

Productivity Commission re Conservation of Historic Heritage Places

Submission on behalf of the Polish Community Council of Australia and New Zealand.

I hereby submit that the established names of historic heritage of sites of historical significance should be protected and preserved.

Reasons

We base our proposal on two documents

1. UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List (Memory of the World) includes, among others objects, a hand-written text of famous Polish Solidarity postulates of 1980, as well as other texts including scientific dissertations. It is obvious that the intellectual property of an item is far more important than its material shape. We submit that at the national level names of historical significance, e.g. Mt Kosciuszka must be preserved.
2. The Burra Charter adopted by the Australian National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites in 1979 states:

Article 1.1

Place means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views.

ICOMOS comments that “The concept of place should be broadly interpreted.”

Article 1.2

Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations.

Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, association, meanings, records, related places, and related objects.

The above definitions show that a name’s meaning, association and acquisition constitute an important component of a heritage site and should never be changed if

- it was given in a justified fashion,
- there was no other name before,

- it passed a similar age test as other man made heritage objects.

The purpose of this submission is to prevent future changes of historical names motivated by political expediency.

The above-mentioned idea should be reflected in the relevant legislation.

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Polish Community Council of Australia and New Zealand

Brisbane, 14 August 2005