

National Trust of Australia



NATIONAL TRUST

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National Trust welcomes Government Planning Study for Sydney & Melbourne Buildings

The ACT National Trust welcomes the ACT Government decision, announced today, to conduct a planning study for the heritage listed Sydney and Melbourne Buildings.

The National Trust has had the buildings Classified since 1979.

Dr Peter Dowling, ACT Heritage Officer, stated today that the buildings were the earliest major development in Civic. "Construction commenced in 1926 but because of the Depression years and the intervention of World War II the buildings were not completed until 1946."

The buildings once had great aesthetic appeal, designed with classical features including light-coloured, smooth walls with medium pitch roofs, Roman pattern tiles, round arches, arcaded loggia and formal entrances.

"Over the years this appeal has been eroded due to the varying degrees of upkeep and maintenance in sections of both buildings. In fact, in July 2007, the *Canberra Times* carried a picture of the Melbourne building labelled 'Eyesore of the Week' due to graffiti and general neglect of paintwork."

The ACT National Trust has for many years been concerned at the condition of parts of these buildings and has been urging successive ACT governments to redress the problem of neglect and *ad hoc* repairs.

The Trust hopes that this latest initiative by the Government is genuine and that a resolution results from the study which will return the buildings' aesthetic appeal as was originally intended by the designers.

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