

CITY OF BELMONT MEDIA RELEASE

COUNCILLORS DISAPPOINTED IN STATE GOVERNMENT DECISION OVER FUTURE OF HISTORIC ASCOT KILNS

A request by City of Belmont Councillors for the historic Ascot Kilns to be restored as part of a park and tourist hub has been dismissed by the State Government.

At the 24 March Ordinary Council Meeting Councillors instructed the City of Belmont Chief Executive Officer John Christie to write to the State Government requesting they review the land use around the iconic kilns and stacks at 80 Grandstand Road, Ascot, with the view to restoring them as the centrepiece of a park and tourist hub which is in close proximity to the airport and city.

In response to the request, Planning Minister Rita Saffioti advised Councillors that development of the land surrounding the Ascot Kilns and stacks is essential to pay for the restoration and ongoing maintenance of these structures.

The Minister said: "A suitable innovative development of the adjacent land under the Heritage Agreement will be pursued by the Western Australian Planning Commission upon return of more favourable market conditions".

The State Government recently announced that the landmark Ascot brick kilns had been recognised through the permanent inclusion on the State Register of Heritage Places.

Located opposite Ascot Racecourse, the site comprises eight circular brick kilns and five tall brick chimneys built between 1929 and 1950, and are thought to be the largest such group surviving in Australia.

For more than 70 years, the site had a significant impact on the development of the City of Belmont, initially starting as Pitman, Piercy & Co - the State's first specialised pottery works - and then as the local manufacturing site for Bristile.

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City of Belmont Mayor Councillor Phil Marks said the Minister's response was a disappointment as Councillors were listening to the community's feedback.

"The Ascot community has expressed concern about the potential impacts increased density in that area will have on the preservation of this historical site, and maintaining the community's continuity of access to the Kilns," Mayor Marks said.

"Concerns have also been raised about any potential damage that may occur to the fragile heritage listed Kilns during any construction work," he said.

"While we welcome the State Government recognising the historical value of the Kilns, we need them to go one step further and ensure any potential development on the site does not have a detrimental impact."

ENDS

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Enquiries to Denise Morton, Media and Communications Adviser

Telephone 9477 7247, Mobile 0419 997 241

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