

Built Heritage Policy 2005

As amended following submissions

(All changes are highlighted in bold)

Built Heritage Policy 2005

“The physical and cultural legacy of urban regions is a valuable asset to be preserved, enhanced, and honored. This precious legacy connects history to future generations, enables broad-based sustainable prosperity, and emphasizes quality of life as a key building block for economic well-being, environmental health, and social vitality. The competitive advantage of places - what makes them attractive and special - is the character and spirit of community that is embedded in our history.”

Prague Institute for Global Urban Development 2003

Introduction

Wellington’s historic commercial, ecclesiastical, industrial and residential buildings and structures – including its timber houses – are a precious and finite resource. They are important in shaping the character of the central city and each of the suburbs, and are part of what makes Wellington unique. Protection and use of the city’s built heritage resources contributes to our quality of life, growth and prosperity. They are also fundamental to the sustainable management of Wellington’s natural and physical resources.

Recognising and acknowledging the importance of the past also contributes to the community’s understanding and awareness of a sense of place. This has been acknowledged in the *Wellington City Council Sense of Place Strategy*. In this strategy, the Council’s goal for Wellington is quality of life, growth and prosperity. In striving for this goal, the Council wants to ensure that what makes Wellington special is preserved. Our historic buildings are a physical representation of our sense of place, and their preservation is essential if this is to be maintained.

In preparing the *Sense of Place Strategy*, research was undertaken to determine what Wellingtonians treasure about their city, and what gives the city its unique character or essence. From the range of factors identified, the following are relevant to the Built Heritage Policy:

- the compact and integrated urban layout
- the pivotal role – and diverse and vibrant character – of the central city
- the distinct character of communities, neighbourhoods, urban quarters and suburban centres – people and buildings – and the city’s confident, unpretentious personality, and
- the symbols, images, places and buildings that identify the people of Te Whanganui-a-Tara and Wellington city, and tell their history.

The Council will work to ensure that all new growth respects these values and, if possible, enhances them.

Built heritage includes: an individual or group of buildings, structures, monuments, or installations, or remains thereof, and their surroundings which are associated with the city’s architectural, cultural, social, political, economic, scientific, technological, transportation, military or maritime history.

Conserving built heritage is an integral component of a ‘creative city’ because it demonstrates how much the city values the diversity of its environment. It provides a sympathetic human scale and form to the urban environment, and enhances the well-being of its citizens. It can also make a significant contribution to the economy, through employment, tourism, and the provision of interesting and alternative working and entertainment spaces.

Protecting the city’s built heritage is not about locking it up. The continued use of a heritage building is essential to its survival but it should not be at the loss of important heritage fabric. The challenge is to protect the most valued heritage places in an evolving environment while meeting the needs of a rapidly changing community.

Issues

There are a number of changes taking place in the city that are impacting on the built heritage. In particular, the apartment boom in Te Aro, suburban infill housing and the subdivision of existing allotments are impacting on the historic character of key heritage areas. Rooftop additions and ‘facadism’ are transforming many important heritage buildings in the inner city.

There are **565 heritage buildings, objects and areas identified** in the Wellington District Plan. However, there are many places, particularly both residential and commercial areas in the suburbs, as well as post-World War II commercial buildings and those associated with the city’s various ethnic communities that are not identified as heritage buildings in the District Plan, and therefore lack any protection. At the same time, the rules in the District Plan do not always provide a sufficient level of protection to match some community expectations.

New legislation, including amendments to the Smoke-free Environments Act 1990 (with implications for licensed premises), and proposed changes to the Building Act 1991, may **adversely impact on** heritage buildings.

The elevated status given to built heritage under the Resource Management Amendment Act 2003* (which made the recognition and protection of historic heritage a matter of

* The recent changes to the Resource Management Amendment Act 2003 have elevated the status of heritage to a matter of national importance so that:
*s6(f) In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:
The protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.*

In addition the principal Act is amended by inserting the following definition:

“historic heritage–

“(a) means those natural and physical resources that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and cultures, deriving from any of the following qualities:

- (i) archaeological
- (ii) architectural
- (iii) cultural
- (iv) historic
- (v) scientific
- (vi) technological; and

national importance), and the launch of the Council’s *Creative Wellington – Innovation Capital* vision, provide an opportune time to review the Council’s approach to heritage issues, and to update its Built Heritage Policy 1995.

