

HERITAGE INFORMATION SERIES

COMMUNITY-BASED HERITAGE STUDIES: A GUIDE



NSW
Heritage
Office

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Aboriginal hand stencils, South Coast. Photograph courtesy of National Parks and Wildlife Service
Interior of Belltrees shearing shed, built near Scone in NSW in 1879 by architect J. Horbury Hunt.
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Australia Square, Sydney
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Lands Department Building, Sydney
The bow of iron steamer, Merimbula, wrecked near Currarong in 1928. Photograph by David Nutley
Snowy Mountains Scheme. Photograph courtesy of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority
St Mark's Anglican Church, Darling Point, Sydney. Photograph by Stuart Humphreys
Belltrees Shearing Shed, near Scone, NSW.
Detail from the crypt floor of St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. Photograph courtesy of St Mary's Cathedral

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WHAT IS A HERITAGE STUDY?

A heritage study investigates the historical context of a local government area and identifies, assesses and lists items of heritage significance associated with this context. The study explains why the items are significant and recommends ways of managing and conserving that significance.

A heritage study provides information to support:

- a community's sense of identity - of its beginnings, its present and its potential
- the future management of heritage
- education programs which help make the community's heritage assets better known, understood and appreciated
- heritage tourism strategies
- a community's sense of ownership of its heritage assets.

A study results in a report comprising:

- an historical analysis of the area, community or organisation, usually by using the State historic themes
- investigative research and field work
- an analysis of significance and a condition survey of items and areas identified during the study
- inventory sheets of significant items
- management and promotional recommendations.

HOW IS A HERITAGE STUDY UNDERTAKEN?

In the past studies have usually been carried out by a team of consultants, working with a local committee. The process usually involves some level of community consultation.

WHY ARE COMMUNITIES DIVIDED OVER THEIR HERITAGE?

Unfortunately, the heritage study process has in many cases led to communities divided about their heritage. Some local councils regard heritage as a problem because of the level of anxiety in the community. This can be the result of:

- lack of sufficient funding to allow for a full program of community consultation
- lack of willingness or capacity of consultants to carry out proper community consultation
- delay in translating the results of the study into a heritage LEP
- insufficient understanding of the study process by the community, council staff or elected representatives
- lack of clarity as to why items have been selected
- lack of community "ownership" of the study and its findings

This guideline offers a solution to some of these problems by proposing a model for community-based heritage studies.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY-BASED HERITAGE STUDY?

The main difference between the community-based heritage study and the conventional expert-based model is that the community is not just consulted, but is actively involved in researching and nominating items and in considering recommendations for their future management and promotion.

This gives the community much greater ownership of the study process and with it the likelihood of less conflict within the community regarding listing and future management.

Its other attraction is that it is likely to be more appropriate and affordable in rural areas of NSW. Rural areas do not always have a large number of heritage items, are not under high development pressure and generally do not have sufficient resources to fund a major study.

A major premise of a community-based approach is that communities have the necessary skills and knowledge if appropriately guided by a heritage consultant skilled in community consultation methods. It is accepted, however, that the approach may not be appropriate for every community.

The community-based model has been successful in several rural areas of Western Australia. The model described in this guideline draws on that experience.

FUNDING FOR THE PROGRAM

The Heritage Council will recommend \$ for \$ heritage funding of community-based heritage studies on a joint basis with local councils.

The allocation of funding will depend very much on the circumstances of each case. The local community needs to decide on its priorities provided that the basic aspects of the study are met.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A PROFESSIONALLY PRODUCED THEMATIC HISTORY

A professionally produced thematic history is a fundamental pre-requisite for a successful heritage study, regardless of the method used in compiling information about heritage items. It is critical that field work as well as documentary evidence is considered during this process, and that the historian is involved in this work.

THE PROCESS

The following steps are suggested. There may be circumstances where it will make sense to change the order, or to delete or add steps.

