

Blue Mountains Heritage Advisory Committee: Minutes

Date:	Thursday, 6 August 2020	Time:	1:02pm to 3:24pm
Location:	Virtual meeting via Zoom		
Chair:	Kim Barrett (Councillor Van der Kley opened the meeting but asked Kim Barrett to Chair in order to run the Zoom meeting. This meeting was held via Zoom due to the Covid-19 situation)	Deputy Chair:	Councillor Kerry Brown
Present:	<u>Committee Members:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Chris Van der Kley • Cr Kerry Brown • David Payne • Elizabeth Burgess • Elizabeth Saxton • Jan Koperberg • Rod Stowe • Ross Ingram • Ruth Longdin 	<u>Observers:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kim Barrett, BMCC Manager City Planning • Sara Reilly, BMCC Senior Heritage Planner • Senthil Kasiannan, BMCC Heritage Planner • Rachelle Schubert, BMCC Cultural Heritage Officer • Christo Aitken, BMCC Heritage Advisor <p><i>Item 8 – RMS Update on the Great Western Highway upgrade project</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pete Styles, Roads and Maritime Services, Project Development Manager for Medlow Bath • Jonathon Blizzard, Roads and Maritime Service, Environmental Lead - Great Western Highway upgrade • Kirsten Fischer, Transport for NSW, Program Director - Great Western Highway upgrade • Kate Walsh, Transport for NSW, Manager Communications - Great Western Highway upgrade 	
Apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Low • Juliana Swatko • Kevin Smith • Ron Powell • Suzanne Mitchell 		
TRIM File:	F05752 – 20/173790		

Speaker	Comments	Actions:
Item 1 – Meeting Commencement		
Chair	Cr Van der Kley opened the meeting at 1.02pm.	
Item 2 – Acknowledgement of Country		
Item 3 – Welcome and Apologies		
Chair	Apologies were accepted from John Low, Juliana Swatko, Kevin Smith, Ron Powell and Suzanne Mitchell .	
Item 4 – Confirmation of Previous Minutes		
Chair	<p>The Heritage Advisory Committee confirmed the minutes from the previous ordinary meeting held 7 May 2020, and also the minutes from the out of session meeting held 16 July 2020.</p> <p>Moved by Cr Van der Kley and seconded by Ross Ingram</p>	1. ACTION: Publish the previous minutes on Council website.
Item 5 – Declaration of any Conflicts of Interest		
Chair	No declarations were made.	
Item 6 – Local Heritage Assistance Fund		
Rachelle Schubert	<p>Rachelle Schubert advised that preparations had commenced for the second year of the Local Heritage Assistance Fund program, and proposed to continue the focus on contributory buildings within the newly listed Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs), that were previously Period Housing Areas.</p> <p>The Heritage Advisory Committee discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was general consensus for funding to again be directed towards works that contribute to improving and enhancing the streetscape values of the new HCAs, however heritage properties within the existing HCAs could also still be considered. Ruth Longdin suggested town centres as a potential focus for future years of the program. The Committee nominated Ruth Longdin and Elizabeth Saxton to this year's Selection Panel for the Local Heritage Assistance Fund. 	
Item 7 – HoWS App		
Sara Reilly	Sara Reilly provided an update on the HoWS App and the timeline for the project.	2. ACTION: Sara Reilly to provide Ruth Longdin with a brief for The Botanists

