



## Heritage Strategy 2014-2017

### **i) Introduction**

This document has been prepared to set the future direction for heritage initiatives in Muswellbrook Shire. It is also prepared to meet the requirements of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage in association with the Three Year funding agreement to support local government heritage management in NSW. As a condition of heritage funding, councils must prepare or update a heritage strategy to guide heritage management in their area.

Muswellbrook Shire comprises the town of Muswellbrook and villages of Denman and Sandy Hollow, as well as other rural areas, including many properties associated with the early European Settlement of the Hunter Valley. The Shire is being increasingly developed and this has exposed the need to protect items of heritage significance and heritage conservation areas.

The purpose of this document is to provide a summary of the strategies that Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) will adopt in relation to heritage management for the financial years 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017.

The implementation of this Strategy will be the responsibility of MSC, the Local Heritage Committee, and Council's Heritage Advisor.

The Strategy is based on the nine (9) recommendations in the the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage publication titled, '*Recommendations for Local Council Heritage Management.*'

### **1.0 Establish a Heritage Committee to deal with heritage matters in your local area**

#### *Aims*

Increased community participation, awareness and appreciation of heritage in the local area

#### *Actions*

- Prepare and adopt a Council Heritage Policy
- Promote good heritage practice among community groups and managers of heritage items.
- Assist community groups to properly manage heritage places under their control by providing timely advice and assistance with management planning.

## **2.0 Identify the Heritage Items in the Muswellbrook Shire and list them in the Muswellbrook Local Environmental Plan 2009.**

### *Aims:*

Increased knowledge and proactive management of heritage in the Muswellbrook area.

### *Actions:*

- Council and/or consultants to begin a period of negotiation with the Aboriginal stakeholders in the LGA with the aim of applying for funding in the future for an LGA wide Aboriginal Study.
- Update the European Heritage Study for use on the internet (currently a hard copy scanned document).
- With guidance from Council's Heritage Advisor, continue to assess potential items of environmental heritage within the Shire for inclusion in Schedule 5 of *Muswellbrook Local Environmental Plan 2009* (MLEP 2009) and State Heritage Register.
- With guidance from Council's Heritage Advisor, review the Shire's heritage conservation areas to ensure they provide a true reflection of significant areas of environmental heritage.

## **3.0 Appoint a heritage and urban design advisor to assist the council, the community and owners of listed heritage items.**

### *Aims:*

Increased community participation and proactive heritage and urban design management in the Muswellbrook area.

### *Actions:*

- Encourage active involvement with community heritage groups and heritage events through the Heritage Committee.
- Encourage and advertise the advantages of seeking advice at the early stages of a design and the opportunity for the Heritage Advisor to visit sites and speak to owners directly.
- The Heritage Adviser to continue to provide advice and support to Council in planning and development issues as necessary through staff referrals. This involves formal advice on development applications or other works likely to impact on heritage items or places of significance.
- Provide assistance with the preparation of related planning and development documents to assist Council staff in the preparation of heritage related documentation.
- Attend a bi-monthly Heritage Committee meeting with Council's Development Officers to discuss heritage issues and attend site inspections.
- Continue to assist Council in other planning issues as recommended by Heritage Branch such as urban design and streetscape issues.

#### **4.0 Manage Local Heritage in a Positive Manner**

*Aims:*

Proactive heritage and urban design management in your local area

*Actions:*

- Apply for funding, and assist in a review of the DCP and heritage guidelines that apply to each conservation area and significant heritage precincts.

#### **5.0 Introduce a local heritage incentives fund to provide small grants to encourage local heritage projects**

*Aims:*

Increased community participation and proactive conservation and management of heritage in the Muswellbrook area.

*Actions:*

- Advertise and encourage through the community and the Heritage Committee the opportunity for all owners of all heritage properties to apply for funding.

#### **6.0 Run a heritage main street program**

*Aims:*

Council, owners and community actively participate in the attractive and well managed heritage main streets

*Actions:*

- Review the Denman Main Street Study and revitalise the interest in this street.
- Encourage and support owners of significant buildings within the CBD area by assisting them in making applications under the Local Heritage Fund and State grant applications for positive repair or restoration work.
- Develop and Implement a main Street Heritage Awning Poles Refurbishment and Re-installation program.

#### **7.0 Present Educational and Promotional Programs**

*Aims:*

Increased awareness and appreciation of heritage by the council, owners and the community in the Muswellbrook area.

