

Lucy Turnbull 'should be aware of Haberfield's destruction'

SMH LETTERS

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Haberfield demolitions send a dire message on heritage

It brings tears to the eyes of those who value the city's history and its steadily declining historical past ("Heritage home destruction is news to chief", August 17). Lucy Turnbull, the Prime Minister's wife and chief commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission, says she did not know about the destruction of more than 50 conservation area houses in a designated conservation area to make way for the WestConnex motorway. Her job involves co-ordinating district plans for the city's neighbourhoods.

So how many other conservation areas are under threat and will she know when other heritage areas will be destroyed by Premier Baird's bulldozers? Under the 1 1/2-year-old, 104-page Baird government *Plan for Growing Sydney*, the then planning minister Pru Goward said the government will "assess the potential for additional housing to be located in heritage conservation areas in Sydney".

This tragic signal shows Premier Baird's government taking total control of local planning and stacking councils with Liberal and National supporters through council amalgamations. Already the whole history of our city's architecture and its suburbs are under threat because of Baird's political whim. Now he has a commissioner for support.

It is a disgrace only outdone by the Premier's dreadful treatment of these Haberfield residents and their homes. So what's next? Look out Paddington and Balmain or anywhere with heritage value.

William Tuck Mosman

It is both appalling and frightening to think that the head of the Greater Sydney Commission, Lucy Turnbull, is unaware of the destruction being undertaken in Haberfield by the state government. All of Haberfield was classified as an urban conservation area by the National Trust in 1978. Heritage conservation principles have been implemented in Haberfield since October 1982 and the Haberfield Heritage Conservation Area was gazetted by the state government in 1985. It was listed on the Register of the National Estate in 1990-91.

With such a pedigree, the head of the Greater Sydney Commission should be aware of Haberfield's significance and what is threatening it. I invite Lucy Turnbull to come on a tour of Haberfield to inform her on this issue.

Vincent Crow President Haberfield Association

The WestConnex disaster has been front and centre of our lives in the former Ashfield local government area for the past three years. The proposal for the motorway generated 8000 plus submissions in opposition, numerous articles in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the local newspapers, many local meetings, rallies, sit-ins in heritage houses and the arrest of at least six local residents.

The devastation of Haberfield and the loss of very significant buildings within the conservation area is a national disgrace. The whole suburb of Haberfield is of national and international significance and should have been protected.

Lucille McKenna Summer Hill

I know where Point Piper is, so I could easily collect Mrs Turnbull and drive her around my decimated suburb.

Lorraine Hecker Haberfield

To be fair, even on a clear day it would be difficult from Point Piper to see the dust rising from the demolitions at Haberfield.

Doug Walker Baulkham Hills

Lucy Turnbull's gob-smacking claim serves to confirm the ruling class view that Greater Sydney exists only East of Broadway. The rest is just Lesser Sydney.

Craig Forbes Lewisham

I suggest Lucy Turnbull visit St Peters any time between 7am and 9am. She might discover, as most motorists already know, that it can take anywhere between 20 and 40 minutes to travel a couple of hundred metres from King Street along Sydney Park Road to Euston Road. How long will it take when West Connex is complete and all that traffic spews out?

Kieran Pinkey Newtown

Does Mrs Harboursidemansion also not know about the trees that used to line Anzac Parade?

Cathy Davitt Waverley

The pulling down of houses in Haberfield is certainly not "the worst hit to heritage in Australia" as the National Trust claims. That was the destruction of Aboriginal sacred sites all across the country, in many cases merely so cattle and sheep could be raised.

Paul Knobel Canberra (ACT)

Perhaps Prime Minister "Malcolm Turnbull and the hapless Barnaby Joyce" (Letters, August 17) should take Mrs Turnbull and other members of the Greater Sydney Commission on a grand tour of Sydney so they can have at least one quick glance to familiarise themselves with the city they "plan to shape", before their vandalism begins.

Like unnecessary medical intervention for minor maladies, the "cure" can often result in a major systems breakdown. Without relevant patient history and a little thoughtful attention, small problems can become major misguided catastrophes that linger on for the helpless patient.

For the everyday Sydney-siders who go around with eyes open and take in the sights, soon everything of value will cease to exist, as it is thoughtlessly and systematically "medicated" and reduced to a pile of slick, soul-less rubble; a visual vacuum.

Joy Cooksey Harrington

Malcolm really must explain to Lucy that between South Dowling Street and Canberra there are real people living real lives in real houses.

Don Smith Ashfield

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