Speaker	Comments	Actions:
	<p>The Heritage Advisory Committee discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruth Longdin provided an update on The Botanists Way trail, and noted efforts to finding an easily accessible track. • Elizabeth Burgess nominated herself to prepare content for the Bulls Camp site. • Sara Reilly discussed splitting the trail into multiple smaller trails, and there was agreement that given the selection of sites, an Upper Mountains trail, a Lower Mountains trail, and The Botanists Way trail would be included on the HoWS App. • Jan Koperberg queried who would arrange photographs, and Sara Reilly suggested using Objective Connect as a repository to initially determine any gaps. • Christo Aitken recommended <i>On Suspect Terrain</i> as a resource to Ruth Longdin. 	<p>Way trail.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. ACTION: Rachelle Schubert to look into options for a separate Objective Connect folder to house the HoWS App photos. 4. ACTION: All text, images and audio for the HoWS App to be finalised prior to the November regular HAC meeting. 5. ACTION: Sara Reilly to confirm via email to the Committee, the timing, process for uploading photos, and the details of the smaller trails.
Item 8 – RMS Update on the Great Western Highway upgrade project		
	<p>Pete Styles, Project Development Manager for Medlow Bath and Jonathon Blizzard, Environmental Lead at RMS, provided an update on the Great Western Highway upgrade project. Kirsten Fischer, Program Director and Kate Walsh, Manager Communications at Transport for NSW were also in attendance for this agenda item.</p> <p>The Heritage Advisory Committee discussed:</p> <p>1. Medlow Bath</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pete Styles provided a status update on Medlow Bath, noting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ direct impacts on heritage items not forecasted, including the Gatekeepers Cottage; ○ constraints due to the stone wall; ○ heritage assessment was still to occur; and ○ strategic designs were being worked through. • After discussion, it was confirmed that the above mentioned stone wall is that which is within the road corridor, a few metres behind the boundary to the Hydro Majestic Hotel, and Pete Styles noted that the design would reinforce the protection of the wall in recognition of its importance. • Pete Styles further noted that discussions would occur to decide whether a pedestrian bridge would be constructed which would link the Mazda dealership with the train station, and then continue down to Railway Parade. • Sara Reilly queried the conservation of item MB015 Avenue of Trees, where the original 	

Speaker	Comments	Actions:
	<p>Radiata Pines have recently been replaced with <i>thuja plicata</i> by Council at considerable cost and care; Pete Styles advised that arborist advice would be sought, but that the trees would be relocated if possible, perhaps to the median strip.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pete Styles noted that the community would need to indicate the preferred tree, that work was still to occur concerning turn bay movements, and that plantings within the median strip would need to be considered. • Cr Brown indicated that <i>thuja plicata</i> were large trees and therefore unlikely to be appropriate for the median strip, and suggested RMS consult with Sue Bell at Council. • Kim Barrett confirmed that Sue Bell is also in charge of the Street Tree Master Plan. • Christo Aitken noted that Chris Betteridge had been engaged to select a more stable tree that would have the landmark status of the radiatas, but advised that there was concern regarding soil condition. • Christo Aitken queried whether a tunnel underneath the highway had been considered, rather than a pedestrian bridge; Pete Styles advised that the location was unsuitable due to its location in relation to the curtilage of the Hydro Majestic Hotel. • Pete Styles noted that options for a pedestrian bridge to improve safety and accessibility were being considered, and queried whether the design should be drawn from that of the previous pedestrian truss bridge for which evidence has been difficult to locate, or whether the bridge should be more slender in its visual design. • Cr Van der Kley suggested liaising with the Blue Mountains Historical Society, and Ross Ingram confirmed that he would seek and provide any evidence of the previous bridge. • Kim Barrett queried the timeframe for communicating with Council, and Pete Styles advised that the environmental assessment to be developed would be on display next year for Medlow Bath, and would require formal briefings and interactions with Council at specific times. • Jonathon Blizzard confirmed that Council would receive notification of the formal interactions, but noted the intention to liaise with Council prior to the statutory consultation. • Kim Barrett noted that it would be ideal to bring the matter back to the Heritage Advisory Committee at another meeting, and be provided with more than the statutory 21 days to prepare a response. • Pete Styles advised that indeed more conversations could be had moving forward, and Jonathon Blizzard noted that issues could be flagged with the Committee as they arise. • Cr Van der Kley noted that an additional Out of Session meeting may be required. • Pete Styles advised that the vibration impact on heritage items was most likely of greatest concern, and Kim Barrett noted archaeological deposits could potentially be of significance. 	<p>6. ACTION: Ross Ingram to research previous pedestrian truss bridge and provide any evidence found.</p>

