



Protecting Local Heritage Places

A national guide for Local
Government and the Community

Supporting Local Government Project

The Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand

Cover Images (Left to Right):

Manchester Unity building, Melbourne

Cape Otway light station.

Manifold clocktower, Camperdown, Victoria

First published June 1998, Australian Heritage Commission, 1998, protecting local heritage places: a guide for communities, Australian Heritage Commission, Canberra. Reprinted 1999, 2000.

Updated 2009 online edition published March 2009, as Protecting local heritage places: a guide for local government and communities. Revised edition prepared with permission by Heritage Victoria as part of the Supporting Local Government Project for the Commonwealth Government and the Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand. This online edition prepared by Lisa Rogers, Heritage Victoria.

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The views expressed herein are not necessarily the views of the Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth does not accept responsibility for any information or advice contained herein.

ISBN 978 1 921607 41 7

Acknowledgements

The production of this handbook has been made possible through the financial sponsorship of the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts.

Acknowledgements of many contributors to the first edition are included in the original document (p118) which noted that Protecting Local Heritage Places is based on work undertaken on behalf of the Australian Heritage Commission by Chris Johnston (Context Pty Ltd) during 1996 – 97 as part of the Heritage Guidelines Project.

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1

Heritage Places

Heritage places come in all shapes and sizes – from a rural post office to a coastal midden to a large forested area. This chapter looks at what we mean by heritage places and why we should protect them.

Who is this guide for?

This guide contains information to help individuals and groups working locally to identify, conserve and protect heritage places. It will be particularly helpful for local government and community groups. This guide will provide ideas and options on how to identify, conserve and protect heritage places in Australia.

Finding your way around the guide

The guide is divided into sections which:

- describe how to plan your approach to, and involve others in, conserving and protecting heritage places in your local area (Chapter 2)
- describe how to identify heritage values through a heritage study, so that conservation actions can be based on a good understanding of the heritage significance of places (Chapters 3, 4 and 5)
- describe methods for conserving and protecting heritage places within the local area after they have been identified and their heritage significance assessed, including developing a conservation plan (Chapters 6, 7 and 8)
- describe techniques for monitoring and measuring the results of your actions, or of heritage conservation generally (Chapter 9)

Many State and Territory governments have developed specific processes and requirements for local heritage identification, conservation and protection. You may need to tailor the process you develop to meet those localised processes and requirements.

1.1 What is a heritage place?

Australia's heritage, shaped by nature and history, is an inheritance passed from one generation to the next. It encompasses many things – the way we live, the traditions we hold dear, our history and values. It is also reflected in the natural and cultural diversity of places and objects that help us to understand our past and our effect on the Australian landscape.

This guide focuses on heritage places. Heritage places are often described as either natural or cultural places. In reality, heritage places usually possess many different values, ranging from natural values at one end of the spectrum through to cultural values at the other. Some people, including many indigenous people, do not distinguish between them. For example, the vast landscape of Kakadu contains important ecosystems, wonderful Aboriginal paintings and engravings, sites of great spiritual significance and interesting historic features. Understanding this complex heritage place means recognising all elements and respecting all values.

A heritage place is... a specific area or site, perhaps a large area such as a whole region or landscape, or a small area such as a feature or building, which is valued by people for its natural and/or cultural heritage significance.

Natural heritage significance means the importance of ecosystems, biodiversity and geodiversity for their existence value, and/or for present or future generations, in terms of their scientific, social, aesthetic and life support value (definition from the Australian Natural Heritage Charter: for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/australian-national-heritage-charter.html>)

Cultural heritage significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations (definition from The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (1999) - <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html>)

Indigenous heritage value of a place means a heritage value of a place that is of significance to indigenous persons in accordance with their practices, observances, customs, traditions, beliefs or history (definition from the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999), section 528). This includes landscapes, sites and areas. Indigenous persons are the authority on indigenous heritage.

1.2 Why protect heritage places?

The reasons for protecting heritage places may be aesthetic, economic, historic, ethical, environmental, legal or even personal. A community may want to protect heritage places because:

- they are a link with the past, a reminder of special moments in lives, history or culture
- they are part of a location's special identity which could bring economic as well as other benefits to the area
- they have natural or cultural values which should be handed on to future generations
- there are social, spiritual or ethical (including respect for existence or intrinsic values) obligations to do so
- there are legal obligations to do so contained in environmental protection, planning, indigenous sites or endangered species legislation.

Heritage places are important to current and future generations. When communities work together to identify and conserve heritage places, they can reflect on the past and build stronger bonds for the future. Keeping these places enables the community to experience again and again the pleasures they offer. Once lost, they are gone forever. No record or photograph can ever substitute for an actual place.

1.3 Standards for heritage conservation

Heritage practitioners in Australia have developed an agreed process to guide decision-making about both natural and cultural heritage places. This process is shown in the flow chart on page 7, and is reflected in a set of charters and guidelines that outline standards and principles for the conservation of places of heritage significance. These include:

- Australian Natural Heritage Charter: for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/australian-national-heritage-charter.html>
- The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (1999) - <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html>

In addition to these standards, each State or territory may publish standards, guidelines and model documents for use by local governments and communities undertaking heritage activities. The relevant state heritage or territory heritage agency should be contacted for advice on applicable publications and standards.

Expert community organisations such as the National Trust of Australia in each State and Territory also publishes guidelines, reports and information suitable for assessing the heritage significance of places and objects associated with heritage places.

The key process for heritage place management outlined in these documents emphasises the importance of:

- understanding the heritage significance of a place, and developing objectives for its conservation in a logical way, based on maintaining its heritage significance
- involving key people in any actions or decisions about heritage places in which they have an interest and, in the case of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, recognising they have the right to be involved in decisions affecting their heritage and its ongoing management
- undertaking the process of heritage significance assessment separately from management decision making
- developing conservation objectives or policies which guide conservation action
- choosing appropriate conservation processes (or actions) to protect the significant values of a place within the management opportunities and constraints of the place, including conservation plans, strategies and protection through statutory instruments
- developing a conservation plan or strategy
- monitoring and evaluating the action taken, then reviewing the conservation plan or strategy or effectiveness of statutory protection or other mechanism.

Following this process will ensure that all key people are involved in identifying heritage places, and that conservation strategies result in actions to protect the

significance of places.

The basic steps are outlined below in the flow chart. Good heritage practice relies on separation of the steps of assessment process and management of places of heritage significance. These are divided into separate processes in most legislation.

1.4 The process of heritage place identification and management

The sequence of investigations, decisions and actions promoted by the Burra Charter (1999) are shown below.

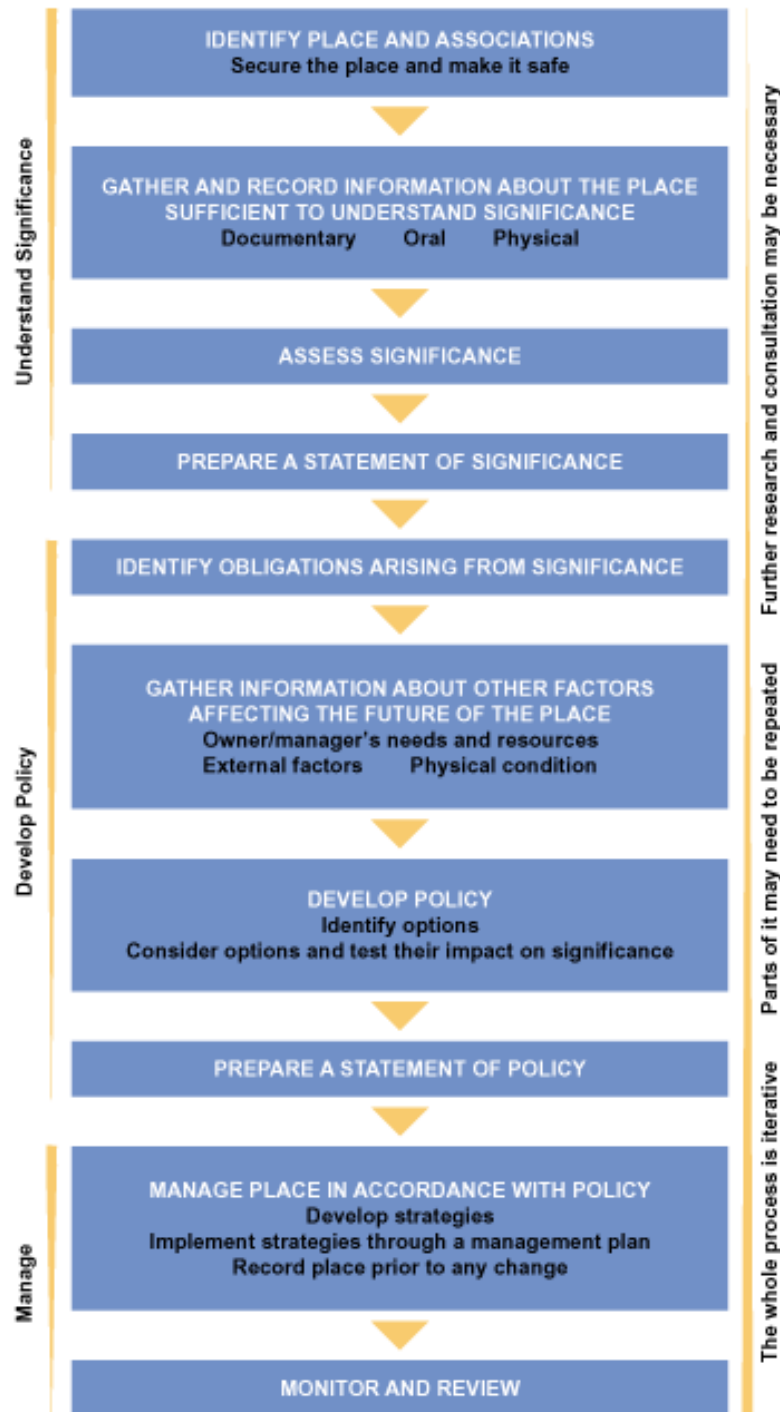


Figure 1 Heritage Identification, Assessment and Management Process, The Burra Charter (1999)

1.5 Who manages local heritage?

In Australia, there is a three tier heritage management system aligning different levels of significance of heritage management to the three tiers of government.

Within this framework the Commonwealth Government manages heritage of national heritage value, overseas places of significance to Australia, world heritage and Commonwealth heritage. The states manage heritage of state significance and local governments manage heritage of local significance under the auspices of state legislation. Legislation is enacted at each tier to identify, assess and manage heritage places. The territories, Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory do not have an additional third tier of legislative protection for local heritage and all heritage, irrespective of its level of significance, is managed by the Territory Government. Within this framework, local government manages the largest portfolio of heritage places in Australia. Heritage places protected by local government statute comprise more than 76 000 historic heritage places and 1770 historic areas.¹

Local governments have a range of heritage responsibilities in complying with state legislation to identify and protect heritage, as approval authority for development through the planning system and as an owner, manager or trustee of heritage places on behalf of the State.

1 - Productivity commission, 2006, as quoted in State of the Environment 2006.

2. Planning your approach

Effective action for heritage protection requires careful planning. It is important to be clear about your goals, and involve other people, groups or organisations who have an interest in your plans. This chapter explains how to create a guiding plan for your action and identify who else may have an interest in the plan. Planning your approach involves the following actions:

- clarify your goals
- identify who else has an interest
- create a plan of action.

Your approach to protecting heritage places in the local area will depend on:

- who you are, for example, an indigenous community organisation, an interested individual, a heritage committee member or a local government heritage officer
- available resources, for example, time, equipment, skills, supporters and funds
- the size of your area of interest, for example, a building, a patch of remnant bushland, a site or landscape with indigenous heritage significance, or an entire town or geographic area
- how much you already know about the heritage significance of places in the local area.
- existing, if any, protection for the heritage place.

2.1 Clarify your goals

Before beginning to create a plan of action for heritage protection, it is useful to clarify your goals.

The first question to ask is: Why do you want to take action for heritage conservation?

The next question is: What do you want to do?

Your objects may be, for example, to:

- identify local heritage and assess its significance
- protect remnant bushland in your local government area
- protect and conserve a local community hall
- maintain the character of the main street of your town
- learn about the indigenous heritage of your local area
- include heritage protection within a larger planning framework, such as catchment planning
- make sure that heritage places have statutory protection and are properly considered in planning decisions?
- promote heritage conservation in your local area
- promote good design for heritage places

2.2 Identify who else has an interest

There will be a range of people, groups or organisations who have an interest in the heritage places in your local area or other places you have an interest in. They include the local council, property owners, property managers, indigenous custodians of the country, ethnic groups, conservation groups, developers and industry groups.

If you want to protect heritage in your local area, it can pay to first identify these other people, groups or organisations and then talk with them. They may:

- be able to work with you to help achieve your goals
- be able to provide information about heritage places
- have a right to be consulted
- have views about heritage places or your goals that you need to consider.

Casting the net widely and identifying a range of interests early on can help to build a process that meets the needs of all those interested, and identify conflicting interests and plan ways of dealing with them.

If your goals involve places that might have indigenous heritage values, make sure that local indigenous communities are centrally involved in decisions about whether heritage identification or conservation action should proceed, and in planning and undertaking any action that does occur. The national publication, 'Ask First, A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values' (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/ask-first.html> - can provide guidance on consultation with local indigenous communities.

Asking the following questions can help to identify interested people:

- Who owns the heritage place?
- Who is the responsible authority for development (local or state government?)
- Who knows about local natural and cultural heritage?
- Who has custodial, caretaker or legal responsibility for local heritage places?
- Who lives or has lived in local heritage places?
- Who has worked at or earned a living from local heritage places?
- Who is interested in using local heritage places, now or in the future?
- Who is interested in protecting or conserving local heritage places?
- Who is interested in your goals? Who would support action towards reaching your goals?
- Who will the achievement of your goals affect, either positively or negatively?
- Who has had similar goals to yours in the past?
- Who needs to be kept informed about progress towards reaching your goals?

2.3 Who might be interested?

Build up a network of contacts by asking those you discuss your plans with to recommend other individuals and organisations who they think may have an interest in what you want to do. They could include the following:

Local government:

- elected representatives or councillors
- advisory committees
- local council officers, for example, heritage advisors, library staff, conservation or environmental officers, heritage officers, strategic or statutory planning officers, works managers or engineers
- regional organisations of councils

Community organisations:

- historical societies
- local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community organisations or land councils
- natural environmental groups such as field naturalists or bird observers; conservation councils
- friends groups or committees of management for local heritage places, for example, bushland reserves or the local museum
- a local branch of the National Trust
- catchment management or Coastcare, Waterwatch and Landcare groups
- Rotary, Apex or other service clubs
- special interest clubs and associations who use the place you are interested in, for example, arts groups, sporting clubs, bushwalking clubs, recreational fishing clubs or diving clubs.

Indigenous communities, organisations and individuals:

- traditional owners or custodians
- local indigenous community members
- local, regional, State or Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land councils
- native title organisations
- indigenous heritage officers
- State or Territory offices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs and sites authorities

Commonwealth, State or Territory government departments:

- agriculture, arts, electricity and water, environment, heritage, national parks, planning, resources, tourism and transport departments.

Schools and educational institutions:

- local primary and secondary schools (public and private)
- tertiary institutions.

Landholders/landowners:

- leaseholders
- freehold title holders
- native title holders custodial owners (indigenous people who have responsibility for caring for the land).

Other associations, organisations and individuals:

- heritage organisations such as the National Trust
- historical societies
- community groups and residents associations
- main street and traders committees
- progress associations
- tidy town committees
- regional development organisations
- industry organisations
- private sector developers, business owners or corporations
- individuals with a personal or work-related interest in some aspect of heritage, for example, local botanists or bird-watchers.

2.4 Create a plan of action

Developing a plan of action can help to clarify your direction, and detail the steps that need to be carried out. A plan can also be used as the basis of a funding application or a brief to present to potential consultants, as background information for others who might want to help, or as the foundation for a media release to publicise your concerns or actions.

A plan could contain:

- goals
- opportunities and constraints
- strategies
- actions
- priorities
- human resources and responsibilities
- community and stakeholder participation
- funding
- timing
- review.

2.4.1 Goals

For example, your goals may be:

- to protect remnant bushland in your local government area
- to protect and conserve a local community hall

- to maintain the character of the main street of your town
- to learn about the indigenous heritage of your local area
- to include heritage protection within a larger planning framework, such as catchment planning
- to make sure that heritage places have statutory protection and are properly considered in planning decisions?
- to promote heritage conservation in your local area
- to promote good design for heritage places
- to assess the significance of a heritage place which is the subject of a development application

2.4.2 Opportunities and constraints

Identify the opportunities and constraints for achieving your goals. This will help to keep expectations at a realistic level. Opportunities or resources to consider include:

- availability of skills and technical expertise
- availability of local and professional knowledge such as heritage advisory services provided by local government
- key players wanting to work in partnership
- availability of funds
- enthusiasm.

Constraints to consider include:

- level of funding and other resources
- amount of people hours needed
- expertise available
- policy and legal requirements
- constraints imposed by the requirements of maintaining the significance of the place/places
- likely opposition
- time available.

2.4.3 Strategies

Work out strategies that will help to reach each of your goals. For example, strategies to achieve the goal of protecting remnant bushland in your local government area could include:

- doing a heritage study to find out about the location and heritage values of remnant bushland in your local government area
- lobbying industry, or local, State or Territory government agencies to develop a conservation plan
- raising community awareness about the heritage values of remnant bushland
- investigating ways of protecting remnant bushland through the planning scheme.