Rationale

The Council, which itself owns and manages a number of the city’s significant heritage buildings, has prepared the Built Heritage Policy 2005 to reinforce its continued commitment to the city’s built heritage to current owners, the community, visitors to the city and to future generations.

It also provides direction to Councillors and staff in their day-to-day role in heritage management. It will be implemented through the development and review of Council’s planning tools and processes, including the District Plan and Annual Plan as well as Council’s relationships with tangata whenua, and with the owners of heritage buildings, and the wider community.

The key initiatives in the Built Heritage Policy 2005 include:

- **Improving statutory protection for the built heritage – this will involve undertaking a District Plan Change to strengthen the heritage rules in the District Plan**
- Establishing a new Heritage Incentive Fund – The new fund would replace the current Building Safety Fund and Heritage Fund and will provide a more flexible approach to encourage the conservation of the city’s significant listed heritage buildings.
- **Creating more heritage areas in the city and the suburbs** – Identifying more heritage places in the District Plan, in particular, **heritage places** experiencing development pressure, places which reflect our ethnic and cultural diversity, and post-World War II buildings.

Structure

The Built Heritage **Policy 2005** consists of an **overall** vision, three high level goals, **six** objectives and **a number of** actions. These provide the direction and framework for what the Council wants to achieve in the next 10 years. **The Council’s vision conforms with the ideals of the Council’s Long Term Community Plan, and the Resource Management Act 1991.** The Policy also includes an implementation plan, which expands on the actions and outlines a timeframe.

“(b) includes–

- (i) historic sites, structures, places, and areas; and
- (ii) archaeological sites; and
- (iii) sites of significance to Maori, including wahi tapu; and (iv) surroundings associated with the natural and physical resources

Vision

*Wellington is a creative and memorable city that celebrates its past through the **recognition, protection, conservation and use of its built heritage for the benefit of the community and visitors, now and for future generations.***

Goals

The Built Heritage Policy is based on the following goals:

- **Recognition** – Wellington’s built heritage is recognised as contributing to our understanding of our cultural diversity and awareness of sense of place
- **Protection, conservation and use** – Wellington’s unique character is enhanced by the protection, conservation and use of its built heritage
- **Sustainable economic use** – Wellington’s built heritage is acknowledged as contributing to a vibrant economy.

Monitoring

Implementation of the Built Heritage Policy will be monitored and its benefits assessed to ensure its objectives are being achieved. Monitoring of the Council’s Long Term Community Plan will be based on the three goals listed above, and will be reflected in the Annual Report. Monitoring of the RMA will be reflected in the District Plan, with changes made accordingly.

Objective 1 – Recognition

To continue to recognise built heritage places as essential elements of a vibrant and evolving city.

Actions

Identification

- 1) *Adopt a heritage area approach to identify important areas within the city which will contribute to the community’s sense of place.*
- 2) *Continue to identify built heritage places with significant heritage value to ensure their protection, promotion, conservation and appropriate use for present and future generations.*
- 3) *Recognise buildings with significant interiors to ensure their protection, promotion, conservation and appropriate use for present and future generations.*
- 4) *Acknowledge the contribution surroundings make to the heritage value of*

places.

- 5) ***Establish clear criteria for identifying individual places and heritage areas.***
- 6) *Identify nationally significant places in Wellington at risk from natural disaster or war for inclusion in a Heritage Disaster/Emergency Management Plan.*
- 7) *Continue to liaise with Council departments, New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT), government and non-government agencies, professionals, owners and the community in identifying the city's built heritage.*

Inventory

- 8) ***Maintain and expand a comprehensive inventory of the city's built heritage.***

Research

- 9) ***Ensure that places continue to be fully researched, documented, and recorded for regulatory and non-regulatory purposes.***
- 10) *Continue to liaise with Wellington City Archives, Wellington Public Library and other research and archive institutions to ensure information about built heritage places in the city is accessible.*
- 11) ***Support the New Zealand Archaeological Association Site Recording Scheme Upgrade and archaeological surveys as an important method and programme of built heritage identification and verification.***

Objective 2 – Protection

To protect the city's built heritage from adverse effects that may compromise the heritage values of a place, including physical deterioration and inappropriate subdivision, development and use.

