Meeting Minutes

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



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| Date: | 16 March 2023 | |
| Time: | 10:00am | |
| Location: | MS Teams | |
| Chair: | Steven Avery | |
| Attending: | **Steering Committee members**  **Steven Avery**, Executive Director, Heritage Victoria *(Chair)*  **Simon Ambrose**, Chief Executive, National Trust of Australia (Victoria)  **Lynley Crosswell**, Chief Executive Officer, Museums Victoria  **Sophie Handley**, Director, City Strategy, Strategy, Planning and Climate Change, City of Melbourne  **Richa Swarup**, Senior Adviser, City Heritage, City of Yarra | **Officers**  Amanda Bacon, Heritage Victoria  Jon Griffiths, Heritage Victoria  Angela Hill, City of Melbourne  Madeleine Moore, National Trust  Rebecca O’Brien, Heritage Victoria  Megan Rowland, Heritage Victoria  Michelle Stevenson, Museums Victoria |
| Apologies: | Nil | |
| Secretariat: | Heritage Victoria, Department of Transport and Planning | |
| Note taker: | Jon Griffiths | |

| Item | Topic |  |
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|  | **Introduction**  Welcome extended to Simon Ambrose, who has joined the Steering Committee (‘the Committee’) as the representative for the National Trust.  Acknowledgement of Country.  Agreement to recording of meeting.  No apologies were noted. | |
|  | **Declaration of conflicts of interest**  No conflicts of interest were noted. | |
|  | **Call for any other business items**  Richa Swarup noted that she would present a meeting paper on behalf of the City of Yarra. | |
|  | **Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting**  The previous meeting was held on 15.12.2022.  **Resolution:** That the Minutes be approved without amendment.  **Moved:** *Lynley Crosswell/Steven Avery* | |
|  | **Actions Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**  Reporting on the five actions arising from the previous meeting:   1. The first related to hearings – these actions are addressed in Meeting Papers 4 and were covered in discussion. 2. The action for Heritage Victoria to prepare the brief for the modification to the buffer zone (WHEA) by mid-2023 is pending the outcome of the hearing on the Strategy Plan which is to be held in May. 3. Lynley Crosswell and Richa Swarup are to confirm whether they are happy to continue as members, noting that their terms will conclude in June 2023. If so, papers will be prepared to extend their memberships. 4. The social media campaign, funded in part with money left over from the budget allocated to produce part of the WHMP, was successfully completed. This campaign is noted as having been run by all teams associated with the Committee and enjoying a high level of engagement. A report will be provided at the 12 May 2023 meeting once all data is gathered. 5. The letter to Museums Victoria to congratulate them on the success of the new Dome Promenade has been drafted and will be sent in coming days.   **Action arising:** Lynley Crosswell and Richa Swarup to confirm if they will continue as members following the meeting, and if so, the required paperwork is to be completed. | |
|  | **Terms of Reference and Remuneration**  The Committee was informed that voting rights have been extended to all members of the Committee, which is an important step forward in enhancing community representation. This has also been called for in a number of submissions. Payment of eligible Committee members was also approved.  The process for claiming payments for eligible members was tabled in papers and briefly explained by the Chair. Eligible members are to complete the forms included in the meeting papers in order to claim payment.  The Chair noted that the ability to provide payment and voting rights means that work to progress membership from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation can be progressed, hopefully in time for the next meeting.  **Resolution:** That the Committee  1) Adopt updated Terms of Reference; and  2) Note the process for making a claim for payment.  **Moved:** *Simon Ambrose/Richa Swarup* | |
|  | **Submissions on World Heritage Management Plan**  The Committee noted the twelve submissions received on the World Heritage Management Plan (WHMP) and the recommended actions relating to the submissions.  Rebecca O’Brien provided a summary of the common themes identified within the submissions, as well as touching on their content. Many of these submissions made reference to the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, governance and a lack of community representation and involvement in the Committee. It was noted that a number of the matters raised in the submissions will be addressed when the WHMP is able to be implemented. Overall, submissions mainly called for minor amendments.  A number of recommendations were put forward to the Steering Committee on how to address matters that arose out of the submission process, including:  *• Work to further revise membership of the Steering Committee, in accordance with the Terms of Reference.*  *• Reviewing the WHEA Strategy Plan for consistency with the WHMP prior to final adoption.*  *• Seeking further information before responding to one submission querying how the WHEA Strategy Plan will address cumulative negative impacts in the WHEA and impact on views.