



Owner outrage at heritage listing of 'typical' homes

By Clare Masters, DailyTelegraph

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THESE anonymous red brick houses might seem like typical, suburban homes - and that is exactly why one Sydney Council wants to put them on the heritage list.

Three brick houses built between 1969 and 1970 in Toongabbie have been listed as classic mid-20th century homes.

Up to 12 properties in Toongabbie and Epping were selected for prospective heritage listing in a draft Parramatta Local Environment Plan.

The perplexed owners of the three homes on Lennox St, Old Toongabbie, say they can't understand how their properties can be considered historic.

"It's council gone mad," said Ken Clunas, who has lived in his home for more than 30 years.

A letter from Parramatta Council sent to the three owners said the properties should be frozen in time as they showed "public recognition of the importance of an item in the life of the community".

But Mr Clunas said the heritage listing would devalue his property and make it very difficult to sell.

"If we wanted to sell the house we'd have a much more limited market because there are restrictions on what you can do to change it," he said.

"You can understand an older federation house being singled out for conservation but now, if we want to sell, we'll either have to wait or have a fire sale and lose tens of thousands of dollars - we can't afford that."

Disgusted local member and NSW Water Utilities Minister Nathan Rees received a number of complaints from perplexed residents and wrote to the Council in protest.

"Council should stick with core business rather than seek to preserve their officers' view of 'Ye Olde Worlde' Toongabbie," his letter read.

"It is suburban Australia and hardworking families should be left alone to go about their lives."

Mr Rees also suggests that if the Council intended to go ahead with its plan it should seek to compensate the residents through council rates.

Speaking with *The Daily Telegraph*, Mr Rees said it was crazy that "some heritage wizard" has swept in and listed the properties.

"If they want to modify their homes they are going to have to get special permission, it's just a joke."

A Parramatta City Council spokeswoman defended the decision saying the properties were "identified as being of historic and aesthetic value that clearly point to a time in Australia's 20th century".

"It is Council's view that if we fail to preserve our local heritage, our reference to the past will be lost for future generations," she said.

"Council acknowledges that, due to the age of properties, there may be some sensitivity about the proposed listings, so there will be continued public consultation on the draft Local Environmental Plan 2008."

Originally published as [Outrage at heritage listing](#)



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