



HERITAGE INFORMATION PACK

Guidelines for Development
Applications



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HERITAGE GUIDELINES

Purpose of Guidelines

These guidelines have been prepared to explain general heritage principles to assist applicants in understanding Council's requirements when lodging a DA for a property that is a heritage item, is in a heritage conservation area or that has potential heritage value. The guidelines will also help people understand the implications of heritage when considering purchasing a heritage item or a property in a heritage conservation area.

Importance of Heritage

Heritage consists of those places and objects that we as a community have inherited from the past and want to hand on to future generations. It also includes archaeology and Aboriginal items.

Our heritage gives us a sense of living history and provides a physical link to the work and way of life of earlier generations. It enriches our lives and helps us to understand who we are today.

For each identified conservation area, precinct (part of a conservation area), listed heritage item and unlisted historic place, Council aims to ensure that new development:

- Enhances and does not adversely impact established character or curtilage.
- Provides a well-maintained appearance so as to be attractive to residents and visitors.
- Retains attractive streetscapes, views, historic themes and consistency.
- Prevents demolition or removal of historic fabric (materials).
- Presents and interprets historical evidence for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

The built heritage of Wollondilly has a wide range of landscapes and historic places. Our historic buildings include colonial (19th century), early railway (c1870s), Federation (c1890s to c1915) and periods to the 1960s.

Note: Council employs a Heritage Advisor who periodically visits the Shire to meet with applicants and provide advice on development proposals through Council's pre DA consultation service.

Considering Heritage in Applications to Council

Council has a responsibility to manage heritage under statutory provisions in the NSW Environmental Planning & Assessment Act, the NSW Heritage Act, the National Parks and Wildlife Act, the Local Government Act and in the Wollondilly LEP and other policies and codes.

In many situations where a development proposes to alter a heritage item it will be necessary for the applicant to seek qualified professional advice as to the heritage impact of the proposal.

Heritage-related subdivision proposals may require pre-planning of the indicative building, outbuilding and driveway footprints, often with a covenant to maintain an architectural and landscape standard (88B Instrument).

Heritage Significance

"Heritage significance" is not a matter of opinion. It is assessed by a standard method. Assessment criteria are set by the NSW Government. Seven criteria have to be considered: historic, associative, aesthetic, social, research, rarity, representativeness. For a place to be heritage significant, one or more criteria have to be significant.

Heritage Items

A heritage item is a building, work, archaeological site, tree, place or Aboriginal object that is identified in a heritage schedule and shown on a heritage map. A heritage item can include an area of land, its structures and significant landscape elements. Many items are sited over several lots and can include vacant land that is important to the setting of an item.

The heritage map is a map of the local government area which shows the location of heritage items and heritage conservation areas. Council has heritage inventory information available for most items

Heritage Conservation Areas

A heritage conservation area (HCA) has historic and aesthetic values to the community. It is an area of land shown on a heritage map and described in a schedule. It can contain streetscapes, historic subdivision patterns, a pattern of building "footprints", examples of important historic buildings, road alignments, trees, gardens, and road works. These can combine to create a place worth keeping.

Identifying Heritage Items or Areas

Heritage items and conservation areas are listed in Schedule 5 (Environmental Heritage) of council's Local Plan.

Benefits to Owners of Heritage Items

Benefits of owning a heritage item can include:

- Grants to assist in maintenance and conservation works available from Local, State and Federal Government agencies from time to time. Grants can be used for conservation work, maintenance, research and assessment of items. New works such as additions and alterations are generally not funded.
- Tax concessions, including a reduction in Council rates are available for heritage items. An application can be made to the NSW Valuer General for a "heritage restricted valuation". Tax concessions vary from time to time.
- Change of use within a heritage building which is otherwise not permitted under an existing zoning such as commercial or retail uses. The purpose of this benefit is to encourage conservation of heritage items by allowing a wide range of uses appropriate to the significance of the item. This is particularly useful where a heritage item is dilapidated and substantial works are required and where the new use ensures its conservation.
- Well maintained heritage items are sought after by potential purchasers and increase the desirability of a locality. Heritage listing can be a 'bonus' to the value of the property.
- Heritage listing provides protection to ensure that nearby development does not have adverse impact on the item or property in a conservation area.

