

Demolition before approval ...

Increasingly, demolition is carried out before approval is granted for the proposed development. Not only does this appear to suggest if not confirm the developer's faith in gaining approvals, it also ensures the existing character is destroyed and cannot be replaced. In the case of appeals over the ultimate proposal, it is also a useful tactic to ensure no debate or legal argument as to the merits of the existing character can be entered into the appeal process due to the highly subjective nature of such decisions, and with the demolition, a lack of evidence to be inspected.

However, the approval of demolition prior to approval of subsequent development also acts to demoralise the local community defence of local community character. Faced with a vandalised untidy "black hole", almost anything would be better. Similarly, this also acts to reduce the confidence in "due process" ie the legal process which at least ostensibly, the community should be able to rely upon to resolve such matters.

Finally it increasingly appears demolition can be carried out with private certification approval thus there is no correlation between the planning approval process on the one hand and the demolition approval process on the other. Further, it would appear that with private certification, local authorities can "escape" all responsibility for community impacts such as controls on dirt, dust, asbestos, etc while the community has to rely on private legal actions eg the so-called "stopper writ" to prevent actions that in many cases appear to involve illegality due to breaches of regulations no longer enforced effectively by authorities.



An example where demolition allegedly preceded approval for development.