



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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

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From: [Stephen Driscoll](#)
To: [LA Committee - ECCB](#)
Subject: Submission on Heritage
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To the committee,

I am a home-owner in Bruce in my mid 30's with one kid (and another on the way). On a weekly basis I meet people in my age-group who feel that they are unable to have families because the cost of housing (defined either as the rental cost or the principal + interest on a loan) is too high relative to their income.

This is a manufactured crisis in a place of abundant land and ultra low density. It is impossible to discuss this crisis without noting the role of heritage. I have seen dozens of buildings built after 1950 that have managed to be heritage listed. Low quality, cheap houses made for the working class are now heritage listed million dollar dwellings (with energy bills to match).

It is essential that heritage pays close attention to the opportunity costs, and has trained economists who can provide estimates. Is this currently the case?

If a building in a prime location near the city is heritage listed, the opportunity costs would be the best alternative use. Perhaps a large apartment building could have been built instead? If so, housing economists can estimate the impact on rental costs and house prices. If those dwellings are pushed further out by excess heritage listing there will be an increased car dependency and corresponding significant environmental costs, there will be greater infrastructure and services costs. A large team would be needed to give the best guidance of the costs of heritage.

These costs would then be weighed against the value derived by people who appreciate the aesthetics of say a 1960's banking building.

My two questions for the committee are (1) are opportunity costs being calculated in a best-in-class way and (2) are such calculations given full authority to determine heritage decisions.

Stephen Driscoll

 Bruce.