

Annual report 2023–24 Heritage Council of NSW

Acknowledgement of Country

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

This resource may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

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Artist and designer Nikita Ridgeway from Aboriginal design agency Boss Lady Creative Designs created the People and Community symbol.

Cover photo: Pinnacles Loop walking track. Beowa National Park. John Spencer/DCCEEW

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Letter of Submission

The Hon. Penny Sharpe MP
Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy
Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit to you the Annual Report of the Heritage Council of NSW for your presentation to the New South Wales Parliament. This report provides a summary of our membership and achievements and covers our performance for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

The report was prepared in accordance with the provision of the *Government Sector Financial Act 2018, Division 7.3*, the *Heritage Act 1977 (NSW)*, regulations under those Acts, the *Treasurer's Direction 23-11 Annual Reporting Requirements* and the *NSW Treasury Circular TPG23-10*.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Howarth', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Frank Howarth AM PSM
Chair, Heritage Council of NSW

21 October 2024

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1. Overview

About the Heritage Council of NSW

The Heritage Council of NSW is a statutory body established under the *Heritage Act 1977* (the Act). The Council is required by the Act to produce an annual report. The Council comprises nine members with a range of knowledge, qualifications and skills. Eight of these members are drawn from the community, government, the heritage/conservation profession and a nominee of the National Trust (NSW). The other member is the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment or their delegate.

Aims and Objectives

The Heritage Council makes decisions about the care and protection of places and items that have been identified as being of heritage significance to the people of NSW. It also advises the Minister for Heritage on state heritage matters. The Heritage Council is supported by Heritage NSW, which provides professional advice and administrative support to help promote the identification, protection, conservation, management and celebration of heritage places across NSW and maintains the NSW State Heritage Inventory. Further details on the role and activities of the Heritage Council are available [here](#).

Management and structure

Heritage Council Members

Dr Danièle Hromek was appointed as a member of the Heritage Council of NSW for a one-year term commencing on 1 February 2024.

The Hon Robyn Parker (Deputy Chair) was re-appointed for a second three-year term commencing on 20 December 2023.

Ms Colleen Morris (Member nominee of the National Trust of Australia (NSW)) was re-appointed for a third one-year term commencing on 20 December 2023.

Mr Frank Howarth AM PSM (Chair), Dr Nicholas Brunton, Mr Ian Clarke, Dr Brian Lindsay, and Ms Vanessa Holtham are ongoing members in 2023-24.

Ms Anthea Sargeant was a member of the Heritage Council of NSW as delegate of the Secretary, Department of Planning and Environment, and as part of the machinery of government changes, on 24 June 2024 she was reappointed to become the Secretary of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's delegate.

Mr Paul Knight resigned as a member of the Heritage Council of NSW on 1 August 2023.

Mr Dillon Kombumerri resigned as an observer from the Government Architect NSW on 3 April 2024.

Heritage Council Meetings

The Heritage Council meets on the first Wednesday of every month between February and December. The Council met ten times during 2023-24, held one out of session meeting, as well as several sub-committee meetings, site visits and workshops.

To ensure it meets its obligations in relation to recommending items for listing on the State Heritage Register and approving applications for change and conservation management of these items, the Council delegates these functions to the State Heritage Register Committee and the Approvals Committee. Both committees meet monthly with members from the Council and additional experts. The Hon Robyn Parker is the Chair of the State Heritage Register Committee and Mr Ian Clarke is the Chair of the Approvals Committee.

State Heritage Register Committee of the Heritage Council

The State Heritage Register Committee makes recommendations in relation to the State Heritage Register nominations and listings. During 2023-24, the State Heritage Register Committee (SHRC) met eleven times and conducted several out of session meetings, workshops and site visits.

The Hon Robyn Parker (Chair) and Ms Colleen Morris (Deputy Chair) were re-appointed for a further term commencing on 7 February 2024 for the duration of their terms on the Heritage Council of NSW.

Dr Brian Lindsay, Dr Stephen Gapps, Dr Wayne Johnson, Ms Lisa Trueman, and Ms Natalie Vinton, are ongoing members in 2023-24. Mr Frank Howarth is an alternate member on the Committee.

Mr Paul Knight resigned as a member of the State Heritage Register Committee on 1 August 2023.

Approvals Committee of the Heritage Council

The Approvals Committee, under delegation from the Heritage Council, determines applications and provides advice on proposed changes and conservation management of items listed on the State Heritage Register. During 2023-24, the Approvals Committee met ten times, and conducted several out of session meetings, workshops and site visits.

Mr Ian Clarke (Chair), Dr Nicholas Brunton (Deputy Chair), Dr Caitlin Allen, Mr David Burdon, Ms Vanessa Holtham, Dr Danièle Hromek, Ms Julie Marler, Mr David McNamara and Mr Bruce Pettman are ongoing members in 2023-24. Mr Frank Howarth is an alternate member.

Grants and Sponsorships Advisory Committee of the Heritage Council

The Grants and Sponsorship Advisory Committee provides advice to the Heritage Council and Heritage NSW on heritage incentives and service delivery programs.

Ms Colleen Morris (Chair), Dr Brian Lindsay, Dr Anne-Maree Whitaker and Ms Chery Kemp are ongoing members in 2023-24.

Mr Paul Knight resigned from the committee on 1 August 2023. The position is currently vacant, in addition to one vacancy yet to be filled from the previous financial year.

Heritage Advisory Panel

The Heritage Advisory Panel provides expert advice to the Heritage Council and Heritage NSW on heritage protection and conservation matters, including historic and maritime archaeology, engineering, landscapes, local government and planning.

Ms Colleen Morris (Chair), Ms Sheridan Burke (Deputy Chair), Professor Paul Ashton, Ms Surbjit Bahtti, Ms Emma Bombonato, Mr Matthew Devine, Ms Catherine Forbes, Mr Glenn Harper, Mr Robert Moore, Ms Claire Nunez, Mr Niall Macken, and Mr Scott Robertson are ongoing members in 2023-24.

Mr David Nutley retired from the panel on 1 July 2022. The position is currently vacant, in addition to two vacancies yet to be filled from the previous financial year.

Ms Judith Coombes retired from the panel on 1 July 2022, following her acceptance of ongoing employment with Heritage NSW, and Ms Joedie Lawler retired from the Panel at the end of her term on 11 February 2023. These positions are currently vacant.