2.4.5 Actions

For each strategy, develop actions. For example, actions could include:

- applying for funding to conduct a heritage study
- writing articles for newspapers about the project and the remnant vegetation of the area
- talking to local planners about existing or available statutory protection options under the local government planning scheme or instrument.

2.4.5 Priorities

To make best use of available resources, work out which strategies and actions will be your priorities. Ask:

- How much time do you have – how urgent is it?
- Which strategies and actions are likely to be the most effective?
- How much enthusiasm and support do you have?
- What skills and resources can you use?
- Which actions could help to build more support or gain more resources?

2.4.6 Human resources and responsibilities

Consider who is available and able to work on your plan of action. Ask:

- What tasks need doing?
- What skills are needed to do these tasks and who has the skills?
- Who will be responsible for carrying out the tasks?
- Who will make the important decisions?
- How will these decisions be made?

You may decide to form a decision-making group as there may be many different groups or individuals who have identified an interest in the heritage values of the place. The decision-making group should have representatives from all the main groups with a direct interest, including indigenous people. The group must have real power to speak and make binding decisions on the plan of action.

2.5 Community and stakeholder participation

Consider how to involve the community, including the indigenous community, and other interested parties in your plans.

2.5.1 Forming active partnerships

Heritage actions can benefit from people working in partnership with other interested parties. Through partnerships you can share the roles, responsibilities and benefits of a project. Potential partners do not need to be motivated by the same factors as you, they just need to want to reach the same goal. A test of a good basis for establishing a partnership relationship is that each partner should benefit individually from the partnership, and together the partners should be able to achieve more than if they were working separately.

2.5.2 Keeping people informed

Another way of working with those who have an interest in your plans is to keep them informed about your actions and give them an opportunity to contribute.

Ways of doing this include:

- writing a regular column for the local newspaper or contributing to a radio program
- holding street stalls and displays which show examples of the work you have been involved in
- photographs of the group at work, examples of heritage places in the area, copies of documents or old maps that have been collected
- starting a newsletter or putting updates in other newsletters or on local notice-boards
- producing a brief progress report or media release highlighting key achievements and the next steps, and inviting people to get involved
- holding a special event such as a walk around heritage features in town or an open day at an important heritage site, with experts on hand to explain it to people.

2.5.3 Seeking input

Invite people who have an interest to contribute their knowledge or views about your plans or actions. Local people have a wealth of knowledge about a place from having lived there and observed it over time. Inviting views, even if they are in conflict with your own, can be beneficial because it can help to identify issues and viewpoints of which you may not have been aware. An awareness of these views can then inform your actions, making it less likely that you might inadvertently provoke hostility and bad feeling. You may even be able to find a solution which works for all parties.

2.6 Funding

Types of funding include:

- Commonwealth – arts, tourism and environment (GreenCorps, and the Natural Heritage Trust programs such as Landcare Australia, Bushcare and Coastcare),
- State or Territory government heritage grants
- local government grants, loans or in-kind assistance
- corporate sponsorship from business or large organisations
- philanthropic grants from trusts, foundations and corporations with fields of interest that include natural and/or cultural heritage
- fund-raising – it may be possible to enlist the support of experienced community fund-raising
- groups such as Apex, Rotary, Lions and other service clubs.

Local governments can run funding programs and can also apply for assistance from State governments, for instance, to undertake a heritage study or heritage collections management and interpretation.

2.6.1 What information is needed in a funding application?

If your plan of action involves applying for funding, you will need to fill out a funding application form. Funding selection criteria may also apply and eligibility may vary periodically. For instance, a pre-requisite may be that a heritage place is publicly accessible and protected through a heritage listing, that is, protected via statutory means by local government or state government heritage inventory, register or list. The information provision requirements will vary according to the funding program, but usually include the following elements.

2.6.2 Project description

Describe:

- place/ project name and location of the study or the natural or cultural heritage places you will be working on
- ownership and owners consent
- existing heritage status – existing heritage statutory protection
- existing information on the place, such as existing significance assessment
- what you want to achieve
- how you intend to do this
- who will do the work and what skills they have
- conservation approach
- how the community will be involved whether the relevant indigenous community has been consulted
- whether the project will affect an identified heritage place, for example, a World Heritage place, a place listed on the National or Commonwealth Heritage Lists, a State government-listed place, a local government listed place or a National Trust listed place
- the time frame for completing the project
- budget including existing funding available and past grants received
- public accessibility of the place or area
- disclosure of current or future plans for the place (such as sale or redevelopment)
- measures to evaluate and demonstrate whether the project has been successful
- applicant details

Examples of State heritage agency funding programs include:

- Victorian Government's Victoria's Heritage Grants Program - <http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Funding.aspx>
- New South Wales Heritage Grants programs - http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/02_index.htm

- Heritage Council of Western Australia Heritage Grants Program - <http://www.heritage.wa.gov.au/owning-a-heritage-property/Financial-Assistance/Heritage-Council-Grants.html>
- Tasmanian Heritage Council and Tasmanian Government Heritage Conservation Funding Program - http://www.heritage.tas.gov.au/funding_program.html
- South Australian Heritage Fund Grants - <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/heritage/conserving/grants.html>
- Northern Territory Heritage Grants - <http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/heritage/grants/index.html>

Always contact the state agency for advice on the latest round of assistance programs and assistance.

2.6.3 Project budget

Outline:

- what funding you are requesting from the funding program
- what funding or in-kind resources will be provided from other sources
- how the money will be spent, with a breakdown of what will be spent on each item, for example, wages and salary, travel, consultants, materials, administration or training.

When assessing funding applications, program managers are usually concerned that the project is feasible and well planned and adheres to good conservation practice, and that all necessary approvals have been obtained. To maximise the chances of success, make sure that the application targets any funding priorities and selection criteria nominated by the program manager.

2.7 Timing

Work out which action should come first, and what is the best order for the remaining actions. Determine start and end dates for each action, for example, obtaining approvals before the start of works. The start and end dates of actions may overlap. Make a detailed timetable so that you can check how you are going and can see when the busiest times will be.

2.8 Review

Decide when and how you will review your plan of action to make sure that you can adapt to changing priorities or new information. A key time to do this would be after assessing the significance of heritage places (see Chapter 4) and before taking action to conserve or protect them.

3.

Heritage Places and Values

Heritage places have a range of values that communities recognise. These are natural heritage values which include the importance of ecosystems, biological diversity and geodiversity, and cultural heritage values which include the importance of spiritual, aesthetic, historic, social, scientific and other special values. This chapter presents examples of some of the different types of heritage places and their identified values.

Heritage places are often described as either natural or cultural heritage places. However, many places contain a range of heritage values. For example, it is easy to think of a forested valley, a coastal landscape or a bushland reserve as part of our natural heritage. These places may also contain evidence of past human activity, either from indigenous people or settlers and be part of our cultural heritage.

Within a forest there might be evidence of old sawmills, mines, huts, roads, lime or brick kilns, or even the remains of whole settlements associated with European occupation of the area. The Aboriginal people of the area might attribute particular significance to a feature of the forest for spiritual reasons, and there might be evidence of past Aboriginal occupation of the area in middens near a swamp or earth rings associated with ceremonial grounds.

Places may also be valued by different people for different reasons. A forest ecosystem may have a number of special natural values such as existence or intrinsic, wilderness and scientific values. It may also have cultural values such as aesthetic, historic or social values for a particular community group.

3.1 Types of Values

Some examples of the different types of heritage places and values are:

- remnant vegetation communities or areas which contain a variety of landscape types and ecosystem
- sites which are the habitat of a rare or threatened plant or animal species
- undisturbed environments or environments demonstrating natural processes at work, for example, wetlands, wilderness areas, coastal estuaries or dune systems
- geodiversity features such as fossil sites and geological outcrops, representative or rare soil types, hydrological and other earth processes
- places with evidence of use by indigenous people for activities such as the extraction of raw materials, manufacture of stone tools or trading of materials, or associated with day-to-day living activities such as campsites, shell middens, hunting grounds or particular food collecting places
- places of historic importance to indigenous people, for example, sites of political protest, cattle stations, hostels, halls, churches, town camps and parks

- places of spiritual importance to indigenous people, for example, landscapes, seascapes and features associated with the Dreamtime or Ilan Kustom (Torres Strait Islands), events and places of special significance to indigenous people such as ceremonial places, meeting places and places where people are buried and remembered
- places of cultural contact between indigenous and non-indigenous people, for example, massacre sites, missions and reserves
- archaeological sites – maritime and historic
- places of importance to Europeans or ethnic groups, for example, houses, factories, churches, bridges, monuments or cemeteries, or a landscape with a range of evidence related to a particular activity, for example, a mining site that includes miners' huts, the mine, poppet head, water races, sheds or Chinese gardens
- landscapes of significance for their cultural heritage value, for example, coach routes, mining sites.
- places where particular events took place, even though there may be no physical evidence of the event or activity
- places demonstrating ways of life, customs, land use or designs no longer practised places of social value to the community, for example, schools, parks and gardens, community
- objects and collections
- halls, local shops, churches or other religious venues
- places important in the community's history or as part of local folklore, or associated with work or knowledge of country.

4.

A Heritage Study

Doing a heritage study involves gathering information about the heritage values and determining the heritage significance of a place. This chapter will help you to do a heritage study.

The methods for doing a heritage study outlined below can be used for a large geographic area, an individual place, or for a group of places linked by a common theme.

The approach to a heritage study outlined here is:

- prepare for the study
- gather relevant information
- assess heritage significance
- write a heritage report
- use your findings.

Writing a heritage report is not necessary for a conservation plan, but gathering information on heritage values and assessing the significance of those values are essential parts of the plan. The information in this chapter under 'Gather relevant information' and 'Assess heritage significance' will help here.

If you are doing a study or assessing significance that involves indigenous heritage places, make sure that local indigenous communities are centrally involved in decisions about:

- whether the study should be undertaken
- how it should be undertaken, and who should be involved
- how to present results
- how to treat sensitive information
- what happens with the study and who controls or manages what comes out of the study.

'Ask First, A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values' (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/ask-first.html> - is the relevant guide to consult for indigenous significance assessment. This guide recognises that indigenous people are the primary source of information on the value of their heritage and how it is best conserved. Indigenous people must have an active role in any indigenous heritage planning process and decision making (Ask First, 2000:6).

Other people or groups may also need to be involved.

4.1 Prepare for the study

In preparation for the study you will need to:

- define objectives
- form a preliminary view on the boundaries of the study area
- determine who can help with the study.

Define the specific objectives of your heritage study. This may have already been done as part of your plan of action (see Chapter 2) or may still need to be done if a heritage study was only one of the actions identified.

Try to get all groups, agencies and individuals participating in the project to agree on its objectives, process and desired outcomes so that everyone is committed to achieving the same end.

4.1.1 Local council heritage studies

Local government initiated studies usually have a clear objective to identify local heritage to be subsequently protected under the local planning scheme or planning instrument. They may be undertaken concurrent to any major review of the local instrument or as a separate project. Local councils may receive support from State or Territory governments to undertake a heritage study. Community consultation may form part of the heritage study and any resultant planning scheme protection will involve public exhibition or advertising of Council's intentions to protect heritage places or areas.

The traditional approach to a heritage study involved appointment of a heritage consultant who identifies significant heritage within the study area. More recently, community based heritage studies have been undertaken which focus on collaborating with the local community to identify important heritage places.

A local government may partner with a State heritage agency to prepare a heritage study. This may involve applying for financial assistance, or receiving expert advice on how to undertake a study, who can assist and what outcomes to expect.

Objectives for local government heritage studies include:

- To determine whether a place, area or precinct has heritage significance.
- Comprehensive survey of places and areas that are of cultural heritage significance for the local area.
- To assist develop conservation policies for the protection and management of local heritage.
- To develop a list of places and areas for protection under the local planning scheme or instrument.
- To assist achieve the conservation objectives of the council and state.
- To update existing records to ensure that information is current (for example, to take into account changes in condition of places or to resolve information gaps in previous studies).

4.1.2 Community Based Heritage Studies

One approach to heritage studies is to increase participation by the community in the process. In rural areas in New South Wales, the preparation of community based heritage studies are supported through funding by the State heritage agency.

The approach is outlined in the New South Wales publication 'Community Based Heritage Studies: A Guide' (2007) - http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/info_community2007.pdf The approach involves partnering between a community working group and a qualified heritage consultant, as project co-ordinator. The project is advertised and the community actively involved in nominating heritage items, local knowledge assisting the efficiency and accuracy of data as well as ensuring places of social value are identified.

Examples of community based heritage studies include:

In Griffith, New South Wales, Council's heritage advisor led a community based heritage study which also resulted in a local publication 'Griffith Heritage' (2004) - <http://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/lp.asp?cat=63> - including local people telling their own stories about the area. The publication also provides a 'how to do it' example of a community based heritage study.

In Walgett Shire Council, New South Wales, Council's Heritage Advisor recently undertook the preparation of the Walgett Shire Community Based Heritage Study - <http://www.walgett.nsw.gov.au/planning/1119/3457.html> This study has had clear outcomes with the exhibition of places nominated for local heritage protection for public comment.

4.1.3 Define the boundaries of the study area

Defining the geographical boundary of the study area will help to establish:

- who to involve
- what areas to protect
- which properties are involved
- what planning or other jurisdictions need to be considered.

The exact boundary cannot always be worked out or decided at the beginning of the study and may evolve over the process. The boundary may include buffer zones or an area much larger than the heritage place so that the precise location of the place is not easily made known. Legal boundaries or management boundaries may be different from cultural boundaries. Some heritage places or landscapes do not have clear boundaries.

4.1.4 Determine who can help with the study

Community members may be able to help observe, record and describe places in the field, do research, and identify, describe and share knowledge about places known to them. Local government officers such as planners, heritage officers and librarians may be able to help with research, coordination and advice.

Heritage specialists can help with project design, undertake the technical work involved in the project or provide training to volunteers. Heritage specialists include professionals such as botanists, zoologists, environmental historians, geomorphologists, geologists, soil scientists, indigenous heritage officers or site officers, archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, community facilitators and social planners. Professional heritage expertise is necessary to undertake the technical work involved such as undertake heritage significance

assessment and make management recommendations.

4.1.5 Natural and cultural heritage specialists

Advice on employing appropriately qualified and competent heritage specialists can be obtained from the following organisations:

- State and Territory cultural heritage authorities and natural environment departments
- community cultural heritage organisations such as the National Trust, and nature conservation groups
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, community groups and custodians
- professional organisations representing natural and cultural heritage specialists, for example, Australia ICOMOS, the Australian Association of Consulting Archaeologists, the Professional Historians Association of Australia, the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand, the Ecological Society of Australia, the Geological Society of Australia and the Planning Institute of Australia.
- museums, for example, the Queensland Museum and the Australian Museum.
- Local communities and historical societies.

Many of these organisations would also have a register or listing of heritage specialists working in your local area or region. Usually organisations offering such lists are not willing to recommend one specialist over another, but they may be able to refer you to past examples of a person's work so that you can seek a reference. Some of these are available online, such as the Australian Association of Consulting Archaeologists - <http://www.aacai.com.au/> - and the Heritage Consultants and Contractors directory - <http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Heritage-places-objects/Consultants-and-contractors.aspx> - published by the Victorian state heritage agency, Heritage Victoria.

4.1.6 Gather relevant information

This will involve the following actions:

- identify what information is available
- identify additional information
- determine resources
- organise your information.

4.1.7 Identify what information is available

Information on heritage values can be found in existing heritage registers/ lists. Existing information may be restricted to the identification of the place as a heritage item but data may be restricted, for example, to an address of the property. Generally, further research and an assessment of the heritage significance of the place is required.

Before undertaking a heritage assessment it is important to fully understand the place, based on documentary and oral research and physical investigation of the fabric of the place.

If the place is not registered, the following sources of heritage information could be helpful:

- documentary research
- field study – field survey and field recording
- collecting community knowledge – talking to individuals, doing oral histories, holding community workshops.

Chapter 5 discusses these methods in detail.

4.1.8 Heritage registers

There are many different lists or registers of natural and cultural heritage places throughout Australia. Remember that registers are not comprehensive lists of heritage places, but lists of the places that have been recorded up to the present time. A heritage register listing will usually include the location of a place, including ownership and title details, a description of the place, and sometimes a statement of significance explaining why the place is important. Note that many heritage registers emphasise the physical aspects of a place, or its scientific value, and may not document all the heritage values of a place.

Heritage registers around Australia

Commonwealth Government management

World Heritage List

The World Heritage List - <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list> - is a list of places of outstanding international importance nominated by Australia and agreed to by the World Heritage Committee. The List is established by the international law, the World Heritage Convention. This list is administered by the United Nations.

National Heritage List

The National Heritage List - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/national/index.html> - is a list of places of natural, historic and Indigenous places that are of outstanding national heritage value to the Australian nation. The list is established by the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/> This list is administered by the Commonwealth Government.

Commonwealth Heritage List

The Commonwealth Heritage List - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/commonwealth/index.html> - is a list of natural, historic and Indigenous places of significance owned or controlled by the Australian Government. The list is established by the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). This list is administered by the Commonwealth Government.

List of Overseas Places of Historic Significance to Australia

The List of Overseas Places of Historic Significance to Australia - <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/overseas-places.html> - recognises symbolically sites of outstanding historic significance to Australia located outside of the Australian jurisdiction. The list is established by the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). This list is administered by the Commonwealth Government. It includes Anzac Cove, Gallipoli.

Natural heritage registers

These various registers may be in the form of 'sites of significance', state of the environment reports, or lists of national parks and reserves. For instance, reserves such as National parks or state forests that are so declared under protected areas legislation. There is a wide variety of designation for reserved lands in the States and Territories², including aquatic reserves, sanctuaries, wild, scenic and heritage rivers, wilderness and primitive areas, State game reserves and conservation parks. A variety of different State laws protect natural heritage places.

Indigenous site registers

These are lists of recorded Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander places including religious or 'dreaming' sites, burial sites, rock art sites, traditional camping sites and sometimes historic sites such as Aboriginal missions and massacre sites.

These registers are maintained by State and Territory government indigenous heritage authorities and by local land councils in some parts of Australia. Access to some information on Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander places may be restricted to respect the wishes of indigenous communities, and to ensure that access to this information does not put any cultural heritage places at risk. Indigenous heritage places of national significance are protected by the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth).

2 - See Boer and Wiffen (2006)

State Heritage Place Registers

These are lists of significant heritage places which may include natural and cultural heritage places. They can include landscapes, movable heritage and collections, historic places, buildings, streets, relics, works and areas/precincts. Each State and Territory has a list or register which is maintained by the State and Territory government heritage agency or department. These are:

<i>State</i>	<i>Key State Heritage Act</i>
New South Wales	State Heritage Register - http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_index.htm - established by the Heritage Act 1977 (NSW) - http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ha197786/
Victoria	Victorian Heritage Register and Heritage Inventory - http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/vhd/heritagevic - established by the Heritage Act 1995 (Vic) - http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/ha199586/
Queensland	Queensland Heritage Register - http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/heritage/index.html - established by the Queensland Heritage Act 1992 (Qld) - http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/qld/consol_act/qha1992188/
South Australia	South Australian Heritage Register - http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/heritage/assessing/database.html - kept under the Heritage Places Act 1993 (SA) - http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/HERITAGE%20PLACES%20ACT%201993/CURRENT/1993.56.UN.PDF
Western Australia	WA Register - http://register.heritage.wa.gov.au/ - under the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990 (WA) - http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol_act/howaa1990295/
Northern Territory	Northern Territory Heritage Register - http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/heritage/ntregister/index.html - under the Heritage Conservation Act 1991 (NT) - http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nt/consol_act/hca229/
ACT	ACT Heritage Register - http://www.tams.act.gov.au/live/heritage/act_heritage_register
Tasmania	Tasmanian Heritage Register kept under the Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995 (Tas) - http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/tas/consol_act/hcha1995279/

National Shipwrecks Database

The Australian National Shipwrecks Database is a register of historic shipwrecks in Australian waters. Australia protects its shipwrecks and their associated relics that are older than 75 years through the Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976.

Local government registers

In most States and Territories, local government authorities keep heritage registers or lists, attached to the local planning instrument or scheme. Some cover only historic places, while others also include natural areas and indigenous places.

Other lists

The National Trust Register is maintained by the National Trust in each State and Territory. Some specialist organisations such as the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and the Institution of Engineers keep lists of important historic places, for example, trees, Art Deco buildings, gardens and bridges.

4.1.9 Heritage-related studies

There are a variety of studies that might contain information relevant to local heritage places. These include school projects, the work of local specialists such as field naturalists, pre-development survey reports, planning studies, environmental impact statements, local histories of an area, families, industries or buildings, scientific papers, journal articles and reports.

There may also be studies of types of places that are found in your local area as well as a broader area, for example, a statewide survey of cemeteries, a state-wide survey of schools, a study of Aboriginal middens along a length of coastline, or records on the statewide distribution of a rare plant species. Such studies are particularly useful for comparing the comparative significance of places. Contact the State heritage agency for information on accessing such State-wide resources.

4.1.10 Identify additional information

Systematically identify what additional information is required. Questions you could ask are:

- What is the coverage of the geographic area of interest? Is this adequate? What else do you need?
- Have all possible sources of information been explored, for example, documentary sources, field sources, maps and community knowledge? If not, what other sources are worthwhile exploring?

- Is there enough information on all aspects of the place or places relevant to heritage significance as is possible or necessary? If not, where could you collect more information? (The Principle of Uncertainty, derived from the international legal principle, the Precautionary Principle, outlined in the Natural Heritage Charter (2002), accepts that our knowledge of natural heritage is incomplete, and that the full potential significance or value of natural heritage remains unknown because of this uncertain state of knowledge.)

4.1.11 Gaps in existing collected heritage data

Gathering information about heritage places is an ongoing process. There are often significant gaps in information held. For instance where a study aims to look at cultural heritage places throughout a whole local government area. Searches of heritage registers and other local studies have shown that:

- the heritage registers contain many town buildings and quite a few rural homesteads
- heritage studies have been completed for each of the towns in the local government area, but not for the rural districts.
- An analysis of the information you have, using a simple framework of place types and themes that describe the information you want to collect, has revealed that:
 - no trees or gardens of heritage value in the towns have been identified, even though the towns are well known for these features
 - no examples of farm outbuildings or structures such as shearing sheds, sheep dips and yards have been identified, even though most of the homesteads on the older farm properties are listed
 - there is little recorded information about the role of Aboriginal people in the history of the area, or about places of significance to Aboriginal people
 - the history of the forested hills, important in the past for logging, charcoal-burning, brush-cutting, hunting and bee-keeping, has not been recorded and is not reflected in the heritage register listings
 - the local community was not involved in past heritage studies, so there is no evidence that the social value of places has ever been considered.

You are now able to decide what additional information to collect.

4.1.12 Determine resources

Having identified the gaps in your information, set priorities for further work according to urgency, threat, available time, funding and other resources, and the objectives of the study. Using the above example, you may decide that the most important work to fulfil the objectives of your study is to collect community views about places with social value, and information on the Aboriginal history of the area, but that there will also be resources to fund a small study of farm outbuildings. This focuses limited resources on the 'gaps' and avoids duplication of research/effort.

A heritage study involves three key steps: investigating significance; assessing significance and managing significance. A staged approach may also be employed in implementing the heritage study however it is important to budget to ensure that the third step, 'managing significance' is undertaken to ensure that identified heritage places are afforded appropriate statutory protection.

4.1.13 Organise your information

It is important to decide on a logical and systematic way to organise information so that it can be retrieved when needed. The publication/public availability of the information collected is important; several State heritage agencies provide free database software to local governments to prepare an inventory of heritage places.

4.2 Collecting heritage information

You may need to collect additional information about heritage values. This chapter outlines three methods for collecting information: documentary research, field study, and collecting community knowledge.

You can collect information that describes places in terms of their development and present state, and information that helps to explain the heritage significance of a place.

This may involve one or more of the following:

- documentary research
- field study
- collecting community knowledge.

The following descriptions of the different methods provide a starting point for collecting additional information. The descriptions do not provide all the necessary information, but should help you decide which methods to use and what further advice or specialist assistance is necessary. Check the Resources section of the guide for organisations or references which can provide more detailed advice.

If collecting information that touches on indigenous heritage places, ensure that indigenous communities are centrally involved in decisions about:

- whether the study should be undertaken
- how it should be undertaken, and who should be involved
- how to present results
- how to treat sensitive information
- what happens with the study and who controls or manages what comes out of the study.

You may also need to closely involve other landowners and those with a strong interest in the place (see Chapter 2).

4.2.1 Documentary research

Documentary research involves searching collections of libraries, archives and museums for information relating to your study. This could be information that relates to individual places in the study area or information relating to the study area as a whole. This information contributes to describing and determining the significance of heritage places by:

- suggesting places that might have heritage value
- providing evidence about the development of heritage places over time
- describing the past and present features of places.

When using documentary sources of information, it is important to remember that the information recorded will be influenced by the culture and intention of the recorder. Records may not be as comprehensive or accurate as they appear to be at first glance. In a diary entry, for example, some events may have been omitted whereas other events may have been emphasised, depending on the interests and concerns of the writer. When putting together the story of a place based on documentary records, it is useful to bear this in mind.

Maps and plans

Maps and plans are a source of valuable information about changes to a place over time, many of which cannot be easily detected from the evidence at a place now.

For example, plans of land holdings often show the locations of landholders' 'improvements' such as fences, buildings and orchards, as well as original native vegetation. These structures may have long since disappeared from the landscape, but knowledge of their existence can help to build up a picture of land use over time. This can then be used to reflect on the significance of remaining historic structures in the landscape, or on the significance of remnant native vegetation.

Maps and plans include parish and county land tenure maps, land allotment plans such as portion plans, surveyors maps and plans, and maps from government departments such as forestry, mining and conservation departments. These types of maps and plans can usually be found in archives, State and Territory libraries, government land departments and council records.

Photographic and picture collections

Photographic and picture collections can show the detailed development of a place over time. These sources are particularly useful for understanding the changes to buildings and landscapes through time. Aerial photos held by State and Territory land or mapping agencies and commercial suppliers can be especially useful. Aerial photographs are almost always accurately dated and sequences of images of the same place over many decades can sometimes be found. Photographic collections can be found in archives, libraries, galleries and museums, and government agencies. The National Library of Australia has provided a single entry point for access of digitised images held by Australian cultural institutions, including historic images: Picture Australia - <http://www.pictureaustralia.org/>

Books, articles and reports

Books, articles and reports can provide specific information about places you are interested in, or information to help build up a picture of broader themes relating to your study. Search for sources of information such as local or regional histories, broad histories on themes that have played a big part in the history of your study area, for example, mining, forestry, manufacturing or exploration, or histories of communities, such as indigenous community stories.

Also search for information about important plant or animal species or communities in your area, finding out about their habitat requirements, abundance, behaviour and evolution. Information about the development of landforms, soils and geology can be found in agricultural and mining libraries.

Search public libraries as well as libraries of government departments, and special interest collections such as those of historical societies and herbariums for books, articles and reports. Many reports and articles can also now be found on the Internet.

Archives and document collections

Archives and document collections contain information about past events recorded in documents such as government or company correspondence, newspapers and personal diaries. They can provide detailed information about the past environment of places, as well as information about the activities of individuals or organisations. Each State and Territory has a large archive, and some smaller organisations have their own archives.

Searching through the mass of archival records to find particular records can be complicated and time-consuming. State and Territory libraries and historical societies run short courses on how to use archives for historical research, which may be useful. Alternatively, engage an historian to locate and interpret public and archived documents.

4.2.2 Field study

A field study can take the form of a field survey, which involves looking over a large area for features or places of heritage value. This might involve travelling by vehicle or on foot with particular members of the community who know the area, and/or specialists. A field study can also involve field recording, which focuses on describing the present features of a place and research which leads to understanding aspects of these features. Examples of types of field studies are described below.

Field studies contribute to identifying and assessing heritage significance by:

- locating places which may have heritage value
- describing the features of heritage places
- providing evidence from which to interpret the development of a place.

Documentary research precedes field surveys. If there is a fauna database for the area, for example, Atlas of Victorian Wildlife or Queensland NatureSearch, try to establish what species are likely to occur there by checking the database for records collected in the past or from surrounding localities.

Note that the study method used can itself affect the values of a place. For example, fungus spores can be carried in on boots, or vehicle tracks may be followed by others and introduce a larger number of visitors to a fragile place. It is important to follow the protocols of assessing and developing ways of minimising any impact before beginning fieldwork. It is essential to obtain permission from owners to enter or gain access to their property.

Surveys of indigenous community interests

Indigenous community surveys are one of the principal means of gathering information about the traditional, historic and contemporary social significance of places to local indigenous communities. The surveys can identify local indigenous community interests, expertise and knowledge.

Remember that it is important to observe cultural protocols about visiting places, and obtain permission from relevant State or Territory agencies and traditional custodians before surveying any indigenous places.

Specific methods include talking with indigenous community representatives or knowledge-holders, or visiting specific sites or areas with people from the community and discussing significance and

management. Indigenous community members may also request that their oral history be recorded, or archaeological sites described, to formally document their attachment to specific places or landscapes. In such cases the community may also need or want the assistance of technical specialists such as anthropologists, archaeologists or historians. The success of surveys of indigenous community interests will depend on factors such as:

- the nature and extent of indigenous community involvement in the survey
- a common understanding of project objectives and outcomes
- sensitivity to individual and community concerns
- the willingness of all to listen and to accurately report information
- the goodwill developed through sharing and recognising indigenous perspectives and experiences.

Archaeological and historic place surveys

Archaeological and historic place surveys involve carefully studying the landscape for any signs of past human occupation or activity, such as material remains, modifications of the landscape or changes in soils chemistry. They include looking underground and above ground for remains and features. The types of features which can be surveyed include signs of both indigenous and non-indigenous activity. Heritage specialists, however, usually specialise in either indigenous or non-indigenous subject matter. The types of information collected on archaeological and historic place surveys include the location of particular sites that are associated with the history of the area, and descriptions of materials or structures found at those sites.

Materials found in archaeological sites, for example, might include materials from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander activity such as stone tools, campfire remains, shell and bone; and materials from non-indigenous activity, such as foundations of houses and buildings, broken household cutlery, and earthworks from mining activities – water races, tunnels and shafts, mullock heaps. Historic place material may include buildings or structures such as walls and gravestones as well as features such as tree-plantings, gardens, streetscapes, roads and railway routes.

Archaeological and historic place surveys consider questions such as:

- What kinds of places are numerous in the area, and what kinds are rare?
- What patterns have emerged from the survey, especially in relation to different landform types,
- time periods or cultural themes?
- How do these places demonstrate or contribute to an understanding of the history of the area or region?

In archaeological surveys, the area of investigation is usually narrowed down by techniques such as sampling before fieldwork commences. Factors such as the weather conditions, terrain, time of day and sun angle, and the area of exposed non-vegetated surface will affect the ability to notice and accurately identify archaeological material or landscape modifications. The information obtained is sometimes used to work out the likely type and location of other archaeological sites in the area.

Fauna surveys

Depending on the amount of time and resources available, fauna surveys can produce information about the types of animal species present in an area – their abundance, population variations, and patterns of behaviour such as where they live, what they eat, when they breed or seasonal migration, and threats such as feral cats or dogs.

Failure to locate a species does not necessarily mean that it is absent – its numbers may be low or it may be difficult to observe. Furthermore, a single short-term survey will rarely produce the information required and, in the Australian climate, observations over a single year may not present an accurate picture. So beware of 'snapshot' fauna surveys.

The non-expert may find it difficult to identify animals correctly from observation surveys and may need to seek the assistance of known experts. If it is necessary to capture or trap animals, engage suitably qualified and experienced biologists who have appropriate permits from State or Territory wildlife authorities.

Many major vertebrate groups can be surveyed using observation and a limited amount of equipment such as binoculars and spotlights. Because most species such as migratory birds and hibernating reptiles are seasonal in their behaviour, it is best to have two survey periods in most areas. In temperate Australia these periods generally correspond with late winter, and late spring/early summer; in tropical climates with the end of the dry season (August–September) and during the wet season (February–March).

Make daytime observations of birds, large mammals (kangaroos and wallabies) and reptiles, and for signs of small mammals, for example, scats, runways, burrows and diggings. Amphibians (mostly frogs) are best surveyed in the evening when their characteristic calls can be heard. There are some excellent pre-recorded frog tapes available for those unfamiliar with their calls.

Use a spotlight or powerful torch to survey nocturnal birds such as owls, and mammals such as possums and gliders. Museums have databases and tagged specimens of vertebrates and invertebrates which can provide past and present evidence of fauna in particular locations.

Vegetation surveys

Vegetation surveys involve field observation and description of the plant species and communities (vegetation types) present in an area and their relationships to each other. They can also involve observation of any processes that are threatening plant species and communities, such as soil erosion, clearing, inappropriate use of fire, grazing, weed invasion, climate change, and air, soil and water pollution.

Vegetation surveys can contribute to an understanding of whether species or communities are rare or threatened, and the relationship between the plants and the soils and landscapes in which they live. This information is useful in understanding what factors will promote or adversely affect the survival of those plant species in that area, the significant contribution of those plants to the landscape, and the significance of a natural place for its biodiversity and ecosystem values.

Note that surveys to determine the presence or absence of plant or animal species only partially contribute to understanding the significance of natural places. Understanding habitats, ecosystem processes, and the elements of geodiversity and biodiversity is critical to establishing the significance of places.

Examples of survey methods:

- Prepare a written and mapped description of the different plant communities present, including - major species, and the structure of the vegetation, for example, forest, woodland or heath. This is often done using aerial photography or imagery.
- Record as many species or communities present as possible to compile a plant list or inventory for a given area. Include weed species as these will be important in deciding how to manage the area.
- Do a more detailed assessment for very small areas using a quadrat sampling technique. This will require expert assistance.

Landform, soil and geological surveys

The Australian Natural Heritage Charter for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/pubs/australian-natural-heritage-charter.pdf> - defines geodiversity as 'the natural range (diversity) of geological (bedrock), geomorphological (landform) and soil features, assemblages, systems and processes. Geodiversity includes evidence of past life, ecosystems and environments in the history of the earth as well as a range of atmospheric, hydrological and biological processes currently acting on rocks, landforms and soils'.

Surveys for heritage sites can involve recording the distribution and extent of particular landforms, soil types and geological features, and the nature of these features. Surveys locate both typical and outstanding examples of the major characteristics of local landforms, soils and geological features, as well as particularly well developed, rare or unusual examples.

As with other surveys, documentary research precedes field surveys. This information is useful in understanding the earth processes which led to the formation of the local environment, and the earth processes that are continuing to form the environment. The continuation of these processes is often fundamental to ensuring the ongoing survival of the ecosystems of which they are a part. They also add to the richness and interest of our environment.

Landform, soil and geological surveys can contribute to answering questions such as:

- What series of geological, hydrological or atmospheric events led to the formation of this landscape?
- How is the landscape changing? What are the characteristics of local soils?
- What is the nature and pattern of water flow in creeks and rivers?

Landform heritage surveys look for individual landforms of interest, or particular groups of landform features where relationships between the features enable us to better understand the evolution of the whole. For example, a beach, a series of sand dunes and a lagoon behind the sand dunes may be interesting in their own right, but together they comprise a related assemblage of coastal landforms. Other sites will be significant because they show natural processes currently at work, for example, where coastal landforms are being modified by wave action and other processes, or because the landforms result from past processes that are no longer active, that is, 'relief' and forms.

Soil heritage surveys look for good examples of soil features, or sites where soil processes have been allowed to continue in a relatively undisturbed state. These sites may be of particular interest in areas where there has been widespread disturbance by human land uses.

Geological heritage surveys often try to find places where evidence for the geological history of the area is clearly visible at the surface. Examples include natural rock outcrops as well as artificial exposures of geological features in road cuttings and quarries. Fossil sites also provide important evidence of past life and environments.

Field recording

Field recording provides information about an individual place today – what it looks like, what is left, what threats it faces. The level of detail of field recording will vary depending on how the results of the study are to be used. For example, if the site is being recorded as part of a local heritage inventory, it probably only requires a simple description of values and features, and several photographs. If the site is being recorded before conservation works are carried out, it may need detailed site measurement, a list of all features and artefacts, a detailed condition assessment and a heritage significance assessment (see Chapter 4). Always try to record as much as possible while at a place. Leave enough time to do this because it is almost impossible to remember what was where after leaving the site. Consider using drawings, photographic, video and audio records wherever possible and practical. When preparing to record places in the field, it is important to observe cultural protocols about visiting places, and obtain permission from relevant State or Territory agencies, landowners and traditional custodians before recording any indigenous places.

What should be included in a field record?

Location of the place

Record:

- a written description of how to reach the place and permits and approvals needed to go there
- a sketch map showing how to get to the place, for example, a map reference with map coordinates
- a written explanation of where the site is in relation to nearby landmarks.

Take care with this information if making it publicly accessible would lead to vandalism or degradation of the site.

Description of the place

Record:

- a clear description of the place and its major features and values
- a sketch, map or plan of the place and its major features, showing the extent of the place and the boundaries of the site
- photographs showing the place and major features a description of the condition of the place and whether it is endangered in any way, for example,
- places may be threatened by development, lack of maintenance or protection, or vandalism.

Setting of the place

Record:

- a brief description of the environment around the place, for example, forest, open plain, suburban housing, industrial estate or agricultural land, and the relationship of the place to geographical features such as waterholes, creeks, caves or hills
- a sketch, map or plan showing the relationship of the place to its surrounding environment and, if relevant, to other heritage places.

4.2.3 Collecting community knowledge

Collecting community knowledge can help to gather information that may not be recorded on paper, and may not be able to be obtained from looking at places in the field. It also helps to highlight the significance of places to sections of the local community. Collect community knowledge by talking to people and recording their oral histories, and through community workshops.

Oral history Talking to individuals

The Oral History Handbook (2006) describes oral history as 'a picture of the past in people's own words'. Oral history involves interviewing selected individuals in a structured way to gather their recollections about a particular event, place or period. The interviews are often taped, then written up afterwards.

Oral histories can provide a sense of what the community was doing in the area during the most recent period of history. They can often provide a wealth of detail about the cultural life of the community at a particular moment in time, and how that was expressed through places in the environment. For example, someone who once lived in an interesting old house may know how the rooms were used and when the house was extended. They may also have useful documents such as earlier photographs and plans. This type of information can often be difficult to recover in any other way.

Details on how to go about doing an oral history are set out in:

- The Oral History Handbook (2006)
- Telling It Like It Is: A guide to making local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, (1996)

Community workshops

Community workshops involve holding a workshop or meeting with people invited because of their membership of different groups in the local community. The workshop method is designed to draw out information about places valued by the local community, as represented by people at the workshop. This method is useful because it gives people the opportunity to share their knowledge, to learn about places important to others, and to participate together in caring for heritage.

Prepare for the workshop

Arrange a workshop venue that has facilities such as pinboards, tables and chairs, and a kitchen, and an appropriate layout and size. Try the local hall or school. Invite a wide range of people from different but relevant walks of life and reflecting different interests to the workshop. This helps to stimulate more creativity and lateral thinking within the group (see the box 'Who to invite to a community heritage workshop'). Think about whether it would be useful to hold separate meetings for different groups because of cultural differences, confidence and so on.

Prepare a workshop outline. This might include an introduction which:

- explains the purpose of the study and what people will be asked to do
- discusses how the results will be used
- uses slides or other visual images to get people thinking broadly about the types of heritage places – natural, indigenous and historic – that might be in their area
- clarifies any questions about what can be considered to be heritage places.

Gather workshop materials, for example, pinboards, butchers' paper, maps and pens.

Who to invite to a community heritage workshop

Invite people with knowledge relevant to heritage places in the study area. They may be people who have lived in the study area for some time or who, through their work or own interests, travel widely throughout the local area. Involve people from a wide range of interests, including:

by geographical area

- those who live or work in the area
- those with long associations in the area
- those from each distinctive locality within the area
- those involved in local government for the area

by environmental/cultural interest

- natural
- indigenous
- historic

by industry or activity

- tourism and recreation
- primary industry, for example, grazing, aquaculture, forestry, mining and bee-keeping
- township commerce and business
- community services and involvements, both paid and voluntary

by community characteristics

- age
- gender
- ethnicity/culture or any other grouping of interests that are important in the situation.

Workshop method

Step 1 Reflect individually

Ask people to reflect individually on the places that are important to them before they are thrown into the hurly-burly of group discussion. For example:

- ask people to write down the places that:
 - ◇ they would share with visitors
 - ◇ they visit every summer for holidays or for picnics and family outings
 - ◇ are their favourite landmark or feature
 - ◇ they would want to show to their great grandchildren
 - ◇ show the history of their community over time
 - ◇ are connected to special people in the community
 - ◇ have very strong memories for people
 - ◇ are important in keeping the community culture strong
- ask people to describe their area to a stranger who might want to come and visit, highlighting their special places.

Step 2 Compile collective lists

The next step is group discussion to put together a combined list of places. This can be done:

- in small groups of perhaps four to six people working with a facilitator, with groups putting their lists together on big sheets of butchers paper so that other groups can see what has been identified
- by working across a map from north to south or east to west, with each person mentioning the places they have identified in Step 1 as the mapmaker moves across that area. This latter method involves lots of discussion of whether one person's place is the same as that of another – sometimes the boundaries differ and sometimes the values differ. Such discussion is very valuable.

Step 3 Review the combined list

The group reviews the combined list and determines the relative importance of places to them.

Step 4 Describe places

Each place identified now needs to be described to draw together all of the information held by the group. This can be a large and daunting task and needs to be carefully organised. Fill in one form for each place, including the following information:

- name of the place
- location and how to get there, especially if it is in a remote location or is hard to find
- who can help to find it, and who should be contacted for further information about this place or for access to the place
- a brief description of the place
- what is known of its history, including any published sources on the history of the place or any local individuals who could help (include their name and contact details)
- why the place is important to this group.

Step 5 Conclude the workshop

Conclude with a discussion of what the group has discovered about places valued by the community, and how this information will be used. Note that this method is aimed at gathering community views about heritage places within a large area, but it can be adapted to gathering community views about a particular site or place by asking people what they value about that place and involving them in describing it.

Step 6 Share the results

The form chosen for sharing the results will vary. You could, for example, distribute the report, develop a display of photographs and information about the places, compile a computer database at the local library or present a slide night.

Sharing the results will also provide an opportunity to test whether the broader community agrees with the descriptions of places and the importance ascribed to them, and whether any places have been missed. This is important because the workshop process only involves a relatively small proportion of the community and may not represent broader community views. You may also choose to have the results reviewed by an expert or a panel of experts.

4.3 Assess heritage significance

Assessing heritage significance is a crucial step if you are going to take any action to conserve or protect a place or want to gain support from others for conservation.

4.3.1 What is heritage significance and why assess it?

Heritage significance is based on the natural heritage values which include the importance of ecosystems, biological diversity and geodiversity, and cultural heritage values which include the importance of aesthetic, historic, social, scientific and other special values that communities recognise. Indigenous communities may choose to use other more culturally meaningful categories to define what is significant to them. The process of deciding why a place is of heritage significance is called heritage assessment.

Assessment helps to work out exactly why a place or area is important and how parts or elements contribute to its significance. Understanding heritage significance is essential to making sound decisions about the future of a place, and is central to developing a conservation plan. It guides management actions, such as planning compatible uses, can inform the development of educational materials, helps to justify the allocation of resources and to explain to people why a place is important.

If an adequate heritage assessment is not undertaken, it can result in the wrong aspects of a place being conserved, the destruction of evidence of significance, inappropriate management practices or loss of a place altogether.

4.3.2 Who can assess significance?

Significance can be assessed by local communities and indigenous owners, with the help of heritage professionals such as historians, architects, botanists, geologists, anthropologists, archaeologists and local government heritage advisers. Where heritage professionals are used, ensure there is an opportunity for the community and those who have commissioned the study to discuss and understand the key elements of significance. This will result in those involved having a shared understanding of significance before decisions about the future of a place are made.

It is also important to remember that a heritage significance assessment is not an absolute measure of value, but a judgement made by a particular person, or group of people, at a particular time. Different people have different perspectives on the significance of places, and the relative importance of places to people will change over time. It is therefore important to be as inclusive as possible and to consider the many different reasons why a place is valued.

4.3.3 How is heritage significance assessed?

Heritage professionals have developed ways of formally assessing the significance of natural and cultural heritage places. The following documents, listed in the Resources section of the guide, may provide some assistance:

- Protecting Natural Heritage – Using the Australian Natural Heritage Charter (2003) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/protecting-natural-heritage.html>
- Guidelines to the Burra Charter including 'Burra Charter Guideline – Conservation Policy' (1988) - <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burrapol.html> - the 'Burra Charter Guideline – Cultural Significance' (1988) - <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burrasig.html> - and the 'Burra Charter Guideline – Procedures' (1988) - <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burrapro.html> - and the 'Illustrated Burra Charter' (2004).
- Ask First, A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/ask-first.html>

A number of State agencies have provided guidance to undertake heritage assessments. These include model documents and guidelines and the establishment of criteria to apply to local heritage significance assessment.

4.4 Key steps in the heritage significance assessment process

The general phases involved in a heritage significance assessment are described briefly below:

Stage 1- Investigate significance

- Investigate the historical context of the place or study area
- Investigate the community's understanding of the place
- Establish local historical themes and relate them to State themes (where established) or adapt National themes
- Investigate the history of the place
- Investigate the fabric of the place

Stage 2 – Assess significance

- Summarise what you know about the place
- Describe the previous and current uses of the place, its associations with individuals or groups and its meaning for those people
- Assess significance using Common Criteria, or the criteria adopted by the relevant State/jurisdiction
- Check whether you can make a sound analysis of the place's heritage significance
- Determine the place's level of significance
- Prepare a succinct statement of heritage significance

(adapted from 'Assessing Heritage Significance (2002) - <http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/assessingheritagesignificance.pdf>

4.5 Steps to undertake heritage significance assessment

4.5.1 Step 1 - Describe the place

Compile the information that you have gathered and organise it according to individual places. If assessing a very large area or a place with a number of different types of values, you may need to look at elements such as natural, indigenous or historic features separately, and then bring them together at the end to tell the story of the place.

4.5.2 Step 2 - Consider the significance of the place

There are many perspectives and views in considering the significant values of a place. For instance, some indigenous communities may wish to define the significance of a place very broadly. Methodologies for assessing significant values constitute a rapidly evolving set of ideas. The following categories and questions are a guide to considering significance.

Why is this place important?

The following definitions of social, aesthetic, historic and scientific values are from The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (1999) - <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html> - and Ask First, A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/ask-first.html>

The definitions of biological diversity, ecosystems and geological values are from the Australian Natural Heritage Charter: Standards and principles for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/pubs/australian-natural-heritage-charter.pdf>

Social values

Social value to the community embraces the qualities for which a place is a focus of spiritual, traditional, economic, political, national or other cultural sentiment to the majority or minority group.

- Is the place important to the community as a landmark or local signature? In what ways, and to what extent?
- Is the place important as part of community identity? In what ways, and to what extent?
- Is the place important to the community because an attachment to it has developed from long use? What is the length and strength of that attachment?
- Which community values the place?
- What is the relative importance of the place to the group or community (compared to other places important to it)?
- Is the place associated with a particular person or group important in your community's history?
- What is the importance of the association between this place and that person or group.
- Is the place valued by a community for reasons of religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations? In what ways, and to what extent?

Aesthetic values

Aesthetic value to the community includes aspects of sensory perception (sight, touch, sound, taste, smell) for which criteria can be stated. These criteria may include consideration of form, scale, colour, texture and material of the fabric or landscape, and the smell and sounds associated with the place and its use.

- Does the place have natural or cultural features which are inspirational or evoke strong feelings or special meanings? What are those features, and to what extent are they evocative?
- Is the place a distinctive feature that is a prominent visual landmark?
- Does the place evoke awe from its grandeur of scale? To what extent is this important?
- Does the place evoke a strong sense of age, history or time depth? How does it do this, and to what extent?
- Is the place symbolic for its aesthetic qualities? Has it been represented in art, poetry, photography, literature, folk-art, folklore mythology or other imagery?
- Does the place have outstanding composition qualities involving any combinations of colour, form, texture, detail, movement, unity, sounds, scents, spatial definition and so on? To what extent is this important?

Historic values

Historic value to the community encompasses the history of aesthetics, science and society, and therefore could be used to encompass a range of values. A place may have historic value because it has influenced, or has been influenced by, an historic figure, event, phase or activity. It may be the site of an important event. History can describe the 'story' of a place or its people and can apply to any period, though not usually the current period.

- Is the place important in showing patterns in the development of the history of the country, State or Territory where your community lives or a feature of your local area? How does it show this?
- Does the place have indigenous plant species that have historic significance?
- Does the place show a high degree of creative or technical achievement? How does it show this?
- Does the place have geological features that have historic significance?
- Is the place associated with a particular person or group important in your history? What is the importance of the association between this place and that person or group?
- Does the place exemplify the works of a particular architect or designer, or of a particular design style? In what ways, and to what extent?
- Is the place associated with a particular event in the history of your area, or the State, Territory or nation? What is the relationship between this place and those events?
- Does the place demonstrate ways of life, customs, processes, land use or design no longer practised, in danger of being lost, or of exceptional interest? How does it demonstrate these things?
- Does the place exemplify the characteristics of a particular type of human activity in the landscape, including way of life, custom, process, land use, function, design or technique? In what ways, and to what extent?
- Does the place reflect a variety of changes over a long time? In what ways, and to what extent?

Historically significant heritage places can be understood from understanding of their context and association. Context means the historical influences which have shaped and continue to influence, a heritage place. These are known as historic themes. Association refers to connections between an item and a historically significant person or group.

A national set of Australian historic themes have been developed, – the Australian Historic Themes Framework (2001, Commonwealth of Australia) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/australian-historic-themes.html> The adoption and use of the Australian historic themes throughout Australia assists a nationally consistent approach to heritage assessment and management.

Several states have prepared state historical themes, including their relevance to the national themes, which may be adapted for local purposes. These include Queensland, New South Wales - <http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/themes2006.pdf> - and Victoria - <http://heritage.vic.gov.au/Forms-Guidelines/Framework-historical-themes.aspx>

An example of a set of developed local themes is the Environmental Thematic History prepared as part of the Melton Shire Council Heritage Study (2002) - <http://www.melton.vic.gov.au/Files/MHSSstage1EnvHist.pdf> The history discusses the major themes which have helped shaped the area. A thematic history for an area wide study provides context and justification assist with significance assessment.

Scientific values

Scientific value to the community will depend upon the importance of the data involved, on its rarity, quality or representativeness, and on the degree to which the place may contribute further substantial information.

- Is the place important for natural values in showing patterns in natural history or continuing ecological, earth or evolutionary processes? In what ways, and to what extent?
- Is there anything about the place or at the place which is rare or endangered, for example, plant or animal species, geological features, a type of construction method or material used, or a particular form of archaeological evidence?
- Is the place important in helping others to understand this type of place? In what ways, and to what extent?
- Is the place a good example of a particular type of place, that is, undisturbed, intact and complete? Why is this?
- Can the place contribute to research understanding of natural or cultural history? In what ways, and to what extent?
- Can the place contribute to scientific understanding of biodiversity or geodiversity? In what ways, and to what extent?

Spiritual values

Spiritual values to the community can be considered as part of other values but are particularly important for some places and some communities. Spiritual value is a recent addition to the Burra Charter, as amended in 1999. As yet this has not been further defined. It has been noted that while the term 'spiritual' is generally not used in legislation to protect Indigenous cultural heritage, other associated terms, such as sacred, secret, ceremonial, and beliefs, are used almost exclusively in association with Indigenous communities (Johnson, 2006).³

- Does the place have important values relating to spiritual beliefs?
- Is the place spiritually important for maintaining the fundamental health and well-being of natural and cultural systems?

