

# Minutes

## Heritage Advisory Committee

Date: Monday 30 January 2017, Collingwood Town Hall

Time: 6pm – 8pm

Chair: Councillor James Searle

Attendance: Councillor James Searle (JS), Councillor Jackie Fristacky (JF), James Lamour-Reid (JLR) – Director Planisphere (facilitator), Claire Baker (CB), Amanda Haycox (AH), Janet Taylor (JT), Jill Anwyl (JA), David Walmsley (DW), Ivan Gilbert (IG) – Group Manager, CEO’s Office Yarra Council, Angela Zivkovic (AZ), Ian Wight (IW), Fiona Bell (FB), Greg Spark (GS), Anne Holmes (AHO), Margaret O’Brien (MO’B), Laurence Abou Khater (LAK).

Apologies: Councillor Stephen Jolly, Alix Hill, Paul Beekman, David Langdon

*diverse*

*vibrant*

*exciting*

*inclusive*

<p>1. <u>Introductions</u></p> <p>The new HAC members – Angela, Greg and Laurence were welcomed to the committee and members introduced themselves.</p>	
<p>2. <u>Declarations of conflicts of interest</u></p> <p>There were none.</p>	
<p>3. <u>Adoption of previous minutes – 12 December 2016</u></p> <p>Accepted.</p>	
<p>4. <u>Report back on Delegate’s report</u></p> <p>JF outlined the matters that were included in the Delegate’s Report which was tabled at the Council meeting on 20 December 2016. The matters included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Strategy Year 1 Implementation Plan</li> <li>• Yarra Planning Scheme (Heritage Policy) rewrite</li> <li>• Review of the Heritage Advisory Committee</li> <li>• St Vincent’s Hospital redevelopment proposal</li> <li>• Filling vacant positions on the HAC, and</li> <li>• Amendment C140 Smith Street Structure Plan.</li> </ul> <p>MO’B advised she was pleased that the Delegate’s Report had been prepared as she had been concerned about the low profile of the HAC. The report to Council will help raise the profile of the work undertaken by the committee. She asked were there any questions raised following the report. JF advised no questions as there was a large agenda for that meeting.</p>	
<p>5. <u>Discussion with Ivan Gilbert</u></p> <p>IG led a discussion around the themes of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• early community engagement by developers prior to applications being lodged</li> <li>• updated heritage information at Council planning counter and Council web page</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <p>HAC members wanting to comment further on these themes to email Ivan Gilbert directly.</p>

- potential heritage officer position

There was lively discussion, particularly around the community engagement theme by developers. As there was a facilitated session around the Heritage Policy rewrite planned, the discussion with IG was cut short. IG advised that he was happy to receive submissions from HAC members on any or all of these themes by email after the meeting.

## 6. Planning Scheme rewrite (Heritage Policy)

### **Introduction**

JLR facilitated a session on the rewrite of the Heritage Policy in the Yarra Planning Scheme. He emphasised that the policy must be rewritten within the framework set by state government and aims to fill gaps identified in the planning scheme review.

### **Policy structure**

AH outlined the proposed structure of the new policy and emphasised that it was an update of the existing policy rather than a new rewrite undertaken from scratch. She noted that the new policy would include specific guidance on commercial and industrial heritage and that consultants were currently engaged to assist in this regard.

### **Heritage significance of buildings**

There was a discussion about the potential for the heritage significance of buildings to change over time. This could be both positive and negative. For example, additional information could come to light about a building that may make it more significant. On the other hand, inappropriate alterations to a building may diminish its significance.

It was acknowledged that heritage significance is not static. Significance can change over time because of evolving views and knowledge, changes in context, and alterations to original fabric. Applied appropriately, purpose of the Heritage Overlay is intended to avoid alterations and additions that diminish heritage significance.

The current review focuses on the heritage strategies and policies contained in the planning scheme. Consideration of the significance of heritage places is beyond its scope.

### **Archaeological sites**

AHo asked how the policy would deal with archaeological information and AH advised that it is dealt with in the Heritage Act and as a consequence had been deleted from this initial draft policy.

### **Timing of process**

CB outlined the proposed timing of the rewrite process and key dates for HAC updates on progress.

### **Clause 21 or Clause 22?**

There was discussion about whether the policy would be included in Clause 21 or Clause 22 of the planning scheme. DW advised that that question had not been resolved yet.

### **Sightline test**

AH took the committee through the sightline test as it relates to upper level additions to residential properties. The test assesses the visual prominence of upper storey extensions above the retained portion of the original building. The sightline test works well in certain circumstances eg where there is a parapet, and it is ineffective in others eg where there is a gabled roof or where the site is opposite a park – the view of the upper level works need to be considered from the open space. There is a difference in the current policy as it applies to individually significant properties and contributory properties.

### **Sightline test - difference between individually significant and contributory**

JT expressed concern about the different tests; she thinks it is better to have the same test applied to both as maintaining the difference poses considerable risks to Yarra's heritage precincts. FB said the test should follow the individually significant line. There was some hesitation with shifting to one line as through the process it could be changed to the less restrictive test. Further consideration will be given to the matter. GS said the test should apply to commercial and residential buildings as well. CB advised policy for commercial and industrial areas will be discussed at a future HAC meeting and reiterated that the meeting was focussing on tests for residential areas.

