

## UDIA MEDIA COVERAGE

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### "There's nothing anyone can do" about Le Cornu site

It may be an emblem of Adelaide's "lack of progress", but the latest development failure on the old Le Cornu site is unlikely to prompt new action from state or local government.



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One of the images of the dumped Le Cornu development.

Yesterday, [InDaily revealed](#) Makris Group – led by developer Con Makris – had abandoned plans for a \$200 million complex on the 88 O’Connell Street plot – which has remained vacant for decades.

Area councillor Anne Moran says she is planning to move a motion at next week’s council meeting calling on Lord Mayor Martin Haese to write to the Government, urging it to compulsorily acquire the infamous site.

“This should be an untenable situation for the Government,” she said.

However, Lord Mayor Martin Haese told *InDaily* it would be inappropriate for the Government to compulsorily acquire the plot.

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He said the best the council could do, for its part, was to maintain a good relationship with landowner Con Makris and to possibly offer “complimentary” streetscape improvements if and when a project ever eventuates at the old Le Cornu site.

“We’d like to see it developed, of course we would,” said Haese.

“It’s the topic of the decade in North Adelaide.”

However, he described compulsory acquisition of the land as an Orwellian “Big Brother” approach.

“A better outcome is working productively with the owner,” he said.

“We can’t force his hand, but we can certainly maintain very open discussions.”

If Moran’s motion passes the council chamber next week, forcing Haese to pen the letter, it is unlikely to spur the Government to action.

In a statement this morning, City of Adelaide Minister John Rau said that while the Government was disappointed in yesterday’s news, it had done all it could to support new development at the old Le Cornu site.

“The State Government is disappointed in the delay at the Le Cornu site and understands that surrounding businesses would like some certainty about the development of the site,” said Rau.

But he added: “The Government has done everything it can to support the development.”

Rau said there had been “record private sector investment in the CBD and inner suburbs” in recent years, including \$1.8 billion worth of projects having been completed, or being currently under construction in the City of Adelaide.

Urban Development Institute of Australia SA executive director Pat Gerace told *InDaily*: “There’s nothing more really that anyone can do.”

“Faced with such an abysmal population growth rate ... people aren’t buying [newly developed property].

“The fact of the matter is that there’s now a situation in South Australia at the moment where you have as much demand as we want [and] without population growth ... you just won’t have these projects get up off the ground.”

He added that: “We live in a society that respects ownership of land.”

“As long as you obey the laws of the land ... you are free to do with it what you will.”

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A spokesperson for Makris Group told *InDaily* yesterday that: “The [Makris] Group has withdrawn an application to extend its development approval for a previous proposal as it explores a more viable development solution for the site, which is bounded by O’Connell, Archer, Centenary and Tynte streets, North Adelaide.”

“The owner of the 88 O’Connell Street site, Makris Group, is working with consultants to develop a new development plan for its prominent North Adelaide holding.”

Moran today that her motion would also ask Haese to write to the developer, renewing the council’s request for the developer to temporarily lease the site to the council.

She said this would allow the site to be beautified and opened up, and allow some car parking for local business employees.

The council [made the same request](#), without success, last year.

Haese said “opening up the site would just be a quantum leap in the right direction”.

He added that “the lack of redevelopment of this site is emblematic of [a] lack of progress in Adelaide.

“[However] the land economics of it will beggar development at some point. I think, ultimately, yes – it will be developed.”

*InDaily* contacted Makris Group for further comment today.