Technical Advisory Panel

The Technical Advisory Panel provides expert technical advice to the Heritage Council and Heritage NSW on issues relating to the maintenance, management and conservation of heritage items and assets.

Mr David Logan (Chair), Mr Bruce Pettman (Deputy Chair), Mr Harilal Gohil, Mr Eric Martin, Mr Peter Phillips and Mr Stephan Netting (Fire & Rescue) were reappointed for a further two-year term on 8 May 2024.

Mr Alex Been, Mr Thomas Bowyer, Mr Daire Fleming (alternate Fire & Rescue), Ms Vanessa Holtham, Professor Gianluca Ranzi, Mr Marc Relf, Ms Joy Singh, Dr Yuanyuan Song and Mr Gary Waller are ongoing members in 2023-24.

Ms Sharon Hodgetts (ACHAC Member) retired on 20 November 2023 and the position is currently vacant.

2. Strategy

Heritage Council of NSW Strategic Priorities 2023-25

The Heritage Council's strategic priorities comprise 5 priority areas, supported by a range of actions to be carried out over the period 2023 – 25.

The priority areas are:

1. **Heritage protection:** A robust and representative State Heritage Register

2. **Aboriginal heritage:** Elevate Aboriginal perspectives in State Heritage Register listings and regulatory processes
3. **Leadership and education:** Build the Council's role in providing leadership and education on heritage matters
4. **Influencing outcomes:** Continue to build the Council's role in influencing outcomes for State Heritage Register items
5. **Decision-making:** Ensure the Council operates in accordance with best-practice governance standards and the *Heritage Act 1977*.

Implementation and monitoring

The Heritage Council has implemented and monitors progress on each action. Heritage NSW supports the Heritage Council to progress its strategic priorities in accordance with the plan. Heritage NSW provides quarterly reports to the Heritage Council on progress of tasks to support the delivery of Council's strategic priorities.

3. Operations and Performance

The Statutory Reporting under s.23 of the *Heritage Act 1977*

Interim Heritage Orders

Following advice from the Heritage Council of NSW or delegate, the Minister made no interim heritage orders under section 24 of the *Heritage Act 1977* (the Act) in 2023–24.

The Minister revoked one interim heritage order over 115, 117 and 119 Holt Avenue, Cremorne under section 29 of the Act. The revocation of the order from the previous financial year was gazetted on 21 August 2023.

State Heritage Register (SHR) Listings

In 2023-24, the Heritage Council of NSW recommended to the Minister 18 places for listing on the State Heritage Register under section 32 of the Act.

Table 1: Heritage Council of NSW – SHR listings recommended to the Minister in 2023-24

Item	Primary Address	LGA	Recommendation to List
Manilla Railway Viaduct and Underbridge	River Street, Manilla (Barraba Branch Line)	Tamworth Regional	4 July 2023
Sydney Croquet Clubhouse, its Collections, Lawns and Grounds	O'Sullivan Road, Rose Bay	Woollahra	4 July 2023

Item	Primary Address	LGA	Recommendation to List
Bouddi Farm	265 The Scenic Road, Killcare Heights	Central Coast	29 August 2023
Nan Tien Temple	180 Berkeley Road, Berkeley	Wollongong City	3 October 2023
Kameruka Golf Course	West Kameruka Road, Kameruka	Bega Valley	3 October 2023
Ravensthorpe Homestead Complex and Setting	436 Hebden Road, Singleton	Singleton	21 November 2023
Greenway	24 Wentworth Road, Vaucluse	Woollahra	4 December 2023
Victoria Pass and Berghofers Pass	Great Western Highway, Mount Victoria	Blue Mountains and Lithgow	4 December 2023
Wellington Town Common	259 Lowrie Drive, Wellington	Dubbo Regional	4 December 2023
Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace	380 Military Road, Cremorne	North Sydney	6 February 2024
Fitz Roy Iron Works Precinct (and moveable heritage)	197 Old Hume Highway, Mittagong	Wingecarribee	6 February 2024
Kwong War Chong Building	82 Dixon Street, Haymarket	Sydney	5 March 2024
Gooribal (Frenchmans Bay and Yarra Bay) Cultural Landscape	56R, 63R, 65R, 67-73 Yarra Road, Phillip Bay	Randwick	2 April 2024
Transport House, Redfern (former)	199 Cleveland Street, Redfern	Sydney	2 April 2024
Captain Moonlite and James Nesbitt's Graves	58 William Street, Gundagai	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional	7 May 2024
Cooma Gaol	1-5 Vale Street, Cooma	Snowy Monaro Regional	7 May 2024
Elsie Refuge (former)	73-75 Westmoreland Street, Glebe	Sydney	4 June 2024
Warringah Civic Centre Precinct	725 Pittwater Road, Dee Why	Northern Beaches	4 June 2024

State Heritage Register amendments

In 2023-24, the Heritage Council recommended two curtilage amendments to the Minister. These were North Beach Precinct and Powerhouse Museum Complex.

Removals from the State Heritage Register

In 2023-24, the Heritage Council recommended to the Minister no removals from the State Heritage Register under section 38 of the Act.

Heritage Agreements

No heritage agreements under section 39 of the Act were entered into by the Minister in 2023-24.

Advice on historic shipwrecks protection orders

No shipwreck protection orders were issued under section 50 of the Act. Members of the public continue to regularly report the discovery or exposure of sites and assist in monitoring the condition of shipwreck remnants and relics in NSW.

Order restricting harm to buildings

The Heritage Council did not have to exercise its powers under either sections 136 or 79C of the Act.

Financial Assistance

The Heritage Council did not make any recommendations to the Minister under section 106 of the Act.

Heritage Applications

The Heritage Council and Heritage NSW (as its delegate) provide heritage conservation and planning advice to many stakeholders on both local and state heritage items. In 2023-2024, a total of 1,106 applications were completed with a total cost of works of approximately \$4.9 billion under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, and 320 applications were completed with a total cost of works of \$1.7 billion under the *Heritage Act 1977*.

