**Minutes**

World Heritage Steering Committee for the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens

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| **Date:** | Thursday, 15 December 2022 |  |
| **Time:** | 09:30AM |  |
| **Venue:** | MS Teams |  |
| **Attendees:** | **Steering Committee members**Steven Avery, Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, Heritage Victoria (Chair)Lynley Crosswell, Chief Executive Officer, Museums VictoriaSophie Handley, Director, City Strategy, Strategy, Planning and Climate Change, City of MelbourneRicha Swarup, Senior Adviser, City Heritage,City of Yarra | **Officers**Angela Hill, City of Melbourne Maddi Moore, National TrustMichelle Stevenson, Museums Victoria Amanda Bacon, Heritage Victoria, DELWP Rebecca O’Brien, Heritage Victoria, DELWP Jon Griffiths, Heritage Victoria, DELWP |
| **Apologies:** | Simon Ambrose, Chief Executive, National Trust of Australia (Victoria) |  |
| **Chairperson:** | Steven Avery |  |
| **Note taker:** | Jon Griffiths |  |

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| **Item** | **Topic** | **Presenter** |
| 1. | **Introduction*** The Chair opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed all those attending.
* The Chair noted apologies from Mr Simon Ambrose. No other apologies were noted.
* The Chair asked for and was granted permission to record the meeting.
* The Chair asked attendees to declare any conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were declared.
* The Chair called for any other business. The Chair noted an item for discussion regarding the use of funds to promote consultation process for World Heritage Management Plan.
 | Chair |
| 2. | **Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meeting*** The minutes of 26 July 2022 meeting approved by roving resolution. The Steering Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2022 without amendment.

**Moved by Sophie Handley, seconded by Lynley Crosswell.** | Chair |
| 3. | **Actions Arising** | Chair |

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|  | * ICOMOS supported the World Heritage Management Plan (WHMP) without amendment and noted the consultative approach taken. The Commonwealth also supported the document but provided feedback that, where possible compliance is met within one overarching document, advice was returned noting that the plan was a single document made up of five parts and all parts should be considered together. This approach was noted and supported by the Commonwealth on 20 October 2022. Minor amendments were made to ensure compliance with the other recommendations. The full Australian Heritage Council will review the full document including all its parts prior to it being formally endorsed.

**Action:** Report on any further progress at the next meeting. |  |
| 4. | **Welcome/Thanks to*** A letter of thanks was sent to Felicity Watson for her time served on the Steering Committee.
* Welcome to Mr Simon Ambrose, who has been appointed as the new representative for the National Trust.
 | Chair |
| 5. | **Adoption of Strategic Vision*** It was noted that key changes made to the Strategic Vision included minor requests from the Commonwealth, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, and some suggestions regarding timing from the City of Yarra. The changes also included recommendations from DELWP’s Legal and Governance Team regarding diversity in governance. These changes are visible within the document. No questions were raised.

The Steering Committee confirmed:1. That the *Strategic Vision 2022-2025* (Strategic Vision) is finalised.
2. That, if required, the Strategic Vision is amended to reflect the final World Heritage Management Plan.

**Moved by Lynley Crosswell, seconded by Sophie Handley.** | Rebecca O’Brien |
| 6. | **Adoption process for the World Heritage Management Plan*** A paper has been prepared with the proposed next steps for the WHMP. Consultation began on 9 Dec and will run through to 17 Feb 2022. It is likely that some submissions made during this time will request a hearing. The proposed next steps have prepared for this eventuality. It was noted that the length of time allowed for consultation accounted for the holiday period.
* Potential dates for the hearings process have been proposed. These are as follow:
	+ 16 March - consider and determine if hearing is held.
	+ 24 March - directions hearing.
	+ 24-28 April - proposed hearing.

This is with the aim for the WHMP to be with Minister for consideration prior to end of financial year.* The process for hearings is yet to be finalised. It was noted that the Heritage Council have processes for hearings that may be useful. Planning Panel hearings may also provide some guidance.
* It was noted that submissions may range in complexity and that there may be an opportunity for submissions in reply. This will be dependent on the nature

 and number of submissions received. By way of example, it was noted that  | Rebecca O’Brien |

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|  | there were up to 33 submissions on the draft World Heritage Environs Area (WHEA) Strategy Plan of varying levels of complexity.* It was queried if a directions hearing would require the entirety of the Steering Committee, or if it would be more suitable to have a select group. The Committee noted that it may be possible to have a select group, however the process is untested at this time. It was suggested that it may be possible to refer to the process when the Royal Exhibition Building & Carlton Gardens (REB&CG) was inscribed on the World Heritage List for guidance.
* It was queried if there should be terms of reference prepared, and some consideration of levels of representation (both for the Committee and submitters). Additionally, it was queried whether any risks for the process have been flagged/recognised.
* It was raised that the City of Yarra is presently a non-voting member, and further information is sought on what their status would be if a hearing eventuated. It was noted that an expansion of membership of the committee is being considered, in order to extend membership to non-voting members. This may be raised for consideration when seeking advice on the process.

