

HERITAGE INFORMATION SERIES

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL COUNCIL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

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Introduction

The focus of heritage management has changed considerably since the Heritage Act came into force in 1977. The Heritage Council was the principal body involved in the statutory listing of heritage items in the eight years to 1985. In that year, a Ministerial direction issued to local councils by the then Planning Minister Bob Carr gave local government the primary responsibility for managing local heritage in New South Wales.

Following the adoption of amendments to the Heritage Act in 1999, heritage management in NSW is now a two-tiered system where:

- items of local heritage significance are listed and managed by local councils; and
- items of State heritage significance are listed on the State Heritage Register by the Minister for Planning and managed by the Heritage Council.

The principal tools that guide local government management decisions are the heritage study and the local environmental plan.

A **heritage study** identifies and assesses heritage items in accordance with the key historical themes for an area. It also makes recommendations on policies the local council should adopt to protect and conserve the identified heritage items.

The **local environmental plan** (LEP) translates the recommendations of the heritage study into a legal document that provides a broad framework for future management of the area's heritage. The LEP is prepared in accordance with principles laid down in the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act, 1979* and the heritage items identified in the heritage study are listed in a schedule to the LEP. The Department of Planning's website contains the latest information on LEP requirements. Please refer to www.planning.nsw.gov.au and go to 'practice notes' and search for the latest update on standard LEP instruments.

As well as the LEP, some councils also produce **local approval policies** (LAPs) under the *Local Government Act 1993* and **development control plans** (DCPs) under the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* to provide more detailed guidance to developers and owners in specific localities, such as heritage conservation areas. These deal with the treatment of fences, colour schemes, replacement of vegetation, setbacks and other factors that contribute to the heritage significance of an area.

Recommendations for local council heritage management provides a framework for proactive local government heritage management. It includes recommendations that have been used successfully by a number of councils. Some of them will be appropriate to your area.

\$-for-\$ funding is available from the Heritage Office, Department of Planning NSW *Heritage Grants program* to assist councils with four of these proposals (marked * in the list below).

For further information and specific subject guidelines, please contact the Heritage Office on (02) 9873 8500, or visit the Heritage Office website at www.heritage.nsw.gov/publications.

Summary of recommendations and outcomes

Recommendation 1	Establish a heritage committee to deal with heritage matters in your area
Outcome 1	Increased community participation, awareness and appreciation of heritage in the local area
Recommendation 2	Identify the heritage items in your area and list them in your local environmental plan*
Outcome 2	Increased knowledge and proactive management of heritage in your local area
Recommendation 3	Appoint a heritage advisor to assist the council, the community and owners of listed items*
Outcome 3	Increased community participation and proactive heritage and urban design management in your local areas
Recommendation 4	Manage local heritage in a positive manner
Outcome 4	Proactive heritage and urban design management in your local area
Recommendation 5	Introduce a local heritage fund to provide small grants to encourage local heritage projects*
Outcome 5	Increased community participation and proactive conservation and management of heritage in your local area
Recommendation 6	Run a main street program*
Outcome 6	Council, owners and the community actively participate in attractive and well-managed heritage main streets
Recommendation 7	Present educational and promotional programs
Outcome 7	Increased awareness and appreciation of heritage by Council, owners and the community in your area
Recommendation 8	Set a good example to the community by properly managing places owned or operated by council
Outcome 8	Increased community participation and proactive conservation and management of heritage in your area
Recommendation 9	Promote sustainable development as a tool for heritage conservation
Outcome 9	Proactive heritage and sustainable development in your area

* \$-for-\$ funding is available from the *NSW Heritage Grants* program to assist councils with four of these suggested programs.

Eight suggestions becomes nine recommendations

This edition has moved from suggestions for local government to a stronger position of recommendations. This new edition also includes a new recommendation focused on heritage and sustainability.

***Recommendations* informs the preparation and updating of local government heritage strategies**

Recommendations for local council heritage management should be used to inform the preparation and updating of the local government heritage strategy. The heritage strategy is generally prepared and updated every three years.

The heritage strategy once completed should be adopted by Council and along with Council's heritage policy, should be the prime non-statutory strategic management document for heritage management in your local council.

