

# HERITAGE INFORMATION SERIES

## HOW TO UNDERTAKE A HERITAGE MAIN STREET STUDY



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# HERITAGE MAIN STREET STUDIES

## Introduction

For many years the Heritage Office has provided funding to assist the preparation of heritage main street studies and main street restoration projects under the Heritage Incentives Program, local government heritage management funding program. This guideline provides information on how to apply for funding, how to write a study brief, how to select a consultant and how to encourage private owners to undertake restoration projects.

## What is a main street program?

Country and suburban main street programs usually begin with the formation of a main street committee which is encouraged to adopt a four point approach:

- ORGANISATION of diverse groups, local government and community representatives with the objective of promoting positive change;
- implementation of DESIGN and HERITAGE CONSERVATION proposals to enhance the physical appearance of all the elements which convey the centre's image;
- implementation of a BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT plan aimed at strengthening existing businesses and creating new opportunities for growth;
- PROMOTION of the centre through special events and other means to emphasise the centre's identity and services.

## What is a heritage main street study?

Main street studies provide very specific advice on heritage and urban design issues for the main street concerned to enable private owners and councils to carry out appropriate conservation and enhancement work for their properties and public areas.

## Who can apply for funding for a study?

The preference is for councils to lodge applications because they have:

- the resources to run a main street study;
- the implementation role in terms of approving or encouraging appropriate changes to be made to heritage buildings;
- a large stake in the physical implementation of the program as they own all of the public spaces including the roads, footpaths and street furniture;

- they can appoint heritage advisors to assist the implementation of the findings of main street studies;
- they can establish local heritage funds to encourage physical improvements to the main street.

### **How much will a study cost?**

This will depend on the size of the main street, the complexity of the work, the distance to be travelled by the consultant, what other work has been carried out already and what information the local council, the local historical society and other community groups and individuals can supply to the consultant. Studies can be as modest as \$6,000 and as much as \$20,000 or more.

### **What funding is available for a study?**

The Heritage Office has some funding available to assist Councils to undertake these studies. Funding is limited to a \$3,000 as a \$ for \$ grant.

Importantly however, full \$ for \$ funding is available through the works program to assist councils to implement the recommendations of the main street heritage study.

Councils are also apply for funding to appoint a heritage advisor and to establish a local heritage fund. Please refer to specific guidelines about funding available for this on the Heritage Office website [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications)

### **How is a funding application for a study assessed?**

There are three important criteria:

- the main street must be clearly of heritage significance. The town centre may be listed in an urban conservation area or may simply have a predominance of heritage items;
- there must be clear evidence that the local community has considered main street very seriously and is fully behind the project. Typically, a main street committee will have been formed, several meetings held and possibly a main street coordinator appointed;
- following on from the above, there must be confidence that the recommendations on the report will be implemented. Indications of confidence would be examples of conservation work carried out or firmly proposed for private buildings in the centre or proposals for well thought out enhancement work by the council.

## **How do I apply for heritage grant funding?**

Main street studies are funded through the Heritage Office Heritage Incentives Program, local government heritage management program. A Copies of this Heritage Office guideline can be downloaded from the Heritage Office website [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications)

For further information and to apply for funding, please contact Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office on email [victoria.throp@heritage.nsw.gov.au](mailto:victoria.throp@heritage.nsw.gov.au) or phone(02) 9873 8577.

## **What heritage funding is available to implement the study recommendations?**

Although funding for a study is limited to a \$ for \$ grant up to \$3,000, a greater level of funding may be available to assist with the implementation of the study recommendations:

\$ for \$ funding up to \$7,000 per year, will be considered for the appointment of a heritage advisor to assist councils to implement the study recommendations. The heritage advisor can also assist council to manage all of the heritage items in the council area. A separate guideline, How to Establish a Heritage Advisory Service, can be downloaded from the Heritage Office website, [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications)

\$ for \$ funding up to \$8,200 per year is also available to assist councils to establish local heritage funds to provide small grants to local heritage owners in main street and other areas. A separate guideline, How to Establish a Local Heritage Fund, can be downloaded from the Heritage Office website, [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications)

Funding may also be available to implement conservation work proposal for larger projects through the works program. Council and building owners can apply for grants for local government and community projects.

## **Which other government agencies provide funding for main street work?**

Assistance on all of the above aspects of the program, (except physical design and heritage) can be sourced through the Department of State and Regional Development funding programs.

### **Funding from the Department of State and Regional Development**

The New South Wales Department of State and Regional Development (DSRD) provides a range of special services and programs to assist the regions of NSW meet the challenges that confront them. These challenges are most effectively met through a partnership between government,

businesses and communities. As economic conditions change, DSRD has programs to address both longstanding and emerging economic development issues in regional NSW.

DSRD works actively to build a stronger State by delivering services to regional enterprises, industries and communities. It also recruits new investment to regional areas of NSW.

### **Main Street/Small Towns Program**

The Main Street/Small Towns Program aims to revitalise regional communities. The program helps to:

- increase business/economic activity in regional communities, particularly small/medium sized communities;
- foster local councils' sustainable and professional commitment to economic development.

The program is aimed at improvements in the general business climate and is not necessarily restricted to the retail sector. Funding is designed to benefit the broader community rather than being of specific benefit to a single enterprise.

For more information please go to the Regional Communities website [www.business.nsw.gov.au/business/programs/regional](http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/business/programs/regional) +programs or contact: Anne Pitchers [anne.pitchers@business.nsw.gov.au](mailto:anne.pitchers@business.nsw.gov.au) or phone (02) 9338 6712.

### **How do I prepare a brief for a heritage main street study?**

The Heritage Office has prepared a model consultant's brief (included in Appendix A) for you to use for your project.

### **How do I select a heritage consultant to undertake a study?**

The Heritage Office maintains a heritage consultant's directory on its website. Go to [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au) and search for 'heritage consultant's directory'. Using this list, you could prepare a short list of five or six consultant to invite to tender on your project.

Many main street heritage studies have been carried out. The first of these was at Glen Innes where a tremendous amount of work was completed including the painting of most buildings in heritage colours.

Studies have also been completed in many regional centres including: Adelong, Albury, Bangalow, Barraba, Bathurst, Bellingen, Bega, Berry, Boolaroo Boorowa, Bulli, Byron Bay, Canowindra, Casino, Cessnock, Cobar, Concord, Coolah, Cooma, Coolamon, Cootamundra, Corowa, Cowra, Crows Nest, Darlinghurst, Denman, Deniliquin, Dungog, East Bathurst, Enmore,

Finley, Forbes, Glebe, Glen Innes, Gloucester, Goulburn, Grafton and South Grafton, Gulgong, Gundagai, Gunnedah, Gunning, Haberfield, Jerilderie, Leeton, Lithgow, Lockhart, Maclean, Manly, Mittagong, Moree, Mudgee, Murwillumbah, Muswellbrook, Narrandera, Narromine, Newtown and Enmore, Paddington, Randwick, Richmond, Rylstone, Stockinbingal, Summer Hill, The Rock, Tenterfield, Tocomwal, Uki, Uralla, Wallsend and West Wallsend, Wagga Wagga, Wellington, Werris Creek, Windsor, Yass, Yerong Creek.

### **Further information**

Further information may be obtained by contacting Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office by emailing [victoria.throp@heritage.nsw.gov.au](mailto:victoria.throp@heritage.nsw.gov.au) or phoning (02) 9873 8577.

## APPENDIX A

### MODEL HERITAGE MAIN STREET STUDY BRIEF

#### BACKGROUND

*(This should fully inform the consultant. The following is an example for the mythical town of Brownstown)*

Like many small rural service towns Brownstown has experienced financial decay in its business centre.

Although many heritage buildings remain, the majority have fallen into disrepair and unsympathetic infill development has also occurred.

The preparation of a Main Street Study will serve to rekindle the interest and pride of local owners for their buildings; both commercial and private and bring together diverse groups, local government and community representatives with the objective of making positive change happen in the town.

Due to the unique location of Brownstown it is anticipated that a successful Main Street Study will encourage tourism and play an important part in rekindling the town spirit and commercial centre.

It is anticipated that community and economic improvements will flow from the Main Street Study to enhance the physical appearance of all elements of the commercial centre and provide a strategy for Brownstown Shire Council for the improvement to the approaches to the town and its urban design as well as encouraging adaptive reuse and good infill..

Finally, it is anticipated that the Main Street Study will serve as a catalyst to the community generally to revalue and upgrade many of the heritage items within the community and to foster civic and community pride.

Brownstown is a recognised urban conservation area. It is classified by the National Trust and is on the Register of the National Estate.

#### STUDY AREA

*(This should clearly define the area e.g. it may include side streets. Add any other comments you wish to make.)*

The study area is outlined on the attached map. The area contains ... buildings of which ... could be described as heritage buildings.

