

Flying a flag for freedom



Urban warfare . . . Gary, Carmel and Brian Green

By LILLIAN SALEH

Urban Affairs Reporter

THREE months ago they were threatened with a \$1.1 million fine for erecting a sign which criticised Sydney City Council.

Now Brian and Carmel Green want to demolish seven terraces and put up a flagpole.

It is part of their ongoing battle with the council and its plans to heritage list their properties on Church St, Camperdown.

The couple's son Gary Green — who is also a Rockdale councillor — said his parents lodged the development application to replace the terraces with a flagpole as a protest to "reclaim our rights".

Mr Green said putting up the flagpole in the middle of the vacant land was a symbolic gesture of victory.

"We're proposing to

put up an Australian flag. The flag embodies the Australian values of fairness and respecting other people's rights, including property rights," he said.

"My parents bought this property more than 20 years ago but all they've gotten is a good kick in the teeth from Clover Moore and her cronies.

"If the council wins this one then the city will fall into ruin — they expect people to repair and maintain old houses without having any incentive. It's all about the stick but not the carrot."

He said his parents had bought the row of terraces with a combined space of 666 sq m with the intention of redeveloping the site.

But the council's new heritage laws would list the terraces as draft heritage items and require their "heritage value" to be assessed.

The Greens stepped up their protest last year by plastering one of the properties in stickers and erecting a billboard which declared: "Help stop City of Sydney Council's heritage theft!"

But the sign came down after the Greens were threatened with a \$1.1 million fine for failing to lodge a development application for the "advertising structure".

The Greens have now lodged a development application to demolish the entire site — which includes six occupied terraces — after becoming tired of dealing with council officers.

"I can't negotiate with Clover Moore and her cronies," Mr Green said.

The proposal will be on public exhibition until January 31, with the Greens given until January 15 to provide council with more information about their plans.