Table 2. Heritage Applications

Description	Completed
EP&A Act	1,106
SSD/SSI – State Significant Development / Infrastructure Referral	690
CNR inc. IDA, DAR, Clause 37, Modification	243
Planning Referrals inc. Planning proposals, Pre-lodgement services, Precinct, Regional or Master Plans, Regional Job Precinct, Re-zoning Application, State Significant Precinct, Special Activation Precinct,	173

Description	Completed
Development Control Plan, Discussion Paper and Place Strategy, Plan of Management, general advice	
Heritage Act 1977	320
s.60 – Application and decision for works	170
s.65A – Variation to s.63 approval	47
s.60FT – Fast track	80
s.140 – Excavation permit	16
s.144 – Variation to excavation permit	7
Total	1,426

Key projects and activities

Policy and Strategy

NSW Heritage strategy

The Heritage Council provided input and advice into the development of a draft NSW Heritage Strategy by Heritage NSW. The Heritage Council and its advisory panels also contributed to meetings and workshops to assist Heritage NSW to develop and test key themes and ideas for the strategy.

NSW Housing Reforms

The Heritage Council was first briefed by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) in February 2024 on the NSW Government’s Transport Oriented Development (TOD) Program. The Heritage Council gave in-principle support for the overall strategy planning process of the TOD accelerated precincts but raised some concerns about heritage impacts of the TOD State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP). The Heritage Council also lodged a submission to the Legislative Council Inquiry into the development of the Transport Oriented Development Program, detailing these concerns. The Heritage Council is continuing to work with DPHI to ensure good outcomes for heritage while meeting the Government’s housing targets.

ICOMOS General Assembly Cultural Landscapes – session with Heritage Victoria

In September 2023, Sydney hosted the 21st General Assembly of the International Committee of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and welcomed 1,500 national and international delegates. The theme of the five-day Scientific Symposium: ‘Heritage Changes: Resilience, Responsibility, Rights, Relationships’, reflected the tumultuous

changes taking place in the world, but also offered a positive message about the role of heritage in supporting rapid recovery and inclusive approaches.

The Heritage Council Chair, Frank Howarth and Heritage Council member Dillon Kombumerri, hosted a cross jurisdictional workshop on cultural landscapes. Speakers from both Heritage Victoria and Heritage NSW explored how forming strong connections and partnerships can provide a framework for protecting cultural landscapes and supporting resilience in the face of change. Speakers provided case studies from NSW and Victoria to stimulate discussion and bring together global perspective on local challenges.

Early Engagement and Collaboration

Parliament House



Image: Parliament House following the conservation works to its façade. Source: Andreana Kennedy

Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney, underwent extensive conservation works in time to celebrate the NSW Legislative Council's 200th anniversary in August 2024. Heritage NSW worked closely with the project managers at Parliamentary Services and their heritage consultants to deliver 14 approvals in 18 months under delegation from the Heritage Council. A timely approval process has ensured works were delivered during the immovable parliamentary recesses.

For the former Rum Hospital's interior, a two-stage approval process was used. The initial application was for investigative works to evaluate the extent and condition of earlier material concealed by later finishes. This approval allowed for the removal of non-original floor, ceiling and wall linings, and fittings and fixtures. The observations

during the investigative works informed the detailed documentation for the conservation works that followed and were approved by a subsequent application.

The Rum Hospital has now been extensively restored. The work has peeled back layers of history to reveal stories long forgotten, like the packing crates found on the rear balcony, repurposed in the mid to late 1800s as budget wall cladding. The overall outcome is a stunning restoration and a prolonged life for this iconic historic site.

Carrington Pump House, Newcastle



Image: Carrington Pump House post conservation works. Source: Newcastle Herald.

2024 saw the final conservation works to the Carrington Hydraulic Engine House (1877), and associated heritage crane bases Nos. 7, 8, 9 and 10. The Pump House contained the first large-scale hydraulic power system in Australia, is unique in NSW, and represents the most complete example nationally of a coal loading system, predating the introduction of conveyor belt-based loading technology.

A long-term project, the Heritage Council and Heritage NSW have been supporting Newcastle Port Authority in the conservation and revitalisation of this heritage asset through the approval of multiple applications for works since 2017. The works have now been completed over three stages. They included conservation works to the building's exterior and design of a new public plaza (stage 1, 2017), additional conservation works to the north, east and west facades (stage 2, 2020), and asbestos remediation and accessibility upgrades (stage 3, 2022-2024).

Now restored, the owners of the Carrington Pump House, the Port of Newcastle, are looking for a commercial partner to breathe new life and engagement with the property.

SS *Nemesis* 1904 shipwreck, discovery and closure

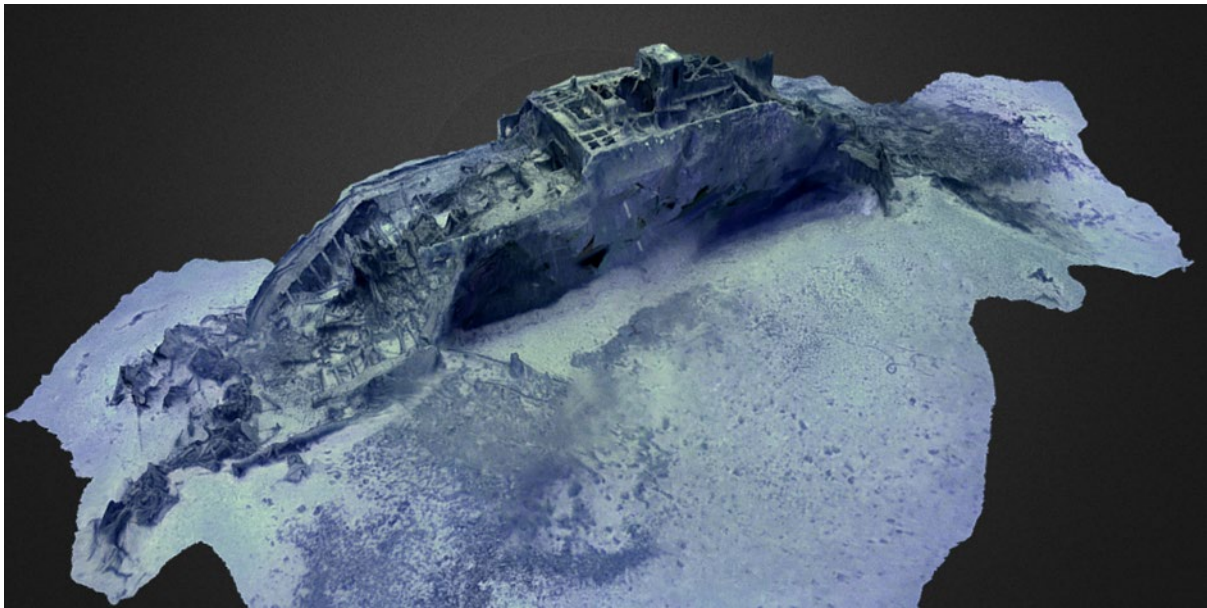


Image: 3D model of SS Nemesis shipwreck produced by Hive Centre (Curtin University), commissioned by Heritage NSW from drop camera footage provided by Marine National Facility (CSIRO). Funded by Commonwealth DCCEEW.

