

29 March 2019

Hon. David Speirs
Minister for Environment and Water

Dear Minister,

Re: A case for the retention and adaptive reuse of Shed 26, New Port

Please find attached a case for the retention and adaptive reuse of Shed 26, the former Main Workshop of the Government (Glanville) Dockyard, which is now the last surviving building to represent that important government service that dated from at least the 1850s. The gist of my case is this.

After over 40 years of urban renewal activity Port Adelaide still lacks a 'must see' visitor attraction that fully capitalises on its very significant built heritage and its rich and varied history. I believe that Shed 26 and the adjacent State Heritage-listed Fletcher's Slip Precinct offer a chance to deliver such an attraction, and that this opportunity should not be allowed to escape without a hard look at its feasibility.

The current proposal for a Maritime Heritage Precinct in No 2 Dock runs a poor second to Shed 26. No 2 Dock is too far from the Port Centre and the State Heritage Area's impressive collection of colonial buildings. Nor does it provide the line-of-sight connection that Shed 26 does with site of the original 'New Port' settlement of the 1840s (on the river side of St Vincent St, roughly between the Jervois Bridge and the Lighthouse), where the first wharves of the Colony's principal port were built. That waterfront is already a focus for visitors.

My own track record in Port Adelaide includes playing a major role in bringing three existing museum collections together to create the SA Maritime Museum and securing four colonial buildings in Lipson St for its use. It also entailed the Premier overruling the Department of Marine & Harbors and authorising the removal of the eastern end of No 1 Wharf Shed to provide a site for the Lighthouse, which quickly became a symbol for the Port. I do know an opportunity when I see one.

Finally, the attached case also suggests that allowing Shed 26's existing provisional entry in the Heritage Register to remain in place, rather than acting in the near future to exercise your powers under s18(7), may be a more flexible way to buy time for a hard look at the feasibility of what I suggest. In their public submission to the SA Heritage Council Cedar Woods stated that they have yet to commit to exercising their right to purchase the Fletcher's Slip Precinct and only bought the land within which Shed 26 stands earlier this year.

Hence I would greatly appreciate a chance to meet with you to expand on my thoughts and insights gained from my long involvement in endeavouring to enhance and celebrate the Port's heritage and history (both as a public servant and a historian/heritage campaigner), and to answer any questions that you may have.

As a matter of courtesy I also advise that, given the considerable public interest in this matter, I will provide this letter and its attachment to the Shed 26 <https://www.shed26.org/> website webmasters.

Yours sincerely

Brian Samuels (via email)