



Media Release

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Planning 'Reforms' Generate Community Outrage

A meeting of heritage, environment and community groups in Sydney last night demanded planning legislation currently before State Parliament be rejected and that a Parliamentary Inquiry into planning reform be established.

The public meeting, organized by the National Trust (NSW), the Local Government and Shires Associations and The Total Environment Centre represented the concerns of hundreds of community groups across Sydney.

The meeting passed the unanimous resolution: ***That as a result of real concern expressed by the community, local government and environmental and other groups, the NSW Upper House hold a Parliamentary Inquiry into the Government's proposed changes to planning laws and generally into planning reform.***

National Trust (NSW) Conservation Director, Graham Quint said the aim of the legislation is to fast track development.

"The proposed legislation is focused on facilitating development rather than environmental planning. Any building that is not heritage listed or protected by a conservation zone will be able to be demolished without community or local council consultation.

"This legislation constrains and limits community rights, which is undemocratic,' Mr Quint said.

President of the Local Government Association, Genia McCaffery said the new laws will have 'extreme impacts' on local communities.

"Private certifiers will approve developments that will take away your view, see a second storey go up next door, or demolish your neighbouring property, all without prior notification.

"Residents choose to live where they do based on the look and composition of the neighbourhood. This is a choice that will be lost if this legislation goes through," Ms McCaffery said.

The proposed legislation passed through the Lower House at 2am this morning and will now go before the Upper House. The National Trust (NSW) urges those concerned about the planning changes to lobby Upper House MPs for an enquiry into planning laws. Go to www.nsw.nationaltrust.org.au for more details.

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