

Strathfield Residents Action Group Incorporated

A voluntary non-profit Community Association

9th February 2006

Productivity Commission
Submission on Draft Heritage Report

SRAG is a group that formed in 2004 in response to Strathfield Council's proposal to Heritage list over 400 homes. Our initial efforts were directed at trying to obtain information from Council on how they arrived at the list of homes.

It became apparent that although the council had policies on some matters pertaining to heritage, they did not have a comprehensive heritage policy that covered the process to be used when selecting items to be listed.

A Draft LEP was approved by Council on Dec 6 2005, and is awaiting signature by the Minister. Several items are being listed against the wishes of the owners.

Many people have objected to having their homes heritage listed, not because they do not want to preserve their home, but because of the possible future implications of a heritage listing.

The current system perversely puts some potential heritage items under threat. In cases where the value of a heritage item is lowered by the current system of listing, there is an incentive to destroy the item (even if only by neglect).

A co-operative approach between owner and government as suggested in the draft report, with a finite time on the listing seems a fair and sensible. Our group would fully support the system proposed in the draft report.

In view of the potential a new system has to mitigate the adverse impact heritage listing can have on some homeowners. We feel that the Commission should also recommend that Governments should defer adding items to their lists until they have considered the Commission's final report. Specifically we feel that the NSW Minister for Planning should defer signing the Strathfield Heritage LEP.

Yours Faithfully

Peter Kenny
Secretary
Strathfield Residents Action Group