***Recommendations* and the heritage strategy annual reporting template**

Recommendations for local council heritage management provides the basis for the heritage strategy annual reporting template. This template is available on the Heritage Office website at www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/funding and go to 'local government heritage management'.

All councils with heritage advisors funded through the Heritage Office *NSW Heritage Grants* must report annually to the Heritage Office using this template on progress made by council against their adopted heritage strategy over the last 12 months. The heritage strategy annual reporting template should be completed by the local heritage advisor with assistance from the heritage officer.

The heritage strategy annual reporting template has outcomes and key performance indicators and qualitative reporting to assist council in assessing and monitoring their performance against these recommendations. This quantitative data is collated by the Heritage Office to form a state-wide report on the position on local government heritage management for that year.

Recommendation 1	Establish a heritage committee to deal with heritage matters in your local area
Outcome 1	<i>Increased community participation, awareness and appreciation of heritage in the local area</i>

What is the role of a heritage committee?

The primary role of a heritage committee is to advise the council on how to conserve and promote heritage items in its area. The committee's responsibility should preferably encompass Aboriginal, built, movable and natural heritage.

How should the committee be structured?

Preferably it should be a formal Section 377 committee of the council under the Local Government Act, so that it has the support of the council and its advice can feed directly into council decisions.

Who should be invited to join the committee?

The committee should be chaired by a councillor, and include representatives from the community and council staff. Community representatives will come from local organisations with a specific interest in heritage or townscapes, such as:

- historical society
- National Trust branch
- Aboriginal Land Council
- ethnic communities
- Tidy Towns group
- main street committee
- chamber of commerce.

Council staff may include representatives from the Environment Services Division and Library. Try to make sure that the interests of the major geographical areas and towns in the local government area are represented. *It is important to choose people who are do-ers rather than talk-ers, even if this means a smaller committee.*

What are the committee's objectives?

The committee should have well-defined and achievable objectives:

- prepare and monitor a heritage policy;
- provide advice to the council on the management of heritage by the council (this includes reviewing council or government policies which affect heritage places in the area);

- raise community awareness of heritage conservation through publications, seminars, public displays and annual heritage awards;
- make recommendations on the collection and recording of local heritage material and artefacts;
- compile a register of local heritage suppliers and heritage consultants;
- make recommendations on the nomination and deletion of items on the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) heritage schedule maintained by the council;
- supervise funding submissions to other agencies, including requests for heritage grants from the Heritage Office, NSW Department of Planning *NSW Heritage Grants program*;
- comment on specific development applications before the council when required.

It is essential to set down the rules of the committee in writing. The rules for the heritage committee could be based on those for other council committees.

Recommendation 2	Identify the heritage items in your area and list them in your local environmental plan
Outcome 2	<i>Increased knowledge and proactive management of heritage in your local area</i>

How does listing help heritage conservation?

- Items are legally protected - proposals for change that may affect their heritage significance will need to be approved by your Council.
- It provides certainty to owners and the community about the status of heritage items, and thus encourages conservation.
- Local environmental plans (LEPs) can contain clauses allowing a broad range of potential uses for heritage items and floor space and car parking concessions - these can be of financial benefit to owners.
- Owners of LEP listed properties (including all properties in listed heritage conservation areas) can request a heritage restricted valuation for land tax and local rate purposes. The Valuation Act was changed on 1 January 2001 to allow this to happen.
- The heritage schedule can be the basis for council providing incentives for owners, such as awards or small grants and loans (see Recommendation 5 and Recommendation 7).
- Listing on the local environmental plan is generally a pre-requisite for financial assistance to be provided by the State. National or State listing is already a requirement for Commonwealth assistance.
- Listings (and additional information in the heritage study) provide basic information for promotional and heritage tourism projects, such as walking trails, site plaques and publications.

How do council's decide what to list?

The first step is for your council to undertake a heritage study to identify and assess heritage items in your area. This study will include specific recommendations on how your council can list, manage and promote heritage conservation.

What is a heritage study?

A heritage study investigates the historical context of a local government area and identifies and assesses items of heritage significance associated with this context. The study explains why the items are significant and recommends ways of managing and conserving that significance.

