



Statement of Intent

Tasmanian Heritage Council

Section 10A of the *Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995 (the Act)* enables the Minister administering the Act to provide the Tasmanian Heritage Council (the Council) with a triennial Statement of Expectation specifying his/her aims and expectations of the Council in performing its functions.

In response, the Council is required under s10B of the Act to provide a Statement of Intent indicating how it intends to deliver on the Minister's expectations.

Functions of the Council

The functions of the Heritage Council, as specified under s7 of the Act, are:

- a) to advise the Minister on matters relating to Tasmania's historic cultural heritage and the measures necessary to conserve that heritage for the benefit of the present community and future generations; and*
- b) to work within the planning system to achieve the proper protection of Tasmania's historic cultural heritage; and*
- c) to co-operate and collaborate with Federal, State and local authorities in the conservation of places of historic cultural heritage significance; and*
- d) to encourage and assist in the proper management of places of historic cultural heritage significance; and*
- e) to encourage public interest in, and understanding of, issues relevant to the conservation of Tasmania's historic cultural heritage; and*
- f) to encourage and provide public education in respect of Tasmania's historic cultural heritage; and*
- g) to assist in the promotion of tourism in respect of places of historic cultural heritage significance; and*
- h) to keep proper records, and encourage others to keep proper records, of places of historic cultural heritage significance; and*
- i) to perform any other function the Minister determines.*

In addition, the Council 'may do anything necessary or convenient to perform its functions'.

Further, under s4A (2) the Act requires that the exercise of functions and powers under the Act is consistent with the objectives of Tasmania's Resource Management and Planning System (RMPS), as set out in Schedule 1 of the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993.

Preamble

On behalf of the Tasmanian Heritage Council, I am pleased to respond to the Statement of Expectation (2024-27) outlined by you on 23 September 2024, with the Tasmanian Heritage Council's Statement of Intent.

Take confidence that the objectives identified in your Statement of Expectation are reflected in our recently updated three-year Strategic Plan. In progressing this work, the Council will ensure that you are informed of progress and of any issues that arise. We look forward to a collaborative approach with the Minister's Office to be able to respond to opportunities and address issues that arise within the historic heritage portfolio.

Ms Brett Torossi
Chair
Tasmanian Heritage Council

Relationship with Government

Minister's Expectation:

The Council is established as a statutory body responsible for performing its functions and exercising its statutory powers at arms-length from Government, except where the Act specifies that the Minister has a role. However, while the Council is a statutory body, it remains an instrumentality of the Crown and must work within the established administrative framework of the State of Tasmania.

The Council recognises its role in being at arm's length to Government in the areas specified by the Act, whilst also remaining an instrumentality of the Crown, working within the established administrative framework of the State of Tasmania and having regard to the objectives of the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act.

The Council will continue to work closely with Heritage Tasmania within the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania and seek advice and guidance to ensure its actions are consistent with the required administrative framework, and with the Minister's Office as we progress the heritage priorities detailed in the Statement of Expectation.

Communication with Minister

Minister's Expectation:

As the responsible Minister, it is my expectation that the Council will, through the Chair, provide me with regular information on its activities and performance and bring to my attention, in a timely manner, any information on significant issues affecting the Council's functions and work.

I expect the Council will, through the Chair, also inform me in a timely manner of all issues affecting its capacity to exercise its statutory functions and powers under the Act.

Given the relationship with the Government that the Council must work within, the Council believes it is critical that it maintains a clear and timely information exchange between the Minister and the Council.

This information exchange shall occur via meetings between the Chair and the Minister in regular quarterly meetings and as otherwise required for complex or contentious matters.

The Chair will then provide feedback to the Council regarding the issues discussed at these regular quarterly meetings with the Minister.

Government Policies

Minister's Expectation:

The Council's primary statutory role is the entry of places on the Tasmanian Heritage Register, the management of the Register and the management of development control processes contained in the Act for places entered on the Register. This involves the task of balancing at times competing objectives of conserving, managing and activating places of historic heritage value with facilitation of economic development and social objectives.

