

RESPONSE GIVEN TO THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD RE HERITAGE IN THE PLANNING WHITE PAPER

On 29 June 2013, an article appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald about heritage issues in the Government's proposed new planning system. Below is the full response the department gave to the Sydney Morning Herald:

RESPONSE

- We've told the Heritage Council there would be little change to its role deciding on development applications relating to State heritage items.
- The White Paper and supporting draft legislation proposes a far more co-ordinated approach in regard to decisions or advice by State authorities on development applications. This is in line with recommendations from the Council of Australian Governments to improve integration and reduce delays in this area.
- Agencies in 2011-12 took on average 50 days to comment on development applications, up from 47 days in 2010-11.
- Under the legislation, the Department of Planning and Infrastructure will have a reserve power to co-ordinate and resolve this feedback from State agencies.
- However we've made it clear when discussing this issue with the Heritage Council, that it would only be when there are delays or where the Council's decision conflicts with another agency.
- As mentioned above, this means there would be little change.
- There will be a protocol with the Heritage Council to implement this approach.
- Furthermore, the new planning system will benefit the conservation of heritage by ensuring planning controls are more regularly updated and for heritage issues to be closely scrutinised in this process.
- This means heritage will be considered upfront when the planning vision for an area is set, not as an after-thought once a development application has been lodged which is often the case at the present time.
- The listing of new State heritage items is not touched at all by the new planning system and is covered under separate NSW legislation, the Heritage Act.