

Steps to save what remains of Kings Cross heritage

COUNCIL MUST ACT NOW TO RESTORE NOT DESTROY:

1. PROTECT EXISTING NEONS & ENCOURAGE NEW NEONS

1.1. Offer alternative contracts to the 40-odd businesses and owners coerced into consenting to remove their current signage and have their awnings cut back.

1.2. Only five distinctive neon signs remain—Playbirds International, Love Machine, Stripperama, Porkies and Showgirls. **Two** owners have signed council's 'standard signage' agreement. Offer new agreements to restore, not destroy.

1.3. Offer Council's financial incentive (\$1000 plus installation) to everybody. Council officers claim the incentive is only available to those who have signed for generic contracted signage.

2. DEVELOP A NEON PRECINCT SIGNAGE STRATEGY

The illuminated signage along Darlinghurst Road and the other streets is at **variance** with a number of Restrictive Provisions in the City of Sydney Signage and Advertising Development Control Plan (DCP). (Noted in Council's 'Assessment of Illuminated Signage' Rod Howard and Associates, Section 5.0.)

EASE THE RESTRICTIONS:

- No 'restraint' in signage design. The exuberance and lack of restraint in design and configuration Darlinghurst Road signs is a positive element and contributes to the area's character;
- No curtailing of the eye catching and vital design and extent of sex industry signage. (S. 2.7: "no neon illumination and flashing lights");
- No prohibition on window glass signs (S. 3.8.2);
- Where several business share premises, each is entitled to signage

ADD THE ART DECO SOCIETY'S PRECINCT- SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

All illuminated signage must be in sympathy with the heritage architecture, streetscape and neons (which emerged jointly in the 1920s): all signage on a black, silver or similar reflective ground to work day and night; white backgrounds, harsh white-light and digital banner adverts are prohibited.



3. ENCOURAGE NEON AND RELATED FORMS OF LIGHTING

Maintain the neon signage incentive (\$1000 plus installation).

4. STOP CHARGING SERVICE TECHNICIANS A 'LADDER FEE'

Neon service call fees have more than doubled – Council permits for cherry-pickers to 'sky signs' (the higher vertical signs) begin at \$500.

5. STOP CUTTING BACK THE 1920s AWNINGS & ADDING OUTDATED GLASS APPENDAGES

No only does the plan call for cutting back awnings, but Minton House's architectural quality and streetscape will be defaced by appending a glass awning. Use funds saved by stopping heritage vandalism to commission neon artworks—beginning with Council's Woolworths Building.

6. COMMISSION ARTISTS, ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS TO CREATE PUBLIC LIGHTING INSTALLATIONS TO ATTRACT TOURISTS AND OTHER VISITORS BACK TO THE CROSS

The successful Llanekelly Place Lights (artist and architect Peter McGregor) argue for extending the City Sculpture Walk to Kings Cross Neon Art Precinct.

7. RESTORE SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR SEX INDUSTRIES

This area tolerates a well-regulated sex industry. Lucy Turnbull's repealing of South Sydney's special provisions for Darlinghurst Road is dispersing the industry into residential areas.

8. AMEND THE SOUTH SYDNEY PLAN (1998)

No more hotel conversions to apartments. Losing 14 hotels is an economic catastrophe. Stop the shift of nightclubs and bars from The Cross into Darlinghurst residential areas.

LET THE CROSS LIGHTS REJOIN THOSE OF TIMES SQUARE, LONDON'S LEICESTER SQUARE AND TOKYO'S GINZA OR SHINJUKU

CONTACT & COMMENT

- 2011 Residents Inc
- DRAG (Darlo Resident Action)

www.2011residentsassoc.com
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2011: Tina Newton & Wanda Jaworski;

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You can add your comments to the Neon Art Comments book at The Cross Art Projects, 33 Roslyn Street opposite St Luke's Hospital gates.

Visit *The Kings Cross Times* online for updates (where you can also add comments instantly) at

<http://kingscrosstimes.blogspot.com/>

Stop Council's heritage vandalism

DEFEND OUR NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT STREETScape & NEON SIGNAGE

The Lord Mayor is committed to protecting Darlinghurst Road's unique character (announcement 30 July 2004). Despite this, the blitzkrieg continues.

The street work upgrade is now months over schedule. The Cross is in an uproar. The project has dragged out because of Council officers' insistence on cutting back or ripping out awnings, trashing classic neon signs and installing Frank Sartor's soulless signage.

The National Trust, Art Deco Society and other heritage groups and resident and business groups support the heritage streetscape and neon precinct. At a recent round table, fifty leading artists, curators and heritage experts endorsed an **Arts Vision in Neon for The Cross** (28 August).

Clive Lucas OBE, a doyen of heritage conservation who has worked from the Cross for decades, claims "Cutting back the 1920s awnings is the equivalent to taking the verandah off Elizabeth Farm Cottage" (*Wentworth Courier*, 14 July 2004.)

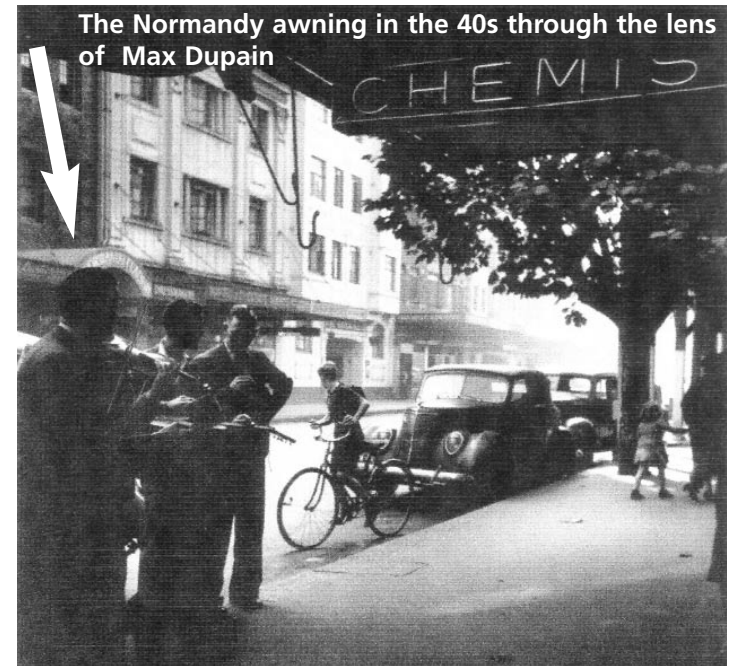
Council's own heritage assessment concludes *neon and illuminated signage has been one of the defining elements of Kings Cross and has contributed to its character and ambience.* (*Darlinghurst Road Streetscape Works. Assessment of Illuminated Signage*, prepared by Rod Howard and Associates, August 2004.) Council's assessment was done after the agreements were in place.

The Lord Mayor's wishes have been ignored and circumvented. The Council juggernaut is steamrolling the express will of elected Councillors.

BEFORE & AFTER

Right: The Normandy Flats awning features in the book Max Dupain's Sydney. Early this month, council began cutting back the 1920s awning.

Below: The Art Deco 'Woolworths' Building, c. 1930, owned by City Council, is Individually listed on South Sydney Heritage Register.



The Normandy awning recently – before the chop

Council's own Art Deco 'Woolworths' building photographed recently... and after the chop



After the chop – this is Council's idea of preserving heritage