

North Shore Courier

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Heritage fanaticism and indeed, heritage terrorism is out of control in the Kur-ing-gai local government area. Kur-ing-gai is densely populated with such people, most of whom earn their living from lucrative heritage and environmental consultancies. They have systematically rorted the NSW heritage laws for the past 30 years, often by using invalid heritage classifications on items as a back door attempt to halt otherwise lawful development on sites, by harassing owners of any items they suddenly decide merits the term "heritage" and mounting attacks on any reform attempts.

The legacy reaped in NSW is 'heritage' sewer vents, 'heritage' asbestos ridden Housing Commission fibro cottages, 'heritage' de-commissioned telephone exchanges, migrant 'heritage' [yes, the concreted over front garden with statuary around Marrickville], 20th century heritage and in Kur-ing-gai "project home" heritage with the Pettit and Sevitt houses and non-descript cottages. All with no more heritage merit than foot.

The NSW National Trust and the whacky Dr Edwards is so disconnected from reality that they heritage classify the sky. The NSW National Trust also fought to have heritage listed a dangerous unsealed dirt roads in country growth areas like Point Plommer, when locals and visitors were being seriously injured due to the roads poor condition. These heritage fanatics willingly put their hobby ahead of citizen's lives and well being.

Heritage terrorists also make the lives of owners of such properties a living hell. They refuse to accept the umpire's decision. When the NSW Heritage Office refuse to heritage list an item they or their members nominate, they continue to claim it has heritage "classification" under their own system, deliberately sowing the seeds of confusion amongst those who do not realise their heritage classification has no legal status whatsoever. They publicly attack owners who disagree with their heritage nomination. They re-nominate properties for heritage listing again and again, putting often elderly owners under dire financial and emotional strain. Some of the worst owner-hating offenders in this regard reside in the Kur-ing-gai local government area.

The NSW National Trust and Dr Edwards is now engaged in more extremist propaganda, this time against the reforms of the NSW Heritage Act.

The Society of Heritage Owners NSW strongly supports the NSW government heritage reforms. We are grateful that Mr Sartor, the NSW Minister for Planning commissioned a review of the heritage laws after 30 years of operation and maladministration. Some of these reforms actually give owners some rights. For example, till now owners had no direct appeal rights against a heritage listing. If we wanted to dispute the validity of the original or current heritage listing, we had to lodge a Development Application for demolition and redevelopment, costing us anywhere from \$40,000 to hundreds of thousands of dollars. The heritage reforms the NSW National Trust have issued a blanket call to fight include an owners right to appeal a heritage listing and a regulated system for de-listing items that are no longer heritage.

We urge the rate payers of Kur-ing-gai to reject Dr Edwards and the NSW National Trust call to oppose all NSW heritage law reforms. We also call on the state government to stop their estimated \$500,000 pa in public funding to the NSW National Trust and to redirect such funding to owners organisations.

Owners who want information and support can contact the Society of Heritage Owners NSW at sogonsw@gmail.com .

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Society of Heritage Owners NSW