

# Summary of ACT Greens position on heritage 2016:

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## KEY POINTS

The ACT Greens value Canberra's history and its importance to the life of the city, now and into the future. We have a strong heritage policy and the key principles we took to ACT's 2016 election are outlined below.

- **Heritage is a reflection of our Territory's history from Aboriginal occupation to today.** It is a valuable part of our collective and cultural history.
- The ACT Greens believe that Canberra needs, and deserves, a vision and rolling 10-year plan for protection of natural, cultural and built heritage sites, including Aboriginal and 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century European sites.

We'd like to see this vision inform urban planning in new developments and in existing suburbs. And, we believe the community should be an active part of how and where this vision is realised. Canberrans should have a say in what their city looks like, and the ACT Greens will continue to advocate for more community consultation to identify heritage places and how they should be protected.

**The cultural, natural and built heritage in the ACT is a precious asset to be respected and protected for current and future generations**

- We will commit additional resources for government and non-government peak bodies to fulfil their obligations, including timely consideration of nominations.
- We will not stop campaigning for ACT and federal heritage protection laws to overcome jurisdictional complexity, a situation that currently risks some important sites falling between the cracks and not being protected.

**It is in the public interest for government, non-government bodies, the private sector and private individuals to fund developments and projects that involve our shared heritage**

There should be greater recognition and improved coordination across government regarding heritage matters in the consultation, planning and delivery of projects.

**A history and heritage tourism strategy** would help capitalise on our heritage, as part of the broader tourism strategy for the ACT and region. This could include incentives for investment in privately owned heritage places such as the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings.

The Greens would commit an additional \$100,000 each year to maintain heritage assets around the city, such as bus stops, light poles, old street signs, and gutter markings, fire hydrants, or post boxes. Many of these physical assets that reflect Canberra's history are currently neglected and are deteriorating.

**There needs to be a balance between protecting heritage places and allowing our city to meet the demands of growth and sustainability.**

We support including the central national area on Australia's national heritage list, to protect key elements and to provide a framework for appropriate future development. Conservation management plans should be prepared and implemented for all heritage housing precincts.

We support retention of representative buildings and landscapes that contribute to the character of the city and provide a sense of place and evidence of a former era. This will require a heritage plan that maps out representative buildings of various phases of architecture in Canberra, and a strategy for sufficient representative buildings to be protected.

Conservation of Canberra's heritage should be done in a way that enables long-term usability. This could include the unique character of villages, and creative, arts and entertainment precincts.

**It is important that built heritage that is used for residential purposes is well maintained and retrofitted for energy efficiency where possible**

Government-owned heritage-listed properties should be audited in respect of energy efficiency to allow for adaptive re-use and environmentally sustainable design in their refurbishment and maintenance.

**Heritage protection is not limited to preservation of buildings and other places and objects; it also includes preservation of cultural and natural heritage, such as the memories and stories of Aboriginal elders**

We recognise, respect and seek active engagement with traditional custodians and other Aboriginal peoples in relation to their skills and knowledge of conservation and heritage places.

**And, government should ensure that heritage repositories are available for libraries, museums and other institutions with collections.**

We want to see a safe and centralised repository to store objects, ACT publications and records.

## **RESPONSE TO ELECTION PRIORITIES**

### **Review of ACT Planning Act and ACAT's Role**

The ACT Greens have called for a significant review of relevant codes. We would work with the community to review codes in established areas to ensure protection of the existing look and feel of suburbs.

The ACT Greens believe in limiting the use of call in powers and have fought for this in the past. We support the right of appeal, and believe that it is important to make sure this isn't prohibitively expensive. The Greens also support the rights of groups like the National Trust to have standing - and for them to be resourced to undertake their important work in recognising and protecting our important heritage values.

However, ideally having to go through an appeal process should really only be a last resort. The ACT Greens believe that through better planning and consultation, the need for appeals should be significantly reduced. To ensure this is the case we have committed to re-establish the independence of the Planning Authority to ensure strategic planning takes precedence over the land development arm of Government.

The ACT Greens are also committed to changing the focus of the Land Development Agency, including broadening the expertise of the Board to include design excellence and community involvement. We also support an expanded role for the Government Architect, supported by a Design Review panel - which should include greater consideration of heritage values when reviewing significant projects.

The ACT Greens believe that the community should have a say in how we build and design our city, and we support calls for genuine dialogue involving both existing residents who wish to maintain the qualities of the communities that they have helped develop (and who may want to age in place), as well as younger people who may aspire to move into established areas. The ACT Greens are committed to facilitating broad, inclusive and meaningful conversation about the future of our city through a process of deliberative democracy.

We believe in this way we will achieve a better design outcome, greater recognition of heritage values and reduce the need for legal challenges.

