



NATIONAL TRUST Of AUSTRALIA (WA)



Australian Heritage Strategy Submissions  
Heritage Branch  
Department of Environment  
GPO Box 787  
CANBERRA ACT 6201

9 May 2014

To Whom It May Concern

**RE: NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (WA) RESPONSE TO DRAFT AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE STRATEGY**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Australian Heritage Strategy. The National Trust of Australia (WA) has reviewed the Strategy and has provided comments for each section and general feedback.

**Section 1: National Leadership**

The Federal Government should demonstrate strong leadership in the conservation, management and interpretation of heritage places. There appears to have been a withdrawing of Federal involvement and responsibility in heritage issues over the past few years, for example the Register of the National Estate being made redundant. The Federal government should take a more proactive lead in heritage through commitments detailed in the Strategy.

*b. Capture a representative National Heritage List*

The National Trust is supportive of the commitment to 'Provide additional support over the next three years to the Australian Heritage Council'.

*c. Pursue greater recognition and protection of our natural and cultural heritage, particularly our Indigenous cultural heritage.*

The Green Army Programme is discussed throughout the Strategy. This programme is strongly supported by the National Trust of Australia (WA). With a shortage of volunteers and resources to assist in the management and conservation of properties, this programme has a number of benefits not only for heritage places but for the broader community.

## **Section 2: Innovative Partnerships**

*Priority a. Greater heritage policy and process alignment across all levels of government (p 19)*

This section discusses the green star rating system which currently does not adequately recognise the value of heritage buildings. This program is currently under utilised but is a promising way in which to recognise and support the conservation of heritage buildings both in refurbishment and in new developments. Appropriate commitments and actions should be developed to engage with this sector and campaign for the inclusion of heritage buildings as part of a sustainable green star program.

### *Section 2.C*

*Support the Federation of Australian Historical Societies over the next three years to strengthen engagement with and support for local community heritage groups (p 22)*

There are several organisations with national umbrellas which are involved in heritage at a local community level. This includes the Oral History Association, Geological Society of Australia, Australia Archaeological Association, Australia ICOMOS, various state and local Museums and the National Trusts of Australia. As heritage encompasses several values, not just historical, this commitment should acknowledge the value of other organisations.

## **Section 3: Community Engagement**

*b. Promoting greater knowledge and engagement with our heritage (p 25)*

Engagement with heritage places can be encouraged at all ages. In particular, linking heritage places with the Australian Curriculum (from Humanities to Science and the Arts) allows school aged children to understand and value these places. The National Trust of Australia (WA) has an extensive number of programs for all school ages based around our properties which are very popular with local schools. Supporting and encouraging these programs will provide further opportunities for the community to engage with heritage.

*c. Appropriate timing for the national celebration of Australia's heritage (p 25)*

The National Trust would not support the Heritage Festival having an association with Australia Day (26<sup>th</sup> January) celebrations due to the controversy surrounding this date as a Day of Mourning by Indigenous groups. Other possible dates would be considered.

## **General feedback**

- The statements as they now stand lack adequate detail for implementation. It is important that the proposed actions have measurement outcomes including priorities and timeframes. This will assist in implementing these actions and setting clear targets which is an essential function for a Strategy.
- Commitments and actions are inconsistent with some being very specific (e.g. securing the Matthew Flinders 1804 map of Australia) and others very broad. The specific actions appear to be priorities for the Department which require little to no support from other organisations; this can be more clearly stated.

- Create a list of potential partnership organisations and include a commitment to actively approach these organisations, particularly those not currently involved in heritage, e.g. Green Building Council.
- The commitments and actions are included on pages 7-11 in the 'Executive Summary' and repeated with additional discussion on pages 15-26. This repetition is unnecessary and should be combined into one section but with the commitments and actions highlighted to be more prominent in the text.
- There is some repetition within the Strategy; for example, discussion of the Green Army appears in more than one part. The role of programs such as this should be clearly stated and explained within one section to provide a more concise Strategy.
- The 'What is Heritage' section should appear at the start of the Strategy and include definitions and the Department's interpretation or use of terms such as themes, stories, representativeness etc. (refer to the Burra Charter) as discussed in the Perth consultation on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014.

[REDACTED]

Thank you

Respectfully



Thomas E. Perrigo  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER