
Hilltops Heritage Strategy

2017-2020

Introduction

This Heritage Strategy for 2017/2020 has been prepared to meet the requirements of the Heritage Branch, Office of Environment & Heritage Three Year funding agreement to support local government heritage management in NSW.

The Hilltops Council covers an area on the Southwest Slopes of New South Wales leading westward and southward into the Riverina. This is part of the South Western Slopes Bio-Region, which extends from Cowra into Western Victoria. The shire includes Towns of Young, Harden-Murrumburrah and Boorowa, and the villages of Bendick Murrell, Bribbaree, Frogmore, Galong, Jugiong, Kingsvale, Koorawatha, Milvale, Murringo, Reids Flat, Rye Park and Wombat and a number of smaller localities. The council area contains many diverse places with significance in the history of the Australian mining and the Australian migration story. It also contains significant railway, pastoral and agricultural infrastructure.

This Heritage Strategy contains a series of objectives designed to ensure the effective management of the shire's cultural heritage. The strategy covers the following key performance areas and outcomes proposed by the Heritage Branch, NSW Department of Planning:

1. Caring for our heritage.
 - Increased community participation, awareness and appreciation of heritage
 - Increased community participation, and proactive heritage urban design and management
 - Proactive heritage and urban design management
 - Increased community participation, and proactive conservation and management of heritage
 - Council, owners and the community actively participate in active, attractive and well managed heritage main streets
 - Council proactively conserves and manages its heritage assets,
 - Proactive heritage and sustainable development within the Council area.
2. Knowing and valuing our heritage
 - Suggested knowledge and proactive management of heritage
3. Valuing our heritage
 - Increased awareness and appreciation of heritage by the Council, owners and the community
 - Proactive heritage and sustainable development

Implementation of the Heritage Strategy will be the responsibility of relevant Council Managers and the Hilltops Heritage Advisor. The Heritage Advisor will be responsible for review of the Heritage Strategy.

1. Caring for our heritage

1.1 Increased community participation, awareness and appreciation of heritage

Aim:

To encourage the community to be actively involved in the conservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of the Hilltops region.

Actions:

- Prepare and adopt a Council heritage policy.
- Undertake a review of previous heritage studies with a focus on community participation and input.
- Maintain a list of suitably qualified heritage consultants.
- Maintain a list of suppliers to support heritage management.
- 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.
- Prepare Conservation Management Strategies for Council owned heritage assets.
- Assist community members in managing significant places by providing small grants for approved conservation works.

1.2 Increased community participation in proactive heritage urban design and management

Aim:

To encourage an ongoing dialogue between Council and the community regarding urban design and management of streetscapes in the Hilltops area.

Actions:

- Provide free advice to property owners, including on-site consultations as required.
- Provide heritage/urban design advice to Council and property developers.
- Provide advice on heritage/urban design issues prior to Development Applications being prepared.
- Provide Council with heritage/urban design advice on development applications.

1.3 Proactive heritage and urban design management

Aim:

To encourage the conservation of the heritage values important in the Hilltops area when making decisions affecting urban design.

Actions:

- Encourage the conservation of heritage values in the management and development of places by waiving or reducing Development Application fees, and adopting a flexible approach to planning and building requirements for heritage places listed in the relevant LEPs.

1.4 Proactive conservation and management of heritage

Aim:

To engage with and support the community in managing and promoting heritage places within the Hilltops area.

Actions:

- Implement and promote a local heritage fund to support conservation and restoration works on heritage places.
- Support the development of heritage projects that contribute to local tourism.
- Support the establishment of an information-sharing network for owners of heritage homesteads and woolsheds.

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

Aim:

To create vibrant, attractive and welcoming main streets in towns and villages.

Actions:

- Continue to manage the Young Heritage Conservation Zone to encourage good design and conservation outcomes.
- Review and upgrade the Harden-Murrumburrah Heritage Main Street Study.
- Implement the recommendations of the Murrungo Village study and consider undertaking similar studies in other villages.
- Establish Heritage Conservation Zones in the Boorowa, Harden and Murrumburrah business districts.
- Continue the implementation of the Council-adopted main street colour palette and linked incentives program in Harden-Murrumburrah.

1.6 Council proactively conserves and manages its heritage assets

Aim:

To ensure that Council is seen to be taking leadership in the responsible management of the community's heritage assets.

Actions:

- Prepare conservation management plans/conservation management strategies for Council owned heritage items.
- Ensure annual works budgets cover heritage asset maintenance and repairs.
- Review management plans and activities for Council owned heritage items to ensure the cultural heritage of the items is protected.
- Monitor the condition of Council owned heritage items consistent with the requirements of conservation management plans/conservation management strategies.
- Monitor the condition & maintenance of non-Council owned heritage items during travel around the shire to undertake other tasks.

1.7 Promote sustainable development as a tool for heritage conservation

Aim:

To encourage practical approaches to heritage conservation to support sustainable development.

Actions:

- Work with property owners and developers to:
 - Encourage the adaptive re-use of heritage structures, rather than demolition and re-development.
 - Encourage re-generation projects and urban design that respect the cultural heritage of the shire.
 - Ensure infill development meets accepted sustainability requirements.
- Provide pre-DA advice on matters affecting the sustainability of buildings.
- Provide learning resources and learning opportunities for sustainability and heritage awareness to Councillors, Council officers, owners of heritage properties and the community.

2. Knowing and valuing our heritage

2.1 Increased knowledge and proactive management of heritage

Aim:

To identify and appropriately record the cultural heritage of the Hilltops shire.

Actions:

- Undertake an Aboriginal Heritage Study covering the entire Hilltops area.
- Continue the ongoing of recording and assessment of heritage items in the region.
- Continue to engage with community groups to identify heritage items.
- Identify opportunities to record archaeological evidence of Chinese settlement in the district during the 19th and 20th centuries.
- Implement a Plan of Management for the Blackguard Gully precinct.

3. Valuing our heritage

3.1 Increased awareness and appreciation of heritage by the Council, owners and the community

Aim:

To ensure that the Hilltops community understands and cares for its cultural heritage.

Actions:

- Prepare guideline documents for identifying and working with various styles of buildings.
- Make heritage information available to the community by maintaining heritage information brochures and links to other relevant websites on Council's website.
- Work with community organisations to develop and conduct heritage promotional events.
- Ensure relevant Council Officers have skills appropriate to the effective management of cultural heritage by;
 - Preparing and providing briefings on relevant cultural heritage principles and practices.
 - Providing relevant learning resources and information regarding learning opportunities.
 - Providing ongoing mentoring to all planning staff.
- Engage with the Heritage Near Me program to optimise the provision of professional advice and funding for local heritage conservation and interpretation