

**The Royal Australian  
Institute of Architects**

**A NEW VISION FOR  
BUILT HERITAGE**

**Submission to  
the Productivity  
Commission Inquiry  
into the Conservation of  
Heritage Places**

**July 2005**

## **SUBMISSION BY**

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## **PURPOSE**

**This submission is made by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) to the Australian Government Productivity Commission.**

**This submission has been prepared with the assistance of the National Heritage Committee of the RAIA, particularly its Chair, Ms Louise Cox AM LFRAIA.**

**At the time of this submission the Executive of the RAIA is: Robert Nation (National President), Carey Lyon (President-Elect), Warren Kerr (Immediate Past President), Alec Tzannes (Honorary Treasurer) and Catherine Townsend (Honorary Secretary).  
The Chief Executive Officer is David Parken.**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This response examines the current status of built heritage in relation to the role and membership expertise of the RAIA. It will address a number of fundamental areas in policy and direction that will ultimately determine the future of built heritage in Australia. Firstly it will explore questions as to the nature and benefit of heritage and the need for its conservation<sup>1</sup>, secondly the economic results and potential stimulators for development of heritage properties and lastly directions for the improvement of conservation outcomes.

In particular it explores the importance of **Cultural Tourism** and its potential as an economic driver, the need for **case studies and guidelines** that assist the development sector and the creation of taxation and in kind **incentives** to encourage the maintenance and enrichment of heritage places and focuses on **heritage of the future**. Finally, it shows how significant is the need for a **shift in government policy** which sees a new and inclusive vision for Heritage. Such a vision will ensure that the heritage of tomorrow is not destroyed by the ignorance of today.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) is an independent, voluntary subscription-based member organisation with approximately 8,800 members, of which 6,070 are architect members. These members are bound by a Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

The RAIA, incorporated in 1929, is one of the over 100 member associations of the International Union of Architects (UIA) and is represented on the National Cultural Heritage Forum and DOCOMOMO Australia.

## 3. SCOPE

The Productivity Commission has defined its scope as related to Historic Heritage Places of which “buildings and structures”<sup>2</sup> are of particular significance and interest to architects. It is for this reason that this response will limit its scope to a discussion of built Heritage Places.

The premise of the response is that ‘Conservation’ and ‘Development’ can act as successful partners in the creation of a surviving, living and changing built heritage. The task which is discussed here is then, ‘how can government and organisations such as the RAIA facilitate this?’

## 4. HERITAGE – WHAT IS IT AND WHY ARE WE CONSERVING IT?

Our built heritage is a significant component of the physical cultural resources, which are of value to the community. How do we judge this significance?

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<sup>1</sup> “all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance.” *The Burra Charter- The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of cultural Significance*, Australia ICOMOS Inc, 1999., p.2.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Conservation of Australia’s Historic Heritage Places Productivity Commission Issues Paper’. Australian Government Productivity Commission, May 2005., p.5.

By the “capacity or potential of the place to demonstrate or symbolize, or contribute to our understanding of, or appreciation of, the human story.”<sup>3</sup>

In other words, we value it because of what it tells us of ourselves. As a developed society we are able to define who we are because we know who we have been. Overall benefits of the conservation of built heritage include, but are not limited to, the following;

#### **4.1. Cultural Tourism**

Cultural tourism is one of the most dynamic sectors of the tourism industry world wide and nationally. Over the past decade, cultural tourism has been one of the largest growth areas in the tourism sector in a world context. Not all State/Territory governments have a cultural tourism policy/strategy. As a consequence much effort in the tourism sector is not as focused on tourism assets as it should be.

##### **Benefits of Cultural Tourism based on Built Heritage**

Cultural tourism, largely based on the conservation of built heritage places, has wide and diverse impacts that if well managed can bring many strands of benefit to the host countries, in terms of sustainability of existing economic, material, human and social resources.

##### **Australia’s Unique Situation**

Australia has a unique and under valued heritage which requires a change of mindset to appreciate. In most parts of the world heritage is a tangible series of cultural overlays, hundreds or thousands of years old, arising from wars, migrations and similar factors. Australia by contrast has an ancient, largely intangible Aboriginal heritage overlain with a very recent European heritage expressed in tangible built fabric. There are few precedents to prepare visitors to appreciate cultural tourism based on built heritage in Australia.

##### **Australia should be a target market for the forming tourism markets in Asia and the Pacific**

Australia’s proximity to Asia and their growing populations and economies should result in growing tourism visitation to Australia.

With increasing visitors will come the need for more tourism product. Australia is typical of the mix of recreation, heritage, landscape, accommodation and hospitality that tourism requires. Regions can be destinations in their own right. However, the benefit can be increased for the places en route to tourism destinations by the heritage, landscape and hospitality offered. Heritage provides prime opportunities where places and their stories exist.

#### **4.2. Sustainability**

Heritage and conservation form part of the wider sustainability debate. Heritage and conservation contributes to sustainability through:

- Retention of cultural values

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<sup>3</sup> Pearson, M., and Sullivan, S., *Looking After Heritage Place*. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1995., p.7.

- Enhanced social cohesion by minimising disruption to social fabric
- Minimising local environmental change
- Sustaining of embedded energy in existing materials and structures. This is an obvious environmental benefit which should be recognised under energy rating systems used to assess development applications.

