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Heritage delays 'cost millions'

Builder slams archaeological uncertainty at CUB site

By **JASON DOWLING**
CITY EDITOR

CONSTRUCTION magnate Daniel Grollo will today slam Heritage Victoria for a lack of certainty in heritage approvals and argue heritage delays could add millions of dollars in costs at the \$800 million CUB site development.

In a speech to a state planning conference, Mr Grollo will say there is "some way to go" to achieve certainty in the area of heritage approvals in Victoria.

"Despite the original advice from Heritage Victoria that the site was not subject to an archaeological overlay, by the time we came to own the site the situation had changed, and we were required to undertake an archaeological investigation of the whole site," a copy of Mr Grollo's speech says.

"This process has the potential to add several million dollars of cost to the project," the speech says.

Mr Grollo, head of Grocon, one of Victoria's biggest construction companies, says he is concerned "the requirement for archaeological investigations seems to be spreading across the city".

Heritage Victoria spokes-

KEY POINTS

- Heritage Victoria says the site's importance was obvious.
- Concern costly investigations are "spreading across city".
- Planners say planning can promote healthy living.

woman Angie Phelan agreed it was late 2007 before the CUB site was listed on the Heritage Inventory of known archaeological sites in Victoria.

"However, under the terms of the Heritage Act, which has been in place since 1995, there is blanket protection for all historical archaeological sites in Victoria," she said.

This protection for sites with archaeological material older than 50 years requires owners to seek consent from Heritage Victoria before damaging a potential archaeological site.

Ms Phelan said that given the history of the CUB site, which dates back to the first years of Melbourne's European settlement and was then a brewery, "this site was always likely to require consideration of its archaeological potential".

Other speakers at the planning conference in Creswick, western Victorian, will high-

light the importance of planning in promoting healthy living, including Jason Black, the Planning Institute of Australia's Victorian president.

"The original modern town planning came from dealing with the Black Plague and the ill-health that people were experiencing in the 15th century in Europe, so sewerage and water supply came from the need to prevent ill health by the built environment that was created," Mr Black says.

"We are starting to face that again with obesity and diabetes and heart disease and the fact that the built environment adds so much to that. For people to be healthy we need to provide them with a healthy environment to live in," he says.

Mr Black will argue that open spaces, bike paths and nearby shops and workplaces are needed to encourage people to walk and ride rather than make long journeys in the car.

Dr Carolyn Whitzman, senior lecturer in urban planning at the University of Melbourne, will argue planning can promote exercise and combat violence and depression in the community by creating safer and more inviting open spaces.