Speaker	Comments	Actions:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elizabeth Burgess noted that the visual impact of a pedestrian bridge was also a consideration, and queried whether the project's urban designer had been appointed; Pete Styles confirmed they had not and that the urban design strategy was being finalised, whilst Jonathon Blizzard noted the opportunity to provide comment on the urban design principles. • Pete Styles advised that construction for Medlow Bath is expected to commence mid to late 2022, but noted the pedestrian bridge would not need to be delivered at that time. • Cr Brown queried how long construction would take, and Pete Styles noted there were variable factors but probably around 18 months as an estimate. • Elizabeth Burgess queried whether consideration was given to using the existing traffic lights as opposed to installing the pedestrian bridge, and Pete Styles confirmed that the issue there concerned disabled access and improving amenity. <p>2. Pulpit Hill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pete Styles noted that work on the strategic design is continuing, however the Explorers Tree remains a key constraint and would be definitively impacted, noting project issues with the condition, accessibility and location of the tree. • Kim Barrett advised that Council had sought to understand the extent of the impact, and had queried how far the corridor extends into the Pulpit Hill precinct given that it is not just the Explorer's Tree which is of significance but the wider area, and noted that this needs to be understood in order to discuss future interpretative opportunities. • Ruth Longdin explained that further to the tree itself, also of significance are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the gravesites behind; ○ the site as a signpost to Nellies Glen Road; ○ the many memorials left there from numerous generations throughout history; and ○ the fact that people have visited there for hundreds of years. • Christo Aitken noted that the tree has had a number of values, is a landmark and is of symbolic importance; and suggested that RMS use the existing Conservation Management Plan for the precinct, to frame its options. • Pete Styles advised that there is quite a bit of work to be done that will inform the broader design package, and Jonathon Blizzard noted that suggestions for preservation would be considered. • Kim Barrett advised that Council had undertaken its own investigations to a point and that GML Heritage had prepared the Conservation Management Plan, but noted sharing the details of the alignment would help to an extent. • Pete Styles noted limitations to moving the highway to avoid the Explorer's Tree, and 	

Speaker	Comments	Actions:
	<p>Ruth Longdin advised that if it stayed, all of the other many items of significance would also be wiped out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pete Styles confirmed the commitment to work with Council and the Committee, and Jonathon Blizzard advised that the more information the Council and Committee could provide, the better. • Elizabeth Burgess noted that it would be beneficial to understand the early design process, and Pete Styles advised that it was an iterative process. • Ruth Longdin offered to meet with RMS to do a walkthrough on site. • Kim Barrett advised that information could be provided to RMS, and noted that the site is also the location of an interpretative project recently completed by Council that looks at the Traditional Owners' perspective of the colonial experience. • Sara Reilly confirmed that Council is finalising the listing of the precinct as a heritage item on the Local Environmental Plan, and that the upgrade would destroy at least nine lots associated with that. • Pete Styles agreed that further consultation on the above was necessary, but noted the unlikelihood of saving everything, particularly given any option to keep the tree would require the construction of massive retaining walls which would be at substantial cost. • Cr Van der Kley noted aesthetic implications of substantive retaining walls, and suggested that RMS show the community modelling of those proposed walls. • Ruth Longdin noted that memorial issues are a trigger point. • Kim Barrett advised that notwithstanding the differing community views, Council continues to receive letters on a very regular basis from people who have travelled specifically to see the tree, and given the substantial amount of work undertaken on the site as a whole, there are archaeological and interpretation issues as well. • Ruth Longdin noted a Transport for NSW report on the National Parks estate, and advised that the triple pressures of the Great Western Highway upgrade, Warragamba Dam and Western Sydney Airport, could impact the World Heritage listing of the Blue Mountains and subsequently have detrimental impacts on tourism. • Kim Barrett queried the timeframe for Pulpit Hill, and Pete Styles advised that the Katoomba to Medlow Bath section was not as progressed as that of Medlow Bath, but he was not aware of a defined timeframe. • Christo Aitken queried as an option, an identical bridge to the one proposed on the western side, and Pete Styles advised that it was not a simple decision but the design would have to minimise the size of the retaining walls, the footprint and the overall impact. 	<p>7. ACTION: Confirm with Kate Walsh the details for the submission of information to RMS.</p>