#### **4.3. Evolution of Communities and Heritage Values**

Communities change and adapt their environment as they mature and pass through stages of evolution. The development of cultural values, townscape and generational development enrich communities. Built heritage acts as a record of this community evolution and history and as a valuable resource for its understanding.

Planning and development pressures which remove the feasibility of maintaining heritage and other older structures counteract the evolutionary nature valued by communities. Too few planning codes these days are mindful of previous development patterns, historic development standards and compatibilities between old and new development. As a consequence planning, too often works against the retention of heritage places and heritage values. This ignorance of consequence is of considerable disbenefit to heritage values.

In times of competition for resources, as now, where costs are being driven upwards, it makes considerable financial sense to focus on conservation of existing building stock and heritage places.

Heritage is a measure of a community's self-respect, through valuing its past. It provides a suitable basis for marketing of communities with that self-respect.

## **5. A HERITAGE PERSPECTIVE**

### **5.1. A World Perspective**

The worldwide interest in heritage and sustainability had its beginnings in the period following the Second World War and has progressively gathered momentum since. It is as much a reflection of the extreme pace of change as any other aspect of the modern condition.

About 10% of the Earth's land area (around 15 million sq km) now has protected area status.

UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre has almost 100,000 records of protected areas, in more than 200 countries.

UNESCO now has close to 1000 places inscribed on the World Heritage List. These places have been identified as having commitments by national governments through international conventions and programs and has escalated the world's protected areas to one of the most important forms of global land and resource allocation in the world.

Increasing numbers and importance of protected areas require collaborative approaches to managing information about their extent, values and conservation status.

The European Union has established international research and development programs within its budget and monitoring processes, such as Inherit (EU regional policies for heritage led regeneration), European Construction Technology Platform (supported by Working Groups such as the City & Territorial Working Group to develop and implement programs to support Inherit), Euromed Heritage Program, and APPEAR (for archaeological sites). The European Union provides prizes for Cultural Heritage such as the Europa Nostra Awards with €10,000 for exceptional examples.

Cultural tourism is of such importance to the European Union that conservation and heritage is incorporated into the construction, research, education and training, accommodation, transport, hospitality and retailing sectors,

In North America, built heritage forms the basis of cultural tourism precincts and redevelopment precincts in many parts of the continent. Natural heritage is a very strong participant in natural heritage conservation and tourism for the whole of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Countries such as Singapore have initiated and supported heritage and conservation programs to establish a distinctive identity and encourage the growth of cultural tourism.

The substantial growth in the number of publications addressing heritage places of world, international, national, state and local levels of significance, over the past two decades reflects a growing awareness, interest and market in cultural places and cultural tourism.

## **5.2. An Australian Perspective**

Australia now has 13 places inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List, including:

- 12 places of natural heritage significance;
- 1 place of built heritage significance.

Some further places of potential world significance are in the assessment and nomination process.

Federal heritage legislation in 1975 enabled the Australian Heritage Commission and the Register of the National Estate.

All States and Territories have initiated heritage legislation, heritage agencies and State/Territory registers.

Since the early 1960s the National Trust has operated in most parts of Australia, under State legislation, with its own non-statutory classified list of historic places.

In several States there is statutory requirement for local authorities to prepare heritage inventories for their districts.

Local town planning schemes in all states/territories have over the past two to three decades initiated schedules of historic places.

It is too early to determine the impact of recent amendments to Federal Heritage Legislation. However there appears to be a merging of the perception of built and natural heritage into an overall consideration of 'Heritage Places'. Such a merge appears not to distinguish between the fundamental differences in criteria under



which each should be determined. Whilst one recognises significantly untouched natural areas the other celebrates unique human intervention which helps to tell the human story.

## **6. RECOGNISED LEVELS OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The following itemisation of heritage listing applies to the **built environment** and does not cover:

- Pre-history or Aboriginal Heritage
- Natural Heritage

Members of the RAIA, with heritage expertise contribute voluntarily and on a consultancy basis to the assessment programs applying to each of the following lists/registers. All built environment lists/registers require input from architects with historical skills:

### **6.1. World**

- 6.1.1. UNESCO World Heritage List
- 6.1.2. Voluntary and Consultancy services

### **6.2. International**

- 6.2.1. UIA International List of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Architecture
- 6.2.2. Voluntarily and Consultancy services

### **6.3. National**

- 6.3.1. National Heritage Register
- 6.3.2. Consultancy services
- 6.3.3. Register of National Estate (now superseded)
- 6.3.4. Voluntarily and Consultancy services

### **6.4. State & Territory**

- 6.4.1. State Registers of Heritage Places
- 6.4.2. Consultancy services
- 6.4.3. National Trust Classified List
- 6.4.4. Voluntary services

### **6.5. Regional**

- 6.5.1. Regional Heritage Inventories
- 6.5.2. Consultancy services

### **6.6. Local**

- 6.6.1. Shire & Municipal Heritage Inventories
- 6.6.2. Voluntary and Consultancy services

## **7. THE ROLE OF THE RAIA**

The RAIA represents a diverse group of architectural practitioners and associated members with varying involvement in the Conservation of Heritage places. Our members follow a series of policies and guidelines, which regulate conduct within the organization including the RAIA heritage policy which is outlined below. Our membership knowledge base includes specialist heritage consultants who participate in discussion and decision-making on a local and international scale, to corporate organisations and practitioners with new development as their focus. In all cases, an architectural understanding of the built environment places our members at the forefront of participation in the future of built heritage.

