

Braidwood Matters

**An update on the proposed listing of Braidwood and its Setting on the
State Heritage Register**

July 2005

Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of *Braidwood Matters*. Through the newsletter we will be giving you updates on progress with the proposed listing of Braidwood and its Setting on the State Heritage Register.

If you missed one of the public meetings held by the NSW Heritage Office in April of this year, then here is a quick recap.

Braidwood's heritage appeal

The Heritage Council of NSW has proposed that Braidwood and its Setting be listed on the State Heritage Register because of its significance to the state of New South Wales.

The case for listing the town and its setting on the State Heritage Register has been growing since the late 1960s, when the first heritage report was commissioned by the National Trust. The Trust listed Braidwood as an urban conservation area on its Register in 1976. It was added to the Register of the National Estate in 1980. Since then there have been a number of reports which have commented on the town's heritage significance.

What makes the town so special is that there are few colonial towns in New South Wales which still retain significant building form and fabric, as Braidwood does. Many of its 19th century buildings are built on a simple grid that preserves Georgian and Victorian town planning and settlement patterns. North of Wilson Street there are many fine pre-1850s buildings, while south of Wilson Street and in Wallace Street there are many mid to late Victorian buildings that reflect the town's growth after the discovery of gold in Araluen in 1851.

The town also has a picturesque setting. A number of the town's streetscapes frame views to the countryside around the town, and approaches from the north, east and south frame the town.

What would listing mean for the town?

The residents of Braidwood know the town and the countryside around it is special and so does anyone who has visited it.

It's hard not to delight in the setting, the streetscapes and the 19th century buildings which have such a contemporary mix of shops, galleries, cafes and restaurants. The pleasure of visiting Braidwood comes from the combination of all these things, not any one thing.

Listing the town on the State Heritage Register recognises that Braidwood offers this unique experience.

It will certainly not stop development or discourage income generating activity. Indeed, the listing would provide an opportunity for businesses to think about ways of using the town's heritage status for marketing purposes.

It would be easy to argue that protection is already available to a number of heritage items in the town under the council's local plan, so why list the whole town, but change does not come about overnight. It is the cumulative effect of single decisions that can transform a place into something completely different. By then of course, it's too late.

If Braidwood was listed then no one would expect it to stay the same or indeed to become a 'theme park'. What the listing says is this town has something special, let's think about how to make new developments work which respect what makes it so special.

Frequently asked questions

Many questions have been asked about the proposed listing which we have reproduced below. If you have a question that isn't here then just email bill.nethery@heritage.nsw.gov.au and we'll make sure we get an answer for you.

What is the Heritage Council of NSW?

The Heritage Council is an independent body, comprising representatives from the community, government and various professions. It provides advice on heritage matters to the Assistant Minister for Planning, the Hon. Diane Beamer; recommends items of state significance for listing on the State Heritage Register; recommends the interim protection of potential heritage items so that their significance can be assessed; determines proposed changes to items on the State Heritage Register so that their significance is retained; and advises the community on heritage.

For more information on the Heritage Council visit www.heritage.nsw.gov.au.

What is the State Heritage Register?

The State Heritage Register was set up in 1999 to recognise items of the state's heritage which are important to the people of New South Wales. Items are included which are in both public and private ownership. In order to be added to the Register items have to meet certain criteria. The criteria and the qualities that justify the listing of Braidwood and its setting can be found at the NSW Heritage Office website www.heritage.nsw.gov.au

What does listing on the Register mean?

The aim of State Heritage Register listing is to acknowledge, celebrate and conserve places, objects and collections that sustain and enhance the quality of life in NSW for present and future generations.

What is the process for listing Braidwood and its Setting on the Register?

There have been four public meetings since the Heritage Council of NSW announced it was proposing Braidwood and its Setting for listing on the State Heritage Register in March this year. Community consultation on the proposal has been extended to 7 October 2005 to allow for a rural impact study into the effects of the proposed listing to be done. The community will be able to consider the results of the study before the closing date for submissions on **7 October 2005**.

Following the submission closing date, the NSW Heritage Office will prepare a report outlining the views contained in all the submissions received. The Heritage Council will consider this report at its meeting on 2 November 2005 and make a recommendation to the Assistant Minister for Planning, who will make the final decision on the listing of the town and its setting.

