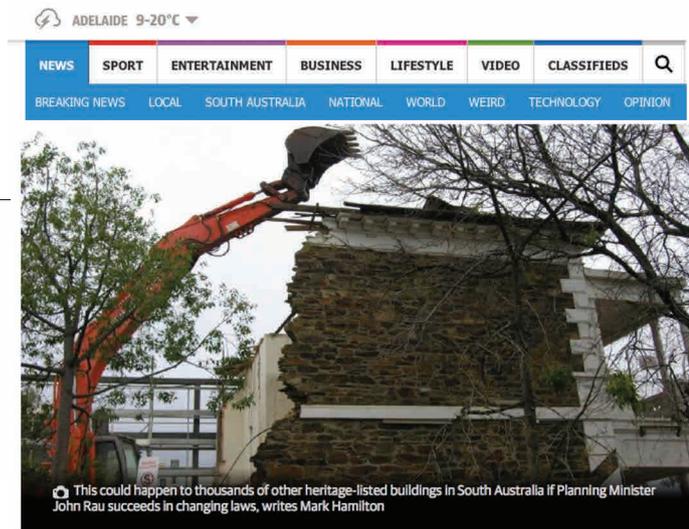


The Advertiser

Opinion

Mark Hamilton: Planning Minister John Rau's push to change heritage laws could result in demolition of 7500 buildings across SA

Mark Hamilton, The Advertiser
September 6, 2016 4:17pm



[Forum to save state's heritage buildings](#)

[Norman Etherington: National Trust 'appalled' by proposed changes](#)

THE State Government's anti-heritage position paper, Placing Local Heritage on Renewed Foundations, would result in the demolition of up to 7500 local heritage buildings across South Australia, leaving only 500 "rare" representative gems as a memento.

Make no mistake, a close examination of this policy document, by those who understand this policy area, shows that it is a wolf dressed up in sheep's clothing. It is shocking spin. Take no notice of the denials by the State Government without examining the paper.

[READ THE HERITAGE POSITION PAPER HERE](#)

Here is why the demolition derby would be on for young and old; and much faster than you think;

REMOVAL of demolition protection for South Australia's 8000 local heritage items.

DELISTING of the vast majority of the 8000 buildings following a foreshadowed state government review of their eligibility to remain listed. This is to be judged under the replacement criteria which will only allow "rare" representative gems to be listed.

This contrasts disastrously with the position, for the last generation of South Australians, where all buildings of local architectural, historical and cultural merit are eligible for listing at the request of local communities through their councils.

REMOVAL of the local heritage listing role from local communities to North Terrace bureaucrats, working at the direction of the State Government through the Minister of Planning. Judging by the reluctance of the current minister to list new local heritage, this would be the effective end of listing; when much local heritage remains to be listed around the state. Good luck to any local community wanting to list its' local heritage in the future.

This proposed retrospective change of the laws of the state, in relation to local heritage protection, would be an unconscionable breach of faith by the State of South Australia, and its parliament, towards its community, which will cause people actual economic, lifestyle and, also, emotional harm.

Tens of thousands of South Australians have purchased homes and invested money over the last generation on the basis that certain buildings, streetscapes, neighbouring buildings and areas are heritage protected. Will the State Government offer compensation to people who suffer loss or who wish to move?

Will the State Government give the Adelaide City Council and its community back the \$25 million or more that council and its ratepayers have granted to the owners of the 1500 or so local heritage items for heritage restoration in the square mile and North Adelaide over the last three decades? These grants would become thing of the past.

Get out and encourage your local councils to fight this tooth and nail.

Mark Hamilton is a former Deputy Lord Mayor of Adelaide who practices as lawyer in Adelaide.