³ Johnson, Chris, *An integrated approach to environment and heritage issues, 2006, State of the Environment Report*, at <http://www.environment.gov.au/soe/2006/publications/integrative/heritage/recognising-heritage-values.html>

Biodiversity values

Biological diversity (intrinsic) value is the importance of the variety of life forms: the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems they form.

- Is the place important for its species diversity, ecosystem diversity or community diversity?
- Is the place important for its rare or endangered elements?
- Is the place important for particular species?

Ecosystem values

Ecosystems (intrinsic) value is the importance of the interactions between the complex of organisms that make up a community with their non-living environment and each other.

- Is the place an important example of intact ecological processes at work?
- Does the place contribute to important ecological processes occurring between communities and the non-living environment?

Geodiversity values

Geodiversity (intrinsic) value is the importance of the range of earth features including geological, geomorphological, palaeontological, soil, hydrological and atmospheric features, systems and earth processes.

- Is the place important as an example of particular earth processes at work in soil, water or atmosphere?
- Is the place important for its diversity in fossils, land systems or geological features?
- Is the place important for its rare or endangered elements?
- Is the place important for particular phenomena?

4.5.3 Step 3 - Order your information using heritage criteria

After assessing the significant values of the place, it is useful to order this information, particularly if a number of places are involved. This is important if a comparative significance assessment is done (see Step 4). Heritage criteria provide a common method of describing the different types of values of heritage places and can be used with small or large areas, and natural and cultural heritage.

In order to understand significance, the process of significance assessment should be undertaken. This identifies the values of a place. Different jurisdictions may use different criteria. There is an adopted national set of Common Criteria (known as the HERCON criteria) which was adopted by all Australian heritage agencies as desirable common criteria. The adoption of the criteria by States and Territories has been variously adopted, as all jurisdictions have a set of legislated criteria to guide the assessment of heritage places. These are commonly also based upon the Burra Charter values.

Heritage criteria are different to heritage values. Heritage values explain why a heritage place is important. Heritage criteria are a method of organising information and evidence to show how a place demonstrates, for example, historic values.

Common Criteria

Heritage criteria are commonly used to help structure and organise the heritage assessment process.

The following list is the Common Criteria adopted by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council of the Australian & State/Territory Governments in April 2008 (comprising the model criteria developed at the National Heritage Convention (HERCON) in Canberra, 1998)⁴:

- A. Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history.
- B. Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.
- C. Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history.
- D. Important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments.
- E. Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics
- F. Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.
- G. Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.
- H. Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.

Prior to the adoption of the Common Criteria, each jurisdiction in Australia had developed heritage assessment criteria, often forming part of legislation or regulation.

Some States have developed heritage assessment criteria for use in assessing local heritage. Such material may also include guidance on applying the criteria and establishing levels of significance.

For example:

- in New South Wales, State guidance is contained in *Assessing Heritage Significance* (2001) - <http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/guidelines/index.htm>

⁴ *The minutes of the 16th meeting of the Environment Protection and Heritage Council on Thursday 17 April 2008, in Melbourne, item 6.1 Cooperative National Heritage Agenda 'Consistent Heritage Criteria and Thresholds' Project, resolved to adopt "the criteria adopted at the 1998 National Heritage Convention held in Canberra, modified by removal of the community test for aesthetic value".*

- In Western Australia, the Heritage Council of Western Australia has developed State guidance for Western Australia in the publication 'Criteria for the Assessment of Local Heritage Places and Areas: A practical guide for identifying, grading and documenting places and areas in local government inventories' (2007) - http://www.heritage.wa.gov.au/assets/files/General_Publications/criteria_for_assessment_local_places_and_areas.pdf

4.5.4 Step 4 - Conduct a comparative assessment, thresholds & level of significance.

For a number of similar places, it may be necessary to do a comparative heritage significance assessment. This is of assistance in developing a statement of significance and establishing a level of significance (state or local etc)

This can be done by asking:

- How many other places like this are there in this area?
- How important is this place compared to similar places in this area or other areas of the country?
- How important is this place to your community or group compared to other similar places in the area of your community?
- What is the physical condition of the place relative to other similar places?

Note that this step is not necessary if the place in question is the only place of its type or one of few similar places existing. Comparing the significance of places may not be appropriate for places of indigenous heritage significance.

Establishing a grade or level of significance for a heritage item is based upon its context or themes. Knowing whether an item is important to a local community or a whole State determines the best way to manage it and whether a State or local listing is appropriate. Comparing a place with 'like' places will assist establish its level of significance. This will involve identifying what parts of significance should be compared and the resources available to undertake comparative analysis.

Comparable items may contain elements such as; being built in a particular period, relating to a historical theme, a type of construction technique or associations with a significant person.

State databases assist comparative analysis by providing search criteria such as the architect or designer, period and relevant historic theme.

An important step in assessing significance of a place is determining its level of significance. The majority of heritage places are of local significance to a particular area. A smaller number will be of significance to the State or Territory and a smaller number still will be of national or international significance. Many State agencies have prepared guidance notes to assist determining the relevant threshold of heritage places.

4.4.5 Step 5 - Write a statement of significance

The above steps will have identified the significant values of the place. A statement of significance sets out why a place is important and explains the values the place holds for the community or groups within the community. The statement of significance should clearly and succinctly answer the question 'why is this place important?'. The statement should clearly relate the attributes of the item to the criteria used. Therefore, the statement of significance is the result of the heritage assessment process.

For precincts, large or complex places, in addition to a summary statement of significance for a place, individual or subsidiary statements of significance may be required for individual components. Local government studies involve preparing statements of significance for each place or item.

The statement of significance must be able to rely on the evidence and analysis of the assessment process undertaken against the criteria.

Tips for writing a statement of significance

The statement should be a succinct, unambiguous and comprehensive statement of the major reasons why a place is significant.

- Focus on answering the question: Why is this place significant?
- Word the statement carefully to reflect the values of the place. Refer to heritage criteria if appropriate.
- For a large or complex area, present overall significance as a summary statement, supported by subsidiary statements for specific features.
- The statement should indicate any areas where there are known gaps in knowledge.
- For instance, it should state whether the place has been assessed for both natural and cultural heritage (indigenous and historic).
- The statement should be accompanied by evidence supporting the judgement of significance expressed in the statement, for example, documents, results of studies or workshops, or oral statements.

Write a final report

After investigating and assessing heritage values and heritage places in your local area, your heritage report can be circulated to the local community or sent to the media to promote the study findings. The report can also be submitted to libraries, government departments and research institutes so that interested people can refer to it in the future.

What should be included in a heritage study?

An *introduction* which explains:

- the goal of your study
- the boundaries of your heritage study area
- who prepared the study.

Descriptions of:

- the study area environment and history (including thematic history)
- the study methods used, for example, community knowledge, and how much of the study area was covered by the particular methods
- what community consultation was undertaken
- whether there are known gaps in information
- where the contributing information was found
- the heritage criteria used to assess significance
- agreements on storage and access to information

The *results* of the study, for example:

- the places that have significance a statement of the significant values for each of the places identified
- recommendations for further research, and statutory and non-statutory measures to assist in
- conserving the heritage places (eg listing on a State or local government heritage register).
- electronic data containing inventory records of significant heritage places

Confidentiality

Before producing the report, consider which information should be kept confidential or may need to have restricted access. Examples of restricted information might include the location of a rare plant or animal species, the location of an unsafe mine shaft, or the location of a spiritually important Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander site. Consider whether drawing attention to a place as a heritage site could increase its risk of damage.

It is also necessary to check that all individual property owners or indigenous custodians whose properties have been considered in the study are aware of the study, and that they agree to publicly announce the results. You will also need to have their agreement on how the information is collected, stored and accessed.

Use your findings

There are a number of ways of using the findings of your study. You may want to:

- use the findings as the basis of a pamphlet, book, video, display or newspaper story about your local area or heritage place
- use the information as the basis of a heritage conservation plan for an individual place
- use the findings as the basis of nominations to a heritage register.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 outline a variety of methods for using, promoting and sharing your findings about heritage places.

5. Conserving and protecting heritage values

5.1 Conservation plans

The aim of conservation is to retain the heritage significance of a place. A conservation plan is a document which details how to look after the significant values of a place. It can be part of a broader management plan which addresses other non-heritage issues such as managing tourism.

Preparing a conservation plan is a systematic way of considering, recording and monitoring actions and decisions relating to all the aspects of managing a place. It will involve the following elements:

- adopt principles for conservation
- develop a conservation plan

Although it will not be feasible to prepare detailed plans for all identified heritage places, for instance, when undertaking a local heritage study of a local government area, the matters detailed in a conservation plan should be considered and documented to some extent for each place. Conservation planning for any place is an integral part of overall management planning for the whole area. Conservation management plans are frequently prepared for highly significant heritage places, such as State or nationally significant heritage places.

A conservation plan must be relevant to and useful for the owner or custodian of a place. It should be prepared in a format that enables its implementation, for example, schedules detailing maintenance for a place which may be detached and applied to an owner's existing environmental or asset management methods.

It should respond to particular issues facing a heritage place, for example, any development proposals for a site or include analysis and solutions for the security and potential future uses of a redundant building. If a Conservation management plan is prepared as part of a development application for a heritage place it should analyse what may be changed, the parameters for new development and the degree of possible change. In some States, a Conservation Management Plan may form the basis of agreed site-specific exemptions from heritage legislative approvals or permits.

Conservation Management Strategies

An alternative to a full conservation management plan document is a conservation management strategy for heritage places including multiple sites, for use with items of local significance or as an interim document. It is a shorter version of a conservation management plan and provides a broad overview of conservation approaches and management guidance.

A type-specific or theme-specific conservation management strategy can be developed for groups of similar types or categories or items that demonstrate a particular theme. It may involve building upon a common history or type applicable to all the heritage places.

5.1.1 Adopt principles for conservation

Conservation plans need to be systematic and based on a set of clear principles. The following charters and guidelines contain sets of conservation principles and are considered a voluntary best practice standard (see Resources section of the guide for details). They have been adopted by many community groups, professionals, and government and non-government bodies. The documents have international recognition and have been developed and refined over a number of years.

- Australian Natural Heritage Charter: for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/pubs/australian-natural-heritage-charter.pdf>
- The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (1999) - <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html>

Any work done to maintain and actively manage places of natural and cultural heritage significance should follow the conservation principles set out in the above charters and guidelines and any specific guidelines developed by the relevant government jurisdiction. For example:

The Western Australian Heritage Commission has developed a model conservation plan brief, Conservation Plan Study Brief: introduction to conservation plans (2002) - http://www.heritage.wa.gov.au/assets/files/General_Publications/conservationBrief0210.pdf

Principles of conservation

The following principles of conservation for any heritage place are based on the Australian Natural Heritage Charter (2002) and the Burra Charter (1999).

- i. The aim of conservation is to retain the significance of the place.
- ii. Conservation is based on respecting all heritage values of the place without unwarranted emphasis on any one aspect at the expense of others.
- iii. Conservation of a place should include provision for its security, maintenance and future.
- iv. Conservation should involve the least possible physical intervention; do as much as necessary and as little as possible.
- v. Conservation of a place should make use of all disciplines and experience that can contribute to the study and safeguarding of a place.
- vi. Conservation depends on methodical process of collecting and analysing information before making decisions and accurate recording about decisions and changes to the place.

Conservation of a place occurs when the significant elements have not been removed or destroyed except under exceptional circumstances.

In addition to the above principles, the guideline, Ask First, A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/ask-first.html> - contains principles for places with indigenous heritage values. These are:

In recognising the rights and interests of Indigenous peoples in their heritage, all parties concerned with identifying, conserving and managing this heritage should acknowledge, accept and act on the principles that Indigenous people:

- are the primary source of information on the value of their heritage
- and how this is best conserved;
- must have an active role in any Indigenous heritage planning process;
- must have input into primary decision-making in relation to
- Indigenous heritage so they can continue to fulfil their obligations
- towards this heritage; and
- must control intellectual property and other information relating specifically to their heritage, as this may be an integral aspect of its heritage value.

In identifying and managing this heritage:

- uncertainty about Indigenous heritage values at a place should not be used to justify activities that might damage or desecrate this heritage;
- all parties having relevant interests should be consulted on Indigenous heritage matters; and
- the process and outcomes of Indigenous heritage planning must abide by customary law, relevant Commonwealth and State/Territory laws, relevant International treaties and covenants and any other legally binding agreements.

Adhering to cultural restrictions on information about an Indigenous heritage place is essential to maintaining its heritage value.

5.1.2 Develop a conservation plan

The basic process for developing a conservation plan are:

- determine who has an interest and what information is needed
- determine the heritage significance and management realities
- determine the conservation policy/objectives

- decide on conservation processes
- identify responsibilities for actions
- formulate and implement the plan
- monitor the results and review the plan periodically

Chapters 1 to 5 prepare you for writing your conservation plan. Your heritage study will be a key document in the conservation plan. If you have not done a heritage study, it will be necessary to gather information about who has an interest in the place and the significance of the place.

The following references explain in more detail how to develop conservation plans for different heritage environments.

- Looking after Heritage Places: The basics of heritage planning for managers, landowners and administrators (1995).
- Natural Heritage Places – A handbook for conservation: Implementing the Australian Natural Heritage Charter for conservation of places of natural significance (2003).
- The Conservation Plan: A guide to the preparation of conservation plans for places of European cultural significance (1996).

Determine the conservation policies

As part of the conservation plan, you will need to develop conservation policies for the place. The conservation policy is a written statement of objectives for the future management of the place and should relate directly to its significant values. The conservation policy is developed by bringing together knowledge about the heritage significance of a place (see Chapter 4) and information about its other management realities. From this information is derived a statement of the desired future condition of the place. The desired future condition is a statement of the objectives for management for the place, and may mention heritage aspects as well as non-heritage aspects. It should therefore suggest proposed uses which are compatible, and may state or imply those which are not.

In summary, a conservation policy is a statement which summarises the:

1. heritage significance
2. relevant management realities
3. desired future condition of the place based on (1) and (2).

Decide on conservation processes

Your choice of which conservation processes or actions to carry out at a place will determine the future security of its significant values. The conservation processes chosen may include one or more of the actions listed in the following summary. The definitions of each of these processes can vary with the different types of heritage. Note that the processes have specific meanings as defined in the charters and guidelines (see 'Definitions of conservation processes'). Note that if some compatible uses are identified in the conservation policy, then one of the conservation processes could be modification, and the process part of the conservation plan would say how it will be modified.

5.1.3 Definitions of conservation processes

The Burra Charter defines conservation broadly as all the processes of looking after a place. The conservation plan or management document prepared for a place recommends which process is appropriate to conserve the cultural and natural heritage values of a place.

Natural values heritage management processes

Outlined in the Australian Natural Heritage Charter: for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/pubs/australian-natural-heritage-charter.pdf>

Protection

Article 16: Protection may include conservation management measures that are either direct or indirect. The aim of protection is to prevent or minimise impacts that may degrade the natural significance of the place and to facilitate regeneration.

Maintenance

Article 17: Maintenance techniques and action should be consistent with the conservation processes adopted for a place and should not detract from its natural significance.

Regeneration

Article 18: Regeneration is essentially dependent on natural processes facilitating recovery from disturbance or degradation. It does not include physical intervention, but should be accompanied by monitoring and protection measures that do not create degradation.

Restoration

Article 19: Restoration is appropriate only if there is sufficient evidence of an earlier state to guide the conservation process and if returning the biodiversity, geodiversity or habitat of the place to that state is consistent with the natural significance of that place.

Reinstatement

Article 20: Reinstatement is appropriate only if:

- there is evidence that the species or habitat elements or features of geodiversity that are to be reintroduced have existed there naturally at a previous time, and
- returning them to the place contributes to retaining the natural significance of that place, and
- processes that may threaten their existence at that place have been discontinued.

Enhancement

Article 21: Enhancement is appropriate only if there is evidence that the introduction of additional habitat elements, elements of geodiversity or individuals of an organism which exist at that place are necessary for, or contribute to, the retention of the natural significance of the place.

Article 22: Where organisms or elements of geodiversity are introduced to a place for the purpose of enhancement, the individuals introduced to the place should not alter the natural species diversity, genetic diversity or geodiversity of the place if that would reduce its natural significance.

Article 23: Enhancement in existing natural systems should be limited to a minor part of biodiversity or geodiversity of a place and should not change ecosystem processes nor constitute a majority of the habitats or features of geodiversity of the place.

Preservation

Article 24: Preservation is appropriate where the natural significance of a place is fully manifested in its existing stage of natural succession or the existing state of its geodiversity, and where the natural significance is dependent on retaining existing conditions which may otherwise be lost by progression in natural processes.

Article 25: Preservation should be limited to the minimum intervention, or the change of maintenance actions, needed to suspend the natural earth processes or processes of succession. The intervention or change should not adversely affect surrounding ecosystems.

Modification

Article 26: Modification of a place to accommodate other non-conservation uses is acceptable where natural significance is retained and where the modification will not adversely affect the natural significance of other places.

Article 27: Modification should be limited to that which is essential to a use for the place, such use being determined in accordance with the conservation policy.

Presentation

Article 28: Presentation should interpret to visitors and others the natural significance of the place and should encourage appreciation and respect. It should also encourage an appropriate level of awareness, understanding and support for the heritage values and conservation objectives of a conservation program or activity.

Article 29: Presentation may not be appropriate for all places for reasons of security and privacy or cultural significance. It should only commence after a place has been given adequate protection.

