

**Submission  
No 123**

## **INQUIRY INTO REVIEW OF THE HERITAGE ACT 1977**

**Name:** Mrs Donna Palmer

**Date Received:** 24 June 2021

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Mrs Donna Palmer

24 June 2021

## **NSW HERITAGE ACT REVIEW 2021**

To Whom It May Concern,

**I am making the following submission concerning the above review.**

I am writing to you to express my views on the NSW Heritage Act Review, as an owner of an Inter-war Period home about to turn 100 years, and as a local history enthusiast.

I believe that the fundamental importance of a Heritage Act is to conserve important representations of our history for future generations to appreciate, educate and understand the importance of our journey to date. It is important to keep examples of each style of architecture in each suburb as this tells a story. It is also important for example to keep some of the working history of our Harbour alive.

I would like to make the following points:

- 1) There is a great need for independence when carrying out Heritage Assessments. These need to be totally objective to ensure that the correct significance is not lost as a result of hidden or destructive agendas. An objective assessment does not mean that a project cannot go forward. It does mean that due and proper consideration is given in the determination, so that a loss of Heritage is avoided for those sites found to play or have a significant role in our history.
- 2) All Heritage Assessments MUST evaluate all nine criteria in depth with clear justification and easy to see reasoning as to the result. No criteria should be summarily dismissed. Any Assessments found not to meet this should be sent back for re-work and not accepted. All firms carrying out Heritage Assessments must abide by a Code of Ethics in the application of these criteria and there should be severe penalties for non-compliance. This builds an assurance that the process of Heritage Assessments is being conducted fairly and objectively. The only sound basis from which to make any decisions regarding the future of any item.
- 3) The Burra Charter must also be used when making Heritage Assessments. Especially the concept of Adaptive Re-use. This is often misunderstood and not correctly used as prescribed by the Burra Charter.
- 4) The Heritage Act has an important role to identify, protect and promote NSW Heritage. There must be no changes to the Act that dilute the ability for the Act to function to protect NSW Heritage.
- 5) The Objectives and Principles of the current act remain relevant and appropriate.
- 6) Additional resourcing should be provided to assist the Heritage Act to perform its role.

- 7) The NSW Heritage Council should be an independent body, and should not have people on the Council with only development concerns. There should be representatives from local History Groups, as these people understand and have a passion for Heritage.
- 8) When making Heritage Assessments, input from local people to the Heritage Item being assessed, must be weighed against input from those outside the local area, who could be more objective. It is easy for a lot of locals so say for example that something is an eyesore, and another park would be nicer; or have a hidden agenda in that they want a better view; and maybe even they are not concerned with heritage at all and would prefer high-rise. Such assessments based purely on such locals is going to result in a lot of Heritage loss. Education is the key combined with independent assessment as mentioned earlier.

For clarification, I have not made any reportable political donations. I have no objections to my name being published with my submission.

Yours sincerely,

*Donna Palmer*

Donna Palmer B.Bus (NSWIT), CPA, MACS