### **Impact on laneways and rear of sites**

MO'B and AHo said that they are concerned about the impact of development on laneways and at the rear of sites.

### **Demolition tests**

AH addressed the committee in relation to demolition tests. Currently the policy doesn't include the "depth of two rooms" test. Useful to include it as a way of ensuring that more original fabric is retained.

IW advised that this test is useful for terraces but the "principal roof form" test is more appropriate in suburban settings. Policy should include guidance to cover both contexts.

### **Guidelines**

AH then led a discussion in relation to the question of whether the new policy should have guidelines. She presented the Heritage Council guidelines and guidelines from Stonnington, Greater Bendigo and Moreland Councils.

IW said that guidelines can be liberally interpreted, better to have them in the policy.

MO'B said reference to guidelines can be unclear and the lack of clarity could have unintended consequences which could see individually significant buildings demolished.

CB highlighted DELWP are more likely to accept more diagrams in policy than before and suggested that the Heritage Council guidelines could be a reference document in the policy and where we wanted additional guidance we could bring it into the new policy with diagrams to assist with interpretation if required. Members of the committee seemed largely satisfied with that approach.

### **Conservation Management Plans**

MO'B said that the current policy had no standards for conservation management plans (CMP) and the new policy should set standards for what is included in them and specify that they should be required.

DW advised that it is not reasonable to impose the requirement for a CMP in all instances as they are expensive to prepare. Heritage Victoria doesn't require them for buildings on the state register.

### **Summary**

JLR wrapped up the session with a summary of issues discussed:

- New policy is a refinement of the existing policy
- There are differences between development in residential and commercial areas
- Sightlines for individually significant buildings vs contributory buildings
- More clarity required around demolition – add in primary roof form in suburban settings
- Consider views from other vantage points to overcome shortcomings of sightline test
- Additional diagrams in policy will assist with understanding

<p>7. <u>Review of HAC</u></p> <p>CB advised that Council has appointed a consultant to undertake the review.</p> <p>Beverley Kliger is the consultant and she will contact HAC members in the coming month to conduct one on one discussions. There will be standard questions asked of all members except the three new HAC members, as they have only attended one meeting. New members will be asked about their expectations and motivations for joining the HAC.</p> <p>The March HAC meeting will include a session for Beverley to report back on her initial findings.</p>	
<p>8. <u>St Vincent's / ACU planning controls</u></p> <p>AH advised that the planning controls for the ACU included a Development Plan Overlay (DPO) which they want to update which has led to the preparation of a master plan. The University has voluntarily decided to engage the community on its master plan which will likely form the basis of the DPO.</p> <p>St Vincent's has different planning controls and has applied for a planning permit for its redevelopment. There is no requirement for an overall master plan. AH and DW stressed that there was no statutory obligation for St Vincent's or any developer to engage with the community prior to the lodgement of a planning application. The Planning and Environment Act has a public notification process that is triggered <u>after</u> an application is lodged.</p> <p>As there is no statutory obligation for a developer to consult prior to the lodging of a planning permit application, there is nothing Council can do to oblige them to undertake this sort of consultation.</p>	
<p>9. <u>Items for future meeting</u></p> <p>MO'B suggested the setting up of four subcommittees to deal with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early community consultation with developers</li> <li>• Proposed heritage officer</li> <li>• Improvement of information on the web in relation to heritage</li> <li>• Planning Scheme rewrite – Heritage Policy</li> </ul> <p>DW advised there have been subcommittees before and they haven't worked successfully. People's availability is an issue. It is better to have everyone's voice heard. There needs to be a process of discussing these issues which is inclusive of the whole HAC. Resourcing constraints mean officers are not available outside of the HAC meetings to coordinate the subcommittees. The primary focus will be on administering the HAC, progressing the Heritage policy for the YPS Rewrite and the Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>Cr Searle was hesitant to support establishing subcommittees without proper consideration of their role, intent and how they would operate. He suggested the matter be tabled at the next meeting for discussion. He reiterated that there is a lot of work that needs to be done in between HAC meetings and members were encouraged to collaborate to progress items of interest and report back to officers.</p> <p>GS asked that at a future meeting it would be useful to understand how Council deals with its own heritage properties.</p> <p>AH advised that the next agenda would be full with the HAC review and Heritage Policy rewrite and it would be included at a subsequent meeting.</p> <p>There was a question asked in relation to the status of the restoration of the WWI honour board at the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Hall.</p>	<p><b><u>Actions</u></b></p> <p>AH to include subcommittee proposal on March agenda and report back restoration of WWI honour board</p>

10. Date of next meeting

Monday 27 March 2017

6pm-8pm

Labor Room, Collingwood Town Hall

Dates of HAC meetings for 2017

All meetings 6pm-8pm\_Labor Room, Collingwood Town Hall

- Monday 30 January
- Monday 27 March
- Monday 22 May
- Monday 24 July
- Monday 25 September