

SUMMARY PAPER

# FINDING COMMUNITY VOICES

*IN OUR PEOPLE, CULTURE & PLACE:  
A PLAN TO SUSTAIN BALLARAT'S HERITAGE 2017-2030*



# INTRODUCTION:

## SHAPING A NEW HERITAGE PLAN

### DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

**The heritage plan is not just another Council strategy, but a plan of action – detailing tangible, on-the-ground projects and programs for delivery by the City of Ballarat and key stakeholders up to 2030.**

The plan recognises that the responsibility for heritage is shared, and so its initiatives have been shaped by a new, **participatory planning approach** that puts local people and stakeholders in the driver's seat. This participatory approach has come about through Council's Historic Urban Landscape or 'HUL' program. The HUL's holistic way of **aligning conservation goals with social and economic goals** also means that the plan crosses many aspects of city management not typically associated with heritage – such as tourism, the skyline, storytelling and economic regeneration, to name just a few. This meant that a broad range of people had to be part of developing the plan, both including and in addition to Council.

Q1  
Without people, 'heritage' has no meaning to the future  
Mustn't lose places of social & community significance

### WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY PLANNING?

Participatory engagement is different to traditional consultation processes that often focus on critiquing status-quo projects, concepts and plans prepared by industry professionals and governing authorities. Instead, participatory planning invites stakeholders to contribute at all stages of development, from scoping through to implementation, in such a way that meaningfully incorporates their ideas and aspirations with technical studies and analysis. Participatory engagement is effectively the HUL approach in action – empowering everyday people to guide the future of where they live and work, by putting them at the centre of planning processes. This is how the heritage plan came to be.

# COMMUNITY VOICES IN THE HERITAGE PLAN

## Who was involved?

Since the City of Ballarat signed up to UNESCO's international HUL pilot program in 2013, many people have been part of a long-term conversation that helped shape the heritage plan, including scoping what it should cover and evolving new projects for delivery. These initiatives have been developed through extensive participatory engagement in the form of:

- Public workshops and symposiums
- Collaboration with local and regional key stakeholders, members of the wider Ballarat community, a range of professional organisations, academic institutions and experts, and across all departments of the City of Ballarat.

## Timeline and outcomes of participation

Ballarat is a city that is home to many diverse peoples and communities, each contributing their own culture, ideas and aspirations to Ballarat's identity. These myriad perspectives were an important part of focused conversations about Ballarat's heritage held between 2013 and 2017, which were central to developing the heritage plan.

These conversations happened in several formats and engaged a range of local, state and national communities and stakeholders, as well as international experts involved with the HUL program. The wealth of information and expertise gained from this approach has underpinned the background evidence and three priority areas set out in *Our People, Culture & Place: A plan to sustain Ballarat's heritage 2017-2030*, which are (in no particular order):

1. **Regeneration**
2. **Celebrating and inspiring with Ballarat's stories**
3. **Managing change and safeguarding heritage**

## PRIORITY AREAS IDENTIFIED THROUGH PARTICIPATORY PROCESS



### REGENERATION

People said that Ballarat's heritage is core to the city's future, as it encompasses all of the many layers that make Ballarat, Ballarat. For example, its buildings, views, landmarks, trees and landscape setting are each part of its local heritage identity. All of these things are seen as attributes that could be better utilised as a means of reinvigorating local social and economic activities, as well as for underpinning how change can occur sustainably across the city.



### CELEBRATING AND INSPIRING WITH BALLARAT'S STORIES

People said that telling Ballarat's stories was of critical importance. They acknowledged that Ballarat's diverse communities provide a unique opportunity to interpret the municipality as an intercultural and continually evolving place, including its Aboriginal cultural heritage. Local stories were also seen as a means of sustaining Ballarat's tourism and cultural and creative industries, which could be better connected with each other and with the City of Ballarat.



### ENHANCING POLICY AND PRACTICE

People said that the HUL approach was logical in its ability to unite traditionally siloed aspects of heritage (e.g. cultural, natural and historical values) towards aligning conservation, social and economic goals. Integrating the HUL approach into the City of Ballarat's everyday practice and strategic policy was seen as essential to the success of implementing HUL in Ballarat. Particularly so for guiding community engagement, decision-making and overarching goals for whole-of-city management.



### MANAGING CHANGE AND SAFEGUARDING HERITAGE

People said that both residents and developers often find the regulatory system in Ballarat difficult to navigate when it comes to heritage, and that they did not think that community voices were evident in the planning process. They felt that an understanding of local place identity should be a platform for best practice decision making, and that regulatory controls should be applied to more holistically safeguard the different elements that contribute to heritage character. This includes urban, natural, historic and Aboriginal cultural heritage and much, much more.