In response to the Productivity Commission's scope and issues paper membership opinions are likewise necessarily diverse. It is the responsibility of RAIAs as a professional organisation to represent this diversity but at the same time put forward a position, which will advance the current status of heritage conservation in a way, which benefits our community (RAIA) and the broader community as a whole.

### **7.1. RAIA Heritage Policy**

The RAIA Heritage Policy reaffirms the responsibility of the architectural profession to contribute to the proper conservation of the natural and built environment.

The RAIA Heritage Policy contains 7 key principles:

1. Conserve significant places of cultural heritage
2. Contribute at an appropriate level in heritage management
3. Recognise the role of fellow professional groups and the community in heritage management
4. Assist to identify, evaluate, interpret and manage the significant elements of our built and natural environment
5. Encourage a continuation of excellence in architectural development
6. Foster the development of innovative design solutions compatible with conservation principles
7. Promote awareness of cultural heritage and its conservation  
(Refer Appendix 1)

### **7.2. RAIA Heritage Committees**

The RAIA has an expert National Heritage Committee that represents RAIA Chapter Committees and teleconferences bi-monthly.

The RAIA has State & Territory Heritage Committees that meet monthly. These Heritage Committees:

- Recommend policy
- Undertake heritage assessments at international, national, state and local level
- Comment on professional heritage matters
- Comment on pertinent public heritage matters
- Promote conferences
- Arrange exhibitions
- Contribute to websites containing considerable heritage information

### **7.3. RAIA Voluntary Contributions to Heritage**

A considerable contribution is made through the activities undertaken by the RAIA Heritage Committees. This contribution is minimally funded and undertaken on a voluntarily basis.

When the voluntary efforts of the State/Territory Heritage Committees are factored in the contribution of architects through the Heritage Committees in Australia would comfortably exceed \$1,000,000 annually.

There are over 1,000 heritage places documented and freely available from the RAIA. Each of the places documented represents at least \$1,500 worth of professional time in research and presentation, independent of the time

volunteered for the Heritage Committees. This represents about \$1.5 million worth of intellectual property placed freely in the public domain, without access charges applying, as occurs through some National and State archives.

#### **7.4. RAIA Involvement & Expertise**

The RAIA Heritage Committees at National, State and Territory level have membership drawn from architects that are practitioners and some that are members of heritage agencies. The level of skills of this membership represents national and international levels of heritage practice.

As well as working on the RAIA Heritage Committees, several RAIA members represent Australia on various UNESCO/ICOMOS International Scientific Committees relating to heritage specialties, requiring their contribution and attendance at least on an annual basis.

#### **7.5. RAIA Evolving Position**

Whilst the current RAIA position on built heritage follows the RAIA Heritage Policy, as outlined previously there is a development in attitude, which focuses on the following.

Firstly under the fifth principle, which encourages high standards in architectural development; there is a new focus on the support, understanding and ultimately listing of important works of twentieth century architecture.

Under the sixth principle, which fosters innovation compatible with conservation principles; there needs to be a renewed energy and attitude in the approach to conservation which allows greater freedom to reach better design and conservation solutions. As outlined in detail under point 9.1 (Improved Outcomes) the RAIA believes through our collective experience there are a number of ways of achieving this.

Principle seven raises the primary issue, which is most pertinent to deciding the fate of built heritage and ultimately the story we will tell of ourselves in years to come. This involves the promotion of awareness of cultural heritage and conservation. As outlined in 10.3, this will involve increased education (in many areas) in the conservation of built heritage by government and organisations such as the RAIA.

## **8. THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HERITAGE IN AUSTRALIA AND THE GOVERNMENT ROLE**

### **8.1. Summary of Overall Situation**

A recent study called:

Heritage Australia: A Review of Australian Material Regarding the Economic and Social Benefits of Heritage Property, by Peter Wills and Dr Chris Eves

was undertaken for the NSW Heritage Office<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Wills, P., and Eves, C., *Heritage Australia: A Review of Australian Material Regarding the Economic and Social Benefits of Heritage Property*. The NSW Heritage Office and The University of Western Sydney, NSW, 2005.