The Community Based Heritage Study Process

1. Council appoints a coordinator.
2. Council advises the community about the proposed study and calls for expressions of interest for a heritage study committee, both by advertisement and direct invitation to interested organisations and individuals.
3. The committee holds a workshop with interested members of the community to decide on the scope and direction of the study.
4. The coordinator arranges for a thematic history to be undertaken.
5. The thematic history is undertaken by a professional historian. Where local expertise is available, the historian will use a team of local historians in preparing the history.
6. The committee develops a computerised list of items already identified, e.g. those identified in the National Trust Register and other respected community lists.
7. The committee cross-checks the known items against the draft thematic history to find obvious gaps.
8. The committee calls for community assistance to complete the necessary information and to fill known gaps.
9. The coordinator and committee may hold workshops at this point to assist the community to nominate items and offer further information on identified items.
10. The historian revises the thematic history in the light of community input and comments on the histories of individual items.
11. The coordinator supports the committee in the completion of assessments and inventory sheets for identified items.
12. The coordinator works with the committee to draw up a list of management recommendations.
13. The draft inventory and recommendations are checked with the community through meetings, displays in shopping centres, articles in the local newspaper, etc.

14. Additional community information and advice is included in the final inventory and recommendations.
15. The committee identifies levels of significance (local or State) for each item with the assistance of the coordinator and the historian.
16. The coordinator sends the full inventory to the Heritage Office for entry into the State Heritage Inventory.
17. The committee presents the completed study and management recommendations and evidence of community acceptance to the council for adoption.
18. Council adopts the study and commences implementation, including LEP listings, promotion and incentives.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Step 1. Appoint a coordinator.

Council in consultation with the Heritage Office should appoint a coordinator who has the necessary skills to work with a local community to achieve the identification and assessment of its heritage.

A standard letter calling for expressions of interest in the Coordinator position is at **Appendix A**. A standard brief for the coordinator is at **Appendix B**.

It is essential that a coordinator has skills to:

- assess heritage significance
- use the new SHI inventory (ongoing half-day training courses are readily available from the Heritage Office)
- manage and promote heritage conservation at the local level including the use of LEP and DCP process
- select, lead and manage community committees
- advise on promotional techniques
- facilitate community workshops

The coordinator could:

- be drawn directly from the community concerned; or
- be the current heritage adviser or the adviser with another council; or
- be selected from the list of other consultants held by the Heritage Office.

The coordinator could come from a variety of backgrounds. What is important is an understanding of the process of heritage identification and assessment and the ability to guide a community-based process. If the council already has a heritage advisor or is proposing such an appointment, this person may be appropriate to act as the coordinator.

The role of the co-ordinator is to:

- commission the preparation of the thematic history
- select or ensure the selection of a community committee with the range of skills and knowledge needed for the heritage study process
- ensure the involvement of the historian throughout the process
- ensure that everyone is using standard data sheets
- co-ordinate the identification of items drawing on the thematic history, respected heritage lists and local knowledge
- supervise the assessment of each item

- check, along with the historian, the coverage of items against the thematic history
- manage the community consultation process, including facilitation of workshops
- edit the final report and the preparation of the management recommendations
- manage the process for presenting the report to council

Step 2. Council advises the community about the proposed study and calls for expressions of interest for a heritage study committee, both by advertisement and direct invitation to interested organisations and individuals.

A standard advertisement is at **Appendix C**.

The committee will be involved in the process of preparing the inventory and suggesting appropriate strategies for implementing the findings of the study. The coordinator will call together interested people in the LGA, including representatives of the council, to explain what a community-based heritage study means and what is required to get it off the ground.

Suggested groups to be represented on the committee include:

- the local Aboriginal land council
- interested and knowledgeable council officers and councillors
- the local historical society
- the local library/archives
- local museum curators
- local nature conservation group or a person knowledgeable in this area
- a person knowledgeable about the rural heritage of the area
- representatives from the key ethnic communities in the area

It is crucial that the committee includes a local councillor. The critical role of this person is to keep the rest of the councillors informed of progress on the study. This can reap rewards when it comes time to make your recommendations to the full council.

Step 3. The committee holds a workshop with interested members of the community to decide on the scope and direction of the study.

Every community and local government area is different from its neighbours. There is no “one size fits all” generic heritage study template that is going to suit every situation.

This workshop is essential for the coordinator to explain what the study is trying to achieve and develop some consensus on the general direction it should take. While all studies should aim to include all aspects of heritage - built, natural, movable and Aboriginal - the history of the local area may suggest that some of these aspects should be favoured over others. This needs to be discussed before the study commences.

Step 4. The coordinator arranges for a thematic history to be undertaken.

