

Heritage strategies are a recommended part of the local government management toolkit, and assist you and your Heritage Advisor to identify priority projects and work areas. The heritage strategy can also support the integrated planning and reporting framework undertaken by each local government, particularly in relation to objectives and strategies identified in the Strategic Community Plan and Asset Management Plan.

Background

The heritage strategy is a means of measuring, planning and reporting on heritage activity in the area and is a required part of the acquittal process for the Heritage Council subsidy, where approved. Preparing a heritage strategy and measuring the outcomes will assist local governments to assess the impact of heritage programs and plan future activities and are recommended whether or not they are required for funding purposes.

Responsibility for the heritage strategy should be given to a nominated officer - this may be the individual acting as your contact point for heritage issues or a function linked with other strategic planning. Depending on the local government, this may be someone within the urban planning, community development, library/museum services or any other department. The Heritage Advisor will also be able to assist with the development of the strategy and making recommendations for future activity.

Content of a heritage strategy

The broad purpose of the strategy is to report the current status of heritage in the area, give a statement of intent or future goals, and provide some targets against which the rate of change can be measured. It then indicates priority work areas that will help you work towards these targets. Bear in mind that this should be a practical working document and a realistic plan for what can be achieved.

There are a number of elements that a heritage strategy should contain. All strategies should include benchmark data such as the local government inventory, heritage elements of the local planning scheme, number of heritage places and status of heritage places owned by the shire. Once a basic heritage framework is securely in place, a strategy may include items such as heritage advisory groups, incentives, analysis of development activity, heritage tourism projects, expenditure on conservation, community engagement opportunities and other relevant issues.

Basic requirements

The basic targets recommended for each local government are:

- a local government inventory that:
 - has been completed with community participation;
 - has been reviewed and updated within a reasonable period;
 - meets the common standards for assessment;
 - is readily available to the public through the inHerit online database;
- a heritage list associated with the local planning scheme;
- extending the data available on the inHerit website by adding images and additional background information;
- a heritage policy (or recognition of State Planning Policy 3.5 as a guide to development assessment);
- a property maintenance plan for all heritage places managed or owned by the shire;
- ensuring that officers participate in training on heritage issues; and
- including heritage in the induction program for elected members.

Next Steps

Larger local governments, or those who have met the basic targets and are interested in extending their heritage services, can add further activities such as:

- establishment of a heritage committee to provide ongoing community input to heritage issues;
- extending the training and ability of the appointed heritage officer;
- developing and implementing a range of heritage incentives;
- holding an annual heritage day or local history event;
- providing education and training on heritage issues for other officers, elected members and the community;
- developing a heritage tourism strategy.

A template for laying out your Heritage Strategy is available from the State Heritage Office.

The strategy is your planning tool for identifying your heritage priorities, so it should be adapted to suit your needs. A copy of the strategy should be submitted to the Heritage Council when acquitting a subsidy at the end of the financial year.

Contact us

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