It examined  
Stakeholders and the Property Market  
The Economic and Social Benefits of Heritage  
It arrived at the conclusions outlined below;

## **8.2. Conclusions Relating to the Overall Situation**

The conclusions of the study are repeated below:

### **Economic and Social Benefits**

“There are definite economic and social benefits for the conservation of heritage property. The benefits to the various stakeholders are often hard to quantify and need more research. Some participants in the market tend to shy away from heritage-listed property as they wrongly perceive that such properties have inherent economic and restrictive problems, whereas there is a distinct and lucrative value added market that can be assessed.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Case Studies**

“There is a definite need to carry out a number of case studies with the aim to measure different types of benefits of conservation using the methods of measurements detailed in the report. This measurement appears to be quite feasible in relation to suburbs, areas and precincts, but is more difficult for isolated or stand alone heritage properties. There is a misconception that the cost of restoration is greater than the cost of renovation. The emerging role of public/private partnerships in conserving heritage property is seen as one of the ways of the future.”<sup>6</sup>

### **Local Government**

“The role of Local Government bodies in becoming more pro-active in ensuring the retention of conservation property is seen as another step in aiding the preservation of heritage properties for the future. This is a positive concept that will benefit local communities as a whole. This is an area that needs research and co-operation between governments at all levels. How the funding of such research, and the funding of future conservation is undertaken raises the big question.”<sup>7</sup>

### **Property Market**

“the drivers of the property market and more specifically the heritage market are dynamic and it is difficult to ‘stop the market’ and assess it. Heritage conservation is also an imprecise term which is often interpreted by stakeholders in a subjective manner rather than an objective one.”<sup>8</sup>

### **Conservation Benefits**

“conservation can and does create employment. There are costs associated with conservation but these are more than offset by the

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<sup>5</sup> Wills, P., and Eves, C., op. cit., p.46.

<sup>6</sup> ibid.

<sup>7</sup> ibid.

<sup>8</sup> ibid.

economic, social and psychological benefits. Precinct and area conservation helps people maintain their socio-cultural identity which would be more than likely be lost through large-scale demolition and redevelopment. Conservation sometimes appears in the short-term to come at a cost but long-term benefits to the owner and the community outweigh this cost. When carried out properly, the heritage listing of a stand-alone or isolated property can benefit the owner as well as those in the immediate vicinity.<sup>9</sup>

### **8.3. Critical Issues Arising from the Overall Situation**

The study found that the overall benefits of heritage were mitigated by:

- A lack of clarity about heritage processes and their applicable costs
- A lack of clarity between heritage and planning processes, that could lead to delays and costs
- Who the costs accrued to
- Who the benefits accrued to
- Whether there was fairness in the distribution of costs and benefits, as too often the costs to owners of heritage places result in benefits to the community rather than the owners
- Disproportionate efforts and costs relating to isolated heritage places compared to a precinct or area based conservation process
- Values often distorted by unrealistically high development opportunities, particularly within precincts or areas of heritage value.

### **8.4. Measurement of Success- “Find out what works”**

The next logical step in measurement of success in the Conservation and Development of Heritage Places is the pursuit of case studies utilising the proposed methods of measurement. The RAIA proposes that such studies be carried out by Government in partnership with organisations such as the RAIA and including the development sector (possibly The Property Council of Australia). In simplistic terms the primary goal of such studies should be to ‘find out what works’.

#### **Case Study Aims**

Other potential broader goals would be to provide some answers to the critical issues above but to aim at examining projects in terms of a full range of success factors including;

- Retention of appropriate cultural significance
- The impact of existing planning framework and legislation
- Recognised Architectural excellence including innovation
- Social benefits to the local and national community
- Economic outcomes for the owner/ manager/ developer, which look at the short and long-term viability of projects

#### **Previous Studies**

These case studies could build on other studies to date including “The Double Dimension: Heritage and Innovation”<sup>10</sup> The Economic Benefits of

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<sup>9</sup> Wills, P., and Eves, C., op. cit., p.46-47.

<sup>10</sup> Hill, J., (ed.), *The Double Dimension: Heritage and Innovation* The Royal Australian Institute of Architects, ACT, 2004.

Heritage Restoration”<sup>11</sup> “Economic Value of Tourism to Places of Cultural Heritage Significance- A Case Study of Three Towns with Mining Heritage”<sup>12</sup>, and ”Successful Tourism at Heritage Places- a Guide for Tourism Operators Heritage Officers and Communities”<sup>13</sup>. However it is intended that the case studies and guidelines would be more focused on overall development models and outcomes including examples of adaptive re-use rather than Tourism specific success. In this way outcomes from previous public and private investment in the heritage sector can be evaluated and utilised to produce positive outcomes for stakeholders in the future.

#### **National Development Guidelines for Heritage Properties**

It is intended that such case studies would provide models for innovation and understanding of successful re-use and development of heritage properties for owners/ managers and developers. These case studies could be used to develop National Development Guidelines for the development of heritage properties that show how successful outcomes may be produced relative to the above factors. From this a help package could be developed which would give developers easy centralised access to relevant Heritage publications, websites and other tools including specialist consultant and trade listings.

### **8.5. Incentives**

Other ways to address market and public perception that have placed heritage-listed sites in the ‘too hard basket’ include incentive programs. In most instances money spent by government in such programs is far more likely to represent better investment returns in terms of broad reaching community benefit than individual conservation works project funding. Industry incentives have been widely used in other cultural fields such as the Australian Film Industry with great success. Possible incentive programs could include the following;

#### **Tax incentives.**

These could include following a film industry taxation model of taxation relief or tax deduction benefits applicable at the time at which the money is needed and spent. That is if money is needed for heritage-based maintenance to prevent further deterioration then returns should be applicable at that stage not when development is complete. Taxation models need to reflect the unique nature of heritage assets and recognize realistic depreciation as it occurs. In this way maintenance of existing heritage resources would be facilitated and encouraged even where development outcomes are uncertain.

