

16 February 2017

The Hon. Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning
Level 16, 8 Nicholson Street
EAST MELBOURNE Vic 3002

Dear Minister,

Demolition of Corkman Irish Pub

The History Council of Victoria was extremely disturbed by the unauthorised destruction last October of the Corkman Irish Pub (formerly the Carlton Inn). We commend you on the stand that you and the government have taken against the developers who commissioned the demolition and note the undertakings you have given for penalties to the owners and for improvements to heritage protection generally.

As the peak body for history in Victoria, our vision is to connect Victorians with history and to inspire engagement with the past, their identity and the world today. We are therefore deeply concerned at this week's media reports which indicate that the developers are now rejecting your order to rebuild the property. This is a shameful tactic that should not be tolerated.

The community's reaction to the 2016 demolition demonstrated that there is widespread appreciation of our heritage buildings and streetscapes. While a mix of architectural styles is inevitable with the passage of time, there are many locations where the presence and preservation of older buildings is appropriate and indeed desirable. The tangible presence of historic buildings in our urban and rural environments helps maintain public awareness of Victoria's multi-layered histories. In the case of the Carlton Inn site, the fact that it had operated continuously from the mid-nineteenth century as licensed premises was visibly evident through its physical form. Its loss is severe, but we know from many international examples (e.g. in Europe after WW2) that the rebuilding of historic structures is not only possible, but also is appreciated by the public, both locals and tourists. We add our voice to the many who believe that the Corkman should be rebuilt without any further loss of time.

I write on behalf of the History Council of Victoria to congratulate you on the stand you have taken thus far and to urge you to continue to defend and protect Victoria's significant historic buildings and streetscapes.

Yours sincerely,

(Dr) Liz Rushen
CHAIR