It is my expectation that in the course of making such decisions of balance, the Council has regard for the social and economic circumstances prevailing in Tasmania and the objectives of the Government with respect to those circumstances.

I expect the Council to take account of the need to create a more prosperous and equitable society, and this relies in part on providing employment and other economic opportunities where they are most needed. The Government's overarching policy position is that a productive community is better able to manage the State's long term social, economic and environmental challenges – including the conservation, management and activation of our most important heritage assets – and I expect the Council to facilitate that outcome wherever it can. In performing its functions, the Council is to consider published Tasmanian Government policies, and those advised by me in writing, relevant to its functions.

For reference:

- *The Government is strongly committed to growing the State's tourism industry. The presentation, interpretation, conservation, use and management of our historic heritage is an important element of Tasmania's brand and the visitor economy, particularly places of State significance. It is therefore my expectation that the Council's practices and decisions will consider the potential to support the State's tourism offerings and visitor experience. This includes looking for opportunities to facilitate and enhance the visitor experience on offer and to encourage the proper conservation, sympathetic development and the adaptive reuse of heritage places, in particular industrial heritage.*

The Council will maintain its commitment to lead and engage stakeholders to generate sustainable heritage outcomes and encourage public and private sector investment in heritage and the visitor economy through:

- continued membership of the Premier's Visitor Economy Advisory Council;
 - inclusion of the Visitor Economy participants as part of its Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy; and
 - the provision of pre-lodgment engagement (through Heritage Tasmania) to assist proponents of tourism related projects to achieve good heritage submissions/outcomes while meeting their commercial needs.
- *The Government has a policy of regulatory reform, seeking to reduce the burden of unnecessary regulation and 'red tape' on business and the community. It is my expectation that the Council will take account of this policy in managing its legislative obligations. This includes looking for opportunities to reduce unnecessary processes and costs of complying with the Act and maximise certainty for property owners and developers, while encouraging sympathetic and innovative development. These opportunities may involve the development of new or revised regulation, policies and practices and a range of engagement/communications activities.*

The Council will continue the use of Delegations that are now well established (and the exercise of which is published in the Council's Annual Report) to enable decisions to be made at the appropriate level to ensure both good governance, consistency and timeliness of decision making. It also will consider the use of additional delegations to reduce regulation (e.g. delegation to approve minor works for TMAG).

The Council will continue its digital transformation to enable increased community access to the Register and improved utility of other built heritage sector information. This will include ongoing enhancement of the *Discover Heritage* online portal and upgrade of the Heritage Tasmania website.

The Council, through Heritage Tasmania, will review the process for issuing the Certificate of Affected Place with the intent of increasing efficiencies and reducing red tape.

The Council, through its Stakeholder and Communications Engagement Plan, will promote educative resources to assist heritage property owners to better understand their regulatory requirements under the *Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995* and encourage innovative development.

The Council will undertake a review of key guidance documents including the *Works Guidelines for Historic Heritage Places* and the *Assessing Historic Heritage Significance* guide to ensure both remain contemporary and continue to provide clear, best practice advice regarding the management of historic places.

- *The Government is also committed to growing the supply of housing. It is my expectation that the Council will undertake activities to support investment in infill housing and key worker accommodation in regional areas, through the adaption or re-use of current heritage listed properties that improve the overall housing supply.*

The Council will work with stakeholders to promote examples of how the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings can positively contribute to Tasmania's housing supply.

- *The Government is also focused on reducing waste, recycling and resource recovery to achieve a stronger circular economy for the State. It is my expectation that the Council will undertake activities to support this Government initiative and support our vision for Tasmania as being a place where nothing is wasted.*

The Council will use its communications channels to promote the adaptive re-use of buildings, re-use of materials in heritage conservation and activation projects and highlight the economic and environmental benefits of such re-use.

