
Shoalhaven Heritage Strategy 2021-2024

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1. PURPOSE

Shoalhaven City Council has reviewed the best practice advice contained in the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and Heritage Council of NSW publication *'Recommendations for local council heritage management'* and has resolved to:

1.1. Increase awareness and appreciation of heritage in the local area.

Council will work with local history groups and historical societies to promote heritage conservation particularly in regard to heritage items and conservation areas listed in the Shoalhaven Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2014. Links to heritage organisations are contained on Council's website.

Council has a page on its website dedicated to heritage information which contains links to studies, conservation management plans, databases, and has general information for property owners.

The heritage information webpage also provides a link to the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage directory of professional consultants, services and trades specialising in heritage.

1.2. Identify places of heritage significance in Shoalhaven and list them in Shoalhaven Local Environmental Plan 2014

Heritage listed items in Shoalhaven are listed in Schedule 5 Environmental Heritage of Shoalhaven LEP 2014. This schedule also includes heritage conservation areas and archaeological sites.

Schedule 5 of Shoalhaven LEP 2014 will be amended and updated as new studies are undertaken and new heritage places and areas are identified.

1.3. Appoint a heritage and urban design advisor to assist the Council, the community and owners of listed heritage items

Council will continue to provide a free heritage advisory service to property owners and others using the services of an experienced heritage consultant on a monthly basis. The Heritage Advisor is expected to meet with property owners and others to assist in understanding the

heritage values of their properties and to provide on the spot advice on suitable forms of development and the maintenance of heritage items and their fabric.

The Heritage Advisor will also provide strategic and detailed advice to Council's City Development Directorate on heritage issues and prepare a range of studies and strategy documents to guide Council's development policies and works on Council owned heritage assets.

The Heritage Advisor will also run internal and external workshops to improve an understanding of heritage and provide guidance on specific heritage issues and planning controls applying to heritage items and in conservation areas.

1.4. Manage local heritage in a positive manner

Much of Shoalhaven is undeveloped and contains a range of natural and modified landscapes that are an important reminder of both Indigenous and early colonial settlement. Following colonisation, the landscape was quickly transformed as it was developed for timber supplies and farming and the resulting landscape is an important element in the character of the area.

Development pressures close to towns and villages, and subdivision and development in rural areas can lead to a loss of buildings, plantings and landscape features that can erode this character.

Council will seek funds to prepare a study with the aim to identify common characteristics for the rural and semi-rural areas of the Shoalhaven, to provide an understanding of important components of the landscape and provide guidelines for the study of these landscapes to allow for better development outcomes.

1.5. Introduce a local heritage incentives fund to provide small grants to encourage local heritage projects

Council has an annual local heritage grants programme known as the 'Shoalhaven Local Heritage Assistance Fund' to assist owners of heritage listed properties with basic repairs and conservation works. The grants programme is intended to continue for the period 2019-2022.

Submissions will be called from heritage owners and the applications will be assessed by Council's Heritage Advisor and Council staff. Successful applicants are required to complete their projects by the end of the following March and these will be inspected by Council's Heritage Advisor to ensure compliance with the application details and sound conservation practice.

These small monetary assistance grants may be used for a wide range of small local heritage projects such as:

- Sympathetic alterations/additions to heritage items;
- Conservation works and general maintenance works;
- Adaptive reuse;
- Urban design projects that support heritage;
- Interpretation projects; and
- Conservation management plans.

1.6. Run a heritage main street programme

Shoalhaven is endowed with over 40 towns and villages including many of which still retain an unspoilt character such as Berry, Milton and Kangaroo Valley.

Council runs a Nowra CBD Façade Improvement Financial Assistance Program providing building and business owners the opportunity to apply to receive financial assistance for labour and materials to improve their façades. Council has also prepared a Streetscape Design Technical Manual for various towns in Shoalhaven.

Council will actively pursue monetary grants that are available to assist with developing a detailed landscape master plans to ensure that projects are “shovel ready” when implementation funding becomes available.

1.7. Present educational and promotional programmes

The Heritage Advisor will provide presentations and training sessions to City Development Directorate staff, as required, to improve understanding of the following heritage matters:

- The heritage planning framework;
- Statutory controls relating to heritage;
- An understanding of heritage terminology (fabric, curtilage etc);
- Heritage issues relating to development of heritage items and in conservation areas; and
- Specific treatment of development of heritage items and items in conservation areas.

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

The Heritage Advisor will provide advice and assistance to Council in the management of its assets that are of heritage significance. It is Council's aim to carry out its own development projects, or assist in larger projects, to ensure that it sets a benchmark for heritage development in Shoalhaven. The projects are aimed at protecting heritage assets and encouraging a public appreciation of heritage.

1.9. Promote sustainable development as a tool for heritage conservation

Council is committed by its Community Strategic Plan to ensure that land use and related strategies for future growth are based on the principles of connectivity, ecological sustainability, flexibility and accessibility.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

The policy will be administered by Council's City Development Directorate within the limits of State Government Funding.

3. REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed in July 2024 or as required.

4. APPLICATION OF ESD PRINCIPLES

This policy reflects the requirements for ESD.