

Mr Fluffy: Planning changes to split housing blocks in two to be tabled by Planning Minister Mick Gentleman

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Controversial planning rules that allow the ACT Government to subdivide Mr Fluffy blocks and sell each section separately will be tabled today in the Legislative Assembly.

The changes, which are already in effect, have faced community opposition, and the Canberra Liberals have criticised their introduction as rushed.

They make most Mr Fluffy blocks dual occupancy, increasing the value of the land.

The changes were designed to offset some of the costs the Government incurred implementing the Mr Fluffy buyback scheme, which has seen more than 1,000 of the asbestos contaminated properties surrendered to the Government.

"The variation will allow the Government to recoup some of the costs of the Loose Fill Insulation Eradication Scheme," Planning Minister Mick Gentleman said.

However the ACT Opposition accused the Government of a cash grab at the expense of residents.

"The Government has really ignored the vast majority of concerns that were put to the Government through the planning committee's inquiry into this variation," Opposition planning spokesman Alistair Coe said.

"The Labor Government rushed through this variation in the Assembly last week, and we're very disappointed that they didn't take into consideration the views of many people that spoke to the planning committee."

Mr Gentleman said the Government had listened and responded to community feedback, which included concerns about density, overshadowing and amenity.

He said he was confident residents would be comfortable with the changes.

"Quite a few of the concerns we think have been addressed," he said.

"Submissions were mostly concerned about the potential impact on residential amenity and character as a result of the dual occupancy developments."

"There are some assurances there in the changes that we've made that the streetscape and amenity will be almost the same as it is now."

But Mr Coe said the changes were unfair, because they created a set of rules specifically designed for Mr Fluffy blocks, not applicable to other residential land.

"We're going to in effect have a two-track planning system, one for blocks the Government controls, and one for everybody else," he said.

"That is no way to run a planning system."