

National Trust is a heritage disgrace

Thursday, 10 April 2008

Dear Editor,

I see Mr Quint, National Trust spokesperson and their Acting Conservation Manager is attacking Orange's Mayor Councillor Davis over Council's failure to abide by a heritage listing or classification imposed by the National Trust.

Orange City Councillors and the Mayor should be congratulated for their position.

What local rate payers should realise is that the National Trust has no legal powers whatsoever to heritage list or classify anything, their Executive is comprised overwhelmingly of people who make their living out the heritage industry and they have strong financial motives to recommend ever more nebulous and frankly ridiculous heritage listings, irrespective of whether they actually meet professionally accepted heritage listing criteria or not.

The National Trust is also reknown for harassing owners of properties they target for heritage listing and which was rejected as not being heritage.

The classic example are the poor owners of the thrown together Pettit and Sevitt project houses around St Ives in Sydney, such as the Boyds and the Sheins. These project homes are 40 years old, tired and in need of major alterations to make them habitable to accepted current standards and/or demolition. However, heritage fanatics have spent the past 17 years harassing the owners, Kur-ing-gai Council and the NSW Heritage Office with repeated attempts to have these houses heritage listed legally. While the NSW Heritage Office states these houses do not fit the accepted professional standard for heritage listing and refuse to list, the National Trust and its extremist supporters continue to agitate for listing and certainly include these items in their non-legal listing. Owners of these properties have made submission to both Federal and State heritage

reviews detailing the expense, misery and pain these heritage terrorists have bought into their lives.

So, when Mr Quist from the National Trust refers to his organisation listing or classifying any items in Ornage as "heritage" I suggest you all remember it is not worth a grain of salt and should be ignored.

The only currently legally valid heritage listed items by Councils or the NSW government can be found on the NSW Heritage Office Register. If it is not listed there, then its not heritage.

Mayor Davis may have thought when he was dealing with correspondence from the National Trust that they were a "reputable organisation" but I respectfully disagree. Their documentation is structured in such a way as to give readers the impression they are independent, but they are a radical, extreme group who refuse to take 'no' for an answer.

As of two weeks ago the National Trust NSW President Ms Zeny Edwards had them heritage listing the sky! That is simply one example of how whacky they are.

Any local property owners who require assistance defending themselves against heritage fanatics can contact the Society of Heritage Owners NSW on sohonsw@gmail.com

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President

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