

Coffs Harbour Heritage Strategy

2017 - 2020



Coffs Harbour Regional Museum - mus07-3223



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Introduction

This Heritage Strategy has been prepared by Coffs Harbour City Council’s Local Planning section in accordance with the standard guidelines developed by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), and is based on the Heritage Council publication “*Recommendations for local council heritage management*”.

This strategy is also informed by the Coffs Harbour Cultural Policy and Cultural Strategic Plan 2017-2022, as well as the Coffs Harbour Regional Museum’s Strategic Plan and its emphasis on *Telling the Stories of Coffs*. The Museum is of direct relevance to this plan as it curates and maintains a unique heritage collection of artefacts and records. Similarly, the Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020 also provides the potential for such information, especially in relation to Aboriginal heritage and culture.

Coffs Harbour City Council has operated a heritage advisory program for over fourteen years and a heritage strategy was first prepared by Council in 2003. The strategy was updated in 2006, 2009, 2011, and again in 2014. This revision of the strategy is to apply to the next three year period (2017 – 2020).

Continuing the use of the best practice advice contained in the OEH publication *Recommendations for local council heritage management*, Council is committed to the following actions with regard to each recommendation:

Recommendation 1	Establish a heritage committee to deal with heritage matters in your area
Outcome 1	Increased community participation, awareness and appreciation of heritage in the local area

Council Response

Coffs Harbour City Council’s Section 355 Heritage Executive Committee was established in 2003 to assist the Council to actively promote heritage conservation. Since its inception the committee has undertaken many promotional activities, including the development of heritage trails and annual themed events encouraging public participation. The committee has also assisted with the development of heritage studies and the implementation of the local heritage fund.

This heritage strategy recommends to continue the Coffs Harbour City Council Heritage Executive Committee for an ongoing period (to be reviewed on an ongoing basis every three years) to continue to assist Council to actively promote heritage conservation.

Actions to be undertaken:

- a. Committee members to continue to assist with the survey work noted in recommendation 2 below.
- b. Continue to provide informal advice to Council and the community on planning, management & promotion of the City’s heritage resources (also see Recommendation 7. g. below).

- c. Continue to oversee the implementation of the joint OEH / Coffs Harbour City Council annual Local Heritage Fund.

Recommendation 2	Identify the heritage items in your area and list them in your local environmental plan
Outcome 2	Increased knowledge and proactive management of heritage in your local area

Council Response

- (a) Continue to identify, survey and put into place measures to legally protect all known heritage items in the Coffs Harbour local government area.

Actions to be undertaken:

Coffs Harbour City Council staff, including the heritage advisor in consultation with the heritage executive committee will use heritage studies (including the Community Based Heritage Study 2015), public submissions and other relevant information with a view to preparing a more comprehensive list of heritage items for eventual insertion into Schedule 5 of the Coffs Harbour City Council Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP 2013).

Council is to continue to foster an informed environment within the Council that recognises the importance of Aboriginal cultural heritage to the LGA. The progression of the *Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Planning and Assessment Toolkit* project in partnership with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage will result in a process that is proactive and knowledgeable enough to apply suitable and appropriate land use management strategies to all relevant planning and assessment proposals.

- (b) Put in place good measures to assess all development applications involving heritage items eg. development control plans, heritage advice.

Actions to be undertaken:

- (i) Coffs Harbour City Council to conduct an ongoing review of current practice with its heritage advisory service to ensure that best practice arrangements are maintained and improved where necessary with regard to development affecting heritage listed properties under LEP 2013.
- (ii) Heritage clauses are contained in LEP 2013 and heritage items are listed in Schedule 5 of LEP 2013.
- (iii) Heritage and urban design guidelines have been inserted into relevant chapters of Council's Development Control Plan 2015 (DCP 2015).

- (iv) The Coffs Harbour Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Planning and Assessment Toolkit project will create a framework within Council that will enable the suitable application of appropriate land use management strategies to all relevant planning and assessment proposals.
- (iv) Briefing is also to be undertaken with development assessment staff and councillors regarding listed and unlisted post-European heritage items and recommendations (as contained in the Community Based Heritage Study 2015) for those sites and adjacent sites, as well as Aboriginal cultural heritage processes (in accordance with the project mentioned in iv above).

Recommendation 3	Appoint a heritage and urban design advisor to assist the council, the community and owners of listed items
Outcome 3	Increased community participation and proactive heritage and urban design management in your local areas

Council Response

Encourage best practice heritage conservation through providing free heritage advisory services, promotion and incentives.

Actions to be undertaken:

- a. Coffs Harbour City Council to continue its heritage advisory service at current levels (subject to funding).
- b. Coffs Harbour City Council to continue to develop and promote further simple heritage brochures and handouts – each to cover a different aspect of heritage promotion.
- c. Coffs Harbour City Council to continue its local heritage fund for an ongoing period (subject to funding), to encourage owners of heritage listed properties and properties contained in conservation areas to undertake conservation works on their properties.
- d. Continue to establish and promote themed heritage trails throughout the City, with a focus on rural heritage and landscapes and the conservation areas of Coramba and Sawtell, as well as the village of Woolgoolga and the Coffs Harbour Jetty area.
- e. Continue to promote "cultural and social heritage" of the area, e.g. Aboriginal heritage, Sikh community etc. including festive days and special events that promote cultural heritage – National Trust Heritage Festival, Heritage Week, the Sawtell Chilli Festival and the "Curryfest" at Woolgoolga.
- f. Encourage further study of the region’s heritage through the Museum and the Local Studies Library collection.

- g. Continue to support and promote the Glenreagh Mountain Railway activities in the villages of Ulong and Lowanna (as identified by the communities of Ulong and Lowanna through the formulation of their Community Plan).