Benefits Council recognises the need to be flexible with heritage items to assist with their long term conservation. Clause 5.10 (Conservation Incentives) of Wollondilly LEP enables Council to consider development of a heritage item that would otherwise be prohibited, if it benefits conservation of the heritage item. A detailed schedule of substantive conservation work is usually required if an applicant is to seek approval under the conservation incentive clause.

Buying a Heritage Item

The majority of heritage items in Wollondilly are houses in private ownership. Other items include public buildings, infrastructure, railway stations, churches, hotels, schools, water reservoirs, substations, shops and government buildings.

The majority of heritage items in NSW are managed by local councils. However, items of state heritage significance listed on the State Heritage Register are managed by the NSW Heritage Council.

Making Alterations to a Heritage Item

Heritage listing acknowledges that places need to change in order to survive and to suit the needs of the occupants. The key heritage objective is to conserve places for future generations.

Some work does not require a development application, while other work does. Most non- structural works to the interior of a local heritage item, including replacing kitchen and bathroom cupboards and fittings, replacing carpet, painting walls and ceilings, replacing floor coverings, window blinds and curtains, do not require development consent. Structural alterations to the interior such as removing walls, opening rooms up, alteration to key historical elements such as stairs or fireplaces do require a development application.

Prohibited Works

New construction, demolition, intrusions or other changes which would adversely affect heritage significance are not appropriate and are unlikely to be approved.

New additions should be sensitively distinguished from the original building by methods such as

- setting back the works from the existing structure
- creating a clear visual break (e.g. changed footprint, recess, or full height opening).

Minor additions should retain the building's cultural significance and be sympathetic to its character.

The addition should generally be simpler and more contemporary in design so that the existing building predominates.

Major additions which are of a bulk comparable to or greater than that of the existing building should be treated by separating from the existing building and joining the two with an unobtrusive link.

The style of additions may be similar to the existing or may be contemporary but in any case should complement the significance of the item and its setting and not detract from it

Minor Work not Requiring a Development Application

Wollondilly LEP (Clause 5.10) includes some exceptions where a development application is not required if in the opinion of Council the proposed development is of a minor nature or consists of maintenance and would not adversely affect heritage significance.

To determine whether a development application is required, applicants must notify Council prior to undertaking any maintenance which affects the external appearance of a building that is listed or in a conservation area. A written response must be received from Council prior to the commencement of works.

Maintenance can include non-structural external works such as:

- replacing broken windows, flyscreens etc
- minor repairs to roofing, brickwork, timberwork and metal work
- renewing metal roofs, gutters and downpipes in galvanized finish
- repainting, in the original colour, surfaces which are already painted including timberwork and metalwork

Maintenance can also include non-structural internal works such as:

- patching, painting and decoration to the interior and installation of joinery items
- repairing timber floors
- plumbing or gas fitting work
- electrical work and communications cabling
- installation of insulation

Under State Government provisions, some minor works that do not require a development application but may need to be limited in size type or location are: air conditioners, bbqs, bird aviaries, clothes lines, cubby houses and satellite dishes.



DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Information Needed for Development Applications

Unlike some other Development Application types, heritage Development Applications can require a detailed landscape plan and all typical materials, profiles, finishes and colours to be noted on the plans. A heritage impact statement, archaeological survey and conservation management plan may also be required.

Heritage-related subdivision proposals may require indicative building, outbuilding and driveway footprints, as well as a covenant to maintain an architectural and landscape standard (88B Instrument).

Alterations

A development application is required for external building alterations to heritage items or properties located within heritage conservation areas (unless it falls into the maintenance category outlined above). Council consent is required for work that alters external appearance (e.g. new colours, replacing timber windows with aluminium, replacing a galvanized roof with Colorbond).

Demolition

Demolition of a heritage item or contributory building in a heritage conservation area is generally not supported. The demolition of a non-contributory building (one that does not add to the historic character of the heritage conservation area) and replacement by an appropriately designed new building is generally supported. Council may require the submission of a report by a structural engineer with heritage experience to determine whether the building can be retained. Demolition of a heritage item or building in a heritage conservation area will not be approved unless a suitable replacement building is proposed.

