

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF STATEMENTS OF HERITAGE IMPACT (SOHI)

TYPES OF HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Heritage impact assessment is about assessing the impact of proposed development on the cultural significance of a heritage place or item.

There is often confusion about the various types of heritage assessment reports required for different developments. The following is an overview of the various types of heritage reports:

1. Assessment of Significance

An Assessment of Significance looks at whether or not a place is of cultural heritage significance. It uses the historical research and the physical fabric of the place to assess its significance against the Heritage NSW criteria. A level of heritage significance is also normally attributed, eg. local, State, national or world. A Statement of Significance is provided (or updated) and includes a succinct summary of the information found during the assessment. An Assessment of Significance does not consider management issues, policies, or impacts of any development.

2. Statement of Heritage Impact

A Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI), alternatively known as a Heritage Impact Statement, is a report that assesses the heritage impacts to a place or item when changes are proposed. It will consider the cultural heritage significance of the place, the type and nature of any proposed development and the impact that the development will have on the significance of the place. The three areas that impact can affect include the fabric of the place, the use (ongoing or changing), as well as the setting which considers views, vistas, streetscape and immediate context. A SHI will inform the final development design.

3. Conservation Management Plan

A Conservation Management Plan (CMP) is a document that sets out what the significance of a place is and what policies are appropriate to ensure the conservation and preservation of its significance for future use and development. A CMP will include an assessment of significance, constraints and opportunities, fabric analysis, detailed historical research and evolution of the place, policies to manage conservation and change, and will address future development potential. A CMP is a management document, not an impact assessment report.

A Conservation Management Plan, when combined with a Statement of Heritage Impact, provides a thorough and comprehensive account for any development proposal which then can be assessed by the relevant approval authorities.

More information on when each of these reports is required as part of the development assessment process is contained in Section 10.2 of Bathurst Regional Development Plan 2014:

https://www.bathurst.nsw.gov.au/images/stories/development/DCP_2014/Chapters/10_Urban_Design.pdf

DEFINITIONS OF HERITAGE

Conserving, interpreting and celebrating Bathurst region's heritage values contributes to a better understanding of our history, our journeys and a deeper understanding of the experiences of the many and diverse people that make up our community. Heritage identification, management and interpretation are required so that heritage places and stories can be experienced by current and future generations.

Heritage is protected for its social, aesthetic, economic, historic and environmental values. It is defined as the places, buildings, works, relics, moveable objects and precincts of World, National, State or local heritage significance. This includes the tangible and intangible values that make places special to past, present and future generations.

So what defines the listing of heritage at different levels? The following outlines what each definition of heritage listing means.

World

World Heritage sites are places that are important to and belong to everyone, irrespective of where they are located. They have universal value that transcends the value they hold for a particular nation. Examples: Sydney Opera House, Great Barrier Reef, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park.

National

Listing on the National Heritage List means that a place has been recognised as having outstanding natural, Indigenous or historic heritage value to the nation. Examples: Parkes Observatory, Greater Blue Mountains, Snowy Mountains Scheme.

State

Listing on the State Heritage Register means that a place or object has been recognised as having particular significance to the people of NSW. It has been identified as an important place that enriches the understanding of the history of NSW. Examples: Ben Chifley's Home, Bathurst Courthouse, Cobb & Co Coach (located at the Bathurst Visitor Information Centre) and the Bathurst Street Lamps.

Local

Local heritage items and heritage conservation areas (HCA) are listed on the Bathurst Regional Local Environment Plan (LEP) heritage schedule. They have been identified as having significance to the local region or area. They are recognised as having heritage significance to the community, that should be protected and managed for future generations. Examples: Bathurst Hall (formerly Oddfellows Hall), Old Government Cottage, Bathurst Town Square and the Heritage Conservation Areas: Hill End HCA, Bathurst HCA, Sofala HCA.