# WHO PARTICIPATED AND WHAT THEY TOLD US



## ACCESSING OUR REGIONAL HERITAGE

**Organisers** Public Record Office of Victoria, City of Ballarat, Regional Development Victoria (funding body)

### WORKSHOP

**Participants** Representatives of 12 community historical associations

#### Topics and Objectives

- Identify needs for and gather ideas about Ballarat's cultural heritage offering.

### INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

**Participants** Representatives of 13 professional cultural heritage and tourism organisations, including:

Art Gallery of Ballarat, Ballarat Archive Centre (Public Record Office of Victoria), Ballarat Mechanics Institute, Library Services including the Australiana Room collection, M.A.D.E, Gold Museum, Sovereign Hill, Federation University Australia, Geoffrey Blainey Research Centre, Child and Family Services, City of Ballarat Administrative Archives and Historical Collection, Wathuarung Aboriginal Corporation, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, City of Ballarat Heritage, Events and Arts teams and Ballarat Regional Tourism.

#### Topics and Objectives

Discuss their:

- Role, purpose and vision;
- Specific functions within cultural heritage;
- Collection-specific needs;
- Physical and digital public access needs, and;
- Staffing and volunteer needs.

### SURVEY

**Participants** 47 individuals with research affiliations, including:

Researchers of Ballarat and local history (61%);  
 Researchers of family history (52%);  
 Members of professional and volunteer historical research user groups in Ballarat (54%); and further afield around Victoria and Australia (46%).

#### Topics and Objectives

- Understanding needs and assessing suitability of current levels of access to Ballarat's historical collections.

2013



2015



## BALLARAT IMAGINE

**Organisers** City of Ballarat

### WHOLE-OF-CITY CONVERSATION

Including workshops, social media posts, postcards and websites, as well as advertising at events, markets, shops, cafes, local community groups and mail outs to all residents across the city

**Participants** Approximately 6500 local community members and stakeholders

#### Topics and Objectives

- Set community vision for the Ballarat Strategy;
- Starting point for the HUL participatory engagement methodology.



## INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 1 UNESCO'S RECOMMENDATION ON THE HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPE

**Organisers** WHITRAP, Deakin University (CHCAP), City of Ballarat

### PUBLIC EVENT

**Participants** 85 individuals, representing:

Australia's leading Universities, Heritage Council of Victoria, State and Local Governments, Ballarat City Councillors, Traditional Owners, Growth Area Authority, Sovereign Hill Museums Association, Ballarat China Community Committee, developers, WHITRAP (China), Australia ICOMOS, heritage consultancies, National Trust of Australia (Vic), Ballarat Heritage Advisory Committee, Ballarat Strategy Reference Group, Ballarat Imagine Community Consultation group.

#### Topics and Objectives

- Discuss HUL and initial findings of Context study (2013) and Ballarat Imagine (Ballarat Strategy) community consultation.



# WE LOVE

## Historic heart

'Elegance and beauty of the historic and vibrant streetscapes.'

## Special places

'It's a great city and lots of places to go like little athletics and the art gallery.'



## Sense of community

'Wonderful spirit of a country town. Clean and tidy. Friendly people.'

## Sense of history

'I love its history, which has included 6 generations of my family.'

## Lake Wendouree

'I love Lake Wendouree (it's the best lake EVER!).'



## Historic streetscapes and street trees

'...big and leafy in summer, bursting with colour in autumn, sculptured when bare in winter, quick to flourish in spring.'



## Views and setting

'Feeling of spaciousness and being close to forested and open farmland country.'

## Cultural experiences

'Richness and diversity of its cultural life.'



## Parks and gardens

'Cycling through lovely parks and streets.'





**INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 2  
PARTICIPATE, IMAGINE, INNOVATE:  
REVITALISING HISTORIC CITIES –  
UNESCO'S RECOMMENDATION ON THE  
HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPE**

**Organisers** Federation University Australia (CRIC), City of Ballarat, Deakin University, WHITRAP

**DAY 1: EXPERT AND PRACTITIONER WORKSHOPS**

**Participants** Approximately 300 individuals over two days – day one included representatives from:

Architectural firms, Australia ICOMOS, Australian National University, Ballarat Mechanics Institute, Ballarat City Councillors, Centre for Multicultural Youth, City of Ballarat (cross-departments), Deakin University, Federation University Australia (cross departments), heritage consultancies, Heritage Council of Victoria, participatory design and place-making consultants, local community networks, Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria, Melbourne University, Metropolitan Planning Authority, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Regional Development Victoria, Regional Local Governments, Regional Tourism bodies (Ballarat, Daylesford, Central Goldfields), Ritsumeikan University (Japan), Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Sovereign Hill Museums Association, Tongji University (China), Traditional Owners, WHITRAP (China).

