**Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens**

**World Heritage Management Plan Steering Committee**

**Minutes – adopted 27 April 2022**

**Date:** Tuesday 14 December 2021
**Time:** 2 – 3PM
**Venue:** via Microsoft Teams

**Members:**

* Steven Avery, Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) (Chair)
* 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
* Felicity Watson, Executive Manager, Advocacy, National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

**Apologies:**

* Amanda Bacon, Heritage Victoria, DELWP
* Fiona Darling, City of Melbourne
* Fiona Finlayson, City of Melbourne

**Officers attending (non-voting)**:

* Angela Hill, City of Melbourne
* Michelle Stevenson, Museums Victoria
* Ronnie Fookes, Museums Victoria
* Evelina Ericsson, Heritage Victoria, DELWP
* Hannah Fairbridge, Heritage Victoria, DELWP

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| **Agenda no**  | **Agenda item**  | **Presenter**  |
| **1.1** | Welcome and introduction  | Chair  |
| **1.2** | Steering Committee member update – welcome Sophie Handley  | Chair  |
| **1.3** | Conflicts of interest   | Chair   |
| **1.4** | Adoption of minutes of previous meetings (11 June 2021) | Chair  |
| **1.5** | Update on community consultation, and progress of Attachment documents A - E |
| **1.5.1 Attachment A:** Heritage Management Plan (formerly Conservation Management Plan)   | Ronnie Fookes |
| **1.5.2 Attachment C:** Exhibition Reserve Master Plan | Ronnie Fookes  |
| **1.5.3 Attachment B:** Carlton Gardens Master Plan | Angela Hill  |
| **1.5.4 Attachment D:** World Heritage Strategy Plan for the World Heritage Environs Area  | Written update  |
| **1.5.5 Attachment E:** First Peoples Cultural Values report   | Ronnie Fookes  |
| **1.6** | Steering Committee Strategic Vision update  | Hannah Fairbridge  |
| **1.7** | World Heritage Management Plan update and process to occur in 2022 | Evelina Ericsson |
| **1.8** | Other business  | Chair |
| **1.9** | Next meeting  | Chair |

* 1. **Welcome and introduction**

The Chair welcomed and thanked those attending the meeting and acknowledged the Traditional Owners across Victoria whose land the meeting was held on.

* 1. **Steering Committee member update – welcome Sophie Handley**

The Chair welcomed new member Ms Sophie Handley. Sophie Handley is the Director, City Strategy, Strategy Planning and Climate Change and will represent the City of Melbourne on the Steering Committee. The formal appointment process was completed prior to the meeting. Sophie Handley’s appointment commenced on 14 December and expires 30 June 2024.

The terms of Ms Felicity Watson, Ms Richa Swarup and Ms Lynley Crosswell expire 30 June 2023.

* 1. **Conflicts of interest**

No conflicts were declared.

**Adoption of minutes of previous meetings (11 June 2021)** - Provided as *Attachment 1*

**Motion:**Adopt the minutes of the previous meeting, 11 June 2021.
**Moved:** Richa Swarup
**Seconded:** Michelle Stevenson

* 1. **Update on community consultation and progress of Attachment documents A - E**
		1. **Attachment A:** Heritage Management Plan (formerly Conservation Management Plan)

Ronnie Fookes provided an update as to the status of the HMP progression. Ronnie advised that Lovell Chen (consultants) had been re-engaged following completion of a final draft. and were to coordinate a meeting with the City of Melbourne in early 2022. Museums Victoria have provided the consultants with a final draft of the First Peoples Cultural Values report, which will be used to inform the HMP. Final work on the HMP will be to align the document with the First Peoples Cultural Values report and to incorporate public feedback.

* + 1. **Attachment B:** Royal Exhibition Building and Exhibition Reserve Master Plan

Ronnie Fookes provided an update as to the status of the Royal Exhibition Building and Exhibition Reserve Master Plan progression. Ronnie advised that Museums Victoria had previously published the following documents on Engage Victoria between 16 October and 19 November 2021:

* Guiding Principles and Actions
* Exhibition Reserve Draft site plan
* Exhibition Reserve draft concept plan.

