

Central Western Daily

14.05.08

Dear Editor,

The Society of Heritage Owners NSW [sohonsw@gmail.com] congratulates Orange City Council on its recent decision to over-ride the Council's own heritage conservation zoning and permit the owners to develop a two story commercial office block on the site.

The two existing cottages are in such a state that the owner would have to spend what to most rate payers is a fortune - \$305,000 - just to restore them. It would have also rendered the whole project - creating modern , quality offices for local people to work in - unviable.

I remind the only Councillor Glen Taylor who was the only Orange City Councillor to voted against approving this development that the 2006 Federal Government Productivity Commission Report into Built Heritage concluded these heritage conservations zones, heritage precincts, heritage streetscapes [various labels are used] are nothing more than local government heritage rorts, often as a back door method to sterile an entire area from development when its individual items would not merit or justify individual heritage listings against professionally accepted heritage criteria. They found the heritage fraud and abuse of these zones to be so prevalent at local government level they recommended that all Councils be stripped of their powers to create such zones.

They did so as they regarded these precincts and zones nothing more than outright heritage fraud. Mr Taylor - even the Council's former heritage adviser agreed this was an unfair burden to place on the owner, yet you persisted in voting against this development.

I recommend that Councillor Taylor be subjected to the same owner-hating, unfair treatment he sought to visit upon Mr Basha and we will see how he likes it. Let Councilor Taylor's private property be included in a Council heritage conservation area so he finds out what it feels like to be told be can't develop his own property to its best/highest usage, cannot provide much needed modern offices for locals and is expected to fork out over \$300,000 from his own pocket to satisfy a heritage zoning already found to be abused and fraudulently applied by most local Councils.

C. Hayward

Society of Heritage Owners NSW