**Topics and Objectives**

Form concrete proposals arising from community interest and the strategic principles of HUL, as developed by UNESCO, including:

- Vulnerability and resilience;
- Planning opportunities;
- Economic futures.

**DAY 2: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOPS**

**Participants** Approximately 300 individuals over two days – day two included a range of local community members, such as residents and business owners, in addition to many of the experts and practitioners from day one.

**Topics and Objectives**

An opportunity for community members to discuss their vision with experts and practitioners for the future of Ballarat as a whole, as well as change in their local areas.

2015

2016



**BALLARAT INTERPRETATION FRAMEWORK**

**Organisers** City of Ballarat, Ballarat Heritage Advisory Committee (BHAC)

**WORKSHOP**

**Participants** Approximately 50 cultural heritage and tourism industry professionals and community members, including representatives from:

City of Ballarat (all departments), National Trust (Ballarat branch) representatives, Ballarat Archives Centre, Local documentary film makers, Local artists, Art Gallery of Ballarat, Public Record Office Victoria, Ballarat Heritage Advisory Committee, Sovereign Hill Museums Association, Ballarat Regional Tourism, Ballarat City Councillors, local participatory design and placemaking consultants, local heritage groups, Federation University Australia.

**Topics and Objectives**

Answer the question 'What is needed in order for interpretation in Ballarat to flourish?', by:

- Building on the Accessing Our Regional Heritage Needs Analysis 2013 results;
- Responding to community symposia/workshops (HUL) with community direction to 'tell our stories';
- Building on discussion at BHAC interpretation working group and BHAC vision 'Ballarat's future as a world-class heritage place and experience is paramount'.





## SMART CITIES: BUILDING A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

**Organisers** Federation University Australia (CeRDI), City of Ballarat

### WORKSHOP

**Participants** Representatives from:

Federation University Australia, multicultural organisations, local artists and galleries, museums sector, local ICT industries, local community networks, Primary Care Partnerships, teaching/education sector, State Government (archives sector), Traditional Owners, Regional Development Victoria, heritage sector, City of Ballarat (cross-departmental), Library services.

### Topics and Objectives

Capturing ideas and shaping future directions that help build a Smart City, as a collaborative strategy for future progression of HUL and Visualising Ballarat processes and tools, including:

- Aligning Ballarat with international imperatives for combining technology, creativity and community to create a Smart City;
- Demonstrating portal prototypes and active portals;
- Sharing current research insights;
- Setting the vision and strategy for transforming Visualising Ballarat.



## COLLABORATING WITH COUNCIL'S ADVISORY COMMITTEES

**Organisers** City of Ballarat

### SERIES OF WORKSHOPS

*A series of workshops held between 2016-2017 with the Ballarat Heritage Advisory Committee, Disability Advisory Committee and Koorie Engagement Advisory Group to develop the preliminary and final draft heritage plan reports.*

**Participants** Ballarat Heritage Advisory Committee, Disability Advisory Committee and Koorie Engagement Advisory Group.

### Topics and Objectives

Consolidate participatory planning feedback to date into specific programs and deliverables in the preliminary and final draft versions of the heritage plan.



## CITY OF BALLARAT AND STAKEHOLDER PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

**Organisers** City of Ballarat

### SERIES OF DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS

Over 100 stakeholder and internal City of Ballarat project development meetings, to further refine actions for delivery in the heritage plan.

**Participants** People and teams from departments across the City of Ballarat, as well as representatives from local cultural heritage and tourism organisations key to delivering the heritage plan.

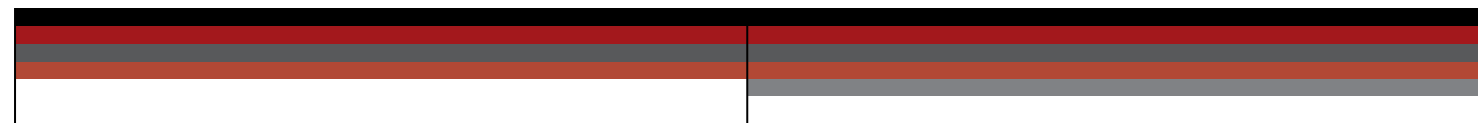
### Topics and Objectives

Setting up a delivery framework for implementing the heritage plan, by:

- Testing ideas, establishing commitment/support/funding and other project requirements;
- Identifying opportunities to integrate with existing or proposed work (value-add) where applicable.

2016

2017





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