

SECOND READING SPEECH – THE HON MATTHEW GROOM MP

Historic Cultural Heritage Amendment (Validation) Bill 2014

Madam Speaker,

I move that the Bill now be read a second time.

Our heritage is one of our greatest assets and the Tasmanian Government is committed to managing heritage better in this State.

As Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage, I will always strive to protect and facilitate investment in Tasmania's heritage for the benefit of all Tasmanians.

As many members will recall, amendments to the *Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995* were proclaimed on 1 March 2014.

The amendments introduced greater alignment and integration with the State's planning system making it easier for property owners and developers to seek approval for works to places entered on the register.

Those amendments have been well received, streamlined processes and introduced clear and consistent decision making frameworks that reflect how to best manage historic heritage in this State.

One of the most positive outcomes has been the efficiencies gained for property owners and developers wanting to complete works to places entered in the Tasmanian Heritage Register.

I am pleased to say that the new approach is working well.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to improving the efficiency and responsiveness of the heritage system in Tasmania and ensuring we have the right legislative framework is critical to achieving this objective.

Unfortunately, the amendments to the Act did not make provisions for dealing with works applications that the Tasmanian Heritage Council could not determine before proclamation of the amendments.

As soon as the matter was identified, the Tasmanian Government sought advice on how to rectify the situation and ensure that there is no legal doubt with respect to the 21 decisions made by the Heritage Council under the provisions that have been amended and replaced.

This Bill will validate all works decisions made by the Tasmanian Heritage Council in respect to works applications lodged prior to the proclamation of amendments to the Act on 1 March 2014, but not determined until after that date.

This provides greater certainty for all the affected parties and removes any legal doubt.

The Bill also addresses how to proceed with one application that remains on hold at the request of the developer.

As I mentioned previously, this is an unfortunate situation. It has created a scenario where, at any time in the future, the validity of works to a heritage listed place may be questioned.

It is a question that cannot be ignored and the Tasmanian Government is fixing that legal problem.

Madam Speaker, the Government fully supports the introduction of this Bill.

I commend this Bill to the House.