As well as providing an historical account of the patterns of Aboriginal land use, colonial settlement and historical events and processes the thematic history will also identify the potential heritage items which best illustrate the key themes, events and processes.

Publications of immediate interest are:

- the NSW Heritage Office's *History and Heritage* booklet in the *NSW Heritage Manual* which canvasses why you need to have an appropriate history context for any heritage study. It also sets out the 35 historic themes for the state;
- the NSW Heritage Office's *Regional Histories* book for NSW which sets out the themes for each of the 16 regions of NSW;
- the NSW Heritage Office's *Historical Research for Heritage* which contains a useful guide to historical sources as well as advice on how to research the history of place.

Themes relevant to such a thematic approach include:

National theme	State theme	Local theme
Peopling Australia	Indigenous cultures	Aboriginal landscapes and settlement patterns
Developing local, regional and national economies	Exploration	Incorporation of the area into the colonial state
Developing local, regional and national economies	Environment	Utilising and conserving natural resources
Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages	Living and working in towns and villages
Developing local, regional and national economies	Agriculture	Mechanisation and local resource management
Building settlements, towns and cities	Utilities	Developing public services and utilities
Developing local, regional and national economies	Communication	Communicating within and beyond the local area
Developing Australia's cultural life	Cultural sites	Creating cultural, religious and educational facilities
Governing	Defence	Contributing to the nations defence

Step 5. The thematic history is undertaken by a professional historian. Where local expertise is available, the historian will use a team of local historians in preparing the history.

Before appointing a professional historian to supervise the preparation of the thematic history the coordinator needs to work with the committee to prepare a list of known historical material.

Important sources of information are the local historical society, the local library/archives and the Royal Australian Historical Society. The RAHS has the largest local history library in NSW on open access.

Because the thematic history will be the basis for identifying the remaining evidence of historical events and processes in the local area it is not enough to only undertake documentary research. The historian needs to understand the topography and other environmental factors, and the people who live in the area. A pair of stout boots, a willing ear and a notebook are essential pre-requisites for this type of historical work.

If the historian is relatively inexperienced in preparing thematic heritage histories, he or she should arrange an appointment with the historians at the Heritage Office who will be happy to go through the process. This could save a lot of misdirected effort.

Step 6. The committee develops a computerised list of items already identified, eg those identified in the National Trust Register and other respected community lists.

The easiest way to start is to bring together what has already been recorded. The following sequence is suggested.

1. Download the State Heritage Inventory database for the local council area onto software which will then be used as the base for all other inventory material collected.

Check information in other lists such as:

- Local and Regional Environmental Plans
 - Register of the National Estate
 - State government department heritage and conservation registers
 - National Trust Register
 - Institution of Engineers, Australia
 - The National Parks and Wildlife Service in respect of any National Park, Reserve or Historic site or Aboriginal sites
 - Professional Historians' Association in respect of historic places and objects
 - Royal Australian Institute of Architects in respect of 20th century items
 - The Art Deco Society in respect of between the wars items
2. Obtain a list of all files held by the Heritage Office for your LGA. This list will include a general LGA file covering many sites since 1978 and separate files on important sites and heritage funded sites.
 3. Council's own record system will have much of the information required, including the legal description of the property, correct address and name of the current owners.
 4. Check any other source suggested by the committee or other community members.
 5. Add items not already recorded using the SHI software. At the end of the study everything should be transferable back to the SHI.

The work in this stage can be undertaken while the thematic history is being prepared. Indeed, it may be beneficial for regular meetings to be held with the historian and her or his team, as information from Step 5 will inform Step 6 and vice versa. Involving the committee in the historical research will keep members enthused about the project and will add to the store of knowledge needed for the history. The WA experience is that the trick is to get people interested and talking, and the rest is history!

Step 7. The committee cross checks the known items against the draft thematic history to find obvious gaps.

All items appearing in the thematic history must be included in the initial inventory.

Step 8. The committee calls for community assistance to complete the necessary information and to fill known gaps.

See the standard advertisement at **Appendix D**.

At this stage a committee representative should communicate with the owners or occupiers of each identified item (preferably by a pre-arranged site visit) to:

- elicit additional information;
- explain the purpose and benefits of listing; and
- discuss any issues owners may have with the process.

Step 9. The coordinator and committee may hold workshops at this point to assist the community to nominate items and offer further information on identified items.

