

**Our objective: local councils will integrate heritage conservation into their overall environmental management**

## Delegations to Local Councils

**Our goal: the Heritage Office will delegate to local councils and manage the ability to determine development applications for minor works and authorise certain councils to make interim heritage orders.**

Over the last three years changes have been made to the heritage system to streamline the approvals process for items on the State Heritage Register and to support the powers of local councils to manage local heritage.

In February 2002 certain approval functions of the Heritage Council were delegated to all local councils to approve applications for minor works to items listed on the State Heritage Register. The delegation enables local councils to be a "one stop shop" for applications for minor works that do not materially affect the significance of a state significant item.

In February 2002 Ministerial authorisation was also gazetted for 17 metropolitan councils and 120 rural councils to make interim heritage orders over items under threat.

### Monitoring delegations and authorisations

In 2003-04 local councils determined five applications using the delegation. The five applications related to external signage, demolition of a fire damaged building, patio and farm shed, and were determined by Bathurst and Junee councils under delegation.

In 2003-04 Ryde City Council made an interim heritage order over a property under threat using the authorisation.

We have monitored the uptake of the delegation and authorisation by local councils in NSW since 2002. Monitoring has indicated that councils have been reluctant to take up the delegations, particularly those councils with large numbers of items listed on the State Heritage Register.

### Measuring Our Performance: Survey of the Use of the Delegation and Authorisation

In November 2003 the Heritage Office conducted a survey of local councils on the uptake of the delegation of certain approval functions of the Heritage Council and the authorisation to make interim heritage orders.

Twelve local councils, both rural and urban, were surveyed by the Heritage Office to represent the 152 local councils in NSW.

#### Use of the delegation between 1/1/2003 and 30/11/2003

<b>Councils to use delegation</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Councils not to use delegation</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Reasons for not using the delegation</b>	
No applications for minor works received	44%
Applications "materially affected" the item and therefore not eligible	22%
Applications to State Heritage Register items viewed as IDA	11%
Staff workload precluded use	22%
<b>Number of councils to use authorisation to make IHO</b>	<b>0%</b>

#### Interpretation

The survey results reveal that only three of the twelve local councils surveyed used the delegation in the period January to November 2003 to determine applications for minor works to State Heritage Register items: Hawkesbury City Council, Parry Council and Bathurst City Council. The applications related to change of use, signage, alteration and addition and strata subdivision.

The survey results further reveal that most of the councils surveyed with a large number of State Heritage Register items in their local government area did not use the delegations to determine any applications for minor works to State Heritage Register items. This result is particularly disappointing given that the intent of the delegations was to enable councils to act as a "one stop shop" for applications for minor works to State Heritage Register items.

The Heritage Office believes that the delegation remains a valid and comprehensive mechanism for the management of State Heritage Register items. We further believe that councils have been reluctant to use the delegations because of the relatively few applications for minor works to State Heritage Register items, and lack of professional skill to assess such applications. The Heritage Office will be introducing further reforms in 2004-05 to encourage councils to utilize these delegations

## Support for Local Councils

**Our goal: the Heritage Office will support local councils to effectively list and manage their local heritage.**

### Building a framework for heritage management

This year we maintained our strategy to support local councils and ensure they have a satisfactory framework for good heritage management. This included distributing the *Local Government Heritage Guidelines* to all local councils in NSW, managing the local government resource centre on the Heritage Office website, briefing heritage advisors, and providing training workshops to local councils.

### Heritage Model Provisions

The existing heritage model provisions were endorsed by the Heritage Council on 13 August 1998. The heritage model provisions are provided to councils as the basis on which local environmental plans should be made, although guidelines formally requiring their inclusion in local environmental plans have not yet been issued.

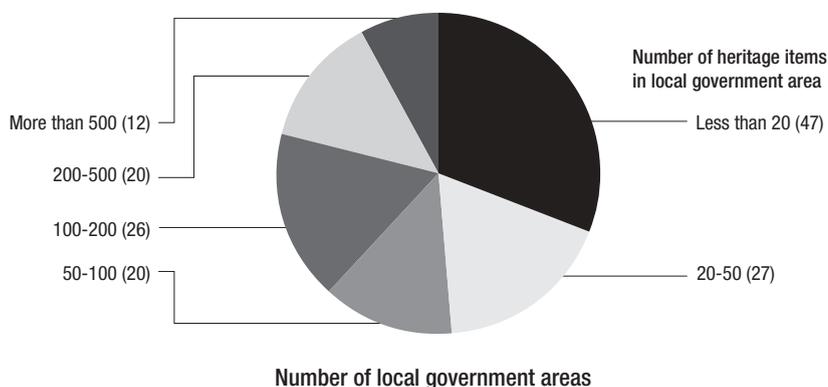
This year we reviewed the heritage model provisions and provided the revised provisions to the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources for the purposes of exhibition of the draft Environmental Planning and Assessment Model Provisions.



The former Navigation Company warehouse in Wentworth in southwestern NSW. *Photograph courtesy of Wentworth Shire Council*

## Measuring Our Performance: Heritage Items in Local Government Areas

Local government is at the forefront of heritage management in the State. Most of the 20,000 heritage items on statutory lists in NSW are listed on council's local environmental plans. The Heritage Office provides support to councils to help them list items of local significance in their local government area.



