# Template FOR INPUT INTO THE

**AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE STRATEGY**

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| Overview  This template should be used to provide comments on the content of the Australian Heritage Strategy. | |
| Contact Details | |
| **Name of Organisation:** | **National Trust of South Australia** |
| **Name of Author:** | **Prof. Norman Etherington, AM President** |
| **Date:** | **3 June 2014** |
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| Questions  Please add your comments for some or all of the questions provided with the Strategy’s three high level themes below. If you have other information you wish to provide, please add this in the “Other comments” field. | |
| 1. **Improve National Leadership**   What are the most important things the Australian Government should be doing to offer leadership in heritage?  How can the Australian Government provide guidance and support for our national heritage—while still empowering other government, industry and community members to take responsibility and get involved?  What priority areas are important to you, your organisation or group?  What practical actions would you suggest to improve national heritage leadership? | |
| The most important things the Australian Government should be doing, in priority order are:   * Creating a single web-based portal through which information can be acquired on all recognised heritage places in Australia, whether national, state, local, including places classified by organisations like the National Trusts. * Providing incentives through the Tax Assessment Act for owners of heritages places * Making the National list more representative by seeking out places that illustrate all of the National Historic themes across all states and territories | |
| 1. **Pursue Innovative Partnerships**   What partnerships are most needed within the heritage sector?  What heritage roles and responsibilities should be led by governments, peak heritage organisations or community groups in the 21st century?  How should resources be shared through heritage partnerships to ensure the greatest return on agreed priorities?  Can you provide examples of successful innovative partnerships you or your organisation have established? | |
| Partnerships are needed to better coordinate the heritage work done by local government and non-government not-for-profit organisations.  Thanks to the internet and audio-visual archives such as film and television, more people have access to non-material heritage than at any time in human history. Further government assistance is probably not required. In contrast, the identification and conservation of material heritage (buildings, the natural environment and museum collections needs as much help as ever.  Partnerships which recognise the heritage work done by the private sector should be developed.  The National Trust of South Australia is currently promoting the creation of associations that will draw attention to this work through associations for: historic hotels; historic bed & breakfasts; historic wineries and vineyards; historic homes.  We are also promoting Civic Partnerships with local government. The small annual membership fees contributed by local governments enable us to fund forums and other devices aimed at giving greater clarity and coherence to local heritage places protected thought the planning system. We are also working with our Civic Partners to exploit their heritage assets for visitors and tourists through better use of websites and social media. | |
| 1. **Enable encourage communities to understand and care for their heritage**   What should the Australian heritage sector be doing to help the Australian community better engage in heritage activities?  How can a shared understanding of our national heritage be developed and best celebrated together?  Do you have any examples of activities that have been successful in promoting local heritage to a broader audience?  What is the role of technology and new media in providing greater community access to heritage? | |
| The primary need is for a single national web portal through which all heritage agencies can be accessed.  Technology and new media are vital. Our organisation has been working with National Trust branches, local government, and business to create virtual heritage trails and virtual visits to heritage places. | |
| **Other comments** | |
| **A Strategy for Australia’s Heritage**  **Comments from the National Trust of South Australia on the Draft Paper of April 2014**    The National Trust of South Australia welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft paper. We support any policy change, action and incentives that will increase support for heritage. We believe that heritage registers should be better coordinated and access to them improved. We believe that non-government organizations should be permitted to comment on development proposals affecting national and state listed heritage places. We agree that much more could be done to exploit the tourism potential of heritage places. In the interests of brevity, we confine our more detailed comments to the three points we think most important.   1. Creating better public portals for information on heritage places, as discussed on pp.   10:   * Explore partnerships to establish a single entry point information portal for access to heritage information at all levels (world, national, state and territory and local). * Improve public access to heritage information through new technologies, social media and plain English government online nomination/application forms.   and p. 26:   * Explore partnerships to establish a single entry point information portal for access to heritage information at all levels (world, national, state and territory and local). * Improve public access to heritage information through new technologies, social media and plain English government online nomination/application forms.   *Comment.* We believe this ought to be the number one priority for the Australian Heritage Strategy. A huge amount of information exists which describes and shows the significance of heritage places protected by government agencies (national, state, and local) and recognized by voluntary agencies (National Trusts, historical societies, Art Deco societies, Victoriana societies, institutes of architects, etc.) However, it is very difficult for ordinary people to access, due to the large number of different sites that exist.  Something like the web portal at Heritage Council of W.A. should be implemented by the Commonwealth in cooperation with state, local government and voluntary organisations. It should be possible to ask for information on a single place and learn instantly:   * how to find the place, including geographical data, plans and pictures * what makes the place significant, including supporting data * what agencies have listed the place * what mechanisms, if any, operate to conserve and protect the place   The creation of the national heritage portal will provide a comprehensive guide to places regarded as significant by government and voluntary agencies. It will be far superior to the discontinued Register of the National Estate, while performing a similar valuable service by providing a national inventory. It will assist everyone involved with tourism to make better use of heritage places, as well as providing practical information to property developers, owners of heritage places, researchers, and educational institutions.   1. Creating incentives to care for our heritage, as discussed on p. 25. *Comment.* Provisions exist in the Income Tax Assessment Act for deductibility of authorised heritage expenses for owners of listed places, but these have remained in abeyance for many years. Implementation of these provisions is the single most important incentive that the Commonwealth could provide. Even if restricted to private owners of places protected by national, state or local government authorities, on a dollar for dollar basis it would do more good than any programme of Commonwealth or private grants. 2. Capture a representative National Heritage List, as discussed on p. 16. *Comment.* The National List certainly could be made far more representative. A good starting point is the compendium of Australian National Historic Themes that has been developed since 1995. Surely every theme should be capable of representation by at least one place of national significance. Heritage agencies across Australia should be asked to nominate places that illustrate themes unrepresented on the National List. Regional representation is as important as the themes. We perceive the present list to be strongly skewed toward the states of New South Wales and Victoria. | |