2024 witnessed one of the most far-ranging heritage media stories delivered by Heritage NSW, with the support of the Heritage Council. The 25 February announcement of the discovery and identification of the long-lost SS *Nemesis* shipwreck off Port Kembla, NSW, attracted global interest. The work by Heritage NSW in identifying the site and engaging with descendants following a call-out by the Minister for Heritage, the Hon Penny Sharpe MLC, showcases the expertise of the NSW Underwater Heritage Program and its staff.

After the report of a new deepwater shipwreck discovery, Heritage NSW coordinated a state-of-the-art investigation of the extensive wreck. SubSea Professional Marine Services Pty Ltd, who found the wreck joined forces with Heritage NSW for two additional archaeological surveys in 2023. A further collaboration with CSIRO Marine National Facility research vessel, RV *Investigator*, led to precision imagery of the wreck and its seabed setting. Heritage NSW delivers the NSW Maritime Archaeology Program and Delegated responsibilities under the Commonwealth *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018* to manage all coastal shipwrecks in NSW. The call for descendants of the 32 lost crew had an overwhelming response, leading to another media announcement on 8 March 2024 after 25 family members came forward.

Heritage NSW engaged the Hive Centre (Curtin University) to create a 3D model of the site based on the CSIRO underwater footage for the public to experience the 165-metre-deep wreck. On the 120th anniversary of the sinking (9 July 2024), Heritage NSW organised an onsite commemoration event, where the families of the those lost were given a chance to say goodbye to their loved ones over *Nemesis*. Needless to say, it was a very moving event. Research into the historic event, the families, and further opportunities to interpret the story, are ongoing.

Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand (HCOANZ)

On August 31 and September 1, 2023, the Heritage Council of NSW, in collaboration with the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee and Heritage NSW, hosted a two-day forum in Parramatta, for the Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand (HCOANZ).

The forum focused on heritage protection, conservation, and management, and included discussions on the impact of climate change on cultural heritage, Indigenous heritage projects and policies, the role of artificial intelligence in heritage, and the economic and social value of heritage. Progress was reported on a new heritage strategy for Australia, aligned with Dhawura Ngilan and co-designed with the First Nations Heritage Protection Alliance. The forum also featured breakout sessions for Indigenous and historic heritage chairs and officials, where members shared their experiences, challenges and priorities, and agreed on actions and collaborations for future work.

Great Success Stories

Badangi



Image: View of Badangi, looking south across Balls Head Bay. (Source: Heritage NSW)

Badangi, a unique, natural landscape on the northern bank of Sydney Harbour, has a rich Aboriginal history with evidence of Gammaraygal occupation and is one of the few remaining natural landscapes in public ownership on Sydney Harbour.

The listing covers public foreshore parklands and reserves around the Greenwich and Wollstonecraft peninsulas including Berry Island Reserve, Badangi Reserve, Manns Point, Holloway Park, Greendale Park, Smoothery Park and Gore Cove Reserve, as well as some nearby waterways.

This listing recognises the area's deep links to the Gammaraygal people and the cultural heritage found within the site, including shell middens, grinding grooves and rock engravings.

The site's natural and recreational values have made it a popular destination for locals, tourists and artists, and its aesthetic qualities have been captured by the renowned painters and photographers of NSW.

Badangi was added to the State Heritage Register on 27 October 2023.

MLC Building, North Sydney



Image: Depiction of the Miller Street façade of the MLC Building. (Source: Heritage NSW)

The MLC Building, Australia's first post-World War II high-rise office building, was added to the State Heritage Register, recognising its irreplaceable architectural and heritage values.

The building, constructed in 1957, was once described as a glassy beacon of modernity. The iconic Miller Street curtain wall continues as a landmark of its immediate streetscape and of modernist architecture in the post-World War II years.

Designed by renowned architect, Sir Walter Osbourne McCutcheon, the aesthetic values of the 14-storey office building are one-of-a-kind featuring modular, lightweight construction and glass walls.

Using construction techniques never before seen in Australia, the building was revolutionary at the time with its open and flexible layout and its people-oriented design full of natural light.

The building, the surrounding sculptural gardens, and integrated terracotta artwork by renowned artist, Andor Meszaros, continue to be highly regarded by architects, engineers and the wider community.

The ongoing and irreplaceable heritage values of this building confirm its rightful place on the State Heritage Register, to ensure it will be conserved and protected for the community.

The MLC Building was added to the State Heritage Register on 22 December 2023.

Cooma Gaol



Image: Depiction of Cooma Gaol, main entrance. (Source: Heritage NSW)

Following the historic apology delivered in NSW Parliament to LGBTQIA+ people for the past legal criminalisation of homosexuality in the state, Cooma Gaol was listed on the State Heritage Register.

The oldest operational gaol in NSW, Cooma Gaol was the only known prison facility in the world specifically and explicitly used for incarceration of men based on their gender identity or sexual orientation. This occurred following World War II, when homosexuality was considered "the greatest menace facing Australia", and NSW participated in electroshock and aversion treatments, and other awful interventions to try discouraging homosexuality.

People were incarcerated on this basis at Cooma Gaol between 1953 and 1984. Privacy and archive restrictions on access to records for 75 years mean that while first

collections will be available from 2028, the number of people incarcerated, and the full scale of programs conducted there, may not be known until 2059.

Now known as the Cooma Correctional Centre, the site continues to operate as a minimum- and medium-security facility and features the 'Crime Through Time' museum, a living museum which showcases the history of NSW corrections since 1788.