### Protection Through Planning Instruments

Identifying and listing items of heritage significance are only the first steps in protecting and managing those places and objects that we as a community want to keep. Planning instruments provide the framework for managing the approval of major changes so that heritage significance is retained and not diminished. In 2003-04 we continued to work with local councils to assist them to develop a satisfactory framework for good heritage management.

#### *Providing Advice on Local Environmental Plans*

We support local councils to develop comprehensive local environmental plans. The Heritage Office examines draft local environmental plans and provides advice to councils about whether plans comply with the requirements of the Heritage Act and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. We have also developed model provisions to provide guidance to councils on the provisions of plans relating to heritage conservation.

During the year the Director of the Heritage Office, as a delegate of the Heritage Council, provided advice to councils on 94 draft local environmental plans.

Sutherland Council prepared a comprehensive local environmental plan which significantly added to their list of heritage items. Several other councils have prepared plans that include specific heritage provisions to provide increased protection for additional items and heritage conservation areas including Ashfield, Gosford, Hornsby, Woollahra and Kogarah.

#### *Regional Environmental Plans*

The Sydney Regional Environmental Plan, no. 24 Homebush Bay Area, was reviewed by the Heritage Office.

### Assisting Councils with Day-to-Day Heritage Management

One of the major ways we assist local councils is through the local government component of the Heritage Incentives Program. The key elements of this component are dollar-for-dollar assistance with community-based heritage studies, heritage advisors and local heritage funds. Assistance is provided through three-year agreements based on an agreed heritage strategy for each council participating in the program.

#### *Heritage Advisor Program*

The Heritage Office has supported the part-time appointment of heritage advisors, both financially and administratively, since 1983. The advisors are consultants with heritage expertise who advise local councils and the local community on heritage matters.

In New South Wales the majority of local councils now have a heritage advisor position. Many also employ officers who are knowledgeable on heritage matters. In total, 87% of the 172 councils have direct access to heritage advisory services, either in-house or through the heritage advisor program.

The Heritage Office organises occasional one-day courses for heritage consultants interested in moving into an advisor role. The courses are also attended by local government officers to assist them to make more efficient use of the advisory position. A course for potential advisors and local government officers was held at the Heritage Office premises in January 2004 with David Scobie as presenter.

### Measuring Our Performance: Statutory Planning Tools

The Heritage Office provides advice to councils on statutory planning tools to provide for good heritage management.

Planning Referrals	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Local Environmental Plans	132	151	94
Regional Environmental Plans	1	1	1
State Environmental Planning Policies	2	2	0
Development Control Plans	16	25	0
Strategic Studies	12	30	25
<b>Total Planning Tools</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>120</b>

### Heritage Network

This network consists of all advisors and council officers in NSW who provide regular advice on heritage matters. It meets in August each year in the Sydney area. This year the annual seminar was held in Woollahra. Examples of infill buildings in the local area were examined as part of a broad discussion on the principles of infill buildings in heritage precincts. Other topics discussed included appropriate procedures for community-based heritage studies, engineering heritage and sustainability and heritage. The seminar ended with a presentation of examples of advisors' work from around the State.

### Heritage Advisors E-mail Network

There are now 393 members on the e-mail network. The network linking heritage advisors, local government officers and the Heritage Office has proved to be an invaluable medium for the exchange of information, the exploration of conservation strategies and the announcement of new initiatives. This year the Heritage Office has continued to provide bulletins to the network summarising announcements and initiatives.

### Heritage Short Courses for NSW Local Government

The administration of the successful heritage short course program developed by the Heritage Office is now handled by the training unit, Learning Solutions, of the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW. The first course under this arrangement was held in March 1999.

The unit delivered five programs during the year attended by a total of 81 participants, including councillors, senior managers and local government officers and professionals from the private sector. The feedback from the courses was excellent and the participants appreciated the continuing interest of the Heritage Office in sponsoring the professional development of councillors and local government staff.

The programs were:

- *Development Approvals: The Heritage Perspective*, 21 July 2003, 15 October 2003 and 28 June 2004, delivered by David Logan, Director, Godden Mackay Logan;
- *Heritage Planning in Practice*, 4-5 October 2003 and 13-14 May 2004, delivered by Sue Jackson-Stepowski, heritage consultant.

## Key Strategies for Next Year

In 2004-05 we aim to:

- assist local councils with the use of the delegations to local government, by presenting seminars and workshops for specific councils throughout the State, especially those with a large number of heritage items;
- continue training existing and new advisors to assist them with developing new skills and to provide professional development;
- encourage new presenters into the local government short course program;
- develop a seminar program for advisors and consultants to provide continuing professional development;
- engage with the Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources on the reforms to the model local environmental plan, including revision to the heritage provisions.

## Measuring Our Performance: Heritage Advisor Positions

Heritage advisors are appointed to assist the local council and community to identify, conserve, manage and present the heritage of an area.

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Councils with either a heritage advisor or officer	78%	81%	87%
Rural councils with either a heritage advisor or officer	69%	72%	83%
Metropolitan councils with either a heritage advisor or officer	96%	98%	98%

### Interpretation

Dollar-for-dollar funding is offered through the Heritage Incentives Program for councils to engage an advisor. Heritage advisors play a crucial role in building a positive attitude towards heritage and providing guidance and advice.

The significant rise over the last three years in the number of rural councils with access to heritage advisory services – 69% to 83% - reflects our commitment to improving services in rural and regional areas. This is a key result as heritage advisors work with the community to achieve practical results for heritage conservation. We will continue our focus on rural and regional NSW in the upcoming year.