



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **National Trust NSW to Monitor Heritage Amendment Bill 2009**

The Heritage Amendment Bill 2009 has had its third reading in the Upper House today. The National Trust (NSW) raised concerns about several aspects of the bill, the key concerns being -

- a) ambiguity introduced by the introduction of concepts such as necessity, economic use and financial hardship as additional criteria for the listing of places on the State Heritage Register;
- b) lack of references to public involvement while consolidating the Minister's power to act unilaterally without reference to either the Heritage Council or community; and
- c) erosion of s170 assets out of a perceived response to reduce the Government's liabilities rather than protect NSW heritage.

"The National Trust (NSW) welcomes its seat on the Heritage Council. The Trust will closely monitor the Act's operation and continue to be a true independent voice on heritage issues, to encourage sensitive and appropriate development but also to be the hand of caution when development runs the risk of ignoring the conservation and protection of our past that we hold in trust for future generations," said John Neish Executive Director of The National Trust of Australia (NSW).

"We also welcome the successful amendment to the bill, moved by the Greens, on recommendation from the National Trust which requires the Minister to provide reasons before delisting items from the State Heritage Register. This will allow the Minister for Planning to demonstrate the judicious exercise of power with appropriate transparency.

"Lastly, the Trust had raised the need for an historian on the Council and we anticipate that the Minister will act on those concerns when appointing members of the Council in the future," he said.

ENDS

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