Understanding the significance and community values of a heritage place early in the planning process provides the greatest opportunity for conservation and management. Discussions with Council at the start of the process provides an opportunity to address impacts on heritage using a strategic approach and allows solutions to be considered.

Protection and management of heritage is a community responsibility undertaken by a broad range of stakeholders including Aboriginal people, State and local governments, businesses and communities. We all play our part.

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF A STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT (SOHI)

Alternatively known as a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS)

Introduction

This guide explains what a statement of heritage impact is, when one is required, and the level of detail that is needed.

This guide has been prepared to assist people who wish to undertake development that could impact a heritage place, item or area.

What is a Statement of Heritage Impact?

When you are proposing to alter or demolish existing buildings and sites, Bathurst Regional Council may require that a Statement of Heritage Impact be submitted with your Development Application. This Statement, which differs from the Statement of Environmental Effects (SoEE), discusses the historical development and current configuration of the building and site that you are proposing to change and is prepared to assist Council's assessment officers in understanding the cultural significance of the building and site (as defined by the NSW Heritage Act). Many buildings and sites in the Local Government Area are historic or contribute the overall historic character of an area but have not been fully assessed against the NSW Heritage criteria.

In some cases a SoHI will also be needed for a proposal to subdivide land that contains a heritage item. This is to ensure that a suitable curtilage and grounds are retained that continue to demonstrate the significant configuration of the place and to ensure the long term conservation of any heritage items or contributory buildings located within.

A SoHI is a document that contains:

- a) A statement demonstrating the heritage significance of a heritage item, or a place or site within a heritage conservation area.
- b) An assessment of the impact that the proposed development will have on that significance.
- c) Proposals for measures to minimise that impact.

The process aims to assist identify the significant heritage matters that need to be addressed and inform the design of the development proposal. The preparation of the statement should be an integral part of the design stage in the development of a site, not completed after a design has been settled upon.

There are two types of the SoHI which Bathurst Regional Council will accept, a full SoHI or a summary SoHI, depending on the heritage significance, location, works and type of place. Council may request either as part of the Development Application process.

When is a SoHI required?

Under Bathurst Council's planning controls a SoHI is required where changes are proposed to:

A heritage item listed on the Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

Places located within a heritage conservation area.

Places nearby to a heritage item or older buildings in a heritage conservation area.

Unlisted properties that are over 50 years of age and considered to be of heritage significance, or

Demolish a building which contributes to the heritage significance of the Bathurst Region.

What is a heritage impact?

A heritage impact results from changes to a place that alters or diminishes one or more aspects of the cultural significance of the place.

Heritage impacts arise from both visual or physical changes to a place and must be assessed against the identified significance of the place. Not all impacts are negative and having an impact does not mean that a proposal cannot proceed. Sufficient information regarding the proposed heritage impacts is required to enable Council staff to determine if the overall impact is acceptable and the long term conservation of the place has been provided for.

The Statement of Heritage Impact must detail what steps have been taken to mitigate the impact of the proposal. Other alternatives that have been considered that may have had more substantial heritage impact should be discussed. Potential positive and negative impacts should be included in the assessment.

If the proposal includes additions and alterations to a building it is essential that the proposal includes any conservation works to the historic portion of the building that is being retained. The phases of development of the place should be identified, as often later additions can be replaced or substantially reconfigured without major heritage impact.

Researching the historical development of the place and the identification of non-significant elements and areas should be undertaken prior to the preparation of sketch designs. It is not acceptable to simply submit a Statement of Heritage Impact to justify a design. For heritage items the SoHI should be prepared by a heritage consultant with a detailed knowledge of the era of building in question. Please see link to Council's Heritage Trades and Services Directory for local heritage consultants:

https://www.bathurst.nsw.gov.au/images/stories/heritage/Heritage_Trades_List_Updated_2021.pdf

Contact Council's Environmental, Planning and Building Services Department should you have any queries regarding the preparation of a Statement of Heritage Impact.