Ronnie advised that the Guiding Principles and Actions document had received some preliminary feedback when it was advertised on Engage Victoria, and the consultants had built on the original Guiding Principles and Actions and completed a final draft of the full document. Ronnie advised that the full document would be advertised on Engage Victoria from Friday 17 December for 28 days. The Steering Committee recommended increasing the consultation time frame to account for the Christmas/New Year period. The Steering Committee agreed to share the document publicly until the 6th February.

**Action:** Ronnie Fookes to circulate draft of document to Steering Committee. Draft document to be advertised on Engage Victoria 14 December 2021 – 6 February 2022.

* + 1. **Attachment C:** Carlton Gardens Master Plan

Angela Hill provided an update as to the status of the Carlton Gardens Master Plan progression. Angela advised that the draft Master Plan had been publicly advertised on Participate Melbourne and a summary and link had been included on Engage Victoria. The public advertisement period of the Master Plan resulted in 149 responses, eight direct written submissions (three from organisations on the Steering Committee). Angela advised that the City of Melbourne directly engaged with 115 young people who represent a big user group, regarding the Master Plan. City of Melbourne are confident that they have a strong sense of community views on the gardens and the draft document. The draft document will be amended to include outcomes of the consultation, and will be endorsed by Council. Final endorsement won’t occur until the HMP is complete. It is anticipated that endorsement and approval will occur in March.

* + 1. **Attachment D:** World Heritage Strategy Plan for the World Heritage Environs Area

Evelina Ericsson advised that the draft World Heritage Strategy Plan had been publicly advertised on Engage Victoria and via notice in *The Age* and *The Herald Sun,* and on the Heritage Council’s website between 16 July and 24 September, in accordance with section 171 of the *Heritage Act 2017*. Evelina advised that the Heritage Council had received submissions in relation to the draft Strategy Plan and were considering submissions at the time of the Steering Committee meeting. The Heritage Council will hold a hearing into the draft document the week of 7th March and 15th March. The hearing process is estimated to take 7 days over two weeks.

Felicity Watson asked whether Heritage Victoria will have legal representation and expert witnesses. The Chair confirmed that this would be the case.

* + 1. **Attachment E:** First Peoples Cultural Values report

Ronnie Fookes advised that the consultants (GML, formerly known as Context) have completed a final core report. Ronnie advised that the report had been distributed to the working group sub-committee and asked the Steering Committee whether the report should be released for public comment on Engage Victoria, or whether to wait and release the report with the World Heritage Management Plan. The Steering Committee discussed whether to release the report for comment or for information, noting that there had been strong public interest in the document. The Steering Committee agreed to release the report for information on Engage Victoria. Sophie Handley suggested including information on Engage Victoria and Participate Melbourne about how the document is intended to be used.

The Steering Committee suggested confirming with representatives of the Aboriginal community who had been consulted on the report whether releasing it for public viewing would be appropriate.

**Action:** Confirm whether appropriate to release report for public information on Engage Victoria and Participate Melbourne, once confirmed release on both platforms and email stakeholders.

**Move:** Lynley Crosswell

**Motion:** Richa Swarup

* 1. **Steering Committee Strategic Vision update –** *provided as Attachment 2*

Hannah Fairbridge advised that the Strategic Vision document had been amended to include all Steering Committee suggested changes, and the document had been reviewed by the Working Group and internally by Heritage Victoria. Hannah raised that an outstanding action was to confirm preferred terminology when referencing the Aboriginal community. Lynley Crosswell confirmed that Museums Victoria had discussed this matter with the First Peoples Department who had confirmed that First Peoples should be used in reference to Australia, and First Nations to be used when referencing Indigenous people from other countries. First Peoples is consistent with language used in other material.

The Steering Committee discussed whether this document would be made public, and whether public feedback would be invited or not. Steering Committee members raised that the document could be made public, but does not necessarily need to invite public feedback. Sophie Handley raised that the City of Melbourne would be unlikely to endorse a document that had not been through a public consultation process. Sophie raised that the document had been the subject of public interest, and it would be worthwhile to check back with the community and see whether expectations had been met. Richa Swarup suggested that the document be made public to ascertain public reaction, but that approval should not occur until the overall World Heritage Management Plan is approved. Richa raised that the Strategic Vision is essentially an implementation document for the World Heritage Management Plan so should be approved in line with that document. Felicity Watson raised that the World Heritage Management Plan process may result in additional feedback regarding Steering Committee governance to surface. It was suggested that the Strategic Vision remain as a draft until the Management Plan is finalised. Richa Swarup raised that the actions presented in the Strategic Vision must be measurable, and the document must be clear as to who is responsible for implementing.

