

GLENDALL CONTINUED OPERATIONS PROJECT

SDD 9349

Coal Mining

Singleton Shire

Dear Sir,

While I recognise the rarity and historical and associative significance of the Ravensworth Homestead and its environs, it appears that the economic benefits of mining has sealed its fate in this location. Therefore I submit that any relocation should be on the original 10,000 acres land grant of Dr Bowman with conditions.

The Ravensworth precinct is rare being one of the few remaining pastoral precincts of its kind in NSW. Early Australian structures that are intact are rare. If you are fortunate to find an early building that is intact on its original site, its value to the Australian community is so high that every effort should be made to retain it as is, where it is.

[1] ICOMOS charters guide global heritage conservation practices. Fundamental to most is the notion that a building or monument is inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the setting in which it occurs. Understanding heritage significance is essential to making sound decisions about the future of a place, The Ravensworth Homestead has significantly high heritage values both locally and at a state level.

[2] The Burra Charter is recognised as an authoritative guide to conservation principles for the conservation of cultural significance. It puts an emphasis on the need for a thorough understanding of the significance of a place before policy decisions can be made. Article 9 of the Burra Charter says a "building or work should remain in its historical location. The moving of all or part of a building or work is unacceptable unless this is the sole means of ensuring its survival."

Issues of sustainability are relevant here. Sites of such outstanding cultural and historic significance such as the Ravensworth Homestead and its precinct are not renewable resources. Once gone they are gone forever. In assessing the cultural significance of the site, the value of the place not only for the past and present communities but for future generations must be considered. A place of historic and cultural significance like Ravensworth assists in the understanding of the past, enriches the present and will of value to future generations. As a community be able to educate our children in the social, natural, architectural, scientific, historic and cultural significance and value of places like this by preserving and not neglecting or destroying them.

Buildings such as on the Glendell site have both tangible and intangible heritage attributes. Tangible attributes are the physical fabric of a place such as structures, trees, machinery and artefacts. Intangible attributes are the cultural practices, traditions, language and knowledge of a place. The significance of any place comes from both its tangible and intangible attributes. Despite Ravensworth Homestead having no current use, it still has important associations and meanings for the local community and this should be respected.

In order to preserve the considerable heritage values of the Ravensworth homestead complex I support its relocation to a site on the original Bowman land grant of 10000 acres at Hebden/ Ravensworth. This option focuses on preserving the heritage values of the buildings; positions them in a location with a similar setting and visual catchment and retains some of the associative values.

The relocation of a historic building should have minimal impact on the heritage significance of the building and its setting. This is the compelling reason I support the Ravensworth option. The Ravensworth Farm option retains the significant heritage values of the buildings by moving them wholly intact using specialized equipment on a purpose built road. Further, this option seeks to replicate the existing site landform and setting, and positions the homestead on a site that lies within the original Bowman 10,000 acre land grant. Relocation to Broke requires the buildings to be dismantled and rebuilt resulting in the loss of large parts of the heritage fabric. Additionally, the proposed recipient sites at Broke and setting lack verisimilitude to the existing homestead site and subjects the buildings to flood risk.

Neither relocation proposal meets all heritage considerations however Broke is an unsuitable location since it meets fewer of the values; has no association with the homestead or the people or its history and is in a flood plain. The Broke proposal is not clear in the necessary details per the exact location; the specific purpose to which the complex of buildings will be put and the degree of alterations / reconstruction that might be necessary to make the building(s) suitable for the proposed use. The absence of this information should make the Broke proposal an unacceptable solution to the fate of the buildings.

While many buildings can easily be adapted for a variety of uses, some cannot, increasing the likelihood that they will be abandoned or removed. As the condition of a place declines, the likelihood of it being used for another purpose diminishes. This submission argues against the assumption 'once a ruin, always a ruin'. Just because there is no current purpose for the building or may be none in the future does not mean it should not be preserved. An unused place may continue to be actively managed to ensure that its

condition does not deteriorate. An abandoned place that does not have this 'residual management' will inevitably deteriorate.

The justification for relocation is the significant economic value of the Glendell Pit Extension and associated employment opportunities, whilst allowing a relocation proposal that provides substantial retention of heritage values. I acknowledge that moving historic buildings is sometimes the only way to save it from demolition, but such an action should be undertaken only as a last resort when all other preservation options have been exhausted. This seems to be the case here. When a historic building has been moved, it loses its integrity of setting and its "sense of place and time"—important aspects of the historic character of a building and its environment. All too often, however, historic and architecturally significant structures are subjected to intense economic or planning pressures from which there are no reasonable alternatives except relocation.

Relocation is a procedure which requires considerable skill and experience to ensure that the structure retains its architectural integrity, and is harmoniously integrated with its new site. Often the original site and its relationship to the historic structure is as important as the building itself. A relocated building, even if placed on a terrain similar to where it stood previously, will seldom have the same aesthetic relationship to its new site. Thus the selection of a new site, appropriate for the building, plays an important role in the success of the relocation project. Thus the Ravensworth/Hebden opinion is the only acceptable one.

Moving a building is not necessarily an easy solution. their positioning confuses rather than enhances their heritage value. The heritage significance is strengthened by related context and setting. By moving th Building to Broke, the attributes that make it significant after reduced or lost altogether. it is harder to understand how it once worked or appeared. Moving it there may cause destructive change or damage to the fabric and will reduce its heritage value, as the surroundings cannot be taken with it. Adaptive reuse usually occurs on site. Moving the building may info preserve the fabric of the building for a few more years but its heritage value is diminished. Therefore to preserve it from complete loss it must be sympathetically moved to a site in Ravensworth where its connection to Dr Bowman and the development of Australia's pastoral industry can be maintained.

Moving a historic structure, whether intact or in a totally or partially dismantled state, unavoidably destroys some of the historic fabric and lessens the historic integrity of the building. It cannot be overemphasized that such buildings should be moved only as a last resort, and if they are moved, precautions must be taken so that the historic significance of the building is not destroyed in the process.

Should the Glendell Continued Operations get consent I support the relocation to the Ravensworth site with the following conditions.

- The chosen site should not be on a floodplain.
- Best practice management of the removal must be used. detailed records kept.
- The new use must not adversely impact the very significance that it should be protecting. The object should be of changing the building as little as possible keeping as many heritage features as possible. The new use must be compatible with its original use.
- All the outbuildings and intact relics of the site's pastoral past , individual items, which can be removed must be included in the enterprise.
- The outbuildings and gardens and even fences where possible should be included in the removal and established at Ravensworth.
- The layout should not be changed. Gutting the building and retaining is facade only is unacceptable. The layout of a historic house is valuable because it tells the history of how the house was used when first built, and how it might have changed over time, because of fashion and as living standards improved.
- The most successful built heritage projects are those that best respect and retain the building's heritage significance and add a contemporary layer that provides value for the future. However in giving the place a new purpose unsympathetic additions and alterations should not be allowed to impact on the significance of the place. Any new work must be clearly contemporary and not a poor imitation of the original history style of the building and it must be reversible. By making a clear distinction between old and new buildings, the visual presence of the complex and the gardens will be retained.

I would appreciate if receipt of this submission could be acknowledged.

Yours sincerely,

C A Russell