A heritage study provides information to support:

- a community's sense of identity - of its beginnings, its present and its potential;
- the future management of heritage;
- education programs which help make the community's heritage assets better known, understood and appreciated;
- heritage tourism strategies; and
- a community's sense of ownership of its heritage assets.

A study results in a report comprising:

- an historical analysis of the area, community or organisation, usually by using the State historic themes;
- investigative research and field work;
- an analysis of significance and a condition survey of items and areas identified during the study;
- inventory sheets of significant items; and
- management and promotional recommendations.

How is a heritage study undertaken?

In the past studies have usually been carried out by a team of consultants, working with a local committee. The process usually involves some level of community consultation.

What is a community-based heritage study?

The main difference between the community-based heritage study and the conventional expert-based model is that the community is not just consulted, but is actively involved in researching and nominating items and in considering recommendations for their future management and promotion.

This gives the community much greater ownership of the study process and with it the likelihood of less conflict within the community regarding listing and future management.

Its other attraction is that it is likely to be more appropriate and affordable in rural areas of NSW. Rural areas do not always have a large number of heritage items, are not under high development pressure and generally do not have sufficient resources to fund a major study.

A major premise of a community based approach is that communities have the necessary skills and knowledge if appropriately guided by a heritage consultant skilled in community consultation methods. It is accepted, however, that the approach may not be appropriate for every community.

The community based model has been successfully applied in rural areas of Western Australia and some NSW local government areas.

Is funding available?

Community-based heritage studies usually cost a minimum of \$20,000. A major consultant firm heritage study would usually cost a minimum of \$70,000. Reviews cost a minimum of \$10,000. The actual cost will depend on factors such as the number of heritage items in the area and the level of existing knowledge about these items.

The Heritage Office currently provides \$-for-\$ funding up to \$12,300 for new heritage studies, Aboriginal heritage studies and community-based heritage studies and reviews of existing studies.

Where can I obtain further information?

A guideline on how to run a community-based heritage study is available on the Heritage Office website www.heritage.nsw.gov.au and go to 'publications' and search for *Community-based Heritage Studies: A Guide* or contact Miriam Stacy or Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office on (02) 9873 8500.

A model Aboriginal heritage study consultant's brief is available on the Heritage Office website www.heritage.nsw.gov.au and go to 'publications' and search for *Aboriginal heritage study consultant's brief* or contact Miriam Stacy or Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office on (02) 9873 8500.

Recommendation 3	Appoint a heritage advisor to assist the council, the community and owners of listed heritage items
Outcome 3	<i>Increased community participation and proactive heritage and urban design management in your local areas</i>

What is the role of a heritage advisor?

The primary role of the heritage advisor is to assist the local council and the community to list, conserve, manage the heritage of the area and provide urban design advice. Advisors can also provide advice for owners of listed items on colour schemes and alterations. They may also comment on heritage and urban design aspects of development applications affecting heritage items.

How does a heritage advisory service operate?

\$-for-\$ funding can be provided through the Heritage Office, NSW Department of Planning *NSW Heritage Grants program* to councils to engage the services of an advisor for regular visits. In rural areas it is often sufficient for visits to be scheduled on one day per month; in urban areas there will probably be a need for more frequent visits.

The advisor reports to a specific council officer, usually the town planner. The council supplies back-up facilities, including appointment-taking and secretarial services. For a typical one day visit, it is usual for the advisor to spend the morning with council staff - planners, health and building inspectors and engineers - looking at building and development applications affecting heritage items.

The afternoon is then normally spent inspecting sites and providing advice to owners, usually on an appointment basis. The advisor may also be required to attend committee meetings. This is usually the case where heritage committees have been established.

Advisors can be very helpful in assisting committees to set up community education programs. They can also liaise with the council and the Local Government & Shires Associations in setting up training programs for staff and councillors. (see Recommendation 7).

How does the heritage advisor make a difference?

The advisor can liaise with owners about heritage and urban design issues before development proposals are finalised. This saves money and can also help to avoid potential conflict with the council. The advisor can also advise on colour schemes and minor repairs.

