

Braidwood Matters



Welcome

to the third edition of the newsletter that is keeping you up to date on what's happening with the proposed listing of **Braidwood and Its Setting** on the State Heritage Register.

In this and upcoming issues of the newsletter we will report on the issues/questions raised at the Heritage Office meetings with Braidwood businesses and rural landowners. We also briefly report on progress with the Rural Impact Study and the extension of the community consultation period.

Background

The NSW Heritage Office met with representatives of the Braidwood business community on Wednesday 17 August and Tuesday 6 September 2005 to provide an opportunity for issues and questions to be raised about the proposed listing of **Braidwood and Its Setting** on the State Heritage Register. The Heritage Office indicated that it would provide a response direct to each participant (which it has now done) and also provide this information to the general community via its newsletters and its website.

The issues raised have been grouped into broad categories and include the NSW Heritage Office response. The information provided below does not represent the entire range of issues covered. We will report on other issues in upcoming newsletters.

Categories

Alternatives to listing the whole town and its setting

- There are 106 properties in Braidwood already listed as heritage items in Palerang Council's planning instruments.
- 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.
- The proposed listing of Braidwood and Its Setting recognises the significance of the township and its surroundings as an integral precinct, or 'item' of cultural landscape, of significance to the State. Listing of the town and its setting on the State Heritage Register provides the most effective means of protecting and enhancing the heritage values of the town.
- While individual structures may contribute to a greater or lesser extent to the significance of the town, Braidwood and Its Setting together are critical elements in demonstrating how the town began and developed, based on early colonial planning principles. The various stages of this history and growth are revealed both in the town's buildings and fabrics and in its important relationship to the surrounding rural lands. The proposed listing does not seek to 'freeze' the town in time, but rather

to encourage future changes that respect, reflect and preserve these now rare qualities for the benefit and delight of residents, visitors and future generations.

Compensation

Maintenance and repair

- There is no provision for compensation for listing under the Heritage Act. There are, however, a number of benefits, including being eligible for a heritage valuation for local government rates and land tax.
- State Heritage Register listing would mean the town as a whole will be eligible for funding from the Heritage Incentives Program.
- Funds will also be available through a local heritage fund, managed by Palerang Council. Similar schemes operate in many other local government areas in NSW. For larger projects with a minimum project cost of \$20 000 owners can apply direct to the Heritage Incentives Program. Neither of these sources of assistance could be categorized as 'compensation', as no injury or obligation attaches to the listing, beyond the obligation to keep a place structurally sound and in a reasonable state of repair.

Loss of potential from subdivision or concessional allotments

- Owners of land currently zoned Rural 1a, are not automatically entitled to assume that approval to subdivide is theirs for the asking. This situation would not change as a result of heritage listing, thus there is no case for 'compensation'. If the area is listed, any subdivision or development proposals in this zone would need the consent of Palerang Council and the Heritage Council.



Heritage Office review of proposals

- Application fees only apply to the limited number of proposals requiring Heritage Council consent. In these instances the Heritage Council intends to waive the fees for non-commercial applications by individuals. Where the Heritage Council is not the consent authority, but is referred the proposal for comment by Palerang Council then the Heritage Council will provide advice as to whether the proposal is likely to affect the heritage significance of Braidwood and Its Setting. There would be no fee for this type of referral and the cost would be borne by the Heritage Office.

Maintenance and repair of items

- The Heritage Office relies on Council, Council's Heritage Advisor and the community at large to bring to its attention instances of neglect of heritage items.

Adapting buildings for:

Occupational health and safety

- Council's Heritage Advisor should be consulted, in the first instance, about such issues. The Heritage Office can provide expert advice on health, safety and disabled access issues affecting heritage properties. The Heritage Office also maintains a list of consultants throughout NSW who are able to advise on these matters. This list can be found on the Heritage Office website.

Energy and water sustainability

- Generally speaking this can be done. The best solution to incorporating these features would vary from place to place. Council's Heritage Advisor should be consulted, in the first instance, about such issues.

New residential subdivisions and population growth

- During the consultation process for the proposed listing, two developments have already been approved in the town – one for an aged care facility and the other for a residential development of 116 lots. The Heritage Office successfully negotiated with the proponents of these developments to take heritage issues into account in their applications. As a result of these negotiations there will now be improved

buffer zones around both developments, with landscaping to reduce the impact of the developments on the heritage significance of the town and its setting.

- The listing area includes a curtilage around the town which incorporates land which is currently zoned rural 1a. (This is land on the north, south and east of Braidwood.) The current zoning of this land does not permit residential subdivision.
- There is development pressure on some of this land – some owners have indicated they would like the land rezoned so they can proceed with residential subdivisions. Applications to rezone this land would have to be made to Palerang Council and ultimately to the NSW Department of Planning. The NSW Heritage Office would be a party to their consideration if the listing is made, as part of the normal rezoning consultation process.
- The Heritage Office has not included the western edge of the town in the listing because it does not have the heritage significance of the proposed listing area. This area is already host to several 1980s and '90s style subdivisions. There is potential for further development in this area.



