

28 February 2020

State Planning Commission
DPTI.PlanningReformSubmissions@sa.gov.au

Chair State Planning Commission
Dear Sir

Draft Planning and Design Code – Historic Areas

We own a house that is a “Contributory” place in the Gawler East Historic Conservation Zone.

We are very concerned about the potential effect of suggested changes to protection of heritage places in Gawler and elsewhere in the State.

Our local Gawler Council has been very concerned about the suggested changes. Organizations such as the National Trust of South Australia have been very concerned. We share these concerns.

Having a simplified system and a single template across the State may look like a useful reform and may suit developers who have been promoting it, but what is lost is the particular heritage provisions that were developed in Gawler some 20 years ago and have generally worked well.

When they don't work well is when the voices of the local community are set aside by the views of administrators who want “a one size fits all” outcome or when planning officers do not appreciate the history and heritage of Gawler; South Australia's first Country Town - Established 1839.

Council staff get a lot of pressure from developers in the planning process but rarely hear from the local community who have been increasingly taken out of the planning process.

Further, there should be serious changes to planning legislation to ensure that properties cannot be neglected and fall into disrepair.

We are also of the view expressed by many people that more time is needed to allow ordinary people to understand the changes proposed. Given that Council and others have pointed out major problems with the very complex documentation presented for comment, it makes to very hard (and potentially unfair) to expect comment on documents which are hard to assess and quite likely to change significantly.

We plead with the Planning Commission and State Government to take more time. We support the proposals from organizations with a focus on heritage protection and promotion for a 2 year extension of time to ensure that there is full and careful assessment of changes.

Yours sincerely,

Brian and Beverley Thom


Gawler East SA 5118