- *In 2023-24, the Built Heritage Grants Scheme was re-established by the Tasmanian Government in recognition of the importance of supporting property owners to preserve and conserve the heritage values of places and to re-purpose and activate underutilised buildings. The Scheme provides \$3 million over two years with funds rolled out from 2024-25, and it is my expectation that the Council will continue to work with all stakeholders to maintain the momentum generated by this investment. In particular, I expect the Council to actively support the Scheme's emphasis on growing visitor demand for Tasmania and the development of Tasmania's skilled built heritage conservation workforce.*

The Council will continue to maintain representation at relevant government/industry fora with a particular focus on the tourism and hospitality sectors, and skills development to elevate the portfolio of heritage within and across government.

Specifically, the Council will:

- regularly meet with the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania to identify opportunities and strategies to leverage Tasmania's unique built heritage to meet growing visitor demand;

- facilitate a meeting with Skills Tasmania, UTAS and the property sector to identify issues arising from the 2024 Heritage Summit outcomes in relation to heritage skills development in Tasmania;
 - regularly meet with other representative organisations including the Local Government Association of Tasmania; and
 - provide ongoing fora for engagement with the heritage sector to share progress and to engage directly with Council members.
- *The Government is committed to diversity in respect of membership of government boards and committees. It is my expectation that the Council seeks to achieve the same in the composition of any committees it establishes over the period for which this Statement applies. In order to recognise the voice of young people and shape sector communications, the Council is also encouraged to consider how it can better communicate and gather feedback from young people within our community. In addition, it is my expectation that the Council review its composition and membership to ensure it is aligned with, and reflective of, contemporary governance arrangements.*

The Council has adopted the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania's diversity statement in all its advertised Expressions of Interests for Board and Committee vacancies. The Council notes that 50 per cent of its board positions are currently held by women. The composition of the committees will be reported to the Minister annually and in the Council's Annual Report.

The Council recognises the need to further diversify its membership. A key outcome from the 2024 Heritage Summit was identification of the need to inject a youth voice into and across the heritage sector. To this end, the Council has established and filled a volunteer Youth Observer position to support the Council in identifying ways to better engage with the youth sector.

Legal advice

Minister's Expectation:

Unless the Council perceives a potential conflict of interest, any necessary legal advice and other legal services must be obtained from the Office of the Solicitor-General through the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania.

The Council recognises this obligation and appreciates the service provided by the Office of the Solicitor-General.

Relationship with the Department

Minister's Expectation:

It is my expectation that the Council will maintain clear lines of communication and receive advice from senior executives and staff from the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, and primarily Heritage Tasmania, the relevant business unit.

The Council will continue its strong communication with the Department primarily through Heritage Tasmania, but also on occasions through the General Manager, Heritage.

Relationship with other Agencies and authorities

Minister's Expectation:

The Council's statutory functions have direct and indirect links to regulatory responsibilities and functions performed by other Agencies and authorities under other legislation, such as the Environment Protection Authority, the Tasmanian Planning Commission, the Policy Planning Unit

in the Department of Justice, the Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal and local planning authorities. It is my expectation that the Council will collaborate and maintain clear lines of communication with these bodies in relation to the administration of these functions.

I also expect the Council to actively seek opportunities to partner with Agencies and authorities such as Tourism Tasmania, the Parks and Wildlife Services, and the Tasmanian Waste Recovery Board, where there may be aligned interests and benefits.

The Council fully recognises that its role and functions cannot be achieved without awareness of, and cooperation with, other agencies and authorities. The Council will use the collective resources of its members and Heritage Tasmania to develop and maintain this understanding and cooperation. The Parks and Wildlife Services alternate delegate is a member of the Council and is well-placed to facilitate communication and understanding with other agencies and authorities where there may be shared interests, responsibilities and functions.

The Council will continue to engage with planning regulators as a participating regulator on project assessments affecting heritage listed places, where required. This includes continuing to oversee implementation of heritage related conditions for the New Bridgewater Bridge, and participation in the Project of State Significance process for assessment of a multi-purpose stadium at Macquarie Point.