If the council runs a local heritage fund (see Recommendation 5), the advisor can assess the applications to help the council decide the funding priority. The advisor can also suggest or promote projects which might not otherwise occur, e.g. preparing an application for main street program funding, heritage awards schemes or heritage interpretive plaques or brochures.

How can the council apply for \$-for-\$ financial assistance for an advisory position?

You can apply to the Heritage Office, NSW Department of Planning for funding under the *NSW Heritage Grants program*. Information is available on the heritage Office website www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/funding and go to 'Local government heritage management program for information and how to apply. For further information, contact Miriam Stacy or Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office on (02) 9873 8500.

For how long will funding assistance be provided?

In the metropolitan areas (south to Wollongong and Wingecarribee, north to Newcastle and Lake Macquarie, and west to the Blue Mountains) assistance will be provided for a maximum of 3 years, after which time the council needs to adopt one of several options including:

- appointing permanent part or full-time council staff; or
- providing full funding of the advisor position.

While there is no time restriction on funding for advisors in rural areas funding after 4 years is generally provided as a \$1 for \$2 grant rather than \$-for-\$.

Where can I obtain further information on the Heritage Advisor Program?

The Heritage Office has further information on its website, go to www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications and search for *How to Establish a Heritage Advisor Service* or contact Miriam Stacy or Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office on (02) 9873 8500.

Recommendation 4	Manage local heritage in a positive manner
Outcome 4	<i>Proactive heritage and urban design management in your local area</i>

Waive or reduce fees for development applications involving heritage items

When heritage items are included in a local environmental plan (LEP), a development application may be required for work. This may mean additional charges to an owner. Where possible these charges should be waived so as to encourage owners of listed properties to regard the listing as a positive, not a negative.

Adopt a flexible approach to planning requirements on heritage sites

The heritage provisions in your LEP should enable the council to vary its requirements for uses, floor space ratio and car parking. If these provisions have not been adopted, councils must use the standard heritage clauses included in the Standard LEP Instrument.

The Department of Planning website contains the latest information on LEP standard requirements. Please refer to www.planning.nsw.gov.au and go to 'practice notes' and search for the latest update on standard LEP instruments, PN06-001.

Adopt a flexible approach to building requirements for heritage buildings

Heritage buildings do not always meet modern building regulations, especially in regard to fire safety. The rigorous application of Building Code of Australia requirements can make too great an impact on the building's heritage significance, particularly one that is valued for its architectural or aesthetic qualities. As long as public safety requirements can be met, encourage reasonable discretion in the application of these requirements.

The Heritage Council's Fire, Access and Services Advisory Panel provides advice on ways of achieving adequate fire safety without damaging the character and architectural detail of heritage buildings. The Panel's membership includes a representative of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

The Heritage Office has further information on its website, at www.heritage.nsw.gov.au and go to 'conservation' for a range of publications and also 'Technical advice' and 'Fire access and services' or contact Miriam Stacy or Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office on (02) 9873 8500.

How does flexibility help a heritage building owner?

Heritage projects can be expensive, relying on the commitment and energy of the owner. A flexible approach by the council may well mean the difference between whether a project proceeds or not. Removing barriers to sensible compromises and waiving or reducing fees are positive ways in which councils can help to assist the continuing life of listed heritage assets. They can also result in a lower project cost. All this is positive for heritage.

Recommendation 5	Introduce a local heritage fund to provide small grants to encourage local heritage projects
Outcome 5	<i>Increased community participation and proactive conservation and management of heritage in your local area</i>

How are local funds established?

The Local Government Act 1993 enables the establishment of local heritage funds. Councils can apply for \$-for-\$ grants from the *NSW Heritage Grants program* to support these initiatives.

What size of fund is recommended?

The fund can initially be quite small, with say \$8,200 per year each from the council and the *NSW Heritage Grants program*. The size will depend on the resources of the council and the heritage results it wants to achieve. Over time we encourage councils to increase the funding available for their local heritage funds.

How can the council apply for a \$-for-\$ heritage grant to establish a small grants program?

Assistance for local heritage funds is restricted to areas outside of the Sydney metropolitan area. A maximum of a \$-for-\$ \$8,200 grant is available for an individual council each year from the *NSW Heritage Grants program*.