Step 10. The Historian revises the thematic history in the light of community input and comments on the histories of the individual items.

Step 11. The coordinator supports the committee and consults the historian in the completion of assessments and inventory sheets for identified items.

At all stages of the process the SHI forms or software should be used to ensure a consistent outcome
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Step 12. The coordinator works with the committee to draw up a list of management recommendations.

The recommendations must be supported by the committee. It is no use if the coordinator prepares the recommendations without its involvement. They would draw on best practice material available from the Heritage Office, including the Model LEP clauses.

Recommendations will normally include:

- incorporation of all heritage items in a schedule to the council's local environmental plans;
- parallel advice to the Heritage Office on the full inventory plus advice on those items which are of State significance for listing on the new State Heritage Register;
- review of arrangements at the council to ensure the management of heritage items, e.g. the appointment of a heritage adviser where none exists;
- establishment of an ongoing Heritage Committee to the council - this could have the same or similar membership as the study Working Party;
- establishment of local heritage funds to promote good conservation projects;
- production of heritage publications, newspaper articles, radio talks, videos and walks brochures based on the heritage study information;
- presentation of heritage awards to foster best practice conservation in the area.

Step 13. The draft inventory and recommendations are checked with the community through meetings, displays in shopping centres, articles in the local newspaper, etc.

This is the most critical phase of the study. There must be widespread support for the findings of the study if the council is going to be able to manage its findings and recommendations. Time taken at this point to ensure the community understands the objectives of the study will reap rewards when the LEP and heritage schedule are advertised.

See the standard letter to all owners of heritage items at **Appendix E**. This is an absolutely basic requirement. Use all available media and presentation opportunities, community notice boards and regular meetings of community organisations to spread the message and gather additional information.

In particular, great care must be taken to consult all owners of nominated items and give them basic information about the implications of listing and the potential benefits. The council should have already agreed to a range of incentives for owners. The Heritage Office publishes a document of eight suggestions for councils to consider at this stage. See **Appendix F** for the standard text of an explanatory brochure that should be sent to all owners with the letter.

Step 14. Additional community information and advice is included in the final inventory and recommendations.

An important means of achieving community support is by incorporating additional information and feedback into the final report.

Step 15. The committee identifies levels of significance (local or State) for each item with the assistance of the coordinator and the historian.

The State Heritage Register was established in April 1999. Adding new items is an ongoing process so that the Register will eventually be a comprehensive list of all the items of State heritage significance in NSW. Heritage studies can assist the process of identification by proposing potential items of State significance for consideration by the Heritage Council.

Step 16. The coordinator sends the full inventory to the Heritage Office for entry into the State Heritage Inventory.

The State Heritage Inventory is a database of almost 20,000 heritage items on statutory lists in NSW. However, for the vast majority of the items the entry includes only basic address and listing information.

It is therefore of great benefit to the local council, the community and the rest of the state if full information on the proposed items can be transferred to the Internet through the State Heritage Inventory when the council's LEP listings have been gazetted.

Step 17. The committee presents the completed study and management recommendations and evidence of community acceptance to the council for adoption.

This needs to be carefully managed so that the councillors are made aware of the level of support in the community for the proposed listings. If the listing of some items is still in doubt because of objections from owners, it is sensible to gain the support of councillors at this stage. As political community representatives they can be good allies in persuading owners of the benefits of listing.

By this stage the council should have received regular briefings on the progress of the study, so that the recommendations do not come as a complete surprise. If all goes well, Council adopts the study and commences implementation, including LEP listings, promotion and incentives. If not, you will need to return to the community to firm up support for the recommendations and commence a program of briefings for those councillors who are having difficulties with the proposals.

Step 18. Council adopts the study and commences implementation, including LEP listings, promotion and incentives.

Time to celebrate! You can let your hair down and stage a celebration of your local heritage. This can become a regular event during the National Trust Heritage Festival each year.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The completion of the study and the adoption of its recommendations are just the beginning for heritage in your community. This is why the appointment of a heritage committee to the council is such an important step.

The council's role in promoting local heritage and getting the schools and tertiary institutions, the Chamber of Commerce and tourism authorities involved is critical if your hard work is to reap benefits for the community over the years ahead. Heritage inventories and listings are useless if the information goes nowhere.