*  *• Establishing a standing agenda item for Commonwealth Government matters and issue a standing invitation to a representative from the Commonwealth Government to attend that agenda item.*  *• Engaging in the review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) (‘EPBC Act’).*  *• Supporting the inclusion of the WHMP and WHEA Strategy Plan reference documents in relevant planning schemes.*  *• Seeking further information regarding options to manage State Government significant development.*  *• Completing an evaluation following the completion of the current review of the WHMP to capture lessons learned that may inform and benefit future reviews.*  *• Amending the WHMP to include the specific amendments requested by the Commonwealth Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).*  On the point of community representation on the Committee, the Committee noted that the public have not yet been informed of changes to voting rights of members, or the intention to have further members join in the near future. The Committee noted that, in accordance with the adopted Terms of Reference, further work will be done to improve the public visibility of the Committee, including providing an email address for the public to contact the Committee, publishing minutes, and the creation of a standing agenda item to discuss any public communication received.  Richa Swarup provided information on the potential benefits of establishing the WHEA Strategy Plan and WHMP as reference documents within the relevant planning schemes, noting that the WHEA Strategy Plan is recommended to become a reference document, but the WHMP is not. It was the view of Ms Swarup that affording the WHMP the same status as the WHEA Strategy Plan would ensure that the document is referred to where appropriate. It was noted that further guidance on the matter may be sought from the Department of Transport and Planning.  It was noted that the WHMP needs to be updated to reflect the removal of the distinction between the Area of Greater Sensitivity and Area of Lesser Sensitivity in the WHEA, as recommended by the WHEA Strategy Plan. It was noted that the WHEA Strategy Plan has not yet been approved by the Heritage Council, and that further consultation on this matter would be required with the Heritage Council Secretariat prior to the WHMP receiving Ministerial approval.  The need to obtain further guidance in relation to the issues raised by DCCEEW in its submission, prior to responding, was discussed. The potential benefits of the Committee’s involvement in the forthcoming review of the EPBC Act was noted.  The Committee noted that a number of submissions expressed the desire to see a single or unified statutory authority to manage the REB&CG. It was clarified that this would require legislative change outside the powers of the Committee. The Committee noted, however, the potential to further pursue this matter following the conclusion of the WHMP review process.  Whether or not submissions received will be responded to was also discussed. It was confirmed that a summary of the WHMP consultation process will be published on the Engage Victoria webpage, and that Heritage Victoria has acknowledged receipt of all submissions. It was determined that each specific submission would be responded to.  **Resolution:** That the Steering Committee:   1. Notes the submissions received; and 2. Adopt the recommended actions.   **Moved:***Sophie Handley/Simon Ambrose*  **Actions arising:**   1. Add a standing agenda item to cover any public communication the Steering Committee has received 2. Commence implementation of adopted recommendations. | |
|  | **Hearing process**  The Committee considered whether there were any issues raised in the submissions that required a hearing, or whether a hearing should be held. Proposed hearing protocols for any such hearing were additionally prepared and submitted to the Committee, which the Chair spoke to.  The Committee noted that one submitter indicated a wish to participate in any hearing held, but not in relation to the WHMP in its current iteration, instead submitting the view that the draft WHMP required substantial re-writing prior to proceeding to a hearing.  The Committee noted that submitters had been clearly instructed to indicate whether or not they sought a hearing in relation to the advertised draft WHMP, and if a hearing were to be held, whether or not they would wish to participate. Considering the absence of any definitive responses in the affirmative, it was determined that a hearing in relation to the advertised draft WHMP was therefore not necessary at this time.  **Resolution:** That the Steering Committee   1. Determine that a hearing in relation to the advertised WHMP not be held.   **Moved:** *Lynley Crosswell/Simon Ambrose* | |
