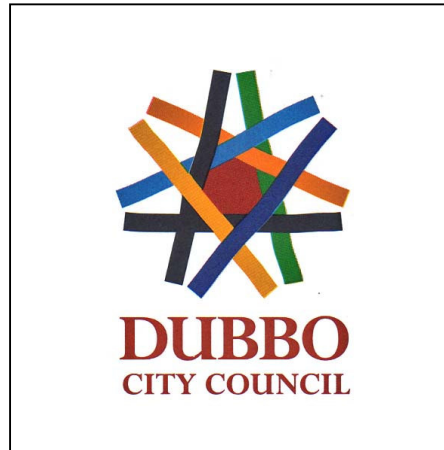


Dubbo City Council Heritage Strategy



For the Period 2009 –2011

prepared by

Dubbo City Council

Environment and Landuse Services Staff

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in association with

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Introduction

This Heritage Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the new standard guidelines developed by the NSW Heritage Office (now Heritage Branch) in early 2007 together with the later amendments.

This strategy is based on the Heritage Council and Department of Planning publication “*Recommendations for Local Council Heritage Management*” and has been prepared in consultation with Dubbo City Council’s Council’s Heritage Adviser, Mr Christo Aitken. All Councils now use the new Heritage Strategy format together with the accompanying Heritage Strategy Annual Report methodology. The Heritage Branch in reviewing its local government and heritage adviser annual reporting requirements require a report on the implementation of Council’s Heritage Strategy to be prepared by Council’s heritage adviser and Council’s heritage officer.

Dubbo City Council has operated a heritage advisory program for approximately 9 years and a draft heritage strategy was first prepared by Council in 2007. That strategy has been updated for the coming 3 year cycle 2009-11 and brought into line with the standard approach recommended by the Heritage Branch and Department of Planning. It will be reviewed at the conclusion of the 3 year cycle to assist and guide future directions for heritage management in the Dubbo LGA.

1. Establish a Heritage Committee to deal with heritage matters in the Dubbo City Council area.

Dubbo City Council has a number of established planning committees that often consider heritage issues. Those committees generally comprise Staff representatives and Councillors.

During the preparation of the Community Based Heritage Study (CBHS) Council set up a working group in 2003 and later in 2006, which were both drawn from experienced and interested members of the community. The committee’s role was limited to the CBHS and unable to consider other issues or to provide advice to Council on heritage issues generally. Council is yet to establish a specific Committee comprising Staff, councillors and community focussed on heritage issues.

Actions:

- Consider extending, on a trial basis, the period of operation of recent CBHS Working Group. The charter of responsibility or terms of reference of the working group could be limited to that required for a number of non-controversial issues such as:
 - (i) continuing the research and compilation of historical material to be included in the CBHS inventory sheets;
 - (ii) promoting the local heritage fund and considering applications; and
 - (iii) encouraging awareness and pride in Dubbo’s natural, cultural and historic heritage. The Committee would not consider, provide advice on or assess specific development applications.
- Prepare draft *Terms of Reference* for Council to consider and discuss.

2. Identify Heritage Items in the Dubbo area and list them in our Local Environmental Plan

Dubbo City Council has recently completed a review of the 1986 Heritage Study. This involved the preparation of a Rural and Urban Heritage Review following the format of Community-Based Heritage Studies. The Urban Heritage Review was completed in early 2007.

The recommendations of both studies are in the process of being considered and adopted by Council. The studies allowed for ongoing work to further research and document historical material necessary to support listing of significant places in the Dubbo area.

Actions:

- Finalise the adoption process by Council of the recommendations within the 2004 Rural and 2007 Urban Heritage Reviews.
- Set up a framework to enable ongoing collection of information to support the studies and in particular to supplement the Heritage Inventory Sheets.

3. Appoint a Heritage Adviser to assist Council, the Community and owners of listed items.

Dubbo City Council has operated a heritage advisory program for some years. The program has been well supported by Council, Council staff and the Community. The program is still in operation.

Actions:

- Continue the Heritage Advisory Program.

4. Manage heritage in the Dubbo area in a positive manner

Dubbo City Council's current two LEPs include provision for Conservation Incentives to encourage proactive heritage and urban design management. These incentives focus on flexibility in permitted use and allowance for floor space and site area dispensations.

Other areas that Council could provide encouragement to building owners is through adopting a more flexible approach to building requirements for heritage buildings. The 2007 Urban Heritage Review also suggested providing encouragement in the sensitive recycling and adaptive reuse of older buildings.