Beyond its history of persecution and repression, Cooma Gaol is of State significance as a symbol of enduring spirit, resistance and identity. Its inclusion on the State Heritage Register acknowledges the resilience of the LGBTQIA+ community and honours those who were unjustly confined within its walls.

Cooma Gaol was added to the State Heritage Register on 5 July 2024.

Kwong War Chong Building



Image: Depiction of the Kwong War Chong Building façade fronting Dixon Street. (Source: Heritage NSW)

The Kwong War Chong Building is of State significance as a highly intact early 20th century Chinese Australian commercial premises. Built in 1910 for merchants Philip Lee Chun and the Kwong War Chong & Company, the shop, associated stores and accommodation are of State associational significance for ongoing connections to the wider Chinese migrant communities of Sydney and NSW.

It is of State historic significance as one of the oldest surviving buildings in Chinatown with direct associations to the Chinese Australian community. The building represents a rare link to early Chinatown, when Dixon Street formed the business and cultural centre for the Chinese Australian community. This is embodied in the primary façade of 82-84 Dixon Street which is of State aesthetic significance in its demonstration of the early built character of Chinatown.

The interior of 84 Dixon Street is also of State historic significance for its potential to provide insights into the longstanding use by the Chinese community, including partitions, doors, stairs, and hand-operated goods lift, as well as the historic ephemera of packing-crate furniture, washing machines, bathtubs, calendars, crockery, merchandise, and personal effects.

The use of the building by Chinese Australian-owned and operated businesses was continuous from its construction in 1910 until 2017. This longstanding community function is of State heritage significance for its contribution to the evolution of a distinct Chinese diasporic identity and culture in NSW.

The Kwong War Chong Building was added to the State Heritage Register on 14 June 2024.

Nan Tien Temple



Image: Depiction of the Nan Tien Temple main shrine showing the roof line and figures. (Source: Heritage NSW)

Nan Tien Temple, a sprawling Buddhist Temple complex located just south of Wollongong in Berkeley, was listed on the State Heritage Register as an exceptional example of Buddhist architecture and landscaping.

A cultural and spiritual landmark, Nan Tien Temple is a testament to the growth of Buddhism in late-20th century Australia and a symbol of interfaith harmony.

The largest Buddhist temple in NSW, it is an extraordinary example of Buddhist architecture in the Chinese Imperial Palace and T'ang Dynasty styles.

Its unique features include two temple shrines, a magnificent seven-tiered, eight-storey pagoda, and expansive landscaped gardens designed for reflection and meditation.

Designed by Australian architects Jones Brewster Regan and predominantly constructed between 1992 and 1995, its 417-square-metre Main Shrine is dedicated to the Five Directions – housing five three-metre Buddha statues encircled by 10,000 smaller Buddha statues within its walls.

The heritage listing recognises Nan Tien Temple as a place of worship and a spiritual home for Buddhist migrants and Australian-born Buddhists to connect and uphold their traditions and culture.



Image: Depiction of the avenue of Canadian Maple trees lining the path to the Nan Tien Temple pagoda, with Mount Kembla in the distance. (Source: Heritage NSW)

Nan Tien Temple has also become a vital space for cultural, educational, and tourist endeavours, welcoming all, regardless of religious background.

As the first pagoda and the only Buddhist temple on the State Heritage Register, this recognition emphasises the value of Nan Tien Temple as a significant cultural site.

The Nan Tien Temple was added to the State Heritage Register on 28 March 2024.

Old Government House Conservation



Image: Old Government House photos taken during and following the conservation works to the former barracks. Source: National Trust (NSW)

Less is more is certainly true for the conservation works that have been undertaken at Old Government House in Parramatta. Removing years of unsympathetic accretions has restored the simple lines and Georgian elegance to the historic buildings in the back range that were built between c1822 – 1838. Historically, the eastern wing housed the officers, with a later southern wing built for the servants. In the 1990s, the Civil Officer's Quarters were converted for use as a restaurant.

Thanks to a grant from the Australian Government and their own fundraising efforts, the National Trust have been able to undertake a program of extensive conservation to restore both the Civil Officer's and Servants Quarters. The conservation works have included the restoration of floors, walls, ceilings, fireplaces, windows, doors and chimneys, new painting and the installation of new lighting and security cameras. Outside, more recent unsympathetic additions have been removed or more sensitively relocated such as services and air-conditioning units. The excellent outcomes of this project have been delivered by experienced heritage tradespeople with advice from conservation specialists and approvals from the Heritage Council.

More work is planned. There is a new master plan for the site that will see further activation and interpretation of the rear of Old Government House heralding an exciting future for this Parramatta and World Heritage gem.

White Bay Power Station

White Bay Power Station forms part of the Bays West Precinct along with Rozelle Bay, White Bay and Glebe Island. The power station is a key element of the NSW Government strategy related to the precinct's urban renewal for over fifteen years. It is currently being managed by Placemaking NSW.

Constructed between 1912 and 1917, White Bay Power Station was the longest serving power station in metropolitan Sydney having generated power for more than 70 years. In 1984, the power station was decommissioned and was mostly unused for the past 40 years.



Image: White Bay Power Station. (Source: <https://www.whitebaypowerstation.com/whats-on/campaigns/power-up-festival>)

As part of the Bays West Precinct plan, the NSW Government provided \$86 million in funding for remediation and repair of the site. Placemaking NSW began the process for site remediation in 2021 for its reactivation and adaptive reuse as an arts, cultural and community hub.

The Heritage Council of NSW and Heritage NSW have been actively supporting the conservation and future activation of the previously derelict White Bay Power Station. The Government has led the revitalisation project through Placemaking NSW as an integral component of the mixed-use precinct, forming part of the Bays West Precinct Stage 1 Master Plan.

In 2024, has seen the extensive rehabilitation and conservation works completed. The Heritage Council has supported the transformation with initial heritage approvals and the granting of Agency exemptions under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* to allow the work to proceed under Placemaking NSW control. The Heritage Council inspected the site on several occasions to note progress and guide conservation approaches and invited presentations on the works program to its standing meetings.

White Bay Power Station is a unique State Heritage Register listed industrial complex. It remains the only power station to retain a representative set of machinery and items associated with the generation of electricity from the early to mid-twentieth century.

For the first time since the conservation works were completed, the giant doors were thrown open for the hosting of the 2024 Biennale of Sydney. For three months, the public were able to explore amazing art and the industrial heritage scale of the station.



