

DTI:Planning Review

From: Stephen Bowers [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 16 December 2022 1:31 PM
To: DTI:Planning Review
Subject: Input for Cultural Heritage planning review

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Submission to the Planning Review.

As a long term resident of South Australia and having lived and worked in the City of Adelaide itself for more than 45 years, I submit the following brief notes for consideration by The Expert Panel.

Heritage can be enjoyed and appreciated by all - at the same time it is also hard to value, preserve and protect.

Heritage is continually subject to natural on-going decay over time, hence the need for provisions for maintaining Heritage which lie with the Community and Govt at all levels and with Developers and private sector owners of Heritage infrastructure.

Heritage is also subject to pressures of urban growth, demographic change and development in the environment.

One of the key drivers of destruction of Heritage is its innate historical character and material structure – including the worker’s building skills, knowledge and crafting that went into its making. Naturally these characteristics are attributes that attract people. Heritage is desirable and it can be expensive and not everyone can afford to own and maintain it. Its appeal – its beauty and interest – are the very things that make it a target for speculation, neglect and destruction. No building – no matter how beautiful or important - will stand for long unmolested if it is neglected. It starts with graffiti and broken windows and proceeds to looting, fires and bulldozing.

Developers know the appeal of Heritage. They enterprisingly look for ways to open up opportunities within or adjacent to Heritage areas where people can ‘buy-in’ and by proximity enjoy the ‘lifestyle and ambience’ of the remaining Character and Heritage of the location.

In this way we see individual examples and whole areas of Heritage broken up.

There would be nothing objectionable to this process if the destruction only occurred on sites or examples which have been already ‘developed’ and which may possess little or no Character or Heritage value – and there are plenty of these sites within and adjacent to what might otherwise be seen as preserves of Character and Heritage. They are the common result of the century of development since the 1920’s.

Ensuring replacement building is approved in advance of demolition, along with a better process for replacement building approvals, will help - but most developers do not want to undertake the difficulty and cost of genuinely replicating historical or heritage characteristics. Their contribution lies in providing affordable competitive modern builds that meet with market success.

If the guidelines want to protect Culture and Heritage they could consider applying demolition controls where anything built or established before 1920 - whether within a Character, Heritage area or Heritage place or not - is automatically fully protected and no substantial renovation or demolition can occur until there has been an accountable process of publicly accessible review with community input.

Anything after that date (1920) whether within a Character, Heritage area or Heritage place or not, can be similarly assessed on its merits as the individual case warrants.

There would be many approvals and few objections.

Respectfully yours,

Stephen Bowers



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