Monitoring

Article 30: Monitoring, which allows review of the effectiveness of conservation programs and re-examination of the appropriateness of decisions, is fundamental to improving conservation practice. It requires keeping adequate records.

Cultural (Indigenous) values heritage management processes

'Ask First, A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values' (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/ask-first.html> - provides guidance on various heritage management approaches for places with indigenous heritage values. When Traditional Owners, Custodians and other Indigenous people manage their heritage, they may maintain the value through one or more of the following approaches:

Maintenance

Defined as actions that serve to keep the existing Indigenous heritage values of a place.

Restoration

Defined as actions that conserve or add to the heritage value of a place.

Removal

Defined as actions to conserve heritage values by removing items from a place. This is normally a measure of last resort.

Interpretation

Defined as actions that may help change people's behaviour.

Cultural (non indigenous) values heritage management processes

The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (1999) - <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html>

Maintenance

Definition: Maintenance means the continuous protective care of the fabric, contents and setting of a place, and is to be distinguished from repair. Repair involves restoration or reconstruction and it should be treated accordingly. Article 1.5.

Preservation

Definition: Preservation means maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration. Article 1.6.

Restoration

Definition: Restoration means returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material. Article 1.7.

Reconstruction

Definition: Reconstruction means returning a place as nearly as possible to a known earlier state and is distinguished by the introduction of materials (new or old) into the fabric. This is not to be confused with either recreation or conjectural reconstruction which are outside the scope of this Charter. Article 1.8.

Adaptation

Definition: Adaptation means modifying a place to suit proposed compatible uses. Article 1.9

5.1.4 Determine responsibilities for actions

Deciding who is responsible for implementing the conservation plan is crucial for its success. There may be a number of people who will carry out different conservation processes and other tasks. List these people and the tasks they are responsible for in the plan.

5.1.5 Implement the plan

Write the plan. The checklist below can assist you. Ensure that the plan addresses monitoring, reviewing and updating (see Chapter 9). Sometimes conservation plans sit on the shelf of an office gathering dust. Involving community groups, landowners and other interested parties in the process of developing the plan and assigning responsibility for tasks can ensure that the plan will be successfully implemented. Chapters 7 and 8 provide some more ideas for ongoing involvement.

The following checklist will guide you through the flow chart and help you to develop your conservation plan.

5.1.6 Checklist for developing a conservation plan

- What are the boundaries of the place?
- Who are all the individuals and groups who may have an interest in the place? Which of these should be involved in decisions about managing the place?
- What information is available about its fabric, setting, contents, associated documents, land use, spiritual use, biological diversity, geodiversity or habitats?
- What are the significant values of the place? Have they all been identified? Is there a statement of these values?
- What are the objectives for the future condition of the place?
- What conservation principles will be used?
- What conservation processes or actions are needed to conserve the significance of the place?
- What are the constraints and opportunities arising from management issues such as resources?
- Has knowledge of the significant values, choice of conservation processes and management constraints and opportunities been integrated into a

- conservation policy for the place?
- Who needs to be involved in agreeing to the conservation policy for the place?
- What strategic actions do you need to take to fulfil the conservation policy and plan?
- Who needs to do what, and when? Who is responsible for which actions in the plan?
- How will monitoring and reporting on the success of the plan be carried out?
- How will the plan be amended to improve it as a result of monitoring?
- Will the plan be endorsed/adopted by an approval authority?

What should go into a conservation plan?

- Typical contents of a conservation plan include:
- a description of the place and its setting
- a statement of the significant heritage values
- an assessment of the condition, management realities, threats, opportunities and other non-heritage
- issues relevant to conserving the place
- a statement of the conservation principles on which the plan is based
- a conservation policy which includes conservation objectives for the place
- the conservation processes to be used
- guidelines or schedules for management processes, such as maintenance
- specific activities which may be exempted from permit/approvals processes
- strategies for conservation, with timing, costs and other resources
- controls on research and other actions that may affect the place
- a list of people responsible for carrying out actions of the plan
- an ongoing maintenance and monitoring plan and who is responsible
- a process and timing for reviewing and updating
- strategies for interpreting values.

6. Raising support for heritage conservation – communities

Support for heritage conservation can be found at a variety of levels. Your approach could involve any of the following:

- Conserving through heritage listing
- Conserving through other legal means
- Conserving through other actions

6.1 Conserving through heritage listing

Commonwealth, State, Territory and some local governments and community organisations maintain lists or registers of places of significance (see Chapter 4 for an outline of the major registers). Some registers provide legal protection to all the places listed, including penalties if a site or object is damaged in any way. Others have limited or no statutory force, but the organisation responsible for the register may assist in protecting the place in various ways, for example, the National Trust may assist by lobbying or providing expert advice. Listing of a place may enable access to financial incentives for conservation such as grants, low-interest loans and rate rebates.

Sometimes listing simply enables the profile of a place to be raised and for there to be greater public recognition of the values of a place. This can be a useful initial step in a long-term conservation strategy.

In some cases (such as for indigenous places) listing may not be appropriate and should not be contemplated without adequate consultation with the community involved.

Nominations for listing in a register can generally be made by anyone, usually on a prescribed form. The organisation responsible for the register considers a proposal for listing after referring to appropriate expert advice. Be aware that this process can take a very long time.

When formally nominating a place to a heritage register, it is necessary to provide an assessment of significance against a set of criteria which have been developed for this purpose. Each State and Territory historic heritage agency has its own set of criteria, but they are all based on common principles.

What may be required in a heritage register nomination?

Location

Include a description of the location of the place:

- address or location details, for example, a written description, a sketch map showing how to get to the place, map references with map coordinates
- the name of the owners of the land – it may be private and/or crown land
- the names of the shire or municipality, county and parish in which the place lies.

Description

Provide a clear description of:

- the physical features of the place and its elements
- the development sequence of the place. For a natural place, 'development' could include its natural evolution and more recent changes; for an indigenous or historic place, it could include stages in the creation of the place as well as later changes, additions or removals.

Note the sources of each piece of information, for example, use footnotes or another referencing system to keep track. Include the names of people providing the information, references to notes, tapes, photographs or other material, and dates of meetings, site visits or interviews.

Note any unsolved problems, for example, missing information about an aspect of the place or inconsistencies between the conclusions drawn from the field study and research work. These may need further work at a later stage and are important to highlight now.

Statement of significance

A statement explaining why the place is of natural or cultural heritage significance (see Chapter 4).

Condition

Describe the condition of each place. Is it degraded in any way? Is it structurally sound? Have any key parts contributing to the whole been removed? Are there any threats to the place?

Attachments

Attach relevant notes, records or reference materials and any photographs, tapes, videos or drawings made of the place to each place record.

6.2 Conserving through other legal means

Other means of conserving heritage places are to:

- consider legislative protection
- consider voluntary agreements and covenants
- apply for rate and tax rebates.

Consider other legal means

Particular types of heritage places such as archaeological sites or habitat of threatened fauna or flora species are protected under Commonwealth, State or Territory legislation. In some States and Territories a conservation or preservation order can be gazetted over places of considerable significance. These may impose restrictions on the use or development of the place and require the owner to consult with the relevant heritage authority over proposed changes to or re-use of the place. In some States and Territories local government by-laws or local laws are used to protect heritage places.

Consider voluntary agreements and covenants

Landholders can be encouraged to enter into voluntary conservation agreements with a State, Territory or local government authority, depending on the legislation. In the case of covenants on title, the undertaking to protect specified heritage values can be binding on future owners as well as the current owner if properly applied. Other voluntary agreements may be terminated at the request of the owner, or when title to the land passes to someone else. Examples of covenants and agreements include:

- nature conservation agreements in Queensland
- agreements with the Heritage Council of Western Australia
- heritage agreements made under section 39 of the Heritage Act 1977 (NSW) with respect to the conservation of a heritage item.
- section 173 agreements under the Victorian Planning and Environment Act
- heritage agreements in South Australia, which apply to areas of native vegetation.

Apply for rate rebates

Land tax relief and rate rebates are other forms of financial assistance that may be available to landholders. In the case of rate rebates, a percentage of a property's municipal rates are rebated based on the amount spent in that year on approved conservation works.

Conserving through other actions

Other ways to conserve heritage places are to:

- contribute to the development assessment process
- become involved in managing heritage areas
- work with developers
- work with local councillors
- join a residents association or community association interested in heritage matters
- start a campaign
- apply for funding
- seek advice and assistance
- organise training for your group
- talk to schools and educational institutions
- start a heritage network
- interpret places.

Contribute to the development assessment process

Community members often have a right to be consulted as part of the development assessment process. Where these rights exist, you can participate by making submissions on development applications, appealing decisions you do not agree with and commenting on draft local environmental strategic or zoning plans. You can contribute your information on the significant heritage values of the place from your heritage study.

Communities can also become involved in the formal environmental impact assessment process through:

- commenting on guidelines or scoping documents and identifying specific aspects that should be
- covered in the impact assessment of a particular project
- gathering and submitting data on issues or heritage aspects of concern
- participating in community consultation processes
- commenting on draft environmental impact statements and development applications.

Become involved in managing heritage areas

Public or corporate land managers are often interested in involving the community in making decisions on the management of land or heritage places. This could be through a community advisory group, a representative on a management committee, or through a friends group. Friends groups often get involved in hands-on work, such as weeding, tree-planting, repair work and fencing.

Work with developers

Sometimes you can work with developers to find ways of both developing and conserving heritage places. The challenge is to identify uses and types of development that are both feasible and compatible with retaining significance. Empty buildings are subject to deterioration and, in some cases, vandalism, so it is particularly important to ensure that there is a viable use.

In many places where the current use has maintained significance to date, such use can continue indefinitely. The use may be an important aspect of the significance. However, a place may no longer be needed for its original purpose, or the owner or managing agency (in the case of public buildings or land) may wish to develop a property to gain a better financial return. Specialist advice and detailed site planning may be needed to cater for proposed changes, while minimising loss or disturbance to heritage values.

Some heritage places have the potential to be developed as tourist destinations, bringing important economic benefits to the district. Such projects need a careful feasibility study and sufficient capital funding to be established, as many sites do not make a profit, and there is a lot of competition for the 'visitor dollar'. Tourism can have an adverse impact on the heritage values of a place, or can be beneficial to the place if its significant values are maintained.

Work with local councillors

Make sure that local councillors have the opportunity to understand the value of heritage places in your local area, and what needs to be done to conserve and protect them. Arrange a tour of local heritage places for newly elected councillors so that they can experience at first hand the special significance of these places to you. Invite councillors to meetings of your group, just to listen, or to discuss a particular issue.

Start a campaign

Heritage conservation decisions can be influenced by starting a public campaign. Campaigns typically involve:

- presenting your case to the local or wider media to build support and influence decision-makers
- demonstrating support by gathering letters and petitions, holding public meetings or rallies, both on and off site
- lobbying or making delegations to decision-makers – the relevant minister, your local parliamentarian, local councillors or a ministerial adviser.

Apply for funding

Commonwealth, State or Territory government agencies or local authorities may offer low-interest loans or grants for conservation works.

Seek advice and assistance

There may be a heritage advisory service available to landholders about conservation and compatible development of heritage properties. This may be available from State or Territory agencies, and/or through councils. Many councils employ part-time heritage advisers who generally deal with historic heritage, but may be able to direct you to sources of advice for other places.

Typically, a heritage adviser is responsible for:

- advising owners and managers about structural or maintenance problems
- providing preliminary advice on alterations or extensions to a building
- preparing guidelines on specific topics
- advising council on heritage matters, including planning and building applications
- assisting people with funding applications.

Advice can also be provided in other forms, including written guidelines (national, State and Territory, from another municipality or prepared especially for your locality), videos, workshops and field days.

Organise training for your group

Obtain training for your group or community in conservation processes, project planning and so on, to build on your own experience in conservation. Funding for training can often be built into grant applications.

Talk to schools and educational institutions

Encourage schools and tertiary educational institutions to do research into and make recommendations for the conservation of places. In some cases it may be feasible to get students actively involved in conservation works projects, or have schools include your local heritage places as a field site in their environmental studies units.

Start a heritage network

A heritage network can become a focal point for people interested in heritage in your local area.

Heritage networks are groupings of people interested in both natural and cultural heritage, who benefit from working together and learning about the heritage issues others are dealing with. They aim to inform and provide support to members working to conserve heritage in the area, and also to facilitate connections between different groups.

Interpret places

Interpretation is the art and science of explaining places – their past, their relationships to people and other places, and their significance to people. Interpretation is a communication process which promotes understanding of, and an opportunity to experience, a place. Information gathered through a heritage study can form the basis of a local interpretation strategy designed to build greater community awareness of the heritage values of a place. The strategy could use a variety of interpretation techniques, some of which may be relatively straightforward or others which could be very complex, for example, signs or plaques on significant main street buildings, guided walks visiting special sites, open days to allow people to see inside places normally closed to the public, performances based on a past event and held on that site, or booklets and self-guided walks.

Special skills are required to interpret a place effectively. Anyone can give a guided tour of a place or write the words for a sign relating facts about a place. However, your objective in interpreting a place should be to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the place among visitors to the site. Facts alone cannot do this. An interpreter should have a deep understanding of and interest in the place, good communication skills, an understanding of how people learn, and a genuine interest in wanting to help visitors. Professional associations like the Interpretation Australia Association can assist with providing the necessary skills (see the Resources section of the guide).

It is important with any interpretation project to make sure that all the appropriate people are aware of the project and have had an opportunity to contribute views early in the process. In cases where it is necessary to present factual historic or scientific information, ensure that the information is correct. If using quotes, make sure they are accurate. Where there is a possibility of an indigenous interest, check with the local indigenous community organisation to make sure that the information presented is appropriate in terms of indigenous cultural protocol, and acknowledges indigenous intellectual property. There is nothing worse than spending hard-won money on a sign or publication only to find there is an error or inappropriate use of information.

7. Heritage protection for local government

A key approach to protecting heritage places is to ensure that heritage values are taken into account at an early stage in all relevant planning and decision-making processes.

The main types of decisions which can affect heritage places at the local level relate to:

- strategic planning
- statutory planning
- other council actions

It is desirable for local government to prepare a heritage strategy, either independently or as part of Council's strategic council-wide planning. A model local heritage strategy is attached (Appendix 1). This outlines the key actions for local government heritage management grouped within themes of:

- Community Education and Heritage Promotion
- Providing for Heritage Expertise in Council
- Heritage and Development
- Funding Heritage
- Council owned heritage asset management

This model is based upon the themes used in the Town of Vincent Heritage Strategy - <http://www.vincent.wa.gov.au/> It includes examples of implementation of actions from a number of Australian local governments.

7.1 Strategic planning

Protection of local heritage places is a relevant consideration in a wide variety of strategic plans prepared at local, regional, State and Territory level. If natural and cultural heritage are not given adequate recognition in 'big picture' strategic plans, then detailed protection and management measures at the individual site level can be overwhelmed by larger scale forces of change.

Strategic planning involves reviewing information about the current situation as a basis for deciding on actions to move towards a desired future state. The various forms of strategic planning will most effectively ensure protection of heritage places where a comprehensive heritage study is undertaken before the development of the plan so that all possible heritage places are known.

Strategic planning can also include amending local plans and instruments to ensure places identified as significant in a heritage study is legally protected through the statutory planning system. This is necessary to effectively implement a heritage study, which may identify heritage places but provides no system of protection or development control unless the study is implemented through the planning system.

How do we include heritage concerns in strategic planning?

Type of plan	Ways of incorporating heritage
<p>Greening plans or catchment management plans are systematic approaches to managing natural resources and native vegetation and maintaining biodiversity within an area.</p>	Can include sections addressing management and protection of both natural and cultural heritage values.
<p>Integrated local area plans are strategic assessments of all significant physical, environmental, economic, social and cultural issues facing the local area, and a holistic and coordinated approach to planning and ongoing management of activities and resources</p>	Encourage coordinated planning for and consideration of heritage.
<p>Local Agenda 21 is a long-term strategy program for achieving sustainability in the 21st century, embracing social, economic and environmental issues, including heritage conservation.</p>	Acknowledge that natural and cultural heritage conservation is a key factor in achieving sustainability.
<p>Local environmental, conservation or cultural strategies.</p>	Detail management and protection strategies for natural and cultural heritage
<p>Outline development plans or structure plans for urban growth areas</p>	Can designate natural and cultural heritage places to be protected as open space or other zoning/use that will assist in retaining their values, and/or identify areas of land which should be regarded as 'sensitive' because of the high likelihood of their containing heritage places.
<p>Regional and local land use plans or strategies outlining broad land use policies</p>	Can include policies to ensure that development and redevelopment do not adversely affect heritage precincts or areas, and/or identify areas of land which should be regarded as 'sensitive' because of the high likelihood of their containing heritage places.
<p>Regional or local economic development strategies</p>	Can consider how heritage places will be protected by having compatible or sympathetic uses that protect significant heritage values, as part of economic development
<p>Tourism development planning</p>	Can consider how heritage places will be protected by having compatible or sympathetic uses that protect significant heritage values, as part of tourism development, including cultural and nature-based tourism.
<p>Vision statement or 'preferred future' statements for the local area.</p>	Recognise that it is important to identify places to be kept for the benefit of future generations.

7.2 Statutory planning

This can involve:

- planning schemes/local planning instruments
- development assessment

7.2.1 Planning schemes

These include:

- planning instruments
- development control
- performance standards
- guidelines for development

Planning instruments

All Australian States and Territories encourage heritage provisions in statutory planning schemes or local environmental plans. The basic components are:

- a statement of aims or purpose
- specification of places of heritage significance, using a schedule or register listing
- controls over changes to places of significance.