The Heritage Office has guidelines available on the website at www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications and search for *How to Establish a Local Heritage Fund* guideline or contact Miriam Stacy or Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office on (02) 9873 8500.

How are applications assessed?

As these are local funds, the decisions are made locally. Where a heritage committee exists, it can make recommendations to the council for their approval on the advice of the heritage advisor. Otherwise, the heritage advisor or the designated heritage planner can make these recommendations.

What type of assistance is available?

Grants are available and have the advantage of being easy to manage. A typical scheme is to annually offer \$-for-\$ grants of \$500 - \$1,000 on a competitive basis.

What types of projects are funded?

Generally as the size of grants are quite small, funding is usually provided for projects such as the reinstatement of picket fences, guttering repairs and painting. Grants can also be used to provide seed funding for larger projects.

How have local funds been used in other local government areas?

The most striking use of local funds has been in concentrated areas such as main streets. Main streets in Adelong, Braidwood, Canowindra, Carcoar, Coolamon, Corowa, Lockhart, Rockley and Sofala have benefited from this approach at very little heritage grant cost.

In the case of Lockhart, every one of the 30 buildings in the main street was conserved in three years following a \$5,000 \$-for-\$ grant for a main street study in 1987. A \$15,000 NSW heritage grant was allocated by way of \$500 to each owner for work. The estimated total cost of the project was in excess of \$65,000, i.e. a multiplier effect of 4.33:1. The whole project was managed by the Lockhart Shire Council.

Where can I obtain further information?

The Heritage Office has guidelines available on the website at www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications and search for *How to Establish a Local Heritage Fund* guideline or contact Miriam Stacy or Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office on (02) 9873 8500.

Recommendation 6	Run a heritage main street program
Outcome 6	<i>Council, owners and the community actively participate in attractive and well-managed heritage main streets</i>

What is a Main Street Program?

The Main Street/Small Towns program run by the Department of State and Regional Development helps communities to take a strategic and proactive approach to their economic development.

The first stage of the Department's program is the community planning process. Central to this process is the Business Retention and Expansion survey which is conducted to collect information on the make up of the local economy and the needs and plans of local businesses. The second stage of the program is the implementation of a community strategic plan.

Local programs usually begin with the formation of a local committee which is encouraged to adopt a 4 point approach to revitalisation:

1. **COLLABORATION and STRATEGIC PLANNING**-bringing together local government, business and community representatives in a structured organisation to develop strategic plans;
2. **BUSINESS and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**-understanding and strengthening the local economy. Encouraging enterprise retention, expansion and diversification;
3. **MARKETING and PROMOTION** of the town and surrounding areas to visitors and locals;
4. **PHYSICAL DESIGN** improvements which enhance the town centre's image and unique character.

Which government agency provides funding for main street work?

Assistance on all of the above aspects of the program including heritage (but excepting physical design) is provided by the Department of State and Regional Development. Assistance with heritage aspects of a main street remain with the Heritage Office, NSW Department of Planning as set out below:

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](http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/business/programs/regional+programs) www.business.nsw.gov.au/business/programs/regional+programs or contact: Anne Pitchers anne.pitchers@business.nsw.gov.au or phone (02) 9338 6712

Towns and Villages Futures Program

The Towns and Villages Futures Program aims to foster economic growth and create a more positive environment for business communities with a population of less than 2,500.

This program helps small regional communities take a strategic and proactive approach to economic development. Local council involvement is encouraged.

Project funding is designed to benefit the broader community rather than being of specific benefit to a single enterprise. Applicants are encouraged to consider projects that may assist business sectors such as agribusiness and retail. Alliances of businesses are eligible for assistance.

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

What is a heritage main street study?

Main street studies provide specific advice on heritage and design matters for the main street and assist private owners and councils to carry out appropriate conservation and enhancement work.

Who can apply for the funding of heritage main street studies?

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

- the resources to run a main street study;
- the implementation role in approving or encouraging appropriate changes 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 have the ability to establish local heritage funds to encourage physical improvements to the main street (see *Recommendation 5*).

What funding is required for a heritage main street study?