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<sup>11</sup> Cotterill, D., Mertz, S., K., Nohl, T., ‘The Economic Benefits of Heritage Restoration’, Conference Proceedings 2000, ‘Heritage Economics - Challenges for heritage conservation and sustainable development for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’, Australian Heritage Commission, ACT, 2001.

<sup>12</sup> Cegielski, M., et. al.; *Economic Value of Tourism to Places of Cultural Heritage Significance- A Case Study of Three Towns with Mining Heritage* Australian Heritage Commission, The University of Canberra, CRC for Sustainable Tourism, ACT, 2001.

<sup>13</sup> *Successful Tourism at Heritage Places- a Guide for Tourism Operators Heritage Officers and Communities*, Australian Heritage Commission, Dept of Industry, Science and Resources, and CRC for Sustainable Tourism, ACT, 2001.

### **Pilot incentive programs**

Programs that are developed to be case specific should be carried out to test a variety of incentives appropriate to various sites. One example includes the provision of new infrastructure by government to particular areas containing heritage sites in need of renewal/ intervention.

### **In kind financial incentives**

These could include a reduction in parking requirements or gross floor area limitation tradeoffs on other sites. Such incentives would provide strong mitigation for the initial costs born by a developer in conserving a heritage asset. For instance where retention of a listed building limits development opportunities on a site – in kind forms of compensation that allow relaxation of some limitations may be appropriate either on the site or a related site, like floor space ratio transfer. Realistic and not extreme financial goals should be the aim, but in this way government would be able to support and encourage community heritage benefits with little financial outlay.

### **Corporate responsibility rewards**

Where corporations undertake Heritage work including development and conservation that has a community benefit there should be a program of recognition, which rewards this. Government has the opportunity to build links between organisations such as the National Trust and financial partners which would help to revitalize otherwise stranded heritage assets. Such partnerships could take the form of marketing programs or national awards which recognise 'responsible heritage conservation and development'. Many similar models exist in the promotion of corporate responsibility in the support of the natural environment.

### **Funding for Conservation Management Plans**

Conservation Management Plans (CMP's) for listed buildings should be subsidised by government. Funding of CMP's prior to development at the time of listing provides numerous benefits to the community and private sector. Firstly such a provision would lead to better-understood and realistic potential outcomes prior to development. Land values would be able to reflect accurately these implications, which in turn would have the potential to relieve extreme or unrealistic development pressure. Secondly it would lead to a more transparent and independent system of conservation, which serves both the community and development sector.

## **9. FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BUILT HERITAGE**

In addition to the above recommendations on economic impacts the RAI A is also able to draw on a vast breadth of knowledge and experience to help determine potential future directions for built heritage. In line with the RAI A Heritage Policy but developing this further, these include evolution of current systems to improve conservation and development outcomes, a greater focus on the conservation of 20<sup>th</sup> Century architecture and a redirection of education aims.

### **9.1. Improved Outcomes**

Experience has shown the best outcomes for community, government and the private sector are achieved when the following principles are adhered to in planning and development practice;

**Use and Adaptive reuse.**

Often original uses either no longer exist or are no longer viable on a specific site. The use, and specifically where an original use is not possible, adaptive reuse of built heritage is the best way to ensure maintenance and revitalisation. This should also include not preclude appropriate new insertion as a cornerstone of best practice conservation and Environmentally Sustainable Design principles.

Many asset rich but income poor owners of heritage sites need assistance or partnership from government or the private sector to transition their properties to an appropriate adaptive re-use. Viable uses have the potential to ensure the financial and physical longevity of such assets. Government has the opportunity to place adaptive re-use at the forefront of Australian Heritage Policy.

**Good Urban Design Principles.**

The best outcomes for communities and the private sector rely on following good urban design principles. Rigid observance of uniformity, façade-ism and inappropriate mimicry of heritage forms have the potential to sacrifice these principles and remove the possibility of appropriate diversity. Buildings and environments should be considered in a holistic sense and if applicable within a precinct and urban design context so that innovative new design is not precluded.

**Levels of Significance.**

Significance is decided on aesthetic, historic, social, scientific or spiritual grounds, yet levels of significance are often somewhat subjective. It is fundamental that conservation responses should be appropriate to the level of significance. Most development power in regards to heritage is held with local approval authorities. Membership experience has shown that a lack of understanding of levels of significance can leave ordinary neighborhoods frozen in time to the preclusion of good new work.<sup>14</sup>

**Performance based rather than Prescriptive Measures.**

Many Heritage guidelines are either written or interpreted in a prescriptive manner. This can preclude innovation and a diversity of solutions, which may be more appropriate than those reached under a prescriptive approach. Guidelines and legislation in other areas of the building industry such as the Building Code of Australia have moved towards the acceptance of performance-based criteria. In other countries outstanding and innovative results have been achieved where the intent of a guideline is met rather than unnecessarily restrictive wording.

In each of these instances government has to power to alter legislation and in particular change local planning practice to ensure these principles are adhered to.

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<sup>14</sup> Jahn, G., 'Making Room for Tomorrow's Heritage' in Hill, J., op. cit., p.211.