Loss of prime agricultural land from subdivision

- The listing of rural lands surrounding Braidwood will not limit the affected landowners in carrying out their day to day farming practices. In fact it will recognise and support the value of this land use in the character and setting of Braidwood. NSW Agriculture has expressed general reservations about the rezoning of prime agricultural land for residential subdivision because of a decline in this type of land across the state and the increased potential for conflicts between farming practices and residential development.
- Agriculture is a significant contributor to the local economy of Braidwood. (An estimated \$8 million worth of cattle was sold at the Braidwood sale yards in 2005).
- Agriculture has and continues to be a key factor in contributing to the economic environment and well-being of Braidwood.

Housing type

- The experience in other conservation areas is that the value of brick veneer housing has not dropped because there is still a demand for this type of housing – especially from those who cannot afford, or don't want, an old house. People choose to buy in these areas because they can be confident about the way the area will develop in the future – there is certainty, and people like that.
- The listing and the development control plan (DCP) will encourage building styles that are more in keeping with the existing fabric of the town within the listed area. There are opportunities for brick veneer developments in the non-listed, western section of the town.

Job opportunities

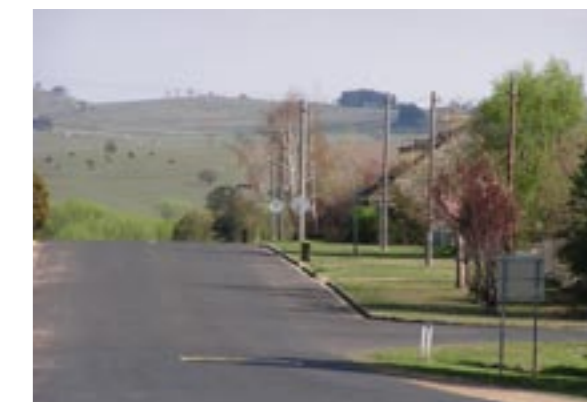
- The Heritage Office is working with the TAFE building and trades courses to encourage the development of trades' skills in conservation work. The ongoing availability of work in both the modern and traditional building trades could well encourage trades people, and their families, to settle in Braidwood.
- Because of the town's heritage appeal several feature films have been made in Braidwood. This brought people into the town and created job opportunities. This is just one example of the opportunities which are available to the town by promoting its heritage.
- Normal life will continue after the listing, so the businesses that currently support the town's population will also continue. The two developments approved by Palerang Council will add extra demand for services, which will also create job opportunities.

Heritage Office commitment to Braidwood

- The NSW Heritage Office and its predecessors have had a long standing commitment to the conservation of Braidwood. Since 1980 Government has invested \$596 995 through various incentives programs in the conservation of Braidwood. This represents nearly \$600.00 per head of population. This is the largest per capita investment of funds in the heritage of any town in New South Wales.
- In common with 87% of rural councils in NSW the Heritage Incentives Program and Palerang Council support a heritage advisory service on a \$ for \$ basis.
- The NSW Heritage Office will continue its support for the town through Heritage Incentives Program funding. It has already offered \$20 000 as the basis for a Braidwood local heritage fund to provide assistance to local property owners in the way of grants for conservation work proposals.

Heritage Office meeting with rural landowners

The Heritage Office met with landowners who own rural land around the town which is included in the area proposed for listing, on Monday 12 September 2005. It will be reporting back to the landowners on the issues raised and information will also be provided to the broader community through upcoming newsletters and the Heritage office website www.heritage.nsw.gov.au



Update on rural impact study

The Office of Rural Affairs, which is coordinating the rural impact study on Braidwood, has advised that its draft report will be provided to Palerang Council and the Heritage Office on Friday, 16 September 2005.

Community Consultation

As a result of requests from the community the Heritage Office has extended the community consultation period to 21 October 2005.

Timetable

September 2005 – Report on Rural Impact Study
21 October 2005 – Consultation concludes
2 November 2005 – Heritage Council of NSW considers the listing of Braidwood and its Setting.

Queries

If you've got a query about the proposed listing of Braidwood and its Setting then ring Bill Nethery on telephone 9873 8566 or email bill.nethery@heritage.nsw.gov.au

If you have a query about items in this newsletter contact Elaine Stewart on telephone 9665 2329 or email estewart@zipworld.com.au

Visit www.heritage.nsw.gov.au for updates on the proposal to list Braidwood and its Setting on the State Heritage Register.



21 September 2005