This will depend on the size of the main street, the complexity of the work, the distance to be travelled by the consultant, other work that has already been carried out and the information the local council, the local historical society and other community groups and individuals can supply to the consultant. Studies can cost as little as \$5,000 or as much as \$20,000.

How much funding is available for a heritage main street study?

NSW Heritage Grants program grants of up to \$5,000 are available for the study, backed up by \$-for-\$ funding to assist councils to implement the study's recommendations, including the appointment of heritage advisors and the establishment of local heritage funds.

What eligibility criteria are used in the assessment of applications for heritage main street study grants?

There are three important criteria:

1. The main street must be clearly of heritage significance. The town centre may be listed as a heritage conservation area or may simply contain many heritage items;
2. Evidence that the local community has carefully considered the potential of the main street and is fully behind the project. Evidence of the formation of a main street committee, preliminary meetings held and possibly the appointment of a main street coordinator will assist the positive assessment of the application;
3. Evidence that the recommendations on the report will be implemented. This could include examples of conservation work carried out or proposed for private buildings in the centre, or proposals for enhancement work by the council.

How do I apply for a grant?

Main street studies are considered under the annual *NSW Heritage Grants program* local government heritage management program.

Where can I obtain further information?

A guideline on how to prepare a heritage main street study is available on the Heritage Office website www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/publications. Search for *How to undertake a heritage main street study* or contact Miriam Stacy or Victoria Throp at the Heritage Office on (02) 9873 8500.

Recommendation 7	Present educational and promotional programs
Outcome 7	<i>Increased awareness and appreciation of heritage by Council, owners and the community in your area</i>

- **Run an awards scheme for heritage projects**

Many councils already run garden awards. Heritage awards are based on a similar idea. The usual practice is to have a panel of judges to adjudicate on the heritage projects carried out in your area in the last 12 months. It might be a good idea to have the awards presentation in National Trust of Australia (NSW) Heritage Festival, which is usually held in April/May each year.

The award could be a simple certificate, a plaque or a monetary or other gift. Conservation work categories are always included, but you might also consider promotional projects, such as books or education activities. Some councils also present awards for building or urban design projects that enhance the built environment.

The idea behind awards is that by giving recognition to the people who are looking after heritage properties you are encouraging others to emulate them. It's also a way of applauding the initiative of people who, usually at their own expense, have done something positive for the heritage of the area.

- **Conduct a heritage short course for councillors, council staff and local professionals**

The Heritage Office began a program of heritage short courses for local government staff and local professionals in 1993.

This program is now managed by the Local Government & Shires Associations Training Unit, which organises an annual schedule of courses. In addition to general courses in Sydney and rural centres the Unit can tailor special courses for staff in the larger councils. For further information contact Local Government Learning Solutions Ruth Niemczyk on 9242 4180 or email learning@lgsa.org.au

Some councils also run seminars for their local community targeted at suppliers, tradespeople and owners of heritage items. Successful seminars of this type have been held in Goulburn and Broken Hill.

- **Make heritage information available on your website and printed brochures**

As accessing information on website and e-planning becomes common place, most people will look to the council's website for heritage information. This is an easy and accessible way for council to provide a one-stop online source for heritage information and brochures that can be downloaded.

Councils can also provide printed information brochures and distribute these through the council offices, public libraries and other information outlets.

It's critical that all website and printed brochures are current and updated regularly – at least annually as this is very important for credibility and building good relationships!!!

- **Include heritage promotional material with the rates notice**

Advertising and direct mailing can be expensive. Consider including a small brochure in the next mail out of the Council rates notice. If your council circularises a full or summary annual report or letter from the mayor, include some coverage of recent heritage matters in your area in this document.

- **Prepare a DVD on the heritage of your area**

Professional production of a DVD may be too expensive, but there is sure to be a local group and/or enthusiast who would be prepared to arrange a low cost but effective DVD. The DVD can be used in schools in your area, in tourist information centres and in the council's foyer areas.

Ashfield City Council produced a video advising heritage owners of their responsibilities and providing guidance on how to research the history of their property before making alterations.

