Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

Natalie Fuller introduced the forum being presented by the Local Government Association of SA, and thanked Adelaide City Council for hosting.

Lord Mayor Martin Haese welcomed attendees and acknowledged the Minister for Planning John Rau and Shadow Minister Steven Griffiths, as well as those Mayors and Elected Members in attendance. The Lord Mayor opened the forum by introducing the main theme of the value of built heritage to communities, and affirmed that councils are open to process improvement.

LGA President Mayor Dave Burgess thanked the Lord Mayor and Adelaide City Council for hosting, and stressed the need for robust engagement before reform and the need to work together.

Approach to Heritage Reforms – Hon John Rau MP, Minister for Planning

The Minister outlined the thinking behind the Discussion Paper:

- A deliberate decision was made not to tackle the breadth of heritage reform proposed in the Expert Panel’s report so as to enable the new planning legislation to pass.

- Heritage is now being dealt with separately, and the current topic is local heritage only – not State or national. The Minister is not an advocate of getting rid of local heritage and is not looking to take anything away from local government.

- The Minister believes local heritage matters should be decided by an independent body, such as the Planning Commission, rather than political figures. However, this is open to change if feedback through public consultation seeks a significant political decision making role.

- There are problems that need to be considered and resolved:
  - Consistency across local councils: there should be a consistent definition for and approach to local heritage.
- Heritage and character: heritage essentially is about individual structures, whereas character is a broader concept related to streetscapes or areas. These may, but do not necessarily, crossover or coexist.

- There is no settled position. The Discussion Paper is inviting conversation and the Minister looks forward to working with local government.

- The aspiration for the planning system is for areas of character to be protected from demolition and replacement of character buildings with inappropriate development.

- In contrast to the significant interest to the Discussion Paper (which only seeks to propose potential areas for reform and is aimed to encourage discussion), the Minister noted the little to no public response to the addition of a plebiscite test to any proposed character zones under the new planning laws introduced by a Cross-Bench MP. The government sought to oppose this addition twice but was unsuccessful in doing so.

**Question:** How can you say it’s not about taking away control from local government when the Discussion Paper has no role for local government?

Minister: It’s a Discussion Paper only. Prefers independent body to make decisions – not of the view that local government should be taken out of the picture, but others such as property owners could be involved as well.

**Question:** If heritage/character were defined with clarity in the Discussion Paper, this would enable comment. Concerned that if clarity is not given, it could go straight to legislation.

Minister: The Discussion Paper is necessarily open ended and vague – it is intended to have lack of specificity to allow contributions to shape a future Bill. There will then be opportunity for further consultation on a future Bill.

**Question:** The Minister has said that this Paper has nothing to do with State heritage places but these are interrelated. The withdrawal of funding for heritage advisory services has had direct impact on local councils; and the impact of the State heritage grant funding, putting pressure on local councils to provide funds.

Minister: There is a relationship between the two – why should we have two different processes? Maybe there should be more harmonization. However, a conversation about State and local heritage at the same time would risk confusion.

**Question:** Why was this Discussion Paper formed? There is a huge disparity between the panel’s expert planning advice and the Discussion Paper.

Minister: Welcomes any submissions with thoughts on the Discussion Paper. If people feel strongly about any particular aspect of the Expert Panel advice that they believe should be reflected in a future Bill, then please put forward those views in any submissions in response to the Discussion Paper.
The Value of Heritage to Tourism for Adelaide – Dr Jack Carlsen, Adjunct Professor, Curtin University

Dr Carlsen commended the consultative approach being taken for complex questions and presented on his work around the value of built heritage:

- Two categories of value: Use(monetary/utility) and Non-Use (intrinsic/non-monetary)
  - Use includes: heritage, research, rarity, tourism, economic, financial, and property values
  - Non-Use includes: cultural, aesthetic, option, bequest, existence, hierarchical, and environmental values
- Estimating the economic value of heritage:
  - Property value does not reflect full value of heritage, so non-market techniques are required to determine the value people place on heritage places.
  - Attribution and substitution methods assign a proportion of tourist expenditure to heritage.
- 2015 study for Adelaide City Council estimated an attribution value of $375 to $569m and a substitution value of $111 to $166 per annum.
  - Attribution value was calculated by estimating total visitor expenditure and using survey questions to explain visitors' motivations, importance and activities related to heritage. 27% of tourism expenditure in Adelaide is attributable to heritage.
  - Substitution value was calculated using a scenario question: if these places didn’t exist, would you have stayed home? 8% of respondents would not have visited Adelaide.
  - These findings were cross-checked with existing tourism data, which found that 32% of visitors undertake cultural heritage activities.
- In order to sustain heritage we need to capture use and non-use values, and need to address the plurality of meanings of the terms cultural, heritage and value in relation to built heritage.

