

REF: CM167/09

ESTABLISHMENT OF WOLLONGONG HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Report of Manager Environmental Strategy and Planning (JT) 9/09/09

SU20994

PRECIS

Council at its meeting on 28 July 2009 resolved to establish a Heritage Advisory Committee and requested a report be provided on the charter and establishment of this Committee. This report provides details on the establishment of the Committee and makes recommendations in relation to the proposed membership and charter.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 The Heritage Advisory Committee provide advice to Council on policy matters relating to the conservation and promotion of Wollongong's Heritage.**
- 2 The proposed Heritage Advisory Committee Charter (Attachment 1) be endorsed.**
- 3 The membership structure of the Heritage Advisory Committee be endorsed and delegation be granted to the General Manager for the appointment of Committee Members.**
- 4 The Heritage Reference Group be dissolved.**

BACKGROUND

The Wollongong Heritage Advisory Committee operated from 1979 until 2004, when the Committee was replaced with a Heritage Reference Group. For the last period of its operation, the Committee reported to Council via the Environment and Planning Committee and considered all Council heritage issues.

The Heritage Reference Group was formed in 2004 with a strategic policy focus and met on an ad-hoc basis. The Reference Group has not met since September 2007 and does not have current membership.

Council at its meeting of 28 July 2009 considered a report on the heritage matters relating to the draft Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009. Council resolved to establish a Heritage Advisory Committee and that a report be submitted to Council on the charter and establishment of the Committee. The resolution followed a suggestion from the Chair of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch of the National Trust (NSW) during a public forum relating to the draft Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 that the Committee be re-established.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed that the Wollongong Heritage Advisory Committee replace the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group. The Committee will be advisory to Council and as such, any recommendations will be reported through the Environmental Strategy and Planning Division.

The proposed charter for the Heritage Advisory Committee is provided as Attachment 1 to this report. The proposed responsibilities and functions, membership structure and priorities of the Committee are discussed below.

Responsibilities and Functions

The Heritage Advisory Committee is proposed to be focussed on strategic policy and project matters, as well as heritage promotion. The Committee's functions and responsibilities are proposed as follows:

- Develop and monitor a Heritage Management Policy and Heritage Strategy;
- Provide advice to Council on the review and update of the Heritage Schedule in Council's Local Environmental Plan(s), including recommendations relating to the nomination and deletion of items;
- Provide advice to Council on strategic projects and Council policies related to, or that may impact on, the conservation and management of Wollongong's heritage;
- Raise community awareness of heritage conservation through heritage promotions; and
- Provide advice to Council on the distribution of the local heritage grant fund.

To ensure that the Committee can focus on its core functions, the charter will not extend to consideration of development applications. It is proposed that Committee members will be notified of developments affecting heritage items and that they be invited to comment on these as individuals. This will ensure that members are familiar with the development issues affecting local heritage items but avoid the Committee's priorities being delayed by the assessment of applications.

Priorities

The proposed charter identifies the following priorities for the Heritage Advisory Committee as:

1. A major review of the draft Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 Heritage Schedule, commencing with an updated Thematic History (as per Council's resolution of 28 July 2009); and
2. The development of a Heritage Policy for the consideration of Council and a three (3) year Heritage Strategy to implement this Policy.

Given the scale and significance of these tasks this is expected to dominate the Committee's agenda for at least the first year of its operation. The Heritage Strategy (once endorsed by Council) will then guide the Committee's priorities into the future.

Composition of the Committee

The Heritage Advisory Committee is proposed to be made up of eight (8) independent members (including one (1) chairperson) with a wide knowledge and expertise in natural and cultural heritage.

Membership will be by nomination, with the following representative groups targeted:

Target Group	Details
Heritage or historical interest group representatives	Local Heritage or Historical Groups with an interest in the heritage of the local area will be invited to nominate representatives for membership.
Aboriginal community representatives	Local Aboriginal groups will be invited to nominate representatives in consultation with Council's Aboriginal Community Development Officer.
Property, Business or Developer Group representatives	Property, Business and Developer groups with an interest in heritage issues will be invited to nominate representatives.
General community representatives	These representatives will be people with an interest in Wollongong's heritage and may include owners of local heritage items.

It is proposed that Council seek nominations via a press release, media advertisements and notices to neighbourhood forums and identified interest groups. Each nomination should be accompanied by a written application addressing the selection criteria for the position. The selection criteria are outlined below:

- Demonstrated interest in and knowledge of local heritage management issues;
- Willingness to dedicate time to attend meetings and perform tasks related to Committee business;
- Willingness to contribute positively and constructively within an agreed management framework;
- Demonstrated contact with a cross-section of the local community for the purpose of passing on information and receiving feedback; and
- Residency within Wollongong Local Government Area.

Groups known by Council to meet the requirements of the target groups will be invited to nominate members for these positions. Groups should outline in their nomination how their expertise can contribute to the committee and demonstrate that the nominee has the authority and capacity to represent their organisation in making decisions on heritage issues. Nominations will also be accepted from groups not identified or invited by Council.

An independent Chairperson will be appointed by Council from the committee membership.

Council's Strategic Project Officer – Heritage will attend Committee meetings as an ex-officio member and will provide professional advice to the Committee.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

In considering the proposed Committee structure and charter outlined in this report, consultation has been undertaken with the facilitators of several other Council Committees. Liverpool, Parramatta and Bathurst Council's were also consulted about the operation of their Heritage Committees. In addition, the Heritage Branch publication 'Recommendations for Local Council Heritage Management' was considered. The National Trust of Australia (NSW) Illawarra Shoalhaven Branch was consulted about the development of the draft charter as were a number of former Heritage Committee members about the Committees past operation, its problems and issues.