What is the area that is being proposed for listing?

The listing will include all properties, as well as public items such as streets and trees inside the 1839 town boundary, as well as surrounding landscape areas that are vital to retaining important views to and from the town. The aerial photo shows the proposed area for State Heritage Register listing. Please note the computer-generated boundary is **indicative** and approximates the exact boundary.

Why does the listing include rural areas?

There was limited growth in the town through the 19th century because of its distance from major transport networks and urban centres, and because of the effect of droughts and depression. As a result there was little expansion of the town into the rural landscape on its northern, eastern and southern boundaries. This creates a clear perimeter around the town, which demonstrates its Georgian origins.

The landscape around the town is integral to the town's heritage significance, both because it reflects the historical development of the area and also because it makes for a particularly fine setting for the town. Certain historic streetscapes in the town frame views of the surrounding rural land. Similarly, views of the town from the north, east and southern approaches to the town are also important to the appreciation of the town's distinctive and historic character.

What effect will the listing have on property owners, particularly in the rural areas around Braidwood?

Listing does not prevent owners from selling, developing or modifying their property, nor does it change the ownership or tenure of the property.

There are 106 properties in Braidwood already listed as heritage items in Palerang Council's local environmental plan.

There are also four items on the State Heritage Register: Albion Hotel, Bedervale, former Royal Hotel and the Mill Centre. These listings have not interfered with their owners' use or business operations.

Currently the approval of Palerang Council is required for a range of development and subdivision proposals. If Braidwood is listed on the State Heritage Register Palerang Council's role will continue, and where proposals involve new dwellings, of a building or subdivision the matter would also be referred to the Heritage Council for approval.

It is likely that there would be very little effect on the daily life of most residents.

Palerang Council is also developing a development control plan (DCP), and when this plan is finalised it will guide decisions about development and planning applications.

What role does the local council have in the consideration of the listing?

Palerang Council has been regularly briefed and consulted about the proposed listing since August last year and will have the opportunity to make a submission about the proposal to list the town and its setting.

What role does the local council have if the town is added to the Register?

Palerang Council is currently preparing a development control plan (DCP). As the first step in this process, it resolved at its meeting on 12 July 2005, to release a 'Heritage Discussion Paper' for community discussion. This will then be finalised into a draft development control plan which will also be released for community discussion. Once an appropriate plan is adopted, and if the town is listed, then Palerang Council would refer only those proposals which do not comply with its plan to the Heritage Council of NSW for its consideration.

If the town is listed, and an appropriate development control plan is not in place, then Palerang Council would refer proposals for new developments and subdivisions, and for demolitions, to the Heritage Council of NSW for its consideration.

All other proposals would be determined by Palerang Council.

Tell us what you think

The Heritage Council of NSW wants to hear from as many people as possible so if you would like to make a written submission on the proposed listing then you can:

email it to bill.nethery@heritage.nsw.gov.au

or

post it to: Bill Nethery, NSW Heritage Office, Locked Bag 5020, Parramatta, NSW 2124

Alternatively, if you have a query or you want to make a comment:

email it to bill.nethery@heritage.nsw.gov.au or

telephone Bill Nethery, NSW Heritage Office on 9873 8566.



Aerial photo showing proposed area for State Heritage Register listing
(NB: the computer-generated boundary is **indicative** and
approximates the exact boundary)

Visit the new Braidwood Website

If you want to keep up to date with what's happening with the listing of Braidwood then have a look at the website set up by the NSW Heritage Office. You'll find frequently asked questions, media releases, the statement of significance, and as time goes by, we'll also post the times and dates of visits by the Heritage Office to the town. Use the front page menu click-on: www.heritage.nsw.gov.au.

If you have a group that is interested in a briefing about the proposed listing then email bill.nethery@heritage.nsw.gov.au or telephone Bill Nethery on 9873 8566 to arrange it.

Contacting us

If you have any queries about information in the newsletter, or would like to make a comment, or add an item in further editions then please contact the editor, Elaine Stewart, on telephone 02 9665 2329 or email estewart@zipworld.com.au.