Local history and heritage is potentially a dynamic factor in:

- building a community's pride in itself
- developing its future with a full understanding of its past
- promoting its unique story to the rest of the world
- providing the basis for strong cultural tourism to your area.

APPENDIX A

DRAFT LETTER CALLING FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FROM A SHORT LIST OF CONSULTANTS

LOGO

[NAME OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA]

Dear

Proposed coordinator position for a community-based heritage study of the [name] local government area

This Council and the New South Wales Heritage Office have agreed to jointly fund this project.

I am pleased to invite you to express an interest in the above position.

The Council's area includes [number] items which are listed or proposed to be listed in the heritage schedule to the Council's Local Environmental Plan. The area also includes many unlisted heritage items.

The full work for this position is as set out in the attached *Community-Based Heritage Study Guidelines*, published by the Heritage Office.

It is essential that a coordinator has skills to:

1. communicate clearly and lead the community
2. manage community committees
3. facilitate community workshops
4. assess heritage significance,
5. use the new SHI inventory (ongoing half-day training courses are available from the NSW Heritage Office)
6. advise on promotional techniques
7. implement the findings of the study through appropriate control and promotion at the local level including the use of Local Environmental Plans and Development Control Plans

An amount of \$[?] has been set aside for this project. Telephone, office space, typing, appointment taking facilities and photographic supplies are to be provided by the Council. Council will also provide a vehicle for your use while in the area on this study.

If you are interested would you please supply:

- a brief statement as to why you consider that you would be a good coordinator for this study against the seven criteria mentioned above
- a curriculum vitae.

Please address your reply to [name] at the above before [date].

If you have any queries would you please phone [name] at the Council on [phone number].

Yours sincerely

[name]
General Manager

APPENDIX B

DRAFT MODEL BRIEF FOR COORDINATORS

LOGO

[NAME OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA]

Dear

Coordinator Position for a Community-Based Heritage Study of [name of local government area]

The New South Wales Heritage Office and this Council have agreed to jointly fund this project.

I am pleased to advise that you have been selected as the person to fill the position.

1. Role and Duties

The work to be carried out by you will be based on the procedure described in the Heritage Office's *Community-Based Heritage Study Guidelines*.

2. Supervision

The Coordinator will generally report to the following nominated contact person at the Council: [name, position].

The Coordinator will supervise the work of the Committee established for the purpose of carrying out the Community-Based Heritage Study.

3. Back-up facilities

Telephone, office space, typing, appointment taking facilities and photographic supplies are to be provided by the Council. Council will also provide a vehicle for your use while in the area on this study.

4. Terms of payment

An overall budget of \$[?] has been established for this project out of which fees for a thematic history (where none already exists) have to be paid.

It is agreed that regular payments will be made to the co-ordinator on the expectation that any final payment will only be paid on completion of the project.

5. Procedure for payment

You will be required to lodge a claim for payment with your nominated contact person at the council every two months.

6. Restriction on other work

While employed as co-ordinator you or other persons or firms with which you have a formal and/or financial association may not undertake other paid work in this local government area, although you may seek council clearance to the following exemptions:

(a) continuation of services to completion on a heritage project which had commenced at the time of your appointment;

(b) work on any matter provided it does not:

(i) involve a heritage item, a heritage site or an item in a heritage conservation area whether listed or not; or

(ii) involve any item which might reasonably be expected to have been the subject of assessment or conservation work; or

(iii) lead to a conflict of interest with the role of co-ordinator.

7. General conditions

Either party may terminate this agreement on one month's written notice. The terms of this contractual letter may be varied with the agreement of both parties and the endorsement of the Heritage Office.

8. Commencement date

It is required that you commence on [date]

9. Completion date

It is proposed that the study be completed by [date]

10. Acceptance of this offer

If you wish to accept this consultancy in accordance with the above terms and conditions you should initial each page and sign and date a copy of this letter and return to the council not more than two (2) weeks from the date of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

[name]
General Manager

I accept the terms and conditions of this consultancy specified in this contractual letter.