Speaker	Comments	Actions:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christo Aitken queried whether RMS still had a heritage advisor, and Pete Styles confirmed that there was Jonathon Blizzard and Denis Gojak, as well as an Aboriginal heritage team, that are consulted with and who advise on options. Christo Aitken queried whether the Committee would receive the RMS heritage team's comments; Pete Styles noted that he assumes that their heritage team would be involved in the next meeting, and Jonathon Blizzard advised that he would also brief them on today's discussion. Pete Styles noted that consultation was ongoing concerning Medlow Bath and welcomed further comments. Cr Van der Kley thanked the RMS and TfNSW representatives for attending the meeting and noted the Committee is looking forward to working together on this matter. 	8. ACTION: RMS to attend another HAC meeting at a date to be confirmed.
Item 8 – HAC Annual Report		
Kim Barrett	Discussion of the Annual Report for 2019/20 was deferred to the next meeting.	9. ACTION: HAC Annual Report to be included on the next agenda.
Item 9 – Heritage Strategy		
All	Discussion of the Heritage Strategy was deferred to the next meeting.	10. ACTION: Heritage Strategy to be included on the next agenda.
Item 10 – General Business		
10.1 Mount York		
Ruth Longdin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ruth Longdin queried when a detailed update would be provided on the impacts on cultural heritage from the bushfires and floods. Kim Barrett confirmed that the information had been requested, and noted the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic had hindered the provision of that update. Ruth Longdin noted in 2013 when working on the Heritage Reserve at Mt York that she observed archaeology close to the surface, and wondered whether a site survey could now be undertaken. Kim Barrett noted that Council had an opportunity to apply for funding as part of the bushfire recovery fund, however the outcome was not yet known. 	
10.2 Other General Business		

Speaker	Comments	Actions:
	<p>1. Bonnie Doon Reserve Track</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ruth Longdin requested that her previous CSR regarding Bonnie Doon be followed up. 	11. ACTION: Follow up Ruth Longdin's CSR regarding Bonnie Doon.
	<p>2. Pulpit Hill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elizabeth Burgess queried whether Council might pursue listing the Pulpit Hill precinct as a state heritage item. Kim Barrett noted that this would need to be programmed after the current Heritage Review and the update to the Heritage Strategy, but noted that the submission the Committee will prepare for RMS could assist that pursuit. Christo Aitken suggested using the Conservation Management Plan to initiate discussions with Heritage NSW. 	12. ACTION: All information to be included in the submission to RMS to be uploaded to Objective Connect, or by email to Rachelle Schubert.
	<p>3. Katoomba Falls Kiosk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ruth Longdin requested an update on Katoomba Falls Kiosk. Kim Barrett noted that the usual standing agenda item updating the Committee on Council's heritage assets had been deferred due to today's full agenda, but advised of the completion of the internal works and internal painting of the building, that were funded through Council's Asset Rehabilitation Fund and signed off by Sara Reilly as minor works. Ruth Longdin queried current thoughts on renting the property, and Kim Barrett advised that options were still under consideration. Cr Brown advised that her impression was works were taking longer than expected, but noted internal discussions on potential uses for the property should be extended to the Committee. 	13. ACTION: Katoomba Falls Kiosk to be included on the next meeting agenda.
	<p>4. Athol House, Lawson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elizabeth Burgess noted that it was good to see works progressing on Athol House; and Sara Reilly confirmed that the Asset Rehabilitation Fund also funded the works on Athol House, and she was attending an inspection immediately after today's meeting to see how those works had progressed. 	
	<p>5. Chelmsford Bridge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ruth Longdin requested an update on the flood impacts to Chelmsford Bridge. Cr Van der Kley advised that he had been advised the site will potentially stay closed for at least another nine months to replace the culvert and due to the dangers of further landslides. 	14. ACTION: Seek update on Chelmsford Bridge.

Speaker	Comments	Actions:
	6. Cemeteries Strategic Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christo Aitken noted his involvement in the inception meeting to develop Council's Cemeteries Strategic Plan, and advised that he had recommended consultation with the Committee to occur early in the consultation program. 	
Item 11 – Next Meeting Date & Items		
Chair	Next meeting currently scheduled for Thursday, 5 November 2020.	
Item 12 – Meeting Closure		
Chair	Meeting closed at 3:24pm.	