

# Camden Residents' Action Group

*Incorporated*

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## Media Release

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Camden Residents' Action Group (CRAG) was delighted to read that the consultant architect for more works in the Heritage Conservation Area of Camden and the Mayor believe in conserving heritage and extensive community participation (*Heritage Look to Stay* 13 July 2016 Camden Advertiser p. 6). But very surprised given the well publicised outcry about the historically insensitive Argyle Street works.

Camden presents a rare nineteenth century scaled townscape as explained and supported by the many writings and testimonials of eminent historians and as reviewed and collated in a recent heritage study available at [www.crag.org.au](http://www.crag.org.au). The 1836 master plan for Camden is intact and is one of its most distinctive heritage features.

Yet we now have an architect engaged to produce an "updated town centre streetscape plan", underpinned by a review of the height and heritage planning controls of the conservation area of the original Macarthur town. More works are in store for John Street, originally planned to provide a sweeping vista to St John's Church.

The well-documented heritage value of Camden Township, understood over the past 180 years by long-time Camden residents, visitors and historians, somehow escaped the current majority faction in Camden Council. CRAG challenges Council to produce primary evidence supporting its investigation into heritage planning controls, the very protections of Camden's "unique point of difference".

CRAG supports the views of historian John Wrigley OAM (Camden Advertiser 13 July 2016 p. 14) and would appreciate an explanation for Council not seeking community input or historical opinion before engaging an architect to review existing heritage protections.

**CRAG also asks for categorical and public assurances from Council that:**

- **there will be no changes to the building height and heritage protections of the conservation area;**
- **as well as extensive community participation, that the input of independent historians and independent heritage experts will be sought before any new "masterplan" is endorsed or further works are undertaken in the conservation area.**

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