

VARRO VILLE

10 January 2019

Professor Helen Lochhead
Member of the Commission (Chair)
Independent Planning Commission NSW
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Sent by email to ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au

Dear Professor Lochhead:

Re: Review of recommendation to list the curtilage extension of the Varro Ville Homestead and Estate (SHR00737) – Site visit

We refer to your letter of 8 January 2019 requesting physical access to Varro Ville Homestead (our home) as part of a site visit scheduled for 15 January 2019.

We understand and support your request for access but ask that the site visit be set back by one week. We are concerned that there are outstanding issues that we have put to the Independent Planning Commission NSW (IPCN) that effect both what we present on Monday and a site visit, that we are yet to get answers to.

This would also enable us to prepare for the visit which has been proposed on very short notice. Our situation is different to the other parties to the site who merely have to give access to investment land that they do not live on. Ours is a private residence where we live and work. Every visit here entails a great deal of work and your request has come in a very busy week. We are currently preparing for the IPCN panel hearing on Monday, a Tribunal (NCAT) case conference on Wednesday and the Scenic Hills Association AGM on Friday where I am the Convenor. Your visit also comes after a prolonged period of drought where we have had to let the garden go, but is now subject to daily rains that have caused havoc to both the house and garden. The situation has been exacerbated by the prolonged uncertainty surrounding our future here. It is thus a matter of dignity and privacy that we request this deferral.

We also note that you have asked us to not be present at the site visit. As a matter of privacy and security we would nevertheless require the following:

1. We need to know the names of all those that will be attending and their role in the visit.
2. We would conduct the internal tour of the Homestead.
3. We do not permit photographs (including by mobile phones) or video recording.

It is not clear to us why we could not guide you across the rest of the site but at the very least request that we be allowed to provide an introduction to it. If you are adamant for some reason that this is not possible then we urge you to consider engaging Geoffrey Britton, the principle author of the curtilage study supporting this nomination, to conduct the tour. We would also be happy for him to conduct the internal tour of the Homestead. He has indicated that he would be happy to do so. It is not appropriate for us to engage and pay Geoffrey for his time and this would need to come out of the OEH or IPCN budget, noting that the study was part funded by a Heritage Grant from the Heritage Council of NSW.

We had previously invited the Sydney Western City Planning Panel to make a site visit here relating to the Varroville cemetery development application (now with the IPCN) as we are well aware that it is not otherwise possible to understand the impact on Varro Ville's state heritage significance, or on us personally, from uncontrolled development on the surrounding land.

We are thus willing to work with the IPCN to come to a mutually convenient arrangement and urge the IPCN to consider the issues we have raised as soon as possible in order to achieve the best outcome from this process.

Yours sincerely



For: Jacqui Kirkby and Peter Gibbs