The Council is seeking to establish regular communication with Tourism Tasmania to leverage opportunities to promote heritage tourism opportunities to grow visitor demand for Tasmania. Heritage outcomes are part of Tasmania's 2030 Visitor Economy strategy. The Council will explore with the Tourism Industry Council Tasmania how it can support implementation of the strategy with respect to actions that aim to develop and diversify visitor products and experiences relating to Tasmania's unique built heritage.

The Council, through Heritage Tasmania, is frequently in discussions with the Parks and Wildlife Service to elevate issues where there is a shared responsibility or interest. Further, the Council will engage with the Tasmanian Waste Recovery Board to explore opportunities to better promote the benefits of re-use in heritage conservation and activation projects.

The Council will continue to engage with partners including TMAG, UTAS, Tourism Tasmania, Archives, the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Burnie Museum and Art Gallery and others to enhance the links and promote the register and searchability of information for Tasmanians and visitors.

Governance and operations

Corporate governance and values

Minister's Expectation:

It is my expectation that the Council will continue to strengthen its practices to the highest standards of governance, transparency, accountability and management of conflicts of interest. I expect the Council to further its work in respect of managing conflicts of interest by undertaking work to improve the identification, declaration and management of conflicts of interest.

Members are to always act in an informed, impartial and professional manner, and exercise leadership when acting on behalf of the Council or when using privileged Council information.

The Council accepts its responsibility to work in accordance with the Act and consistent with the objectives of Tasmania's resource management and planning system.

Registration and works approval matters of a complex, contentious or novel nature will continue to be determined by the convened meetings of the Council.

The Council also will continue the use of Delegations that are now well established to enable decisions to be made at the appropriate level to ensure both good governance, consistency and timeliness of decision making.

As an important element of good governance checks and balances, the Council has endorsed guidelines to complete internal reviews of registration decisions made under delegation. This is consistent with a delegation process for works decisions that has been operating for several years. These regular reviews will be conducted by the Council's sub-committees (Registration Committee and Works Committee respectively). Any learnings through the review process will be utilised to continuously improve the delegated decision-making framework.

The Council has a thorough, documented induction process that identifies processes for the management of conflicts of interest. The induction process is reviewed every six months to ensure it remains contemporary and fit for purpose. Council members sign a Confidentiality Declaration at the time of appointment and are then required to declare all conflicts of interests (real, potential or perceived) at each meeting, which are recorded in Council minutes and the Register of Interests. A recent audit of the induction process has shown that 100 per cent of Council and Committee members have completed the formal induction process.

The Council will continue to invite professional governance experts to provide presentations on the identification, declaration and management of conflicts of interest at future meetings to further strengthen its understanding and processes.

Reporting

Minister's Expectation:

The Council's Annual Report is to be delivered to me by 31 October each year, as required under s92 of the Act. It is my expectation the Annual Report will provide evidence of how the Council has progressed the Statement of Expectation and the Statement of Intent in effect during the reporting period. It is also my expectation these Statements are published on the Council's website and made readily accessible to the public.

The Council sees the Annual Report as an important document to both inform and maintain community trust in the activities of the Heritage Council and its roles and functions.

The Council commits to satisfying this expectation.

Policies and Procedures

Minister's Expectation:

The Council will regularly review its operational policies and procedures to ensure it performs its functions effectively, efficiently, consistently and transparently, both in terms of engagement with external stakeholders and its relationship with Heritage Tasmania, and in accordance with the provisions of the Act and the expectations of this Statement in this regard, I expect the Council to review and update in the next six months its Charter and policies in relation to governance, which were last approved in 2021. This includes procedures for induction of new members and Committee Terms of Reference.

I expect the Council to take particular care to ensure that its processes maximise certainty, provide for consistent and timely assessments and decisions, and that the degree of regulatory burden imposed is the minimum necessary to achieve appropriate heritage outcomes.

