



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY  
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Ed Cocks MLA

## Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into ACT's heritage arrangements

**Submission Number: 056**

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**From:** Mauro Aviles [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 31 March 2023 11:18 PM  
**To:** LA Committee - ECCB  
**Subject:** SUBMISSION: Inquiry into the ACT's heritage arrangements

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**Categories:** Heritage

Hi LA Committee,

My name is Mauro Aviles, I reside at [REDACTED].

Before continuing, I would like to point out that Gorman Arts Centre, is currently named as such, and it is no longer named Gorman House Arts Centre, nor is it called Gorman House. Ainslie Arts Centre, is simply named as such.

I would like to raise several issues regarding heritage, which I think are worth considering, and I will use Gorman Arts Centre as example, due to its familiarity to me.

c. the adequacy of resourcing for the ACT Heritage Unit

Gorman Arts Centre has had no serious maintenance plans for years. This terrible lack of maintenance funding, is causing it to die a slow decaying dead. Not far from Gorman Arts Centre is Ainslie Arts Centre, one quick tour and you will soon realise it too, experiences a serious lack of maintenance funding. If these two heritage listed buildings, highly used and well respected (two of the oldest buildings in Canberra) are screaming and begging for proper maintenance, what hope is there for other heritage listed buildings around Canberra?

If "resourcing" refers only to staff, we must make sure that the ACT Heritage Unit has enough, and properly trained personnel. Wait times of 6-7 months is just not good enough.

f. any other related matters with respect to the ACT's heritage arrangements

Restrictive:

It feels like heritage can be very restrictive, this could be due to the waiting time for resolutions, or maybe other factors which I am not aware of.

The following point, refers to trees in the grounds at Ainslie Arts Centre, as well as trees along the nature strip along Ainslie Avenue, and possibly other places. Heritage listed trees hang low to the ground, which can cause eye damage or other physical damage to the general public. What is preventing the trees from being trimmed? Does heritage know that the trees are a Work Health and Safety Issue?

Solar panels, a lot of the heritage listed buildings have so much roof space for placing solar panels. Yes, I admit that solar panels take away from the aesthetics of an old building, but the question should be asked. What is more

important, freezing a moment in time, which has come and gone or using roof spaces for solar panels for the benefit of current and future generations?

Not inclusive:

Heritage seems to want to freeze a moment in time, turning buildings into museums. Wanting to keep a memory of times gone by alive, forcing society to adapt to buildings, instead of allowing the buildings to adapt, grow and thrive with the society of the current time. Because of this, we have buildings that are not fully fit for purpose. Also, the buildings are not easily accessible to people with mobility issues.

If the buildings belong to the people, why do we restrict who can enter them? And why can't they represent the wider Canberra/Australian community?

How beautiful it would be, if the usually dry grass around the outside perimeter around Gorman Arts Centre, were removed and replaced by native gardens, including sensory gardens.

Summing up, I am all up for an inclusive and respectful heritage, that is adaptive and tells the story of the buildings and communities that use them, not a single moment in time. An organic heritage, which takes into account where we have been, how we got here, where we are, and where we are heading.

For this to happen, money is required and it must be spent well, so please consider increasing the maintenance funding for government owned heritage listed buildings, to a realistic amount.

If the ACT Heritage Unit does not fund maintenance, please help push for an increase in maintenance money from the government, so that the buildings are here for generations to come.

Please also consider the restrictions. Create a system that prioritises Work Health and Safety, the environment and energy needs.

The Heritage Unit must be effective in the way it runs – easy to contact, good with advice and fast with decisions.

Make it inclusive, so that everyone can claim a small part of the building history and relate to it, no matter what their cultural background may be or their place and time in history.

Tomorrow's heritage is being created today. Let's make it something, we can all be proud to be a part of.

Kind regards,  
Mauro

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