



Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

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Hon Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning
Minister for Housing
8 Nicholson Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3022

Dear Minister

STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS – HERITAGE VICTORIA

On behalf of Heritage Victoria, I am pleased to provide you with a response to your Statement of Expectations dated 4 March 2021.

Activities planned by Heritage Victoria for the period 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021 in response to your Statement of Expectations are outlined below.

Statement of Expectations Target	Heritage Victoria Response
<p>Implement communication strategies to ensure information regarding Heritage Victoria’s statutory responsibilities under the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i> are clearly articulated to its stakeholders.</p>	<p>During the 2020 – 2021 SoE period, Heritage Victoria have re-developed its existing website. The new website launched on 24 February 2021 and provides for a more user friendly and accessible repository for information relating to the organisation and to its regulatory role. The updated website complies with whole of Victorian Government digital accessibility standards.</p> <p>The updated website will make it easier for owners, Government asset managers, local councils, applicants for permits and consents, members of the public and other stakeholders to access information and fulfil their obligations in accordance with the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i>. The updated website also makes it easier for stakeholders to access vital policy and guideline documents, information and application forms for the Living Heritage Grants Program, permits and exemptions, heritage nominations and information that allows for a greater understanding of the role of the Victorian Government in protecting Victoria’s heritage.</p>
<p>Enhance existing systems which improve access and streamline processing of statutory approvals under the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i>.</p>	<p>Heritage Victoria will continue to seek new ways of easing the administrative burden on its stakeholders when applying for statutory approvals under the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i>.</p> <p>This will include enhancing existing online systems</p>

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	<p>and databases including HERMES Orion.</p> <p>In 2019 HERMES Orion launched, replacing Heritage Victoria's outdated system HERMES. Heritage Victoria will continue to make improvements and updates to HERMES Orion. Updates will include gradually rolling out external user access to HERMES Orion for local councils, heritage consultants, the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and other approved users. Rolling out access to HERMES Orion to appropriate heritage stakeholders will result in improved records management, data visibility, consistency and efficiency for those stakeholders and organisations with management responsibilities of heritage places.</p>
<p>Develop tools which improve internal practices, systems and visibility of data to ensure Heritage Victoria fulfils its regulatory obligations under the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i>, while achieving the best possible outcome for stakeholders.</p>	<p>Heritage Victoria will develop a tool or system which prioritises heritage enforcement and investigation matters according to the potential threat to the cultural heritage significance of places and objects on the Victorian Heritage Register. This tool will ensure those matters which pose the greatest threat are prioritised and ultimately aim to reduce harm to significant places and objects.</p>
<p>Utilise existing digital tools to improve transparency of internal operations, identify areas of improvement and redefine current operations to fulfil regulatory responsibilities under the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i>.</p>	<p>Heritage Victoria will implement use of a digital tool (Tableau) to improve internal permit reporting and tracking systems. Implementation of this tool will lead to greater internal visibility of the permit process allowing Heritage Victoria to more easily identify areas for improvement with the goal of reducing the administrative burden on stakeholders when applying for statutory approvals.</p> <p>Heritage Victoria will also consider its statutory advertisement and submission processes to ensure people with an interest in Victoria's heritage can fully participate and provide input. Currently all permits that are advertised are added to the website of Heritage Victoria, and submissions are invited through that platform. The remote working environment has caused Heritage Victoria to re-consider whether this process is best for its stakeholders, so will continue to redefine this process to ensure it is efficient, transparent, and accessible for all.</p>

Develop guidelines to streamline the permit exemption process and reduce the administrative burden on owners, government asset managers, municipal councils and applicants when applying for Statutory approvals in accordance with the *Heritage Act 2017*.

Heritage Victoria will explore greater utilisation of the provisions available in section 92(1) of the *Heritage Act 2017*, which allows for categories of work or activities to be undertaken in relation to any registered place or object without a permit.

This will give stakeholders clear parameters under which categories of works may be exempt from a heritage permit. By providing these exemptions Heritage Victoria will reduce the administrative burden on stakeholders, particularly those who are responsible for the management of particular or similar types of heritage assets, and allow for the carrying out of categories of works or activities which will not harm the cultural heritage significance of a place or object at any point in time that the works are required.

Heritage Victoria will continue to work with stakeholders to identify categories of works or activities that may apply to registered places or objects.

Heritage Victoria is committed to administering the *Heritage Act 2017* and its regulations in an effective and efficient manner. I look forward to providing you with continued updates on our progress with meeting your Statement of Expectations.

Yours sincerely



STEVEN AVERY
Executive Director
Heritage Victoria

18/3/2021