

Fluffy dual occupancy changes set for green light

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Planning changes allowing dual occupancy on Fluffy blocks look set to go ahead despite some vehement opposition, after the planning directorate recommended the green light.

The change will allow dual occupancy on the properties where Fluffy homes are being demolished for all blocks bigger than 700 square metres. Currently, dual occupancy is only allowed on 800 square metre blocks. The change will also allow the Fluffy blocks to be unit-titled and sold as two separate properties, whereas dual occupancy rules elsewhere don't allow the subdivision.

Plot ratios will also change. At the moment, dual occupancies can cover no more than a third of the block. The Fluffy dual occupancies will be allowed to cover 50 per cent of the block if both homes have direct street frontage, and 35 per cent otherwise.

Semi-detached developments will be allowed, as will two-stories if both homes have direct street frontage.

The change is expected to affect 770 blocks in 56 suburbs.

The aim is to increase the value of Fluffy land, allowing the government to recoup some of the costs of the buyback and demolition of 1022 homes.

When the plan went out for public comment, [124 people made submissions](#), almost all opposed. Neighbours and owners voiced concern about house values and lifestyles, over-shadowing and increased traffic. They complained about poor planning, given the only reason for the move was to increase the value of the land.

But some building industry groups said the change didn't go far enough and should be extended beyond Fluffy blocks, while [architects pointed to the difficulty of designing family homes with such small footprints](#).

Despite the concerns, the planning directorate has recommended the move go ahead unchanged. It is now with Planning Minister Mick Gentleman for a decision, expected this week. If Mr Gentleman gives his approval, it goes to the Assembly before being finalised.

In its response to submissions, the directorate said the change was a "modest increase" in density, and the plot ratios and height limits would protect the low-density character of suburbs.

"DV343 [the plan change] does not prejudice the welfare of future generations, nor will it result in serious or irreversible loss of life-supporting nature resources or damage to the environment," it said.

The directorate stressed that the change was an "incentive" for dual occupancy but not mandatory. It would not allow apartments or other forms of multi-unit development, and all developments would require planning approval, giving neighbours a chance to comment.

As to concern about the impact on neighbours' views, it said "the extent to which a particular view may be lost or altered must be weighed against an individual's right to maximise the potential of their own block".

The change was "due to extraordinary circumstances that have impacted on a number of dwellings in the ACT".

"It would be remiss of the government not to try and minimise some of the costs to the ACT community associated with the asbestos eradication scheme," it said. "The government anticipates a shortfall of some \$400 million as a result of the eradication

scheme," the directorate said.

Some suburbs and streets are set to be transformed by the demolition and planning changes, with 12 streets containing six or more Fluffy houses, and 45 streets home to at least four Fluffy houses.