## **OUTCOMES FOR THE MAIN STREET STUDY**

***(You need to be very clear about your requirements. Add to the following any matters you consider to be necessary)***

A heritage main street study should provide council and property owners and tenants with an overall strategy and detailed recommendations for the following outcomes:

- Encourage the positive and proactive management, conservation and presentation of heritage main street buildings and surrounding areas
- Provide detailed recommendations for property owners and tenants
- Enable positive social and economic benefits for owners/tenants that supports the wider community

The study will address the following:

1. provide a strategy and recommendations to the local council to enable it to take measures to conserve and enhance the identified heritage character and heritage items of the area and encourage appropriate adaptive reuse and infill of heritage buildings; and
2. provide recommendations, information and guidance to building owners and the Council to enable appropriate restoration, painting, infill and urban design including streetscape, street furniture, paving and tree planting.

## **PROGRAM OF WORK FOR THE CONSULTANT**

***(Add to the following all tasks you consider to be necessary for the project)***

The consultant will be required to complete the following tasks:

1. undertake public meetings with shop owners, lessees, members of the main street committee, council and other interested parties to ensure a clear understanding of the community views on the project and also to create further public interest and to assist a common understanding of the project;
2. undertake research of all material relating to the study area including documentary evidence of the history and development of the area, particularly in the form of photographs;
3. undertake a comprehensive external building and item survey of the study area and produce an inventory of the material;

4. provide guidelines for infill development and, where considered necessary, recommendations on how existing unsympathetic buildings can be made more acceptable;
5. provide sketch designs with recommendations for the restoration of facades to main street buildings based on research and on a close inspection of the buildings concerned;
6. provide a suggested colour scheme for each heritage building. In addition to this, the final report should include standard colour schemes. To assist the consultant good standard information is contained in the Lithgow Main Street Study. This study showed 3-4 different colour schemes for Late Victorian, Edwardian and Twenties and Thirties buildings. The purpose of this inclusion is to give owners an option; the consultant is **only** required to indicate to which period each main street building would belong;
7. provide advice and recommendations on urban design issues including the streetscape, street furniture, paving and lighting on the clear understanding that these must complement the heritage character of the centre and not compete with it. The consultant is specifically required to research street furniture elements previously used in the town and have regard for this in making final recommendations;
8. provide advice and recommendations on appropriate signage and placement of signage. Good readily available information is available on the Heritage Office website [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au). Do a google site search to find: *Streetsmart* (NSW Heritage Office 1998), the NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning brochures *Outdoor Advertising: An Urban Design Approach* (1995) and *Controls on Outdoor Advertising: Best Practice Guidelines* (1995); the Lithgow Main Street Study.
9. produce a final report which either includes a development control plan for the study area based on the above or is capable of easy adaptation by local council planning staff into a development control plan;
10. indicate to the council amendments that should be made to its local environmental plan to adequately implement the recommendations of the study and, in particular, to protect and manage identified heritage items e.g. by the addition of items to the LEP heritage schedule;
11. assist the council to produce an action package for all owners and tenants based on the recommendations of the study included in Appendix C.

## **ASSISTANCE TO BE PROVIDED TO THE CONSULTANT BY THE MAIN STREET COMMITTEE/COUNCIL**

*(This is important. It clarifies the assistance Council will provide to the consultant. It will also help to keep down the cost of the project. You should advise here what administrative backing will be provided. Will there be temporary office space and telephone? Will you be supplying any mapping facilities etc? A contact person for the council and the committee must be nominated.)*

## **INFORMATION SOURCES**

*(If you know about available information sources include this here. The more advice provided at the outset, the better the study will be. There may be an excellent local history or a good set of early photographs or council records. The local historical society, museum or newspaper may hold excellent material. You may be in a better position to organise these than the consultant. Historic photographs are very important.*

## **REPORT FORMAT**

*(The format of the report is fundamental to its success. It must present understandable recommendations to the council and all building owners in the main street.)*

**Suitable for display on council's website:** The report, including all graphic materials should be presented to Council in an electronic format suitable for display on its website.

**Size:** Should be A4 to enable photocopies of material to be made for all interested parties.

**Graphic presentation of the whole study area:** Good graphic presentation is critical to the success of this project. There needs to be some representation of the streetscape as a whole, and for individual buildings. This is normally achieved by sketch drawings based on photographs. This will particularly help the council to understand recommendations which it needs to implement in relation to each building and urban design issues including streetscape, footpaths, trees, seating, lighting, traffic management etc.

**Graphic presentation of individual buildings:** The consultant will prepare minimum two page inventory sheets of every building in a manner similar to the model included in Appendix B.

It is suggested that where there are several shops of the same design, that these be treated as one building. The material can be neatly handwritten and the instructions of work to be undertaken to buildings can also be handwritten in the margin and arrowed across the photograph to the item in question. Importantly, the whole purpose of this advice is to assist the owner to carry out appropriate restoration work.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The committee/council considers that public support for this project is of paramount importance and only consultants with a demonstrated success in this area will be considered for the project.

