

## ACT government releases draft plans for public housing renewal sites

Canberra Times July 6, 2015 **Meredith Clisby**

Plans to redevelop some of Canberra's most notorious public housing complexes are a step closer with the ACT government releasing the proposed zone changes for the sites.

Stuart Flats in Griffith, Gowrie Court in Narrabundah and Red Hill flats are all slated for redevelopment under the government's public housing renewal program.

While initially included as part of an omnibus draft territory plan variation released about a year ago the ACT government removed the controversial sites after community concerns over the proposals.

It has now opened the delayed rezoning proposals to the community for public comment until August 17.

Broadly, the three territory plan variations will change the zoning for the sites to allow for high-density development of up to six stories, which is double the current heights of the complexes.

The ACT government appears to have backed down over plans to rezone an open space area with a playground in its proposal to redevelop Stuart Flats in Griffith.

The draft variation notes that in response to design considerations and community feedback it has decided that only a small part of the park will be rezoned.

This amounts to about 13 per cent of the park, or 860 square metres.

The redevelopment of Red Hill flats is expected to support the revitalisation of the local shops and extra commercial space will allow for an expansion of commercial opportunities.

Plans have already been drawn up for private developments to replace the public housing at each site and dwelling numbers will go from about 150 units to 500 in Griffith, Red Hill and Narrabundah.

The government has also released a draft rezoning plan for a site in Kaleen that was part of the first omnibus plan but was later withdrawn.

The site, which is the former bocce club north of UC High School Kaleen on Baldwin Drive, has been subject to two previous zone changes.

The first allowed the development of the medium-density residential Huntington Apartments complex and the second for the provision of supportive housing that did not go ahead.

The land's lessee, the commissioner for social housing, proposes to develop part of the site for older public housing tenants and introduce further private residential development to create a mixed community.

The draft variation notes that Kaleen housing stock is predominantly detached dwellings which meant people had to move from the suburb in order to downsize.

"Rezoning of the site to high-density residential will increase the diversity of housing types in Kaleen," it says.

Planning Minister Mick Gentleman said the draft variations were the result of extensive consultation with residents in the suburbs of Narrabundah, Red Hill and Griffith.

He said the sites were part of an ageing portfolio of properties that no longer met the needs of tenants.

"The renewal of these sites will allow the ACT government to better support needs of

some of the most vulnerable people in our community and better integrate public housing and public housing tenants into the community," Mr Gentleman said.

According to the draft territory plan variation documents as at April 2015 there were 11,826 public housing properties in the ACT.

As of April there were 2323 clients on the waiting list and a further 869 public housing tenants on the transfer waiting list.

The number of people on the public housing list has doubled since 2008.

*To view the interactive map that accompanied this article, visit:*

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