

Battling council over terraces

COUNCIL

Sarah McInerney

WHEN the slum clearance swept through Camperdown in the early 1900s, the York Terraces were some of only a small number of houses left standing.

Just over a century later these cottages are facing an uncertain future as their owner and Sydney Council battle over what can be done with them.

Seven of the cottages are owned by Carmel and Brian Green who purchased them in the 1980s as an investment.

The houses now have a draft heritage listing and are subject to tighter planning restrictions. Their son, Rockdale councillor Gary Green, said they had lodged a development application to demolish the houses and erect a flagpole to protest how they had been treated by the council.

A new set of controls implemented earlier this month require that major development applications for buildings 50 years or older be accompanied by a heritage impact statement.

"I would rather deal with terrorists as you can negotiate with them, you cannot negotiate with Sydney City Council," Cr Green said. He said they had lodged such a drastic plan in the hope that it would help negotiations with the council, having had two previous plans refused.

Mr Green said it was not financially viable to restore the one-bedroom houses. He said fixing the rising damp alone would cost \$500,000 and only increase the rent by \$10 a week. One of the cottages is completely unliveable.

"Council has zero compassion for the cost of heritage on owners," he said.

The development application is on public exhibition until February 1. For details: www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au



Gary Green and his family are battling Sydney Council about their development.

Picture: DANNY AARONS