New Buildings

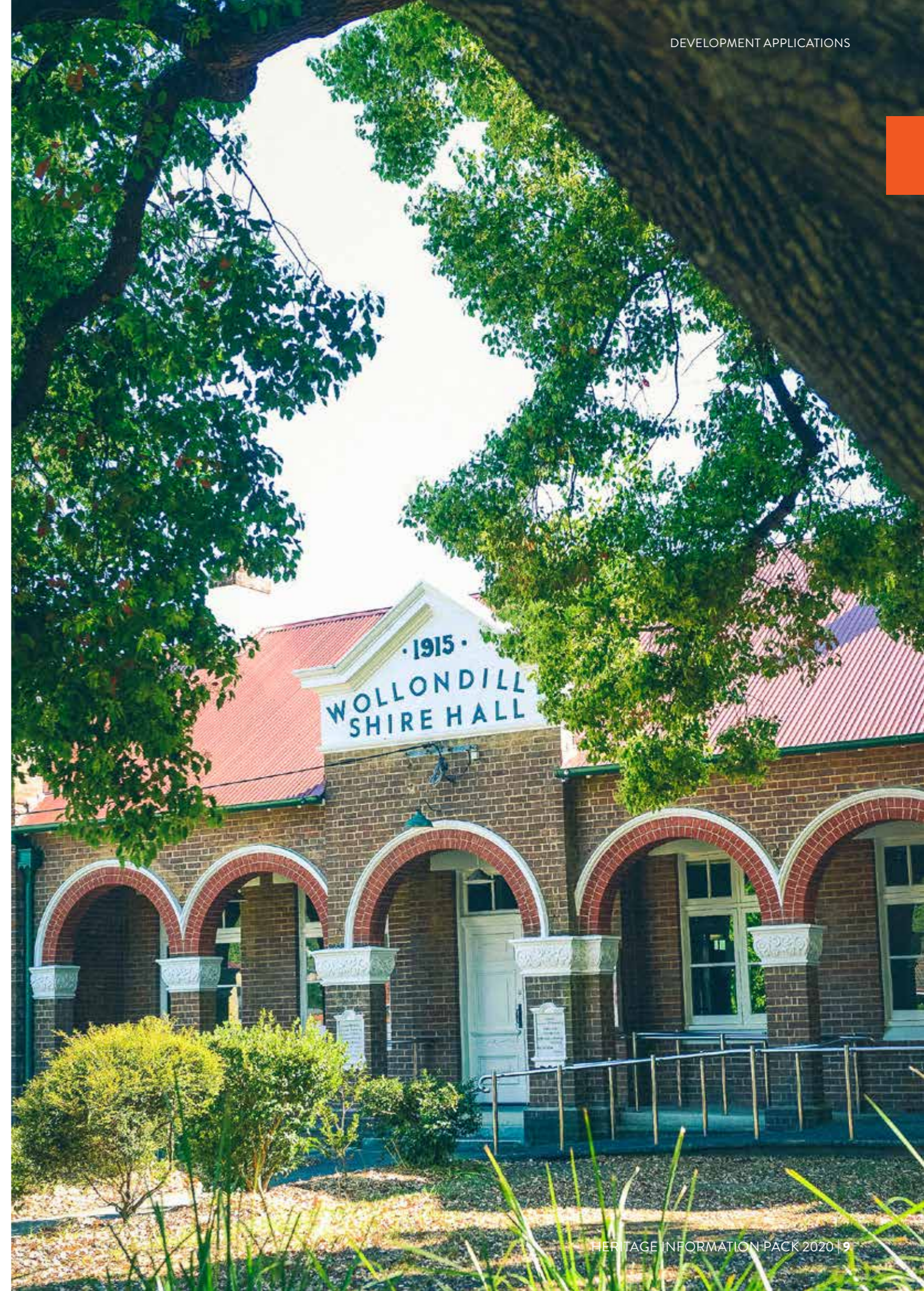
A new building within a heritage conservation area, whether the style is traditional or contemporary, must respect density, form, scale, architectural and streetscape character of the conservation area. New buildings do not necessarily have to replicate original architecture. If they do copy historic details, they should on close examination be able to be interpreted as later buildings.

Development near Heritage Items and Heritage Conservation Areas

All new development adjacent to or in the vicinity of a heritage item or heritage conservation area needs to consider its likely effect on heritage significance and setting. Applicants should address in the Statement of Environmental Effects any potential impacts of the development on a heritage item or heritage conservation area and measures to minimise this impact.

Council has a pre-DA consultation service and we recommend that applicants use this service, particularly if your property is a heritage item or in a heritage conservation area.

