



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY
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Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into ACT's heritage arrangements

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Inquiry into the ACT's Heritage Arrangements

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the ACT's Heritage arrangements, we really appreciate the Committee's consideration of our concerns.

Balancing Heritage & Sustainability Concerns

We are owners of a house in the Ainslie heritage precinct; we have undertaken a renovation, which has substantially improved the energy efficiency of the existing building. We have also extended out the back to capitalise on the perfect North-facing aspect. We have a skillion roof, which means that we can minimise the summer sun and maximise the winter sun to reduce our reliance on external heating and cooling. To get the roof pitch required, we had to extend our planned footprint because Heritage guidelines and concerns about the streetscape prevented us from following our original plans. It seems irresponsible for heritage to trump sustainability when we should be looking to build the most efficient homes with the smallest footprint and recycling and reusing materials where possible.

More broadly, larger footprint homes should be restricted, efficiency prioritised over other design considerations and knock-down-rebuilds should not be cheaper than renovations.

We need to be building homes that are future-proofed and a legacy for future generations where we can. They should be double glazed, insulated properly and disconnected from gas. We need to make sure that Heritage is not used to block sustainability measures.

During the discussions we had with Heritage we were advised that we could knock down and rebuild the original garage 'in the style of'; this seems at odds with the intention of preserving heritage. There are also the implications of the carbon emissions from knocking down and rebuilding: <https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/news/recycle-buildings-tackle-climate-change/>

We know of homeowners in the Heritage Precinct in Reid that have been trying to have solar installed on their roof for over a decade. We should be actively encouraging owners who wish to put solar on their homes, not prioritising heritage aesthetics over sustainability.

We also know that verges in Heritage areas are restricted from being used as community gardens; another adjustment that should be made as we look towards building sustainable and resilient communities.

The UK's National Trust demonstrates how Heritage can be sympathetically managed alongside improving sustainability: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/our-cause/nature-climate/climate-change-sustainability>. Buildings in the UK have greater heritage value in terms of age than buildings in the ACT and are demonstrating how it is not only possible but vital.

First Nations Heritage

We would urge that First Nations' Heritage receives greater importance than white settler heritage in recognition of the significance of country to Ngunnawal and Ngambri people. We strongly advocate for the protection of sites like the Ainslie Volcanics on Quick Street that are known to have significance to the Ngambri and Ngunnawal people. Even if this cultural and historical importance is contested, it is of geological interest and deserving of protection.

Natural Heritage

Increasingly we should be protecting sites that should be conserved for their natural significance. There are native remnants that we should be restoring for their environmental and biodiversity benefits. We have sites like the Quick Street Ainslie Volcanics that have grasslands that need preserving and urgent protection.

Thank you

Amy & Danny Jowers Blain