#### **b. Development of ACT Heritage and History Industry Planning**

The ACT Greens support a strategic long term heritage and history plan. Our policy platform recognises the need for an overall vision and rolling 10-year plan for protection of natural, cultural and built heritage sites, including Aboriginal and 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century European sites. We'd like to see this vision inform urban planning in new developments and in existing suburbs. I'm particularly interested in recognising songlines within the fabric of new suburbs.

We want more community consultation to identify heritage places and how they should be protected, for example the Community Reference Group the ACT Greens proposed for the Manuka Oval precinct.

Key to undertaking this planning is adequate resources for government and non government groups - and the ACT Greens are committing additional resources (see f below)

#### **c. Conduct of a Heritage and History Impact Study**

The same answer to b. above and the same comments made about resourcing.

#### **d. Funding a History and Heritage Tourism Plan**

Canberra is connected with the broader region, and the country, through our cultural facilities, entertainment, and the arts. The Greens believe that Canberra's international connections including our embassies and international flights will be vital to our economic and cultural future. Our regional links are also important with the Kings, Monaro, Barton and Federal Highways providing links to the snow, the pristine south coast and regional food and wine growing areas and opportunities to showcase the Canberra and the region's heritage values.

To achieve this, the ACT Greens will invest \$300,000 to establish an eco-tourism coordinator and undertake targeted promotions to promote Canberra as tourism destination for niche markets including mountain biking, horse riding and nature and heritage based tourism. Targeted promotion would include through social media, specialist magazines and tourism agencies and advertising such as the airport.

#### **e. Review of Heritage Unit Activities and Resources**

The ACT Greens appreciate the range of heritage activities undertaken within Government and recognise the limited resources available.

Under our Heritage package we have a specific initiative to increase resources to assist government and non-government bodies to fulfil their obligations and strategic directions

The ACT Greens will commit additional staff resources for government to fulfil their obligations and strategic directions. The first task to be to undertake an internal review to determine key priorities. Depending on the outcome of this review the additional resources could be used to assist with the timely consideration of nominations and developing conservation management plans for Heritage Housing Precincts, and providing considered heritage input into redevelopment proposals for precincts such as the Manuka Oval.

This funding would be in addition to new funding for tourism which could assist with specific events such as the Heritage Festival, and an enhanced role for the Government Architect which could support better recognition and protection of heritage values.

**f. Providing Operational Funding Assistance for Peak Bodies**

The ACT Greens value the work of the key non-government heritage bodies and the work they do to promote the importance of history, heritage and conservation within the community.

As part of our Heritage package the ACT Greens will commit \$100,000 to the non government organisations to support the important work they do.

**g. Development of New History and Heritage Hub**

The ACT Greens support the development of a new history and heritage hub.

We note the proposal for a site near Blundells cottage. There has also been a proposal for a heritage museum at one of the Lyneham Flats on Northbourne Avenue.

The ACT Greens will commit funding to a detailed feasibility study for the Creation of an ACT history and heritage display centre. This could potentially include an education and display centre, cafe and shop and administration and meeting space for heritage organisations. The feasibility study will explore options for a history and heritage display centre, including indigenous heritage. Potential sites could include the Blundells Cottage precinct or the Lyneham Flats, Northbourne Avenue for an architectural heritage museum and potentially housing voluntary heritage organisations and even including space for the Government Architect.

**h. Commitment to National Listing of Canberra**

The ACT Greens support the national heritage listing of the central national area and inner hills. Inclusion of Canberra's central National area and the inner hills will help protect key elements. This will provide a framework for future development, including specific reference to the Griffin's Plan.

The ACT Greens will progress negotiations with the Commonwealth as a matter of urgency.

**i. Heritage Listing of Lake Burley Griffin**

As above this National Heritage listing includes Lake Burley Griffin

**j. Development of Yarralumla Brickworks and Manuka Oval**

The ACT Greens consulted actively with the community in relation to previous development proposals for the Yarralumla Brickworks. We welcomed the more recent

approach of engaging with community groups representing a range of interests including heritage which assisted in defining agreed objectives. While recognising that not everyone was happy with all aspects of the process, we have ended up with a scale of development that is more welcome by the community.

Likewise in relation to Manuka Oval, in response to community concerns about the unsolicited bid proposal, Greens MLA Shane Rattenbury moved a successful motion in the Assembly, that a Master Plan be developed for the Manuka Oval and wider precinct, with a reference group representing a range of interests, including heritage experts, local sporting groups, residents, local businesses

**k. Preparation and Approval of Conservation Management Plans for Heritage Housing Precincts**

The ACT Greens support Conservation management Plans for Heritage Housing Precincts, and recognise the need to undertake effective community consultation on the draft CMPs.

It is intended that part of the additional funding that the ACT Greens has committed to the Heritage Unit will be directed to this

**l. Recognition of Local/Territory significance**

The ACT Greens support reviewing existing heritage legislation with the aim of recognising and supporting places and objects that have "Local", "State/Territory" significance.