Image: The public visiting White Bay Power Station to view the Biennale. (Source: <https://design5.com.au/index.php/portfolio/24th-biennale-of-sydney-at-white-bay-power-station/>)

The master plan and rezoning package was approved in 2022 enabling some new infill buildings up to 22 metres on the site. That work and rezoning for the next stages of Bays West Precinct will be progressed and the Heritage Council will continue to have a commenting role.

State owned heritage – asset register management

This year over 30 state agencies were supported to meet or work towards meeting their responsibilities under s170 of the *Heritage Act 1977* (the Act). This included three advertised workshops run by Heritage NSW for agencies introducing them to s170 in the Heritage Management System (HMS), numerous informal workshops targeted to individual agencies and provision of ad hoc advice. Quarterly external state agency forums and NSW Treasury's Facilities Management Community of Practice meetings were attended, to provide advice and information to attendees.

Five new or updated heritage and conservation registers have been accepted, an additional 3 are awaiting review and 11 agencies are actively working on their registers for submission in 2024-25.

Over 50 notifications were processed under s170A of the Act. A key challenge has been onboarding agencies to the new s170 HMS portal from the beginning of the financial year.

Discussion has been initiated with NSW Treasury about how the Heritage Council and Heritage NSW can work with them to better assist agencies to manage their heritage assets.

Draft updated state heritage asset management guidelines and principles have been prepared with a view to releasing them in 2024-25.

Sydney Opera House Archaeology



Image: Circular face of the southeast fort tower (pink arrow) above polygonal courses (tan arrow). The c.1820s eastern fort wall (blue line) is below the lowest course of the c.1860s Barbette wall (orange line). Bedrock is at base (black arrow) (note seawater at base). Scale 1m, 200mm increments. (Source: GML Heritage 2023)

An unexpected find led to an exciting discovery beneath the Sydney Opera House in 2022. Archaeological monitoring of structural works associated with installation of the southern assembly of the new Utzon Escalators revealed the remains of the southeast tower and eastern wall of Fort Macquarie. The Fort was designed by Francis Greenway, who had direct, on-the-ground input during its construction from 1817-1821.

Test excavations were subsequently conducted under a s60 works approval between March and June 2023. Two courses of the later (c.1860s) Barbette wall was found sitting above the remains of the original (c.1820) eastern fort wall. The lower courses of the southeast tower were also exposed above natural sandstone bedrock. These remains are of State heritage significance for their ability to demonstrate the history, technology and craftsmanship of early Colonial fortifications.

The installation of the Utzon Escalators is essential to allow equitable access to all. Initial engineering plans for the southern assembly required removal of a substantial portion of the remains of Fort Macquarie. In consultation with Heritage NSW, the project consultant team came up with an engineering solution that required only the removal of a small portion of the top course and rubble infill of the c.1860 Barbette wall, leaving the most significant (c.1820) remains of Fort Macquarie (southeast tower and eastern wall) conserved in situ.

Due to the damaging effects of seawater and tidal movement, it was determined that the best conservation option was to rebury the remains of the Fort that will be retained, rather than leave them exposed on public display. In consultation with Heritage NSW, the project heritage consultant prepared a comprehensive interpretation strategy, including digital interpretation, tours and temporary exhibitions, to bring the story of Fort Macquarie to the public. This is an excellent outcome and is appropriate mitigation for the removal of a small portion of the Barbette wall to facilitate inclusive access to

the Sydney Opera House. The Heritage Council Approvals Committee approved the final s60 application for the proposed works, including conservation and interpretation requirements, on 6 October 2023.

Heathcote Hall



Image: Heathcote Hall, 2024 (Source: Heritage NSW)

Constructed in 1887, Heathcote Hall is listed on the State Heritage Register for its historic and aesthetic significance as the oldest and grandest building in the Sutherland Shire. It features a two-storey building designed in the Victorian Italianate style and is a prominent landmark in Heathcote.

The recently completed development at 1-21 Dilwynnia Grove, Heathcote, showcases Heathcote Hall and its pleasure garden, which have been conserved and restored, and integrated into the surrounding new residential enclave - Heathcote Grounds. Before development, it had fallen into years of neglect, vacancy, vandalism and was at serious risk as a virtual ruin. The project conserves and celebrates the site's significant values while providing new residential development.

The project's success was made possible through close collaboration between the Heritage Council, Heritage NSW, the owner and their heritage consultant. Since 2019, the Heritage Council and its delegate have approved several applications to facilitate the project works. In October 2019, an Integrated Development Application for refurbishment and restoration of Heathcote Hall was approved. This included construction of 35 townhouses and 20 apartments, extensive landscape works, and a 56 lot strata subdivision. In February 2022, the resulting section 60 application under the *Heritage Act 1977* was approved. Section 60 approval conditions ensured funding and maintenance of Heathcote Hall and its pleasure garden in perpetuity and delivered comprehensive interpretation of the place. The residential project financed the

restoration of the Heathcote Hall and ongoing maintenance costs for the building through a portion of the strata levies from the residents.

In October 2022, a separate Integrated Development Application for alterations and additions to the Heathcote Hall building was supported. The works facilitated the renewal of Heathcote Hall as a private residential dwelling and later approved with all works finalised in June 2024. The project serves as an example of how heritage sites can accommodate new development whilst retaining and respecting the significant values of the place.

Studley Park



Image: Existing view, Studley Park House (Source: Heritage NSW)

Studley Park is listed on the State Heritage Register for its aesthetic and visual qualities associated with a nineteenth-century country house and setting. Studley Park House is an excellent example of Victorian Italianate architecture and is positioned in a prominent and open landscape that can be viewed from around the Camden area. This cultural landscape setting includes important views that physically connect Studley Park to other nearby historic 'country estates' such as 'Camelot' and 'Kirkham Stables' and define a broader historic landscape in the areas surrounding Camden.

The current owner has proposed to activate the site by restoring and adaptively reusing the Studley house as a hotel, surrounded by residential units within the grounds. The proposal involves site remediation, construction of a two-storey hotel building, removal of some structures and vegetation, construction of four residential flat buildings and associated road access, landscaping, civil infrastructure, and Community Title subdivision.