Actions

District Plan

1. ***Recognise those places with significant heritage value through listing in the District Plan, either individually or as part of a heritage area.***
2. ***Update the objectives and policies in the Heritage Chapters in the District Plan that pertain to the built heritage to ensure they deliver on this policy and meet the requirements of section 6(f) of the Resource Management Act 1991.***
3. ***Undertake a District Plan Change to amend the heritage rules in the District Plan so that additions and alterations to a listed heritage item or area would become a discretionary activity and that demolition of a listed heritage item or area would become a non-complying activity.***

4. ***Re-examine other rules in the District Plan to ensure they take into account the heritage value of listed items and the heritage significance of areas.***
5. ***Extend the protection of heritage values to suburban areas through identifying more heritage areas and other mechanisms.***

Other statutory provisions

6. *Ensure administration of other legislation, including the Building Act 2004 and the Smoke-free Environments Act 1990, takes cognisance of the heritage values of a place when assessing building and resource consent applications for heritage buildings.*
7. ***Make use of other statutory provisions including the use of encumbrances, heritage orders and covenants that provide for the management and preserving of built heritage places, including those specified in the Reserves Act 1977, Local Government Act 2003 and the Conservation Act 1987.***
8. *Promote appropriate levels and methods of earthquake strengthening that minimise the negative impact on the heritage fabric of a listed building.*

Objective 3 – Public awareness

To actively promote and celebrate the city's built heritage.

Actions

Promotion

1. *Undertake promotional activities to highlight the contribution heritage conservation makes to the built environment.*
2. *Make information about the city's built heritage resources available to owners, stakeholders, the community and visitors.*
3. *Explore opportunities to promote important heritage properties in Council ownership.*

Community and stakeholder partnerships

4. *Establish effective partnerships with owners and stakeholders to ensure better management and sustainable use of the city's built heritage.*
5. *Liaise with other heritage stakeholders in the development and provision of conservation guidelines that promote the city's built heritage.*
6. *Co-sponsor and co-ordinate workshops periodically with heritage stakeholders to provide technical advice to participants, including owners, about appropriate conservation practices and techniques.*
7. *Work with local communities to establish trails, run guided tours of the community, hold workshops and other programmes that identify and interpret the City's built heritage.*

Objective 4 – Conservation

To ensure that best practice in heritage conservation is followed by heritage practitioners, owners and occupiers of heritage buildings and Council staff, and the loss of heritage values is minimised.

Actions

1. ***Adopt a set of guiding principles for conserving the city’s built heritage to ensure that the heritage values of a listed place are retained.***
2. *Advocate the appropriate conservation of heritage places with developers, owners, the community and other stakeholders to ensure new uses are consistent with heritage values.*
3. *Develop, with Wellington City Council Emergency Management Office (WEMO), an Emergency Management Plan for nationally significant heritage buildings in the event of damage caused by a natural or technical disaster or war.*
4. *Require the preparation of an appropriate plan (e.g. heritage inventory, maintenance plan or conservation plan) for any heritage place subject to a major development that could affect the heritage values of that place.*
5. *Endorse and promote the use of international best practice methods, including conservation charters, to guide heritage planning and work.*

Objective 5 – Sustainable economic use

To encourage and support economic growth that preserves and enhances the distinct character of communities, neighbourhoods, urban quarters and suburban centres through the sustainable use of the city’s built heritage assets.