The NSW Heritage Office has a model brief which may also be of assistance in the preparation of the Statement of Heritage Impact.

<https://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/assets/Uploads/a-z-publications/s-u/Statements-of-Heritage-Impact.pdf>

Historical outline

The SoHI should include a brief historical outline of the development of the property. This historical outline must be based on a survey of factual, archival material and not simply secondary sources or the brief history included on Inventory Sheets.

Local studies collections and local historical societies (particularly the Bathurst District Historical Society) may both hold historical source material. Likewise the major archives and libraries in Sydney: State Library of NSW and State Archives hold considerable information regarding the development of NSW. Much of this material is now available online. Historic newspapers are available via the National Libraries' Trove website.

Graphic sources such as parish maps and subdivision plans, and historic photographs should be sourced. More recent photographs including aerial photographs can provide an indication of changes to both the building and the landscaping.

A Historical Assessment will include the following areas of research in relation to the building and its site:

- a) Address
- b) Main purpose / use (past and current)
- c) Construction date / evidence of this date
- d) Builder, designer and architect
- e) Original drawings, plans or records
- f) Historical photographs
- g) Extracts from books or other printed references relevant to the building
- h) Alterations /additions
- i) Association with notable people or events
- j) Examples of similar styles within the Bathurst region
- k) Heritage listings

Statement of significance

An inventory form containing a brief Statement of Significance may already have been prepared as part of the State Heritage Inventory (SHI) – which are held by Council, or the State Heritage Register (SHR). The online SHR and SHI forms can be obtained from Heritage NSW.

https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/SearchHeritageItems?_ga=2.149372598.1618368558.1630920484-171694371.1621816725

Bathurst Council may also have a heritage inventory sheet for the property. Non-statutory heritage registers such as the National Trust Register also include a Statement of Significance.

If a Statement of Significance has not already been prepared, then one will need to be prepared as part of the process of preparing a Statement of Heritage Impact. The assessment criteria for NSW have been set by Heritage NSW and can be found in the section on Assessing Heritage Significance in the NSW Heritage Manual. The criteria are historic, historic associations, aesthetic and technical, social, potential to yield information (research), rarity and representativeness.

In order to prepare a Statement of Significance the historical development and current state of the place needs to have been investigated. Questions that need to be addressed include:

- Who established and built the place and when?
- Was the place architect-designed? If so, who was the architect and/or landscape architect?
- Who occupied the place?
- Changes in owner and occupier should be identified, as should alterations to the place.
- How does the place compare with other similar places in the LGA (for a local item) or the State?
- What are the distinguishing or remarkable features?
- Has the pattern of use changed?

Significant fabric

In the case of buildings within a Heritage Conservation Area, a detailed description of the building should be provided together with photographs of the areas proposed to be changed.

In the case of a heritage item, a more detailed schedule of significant fabric will need to be provided that differentiates between original or early fabric that is significant and fabric that is either intrusive or is of little significance. The levels of significance of the fabric should follow the guidelines produced by Heritage NSW. To assist Council's assessment officers, the schedule of fabric should include photographs.

Architects moral rights

For architect-designed buildings, where the architectural firm still exists and the architect is still alive, they should be informed of the potential changes to their design and given the right to record the building. The research that needs to be undertaken to identify the architect/designer is similar to that for historic buildings. In some cases, the design may have been published or received an Architectural award so is considered to be a work of modern heritage.

An example Statement of Significance

St Martin's church built from 1923 (foundation stone) to 1926 (consecration) is a fine example of an 'Arts and Crafts' inter-war Gothic church by ecclesiastical architect Louis Reginald Williams. This example is rare example from the interwar period as it has a high degree of integrity, is virtually unaltered since construction and was built to design.

The Perthville Church was intended from inception to be a 'Soldiers' Memorial Church' under the keen enthusiasm of local Bishop Merrick Long (1874-1930) when religious life was strengthened after the Great War.