Development applications involving works to heritage items and buildings in heritage conservation areas may take longer to process because they are required to be advertised in the local papers for 30 days and some applications may also need to be referred to the NSW Heritage Council.



Heritage Impact Statements

Council may require a Heritage Impact Statement if your proposal involves demolition of a heritage listed item, or building in a conservation area, or is in close proximity to a heritage item, or involves partial demolition, or structural changes to a heritage item.

A Heritage Impact Statement should evaluate and explain how the proposed development, rehabilitation or land use change will affect heritage values. The Statement should explain how the heritage value of the item/place can be conserved or maintained, or preferably enhanced by the proposed works.

If the proposal cannot be designed other than to have a negative impact on heritage values, then the Statement can set out measures to mitigate (trade-off) impact on heritage values (e.g. generate income for the economic viability of a heritage item, improve appearance from the street, provide historical research).

In most cases it will be necessary for the applicant to seek qualified professional advice as to the heritage impact of the proposal.

We recommend that a heritage impact statement be prepared by a person experienced in heritage conservation.

Heritage Conservation Management Plans

Council may require a Heritage Conservation Management Plan if your proposal requires detailed and rigorous assessment of changes to a heritage item.

A Heritage Conservation Management Plan should contain a detailed schedule of conservation works to heritage buildings and heritage landscapes. It also should identify conservation policies and management mechanisms to ensure that the significance of a heritage item or conservation area is protected. A specialist heritage consultant should prepare the Plan.

Archaeological Surveys

An archaeological survey (Aboriginal and European heritage assessment) is a document prepared by a qualified archaeologist that outlines the physical archaeological evidence contained within a site in conjunction with historical research such as documents, maps, illustrations, photographs and oral history.

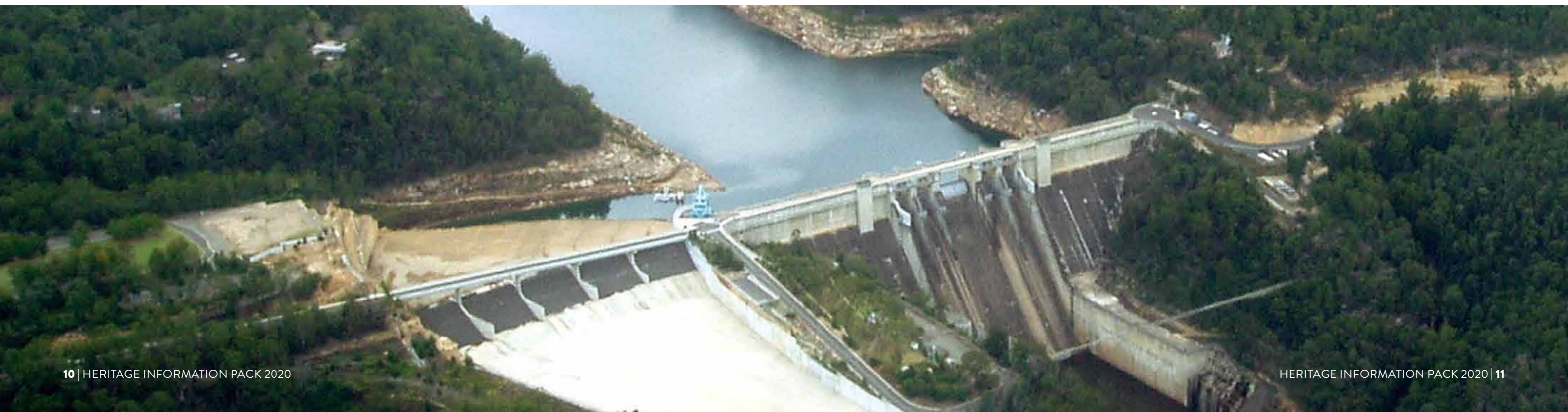
Council may require an archaeological survey if your proposal affects primarily undeveloped land, or where there are registered Aboriginal sites, or important historical relics (e.g. stone ruins). A typical example of such a proposal would be residential subdivision of rural or “green field” land.

The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 protects Aboriginal objects and places in NSW and the Heritage Act 1977, protects historical relics in NSW. Information on Aboriginal sites and places can be obtained from (<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licences/WhatInformationCanYouObtainFromAHIMS.htm>) and Aboriginal heritage assessments must comply with State guidelines. A qualified archaeologist must write the report.