*Actions:*

- Undertake workshops in council and the local area to explain the heritage clauses of the Muswellbrook Local Environmental Plan and the listing and the constraints and opportunities of heritage listing.
- Continue to promote the heritage attractions in the Muswellbrook area to residents and visitors to the region. Work with the Muswellbrook Visitor Information Centre to make the most of opportunities to link these and other heritage sites. Confer with Council's Economic Development Officer to assist in developing a cultural heritage tourism industry.
- Develop Council's existing internet web pages to include relevant heritage information and material either to assist in a greater appreciation of local history.

## 8.0 Set a good example to the community by properly managing places owned or operated by the Council

### *Aims:*

Council proactively conserves and manages its heritage assets.

### *Actions:*

- Prepare Conservation Management Plans for significant Council owned or management heritage buildings. This could include working with and encouraging other State Government agencies also directly involved, such as State Rail Authority or Department of Lands etc.
- Prepare a simple plan of management for the historic cemeteries covering broad aspects of care and conservation.

## 9.0 Promote sustainable development as a tool for heritage conservation

### *Aims:*

Proactive heritage and sustainable development in your local area.

### *Actions:*

- Promote heritage and sustainable development in the Shire by providing heritage advice service to members of the public and to council staff.
- Council to promote and encourage the adaptive re-use, or infill or sympathetic additions to historic buildings. Consider extending the waiving or reduction in DA charges and fees for positive projects that support those principles in the Muswellbrook area.
- Encourage sustainable heritage tourism commercial ventures or state projects associated with the adjacent National Parks.

### **Actions Table**

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date	Commenced
Prepare and adopt a heritage policy document	Planner Heritage Advisor Heritage Committee	2015	Yes
Heritage Committee to provide assistance and input on heritage matters in the Muswellbrook Shire Council LGA.	Planner Heritage Advisor	Ongoing	Yes
Identify heritage items in the Muswellbrook Shire Council LGA and list them in the State Heritage Inventory Database and Local Environmental Plan.	Planner Heritage Advisor Heritage Committee	2016	Yes
Review the Shire's heritage conservation areas to ensure they provide a true reflection of significant areas of environmental heritage	Heritage Advisor Heritage Committee	2017	No
Appoint a Heritage Advisor to assist Council, the community and owners of listed heritage items.	Planner Heritage Committee		Yes
Provide owners of heritage listed properties with appropriate heritage conservation advice.	Heritage Advisor	Ongoing	Yes
Introduce a local heritage assistance fund, based on Council's budget, to provide small grants to encourage local heritage projects.	Heritage Advisor Heritage Committee	Ongoing – with budget limitations	Commenced

Action	Responsibility	Completion Date	Commenced
Offer funding as a priority to heritage items, places within conservation areas or items of historical significance. Setup policy/ procedure for the fund.		Review in 2016	yes
Broaden the criteria for local fund projects, in accordance with the Eligibility for Funding, as defined in the Heritage Office publication 'How to Establish a Local Heritage Fund', to meet the needs of the types of restoration projects within the community.	Heritage Advisor	As above	No
Heritage Main Street Program: Denman	TBA	TBA	
Heritage Main Street Program: • Develop and Implement a main Street Heritage Awning Poles Refurbishment and Re-installation program	Heritage Advisor	June 2017	No
Look into opportunities for educative seminars to be held in conjunction with regional groups and networks and attend site visits to heritage items and places with the heritage committee, Council Officers and Council Staff.	Heritage Committee/ Heritage Advisor	Commenced 2016	<del>No</del> Yes
Develop a range of educational brochures for the area in respect to heritage tourism, trails and events. Extend the range of brochures for legislative issues: heritage conservation and management. Provide information on the most commonly asked heritage questions and matters. Provide these brochures to the Tourist Information Centres, Heritage Groups, and on Council's website and display areas.	Tourism/ Heritage Committee/ Heritage Advisor	2017/18	No
Provide support to community and tourism groups in the development of cultural heritage tourism projects and programs.	Heritage Committee/ Heritage Advisor	TBA	No
Establish a link with other like-minded and similar heritage organisations and persons in the area or region.	Heritage Committee	TBA	yes
Ensure that asset management plans and maintenance budgets are in place for all Council owned heritage listed properties and that consultation with Councils' Heritage Advisor occurs.	Asset Planner/ Technician, Parks & Facilities	Commenced	Yes
Encourage appropriate change of use for heritage buildings to ensure the ongoing use and maintenance of those buildings by providing available Council resources and identifying and incorporating opportunities.	Planner Heritage Advisor	TBA	TBA
Prepare a simple plan of management for the historic cemeteries covering broad aspects of care and conservation.	Heritage Advisor	TBA	TBA
Provide guidance on the provision of sustainable additions to buildings within heritage conservation areas and on heritage items.	Heritage Advisor	Underway & ongoing	Yes