The Chair summarised the discussion, and the Steering Committee agreed that the document should be made available for public comment. Felicity Watson raised that the Steering Committee should be cognisant of the timing of the Heritage Council hearing into the Strategy Plan, many individuals or groups interested in the Strategic Vision will also be interested in the Strategy Plan and may be submitting on the Strategy Plan before the hearing date in March.

The Steering Committee discussed timing for making the document public and agreed that advertising it for the duration of February 2022 would be a good approach.

**Action:** Steering Committee to agree on final version of the Strategic Vision, to be advertised publicly for the duration of February 2022.

**Move:** Felicity Watson

**Motion:** Sophie Handley

* 1. **World Heritage Management Plan update and process to occur in 2022**

Evelina Ericsson advised the Steering Committee that the RFQ for the Management Plan had been finalised and had gone out to tender. Evelina advised that project proposals are due back on the 7th January, and Heritage Victoria were hoping to have a contractor engaged by that date. Evelina advised that the budget was tight, so the proposal was to occur in stages to allow time for seeking additional funds as needed. (i.e. participation in hearing as experts; amendments to the document following hearing and Ministerial approval).

Evelina advised that the date for completion of a final draft Management Plan, and public consultation is 30 June 2022. Aim is to conclude the review process by December 2022.

Angela Hill queried when the Commonwealth Government would need to be involved in the review process, and whether communication with the Commonwealth Government formed part of the RFQ. Evelina advised that the RFQ asked for the review to be completed in accordance with Commonwealth legislation but doesn’t specifically ask for direct consultation with the Commonwealth.

Richa Swarup queried whether this consultation would be included in budget discussions. The Chair responded that the State Government annual budget would be where any funding would be requested and that the Commonwealth Government have in the past provided ad-hoc funding for works in relation to tourism. Richa raised that the Management Plan will require assurance in relation to sustainable resourcing, and that any future ambition for the site comes back to funding. Felicity Watson raised that the Management Plan will be a tool to advocate for funding, and that the Strategic Vision document also has tools built in to assist the Steering Committee advocate for funding. Felicity raised that the Steering Committee would need to build a relationship with the Commonwealth Government to ensure adequate engagement.

* 1. **Other business**

Felicity Watson raised that the planning decisions on two developments within the WHEA (1-9 Gertrude Street and the St Vincent’s Hospital Aikenhead development) had been approved without many conditions or amendments. Felicity raised that these developments are interesting case studies in the context of the Strategy Plan review, and asked the Steering Committee whether it would be useful to hear a summary into those developments. The Chair agreed that the Steering Committee would benefit from hearing about the developments and the planning process.

Lynley Crosswell raised that the St Vincent’s Hospital development had been discussed by Museums Victoria, and that the impact on the World Heritage Environs Area was being considered. Felicity and Lynley agreed to connect offline to discuss and possibly present a paper to the Steering Committee. Felicity Lynley agreed that the National Trust and Museums Victoria legal counsel would get in touch to discuss the proposals. Felicity raised that the Steering Committee’s role in these development’s is unclear, and that it would have been beneficial if Museums Victoria or Heritage Victoria were represented at the VCAT hearing.

Sophie Handley raised that in planning matters like this there is potential for conflict of interest, raising that the dual roles of City of Melbourne and City of Yarra as regulators and members on the Steering Committee needs to be very clear.

Richa Swarup raised that the two proposals will also be discussed at the Heritage Council hearing in March and that it would be beneficial for the Steering Committee to review the decisions. Richa has put together a summary of the VCAT hearing from the City of Yarra perspective.

Lynley Crosswell raised that Museums Victoria would be putting a funding proposal to the Commonwealth Government for assistance addressing restoration issues at the Royal Exhibition Building. The Chair raised that Heritage Victoria could help with the proposal if needed.

* 1. **Next meeting**
* No meeting date proposed, will be coordinated based on milestones and need.