

Council Policy

Moveable Heritage Management Policy

(as adopted by Council on 28 May 2019)

Policy Statement

This Policy supports Council's role of identifying and protecting objects of heritage significance to the Northern Beaches. It assists in the collection, documentation and interpretation of objects of moveable heritage which can provide historical information about the Northern Beaches, its development and the people and their stories which are integral to understanding its past.

Principles

This Policy adopts the Movable Heritage Principles issued by the NSW Heritage Office:

1. Movable heritage relates to places and people.
2. Educating the community about how to identify and manage moveable heritage, assists in conserving items and collections.
3. Assess the heritage significance of movable items and collections before making decisions on managing them.
4. Recognise the significance of indigenous moveable heritage to indigenous communities and its unique role in cultural maintenance, cultural renewal and community esteem.
5. Retain moveable heritage within its relationship to places and people, unless there is no prudent or feasible alternative to its removal.
6. Remove moveable heritage from its relationship to places and people only when the items and collections are under threat and this is the only means of safeguarding or investigating significance.
7. Provide community access to moveable heritage and encourage interpretation.
8. Document moveable heritage.
9. Acquire movable heritage where there is no alternative to removal, where this serves clearly defined collecting policies.
10. Reinststate or return items and collections to places and people when circumstances change.

Scope and application

This policy applies to all employees, agents and officers of Northern Beaches Council, as well as members of the Places for People Strategic Reference Group and all Councillors.

References and related documents

Objects in their Place - An Introduction to Moveable Heritage, NSW Heritage Office, 1999

Moveable Heritage Principles, NSW Heritage Office and Ministry for the Arts Moveable Heritage Project, Sydney 1999

The Illustrated Burra Charter, Australia, ICOMOS, Marquis-Kyle, P and Walker, M, 1994

Definitions

This Policy adopts the NSW Heritage Office definition of moveable heritage:

moveable heritage is a term used to define any natural or manufactured object of heritage significance (but excludes archaeological relics found underground or underwater).

An **object of movable heritage** is not a **heritage item**, as defined in Council's Local Environmental Plans (Manly LEP 2013, Warringah LEP 2011 and Pittwater LEP 2014).

For this reason, the term **object** is used in this Policy to refer to items and objects of movable heritage and this term covers **all types** of movable heritage (including paper-based and 3D objects). **Object** is also the term used by the NSW Heritage Office in the definition of movable heritage.

Responsible Officer

Executive Manager – Strategic & Place Planning

Review Date

November 2028.

Revision History

Revision	Date	Change	TRIM Ref
1	12/11/2024	Review of Policy reported to Council. Council maintained the policy in its current form and resolved to receive a briefing	2019/318640
2			

POLICY DETAIL

Establishment of Movable Heritage Register

A Movable Heritage Register will be established which provides photographs and information on objects which have been assessed as being of heritage significance to the Northern Beaches. This Register will be created with a view to it being made available on-line, thereby providing increased community access to information on the heritage and history of the Northern Beaches.

The initial focus of this Register will be to record:

- moveable heritage objects, which are not yet documented in an existing collection; and
- moveable heritage objects which are in Council ownership.

The Register will not be limited by these initial priorities, being designed so that it can record and document all manner of moveable heritage, whether in Council's ownership or not.

This Register will be created in consultation with Council's Local Studies unit, to ensure compatibility with documentation of the Northern Beaches Local Studies collection.

One of the main aims of the Register is to have it available for the community to access. The Moveable Heritage Register, as a collection of objects of moveable heritage significance to the Northern Beaches, should be made available by Council as an on-line searchable database (similar to the current historic photographs database, currently provided by Local Studies).

Determining Significance to the Northern Beaches

An object of moveable heritage must be assessed against criteria to determine whether it is of heritage significance to the Northern Beaches area. The basis for this assessment will be the Northern Beaches Thematic History (to be completed 2019) along with the Northern Beaches Historical Themes which will result from this study.

To be listed and recorded in Council's Moveable Heritage Register, the object must be able to show or represent a particular period of development, particular event or other link with the past history and development of the Northern Beaches area.

The identification of Northern Beaches historical themes will guide this determination of local heritage significance. An example of this is the current museum policy adopted by the Manly Art Gallery & Museum (MAG&M), which collects museum pieces which specifically reflect the historic theme of beach culture. While this is currently focussed on Manly, the beach theme is prevalent throughout the whole Northern Beaches area and is only one of the historic themes important in the development of this area.

Relationship to Existing Moveable Heritage Collections

The Moveable Heritage Register will complement existing collections of moveable heritage managed by Council. These include the Museum Objects collection managed by MAG&M and the paper based collections (e.g. photographs, maps, plans, books, documents, memorabilia) managed by Local Studies units within Manly, Dee Why and Mona Vale Libraries.

Relationship to Collection Management and Gift Policy

The Moveable Heritage Register will sit under the general Northern Beaches Collection Management and Gift Policy, which contains detailed guidelines for collection development, acquisitions, gifts, preservation and care and collection access. The establishment of the Moveable Heritage Register will be guided by these Collection Management and Gift Policy guidelines, which provide more detailed consideration of these aspects of collection management.

On-going Management of Register

The Register of Moveable Heritage will require on-going management. After initial set-up, the addition of existing objects in Council ownership will be an on-going process of documentation and inclusion in the Register.

As new objects are offered to Council, acquired by Council or otherwise come to Council's attention for addition to the Register, they will need to be assessed to determine if they meet the heritage significance criteria for addition to the Register.

Once fully established, with an on-line presence, there will be on-going management related to the assessment and documentation of potential new objects to be added to the Register. While assessment of new objects will need to be done by Council, there are significant opportunities to utilise volunteers for the documentation and addition of movable heritage objects onto the Register.

Guidelines for future acquisitions

Moveable heritage objects considered for acquisition by Council will first be assessed to determine if the object meets the criteria for heritage significance (i.e. does it possess heritage significance in the context of the Northern Beaches). Also considered will be the rarity of the object, with priority being given to objects which fill gaps in Council's moveable heritage collection.

Cost will also be a factor, along with practical issues such as storage considerations. In some instances, Council may consider photographically recording the object for the Register, without purchasing it.

Guidelines for future donations

Donations from individuals and organisations are encouraged, however they will also need to be assessed as to whether they meet the criteria for listing on the Moveable Heritage Register. If a donated object is determined not to meet the heritage significance criteria, or at some time in the future is considered to no longer be needed on the Register, then Council may dispose of such objects appropriately.

Storage

Objects identified in the Moveable Heritage Register, if not displayed in a Council building, should be stored in a controlled environment appropriate for objects of heritage significance.

Display of Moveable Heritage Objects

Where possible, Council should celebrate moveable heritage in its custodianship, by placing them on display in Council owned buildings. Where this is not possible, Council should investigate allocation of a building space for the permanent storage and display of Northern Beaches moveable heritage. In doing so, Council will increase community access to history and heritage resources and increase community awareness of the importance of remembering the past history of an area.

Budget allocation

To assist in the on-going enhancement of Council's moveable heritage collection, a budget allocation should be made available each year for the acquisition of important objects which reflect the past history and development of the Northern Beaches.

On-going review and reporting

This Policy should be reviewed two (2) years after its adoption, to ensure that it is achieving its stated purpose. After the initial period, this Policy should be reviewed every four (4) years or sooner, should the need be identified.