



**Government
of South Australia**

**Office of the Minister for
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To: Shed 26 supporters

Dear supporters of Shed 26

I wish to write you an open letter to personally acknowledge you and the efforts of the Save the Shed 26 community.

You will no doubt have heard that I have directed the South Australian Heritage Council (the Council) to remove the provisional listing of Shed 26 as I believe the listing is contrary to the public interest.

This was an incredibly challenging decision for me, and one which I genuinely wrestled with. As you are likely aware, I originally intended to make a decision to end the uncertainty around Shed 26 by 11 April 2019. I subsequently chose to extend my own timeframe as I had heard significant arguments both for and against the Shed's retention and I wanted to give the decision the time and respect it deserved.

At the end of the day, I could not see a practical way forward to enable the retention of Shed 26. The site is owned by Cedar Woods and thus limited the options available to government.

Additionally, it became clear when hearing from the stakeholders I consulted with, that Shed 26 needs significant work at a cost running into many millions of dollars. Under commercial arrangements struck by the previous government, costs associated with the retention of Shed 26 would have been left to the South Australian taxpayer, an outcome which I deemed to be less than ideal.

With limited government resources to direct towards the refurbishment of the shed, there was a very real risk that the Fletcher's Slip redevelopment project could stall, an outcome which could have seen Shed 26 languish for many more years (it has already sat unused for three decades).

The argument around a new maritime museum was something I grappled with, but at the end of the day, the likely requirement for this to be government owned, and the significant cost attributable to this, again is something that I didn't believe to be in the South Australian public's interest in this case. Further, the state government would have had to buy the land back from Cedar Woods to achieve this.

On top of all of this, if the site was to be adaptively reused for some other purpose, there was extensive work that needed to be done to effectively replace the entire exterior of the Shed leaving just the frame. It is arguable that this would have diminished the heritage fabric of the site and resulted in a replica being created onsite.

It should be noted that while I did hear from you as supporters of Shed 26, I also heard from a large number of people did not agree with its proposed listing.

It was clear that as a result of this process relating to Shed 26 which has run over a number of years, you, the community feel aggrieved by the actions of the developer and Renewal SA. This is something I have communicated to both Renewal SA and Cedar Woods and is something that added to the complexity of the matter.

As the responsible minister I have considered this matter and have reached a difficult position which I believe to be for the benefit of the broader public.

Some of you will ask how I as Minister could overrule a decision when the Council determined that 4 of 7 criteria were met to grant Shed 26 heritage status. It is important to also note that the relevant legislation allows me to take a broader range of matters into consideration. This has been done before by previous ministers.

Further, there were conflicting opinions between the Council and the Heritage SA branch as to the heritage significance of Shed 26. The advice Heritage SA provided to me is that it should not be listed.

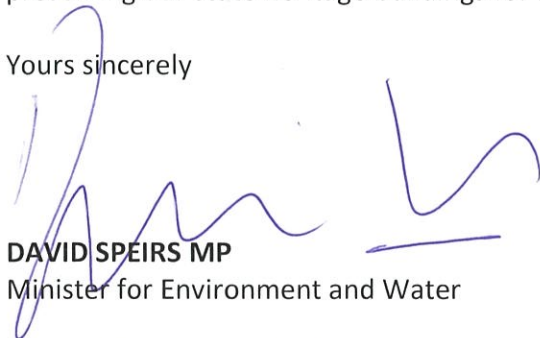
I understand that this is not the outcome that your were hoping for and I commend your passion for South Australia's heritage.

Please rest assured that the state government has an ongoing commitment to preserving and revitalising our heritage assets wherever possible. We went to the 2018 election with a broad suite of heritage policies which are currently being developed which include:

- the return of heritage grants (previously axed in 2014) to assist owners of state heritage buildings invest in much needed preservation and restoration works
- the development of a South Australian Heritage Tourism Strategy
- a grant of \$500,000 to support the National Trust in the restoration of Ayers House
- the preservation of heritage buildings at Glenthorne Farm, O'Halloran Hill.

Please know that this is not a decision that I have made lightly and I remain committed to preserving our state heritage buildings for future generations.

Yours sincerely



DAVID SPEIRS MP
Minister for Environment and Water

Date: 18 April 2019