

Media Release

The Hon Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning
Minister for Housing



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PROTECTING OUR HERITAGE FROM DEMOLITION

The Andrews Labor Government will introduce tough new laws into the Parliament today to strengthen Victoria's building system and provide greater protection for heritage listed places.

The new provisions under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* will prevent developers from benefiting from the unlawful demolition or neglect of our precious heritage.

The changes to the Act will allow the Labor Government to regulate the development of land where a heritage building has been unlawfully demolished – in whole or in part – or left to fall into disrepair.

The legislation will allow the Government to prohibit development on these sites for up to 10 years if the owners are charged with unlawful demolition.

The bill will enable existing permits to be revoked and allow for new permits to be issued for specific purposes – such as building a park or reconstruction or repair of the heritage building.

These new provisions are a significant strengthening of the current enforcement regime and are expected to act as a powerful deterrent to the unlawful demolition of buildings of heritage significance.

This reform complements the enforcement measures the Government introduced in 2017, which made it an indictable offence for a builder or person managing building work to knowingly carry out works without a permit or in the contravention of the Building Act, the regulations or their permit.

The Bill will also improve the efficiency and operation of Victoria's planning system, in relation to the publication of notices, the inspection of documents and for panel hearings.

The changes have been developed following extensive consultation with the building industry and other stakeholders.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Planning Richard Wynne

"These new laws remove the financial incentive to illegally demolish by stopping development on the land for up to 10 years."

"We're sending a clear message to those developers who do the wrong thing – there are real consequences for wilfully destroying our precious heritage."

"Fines shouldn't just be the cost of doing business. Preventing those who illegally demolish our heritage from redeveloping means they can no longer reap windfall gains from selling or rebuilding on their land."