The Economic Value of Heritage to Cities – Donovan Rypkema, Principal of Place Economics

Donovan presented on the findings from studies over the last decade identifying the wide range of economic impacts of heritage conservation:

- Jobs: Heritage restoration is a labour-intensive and generates considerably more jobs and income per dollar output than other activities, including local jobs and high-end artisans.
- Savings: Restoring historic buildings sees significant savings in infrastructure investment (50-80%) and in waste going to landfill.
- City Centre Revitalisation almost always uses heritage resources. One study found a range of financial benefits including more private investment, tax generation, lower vacancy rates, etc.
- Economic growth: rather than people following jobs, young people are now going where there is lifestyle quality, and the jobs follow people. Heritage is an important component of quality of life.
  - One study showed 41 more instances of foreign direct investment in 29 “heritage cities” in Europe than in 29 comparable cities.
- Density: historic districts in Manhattan have approximately 30% higher density than modern residential skyscrapers being built as high-density to accommodate growth.
- Competitiveness: cities are now competing internationally and heritage contributes to civic identity
  - Historic cities attract creative classes, with evidence that historic districts in the US have proportionally higher percentage of creative jobs.

- Arts & Culture: There is a natural connection between arts/culture and historic buildings which are often used as venues for fine arts, contributing to the experience of museums, theatre, etc.

- Heritage buildings are often used for small, local businesses, food and wine businesses, and lend authenticity to local crafts and local products.

- Environment: Older buildings have lower energy usage even compared to energy efficient new buildings. It takes almost 80 years to make up for cost of a new build.

- Heritage tourism: Heritage visitors outspend visitors not visiting heritage.

- More information in the World Bank’s publication: The Economics of Uniqueness

**Social and Cultural Value of Built Heritage – Duncan Marshall, ACT-based Heritage Consultant**

Duncan presented on the social and cultural value of built heritage and the community’s attachment to heritage:

- A 2006 Productivity Commission Inquiry Report into conservation of historic places identified a range of “community benefits” including: the role of heritage places in identity, the contribution to streetscapes and neighbourhoods, and educational and tourism benefits. The study found people value having the option to visit heritage places, knowing heritage assets can be endowed to future generations, and value knowing that heritage places are conserved, whether or not they will visit.

- A 2005 survey found most people agree that heritage enriches their life, is part of Australia’s identity, and that it is important to protect heritage places. 80% of respondents agreed that “historic houses in my area are an important part of the area’s character and identity”.

- Communities do care for heritage, but this is not always obvious due to the wide range of issues that communities care about.

- The Burra Charter was adopted in 1979. It is a world-class guideline used as the basis for principles adopted elsewhere, such as in China.

- Heritage conservation tools include heritage criteria, thresholds, and thematic frameworks.

- Heritage and character require definition and this should be addressed by experts in the community to assist the reform process.
Panel Q&A – Duncan Marshall, Dr Jack Carlsen & Mayor David O’Loughlin

**Question:** Concern around potential loss of contributory items and their association with themes important to a historic zone. What is the panel’s view on this and the importance of establishing a theme?

- Duncan: Places either have heritage value or they don’t. Is another category of heritage protection needed, or can they captured by normal planning controls?
- Comment from the audience: Contributory items are a strange anomaly from the SA planning system. In 1993 councils were allowed to designate historic conservation zones but were not allowed to have too many local heritage places; so, within these areas there were local heritage places and contributory items.
- Mayor O’Loughlin: Local heritage is complex compared to State heritage listings. We need to get the process to be very clear – do we need four categories, or could we have just two?
- Dr Carlsen – Complexity is easy while simplicity and clarity can be hard to achieve. We need to draw upon world’s best practice in these areas.

**Question:** How can more recent heritage places be included, such as Basket Range style housing?

- Mayor O’Loughlin: If something has particular value importance, there is no reason it can’t be protected at very early stage. For example the SAHMRI building should maybe one day be listed. How do you audit that you have collected enough heritage to tell your story? If local government is the only driver of what will be listed – who is making sure we’re doing our job? Many councils haven’t reviewed their heritage registers in a long time.

