

Submission
No 177

**INQUIRY INTO DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSPORT
ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 28 March 2024

Partially
Confidential

Thankyou for the opportunity to share my thoughts about the NSW State Government's proposed housing reforms that focus on higher density and include an alarming proposal to reduce the aesthetic appearance and property values of the present built environment by eliminating heritage protection that currently applies to a significant percentage of properties in the affected areas. The NSW National Trust's February 2024 submission notes on page 3 that "through the Local Environment Plans and Development Control Plans, 43 Local Government Areas, that together contain around 20,000 heritage items - representing almost two-thirds of all heritage listings in NSW." As a National Trust member and concerned citizen, I am horrified that a Government could imagine destroying our state's historic legacy by not preserving important structures and precincts that reflect our substantial architectural inheritance. Yes, this is a complicated discussion and one that must start with credible facts, such as Sydney's numerous empty buildings. The NSW National Trust's submission notes on page 7 that there are "a staggering 163,740 unoccupied dwellings in Sydney" (Source: The National Trust. (February 2024.) *Housing reforms in NSW. Submission by the National Trust of Australia (NSW)*. Retrieved March 26, 2024 from <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/NT-Housing-submission.pdf>)

This is a nuanced conversation that should include all aspects of the problems affecting the accommodation debate, including the increasing numbers of people choosing to live in limited spaces, the effects of Government decisions related to rates, taxes, water, tree planting and other factors that affect infrastructure, and larger issues such as a warming climate and the impact of longer hours of hotter days on people and dwellings in densely populated areas such as western Sydney. An article published on the *Conversation* website on 26 March 2024 states that "In January 2020, Penrith in Western Sydney was the [hottest place on Earth](#)." The authors cite an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* published on October 5, 2020, that states that in 2020 "At 48.9 degrees, Penrith was officially the hottest place on Earth on January 4, in a Bureau of Meteorology air temperature reading that broke a temperature record standing since 1939." (Source: Plautsch, S. and Paolini, R. (March 26, 2024.) *If you've got a dark roof, you're spending almost \$700 extra a year to keep your house cool*. Retrieved March 26, 2024 from https://theconversation.com/if-youve-got-a-dark-roof-youre-spending-almost-700-extra-a-year-to-keep-your-house-cool-225674?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%2026%202024%20-%202918529642&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20March%2026%202024%20-%202918529642+CID_49c3119347507af6123ac01544bd349f&utm_source=campaign_monitor&utm_term=If%20youve%20got%20a%20dark%20roof%20youre%20spending%20almost%20700%20extra%20a%20year%20to%20keep%20your%20house%20cool)

Given the considerable influence that the State Government has on planning and the subsequent actions taken by its citizens, it seems the Government could be persuading more people to move from overcrowded urban locations by providing incentives to live in regions and rural communities, thereby bolstering the economy of the state and improving the quality of life of the growing population. This may be a bigger picture solution than the current proposal to squeeze small spaces by removing their appeal and beauty, aspects that ironically may contribute to the interest of people wanting to live in established areas characterised by civic amenity and strong heritage values. Once the built environment of the state all looks the same, there may be little left that once contributed to its unique charm, and we may well wonder what happened and, more importantly, how we let it take place. My heartfelt plea to the Government is to be imaginative and to consider your own legacy and be remembered as a leader that acted boldly and with flair to save our state's irreplaceable assets.