- **Develop a heritage walking trail**

Marked walking trails through the town or local area are now a recognised, and popular, way of encouraging interest in local history and local heritage tourism. These projects can make good use of employment program funding, both for the research stage and also the building of trails and signposts. The Department of Land and Water Conservation also has considerable expertise in this area and may be interested in fully or jointly funding trail markers and brochures.

The Heritage Office has published a guideline on how to carry out heritage trail projects. It is generally council's responsibility to provide funding for local heritage trail projects.

- **Introduce a plaques scheme for heritage buildings and sites**

Informative heritage plaques can create a high degree of interest for owners, visitors and the general community. The design and placement of plaques are important considerations. If you use historical photos, make sure you clearly show how it relates to the contemporary scene.

The placement of plaques provides a photo opportunity for the owner and local politicians – yet another occasion to push forward the positive heritage theme in the media. The Heritage Office's guideline on heritage trails also provides some basic advice on plaques.

- **Prepare and adopt a local or regional heritage tourism strategy**

The Heritage Office encourages councils to prepare and adopt a local heritage tourism strategy that identifies and develops strategies for local and state heritage items within their local government area.

Council may also choose to work with adjoining local government areas to prepare a regional cultural heritage tourism strategy.

Once adopted the council tourism information office can use and implement this strategy to work with heritage site owners and promote local heritage sites to tourists.

Recommendation 8	Set a good example to the community by properly managing heritage places owned or operated by the council
Outcome 8	<i>Increased community participation and proactive conservation and management of heritage in your area</i>

All councils own heritage assets, including:

- town halls, schools of arts, museums, showgrounds, museums, parks and gardens;
- streets and roads dating back to the early development of the area may have remnant vegetation, avenue planting, stone guttering, historic signs or street furniture;
- archival records, e.g. rate books and minutes of meetings. These are not only valuable in their own right as archives but also provide a sound foundation for historical research.

The conservation and management of these heritage assets by the council ensures their long life and provides an appropriate setting for heritage items owned by others in the community.

Good heritage practice by the council also sets up a model for the community to follow. Good heritage management is achieved through:

- asset management planning – prepare a heritage asset management through a conservation management plan,
- asset maintenance planning – prepare a heritage asset maintenance plan with indicative timeframes and costings, and
- securing resources to implement the plans through annual budget allocations and securing appropriate staff or contractors to undertake the works.

North Sydney Council has restored its own heritage buildings. It also has an excellent record in the presentation of its streets and public areas, providing a sympathetic setting for the hundreds of heritage items in the council's area. It also has a best practice local history collection in its library.

Recommendation 9	Promote sustainable development as a tool for heritage management
Outcome 9	<i>Proactive heritage and sustainable development in your area</i>

Heritage + sustainable development – what is the link?

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 ongoing and dynamic process, balancing conservation and change.

Sustainable communities, economies and environment – the triple bottom line

Heritage and sustainable development are intimately linked. The goals of sustainable development are continually assisting heritage conservation internationally and heritage sits perfectly within the philosophical context of sustainability – recycle, reuse and minimise environmental and socially negative impacts.

Sustainable effects are measured and reported on using triple bottom line outcomes, that is social, economic and environmental benefits or impacts on the community.

In implementing best practice heritage management in local government, Councils should aim to utilise triple bottom line reporting to demonstrate heritage outcomes to the community.

Educating for positive change and leadership that embraces sustainable heritage development

It is important that stakeholders understand the integral relationship between heritage and sustainable development and to encourage changes in heritage practice that meet sustainability criteria.

Education about heritage and sustainable development is essential to train decision makers and professionals working heritage and related fields as well as heritage owners and managers and the broader community to that will lead to greater awareness, support and action leading to valuing of heritage and embracing sustainable development.

Some examples of implementing sustainable heritage development

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

- the promotion and encouragement of regeneration of urban towns, places and fabric;
- encouraging and supporting compatible adaptive reuse, or infill or sympathetic additions to heritage places,
- encouraging sustainable heritage tourism commercial ventures and council tourism information centres;
- sensitive application of BASIX requirements for new design in a heritage precinct or conservation area; and
- incorporation of energy efficient design solutions into heritage places for water, energy and waste.