Where the proposal is a small development and there are no known Aboriginal sites on the land or its vicinity, comply with Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in NSW (OEH, 2011).

Where the proposal is a subdivision of primarily undeveloped (rural or “green field”) land and/or requires test pitting to determine archaeological potential, comply with Code of practice for archaeological investigation of Aboriginal objects in NSW (DECCW, 2010).

Where the land contains an Aboriginal site that will be impacted, an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) is required, comply with Guide to investigating, assessing and reporting on Aboriginal cultural heritage in NSW (OEH, 2011).



HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations for Development to Heritage Items

Council recommends a building design professional be used for development to heritage items. Aspects that Council will consider are:

Design and Character

The design of development should ensure a sympathetic blend of old and new. This may be achieved by maintaining consistency with the street's established scale and form, siting and setbacks, and material and finishes without being overly imitative.

Scale and Form

New building work should have minimal impact on heritage significance and not overwhelm the place in bulk, mass or scale.

Siting and Setbacks

Front and side boundary setbacks are a major contributor to the character and significance of a heritage item or heritage conservation area. Existing patterns should be maintained in new development to continue the established rhythm of buildings and spaces.

Detailing

The significant features and elements of a heritage item or heritage conservation area are often reflected in details such as windows, doors and decorative woodwork, metalwork, brickwork, stonework and cement render.

Materials, Finishes and Colour Schemes

Often it is not possible, or desirable, to replicate original materials due to cost constraints and lack of availability. The principle should be to use materials and colour schemes that visually relate to or approximate the building elements of the earlier work in size, style and type of finish. The painting of heritage items in appropriate colours can draw attention to the building and reinforce the historic character. Original face brickwork should not be rendered, bagged or painted, as this will detract from the building's heritage significance.

Roofs and Chimneys

Roof forms and details to heritage buildings vary according to building type and architectural style, and this variety makes an important contribution to the aesthetic significance and visual complexity of heritage items and heritage conservation areas. Fireplaces and chimneys were an important element in buildings, contributing to the character of the building and the skyline.

Verandahs and Balconies

These are important design features that provide an interface between the building and the street. They also provide shading and a sense of depth to the front façade.

Garages, Carports, Car Spaces and Driveways. Most early buildings were designed without garages or carports, the building itself was usually the only structure visible from the street. Later garages were commonly located as a separate structure to the rear of the property.

Fences

Front fences are an extremely important streetscape element with each architectural style having an individual characteristic style of fencing. Hedges are encouraged to be planted for privacy.

Gardens and Garden Elements

These enhance the relationship of the house to its setting, softening and enhancing views of the house and screening out unsympathetic buildings or alterations and additions. Generally on residential lots, small trees and hedge planting should be used for screen planting.

Access and Mobility

Heritage places should be accessible to everyone including people with disabilities, the elderly and families with small children. Owners and managers of heritage properties that have public access should commit to creating a situation in which this can be achieved without detrimentally impact on the heritage values. Access solutions will be unique to each historic building.

Commercial and Retail Properties

Original characteristics of traditional buildings should be retained and enhanced for commercial properties listed as heritage items or within heritage conservation areas. Visual clutter to be minimised while contributing to the identity of the area and streetscape.

Services and New Technologies

The improvement of water conservation and energy efficiency may involve installation of new devices (such as solar energy systems). These additions should not be prominent from a public place nor intrude on any significant views or vistas gained from neighbouring properties.



Development in Conservation Areas

Development in conservation areas should enhance rather than impact established character or curtilage. It should provide a well-maintained appearance so as to be attractive to residents and visitors. We recommend using a building design professional with heritage experience to prepare designs in conservation areas. Aspects that Council will consider are:

Height and Scale

The prevailing scale (building height, bulk, density and massing) of the conservation area/precinct. The impact of inappropriately scaled development cannot be compensated for by building form, design or detailing.

View Corridors

These must be retained to and from significant features within the conservation area/precinct.

Architectural Style and Form

This must be compatible with the best examples of heritage buildings in the conservation area/precinct.

Materials, Detailing and Colour Schemes

These must respect the materials of the best examples of heritage buildings in the conservation area/precinct.

Siting

The existing patterns of building setbacks from property boundaries, which contribute to the harmony of streetscapes in the conservation area/precinct.