Actions

1. ***Encourage the sustainable use of heritage buildings for present and future generations.***
2. *Support owners and managers of heritage buildings by establishing a new Heritage Incentive Fund that targets specific heritage projects that are consistent with the heritage outcomes in this strategy. The new fund will include:*
 - *Providing grants for conservation work, including stabilisation, repair or restoration, for at-risk, significant heritage buildings*
 - *Providing grants to home owners to assist with fire protection and maintenance and repair work that will aid the conservation of a heritage building*
 - *Providing funding for professional services (e.g. to undertake conservation plans, heritage inventories, condition reports) for listed heritage buildings and structures*

3. *Continue to provide free conservation advice and technical assistance to owners of heritage buildings.*
4. *Introduce a fees waiver for non-notified resource consent applications for conservation work on listed heritage buildings and structures, and heritage buildings in listed heritage areas.*
5. *Provide an accelerated approval process for listed heritage items where a conservation plan has been prepared to international conservation standards.*
6. *Investigate the use of appropriate financial instruments, covenants and other voluntary mechanisms for the protection of heritage places.*
7. *Establish an emergency fund for the purchase of significant, at-risk heritage buildings.*
8. *Work with the tourism and business industries to discuss ways in which retention of heritage buildings can be promoted and encouraged.*

Regional and urban planning

9. *Undertake a study to determine the contribution that the preservation of the historic environment has on the quality of life in Wellington, and the long-term social, economic and environmental benefits of preservation of heritage buildings on our urban environment.*

Objective 6 – Council effectiveness

To provide effective support for the implementation of Council's objectives and aspirations for the city's built heritage.

Actions

Management

1. *Integrate heritage management into other related Council functions.*
2. *Continue to develop strong relationships with relevant tangata whenua to assist the effective management of heritage places of significance to Maori.*
3. *Maintain and develop relationships with key stakeholders and interested parties e.g. NZHPT, Wellington Regional Council, **property owners**, appropriate government and non-government agencies, and local community groups, to ensure wider heritage goals are met.*
4. *Publicise Council's heritage role and related activities, e.g. conservation work on Council-owned buildings.*
5. *Ensure annual funding to support heritage activities identified in this policy.*

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2005 – 2015

Objective 1 – Recognition

To continue to recognise built heritage places as essential elements of a vibrant and evolving city.

Tasks

Identification

- a) *Implement District Plan change to list those heritage buildings identified in the Wellington Building Inventory 2001 – Non-Residential Buildings (start DP change by **February 2006**)*
- b) *Review District Plan listings to ensure built heritage places associated with Maori are identified, and identify new places (complete by December 2008)*
- c) *Review District Plan listings to ensure places associated with ethnic and cultural groups and gender are identified, and identify new places (ongoing)*
- d) *Continue to identify built heritage places that illustrate the historic development of the city, represent our cultural diversity, and contribute to our ‘sense of place’ including settings and interiors where appropriate (ongoing)*
- e) *Conduct a heritage building survey focusing on post-World War II architecture in Wellington (complete by June 2007)*
- f) *Undertake surveys of residential heritage to identify places for listing, either individually, or as part of heritage areas (ongoing)*
- g) *Expand use of character area-based approach for identifying and celebrating the city’s built heritage (e.g. Seatoun Heritage Character Assessment) (ongoing)*
- h) *Identify nationally significant heritage places for Heritage Disaster/Emergency Management Plan (**Complete by June 2006**)*
- i) *Work with NZHPT and other stakeholders in streamlining the identification of heritage places (ongoing).*

Assessment criteria

- j) *Establish thematic framework identified in the 2001 Inventory for considering new places to be identified for listing in the District Plan (**complete by February 2006**)*
- k) *Review assessment criteria for listing heritage places in District Plan and criteria for assessing inclusion of places in Wellington Building Heritage Inventory 2001(**complete by September 2005**)*
- l) *Adopt new criteria for assessing additions to the District Plan (**present to Council by December 2005**)*

Inventory

- m) *Complete Residential Heritage Inventory and Heritage Area Inventory for all buildings and areas currently listed in District Plan (**complete by December 2008**)*
- n) *Revise current inventory descriptions in line with adopted criteria (ongoing)*
- o) *Continue to update Non-Residential Heritage Inventories (ongoing)*

Research

- p) *Continue to research, assess, document and record changes to the city’s built heritage for regulatory and non-regulatory purposes (ongoing)*

- q) *Continue to liaise with Wellington City Archives, Wellington Public Library and other research and archive institutions to ensure information about built heritage places in the city is accessible (ongoing).*

Objective 2 – Protection

To protect the city's built heritage from adverse effects that may compromise the heritage values of a place, including physical deterioration and inappropriate subdivision, development and use.