Planning instruments can be reviewed to see whether they promote a level of development that poses a threat to heritage places or their setting.

Development control procedures

Planning instruments are implemented through development control procedures that require local authority approval for proposed changes.

Development control procedures can be designed to:

- incorporate heritage considerations into the preparation of proposals for change of use or development
- assess proposals in terms of their effects/impact on heritage significance
- integrate the requirements of government agencies into any approvals
- gather the views of interested third parties
- issue approvals with effective and enforceable conditions and requirements to protect heritage significance.

While the detail of controls varies around Australia, the most common form of control is a requirement for consent or approval before making changes to specified heritage places, or within an area covered by a heritage conservation overlay or zone. Such controls can be applied to individual places, including structures or trees, precincts or broader landscapes. They can also be used to protect the setting of places. These controls allow councils to regulate development in areas which have not been surveyed in detail but which are known to be highly likely to contain heritage places.

The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (1999) - <http://www.icomos.org/australia/burra.html> - and - Australian Natural Heritage Charter: for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance (2002) - <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/ahc/publications/commission/books/pubs/australian-natural-heritage-charter.pdf> - can assist in establishing conservation principles for the controls.

Performance standards

Another form of development control is performance standards. A performance-based approach to development controls allows scope for more sympathetic treatment of heritage places than mandatory, prescriptive standards. With a performance-based approach, the required outcomes are specified, but there is flexibility as to how these are actually achieved.

For example, outcomes specified might take the form of:

- no development to obscure a particular view or feature within an area defined by particular sight lines
- additions or extensions to a protected building acceptable without requiring a permit where, for example, total floor area is not increased by more than 50 per cent of ground floor area, and the extension is not visible from the street.

When considering the flexibility of performance-based controls, also consider their statutory and legal appeal implications. Appeal systems often favour specified controls over performance-based controls.

Guidelines for development

Guidelines detailing how to protect heritage significance while undertaking changes to places can be incorporated formally or informally into the planning control system. Guidelines describing acceptable forms of development are useful to assist property owners and their design consultants, as well as assisting councils to make consistent decisions. Technical and design guidelines have been prepared on many topics, and can be adopted (with permission) or adapted to local conditions. They may be needed for issues such as:

- demolition and alteration of buildings
- construction of additions and extensions
- design of infill buildings in heritage areas development of adjoining natural areas, including sediment control, stormwater management and tree protection
- works in the vicinity of archaeological sites
- proposals in areas known to be likely to contain indigenous sites
- mineral exploration on land controlled by an indigenous community

7.3 Development assessment

This involves:

- specifying information required
- impact assessment
- seeking community and specialist advice
- consulting about proposed change
- negotiating with applicants
- developing consent conditions.

Specifying information required

For proposals affecting heritage places, councils need to itemise the information to be provided with a development application (in addition to the usual information requirements). This typically includes:

- a plan showing the location of all buildings and other features, both natural and constructed, on the site
- information about the heritage significance of the place
- information about whether a survey or study of heritage values or places has been undertaken
- a description of the likely impact of the proposal, in both the construction and operational phases, on the significance of the place.

For identified heritage places not protected in the planning scheme, an internal procedure could be established to monitor development applications that may affect these places.

Information about heritage places gained through studies, inventories or other investigations should be readily available to and used by council officers when advising on both development control and works project decisions. One important tool useful when assessing the impact of a proposal is a conservation plan (see Chapter 6). Where information about an important place is inadequate, a conservation plan could be required in connection with a development application, either as a pre-condition to assessing the application or as a condition on a permit. A growing number of local government authorities now maintain a computer-based geographic information system, with layers of information relating to land across the local government area. Heritage places can form one layer, with an associated database providing more information about each place.

Impact assessment

Proposed development with the potential to threaten or disturb known or potential heritage could be subject to impact assessment. Councils can use a checklist to prompt the investigation of potential environmental impacts of development, including impacts on heritage places.

Impact assessment should address the effects of the development upon the significance of a place. Such assessment may require the employment of one or more heritage specialists, at the proponent's expense. In cases of unacceptable impact, the proposal may need to be modified or abandoned. Where disturbance to a place is permitted, mitigation or salvage work may be required as a condition of project approval.

When assessing an application regarding a heritage place, councils should take into account:

- the significance of the place and its contribution to the heritage of the locality
- the impact of the proposal on the significance of the place
- where the impact is likely to be adverse, whether there are any alternatives to the proposal as it stands
- whether the impact can be minimised
- any conditions that should be part of an approval.

Seeking community and specialist advice

There are many sources of community and specialist advice that can be drawn on by councils when assessing development applications. For example, indigenous people will have special knowledge of indigenous heritage values and places, and may be authorities on natural environments and their management. Other individuals and organisations will have special knowledge and skills.

An official heritage advisory committee could advise a council on the implications of proposals affecting heritage places. This can be an effective way of drawing on knowledge and skills residing in the local community. It can include elected representatives, council staff, specialists and members of the community.

The professional services of a heritage adviser or specialist consultants could be engaged to advise on specific development applications. For example, if an application for demolition is based on the claim that the building is structurally unsound, it may be desirable to obtain independent advice from a heritage architect who may be able to suggest alternatives.

Consulting about proposed change

The approvals process for any works, development or change in use affecting a heritage place should contain 'triggers' to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are notified and consulted. Consultation is most effective and least disruptive if undertaken early in a project planning or approvals process.

If confidentiality of site location is necessary, then parts of the municipality could be designated as a 'special consultation area', and any development proposals in these areas discussed with the interested parties, such as indigenous custodians. In consulting with indigenous people and groups, it is vital to correctly identify the relevant individuals and groups for any area of land.

Consultation takes time. Allow sufficient time for people to consider their views and respond. For government organisations, this can take several weeks. Voluntary organisations need longer as they may meet only monthly. It depends on the complexity of the issue and the resources of the community or organisation being consulted. For example, for indigenous groups to comment on development proposals with regard to ceremonial or spiritual sites, the process could involve many people who may be scattered throughout the region, and may take several months.

Negotiating with applicants

Negotiations between a council and an applicant before a decision is made can be effective in modifying a proposal after it is submitted to protect heritage significance. In some situations, planning and building requirements can be relaxed to encourage appropriate re-use of places. An example is a dispensation to use an historic building for a purpose prohibited in the planning scheme where that use is compatible with retaining significance. This provides an opportunity to conserve the building, and will not be detrimental to the overall amenity of the area. It may also be appropriate to consider waiving certain building requirements such as fire rating in a case of major alteration or change in use where it is very difficult to comply while retaining heritage significance of a building. Other standard provisions such as setbacks or car-parking requirements could be adjusted to encourage compatible development or viable re-use.

A council can negotiate with a landholder to allow more intensive development than would normally be allowed on part of a property with low heritage value, or on another site owned by the landholder, in return for protecting or transferring to council ownership a significant place on the property. Such a transfer of development rights has commonly been used to protect heritage buildings in city centres, but is increasingly being applied to natural heritage areas. Care needs to be taken in using these types of provisions, however, because they can create density problems which adversely affect the setting of heritage places.

Developing consent conditions

Planning permits can be issued with conditions attached to protect heritage places, for example:

- a requirement for an archaeologist or other specialist to be on site while works are done, in case any items of significance are revealed
- a requirement for a landholder to enter into a covenant to preserve and maintain a specified heritage item
- indigenous plant species to be used in landscaping Works
- consent from the relevant indigenous community to be obtained before any disturbance to or destruction of an indigenous site.

Council officers who have a basic understanding of heritage conservation and know the approval conditions can be assigned to the task of checking on compliance as the project progresses. Penalties for infringements should be applied through the relevant enforcement procedures.

7.4 Other council actions

Councils can take a range of other actions to protect heritage, including:

What to do	Why
Establish a heritage committee to deal with heritage matters	Increased community participation and awareness of heritage
Identify the heritage items in your area and afford them statutory protection	Increased knowledge and strategic protection of heritage
Appoint a heritage advisor to assist council and the community	Increased community participation and understanding of heritage
Manage local heritage in a positive manner – find the good news	Increased understanding and acceptance of heritage
Introduce a local heritage fund to provide small grants	Increased acceptance of heritage and statutory heritage listings
Run a main street program	Positive activity, reaches wider market, benefits tourism
Run education and promotion programs	Increased understanding and acceptance heritage. Community engagement and involvement.
Lead by example	Demonstrates conservation is possible and valued, that Council takes heritage seriously and does what it requires owners to do.
Link heritage to sustainable development	Links to more widely accepted environmental concepts – promotes understanding of heritage and its wide definition.

Figure 2 Local Heritage Management – NSW Model

Source: Adapted from guideline published by the NSW Heritage Office, NSW Department of Planning (2007) 'Recommendations for Local Council Heritage Management'.

7.4.1 Corporate plans and policies

Corporate plans for a local council can commit the organisation to protecting heritage places and indicate how this will be done through strategies such as:

- recognising heritage places
- protecting heritage values through council planning and decision-making
- offering assistance to owners
- consulting widely
- protecting and managing council-controlled places
- including best practice heritage conservation standards and principles.

7.4.2 Recognising heritage

Council works and land management

Procedures can be established to ensure that heritage places are protected in the planning and implementation of councils' capital works and land management programs – whether implemented by council staff or contractors. Councils can demonstrate good practice in heritage conservation in any works or management action undertaken on properties they control, such as a park or foreshore reserve, or an historic town hall building, and in works associated with roads, landscaping, street-planting, waste disposal and drainage.

Heritage considerations can be built into all phases of a works or management program including:

- project design
- site or route selection
- construction
- maintenance.

Codes of practice, guidelines, contract conditions and best practice training of field staff can be used to protect heritage places in the construction and maintenance phases of projects. When planning, or reviewing for approval, works or management projects to be undertaken by local authority staff, contractors, volunteers or the private sector, consider the following.

- Will the action affect any known cultural or natural heritage places? Check State and Territory heritage and National Trust registers, and statutory planning controls.
- Is there a need for consultation or survey work to identify unrecorded heritage places that may be affected? Ask the relevant indigenous community, and State or Territory agencies responsible for natural and cultural heritage. It may be necessary to commission a heritage specialist.
- If there are potential effects, what steps are proposed to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on heritage significance?
- Have all relevant approvals been obtained where protected heritage places may be affected? Approvals may be required from a State or Territory agency, the relevant indigenous community and the council.

Acquisition of land

For very important places, public acquisition may be the best means of long-term protection. Land purchases can be funded through special levies on ratepayers, trust funds, donations or long-term loans. In some cases community groups have purchased a property or an individual landholder has bequeathed their property to the State government or local council.

Developers of land subdivisions are often required to set aside a percentage of land as public open space, or provide the equivalent value in cash to the local council. Councils can negotiate with developers to protect significant places within the open space contribution. Developers' contributions of money instead of land for open space can be set aside for land acquisition nearby.

Land exchanges or swaps are another way for councils to acquire heritage places. They involve local authorities exchanging sites of relatively little significance for sites with heritage value. Councils can accumulate a 'bank' of sites which may be valuable for development but do not have heritage significance. Once acquired, the land should be permanently protected by reservation for conservation purposes, or appropriate covenants or protection orders.

7.4.3 Funding and assistance

Councils can develop a revolving loan fund which makes funds available as loans to landholders or crown lessees for conservation works. As loans are repaid, the funds become available to support new loans. Councils can set their own interest rates, borrowing limits and priorities for places or works. The initial funds could be established by a special allocation by councils, a small heritage levy on rateable properties, or corporate contributions.

Depending on state or territory legislation, councils may have the power to levy a lower property rate in a particular zone or on individual properties as a financial incentive for conservation. This may be conditional on ongoing maintenance of the heritage values.

Councils can offer building or site maintenance assistance on a subsidised cost basis for landholders with special needs or those who are unable to fund essential maintenance to heritage places. Councils can also employ heritage advisers to advise councils and the community on the conservation of heritage places within a local area (see the information on seeking advice and assistance in Chapter 7).

7.4.4 Training

Locally focused training in heritage conservation principles and processes can benefit councillors, council officers and other parties involved in land use and development. In-service training for all officers advising a council on planning approvals should familiarise them with the types of heritage places in an area, as well as the means of protecting them.

A local training program could also cover:

- conservation works on heritage places for property owners and those in the building industry
- implications of heritage controls for property owners and occupiers, architects and planning consultants, real estate agents and solicitors.

7.4.5 Supporting community action

Councils can encourage heritage conservation and protection through supporting community action by, for example:

- holding a seminar on 'Researching the heritage of your house or property'
- developing a collection of materials on heritage conservation and management to complement a local history collection

- establishing or supporting a friends group or community reference group for managing a public
- acknowledging and rewarding those who have made a contribution through recognition or an award
- participating in and providing assistance for conservation works.

7.4.6 Celebrating heritage

Public celebrations are a good way of increasing community awareness and support for heritage conservation. Some of the possibilities include:

- heritage awards for conservation of various categories of place, or for research and educational
- Projects
- a local heritage festival
- an annual heritage week, with a different theme each year
- a photographic, art or writing competition about local significant places
- community visual or performing arts projects that focus on local heritage, such as an art exhibition, a locally written play, or a neighbourhood map on a quilt or mural
- a public ceremony to mark an achievement in conservation, such as the launch of a local heritage inventory or the opening of a restored building

7.5 Key attributes for successful local heritage management

There are a number of key characteristics of successful local government heritage management. Some local governments are able to undertake, some just a few depending on local circumstances. At a minimum a combination of some statutory tools and proactive incentives should be employed by council.

A successful local heritage manager is a local council that:

1. is supported by a State government that takes a leadership role and demonstrates best practice in heritage strategy and practice; that obliges local government to identify, conserve and appropriately manage local heritage; that has a state heritage policy or framework, that provides support and long term funding and has systems for the consistent identification, assessment and condition of the states' heritage;
2. resources heritage by planning for and funding strategic and statutory heritage management as a key component of its planning and regulatory roles;
3. has a Council and corporate commitment to heritage in plan and action;
4. invests in and sustains good advice and skills with staff and heritage advisors;
5. develops and implements a heritage strategy and monitors progress;
6. provides free advice, information and support to heritage owners, developers and the wider community through provision of a heritage advisory service;
7. identifies heritage, assesses significance and defines a statement of

- heritage significance for individual places and precincts through a thorough and defensible process;
8. embraces a wide definition of heritage, achieves a comprehensive heritage list and manages heritage places and areas/precincts;
 9. integrates heritage management into Council's statutory and strategic planning processes and Council's environmental and sustainable development management;
 10. provides fiscal and other forms of incentives to owners and developers and consistently exercises statutory heritage controls;
 11. undertakes heritage promotion and education, interprets significant local heritage and promotes heritage tourism;
 12. builds capacity for community heritage management, provides opportunities for volunteerism and heritage owners and recognises and rewards participation;
 13. communicates councils heritage strategies and programs to the community in plain English;
 14. builds effective working relationships with relevant tourism, arts, community, state and heritage organisations and;
 15. is creative in the absence of state direction, plays to its strengths and unique heritage values and partners with local government and regional networks.
 16. engages proactively with local communities such as through direct consultation on local heritage studies or the use of a local heritage committee.

[Supporting Local Government Heritage Conservation draft report for Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand, May 2008]

7.6 Key actions for local government include:

The key attributes of successful local government heritage management, common to these councils are:

- Achieve councillor support and understanding of heritage
 - ◇ This is key as Councillors need to support heritage both at the strategic and statutory level. Local government heritage planning is inherently political and ways to proactively and positively engage Councillor support for heritage, beyond statutory decision making on contentious issues, is essential. Achieving Councillor support provides both the long term strategy (having policies to protect heritage and identifying heritage places for protection via the planning instrument) to ensure good proactive decisions are made at the development approval stage.
- Make it a corporate (and statutory planning policy) to conserve and interpret local heritage. Seek to promote the benefits of heritage to gain community support for heritage
 - ◇ The Southern Midlands Council (Tasmania) has embraced heritage as a key element of the local area's future prosperity through cultural tourism.

- ◇ Melton Shire Council (Victoria) when exhibiting a heritage amendment listing heritage places, ensured that relevant Council officers understood the purpose and impact of the amendment.
- Have a heritage strategy
 - ◇ Almost all of the successful case studies profiled have a heritage strategy. Examples of excellent local heritage strategies are The Town of Vincent (Western Australia) - <http://www.vincentheritage.com.au/docs/Heritage%20Strategic%20Plan%20September%202007.pdf> – and Broken Hill (New South Wales) - http://www.brokenhill.nsw.gov.au/files/3618/File/Draft_BrokenHillHeritageStrategy2006.pdf
- Get good heritage advice
 - ◇ The heritage advisory service in Broken Hill has been a successful partnership between Council and the community. Heritage advisors and heritage officers who are skilled both technically and in working with the community, can make a significant difference.
- Prepare a defensible heritage study
 - ◇ Make sure your heritage study is comprehensive, uses standard criteria and threshold assessment and is defensible through public exhibition.
- Adopt a comprehensive approach
 - ◇ Pursue a holistic approach beyond statutory planning. The City of Whitehorse (Victoria) has developed a program 'Approaching Heritage Holistically' which proposes that protecting areas of heritage significance required more than planning scheme controls. The program is a joint project involving City of Whitehorse officers, Councillors, Heritage Groups, Libraries, Neighbourhood and Community houses in the municipality and residents.
- Run a local heritage fund
 - ◇ In Brisbane, a marked reduction in objections to listings followed introduction of a local heritage funding program. Even proportional funding combined with a free heritage advisor program can assist change negative attitudes to heritage listing.
- Be creative in promoting heritage
 - ◇ Involve the community in archaeological digs and competitions.
- Be flexible
 - ◇ Many profiled councils waive development fees and consider planning trade-offs to achieve a conservation outcome.
- Be clear
 - ◇ Successful councils communicate in plain English. Prepare fact sheets and brochures that explain what heritage listing means, have before and after examples.
- Community education
 - ◇ Bathurst publishes a brochure Heritage Survival Kit - http://www.bathurst.nsw.gov.au/images/stories/pdfplanning/heritage_survival_kit.pdf - for residential buildings which is a model of simplicity.