The Heritage Advisory Committee will be a consultative forum for interest groups and the wider community to be involved in Council's heritage decision making. The proposed membership structure will provide for a variety of views to be considered in making decisions relating to Council's heritage policies.

It is proposed that Council call for nominations to be members of the Committee.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs related to the administration and running of the Heritage Advisory Committee are considered to be minimal and can be managed through the existing annual heritage budget. Committee members will be volunteers and no payments, other than approved expenses, will be payable. Costs relating to proposed tasks and projects arising from Committee meetings will require the endorsement of Council and as such, separate consideration of funding can be made when these matters are considered.

CONCLUSION

The proposal to establish a Heritage Advisory Committee provides an opportunity for Council to work with the community to update current heritage studies and policies.

The proposed Committee structure and charter detailed in this report will ensure that the Committee will provide a representative advisory group and will add value to the development of Council's Heritage policies and strategic planning projects.

Name	Position Title
Author:	
Joel Thompson	Strategic Project Officer - Heritage
Authorised by:	
David Green	Land Use Planning Manager
Renee Campbell	Manager Environmental Strategy & Planning
Peter Chrystal	Acting Director Planning & Environment
David Farmer	General Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Heritage Advisory Committee Charter



WOLLONGONG HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARTER

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL

Introduction

The Wollongong Heritage Advisory Committee has been established to provide advice to Council on its policies and strategic projects where these relate to the management, conservation and promotion of Wollongong's heritage. The Committee comprises people interested in the management and conservation of Wollongong's unique cultural heritage.

Authority

The Wollongong Heritage Advisory Committee will provide advice, feedback, recommendations and support to Council in developing policies and strategic projects that relate to, or may impact on, the conservation and management of Wollongong's heritage.

The Committee does not have decision making authority, the power to bind the Council or the power to incur expenditure.

Responsibilities and Functions

The responsibilities and functions of the Heritage Advisory Committee are to:

- Develop and monitor a Heritage Management Policy and Heritage Strategy;
- Provide advice to Council on the review and update of the Heritage Schedule in Council's Local Environmental Plan(s), including recommendations relating to the nomination and deletion of items;
- Provide advice to Council on strategic projects and Council policies related to, or that may impact on, the conservation and management of Wollongong's heritage;
- Raise community awareness of heritage conservation through heritage promotions; and
- Provide advice to Council on the distribution of the local heritage grant fund.

Note – To ensure that the Committee can focus on its core functions, the Committee will not be involved in reviewing development applications. Members will however be

notified of developments affecting heritage items and be invited to comment in their own capacity.

Priorities

The immediate priorities of the Wollongong Heritage Advisory Committee are:

1. A major review of the draft Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 Heritage Schedule, commencing with an updated Thematic History (as per Council's resolution of 28 July 2009); and
2. The development of a Heritage Policy for the consideration of Council and a three (3) year Heritage Strategy to implement this Policy.

Given the scale and significance of these tasks this is expected to dominate the Committee's agenda for at least the first year of its operation. The Heritage Strategy (once endorsed by Council) should then guide the Committees priorities into the future.

Composition of the Committee

The structure of the Heritage Advisory Committee is proposed to be made up of eight (8) independent members with a wide knowledge and expertise in natural and cultural heritage. Membership will be by nomination, with the following representative groups targeted:

Target Group	Details
Heritage or historical interest group representatives	Groups with an interest in the heritage of the local area will be invited to nominate representatives.
Aboriginal community representatives	Local Aboriginal groups will be invited to nominate representatives in consultation with Council's Aboriginal Community Development Officer.
Property, Business or Developer Group representatives	Property, Business and Developer groups will be invited to nominate representatives for these positions.
General community representatives	These representatives will be owners or managers of heritage items and/or people with an interest in Wollongong's heritage.

An independent Chairperson will be appointed by Council from the Committee membership.

Vacancies that occur in the Committee will be filled by nomination.

Council's Strategic Project Officer – Heritage will attend Committee meetings as an ex-officio member and will provide professional advice to the Committee.

Other Council staff, Government Officers or individuals may be invited to attend meetings from time to time to provide information or presentations in relation to the Committee's business. These individuals will act as ex-officio members.

Term of appointment is to be for the term of the 2008/2012 Council Administration.

Obligations of Members

Members of the Committee, in performing their duties, shall:

- Act honestly and in good faith;
- Participate in the work of the Committee;
- Perform their duties in a manner that ensures public trust in the integrity, objectivity, and impartiality of the Committee;
- Exercise the care, diligence and skill that would be expected of a reasonable person;
- Comply with the Committee Charter; and
- Comply with Council's Code of Conduct.

Meetings

Meetings will be held bi-monthly, except where no business has been identified.

A quorum will consist of half of the Committee members plus one.

Meetings will be chaired by the Council appointed independent chairperson.

The committee has an advisory role to Council and will make recommendations by consensus. In the absence of consensus, advice from the Committee may be presented with supporting and dissenting views of Committee members.

Meeting agendas will be distributed at least one week prior to the meeting.

Reporting

The minutes of Committee meetings will be provided to Council's Administrators and management for information. Minutes will also be distributed to all Committee members.

Advice and decisions of the Committee relating to specific Council projects will be reported to Council as part of the project reporting process.

Any matters arising that require a separate decision of Council may be reported to Council by the Manager Environmental Strategy and Planning at their discretion.

Evaluation and Review

A review of the Committee will be undertaken every 12 months to ensure the purpose, membership and operation of the Committee is effective and to make appropriate changes.

Remuneration and Expenses

There is no remuneration for members.

Reasonable expenses incurred by Committee members in relation to their responsibilities as members of the Committee will be met by prior approval. These expenses should relate directly to tasks completed for Committee business and will be reimbursed at the discretion of Council.