**Question:** Gawler has many listings and many contributory items, and heritage and character are intertwined. What is the panel’s view on heritage v character?

- Duncan Marshall: The Minister was right in the sense that you can have heritage without character/ and vice versa. For example West Lakes has character and that may be valued by the people of that community, and the normal planning system should respond and protect that. It gets murky where character meets heritage. If you’re talking about character where related to local heritage, then it is related to heritage. Conservation areas are standard in jurisdictions across Australia. We don’t talk about just character – it’s about heritage character.
- Dr Carlsen: Heritage can only be inherited whereas character can be created. Perhaps character can be defined from considering what has no character.
• Mayor O’Loughlin: Using character as euphemism for heritage is problematic. Definitions are very important, and character should be defined in heritage terms.

**Comment**: Heritage is seen as a handbrake on economic prosperity, but heritage restoration sees more money spent on labour as compared to materials. There is inconsistency in heritage opinion and listings in a street. There’s a need for “4th tier demolition protection”.

• Dr Carlsen: There’s an argument in favour of job creation, but don’t overlook the benefits of operating places (such as for tourism) once renovation complete. The Minister commented that private owners could initiate adjustments to heritage listing, but the value of block of land is often more than the market value of the building, it has a wide range of values to the community. It is important that community value is well recognized.

• Duncan Marshall: An independent alternative to Ministerial decisions is a good thing, but the question is, what expertise will be on the planning commission? If there is not a strong voice you can still get a poor outcome. There is a very broad range of views among heritage experts/consultants. Therefore need a layered process incorporating a range of views rather than coming back to a single expert without checks and balances.

• Mayor O’Loughlin: Maybe local government is not always the best arbiter. But where do we go to get a hearing? The State heritage system allows anyone to apply for listing, which is less cumbersome than the Development Plan Amendment process required for local heritage listing. This current process may help to free this up and allow other groups to initiate changes.

**Question**: The Discussion Paper mentions “over-representation”. What does this mean – only one representative of a class of building is needed and the rest are irrelevant?

• Duncan Marshall: The idea of representation arises in criteria for State listing. The use of criteria suggests you are being highly selective, but doesn’t suggest you’re trying to be comprehensive. The practical issue is the lack of resources heritage authorities have to make decisions, which leads to the need to prioritise. So, when there are a range of nominations, they may decide to put energy into places most under threat or not well-represented.

• Dr Carlsen: Longer term thinking is required to achieve the outcomes desired, so any system has to be able to stand the test of time, beyond political terms.

**Comment**: Lives in a contributory dwelling in a historic conservation zone in Burnside. Residents value historic dwellings and the heritage character of the suburb. Listings and zoning prove no impediment to property value, and the heritage/character of the whole suburb is valued.

**Comment**: We do not know what will happen to contributory items. These are the building blocks in heritage conservation zones – what people value are collections of old buildings and not just individual buildings here and there. Contributory Items will not become local heritage places – if heritage conservation zones lose their status, the contributory items will lose demolition protection.

**Question**: My son is doing a trades-based course in heritage conservation – but while tradespeople are highly skilled, they are not asked about their knowledge. Concerned about Discussion Paper referring to demolition on merit – if something has been listed, there is no merit to demolition.

• Duncan Marshall: This needed more clarification. From discussions, understands that this is intended to deal with non-heritage aspects of heritage places (i.e. a 1960s extension).
Comment: Contributory item proposals are difficult to assess and perplexing to DA staff. If working without contributory items you have to be very specific in crafting the zoning policy, and there are ways of doing this without contributory items.

- Duncan Marshall: You can design the best system, but it will fall over without the right people, expertise, and sufficient resourcing.

- Mayor O’Loughlin: Do not to assume government is pro-heritage or that the Minister for Heritage sympathises. It’s upon all of us to get the best system we can get and legislate safeguards. We have a rare opportunity and need to get involved in the current reform opportunity to help this happen.

Lord Mayor Martin Haese closed the forum with reflections on the economic value of heritage in Adelaide as well as its contribution to our identity, and once again highlighted the need to work together on heritage reform. The Lord Mayor invited people from communities throughout South Australia to the Heritage Community Forum on Monday 26 September.