An integrated development application for the proposal was supported by the Heritage Council Approvals Committee in March 2024. Application consultation process involved close collaboration and engagement with the owner and the project group that included site inspection, workshop and presentations to the Committee. The Committee provided the proponent with clear advice, direction and feedback on built and landscape aspects to create an improved scheme. Subsequently, the Committee considered a revised scheme and issued general terms of approval subject to deferred commencement conditions requiring further architectural design modifications, submission of a revised schedule of conservation works, and a revised landscape design.

The currently boarded up house is at significant risk of decay, but the multimillion-dollar activation will ensure its conservation and future use offsetting ongoing heritage and operational costs. Heritage Council and its delegate will continue to work alongside the owner and Camden Council during the next stage of the planning process to achieve improved heritage outcomes for the site.

Paragon, Katoomba



Image: Restoration hoarding installed to the front of the Paragon Café (Source: Heritage NSW)



Image: Historic image of Paragon Café. (Source: Unk)

The State Heritage Register-listed Paragon Café is one of the most iconic Art Deco cafes in NSW and a distinct tourist destination in the Blue Mountains. Sadly, its condition had deteriorated considerably, being unoccupied and failing due to underfloor water and moisture issues.

In 2018, Heritage NSW initiated a minimum standards of maintenance investigation due to significant community concerns. In 2020, the owners submitted a program of conservation works for the repair of structurally inadequate subfloor system, sub-floor ventilation and damaged internal structures, approved by the Heritage Council. Subsequent delays to the works heightened Blue Mountains City Council, National Trust and broader community concerns about the café's future and visual condition.

In June 2023, Heritage NSW commenced active engagement with the owners and Blue Mountains City Council, supporting the finalisation of all outstanding planning approvals. A February 2024 Heritage NSW inspection of the café coincided with the granting of a Construction Certificate and resulting commencement of the urgent heritage conservation works.

The restoration project is gratifying, with the café recognised as a landmark in the Katoomba community. Many will be following the outcome and eventual reopening of this much-loved icon.

Former Kenmore Psychiatric Hospital risk



Image: Kenmore Psychiatric Hospital – Matrons Quarters. (Source: Heritage NSW)

For some time now, the Heritage Council and Heritage NSW have had concerns that the owners of the State Heritage Registered (SHR) Kenmore Psychiatric Hospital, Goulburn were not meeting their obligations in maintaining the site.

Owners of SHR listed items are required to meet minimum standards of maintenance and repair under section 118 of the *Heritage Act 1977*.

In October 2021, despite ongoing dialogue with the owners about their maintenance obligations, vandalism led to a fire which destroyed the Ward 15 building.

In July 2023, Heritage NSW met with the owners to discuss the site's future and their heritage obligations. In October 2023, some work had occurred, including a repaired roof on one of the most significantly damaged buildings (the Matron's Quarters), and two cottages near Taralga Road.

Not satisfied by the extent of work, in December 2023, Heritage NSW, supported by the Heritage Council, issued an Order under section 120 of the *Heritage Act 1977*. The Order reflected the work that had been completed and work still needed to meet the standards set out in the *Heritage Act 1977*.

2024 has seen numerous site inspection and compliance activities to ensure the requirements of the repair Order are implemented.

The Kenmore Hospital site is highly significant as the first purpose-built complex for mental health care in rural NSW. The former hospital represented changing ideas and policies concerning the treatment of the mentally ill and handicapped people in NSW

4. Management and Accountability

Membership and Attendance

Table 3. Heritage Council of NSW – Membership and Attendance

Heritage Council of NSW	Method of appt	Role	Term [yrs]	First appt	Term end	Attendance	Expertise
Frank Howarth AM PSM	Ministerial appointment	Chair	6	Jan-19	Dec-24	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation of the environmental heritage • Moveable heritage • Natural heritage • Cultural landscapes • Aboriginal heritage
The Hon Robyn Parker	Ministerial appointment	Deputy Chair	6	Feb-21	Dec-26	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Government liaison • Risk • Past Heritage Minister (2011-14)
Ian Clarke	Ministerial appointment	Member	6	Jan-19	Dec-24	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering • Property economics
Colleen Morris	Nominee of the National Trust of Australia (NSW)	Member	6	Jan-19	Dec-24	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural landscapes • Conservation of the environmental heritage • Australian garden history
Dr Danièle Hromek	Ministerial appointment	Member	1	Feb-24	Jan-25	5 (of 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal heritage
Dr Brian Lindsay	Ministerial appointment	Member	6	Feb-20	Feb-26	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW history • Governance
Dr Nicholas Brunton	Ministerial appointment	Member	6	Feb-20	Feb-26	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property, planning or environmental law
Vanessa Holtham	Ministerial appointment	Member	3	May-22	May-25	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture • Conservation of the environmental heritage • Local government • Planning
Anthea Sargeant	Delegate of the Secretary DPE	Member	N/A	Jan-23	Open	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning
Retired Members							
Paul Knight *	Ministerial appointment	Member	3	Feb-20	Aug-23	1 (of 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal heritage
Dillon Kombumerri	Representative of Government Architect NSW	Observer	N/A	Oct-17	Apr-24	4 (of 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture • Cultural landscapes

* Mr Paul Knight was a member of both the Heritage Council of NSW and ACHAC.

Under Schedule 9 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee (ACHAC) comprises 13 members appointed by the Minister. This includes one nominee of the Heritage Council of NSW. The dual role strengthens the collaborative relationship between both the Council and the Committee and ensures that Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is considered and valued in all the work we do.

