



Conserving Heritage

'best practice standards for heritage conservation'

Conservation Management Plans

OUR GOAL: conservation management plans will be a standard user-friendly and practical tool in heritage management practice

One of the functions of the Heritage Council is to review and endorse conservation management plans. These essential documents provide a guide to the future care and use of heritage places, including any new development. Conservation management plans are reviewed and endorsed by the Heritage Council's Approvals Committee, or by the Director of the Heritage Office under delegation.

This year 24 conservation management plans were formally endorsed. Of these, 71% were prepared for heritage items in public ownership.

Conservation management plans were endorsed for the following publicly-owned items:

- Alexandra Canal in Alexandria, Mascot, St Peters and Tempe
- Ashfield Reservoir Site, Ashbury
- Brush Farm, Eastwood
- Drummoyne Reservoir
- Hurley Park Reservoir and cattle tanks, Campbelltown
- Newington Armoury Conservation Reports, Millennium Parklands, Sydney Olympic Park
- Old Government House site and ruins, Port Macquarie
- Old King's School (Marsden Rehabilitation Centre), Addendum, Parramatta (site partially occupied by the Heritage Office)
- Pipehead Site, Guildford
- Potts Hill Reservoirs and site, Yagoona
- Ryde Water Pumping Station and site, West Ryde
- Sewage Pumping Station SP0038, Mascot
- Sewer vent and cottage, Corunna Road, Stanmore
- Sydney Water Conservation Management Plan Manual
- Tank Stream, under the city, Sydney
- Wahroonga Reservoirs, Wahroonga.



Potts Hill Reservoir, Yagoona.
Photograph courtesy of Sydney Water Corporation.

Opposite: New two-storey section added to this cottage in a conservation area shows how infill development can respond to its historic setting. Photograph by Brett Boardman Photography.



St Stephen's Uniting Church, Sydney.
Photograph by Lianne Hall.

Conservation management plans were endorsed for the following privately-owned items:

- Ashton, Elizabeth Bay
- Best Family Cemetery, Wagga Wagga
- City Mutual Building, Sydney
- Hong Kong House (Gresham Hotel), Sydney
- Qantas House, Sydney
- St Stephen's Uniting Church, Sydney
- Westpac (Bank of NSW), 341 George Street, Sydney.

A further 41 plans were dealt with during the year. Mostly these were commented upon, and then returned to their authors for further revision and amendment.

During the year a ground-breaking conservation management plan was prepared for the Old Windsor Road and Windsor Road in Sydney's new north western suburbs. It identifies a number of potential precincts of state heritage significance which demonstrate the evolving processes of road making since the 1790s. It will serve as a model for similar conservation management plans for lineal items such as lengths of road. It is expected that nominations arising from this conservation management plan will be considered for listing on the State Heritage Register during the new reporting year.

Conservation Practices

OUR GOAL: provide clear guidance on best practice conservation and appropriate change and standards for works to listed heritage items

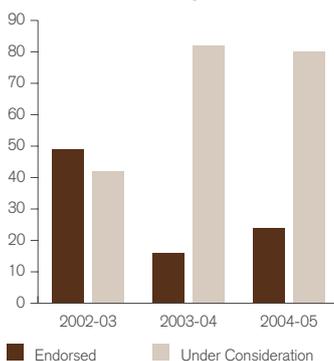
One of the major challenges facing owners and managers of heritage places is how to maintain them so that future generations will be able to use and enjoy them. Looking after a place in a way that retains the values that make it significant to us is known as 'conservation'. We promote best practice in heritage conservation and provide technical advice and assistance to help the community care for their heritage places.

Materials Conservation

The Heritage Office continues to receive many enquiries regarding materials conservation issues from the public and the professions. The Technical Advisory Group is an expert committee which provides the latest technical advice on conservation techniques. Public enquiries about materials conservation are answered by the Heritage Office's conservation specialist or, if highly specialised, directed to a member of the Technical Advisory Panel to respond or visit the site.

A key event in materials conservation this year was the presentation of Lime Day, a technical seminar on the use of lime in traditional building techniques.