The Steering Committee:1. Approved 24 March 2023 for a Directions Hearing in relation to the draft World Heritage Management Plan.
2. Approved 24-28 April 2023 as the dates for any hearing and discussion on the Plan and submissions.
3. Noted that revisions to the Plan required to ensure consistency will be considered at the Steering Committee meeting on 16 March 2023.
4. Noted the activities being undertaken to promote consultation on the Plan.

**Moved by Sophie Handley, seconded by Lynley Crosswell.****Actions:**Confirm if terms of reference are required for hearing, should one eventuate.Explore any criteria and background information regarding what triggers public hearing and provide to committee.Decision on whether hearing is necessary. |  |
| 7. | **World Heritage Strategy Plan*** The draft Strategy Plan went to exhibition in September and closed for submissions in November. Heritage Victoria is still awaiting confirmation regarding a hearing with the current expectation one will occur. Heritage Victoria is also awaiting the Heritage Council’s advice regarding the contents of the submissions.
* The WHEA needs to align with the extended buffer zone for the REB&CG. To achieve this, the Commonwealth must write to World Heritage Committee (WHC) to request a modification. This should be done in the February of the year the change is expected to occur. The Commonwealth has advised that pursuing this process should be paused to align with the timing of the Management Plan (2024). In support of this advice, the Commonwealth have highlighted that the WHC have not sat for two years due to the pandemic and that it is unlikely a request would be considered in 2023. A brief should be prepared by mid-2023 in preparation.
* It was queried if it could eventuate that the World Heritage Council does not

 approve of the modification to the WHEA, even though the buffer zone has  | Amanda Bacon |

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|  | been approved by minister. In response, it was suggested that although this is possible, it is unlikely.**Action:** Prepare brief for modification to buffer zone by mid-2023. |  |
| 8. | **Membership update*** Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung have put forward Uncle Colin Hunter to serve as a representative on the Steering Committee. Work on the appointment is currently underway.
* A paper is being prepared for the new Minister for Planning to consider before the end of December that proposes the extension of voting rights to all members. Information on the outcome of the paper will be provided in due course.
* Membership terms for Lynley Crosswell and Richa Swarup will be coming up in June 2023.

**Action:** LC/RS to confirm whether they are happy to continue as members. | Chair |
| 9. | **Any other business*** It was requested that the Committee confirms that up to $5000 of the remaining $10,000 funds from part of the Traditional Owner report are used to fund social media costs to promote the current consultation on the plan.

Attention was drawn to the public information forum to be held for the WHMP, with the hope that a social media campaign may assist in engaging the public in this process. The committee agreed that further visibility through promotion would be a positive outcome.**Both Lynley Crosswell and Sophie Handley voted in support of the matter.*** A question was raised regarding the status of Heritage Victoria (HV) and the Heritage Council following the recent election and changes to portfolios. Steven Avery reported that while HV will be moving to the Department of Transport and Planning, no immediate impacts are expected, however MoG processes have not been fully explored. This process might take upwards of six months. HV (and Steering Committee’s) roles result from legislation and should not be impacted by administrative changes.
* Steven Avery noted that as part of their election commitments, the federal government would like to progress a World Heritage bid for the Trades Hall in Carlton, along with the Trades Hall in Broken Hill. This will be part of a transnational bid led by the Danish government. The Victorian state government has indicated their tentative support. Sophie Handley noted that the City of Melbourne was approached regarding this matter and have also indicated support in principle. Steven Avery notes that this bid was unexpected and requires some working through, however should not impact the existing WHEA for REB&CG despite proximity. All members will be kept updated regarding any opportunities and/or overlaps.
* In other World Heritage news, the Central Goldfields listing has been given support in principle by the state government. The project has been, in part, led by 15 local councils who have undertaken substantial including economic cases. As with the Trades Hall, there should not be any repercussions for REB&CG, however it is beneficial for the committee to be aware of other movements in world heritage space.
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|  | * Sophie Handley queried if it would be appropriate for the Steering Committee to write to the Melbourne Museum to congratulate them on the newly opened Royal Exhibition Building dome promenade. A letter from the Steering Committee may assist in highlighting the impact of funding at the site and encourage further investment to cement the REB&CG’s position as both a celebrated heritage site and attraction.

Lynley Crosswell extended thanks for the support on behalf of the Museum but noted some apprehension regarding access requirements and other maintenance issues. As such, she has suggested any celebration of the promenade should be balanced with an acknowledgment of/ emphasis on the ongoing upkeep and conservation required at the site.The Committee agreed that a letter would be appropriate.**Moved by Sophie Handley, seconded by Steven Avery.*** Lynley Crosswell extended thanks to Steven Avery for his efforts as Chair. Steven Avery extended thanks to all members for their contributions through 2022 and notes excitement for the implementation of the WHMP in future.

**Actions:**Proceed with social media campaign to promote consultation process.Draft a letter to the Melbourne Museum to congratulate them on the success of the new dome promenade. |
| 10 | The Chair thanked those attending and closed the meeting at 10:15am. |

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 16 March 2023.