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### **Heritage Matters - Sandringham Hotel Belmont, formerly Belmont House**

Dear Cassie,

We note you have progressed grassroots campaigns on local issues: for more police resources in the area, opposing high-rise developments and council amalgamations. Your assistance in urging the State Government to save the heritage listed Ascot Kilns from 'demolition by neglect' was invaluable to our community.

We hope we may therefore call on your assistance to gain a better understanding of our local government's policies and practices in relation to heritage matters, in particular to the former Belmont House, also known as the Sandringham Hotel.

We draw your attention to some key elements of the Government of Western Australian Heritage Council Development Assessment Framework *"Best practice standards in heritage conservation are detailed in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 1999."* Those standards are described below:

1. Places of cultural significance should be conserved. (Article 2.1)
2. Proposed changes should respect the existing fabric, use, associations and meanings. It requires a cautious approach of changing as much as necessary but as little as possible. (Article 3.1)
3. Changes to a place should not distort the physical or other evidence it provides, nor be based on conjecture. (Article 3.2)
4. Change is acceptable only where the change has minimal impact on the cultural heritage significance of the place. (Article 21.1)

5. Proposed changes should involve minimal change to significant fabric, achieved only after considering alternatives. (Article 21.2)

6. Proposed changes should retain an appropriate visual setting when it contributes to the cultural heritage significance of the place. New construction, demolition, intrusions or other changes, which would adversely affect the setting, are inappropriate. (Article 8)

The above listed Heritage Council framework is not a comprehensive list but it points to the significance of heritage and how heritage is to be retained and this has been in place since 1999.

In addition the City of Belmont has a Local Planning Scheme (LPS) No 15 Support Document titled "Heritage Planning Strategy". The Local Planning Strategy supporting document (Document Set ID: 1897907 Version: 2, Version Date: 04/02/2019, p3 states:

"The Municipal Inventory was completed in 1995, reviewed in 1997 and again in 2002. The 2002 review was undertaken by the City's Community Committee. The Committee's work resulted in a number of new nominations being put forward for consideration and the updating of existing entries.

"In August 2002 Council considered the draft Revised Municipal Heritage Inventory (Item 8.3.2 – PDC 19/08/2002). At that time, it was noted that the majority of sites included on the draft revised Inventory recognised the significance of the site, but also acknowledged that retention of the buildings were not essential to an understanding of the history of the City of Belmont and that those sites would merely need to be photographically recorded prior to any major redevelopment or demolition taking place. The view was expressed that the Municipal Inventory was intended to act as a snapshot of the history of the Belmont district, but was not intended to stifle new high quality developments."

It seems to us that the latter official record contemplates some variance between the City's own heritage policies and the objects of the Heritage Act framework. How can a photographic record be an acceptable act recognising conservation and cultural heritage significance?

We note '*conservation and cultural heritage significance has the same meaning as in the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990*'

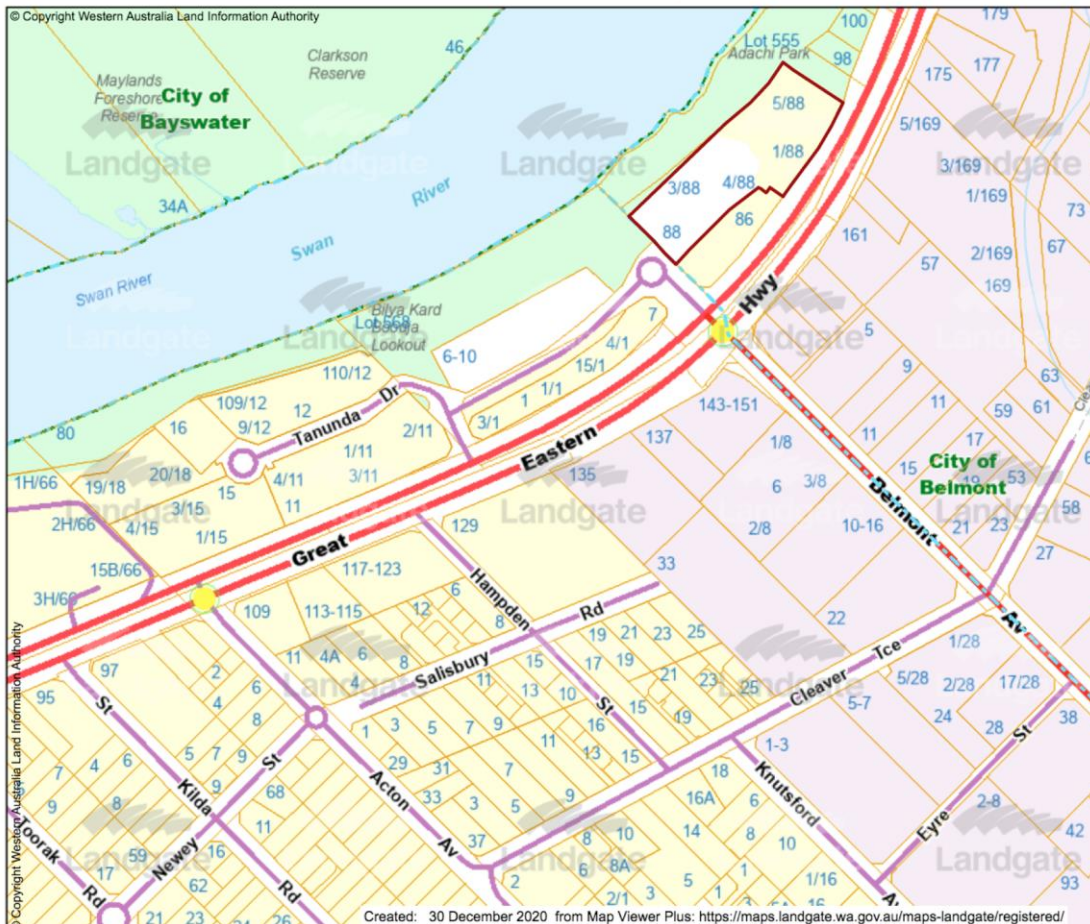
### **The Sandringham Lot (Lot 88 Great Eastern Highway)**