*(Request that the consultant provide a proposed consultation process for the study to show how they will approach this section of the study). Council should also include here any intended public exhibition process and anticipated timing and consultant involvement (if any) with this process.*

## **PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND TIMING**

*(Request the consultant to provide a project outline with stages and a proposed timeframe. Where the conditions of a grant require conformity to a specific time schedule these should be written into the brief. Generally the study must be completed within 12 months of engagement to comply with the funding timeframes set out in the Heritage Office funding approval.)*

## **PAYMENT**

*(This section should record how much is to be paid for the project and how and when payments are to be made. It is suggested that Council make progress payments against work completed as follows; 50% on submission and acceptance of a draft report suitable for public exhibition by Council; and 50% on submission and acceptance of a final report.)*

## Appendix B

### MODEL INVENTORY SHEETS

#### Brownstown Main Street Heritage Study 2009

**Inventory Item No.:**

**Date of Inspection:**

*A serious attempt must be made to locate a historic photograph and date*

**Historic Photograph**

*Use this photograph to give advice eg. the removal/relocation of unsympathetic infill, advertising signs, air conditioners, air ducts, television aerials and paint on brickwork and the reinstatement of detail such as parapets, verandahs, etc. Arrow the item and record the advice in the margin.*

**Photograph at time of inspection**

**Address:**

**Present Building Title/Business Name/s:**

**Former Names:**

**Period of construction:**

- Colonial 1820-1840
- Early Victorian 1840-1860
- Mid Victorian 1860-1880
- Late Victorian 1880-1900
- Edwardian 1900-1920
- 1920s
- Art Deco 1930/1940
- 1950s
- 1960s/1970s

**Building Description:**

- Shop/office only
- Shop with \_\_\_\_\_ levels over
- Residential only, \_\_\_\_\_ levels
- Face Brick
- Pebbledash, render details
- Rendered & painted walls
- Modelling & mouldings, highly detailed / moderate / low
- Verandah, \_\_\_\_\_ levels/ enclosed/ unenclosed
- Balconies/bays, enclosed/unenclosed
- Exposed Roof, TC Tiles, Gal. Iron/Slate/other
- Parapet, solid/balustrade
- Comments

**Architectural Quality:**

- Very high
- High
- Moderate
- Low

**Streetscape Impact:**

- Critically important
- Important
- Contributes
- Detracts

**Restoration/Colour Advice:**

- Good as it is - continue basic maintenance
- Urgent maintenance required/ Timber / Iron / Walls / Other
- Repaint, to period guidelines given in this main street report or one-off scheme below
- Retain face brickwork
- Re-open, or change enclosure of Balconies/Bays/Verandahs
- Remove above-awning sign
- Tolerate as typical of its period
- Instate more appropriate garden/forecourt pavement & detail
- Plant trees to obscure building
- Other specific advice

## Appendix C

### **SUGGESTED LETTER PACKAGE FOR ALL OWNERS/TENANTS AT THE COMPLETION OF THE MAIN STREET STUDY**

#### **Reason for this package**

*The main reason for this package to communicate clearly and positively with owners and tenants about the benefits for them, their business and the community and to seek their enthusiastic agreement and involved in carrying out the main street study recommendations.*

The main street study will set out recommendations about desirable physical changes to both private property and public property (eg. footpaths). In the case of private property, nothing will happen unless the owner/tenant has a clear idea of what work is expected of them, why, how much, how to go about it doing the works and possible funding opportunities.

This is why it is important to have a package of understandable information going out at the end of the study.

Don't assume that owners or tenants know what is expected of them because a public meeting has been held - there is a need for the following package of advice.

#### **What should the package contain?**

1. A letter from the main street committee advising:

- what the main street project was about and how this will benefit them, their business and property and improvements to the look and feel town overall;
- what the consultants have been engage to do;
- what work and paint scheme are desirable for the building in question - include specific inventory sheet for the building (stress the voluntary nature of the request);
- where paint and other materials can be obtained from and any discounts which might have been arranged;
- what work, including painting, can be carried out without the consent of the council and also what work requires consent, e.g. new signs;
- where the owner/tenant can obtain further advice, e.g. the Heritage Office, a heritage advisor or a nominated person at council.

- other potential funding opportunities that may be available to assist owners, either individually through local heritage funds, or collectively through larger funding grants from the Heritage Office works program.
2. The summary sheet from the study for the building showing work and paint scheme recommendations.
  3. Summary sheet giving general advice on appropriate conservation, eg. The value of keeping unpainted face brickwork intact, using breathable paint on masonry walls, etc.
  4. Very simple illustrated signage control leaflet - this should both show which signs are acceptable and which signs are not and why.