## 9.2. Twentieth Century Heritage Conservation

There is a community view, which states, “it is that which appears to be old that is of value and should be conserved”<sup>15</sup>. Such a tendency not only bypasses the principals of the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter but also has the potential to allow the wholesale removal of significant slices of our recent past. If we follow the premise that built heritage helps to tell the human story then we are in danger of editing out the significant elements of our Twentieth Century chapter.

In the 1960's, the RAI A instigated a focus within its own organisation to help protect and conserve the significant architectural works of the twentieth century. Since this time the RAI A has actively developed a Register of Significant Australian 20th Century Architecture, which is based on the following criteria arising out of national and international standards.

The accepted criteria to be used in the assessment of twentieth century works include:

1. Outstanding national importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or period of design.
2. Outstanding national importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.
3. Outstanding national importance in establishing a high degree of creative achievement.
4. Having outstanding monumental and symbolic importance to the development of architecture and the history of architecture.
5. Having a special association with the life or works of an architect of outstanding importance in our history.
6. Outstanding national importance in demonstrating a high degree of technical achievement of a particular period.

The importance of retaining noteworthy works of twentieth century architecture lies in the significance of the era, which these works represent. Architecture meeting the above criteria has the ability to characterise a time of unprecedented change. The Modern Movement in architecture reflects and represents the societal and cultural move into modernity, which encompasses an era of huge social and industrial change. Many cultural and technical advances are also represented in the significant works of this time, which will be lost unless we move towards a greater recognition of this period. For instance great art deco buildings, which joyously represented the exuberance of a new era have already been lost because of a failure to recognise their value in the development periods of the 1960-70's.

The RAI A's policy of not restricting the recognition of heritage assets with arbitrary age limitations helps to support the importance of recent architecture as the heritage of the future.

For these reasons it is critical that Government follow expert advice on the conservation of twentieth century architecture and initiate a new focus and

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<sup>15</sup> Pearson, M., and Sullivan, S., *op. cit.*, p.6.

understanding of this broader concept of Heritage Conservation within government organisations.

### **9.3. Education**

#### **Public Education**

Education is one of the key elements needed in the adjustment of perceptions of Heritage. If we want the public to understand and value twentieth century architecture for instance we must ensure a broader concept of heritage is understood. Encouragement of public debate and input into the listing process is fundamental to this education and has been shown to raise the profile and understanding of twentieth century heritage significantly. The RAI A proposes to institute a program of education through its public affairs and heritage committees, which focuses public heritage education on twentieth century architecture. We would seek to achieve this aim by developing such a program in partnership both with Government and NGOs such as the National Trust.

#### **Professional Heritage Accreditation**

The RAI A proposes to develop a voluntary program of Heritage Accreditation for architects and planners. This could be organised as a collaboration with other associated professional bodies. An education program within the current Continuing Education program or the University system could be developed so that a minimum recognizable standard is created. Such a standard could be utilized by government as the minimum requirement needed in order to carry out conservation work and conversely as a minimum standard of education within local government. This has the capacity to provide a level of consistency in heritage assessment that will provide greater certainty for owners, developers and managers.

#### **Heritage Trade Skills**

Hand in hand with professional education is the need for increasing numbers of those trained in specialised heritage trade skills. There is a current shortage of skilled trades' people in this area, which is likely to worsen as the current building stock ages. Government investment targeted in the development of skilled training programs, enhanced apprenticeship schemes, small business startup allowances and award schemes would help to offset this. Importantly over the long term increasing the labour pool with these unique skills, would help to ensure that conservation building works are not priced out of the market.

#### **Continuation of Existing Programs**

Under current government funding there are a number of education and research programs including Architects oral history projects, Architectural Monogram series and Heritage Guides for the public, which the RAI A participates in and provides in kind contribution. It is proposed that ongoing support be provided for programs such as these because of their value as a historical resource for future generations and for their value in educating the public. In particular a number of these programs provide an excellent background to developing a public understanding of recent architecture including the valuation of significant twentieth century works.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

The RAI has consistently shown a strong commitment and involvement to the decision making which impacts upon our built heritage. Our expertise is developed from a diverse group of members working daily within and alongside the discipline of Heritage Conservation including a nationally and internationally recognized core of specialist professionals. Such a background makes the RAI an important and well-qualified participant in the debate. Utilising the premise that 'Conservation' and 'Development' can be partners in the revitalisation of our nations built heritage a number of questions have been explored and the following conclusions can be drawn.

- **Support and development of Cultural tourism**

The numerous benefits of heritage conservation include economic, environmental and social and community benefits. Cultural Tourism associated with Heritage places has been shown to be an integral element of international cultural and economic development. Public programs which recognise and foster this, provide an opportunity to stimulate Australia's unique untapped potential in the creation of cultural tourism associated with built heritage.

- **Case Studies – 'How to' help for Developers**

Studies of built heritage places have raised numerous issues and questions, which relate to the perceived economic uncertainty associated with built heritage. Although a number have sought to address economic outcomes none have yet focused on the gamut of success factors including financial development outcomes. The RAI supports the development of research-based case studies, which include the development sector in their preparation and terms of reference and seek to provide appropriate guidelines for development associated with our built Heritage. Just as advice is provided to the domestic homeowner, a sophisticated set of resources specifically designed for developers, which helps to show 'how to' achieve better Heritage outcomes, is needed.