|  | **City of Yarra Response to draft WHMP**  Richa Swarup spoke to points raised in a paper prepared by the City of Yarra (CoY) regarding the draft WHMP.  The CoY sought clarification on the following matters:   1. *Regarding the Aboriginal heritage context of the site and its surrounds, CoY would like to see further information in order to be able to inform appropriate parties of their responsibilities (i.e., enabling the Council to create triggers on permit applications if they affect a relevant site). This is specifically in relation to places that are not on the Aboriginal Heritage Register.* 2. *Regarding the Steering Committee notification process, CoY is of the position that people may be unaware this exists, in the same way they may be unaware the WHMP exists if it is not formalised within the Planning Scheme.* 3. *CoY seeks clarification regarding which parties can refer an action and would like to understand their position within the legal arrangement. CoY wish to understand if the Committee will seek legal advice on this topic or whether this is up to the Council to seek themselves.* 4. *Finally, CoY would like to be made aware if any bilateral agreements are made in the future.*     The Chair noted the potential to liaise with First Peoples State Relations on any confidential information, with the possibility of making it available to the limited parties that need access to it.  The Chair further noted that CoY’s queries may be best answered in a meeting paper at the next meeting, which was agreed to by the Committee.  **Actions arising**:   1. Liaise with First Peoples State Relations regarding sites within the WHEA and the appropriateness of making these locations known to the City of Yarra; and 2. Consider information within the City of Yarra’s paper and provide clarifications or responses where appropriate in a paper at the next meeting. | |
|  | **GML Heritage recommendations for consistency**  The Steering Committee noted that Part 1 of the draft WHMP was prepared after Parts 2-5, and that minor changes to Parts 2-5 are required to ensure all parts of the document are consistent. GML Heritage has been contracted to review all parts of the document and ensure its consistency. All required changes have now been marked up and will be supplied to Working Group members to action, with approval required from the Steering Committee.  It was agreed that recognition of authorship will be retained in the front section of the document, but that the branding should reflect that of the Steering Committee as the owner of the of the document. It was noted that this may require changes to branding/logos used in various Parts of the WHMP. It was further agreed that a disclaimer regarding Conflicts of Interest be inserted at the beginning of each document Part.  It was additionally noted that DCCEEW had requested that any WHMP adopted by the Committee be reviewed by the Australian Heritage Council prior to being submitted to the Minister. The potential for further changes to arise from this process was noted.  **Resolution:** That the Steering Committee:  1) Agree to update Parts 2-5 of the WHMP as recommended by GML Heritage;  2) Note that Heritage Victoria will provide track change versions of each Part to Working Group members;  3) Agree to include a disclaimer regarding Conflicts of Interest at the beginning of each WHMP Part; and  4) Note DCCEEW’s request that the Australian Heritage Council review any WHMP adopted by the Committee prior to being submitted to the Minister, and the potential changes that may arise from this process.  **Moved:***Sophie Handley/Lynley Crosswell*  **Action arising:**   1. Provide the tracked change versions of the documents to the Working Group, including a Conflicts of Interest disclaimer; 2. Coordinate the removal of external logos from documents where possible; and 3. Working Group members to ensure changes are undertaken in advance of 12 May 2023. | |
|  | **Any other business**   1. It was noted that the next Australian Heritage Council meeting will be held in Melbourne on 22 March 2023. Members of the Council and Commonwealth representatives will be visiting the REB&CG to see the Dome Promenade during their time in Melbourne. 2. It was noted that the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee (AWHAC) meet regularly throughout the year, and cover topics relevant to the REB&CG, and comprises site managers of World Heritage places. It was agreed that AWHAC meeting minutes may be tabled for the Committee as a standing agenda item.   **Action arising:**   1. Add the AWHAC meeting minutes as a standing agenda item. | |
|  | **The meeting closed at 11:05am** | |
|  | **The next meeting is 12 May 2023** |  |
|  | **Upcoming events**  12 May 2023 – adoption of World Heritage Management Plan  **Future Steering Committee meetings**  15 June 2023  14 September 2023  14 December 2023  14 March 2024  13 June 2024  12 September 2024 | |

## Membership (For information only)

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| Name (gender) | Position, title and nominating organisation | Appointment term |
| Mr Steven Avery (M) | Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, Department of Transport and Planning | No appointment term due to the legislated requirement for the Executive Director to serve as Chair, in accordance with s.181(2)(a) of the Heritage Act 2017 |
| Ms Lynley Crosswell (F) | Chief Executive Officer & Director, Museums Victoria | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2023 |
| Mr Simon Ambrose (M) | Chief Executive Officer, National Trust of Australia (Victoria) | 12 December 2022 to 11 December 2025 |
| Ms Richa Swarup (F) | Senior Advisor, City Heritage, Yarra City Council | 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2023 |
| Ms Sophie Handley (F) | Director, City Strategy, Strategy Planning and Climate Change, City of Melbourne | 14 December 2021 to 30 June 2024 |