



Members of the Legislative Assembly

**Draft Variations 332, 333, and 334**  
**Public Housing Redevelopment, Inner South**

We note that the recommended versions of DVs 332 (Gowrie Court) and 333 (Stuart Flats), to be debated in the Assembly today, are almost the same as those released for public discussion in July 2015.

Similarly, although the Government has substantially revised DV 334 (Red Hill Flats), and this is welcome, it still fails to meet the wishes of the local community.

This is disappointing because there are some important changes that we think should and could be made to improve these variations, so that better outcomes can be achieved at these sites.

All three developments are very important in the urban renewal program and should be planned to last for at least 50 years. It is therefore crucial that every effort is made to achieve high quality outcomes. We are therefore recommending that the Standing Planning Committee assess the key issues we have outlined below before the variations are finalised.

**Draft Variations 332 (Gowrie Court)**

DV 332 proposes high density zoning (RZ5) in an area comprising mainly detached housing stock. This is at variance with the 2012 ACT Planning Strategy, which calls for *“a more compact, efficient city by focusing urban intensification in town centres, around group centres and along the major public transport routes.”*

Gowrie Court is about 700 metres from the nearest local shopping centre, about 1.7 km from the nearest Group Centre (Manuka) and over 5 kilometres from either Woden, Civic or Queanbeyan. Consequently, it does not have adequate access to facilities and services usually available at group or town centres and/or frequent public transport services.

The recommended variation states that:

“The site is within walking distance of the Griffith local shops. There are bus services which use Stuart Street and McIntyre Street and other services are

available on Captain Cook Crescent which is easily accessible from the site.” This does not convey the isolation of the site.

We recommended that the height of the ‘towers’ on the ‘c’ areas be restricted to four storeys so that development will better meet the desired characteristics of the area.

The Planning Committee should focus on this issue and also the benefits of zoning the whole site RZ5, when only part of the site will be occupied by high density dwellings.

It would seem to us that the zoning should represent what was being planned rather than something very different.

### **Draft Variations 333 (Stuart Flats)**

The recommended variation proposes high density zoning (RZ5) throughout the Light Street Precinct, even though the precinct plan shows a mixture of RZ4 and RZ5 dwellings. We can see no advantage in proposals where the buildings being proposed do not comply with the designated zones.

However, the main issue we have is that what is being proposed does not comply with the Desired Character as specified in the Precinct code:

*‘Buildings should be sympathetic to the existing garden neighbourhood character of Griffith in terms of setback, bulk and scale.’*

In particular, the ‘a’ areas, which will contain buildings of three storeys, will not be sympathetic to the existing garden neighbourhood character of Griffith. They should be zoned RZ2 to maintain the desired character of the area.

Furthermore, the proposal to build a four storey building on the southern edge of the urban open space is completely unacceptable. This building would completely dominate the open space and one wonders whether any landscape modelling has been done to visualise effect of a four storey structure on the edge of the park. This **b** area should be reduced in size so that the original open space is retained and the zoning changed from **b** to **a**.

Perhaps the most important issue is that no consideration appears to have been made on the impact of the Grocon proposal for Manuka. For these two major developments to proceed independently is unconscionable. Otherwise the opportunity to provide a high quality outcome will be lost.

### **Draft variation 334 (Red Hill Flats)**

The Red Hill Residents Group (as did several Red Hill residents) lodged concerns and representations about the Red Hill Flats re-development, especially in relation

to proposed building heights, density, traffic and parking impact. In September 2015, the RHRG submitted a petition that stated “the density of housing proposed by the Government through Draft Variation 334 for the Red Hill Public Housing site is unacceptable, as is the proposal for 4 and 6 storey buildings on it.” The area should be zoned RZ3 but be limited to 9.5 metres and generally two storeys. As it stands, there is a potentially severe impact on local traffic and the RZ5 Zone is inappropriate for Red Hill.

### **Recommendation**

We recommend that these Draft Variations be referred to the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment for consideration of the main issues identified above.

This could be done quite quickly and it should ensure that the best possible variations are adopted.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Kent". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Kent  
Chair  
Inner South Canberra Council

10 March 2016