District Plan

- a) *Undertake review of objectives, policies and rules in District Plan to ensure they deliver on this strategy and section 6(f) of the Resource Management Amendment Act 2003 (**Initiate DP change by June 2006**)*
 - *Review urban design controls and guidelines, and other policies and rules in the Wellington City District Plan in order to ensure consistency with heritage objectives, policies and rules*
 - *Develop guidelines for additions and alterations to heritage buildings to ensure new development is consistent with the heritage values of buildings and areas*
 - *Revise heritage area rules in the District Plan to ensure appropriate regulatory mechanisms are in place that are consistent with conserving the city's built heritage while allowing for sustainable use of buildings*
- b) *Require heritage assessments, inventories, conservation plans for heritage places that may be subject to major developments that could impact on the heritage values of the place (**ongoing**).*

Objective 3 – Public awareness

To actively promote and celebrate the city's built heritage.

Promotion

- a) *Expand the heritage trail network throughout the city (ongoing)*
- b) *Develop a comprehensive heritage module for the Council website (**complete by September 2005 with ongoing updates**)*
- c) *Upgrade and develop the heritage inventory and make the information available on the internet and in print (ongoing)*
- d) *Promote the benefits of preservation to property owners (ongoing)*
- e) *Promote the use of plaques and signage to identify important heritage places (ongoing)*
- f) *Publicise the District Plan's heritage rules and assessment criteria (ongoing)*
- g) *Develop and publicise guidelines for adaptive reuse of heritage buildings (complete by December 2005)*
- h) *Introduce an annual award programme to promote good heritage conservation projects (ongoing)*
- i) *Celebrate the city's built heritage as part of architecture week, heritage month and other heritage-related events (ongoing)*
- j) *Co-sponsor and co-ordinate workshops periodically with heritage stakeholders (ongoing).*

Objective 4 – Conservation

To ensure that best practice in heritage conservation is followed by heritage practitioners, owners and occupiers of heritage buildings and council staff, and loss of heritage values is minimised.

Tasks

- a) *Work with NZ Institute of Architects (NZIA), NZ Planning Institute (NZPI), universities etc to support the development of education and training programmes for heritage conservation (ongoing)*
- b) *Work with NZIA and other building industry stakeholders to recognise best practice in the adaptation and reuse of heritage buildings (ongoing)*
- c) *Liaise with NZHPT to ensure consistent standards of conservation advice (ongoing)*
- d) *Ensure that work on heritage buildings and structures is carried out in accordance with recognised national and international standards (ongoing)*
- e) *Develop, with Wellington Emergency Management Office (WEMO), an Emergency Management Plan for nationally significant heritage buildings **Complete by December 2006**.*

Objective 5 – Sustainable economic use

To encourage and support economic growth that preserves and enhances the distinct character of communities, neighbourhoods, urban quarters and suburban centres through the sustainable use of the city's built heritage assets.

Tasks

Incentives

- a) *Develop funding criteria & accountability measures for a new Heritage Incentive Fund **(complete by July 2005)***
- b) *Investigate the use of appropriate financial instruments, covenants and other voluntary mechanisms for protection of heritage places (ongoing)*
- c) *Investigate the establishment of an emergency fund for the purchase of at-risk, nationally significant heritage buildings **(complete June 2006)***
- d) *Implement new Heritage Incentive Fund **(commence September 2005)**.*

Regional & urban planning

- e) *Undertake a study on social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits of retaining built heritage **(complete by June 2007)**.*

Objective 6 – Council effectiveness

To provide effective support for the implementation of the Council's objectives and aspirations for the city's built heritage.

Management

- a) *Improve Council internal processes, staff skills and understanding of its role in managing heritage (ongoing)*
- b) *Develop a best practice approach for managing Council-owned heritage places (ongoing)*
- c) *Prepare and implement conservation plans for significant Council-owned heritage places (ongoing)*
- d) *Engage appropriate specialists to conduct conservation planning and work on significant Council heritage places (ongoing)*
- e) *Publicise Council's heritage role and related activities, e.g. conservation work on Council-owned buildings (ongoing).*