This Anglican church was an important addition to the village of Perthville, to the members of the congregation and the wider community, who raised the bulk, if not all, of the funding and used it for worship and celebrations. Typical details in St Martin's that express in particular the design style of Williams were the face brickwork, slender windows, expressed timber detailing such as the hammer trusses and sanctuary ceiling, wide eaves and a building envelope where scale and proportion are well considered.

This building can be aesthetically and historically linked to other contemporary projects locally, notably the Walshaw Memorial Hall (1924) and the Warriors' Chapel (foundation stone 1920). The builder Edward Abraham Wright (1868-1928), was a respected Bathurst building contractor, active in the trade since 1894. This is rare surviving examples of his work that is not residential.

Assessment of significance

The table set out below includes questions that will need to be answered in the Statement of Heritage Impact.

The heritage place and the proposal	Some questions to be answered in a Statement of Heritage Impact
Why is the building or site of heritage significance? What is important about the affected property	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the various aspects of significance of the place, as set out in the assessment for the Statement of Significance.• Assess the relative levels of significance of the various components of the site, including recent work that could potentially be altered without heritage impact.• Include a description of the current state of the property. In some instances a structural engineers report will be required.• Determine if there is social significance and if the local community values the place.• The local historical society may be able to provide assistance in researching the historical development and in determining social significance.

The heritage place and the proposal	Some questions to be answered in a Statement of Heritage Impact
<p>What positive aspects will the proposed works have on the significance of the place. What aspects of the proposal respect the significance or assist with the long term conservation of the place?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the elements of the property that are to be retained and conserved as part of the proposal. • Include the extent to which the property has been recorded, eg measured drawings, condition survey. • Include proposed documentation to record the place eg archival photographs. • Include mechanisms for the long term conservation of the place such as a maintenance plan.
<p>What negative aspects will the proposed works have? What aspects of the proposal remove significant fabric or detract from the identified significance of the place?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the forms, volumes and elements of the place that are significant and describe how these elements or spaces are proposed to be altered. The changes to the exterior of the building may also have an impact on the streetscape.
<p>What measures are proposed to mitigate the negative aspects of the proposal?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List the steps taken to minimise the negative impacts, including other options considered.
<p>Explain why more sympathetic solutions are not viable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline why the proposed works are necessary. • Explain why alternative, more sympathetic solutions were not viable.

The following is an abridged version of the questions that the NSW Heritage Office provides as a guide to assessing heritage impact. These questions should be addressed in your Statement of Heritage Impact.

Proposed Change to Heritage Place	Some questions to be answered in a Statement of Heritage Impact
<p>Where demolition or partial demolition is involved (Note: A Structural Engineers Assessment of the building from a suitably qualified structural engineer must accompany the SHI for demolition proposals (refer 10.3 of the Bathurst Regional DCP 2014).</p>	<p>Have all of the options for retention of significant fabric and adaptive reuse been explored?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can all of the significant elements of the building or place be kept? • Can the new development be located elsewhere on the site? • Is there a potential for a lesser scope of works to be undertaken at this time, in order that more funds can be directed to conservation works in the future. • Has advice from a Heritage Architect or Heritage Consultant been sought and their advice implemented? • Is the demolition essential for the place to function, or is there an alternative solution? • Are important or significant features of the building affected by demolition? • Is demolition a result of poor condition of the historic fabric, and can it be repaired? • Can the demolition be minimised, ie partial demolition that retains evidence of the past layout, eg creating an opening rather than removing a wall.
<p>Re-roofing/re-cladding</p>	<p>Have previous (including original) materials been investigated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a previous material being reinstated? • Will the re-cladding effect the conservation of the historic fabric of the place? • Are the details in keeping with the heritage significance of the place? • Has the advice of a heritage consultant or skilled tradesperson been taken?

Proposed Change to Heritage Place	Some questions to be answered in a Statement of Heritage Impact
Change of Use	<p>Is the current use of the place significant?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the proposed change in use impact on significance? • What changes to significant fabric are required to accommodate the change in use? • What other changes are required to the place to accommodate the change in use? • Has provision been made for the long term conservation of the significant fabric? For example, a maintenance plan or funding allocation for ongoing conservation works?
Where additions to a building are involved	How is the impact of the additional elements proposed for the site to be minimised?
New landscape works and features (including car parks, tree removal or fences)	<p>If trees are proposed for removal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the tree been identified by Council on its register of protected trees? • Are the trees part of a significant landscape design or are a well known landmark? • Has the advice of an Arborist or Tree Surgeon been sought? • What is the rationale behind the selection of the replacement species?
New Signage and Colours (Note: Council will generally not support the painting or rendering of existing unpainted/unrendered surfaces)	<p>How has the impact of new signage and colours on the significance of the place been minimised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the colours appropriate to the heritage item or heritage conservation area? Modern, neutral colour schemes are not appropriate for use on historic buildings. The use of corporate colour schemes for entire buildings is also not appropriate for Heritage Items or in Heritage Conservation Areas. • Will the proposed signage visually dominate the heritage item or streetscape? • Is the signage in accordance with Council's current Development Control Plan (DCP)?

Types of Statement of Heritage Impact

The following table summarises the situations in which the type of SoHI may be acceptable. You should seek confirmation from Council prior to commencement of the documentation to ensure that the correct type of assessment is included in your Development Application.

	Summary SOHI	Full SOHI
Heritage Items		
Additions and alterations		✓
Demolition or partial demolition		✓
New landscaping works and features		✓
Change of use		✓
Construction of new carport or garage or other outbuilding		✓
Repainting/rendering (of non-existing painted/rendered surfaces)		✓
Re-roofing/re-cladding – new material, sympathetic	✓	
New services (minor)	✓	
New services (major), ie. Fire services		✓
Signage		✓
Subdivision		✓
Tree removal – listed		✓
Tree removal – not listed, outside curtilage	✓	
Heritage Conservation Areas		

	Summary SOHI	Full SOHI
Heritage Items		
Proposal on a modern dwelling (less than 50yrs old)		
Additions and alterations not visible from the street	✓	
Additions and alterations visible from the street	✓	
Proposal on a dwelling (greater than 50yrs old)		
Additions and alterations to non original fabric	✓	
Additions and alterations original fabric		✓
Construction of new carport or garage	✓	
Change of use	✓	
Demolition (The SoHI must address Section 10.3 of BRDCP 2014)		✓
Partial demolition to non original fabric, not visible from the street	✓	
New Infill building visible from the street (The SoHI must address Section 10.3 of BRDCP 2014)		✓
Repainting/rendering (of non-existing painted/rendered surfaces)	✓	
Re-roofing/re-cladding – new material, sympathetic	✓	
Signage	✓	
Subdivision	✓	
Tree Removal (if a DA required)	✓	

A Summary SoHI is a condensed version of a Full SoHI. Any The Statement of Heritage Impact should include:

- An outline of the historical development of the place.
- A description of the surviving configuration including photographs.
- Levels of significance of the fabric (for a heritage item).
- Plans and photographs that show the areas proposed to be altered.
- A discussion of the positive and negative heritage impacts of the proposal.
- The measures taken to mitigate heritage impact.
- A discussion as to why the proposal is considered to be the best alternative for the long term conservation of the place.
- An outline of the proposed conservation works.
- Confirmation that the design of the proposal has taken the findings of the Statement of Heritage Impact into consideration.

The Statement of Heritage Impact should inform the early design process. It should not be prepared simply to justify a final design.

Additional information

Additional information such as previous heritage reports, condition surveys, engineer reports and heritage inventory sheets should be considered as part of the SoHI and are to be included as appendices to the Statement of Heritage Impact.