The Council firmly agrees with your expectation that its processes should maximise certainty and provide for consistent and timely assessments and decisions. It will continue to encourage pre-statutory consultation with property owners and developers and make decisions in line with its

Works Guidelines. These two mechanisms continue to realise appropriate heritage outcomes with minimal impost on property owners and developers and minimise the number of appeals against Council decisions.

In addition, the Council will continue its focus on revising the applicability, transparency and consistency of its policies and procedural guidelines, including a review of its Charter, Induction process and Committee Terms of Reference in the first half of 2025.

Progress achieved on with ongoing improvement work will be published in the Council's Annual Report.

Community and stakeholder engagement

Minister's Expectation:

Under the Act, the Council has specific functions associated with raising community awareness and understanding of heritage issues, and general functions that both serve and impact stakeholders and the community. It is my expectation that the Council strengthens its engagement and communications program to better inform the public of its role within Tasmania's statewide planning scheme, elevate the brand value of heritage, promote the economic and social value of heritage and engage more broadly with stakeholders to achieve long-term, generational improvements in the community perception of the value of heritage.

The Council's *Plan to Evolve the Tasmanian Heritage Register* documents the pathways to guide and prioritise efforts and identifies actions and outcomes to help develop the Heritage Register as an accurate, reliable, and current record of Tasmania's places of historic heritage significance. This improved engagement of the community in the content of the Register also is seen as a step towards improved representation within the Register.

The Council will refine and implement its Stakeholder and Communications Engagement Plan to include media, events, research, publications and communications activities targeted at leveraging the value of Tasmania's heritage assets, including activating and adaptive re-use stories. A particular focus will be promotion of the improved searchability of the register through the new *Discover Heritage* portal, and development of a sector portal to allow the sharing of educational resources.

The Council will continue to publish via its website the minutes of its meetings and the decisions made.

The Council's Policies, particularly its Works Guidelines and Practice Notes, will continue to be reviewed, updated where required and made available to all interested parties. These documents are written to appeal to the end user and to ensure consistent decision making by the Council. A review of companion Registration Guidelines also will be undertaken.

The Council also will continue to encourage owners of listed properties to discuss their proposed works with Heritage Tasmania's Heritage Advisors prior to proceeding with works or detailed development proposals. The commitment of Heritage Tasmania to the timeliness of this process has proved to be one of the most effective engagement strategies adopted to date.

Continued efforts will be made to engage with Local Government to help build its capacity and capability in heritage management, particularly in support of its role in preserving heritage streetscapes and encouraging identification of local places to which the Local Historic Heritage Code will be applied in a Local Provisions Schedule (LPS).

Heritage Priorities


Minister's Expectation:

- *Continue to implement A Plan to Evolve the Tasmanian Heritage Register (2020-2025) and maintain a strategic approach to ensure places of State significance are entered to the Register. This includes better management of legacy issues regarding boundaries and titles, an ongoing focus on strengthening the stories of existing entries and addressing gaps in the Register.*
- *Advocate and support the development of skills and capacity in relation to the sound management of historic heritage including across the Tasmanian building and construction sector.*
- *Strengthen the relationship with owners of places entered on the Register, to support them to elevate and activate their listed places.*
- *Continue to build the capacity of local planning authorities to manage places and precincts of local heritage significance. This includes strengthening efforts to share resources and skills as well as actively work to improve communications between the sectors.*
- *Provide an advocacy role in promoting and supporting owners, tourism and business operators, property developers and local government to increase investment in Tasmania's built heritage, with a particular focus on leveraging the State's built heritage.*
- *Maintain a leadership role in both the State and National heritage sectors and maintain collaborative and supportive relationships with key sector stakeholders, including the operators of key sites, local planning authorities, the National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) and the Tasmanian sites included in the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage Property.*

The Council accepts these heritage priorities, which also are included within the Council's recently updated rolling three-year Strategic Plan.

Period of this Statement of Intent

This Statement of Intent takes effect from the date of signing below, until amended or revoked by the incumbent Minister.



Ms Brett Torossi
Chair
Tasmanian Heritage Council

Date: 18 December 2024