



**Australian
Institute of
Architects**

ABN 72 000 023 012

The Royal Australian Institute of Architects
trading as Australian Institute of Architects

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The Hon. Susan Close, MP
Minister for Climate, Environment and Water
OfficeoftheDeputyPremier@sa.gov.au

26 June 2023

Dear Deputy Premier,

Re: Heritage listing of Dr Kent's Paddock Housing Complex

We write to you on behalf of the Australian Institute of Architects, which represents over 950 members in the South Australian architectural profession.

We are aware that as Minister for Climate, Environment & Water you have requested that the Heritage Council defer confirmation of the of the provisional entry on the SA Heritage Register for the Dr Kent's Paddock Housing Complex. We understand that this request was made to allow for further consideration of whether listing of Dr Kent's Paddock is in the public interest. The Institute contends that this is indeed the case.

Dr Kent's Paddock has been included on the [Institute's list of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture](#) for many years. It received an RAIA (SA Chapter) Commendation and Civic Trust Award in 1982 and is an exemplar of the medium-density social housing delivered by the SA Housing Trust (SAHT) during the 1970s. The development was further recognised in 2007 through the award of an RAIA (SA Chapter) Enduring Architecture Award, which is given to projects that continue to provide value and a positive impact at least 25 years after they were first occupied.

Given the commitment that the SA government has recently made to public housing with the release of the new state budget, it would be a very disappointing outcome for this outstanding model of public housing to not be celebrated and preserved, particularly as it continues to house over 100 residents. The complex continues to be considered a positive and important asset by the local community, as demonstrated by the large number of submissions made in support of the listing to the SA Heritage Council.



In our view, the development is significant for the following reasons.

- It is an exemplar of the high quality and humanist social housing delivered by the SAHT with the support of the state government of the time. As such, it demonstrates the social awareness of the state government during this period and its willingness to take direct responsibility for the delivery of programs to address inequity.
- It is an excellent example of social housing, incorporating a range of housing options clustered around a generous shared green space. It is a notable demonstration of the aspirations of the SAHT at the time to improve the quality of social housing.
- It demonstrates excellent design at a micro and macro scale. The individual dwelling units are efficiently and effectively planned to provide a high level of liveability to occupants. Collectively the units are clustered to form a medium-density village, with excellent consideration of privacy, controlled solar access, amenity and shared social space. It also demonstrates how appropriate selection and well-considered detailing can allow cost-effective materials to be used to achieve high-quality and robust buildings that are of enduring value to the occupants and the wider community.
- It was designed by highly respected architect Newell Platten and is a notable example of his work during his tenure with the SAHT and his career-long endeavour to maximise human comfort through the well-considered design of buildings.

The Institute considers that heritage listing of Dr Kent's Paddock is in the public interest for the following reasons:

- It continues to provide an exemplar of high-quality medium density social housing, providing tenants with well-designed homes close to services and employment.
- The communal garden offers valuable green space unlikely to be matched by any new development. Appropriate greening is an essential factor in keeping ongoing energy bills low, which is an important consideration for tenants in public housing. It also supports the Government's commitment to addressing climate change.



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- Similarly, the parking area and garden have significant tree cover which is unlikely to be replicated if the site is redeveloped. South Australians continue to express their interest in improving protection for existing trees and increasing tree canopy.
- Access to green space also provides physical and mental health benefits, Protection of this green space is therefore of benefit to the tenants and the wider community.
- Demolition and replacement of buildings prior to the end of their service life generates significant waste and carbon emissions, working against attempts to mitigate climate change. Heritage Listing will protect the building from demolition into the future.

While we absolutely commend the government for its commitment to delivering 564 new public housing dwellings and halting the sale of another 580, the loss of the 114 dwellings at Dr Kent's Paddock would be significant – a 10% reduction in the positive outcomes promised by the recent state budget.

The public has expressed ongoing concern regarding loss of built heritage and character areas. The review of the SA Planning System undertaken by the Expert Panel is one forum where this concern has been communicated. Confirmation of the listing would demonstrate the Government's commitment to protecting South Australia's built heritage.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Morley'.

Chris Morley
SA Chapter President
Australian Institute of Architects

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicolette Di Lernia'.

Nicolette Di Lernia
SA Executive Director
Australian Institute of Architects

CC: The Hon. Nat Cook, MP Minister for Human Services MinisterHumanServices@sa.gov.au
CC: SA Heritage Council, DEWheritage@sa.gov.au