



24th September 2014

The Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee
Queensland Parliamentary Service
GPO Box 2454
Brisbane Qld 4001

Mr. Howard Hobbs MP (Chair),

Queensland Heritage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014

The Anglican Church Southern Queensland (trading as The Corporation of the Synod of the Diocese of Brisbane) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee on the Queensland Heritage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. The Anglican Church Southern Qld covers the lower third of Queensland, an area of 542,000 sq. km and is one of 23 dioceses which make up the Anglican Church of Australia. The Diocese is one of the state's major owners of heritage-listed places with 48 places on the Queensland Heritage register, and is proud of the contribution its heritage properties make to the cultural and architectural identity of Queensland.

As an important public policy issue we affirm our support for the principle of formal heritage protection and conservation. We are pleased to note that with amendment of s75 the bill extends the powers of local government to issue exemption certificates for minor works and that there is no change to Division 3: Development for liturgical purposes. However, we would like to emphasise that the proposed amendments to the heritage legislation continue to take insufficient account of the costs associated with maintaining heritage places and there are inadequate financial incentives for their active conservation and development. This issue was raised in 2008 by the Productivity Commission¹, and we hoped it would be addressed through legislative amendment and expansion in heritage grant funding.

¹ Productivity Commission (2008). Inquiry into the policy framework and incentives for the conservation of Australia's historic built heritage places

The costs associated with maintaining and developing heritage places will continue to escalate whilst the requirements are fixed on replacing like with like – a requirement we consider counterproductive to effective property management. Due to the age of most heritage buildings original manufacturers, materials or tradespeople are either not available locally or no longer exist which make maintenance a time consuming and costly exercise. To contain costs we suggest that amendments to the Act and Queensland Heritage place state code include the option for owners to use reasonable alternatives to heritage materials which utilise new technologies but are visually similar. We consider that this can be encompassed whilst ensuring the development does not detract from the cultural heritage significance of a heritage place or heritage precinct.

The following example is provided to demonstrate the challenges charitable organisations experience in managing an expansive heritage property portfolio to the exacting standards demanded by current and proposed State heritage legislation. The Deanery, previously Adelaide House, is located at the rear of the Cathedral Precinct on Ann St, Brisbane. The Deanery has considerable secular as well as religious historical significance as one of Brisbane's earliest buildings and, before its purchase by the church, Queensland's first Government House. It was from this building that Queensland was proclaimed a separate colony in 1859. Numerous grant applications have been submitted to local, state and federal departments to develop the property to enable broader public access and utilisation. The applications were supported at a high level (by two recent Queensland Premiers) and by comprehensive (and costly) conservation management plans. Yet none of our applications have been successful, raising the point that despite significant effort and expense on our part it has proved impossible to access grants for such a significant heritage place. Ongoing maintenance is a significant drain on finances and there are no funds available to lift it to the standard we desire for such a State treasure. We urge that the grounds for grant funding be revisited to ensure they are more reasonably accessible for instances such as this.

Yours Sincerely



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