Conservation Management Plans



Measuring our Performance: Conservation Management Plans

Interpretation: In 2004-05 there was an increase in the number of conservation plans endorsed. However there remains a backlog of plans under consideration. This year we implemented a strategy to engage contractors to assist in the reviewing and processing of plans in order to reduce the volume awaiting consideration. These outsourced reviews were undertaken on a cost-recovery basis, with the Heritage Office paying the reviewers a flat fee which was then recovered from the owner or practitioner submitting the plan. The outsourced reviews constituted 80% of all conservation management plans endorsed for the year, and indicate the management value of an outsourcing approach.

One of our major initiatives this year was to make a wide range of technical information available to the general public over the internet. The *Maintenance Series* brochures on practical conservation issues were originally published in 1998. This year we reissued them in electronic format and they have become the top downloadable files on the Heritage Office website.

The Heritage Office and the Technical Advisory Group add to and update the *Maintenance Series* as resources become available. This year we published a new brochure titled *The Repair of Tongue and Groove Floorboards* written by Heritage Office conservation specialist, Elisha Long.

The Technical Advisory Group also work on strategic projects to respond to broad needs for materials conservation advice and skills across the community. They have identified an urgent need for practical conservation skills in the trades, the professions and for conservators in New South Wales. We are currently undertaking a strategic project to promote training in these essential conservation skills.

Fire, Access and Services

The Heritage Office receives many enquiries on appropriate means to upgrade heritage buildings to meet building code, fire, access and services requirements. Many applications under the Heritage Act also have issues relating to these needs and, where expert opinions are required, the Heritage Office refers these to the Fire Access and Services Advisory Panel (FASAP). This year eight presentations were made to FASAP and another 23 enquiries on fire, access and service issues were assisted by the Heritage Office.

In 2004-05 there was a continuing broadening of the issues brought to the Heritage Office's attention reflecting new sections of the Building Code of Australia.

Interpreting Heritage Places

Conserving our important heritage places is only part of our responsibility to future generations. Interpreting them provides insight into what makes these places special.

This year the Heritage Office prepared *Interpretation Policies and Guidelines* to guide managers and owners of heritage places on how to interpret them for the public. These were endorsed by the Heritage Council of NSW in December 2004. They will be available on the Heritage Office website in the upcoming reporting year.

Combining the wisdom and work of more than 100 organisations, agencies and individuals, these comprehensive standards for best practice mark a significant milestone in recognition of the vital role of interpretation as a heritage conservation discipline.

Key strategies for next year

In 2005-06 we aim to:

- continue to outsource conservation management plan reviews on a cost-recovery basis to reduce the backlog of plans awaiting endorsement by the Heritage Council;
- implement the Heritage Council's new policy to encourage a range of conservation planning documents;
- publish the Interpretation Policies and Guidelines;
- roll out *Design in Context; Guidelines for Infill Development in the Historic Environment* to a wide range of users through workshops and seminars and publish an online version;
- continue to revise the technical information available on the Heritage Office website and publish new titles in our *Maintenance Series*;
- develop a recurrent program of technical seminars for professionals on materials conservation;
- present a further workshop on the use of traditional limes in conservation work, in partnership with the Department of Commerce;
- promote training in traditional conservation skills by scoping a course for trades supervisors on sites which have received approval under the Heritage Act.

CASE STUDY | LIME DAY

Lime was the most common material used in traditional masonry buildings; it was a key component in everything from plasters and finishes to the construction of the walls themselves. In June the Heritage Council's Technical Advisory Group, in association with the National Trust of Australia (NSW) presented Lime Day to reinvigorate the traditional skills needed to work with building limes.

This practical hands-on training day looked at the use of lime in mortars, plasters and limewashes. Technical experts covered topics such as the making lime, site practices and skills, mixing and pointing, traditional plasters, lime wash, hydraulic lime and lime in building. Participants had the opportunity to get their hands dirty with a practical demonstration of the production of lime which included slaking of quick lime, lime putty and the mixing of mortars, plasters and limewashes. The day was booked out and plans are underway to make this seminar available on a regular basis.

Photograph by Murray Brown.