As early as 1997 matters relating to 'development' of the Sandringham site have been recorded in the City of Belmont Ordinary Council Minutes (OCM). However, we draw attention to one in particular, OCM 13 March 2000, Item 8.7.9, page 61, Point 2 wherein it was stated "...Council discuss with the developers of the Sandringham Hotel whether they have any interest in acquiring Lots 21 and 24 to incorporate into their redevelopment, but only if such use was integrated with the adjoining foreshore park area and it did not obscure views of the river across this land from Great Eastern Highway." It is hard to conceive how this would be achieved.

We note the above Minute failed to reflect the development of the Sandringham site was subject to heritage significance and conservation frameworks especially because Belmont House was on the State List of Heritage Places in 1997. (Please note it has since been removed).

What remains at Lot 88 is a derelict plot of land with a steep embankment to the Swan River. The Lot is wedged between the Swan River and a solid wall on the boundary of the lot. On the Great Eastern Highway side of the lot some commercial buildings front onto Great Eastern Highway (photos below refer). The commercial buildings comprise the Sandringham Hotel liquor outlet and a restaurant called ‘The Cray’.

Lot 88 is depicted on the map below, top right:



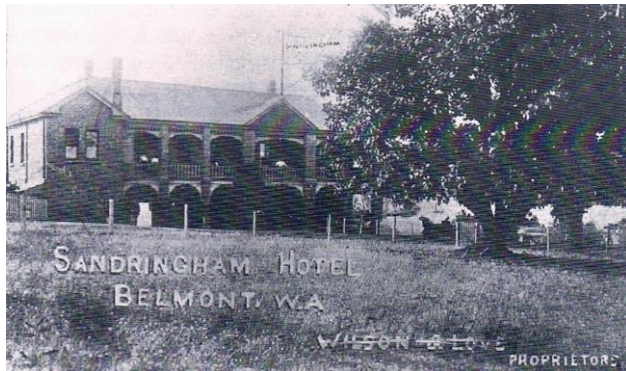
Another matter of interest is an ABC report of two men who were allegedly charged with fraud of \$1 million regarding development of the Sandringham Hotel (refer Attachment 1). We have been unable to find information on whether this has impacted the current sad state of affairs.

In 2019, it was reported by Perth Now (Bronwyn Donovan, Southern Gazette, May 16) Balneun (sic) Apartment Owners Want Address in Ascot not Belmont. The City of Belmont accepted the application to amend suburb boundaries and submitted the request to Landgate.

Given there is so little information available to the public we are seeking your assistance to find out what happened to Belmont House and what is happening to the vacant lot? We believe this is important information for historical purposes. We cannot find information on the City of Belmont’s website because the City has revamped its website removing the majority of documents prior to 2016, so history is lost to the public.

We include below several photographs of before and after pictures of the former ‘Belmont House’ heritage built by Mr Hardey in around 1895 and later purchased and operated as the Sandringham Hotel. As you can see there is not one piece of heritage left except maybe some cellars at the rear

or underneath the liquor shop and adjacent existing buildings (a narrow strip of commercial properties fronting Great Eastern Highway).



Photos taken December 2020

Could you please investigate on our behalf with the City of Belmont?

Of further interest to may be that we made a motion of 'no confidence' in our elected members and the City at the electors meeting of December 2020 and one of the reasons is that our local government and elected members do not appear to have much regard to matters of heritage significance. Instead, approving highrise developments appears to be the main function of the City of Belmont.

Please be advised this letter and any response may be made available to the Residents of Belmont on the BRRAG website.

Yours, in the interests of Heritage in Belmont, and a community and culture led heritage intent,

BRRAG Committee