



ACT
Government

Environment, Planning and
Sustainable Development

Planning and Development Act 2007

REPORT ON CONSULTATION

Draft Variation to the Territory Plan 376

Demonstration Housing
Co-housing
Ainslie section 25 block 6

August 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

This consultation report was prepared in accordance with s 69 of the *Planning and Development Act 2007* (the P&D Act).

The report describes the consultation undertaken on the draft variation with the public, the National Capital Authority (NCA), the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), and ACT Heritage Council, and responds to the issues raised.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

2.1 Details

Draft variation 376 (DV376) was released for public comment on 19 February 2021. The closing date for comments was 16 April 2021. A copy of DV376 that was released for public comments is at **Appendix 1**.

Copies of submissions received from the public are provided in **Appendix 2**.

The comments from the NCA, the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, EPA, and ACT Heritage Council were received and assessed prior to release of DV376 are addressed in section 4.2 of this report.

2.2 Summary of matters raised

A total of 14 written submissions were received, 13 from individuals and one from a community group.

The following Table 1 provides a summary of the considerations raised in the public submissions, as well as the number of submissions that raised the matter.

Table 1 Summary of matters raised in public submissions:

Issue	Number of Submissions
Support the draft variation	13
Concern about the proposed 'modest' size of units and limited individual and community storage space	1
Concern about the long-term management of the development	1
Concern about varying the Territory Plan to permit the development	2
Proposed number of car parking spaces is inadequate	1

The comments from the NCA, the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, EPA, ACT Heritage Council and the ACT Parks and Conservation Service were received and assessed prior to release of DV376 and are addressed in section 4.2 of this report.

2.3 Issues and responses

The key issues raised are summarised below, and responses provided.

2.3.1 Support for the draft variation

Thirteen submissions support the draft variation.

Response

It is noted that all submitters, except one support the draft variation. Some submitters also raised concerns.

2.3.2 Concern about the proposed 'modest' size of units and limited individual and community storage space

One submitter indicated their only comment is that the proposed individual units might be too 'modest' in size and there will be very limited additional storage space.

Response

The dwellings have been purposely designed to be modest in size by the proponents. The shared space includes a large kitchen and common room for the use of all residents to create a sense of community.

In terms of storage, the proposal has a shared bicycle shed and each unit is provided with its own storage space.

2.3.3 Concern about the long-term management of the development

There are concerns about how the development will function in a harmonious way in the longer term when new tenants move in.

Additionally, two questions have been asked:

- a) whether charitable groups would be able to manage the property for supportive housing in the future; and
- b) will the property be able to be used as a bed and breakfast?

Response

The Demonstration Housing Project responds to the need for more housing choice in Canberra. It seeks to address the social, environmental, and economic changes that the city is facing, such as population growth, shifts in household sizes and becoming climate resilient. These shifts present the opportunity to rethink how housing is designed and delivered beyond typical single dwellings in the RZ1 Suburban zone.

It is acknowledged that there are shared facilities, which are an integral part of the co-housing development. It is anticipated that a resident who chooses to live in a

co-housing development would share similar co-housing/co-living values and that this would enable any difficulties to be overcome as a part of the owners' corporation. The owners of the units will be responsible for any future sale of the dwellings.

- a) This Demonstration Housing Project has been designed for private occupancy and is not intended to be converted to supportive housing. Supportive housing is currently permissible under the current Territory Plan, should the owners agree for it to be managed by a Territory approved organisation that provides support services, such as a community housing provider.
- b) No, the site will not be able to be used as a bed and breakfast, as a guesthouse is only permitted in RZ1 Suburban zone if there is only one per section and it is adjacent to a commercial zone. The draft variation does not make any changes to this provision in the Residential Zones Development Code.

2.3.4 Concern about varying the Territory Plan to permit the development

Two submissions raised concern that a Territory Plan variation is required to support this type of development and it could result in changes to the residential RZ1 Suburban zone provisions more broadly.

Response

While this proposal requires a site-specific Territory Plan variation for an alternative housing type, this type of variation is only offered to proponents who have successfully completed the Demonstration Housing Project process, to enable evaluation and consideration for broader housing policy within the ACT.

For Demonstration Housing Projects to be built and 'demonstrated', most proposals will require their own site-specific and design-specific Territory Plan variation. This is to allow these innovative housing concepts to be realised and tested.

Demonstration Housing proposals offer a unique 'hands on' opportunity to test the effectiveness of different housing types through real examples and future review through post-occupancy modelling. The lessons learnt from the Demonstration Housing Project will inform future government housing policy and may result in policy changes to support improved housing choice and housing quality in Canberra. If broad changes to housing policy are recommended following evaluation of the co-housing development, such policy changes would require further community consultation and Territory Plan changes.

2.3.5 Proposed number of car parking spaces is inadequate

One submission indicated concern that not enough car parking spaces will be provided, and that this is used for justification for an increase in size of the four units.

Response

The proposed development will include a private car sharing system of two electric vehicles to be used by residents. The proponents are intending to use more

sustainable modes of transport, such as active travel and public transport, compared with private vehicle use and ownership. This is considered appropriate given the site's proximity to light rail and local shops and services.

Demonstration Housing proposals that seek to provide fewer car parking spaces than would otherwise be required, must submit a Residential Travel Plan as part of their development application to demonstrate how they can travel to key local destinations using active or public modes of transport. A draft Residential Travel Plan for this proposal has been prepared and was included in the Planning Report which is a background document for the draft variation. This will be developed in more detail and assessed as part of the development application process.

It should be noted that the co-housing proposal is for three dwellings with a shared space, rather than four dwellings. The proposed units are of a modest size, being 100m² each and a shared space is also provided. The proposed site plot ratio is 42.3 %, which includes a double garage.

To avoid any confusion regarding the maximum plot ratio that applies to co-housing in the RZ1 zone, the draft variation has been amended to include a maximum plot ratio for this site. Single dwelling housing, the predominantly housing type in the RZ1 zone, has a maximum plot ratio of 50%. It is considered that the same maximum plot ratio be applied for co-housing on this site to enable it to be consistent with the surrounding single dwelling housing.

In accordance with the Parking and Vehicular Access General Code the provision of three undercover car parking spaces would usually be required for three dwellings, being one per dwelling. However, in this instance the requirement for car parking is for two spaces, based on an electric vehicle sharing arrangement for residents. As the proposed co-housing development has a plot ratio of 42.3%, there is still sufficient space on the block to provide additional car parking without exceeding the maximum 50% plot ratio.

3. SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE DRAFT VARIATION

3.1 Changes to the draft variation after public consultation

A 50% plot ratio is introduced to protect the amenity of the surrounding RZ1 Suburban zone.

3.2 Other changes following public consultation

No other changes were made to the draft variation.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2007

4.1 Release for Public Comment (section 63)

DV376 was made available for public comment from 19 February 2021 to 16 April 2021. A consultation notice under s 63 of the P&D Act was published in the ACT Legislation Register on 18 February 2021 and a public notice was posted online on 22 February 2021.

4.2 Consultation with Government agencies (section 61 (b))

Consultation was undertaken with the following agencies and their comments reported in the draft variation that was released for public notification (**Appendix 1**): the National Capital Authority, the Environment Protection Authority, the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, and the ACT Heritage Council.

4.3 Notice of Submission to the Minister (section 70)

In accordance with s 70 of the P&D Act, a public availability notice will be placed in the ACT Legislation Register stating that DV376 has been submitted to the Minister and that the documents are available for public inspection.

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5. APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1
Draft variation 376 public release version

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APPENDIX 2
Copies of public comments received on draft variation 376

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