Table 4. State Heritage Register Committee – Membership and Attendance

State Heritage Register Committee	Method of appt	Role	Term [yrs]	First appt	Term end	Attendance	Expertise
The Hon Robyn Parker	Heritage Council	Chair	6	Mar-21	Dec-26	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Government liaison • Risk • Past Heritage Minister (2011-14)
Colleen Morris	Heritage Council	Deputy Chair	6	Feb-19	Dec-24	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural landscapes • Conservation of the environmental heritage • Australian garden history
Dr Stephen Gapps	Heritage Council	Member	3	Jul-21	Jun-24	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and colonial history
Dr Wayne Johnson	Heritage Council	Member	4.5	Jan-20	Jun-24	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeology • Heritage conservation
Dr Brian Lindsay	Heritage Council	Member	6	Mar-20	Feb-26	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW history • Governance
Lisa Trueman	Heritage Council	Member	3	Jul-21	Jun-24	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architect and heritage consultant • Built heritage consultant • Local government design and statutory guidance to government agencies • Governance • Heritage legislation (local and state) • Heritage Impact Statement (HIS)
Natalie Vinton	Heritage Council	Member	3	Jul-21	Jun-24	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage planning • Archaeology • Museums, curatorial, moveable heritage • Planning • Adaptive reuse • Heritage interpretation • Cultural heritage landscapes • Heritage asset management

State Heritage Register Committee	Method of appt	Role	Term [yrs]	First appt	Term end	Attendance	Expertise
Frank Howarth AM PSM	Heritage Council	Alternate Member	6	Jan-19	Dec-24	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation of the environmental heritage • Moveable heritage • Natural heritage • Cultural landscapes • Aboriginal heritage
Retired Members							
Paul Knight *	Ministerial appointment	Member	3	Feb-20	Aug-23	1 (of 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal heritage

Table 5. Approvals Committee – Membership and Attendance

Approvals Committee	Method of appt	Role	Term [yrs]	First appt	Term end	Attendance	Expertise
Ian Clarke	Heritage Council	Chair	6	Fe-19	Dec-24	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering • Property economics
Dr Nicholas Brunton	Heritage Council	Deputy Chair	6	Mar-20	Feb-26	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property, planning or environment law
David McNamara	Heritage Council	Member	Open	May-20	Open	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning
Dr Caitlin Allen	Heritage Council	Member	4.5	Jan-20	Jun-24	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeology • Conservation of the environmental heritage • Cultural landscapes • Moveable heritage • Natural heritage • Industrial heritage • Rural heritage • Community values assessment
David Burdon	Heritage Council	Member	4.5	Jan-20	Jun-24	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture • Heritage conservation
Bruce Pettman	Heritage Council	Member	6.5	Apr-18	Jun-24	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architect • Heritage conservation
Ms Julie Marler	Heritage Council	Member	3	Jul-21	Jun-24	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape architecture • Heritage conservation • Cultural landscapes
Vanessa Holtham	Heritage Council	Member	3	Jul-22	May-25	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture • Conservation of the environmental heritage • Local government • Planning
Dr Danièle Hromek	Heritage Council	Member	3	Feb-23	Feb-26	3 (of 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture • Aboriginal heritage • Cultural landscapes

Approvals Committee	Method of appt	Role	Term [yrs]	First appt	Term end	Atten dance	Expertise
Frank Howarth AM PSM	Heritage Council	Alternate Member	6	Jan-19	Dec-24	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation of the environmental heritage • Moveable heritage • Natural heritage • Cultural landscapes • Aboriginal heritage

Governance

The Heritage Council does not own any property and does not employ staff. Members of the Heritage Council are covered under the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water¹ for:

- insurance arrangements, through the NSW Government’s self-managed insurance scheme (the NSW TMF)
- Privacy Management Plan, for matters under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (PPIPA)

See the *Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Annual Report 2023-24* for the Internal Audit and Risk Management Policy attestation.

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

The intention of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* is to make information more open and available to the general public. The Heritage Council complies with this Act by proactively releasing information on the website and responding to formal applications made to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

Statistical information about access applications received is reported in the *Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Annual Report*.

Annual Report Production

The total external cost incurred in the production of the Heritage Council Annual Report 2023-24 was absorbed by Heritage NSW.

5. Sustainability

The Heritage Council is supported by staff within the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. See the *Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Annual Report 2023-24* for information regarding:

- Disability inclusion action plans

¹ Previously Department of Planning and Environment

- *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (NSW) reporting
- Work health and safety
- Workforce diversity

6. Financial Performance

Budget and financial statements

The Heritage Council does not hold any assets and therefore does not produce accounts. In 2023-24 the Heritage Council operated within an agreed budget that was supported by the Corporation Sole, Minister Administering the *Heritage Act 1977* and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

Overseas Travel

There were no overseas visits conducted by members of the Heritage Council in 2023-24.

Annual report compliance checklist

Compliance requirement	Section in the Annual Report
Acknowledgement of Country	Beginning
Letter of Submission	Beginning
Aims and Objectives	Overview
Management and structure	Overview
Charter	Overview
Combined annual reports	n/a
Application for extension of time	n/a
Strategic objectives and outcomes	Strategy
Management and activities	Operations and Performance
Summary review of operations	Operations and Performance
Land disposal	n/a
Research and development	n/a
Price determination, implementation	n/a
Performance information	Operations and Performance
Senior executives, numbers and remuneration of	Management and Accountability
Human resources	n/a
Consultants	n/a
Promotion	n/a
Employment arrangements, requirements arising from	n/a
Legal change	n/a
Economic or other factors	n/a
Events arising after the end of the annual reporting period	n/a
Risk management and insurance activities	Management and Accountability
Internal audit and risk management policy attestation	Management and Accountability
<i>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, compliance with</i>	Management and Accountability

Compliance requirement	Section in the Annual Report
<i>Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009</i> reporting	Management and Accountability
Other information (external production cost of the annual report, website the report can be accessed)	Management and Accountability
Exemptions	
Disability Inclusion Action Plans	Sustainability
<i>Modern Slavery Act 2018</i> (NSW) reporting	Sustainability
Work Health and Safety	Sustainability
Workforce Diversity	Sustainability
Financial Statements	n/a
Audited financial statements, identification of	n/a
Unaudited financial information	n/a
Investment and Liability Management Performance	n/a

Contact Information and Acknowledgements

Unless otherwise stated, all photographic/imaging work is by Heritage NSW

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The Heritage Council of NSW respects and acknowledges that its people and programs are built on the land and waters of the world's oldest living culture. We acknowledge that Aboriginal people are the traditional custodians of NSW and of the places listed on the State Heritage Register.

Version control and approval tracking

	Name & position	Date
Reviewed by	The Heritage Council of NSW	4 August 2024
Reviewed by	Heritage NSW, Senior Management Team	18 October 2024
Approved by	Frank Howarth, Chair, Heritage Council of NSW under delegation	21 October 2024

QA process (Corporate Services team use only)

Name & position	Date
Received for review	
Reviewed by	
COO Corporate Services	

Deputy Secretary approval (required after QA process)

Name & position	Date
Approved by	