Recommendation 4	Manage local heritage in a positive manner
Outcome 4	Proactive heritage and urban design management in your local area

Council Response

Encourage positive, proactive, best practice heritage conservation through providing free heritage advisory services, and offering flexibility in allowed land uses on heritage properties.

Actions to be undertaken:

- a. Coffs Harbour City Council to continue its heritage advisory service at current levels (subject to funding).
- b. Council staff, including the heritage advisor to ensure that referred development applications give consideration to heritage and urban design principles through the implementation of controls outlined in current relevant documents including LEP 2013 and DCP 2015.
- c. Continue to offer flexibility in LEP permitted (with consent) uses for development applications on heritage properties.

Recommendation 5	Introduce a local heritage incentives fund to provide small grants to encourage local heritage projects
Outcome 5	Increased community participation and proactive conservation and management of heritage in your local area

Council Response

Encourage best practice heritage conservation through providing a local heritage fund for maintenance costs and other conservation projects on heritage items.

Actions to be undertaken:

- a. Coffs Harbour City Council to continue its local heritage fund for an ongoing period (subject to funding), to encourage owners of heritage listed properties and properties contained in conservation areas to undertake conservation work.
- b. Organise for media releases either through local newspapers and/or Council's web page to promote the benefits of the fund and to encourage others to apply for funding.

Recommendation 6	Run a heritage main street program
Outcome 6	Councils, owners and the community actively participate in attractive and well-managed heritage main streets

Council Response

Encourage interaction between all stakeholders to achieve best practice heritage conservation through commissioning further main street type urban design studies.

Actions to be undertaken:

Council staff to initiate the commissioning of further main street type urban design studies, through processes such as the Woolgoolga Town Centre Study review etc.

Recommendation 7	Present educational and promotional programs
Outcome 7	Increased awareness and appreciation of heritage by the Council, owners and the community in your local area

Council Response

Encourage and foster best practice heritage conservation through providing educational and promotional services.

Actions to be undertaken:

- a. Continue to establish and promote themed heritage trails and walks throughout the City, with a focus on rural heritage and landscapes and the Conservation Areas of Coramba and Sawtell, as well as the village of Woolgoolga and the Coffs Harbour Jetty area.
- b. Strive to improve the community's knowledge of and access to local cultural collections and services both in person and through traditional media as well as digital channels across the Coffs Harbour Gallery, Museum and Library facilities.
- c. Continue to promote "cultural and social heritage" of the area, e.g. Aboriginal heritage, Sikh community etc. including festive days and special events that promote cultural heritage – National Trust Heritage Festival, Heritage Week, the Sawtell Chilli Festival and the "Curryfest" at Woolgoolga.
- d. Continue to hold the annual series of "heritage lectures", which is a full day of lectures covering a wide variety of heritage related topics by speakers with various heritage related expertise.

- e. Incorporate, establish and promote Glenreagh Mountain Railway activities in the villages of Ulong and Lowanna (as identified by the communities of Ulong and Lowanna through the formulation of their Community Plan).
- f. Coffs Harbour City Council to promote local heritage with flyers, fact sheets and the local history blog at <http://coffscoastheritage.info>.
- g. Align strategies for the planning, management & promotion of the City’s heritage resources with the goals and strategies contained within the Coffs Harbour Cultural Policy and Cultural Strategic Plan 2017-2022, the Coffs Harbour Regional Museum’s Strategic Plan, as well as the Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020.

Recommendation 8	Set a good example to the community by properly managing places owned or operated by council
Outcome 8	A council proactively conserves and manages its heritage assets

Council Response

Lead by example by taking good care of its own heritage items - halls, school of arts, cemeteries, historic parks, street trees, etc.

Actions to be undertaken:

- a. Council to investigate the commissioning of further urban design studies.
- b. Continued maintenance of the Ficus Hillii trees in First Avenue Sawtell.
- c. Continued maintenance of the jetty structure.
- d. Continued maintenance of the Coffs Harbour Regional Museum.
- e. Continued up-keeping of Council owned cemeteries.

Recommendation 9	Promote sustainable development as a tool for heritage conservation
Outcome 9	Proactive heritage and sustainable development in your local area

Council Response

Raise awareness of Council’s role in promoting sustainable development within the community and emphasise the importance of heritage conservation within the process.

Actions to be undertaken:

- a. Include heritage conservation themes within material promoting sustainable development.
- b. Promotion of LEP 2013 & DCP 2015 which encourages and reinforces sustainable development. Clause 5.10 of LEP 2013 outlines requirements for development consent on heritage properties. It also outlines relevant requirements for cultural heritage sites and outlines incentives to encourage sensitive and appropriate development. More detailed heritage and urban design guidelines have been inserted into relevant chapters of DCP 2015.
- c. Continue to offer and promote flexibility in LEP permitted (with consent) uses for development applications on heritage properties.
- d. Continue to require development to align with the following strategies contained within the Coffs Harbour 2030 Strategic Plan:
 - LP 4.1 Promote Sustainability programs and policies;
 - LC 1.1 Build pride and identity in Coffs Harbour as a community and a place;
 - LC 3.1 Council supports the delivery of high quality, sustainable outcomes for Coffs Harbour;
 - LE 1.1 Identify and promote the region's unique environmental values; and
 - PL 1.6 Reinforce the unique identity of villages and communities.
- e. Continue to gather community opinion, promote and investigate the themes outlined in (d) above through the "MyCoffs" process. MyCoffs is the foundation of a community-led plan for the future of the Coffs harbour local government area and provides an opportunity for the community as a whole to help shape it.

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