- ◇ Melton Shire Council (Victoria) has participated in projects to celebrate the unique heritage of their region through promoting the cultural heritage of Dry Stone Walls - http://www.melton.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.asp?Page_Id=716&h=1 This assists widen the scope of what heritage is and is a positive community project run concurrently to a statutory heritage listing process for other heritage places.
- Consult with the community early
 - ◇ That has an end point and is meaningful for participants. Notification and exhibition of heritage amendments is a legislative requirement and usually involves legalistic notices and advice. Planned community consultation during the heritage study or survey and ongoing consultation during the legal exhibition period is essential. Most councils report delivering increasingly sophisticated consultation programs. Southern Midlands Shire Council publishes updates and reports on the progress and status of local heritage projects - <http://www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=280>
- Adapt state guidelines for local circumstances or devise your own
 - ◇ Many local councils which lack state direction have devised their own heritage provisions which work well for their local environment.
- Promote local successful Case studies
 - ◇ Broken Hill utilises before and after photographs to show the results of heritage restoration and conservation works. Council reports on implementation of programs such as the Verandah Program - http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/brokenhill_verandahprogramreport.pdf
- Rewarding volunteers and community efforts to conserve heritage
 - ◇ Private sector owners and the community play a large role in heritage conservation.
 - ◇ In Indigo, council's Heritage Awards program - <http://www.indigoshire.vic.gov.au/> - rewards owners, community groups and volunteers for a wide range of heritage conservation activities, from conserving movable heritage to the most sympathetic adaptive re-use of a heritage building.
- Lead by Example and manage your own heritage assets
 - ◇ Southern Midlands Council (Tasmania) has found that doing the right thing by your own council owned assets goes a long way to inspire the community.

- Focus on education and promotion and plain English communication
 - ◇ Positive community engagement with heritage can achieve much more than inflexible and incomprehensible statutory provisions which do not have the support or understanding of the local community. Most local governments publish such fact sheets, brochures and guides. Two examples include: The Town of Gawler has published a simple brochure, Development Policies Protection of Gawler's Heritage - http://www.gawler.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/development_heritage.pdf - which explains what it means to be heritage listed.
 - ◇ The City of Brisbane also publishes Guide to Brisbane's heritage places - http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/bccwr/lib188/bcc5428%20heritage%20fact%20sheet_screen_1.pdf
 - ◇ Concurrent to listing process, Ashfield published a guide to listing which gives clear answers to common concerns - http://www.ashfield.nsw.gov.au/page/heritage_brochure.html
- Partner with the state
 - ◇ Where resources are scarce, states such as Queensland and Tasmania partner with individual councils on projects, heritage studies and workshops or provide seed funding to kick-start a program.
- Partner with others - Seek cultural tourism opportunities
 - ◇ The Cobb & Co Heritage Trail - <http://www.cobbandco.net.au/> - project commenced in 1997 by Bathurst City Council's (NSW) councillors, a local coach builder and Bathurst's heritage advisor. A number of local councils participated in recording the history of Cobb & Co and today the award winning tourist trail is promoted by a website and annual festival.
 - ◇ The Town of Gawler has published a heritage trail of Historic Hotels - http://www.gawler.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Gawler_Pub_Brochure1.pdf - sponsored by Coopers.
- Seek alternate funding opportunities
 - ◇ The heritage agencies in each state are one limited source of funding. For the Dry Stone Walls project Melton Shire Council received funding from a then Victorian Government program (Pride of Place) funding urban design initiatives.
 - ◇ The City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters in South Australia partnered with Flinders University on an archaeological project.
- Know what is significant in your area and promote it
 - ◇ Every local area is unique and will have its own history and heritage to conserve and celebrate. The Gold Coast is promoting its 20th century heritage - http://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/t_standard.aspx?pid=5079 - Melton its Dry Stone Walls, Bathurst promotes its associations with Cobb & Co and Southern Midlands its Georgian heritage.

- Build partnerships and include heritage in broader community cultural and social festivals
 - ◇ Build regional networks council to council, such as the Hunter Heritage Network in Bathurst or informal partnerships as evidenced in WA and QLD where state leadership is not as formalised.

(Supporting Local Government Heritage Conservation draft report for Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand, May 2008)

8.

Monitoring progress

Having identified heritage places and established procedures for conserving or protecting them, you can prepare to monitor and measure the changing status of heritage places in your local area. This chapter lists some ways of monitoring progress.

It is important to use information gained through monitoring or evaluation, for example, through heritage awards schemes, volunteer awards and promotion of case studies of successful heritage projects. This can help build on successes and expand future heritage projects.

To evaluate the impact of your heritage action plan, you could monitor:

- overall heritage conservation and protection
- on-the-ground change.

For any monitoring projects:

- have clear objectives
- know the baseline conditions against which change will be measured
- define the time that you are looking at, for example, the last 12 months or the last five years
- collect data which provides a reasonably objective measure of the change, and be realistic about the amount of data that can be collected.

8.1.1 Conservation and protection

Evaluate whether aspects of heritage place conservation are changing, positively or negatively, by comparing changes in the number of heritage places:

- protected under legislation or local planning
- damaged or destroyed
- actively managed for their heritage values.

This can be a simple and quick check on an annual basis.

8.1.2 On-the-ground change

Evaluate on-the-ground change by looking at the:

- condition of a heritage place
- influence on key players
- improvement in local resources and knowledge
- community perceptions
- state of the environment reporting.

8.1.3 Condition of a heritage place

Evaluate improvements in the condition of heritage places by using indicators,

for example:

- for a rare plant restoration site, changes in the number of plants in the population at the same time on a year-to-year basis
- an increase or decrease in the rate of erosion of a coastal midden
 - ◊ a change in the amount of vandalism to an historic site.

8.1.4 Influence on key players

Evaluate the changing attitudes or behaviour of key players such as landholders, developers and decision-makers to assess the impact of local community action.

A first step towards a change in behaviour is often a change in attitude. For example, assess whether key players are willing to:

- consult with heritage organisations and interested individuals
- ask for advice on heritage matters.

Behavioural change could include key players:

- adopting improved heritage management practices
- agreeing to pre-development heritage surveys
- building heritage values into decision-making.

Changes in behaviour can often be measured objectively, whereas changes in attitude may be happening but be less evident.

8.1.5 Improvement in local resources and knowledge

Evaluate whether the level of local resources such as skills, knowledge and information about heritage has improved. This may be hard to assess objectively, but some useful indicators could be:

- the amount of heritage material in the local library
- interest from schools in linking heritage activities into their curriculum
- the number of local groups interested in heritage, or the number of people involved.

8.1.6 Community perceptions

Monitor community perceptions about heritage to see whether they are changing.

If you have access to resources and skills, conduct public opinion surveys at regular intervals to see if there has been any change. Changes in community perception can also be monitored by measuring shifts in:

- attendance at public heritage activities such as heritage walks or planting days
- interest by the local media in heritage stories
- opposition to proposals which will adversely affect well-known heritage places.

For a community group, an indicator of community interest might be a change in the number of people who are getting involved in your projects. For a local government authority, it might be a change in the number of people who ring up to express concern about a proposed change to a heritage place.

8.1.7 State of the environment reporting

The concept of reporting on the changing state of the environment has been adopted by Australian governments.

It provides a means of monitoring the overall picture of the state of the environment within a locality. A state of the environment report typically uses a set of indicators to describe the type and amount of change over a set period, for example, one year. The indicators selected need to be easily understood and, where possible, measurable, and give the clearest picture of what is being achieved or lost. They also need a clear cause-and-effect link indicating the effectiveness of heritage protection and management within the locality. If the community is not involved in state of the environment reporting, establish a 'state of our heritage' process, producing an annual heritage report. Ideally, this report would go to the council. It would cover the successes and failures of the past year, and would include recommendations on new actions the council could take.

Many state of the environment reports appropriately include natural and cultural heritage themes as part of the environmental reporting.

In New South Wales, local governments are required to prepare an annual state of the environment report every three years and must report on environmental sectors including Aboriginal heritage and non-Aboriginal heritage. In Queensland, the State government prepares a report every three years including natural and cultural heritage. State of the Environment reporting may be adapted to local government circumstances, for example:

- City of Adelaide State of the Environment Report (2005) - <http://www.adelaidecitycouncil.com/environment/plans-and-policies/environment-reporting.html>
- Hornsby Shire Council State of the Environment Report (2006) - <http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/environment/index.cfm?NavigationID=1691>

Changes in the following heritage indicators are useful at the local level.

State of knowledge about heritage:

- number and types of heritage places listed in registers and local heritage lists
- number and types of places known to indigenous communities, but not able to be listed because of confidentiality requirements.

Responses to identify and protect heritage:

- availability and scope of relevant Commonwealth, State, Territory and local laws designed to protect heritage places
- number and types of places protected under available legislation
- number of decisions under the specific protective provisions of relevant Acts and laws, including local development control decisions.

State of physical condition and integrity:

- physical condition and integrity of the heritage places, by class of places.

Expertise and skills for managing heritage:

- expertise available to council for managing heritage

State of conservation practice:

- number of heritage places managed under agreed management plans and with appropriate resources
- level of financial assistance available
- availability of expertise to the local area – professional, technical and traditional skills and knowledge.

State of community attitudes and involvement:

- level of community involvement in heritage-related organisations
- level of community involvement in the processes of heritage identification, evaluation and listing
- objections to listings in heritage registers.

Source: Adapted from Australia: State of the Environment 2006 (2006).

9. Appendix

Model local government heritage strategy

Model Local Government Heritage Strategy

Insert Council/Shire name and logo

Preliminary Notes

- The strategy may be integrated into Council's(business) corporate strategy plans
- The strategy should be adequately resourced for implementation
- The strategy should be a whole-of-council adopted strategy
- The strategy may include challenges/opportunities at play
- The strategy should include realistic goals for implementation
- Council should commit to some goals from each category for a well rounded approach to heritage management
- Council may include mission statements or vision statements committing Council to the effective identification, protection and promotion of local heritage.
- Under the goals examples as examples of where local councils have implemented such actions. These do not form part of the strategy.
- Council's heritage advisor may be able to provide advice on the development of the strategy, as can the State heritage agency.
- The strategy should identify Council's heritage strategy goals.
- Council may identify others in addition to these or replace some of these goals. These may be grouped in the following categories:

Goals

Community Education and Heritage Promotion

- Prepare online resources on heritage (faqs, factsheets)
- Publish information sheets and brochures explaining heritage for owners
- Provide guidance on researching the history of local homes
- Conduct heritage walks, tours and talks
- Run a heritage volunteer award program
- Run a heritage incentives fund or grant program
- Investigate corporate and commercial sponsorship of council's heritage program
- Investigate opportunities for cultural heritage tourism
- Interpret significant heritage
- Run heritage conservation/development/design awards
- Collaborate with local heritage/history/property groups on projects, such as local studies library, historical societies, real estate agents

- Develop for Council a contact list of heritage owners of listed properties
- Run events celebrating heritage
- Develop contact lists of known heritage architects, contractors or conservation suppliers and services working on heritage places.
- Run heritage consultation programs during heritage projects and introduction of heritage listings or policies.

Heritage Expertise in Council

- Run a heritage advisory service and/or employ staff with heritage expertise
- Deliver regular heritage awareness training to Councillors and staff
- Raise the level of awareness of heritage in Council's arts, economic development, building, engineering, property management & works areas.
- Identify known Council heritage assets on Councils rates database
- Establish a heritage advisory committee
- Participate in regional or State heritage networks established to develop heritage skills, share resources & exchange information
- Enhance statutory planners expertise in heritage through training and collaboration.
- Utilise State heritage agency model guidelines, heritage assessment criteria and resources.

Heritage and development

- Undertake a comprehensive heritage study to identify and assess the significance of heritage in the locality.
- Prepare statements of significance for identified local heritage.
- Achieve statutory protection for heritage identified as locally significant.
- Nominate State significant heritage identified in heritage study to the relevant state heritage register.
- Prepare guidance for owners on making changes to heritage places and how Council's local policy and decision making criteria apply. Explain Council's development policy in plain English,
 - ◇ Example: Town of Gawler (SA) Development Policies - http://www.gawler.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/development_heritage.pdf
- Publish guidance on Council policy for owners and developers on infill development, urban design and adaptive reuse.
- Explain how the heritage system works and publish definitions of common heritage terms
 - ◇ Example, Town of Vincent (WA) Glossary of Heritage Terms - http://www.vincentheritage.com.au/pdf/GLOSSARY_v2_proof.pdf

- Ensure local heritage management decision guidelines and local policies appropriately conserve local heritage through change & development
 - ◇ Example, Town of Vincent (WA) Development Guidelines Policy 3.6.1 - <http://www.vincent.wa.gov.au/cproot/414/46/3.6.1%20Heritage%20Management%20-%20Devel%20Guidelines.pdf>
 - ◇ Example, Town of Vincent (WA) Assessment Policy 3.6.2 - <http://www.vincent.wa.gov.au/cproot/415/46/3.6.2%20Heritage%20Management%20-%20Assessment.pdf>
- Create a publicly accessible version (online) of Council's statutory protected list of heritage places and understand their significance, or participate in State heritage agency collation of local data into one central online heritage listings database (NSW, Vic, WA).
 - ◇ Example: Town of Vincent (WA) Municipal heritage inventory - <http://www.vincentheritage.com.au/search.asp>
 - ◇ Establish, or if statutory protected list of heritage is already established, Review statutory heritage list, a comprehensive list should encompass range of types of heritage as relevant, including, aboriginal heritage, horticulture/trees, archaeological heritage, movable heritage.
- Assess the significance of a range of local heritage types:
 - ◇ Example: Mosman (NSW) Local Government Area Aboriginal Heritage Study - <http://www.mosman.nsw.gov.au/planning/heritage/indigenous>
- Consult effectively with the community when planning a heritage study, undertaking heritage studies and amending local planning instruments/schemes to list heritage places or amend policy affecting heritage places.
- Establish a heritage committee to guide Council's strategic heritage management.
- Encourage preparation of conservation management plans for State significant heritage assets and prepare conservation strategies for Council owned heritage assets.
- Produce technical advice on good maintenance of heritage assets/provide links to State heritage agency published material
 - ◇ Example: City of Brisbane (QLD) technical factsheets - http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCC:BASE::pc=PC_2868

Funding heritage

- Establish a heritage assistance, grants or loans, program for owners of heritage places.
- Example: Bathurst Region (NSW) Heritage Fund - <http://www.bathurst.nsw.gov.au/planning/heritage-management/98-bathurst-region-heritage-fund>
- Promote and assist owners to apply for relevant State heritage funding
- Seek funding from State and Commonwealth governments to:
 - ◇ Undertake heritage studies
 - ◇ Employ a heritage advisor

- ◇ Undertake main street studies
- ◇ Undertake interpretation/cultural tourism projects
- ◇ Undertake urban revitalisation projects incorporating heritage
- Consider a rate reduction scheme for property owners of listed heritage places
- Provide a free heritage advisory service
 - ◇ Example: Ipswich City Council Heritage Adviser Service - http://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/residents/building/heritage_adviser_service/
- Run an heritage excellence awards scheme for owners undertaking conservation works
 - ◇ Example: Ipswich City Council Awards for Excellence in Design and Heritage - http://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/about_ipswich/heritage/awards_for_excellence/

Council owned heritage

- Lead by example in the maintenance, repair and management of council owned heritage assets.
- Know what you own. Prepare an inventory and assess significance of heritage owned, occupied or managed by Council.
 - ◇ Example: Bathurst Regional Council (NSW) Heritage Asset Register - <http://www.bathurst.nsw.gov.au/planning/heritage-management/97-heritage-asset-register>
- Achieve local statutory protection for heritage identified as locally significant.
- Adopt good asset management practices
 - ◇ Example of good Principles for managing local heritage Managing Local Authority Heritage Assets guideline prepared by English Heritage (UK) - <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.001002005009008>
- Prepare conservation plans/strategies/documents/policies to guide the future conservation, development, adaptation, maintenance of heritage assets.
 - ◇ Example: Southern Midlands Shire Council (Tas) Collections Management Policy - http://www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Heritage_Collection_Policy_Endorsed_160507.pdf
- Plan and undertake cyclical maintenance and repair programs, demonstrating good conservation practice, for heritage assets, undertake regular inspections and condition reports.
- Ensure that the heritage value of council owned assets is taken into consideration during leasing process & contract documents.
- Ensure that the heritage value is taken into account when examining options for disposal.
- Publish information on the significance and values of Council owned heritage assets

- ◇ Example: Baulkham Hills Shire Council (NSW) heritage assets (change dot point type) - <http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Council-Owned-Heritage-and-Places-to-Visit.html>
- Examine potential for tours and open days of Council owned heritage assets
- Monitor condition of council owned property and practice good heritage asset management.

10.

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