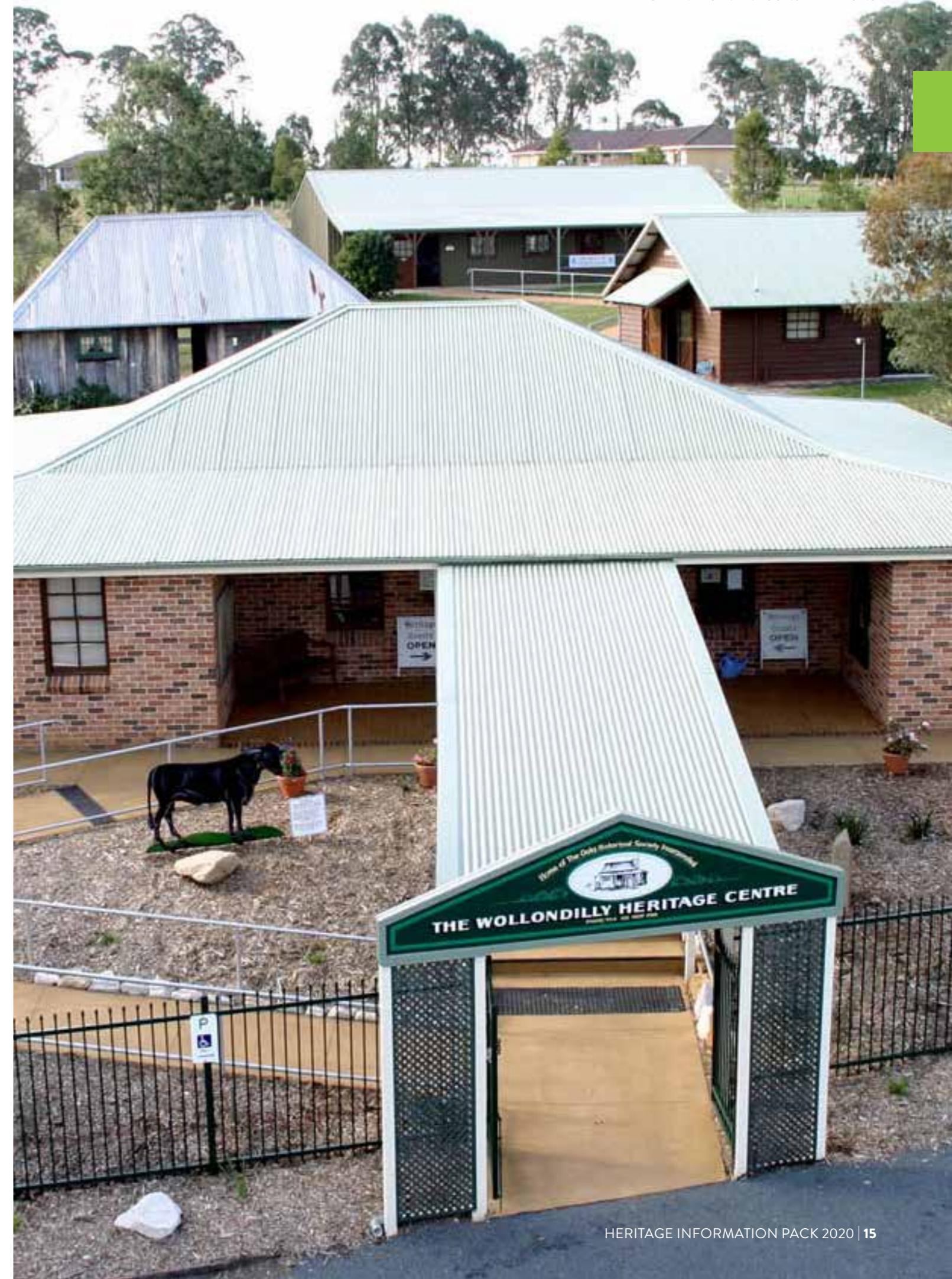
Cumulative impact

The cumulative impact needs to be considered to ensure that character of the conservation area/precinct giving harmony and cohesiveness to views, streetscapes and individual buildings is not eroded.

Development Impact

Development must not adversely impact on significance of cultural heritage of the conservation area/precinct. This includes the seven heritage values (historic, associational, social, technical/research, rarity, representativeness and intactness).

For more information, please refer to council's Development Control Plan or contact council to utilise our pre DA consultation service.





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OPENING HOURS

General enquiries: Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 5:00pm