- **Incentives**

Incentive schemes including taxation relief and in kind support provide excellent opportunities for government to stimulate economic growth whilst making the maintenance and rejuvenation of our cultural resources more viable. Why should a heritage asset, which benefits the community as a whole be considered just as any other asset. Taxation relief which recognises the nature of the asset and its depreciation is not only necessary to engage the private sector in the survival of built heritage but is now well over due.

- **Focus on heritage of the future**

The RAI has a specific heritage policy which does not apply arbitrary age restrictions but which respects recognised international, national & local standards and existing procedures such as the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter. The organisation has a very strong vision for the future of built heritage drawn from the vast experience of its members. This includes the improvement of current heritage outcomes by the implementation of a few simple principals, expanded education programs, and in particular a new emphasis on the conservation of 20th Century Architecture.

- **A shift in government policy equals a 'New Vision' for Heritage**

This response has clearly demonstrated that with a shift in emphasis together we can conserve and revitalize a viable link to our past in built form. In partnership with the private sector and organisations such as the RAIA, government has the ability to realise the full potential of our built heritage. A shift in understanding which recognises the unique criteria under which our built heritage should be judged is critical to this future. Fundamental to this is a need for a driving 'New Vision' for Heritage, which sees built heritage as an equal yet different component of a Heritage Place. Such a vision has the chance to be inclusive and vital. While including community needs it can also focus on the reality of the financial spectrum of owners and their requirements. Policy that supports the economic viability and self sufficiency of built heritage will find as its centrepiece the concept of appropriate Adaptive Re-use. This 'New Vision' has the chance to recognise that heritage should be a broader and more dynamic concept than is currently conceived.

**What we design today will become our heritage tomorrow!**

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **RAIA Heritage Policy**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Through its Code of Professional Conduct and this Policy, the Royal Australian Institute of Architects reaffirms the responsibility of the architectural profession to contribute to the proper conservation of the natural and cultural environment.

The Charter of the United Nations and its Universal Declaration of Human Rights establish culture (and cultural heritage) as a human right, giving rise to a need for access to cultural heritage for all.

Architects are involved in the design and management of the built environment. They have a responsibility to the community, as well as their clients, to understand, conserve, interpret and contribute to the natural and cultural environment. Architects therefore have a key role to play in the conservation of our cultural heritage.

The RAIA was founded as a national body in 1929, having emerged from state-based professional organisations dating back to the 1850s. In 1934, well before the National Trust of Australia was established, the Tasmanian Institute of Architects formed its Historic Buildings Committee. In 1947 the NSW Chapter of the RAIA compiled one of the first lists of historic buildings in NSW. In the early 1970s, architects pushed for the Victorian Historic Buildings Preservation Act (1974), the Australian Heritage Commission Act (1975), and the NSW Heritage Act (1977). The RAIA Heritage Registers include the International list with the UIA, as well as the National and Chapter lists, which also incorporate the Register of Significant Buildings of the 20th Century.. The RAIA has caused seven Australian buildings to be placed on the UIA's international data-base of significant 20th Century buildings and, through its Public Affairs Committee, intends to submit further buildings.

#### **Principle 1**

Conserve significant places of cultural heritage

RAIA members are responsible for ascertaining whether or not their work is likely to affect a place of cultural heritage significance, and for ensuring that their work does not adversely affect any such place.

#### **Principle 2**

Endorse and facilitate heritage management

- Adopt the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter as a principal guiding document in heritage conservation
- Ensure that the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter is appropriately applied
- Recognise obligations arising under international listings, Commonwealth, state, territory and local government heritage legislation, and RAIA National and Chapter lists
- Promote the need for cultural heritage conservation to client groups and government at all levels

**Principle 3**

Recognise and respect fellow professional and community groups engaged in heritage management

- Recognise all the disciplines involved in the assessment and management of cultural heritage
- Involve suitable professionals
- Identify and consult key organisations and communities involved in conservation
- Promote RAIA representation and/or participation by architects on Commonwealth, State, Territory and local government heritage bodies
- Reward publicly the contributions of differing disciplines through joint awards
- Promote the exchange of relevant professional expertise in awards

**Principle 4**

Identify, evaluate, interpret and manage the significant elements of our cultural environment

- Co-ordinate and encourage historical research on Australian architecture
- Enable publication of research material on Australian architecture
- Support a national database on the history of Australian architecture
- Help to standardise and codify national criteria and terminology for the identification and assessment of Australian architecture
- Contribute to and ensure regular reviews of the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter and heritage legislation

**Principle 5**

Encourage high standards in architectural development

- Support a RAIA Register of significant 20th century architecture
- Integrate the RAIA Heritage Registers with Commonwealth, State, Territory and local government heritage registers
- Protect items on the RAIA Heritage Registers through appropriate Commonwealth, State, Territory and local government measures
- Ensure availability of appropriately qualified people through Professional Development on conservation, and instigate an accreditation process
- Ensure that the conservation of cultural heritage remains part of the core curriculum in tertiary education programs
- Support research into the conservation of cultural heritage
- Each Chapter's list of heritage items shall be accepted and endorsed by its Chapter Heritage Committee and be endorsed by Chapter Council.