Signature Date

APPENDIX C

ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

<p style="text-align: center;">LOGO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[NAME OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HERITAGE STUDY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COMMUNITY COMMITTEE</p> <p>We are preparing a list of heritage places and items valued by the community.</p> <p>We are seeking your help with this project.</p> <p>Residents of the area interested in its history and heritage are invited to join the project committee.</p> <p>If you are interested in nominating for a position on the committee please contact:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Name of contact Telephone / fax numbers E-mail address]</p> <p>The closing date for nominations is [DAY / DATE]</p> <p>[Signature] General Manager</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>This project is supported by the NSW Heritage Office</i></p>

APPENDIX D

ADVERTISEMENT FOR COMMUNITY INFORMATION

LOGO

[NAME OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA]

HERITAGE STUDY

CALL FOR INFORMATION

We are preparing a list of heritage places and items valued by the community. The provisional list can be inspected at Council libraries or at the Council's Planning Department.

We are seeking your help with this project.

This project is being managed by a community committee under the supervision of [Name], [profession]. If you would like to:

- express your views on the nominated items
- provide additional information on the items, or
- suggest additional items

please contact the following members of the committee:

1 [Name of contact
Telephone / fax numbers
E-mail address]

2 [Name of contact
Telephone / fax numbers
E-mail address]

3 [Name of contact
Telephone / fax numbers
E-mail address]

The closing date for comments is [DAY / DATE]

[Signature]
General Manager

This project is supported by the NSW Heritage Office

APPENDIX E

LETTER OF ADVICE TO OWNERS OF NOMINATED PLACES

COUNCIL LETTERHEAD

Dear

HERITAGE STUDY

The Council is preparing a draft list of places and items valued by the community that we would like to keep for future generations. These places and items are evidence of the history of the council area. This project is being managed by a community committee under the supervision of [Name], [profession].

The committee has suggested that the property at [address] should be included in the draft list because of its importance in the history of the local area. All owners of properties on the draft list are being contacted to seek both your comments on the proposal and also further information which may not yet be part of the public record.

The attached provisional listing information of your property explains why the committee considers it has heritage significance. We are interested in amending the listing in the light of any information you may care to offer to us.

I also enclose a brochure that explains the purpose of the heritage study, the listing process and the benefits the council will be offering to the owners of listed properties.

If you wish to comment on the proposed listing, ask questions or offer additional information, please contact me on [phone number], [fax number] or [e-mail address].

Yours sincerely

[signature]

[Name]
Chair
Heritage Committee

This project is supported by the NSW Heritage Office

APPENDIX F

STANDARD TEXT FOR EXPLANATORY BROCHURE

Heritage Office logo

HERITAGE LISTINGS

AN explanatory guide for owners of nominated properties

How are places listed?

Privately owned properties can be listed on:

- schedules to **local environmental plans** (for items nominated on the basis of their heritage significance for the local government area); OR
- **State Heritage Register** (for items nominated on the basis of their heritage significance for the State).

The preparation of these lists is a requirement of the relevant legislation:

- *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (for local items); OR
- *Heritage Act 1977* (for State items).

Why are items nominated for listing?

The heritage of the local area is the places and objects we want to keep because they provide evidence of our history.

How are items assessed for listing?

There are seven statutory criteria against which items have to be tested - their historic, aesthetic, scientific or social significance, their connection with historical persons, or their rarity or representativeness within the local area.

What will the listing of my property mean?

Listing recognises the heritage significance of your property against one or more of the assessment criteria. It is a mark of the community's respect for the property as evidence of the history of the area. Documentation associated with the listing will indicate the aspects of the property that have the greatest heritage significance. You will need to apply to the council to make changes that may affect its heritage significance.

How will the value of my property be affected by the listing?

Because the listing has been proposed by the community it may well increase its monetary value because the listing adds prestige to its real estate valuation. In many areas of NSW properties with intact original features attract higher resale value than properties of a similar age that have been modernised unsympathetically.

Does this mean I can never change my property?

The point of listing is to recognise heritage value, not to prevent adaptation to the owner's changing needs. You can retain original features and also install modern conveniences, such as central heating, or add new living spaces. The council offers free advice to help you to make appropriate decisions for these adaptations.

Does the listing affect my rights as owner?

The owner retains all rights in the property. Listing is a mark of the community's esteem, which we hope you share.

Is the whole of my property affected by the listing?

The documentation associated with the listing will indicate which parts of the property have greatest heritage significance. Sometimes views to and from the place, or its internal fittings and contents may be a part of its significance if they reflect its heritage importance.