Actions:

- Continue to offer flexibility in permitted uses, floor space and car parking requirements for DAs involving heritage items.
- Adopt a flexible approach to building requirements for heritage buildings.

5. Introduce a Local Heritage Incentives fund to provide a small grants program to encourage local heritage projects

Dubbo City Council has operated a local grants program for a few years. However, only a small number of projects have been carried out. It is likely that the Community is not fully aware of the grant as the program is not widely publicized in the media.

Actions:

- Continue the Local Heritage Fund.
- Organise the appropriate media releases either through local newspapers and/or Council's web page. Subsequently publicise completed projects to encourage others to take up the offer of funding.

6. Run a Main Street Program

Dubbo City Council has managed two improvement programs in Macquarie and Talbragar Streets in Dubbo. These programs were not specifically organised as 'main street programs' however their intent was the same in that they were driven by the desire of Council, building owners and the community to enhance these major streetscapes in the CBD.

Funding is available from the NSW Heritage Office and the Department of State and Regional Development to assist in aspects of main street studies and works. Council could consider funding from NSW Heritage Office to carry out a formal Main Street Study, through the Local Government Heritage Management Program, which could focus on the opportunities for buildings and include conservation recommendations. The management of this research study could form part of the Terms of Reference of a Heritage Committee.

Actions:

- Investigate the possibility of funding from NSW Heritage Office for a Main Study for Macquarie and Talbragar Streets in Dubbo.

7. Present Educational and Promotional Programs

There are a range of approaches that Council could consider such as:

- (i) an awards scheme for heritage buildings;
- (ii) a short course for councillors and staff, providing information on Council's web page;
- (iii) including promotional material with Rates Notices;
- (iv) preparing a DVD on the heritage of the Dubbo area;
- (v) developing a heritage walking trail;
- (vi) introducing a plaques scheme for historic buildings or
- (vii) preparing a regional heritage tourism strategy. Council hosted the Central West Heritage Network in 2007 which was a positive local event and well attended.

Actions:

- Consider setting up an awards scheme for 'Good Urban Design'. The scheme would include a heritage or adaptive reuse component but should also encourage quality infill and new design.
- Create a heritage chapter within Council's web page. The chapter would provide an opportunity to increase local awareness of history and heritage in the

Dubbo area. It could include extracts from the Rural and Urban Heritage Reviews, recent initiatives and links other sites for access to further information.

8. Set a good example to the community by properly managing places owned or operated by Council

Dubbo City Council owns and manages a number of heritage or historic places. These include well-known places in the centre of Dubbo such as Victoria Park, but also outlying less well-know sites such as historic cemeteries. Dubbo Grandstand is another example of a historic building managed by Council through a Trust agreement with Department of Lands.

A first step in establishing an understanding of the issues could be the extension of an Asset Management Program for Council Properties and to include detailed inventory sheets for heritage places that may have historic, aesthetic, social or technical significance. The inventory sheets would document known historic information, levels of significance and suggest recommendations for longer term care and management.

Actions:

- Establish an Asset Register of Council owned, operated and managed historic places with provision for individual inventory sheets.

9. Promote sustainable development as a tool for heritage conservation

Sustainable development is a relatively new issue however Council has already considered the subject for some years. Since October 2000 Dubbo City Council (DCC) has been involved in the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP(tm)) Campaign, a global initiative designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Council operations and the community.

This Strategy Recommendation from NSW Heritage Office is also a new addition. The guideline document from NSW Heritage Office notes that ‘sustainability concerns people and changes that minimise our effects on our environment. Heritage is not about dwelling in the past, it’s about understanding today and the future. Heritage management is an ingoing and dynamic process, balancing conservation and change’.

Some examples of how sustainable development and heritage can be implemented locally are

- (i) promotion and encouragement of regeneration of urban towns, places and fabric;
- (ii) encouraging and supporting compatible adaptive reuse, or infill or sympathetic additions to heritage places;
- (iii) encouraging sustainable heritage tourism commercial ventures and Council tourism information centres; and
- (iv) incorporation of energy efficient design solutions into heritage places for water, energy and waste.

Actions:

- Together with Strategy #4 regarding flexibility in the DA assessment process; encourage and support compatible adaptive reuse, or infill or sympathetic additions to heritage places.

Dubbo City Council
Draft May 2008