**Principle 6**

Foster design innovations compatible with conservation principles

- Promote professional standards of innovative conservation work
- Broaden the Conservation category of the RAIA Awards programs to specifically identify conservation, and innovation, but not to the detriment of conservation principles

- Review and publish successful adaptations of significant buildings and new works in significant urban fabric

**Principle 7**

Promote awareness of cultural heritage and conservation

- Promote the Conservation category of the RAIA Awards
- Establish, publish and archive a register of all architectural awards in Australia
- Disseminate publications from recognised heritage bodies in Australia and overseas, particularly those from the International Union of Architects
- Encourage architects to contribute to archives of Australian architecture
- Require annual reporting of RAIA Heritage Committees activities nationally.

October 2003

## APPENDIX 2

### RAIA Register of Significant Australian 20th Century Architecture

#### CRITERIA

##### Background

Currently there are no criteria against which to assess the national significance of Australian 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture. We researched national and international criteria for assessing heritage significance and obtained details of:

- 1.0 Australian Heritage Commission Criteria for places in the Register of the National Estate
- 2.0 Draft criteria for National Heritage Significance for Australia's Heritage Places
- 3.0 UNESCO Criteria for World Heritage List
- 4.0 International Union of Architects (UIA) criteria
- 5.0 Documentation of Modern Movement (DOCOMOMO) New International Selection Criteria.

These were examined and the following set was proposed and adopted.

The set of criteria aims to determine "architectural" significance in particular rather than attempting to cover all aspects of cultural heritage significance.

The criteria are largely based on the UIA and AHC Draft National Heritage Criteria.

A brief explanation of each criterion is offered and some examples identified by way of illustration. Only buildings constructed in Australia to be considered.

#### Criteria

##### **1. Outstanding national importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or period of design.**

This could include architectural works, which are of outstanding universal value as examples of a particular style or period of architectural development. They should only include buildings designed at the time of the particular period. Examples are

Art Deco	Anzac Memorial Hyde Park Sydney	by C Bruce Dellit	1934
International	ICI Building East Melbourne	Bates Smart and McCutcheon	1957
Brutalist	WA Fire Brigade Board Headquarters Perth	Cameron Chisholm and Nicol	1986



**2. Outstanding national importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.**

This would include architectural works which have a wide professional and universal appeal and are held in high esteem as outstanding examples, for example:

Former Australian Institute of Anatomy (also former National Film and Sound Archive, currently Screen Sound Australia)	Howard Morris and Robert Casbolte	1930
Sydney Opera House	Joern Utzon	1973

**3. Outstanding national importance in establishing a high degree of creative achievement.**

This includes architectural works which are masterpieces of human creative genius. It also includes places which respond to and are part of a particular environment in an innovative and responsive way. For example:

Newman College, University of Melbourne	Walter Burley Griffin	1918
House at Bingi Bingi, NSW	Glenn Murcutt	1984

**4. Having outstanding monumental and symbolic importance to the development of architecture and the history of architecture.**

This includes architectural works which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of the history of architecture or the history of Australia. For example:

Council House Perth	Howlett and Bailey	1959
Parliament House, Canberra	Mitchell Giurgola and Thorpe	1980

**5. Having a special association with the life or works of an architect of outstanding importance in our history.**

This will include the best examples of the architecture from architects of world recognition and standing, for example:

Australia Square Sydney	Harry Seidler	1967
Cameron Offices, Belconnen ACT	John Andrews	1975

International

**6. Outstanding national importance in demonstrating a high degree of technical achievement of a particular period.**

This will include architectural works which use technology of the day in an advanced and creative way and architectural works which extend technology to new limits. For example:

Denny Lascelles Austin Woolstores Geelong	EG Stone	1911- 12
Becker House (Australian Academy of Science) Acton ACT	Grounds Romberg and Boyd	1958
Sydney Football Stadium	Philip Cox Richardson Taylor and Partners	1986

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Other international examples of the encouragement of cultural tourism**

#### **European Union**

The European Union has considerable ongoing budget provisions for heritage and cultural tourism based on performance requirements and monitoring.

#### **Britain**

British Lotteries funded built cultural heritage at £500 million/annum. This fund for management, maintenance and interpretation demonstrates the ongoing commitment needed at Government level to maintain the built heritage fabric on which cultural tourism flourishes. The sum is a simple measure of the management and maintenance costs necessary to maintain the value of cultural heritage to the British economy.

#### **France**

French cities, towns and villages demonstrate the centrality of cultural tourism to their economies. Clear, unambiguous signage lead visitors to convenient and attractive car parking stations at all destinations. Movement is along townscaped routes that reflect local and regional character and bring passing trade to small settlements and reinforce exposure to local and regional products. This situation can only be delivered with a whole of government approach that marshals the outcomes from design and construction sectors through to accommodation, hospitality and various product sectors to produce outcomes focused on specific objectives.

#### **Singapore**

Singapore saw the need to diversify its tourism product in the late 1970s and developed the ethnic kampongs to project a diverse image of Singapore and capture a place in the cultural tourism market of Asia.