



*The Voice of Heritage
for New Zealand*

Patron: Dame Anne Salmond, DBR, FRSNZ, FBA
2013 New Zealander of the Year

**Submission to Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage
Draft Policy for Government Management of Cultural Heritage
5 November 2021**

Context of this submission

This submission is made by Historic Places Aotearoa Inc. (HPA) which welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Draft Policy for Government Management of Cultural Heritage. (PGMCH)

The reasons for making this submission are that HPA promotes the preservation of historic places in Aotearoa New Zealand. HPA also has an interest to promote the education of the public in the appreciation of heritage values.

HPA has reviewed the Draft PGMCH and considered that the review of the current 2004 Policy is long overdue. The Crown owns many items of New Zealand's cultural heritage value and for many years the management of these has been ad hoc and the auditing of the Crown agencies has been non-existent.

This has resulted in the loss of cultural heritage items including the Aniwanīwa Visitors' Centre, DoC huts, hospital buildings and nurses' homes, classrooms, courthouses, and post offices.

The Crown should be seen as a leader in the management and use of our cultural heritage.

Scope of this submission

HPA welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Draft Policy for Government Management of Cultural Heritage.

Our response is focussed on key content areas in the draft policy, as the questions posed in the discussion document are directed more towards state sector organisations with cultural heritage assets in their care.

General comments

HPA is supportive of the objective, principles and policy direction outlined in the draft policy document. We consider that it represents a positive improvement on the current policy.

We note that this draft policy presents a major step-change for many state sector organisations and for many it will take time to get to grips with the Policy and agencies will need to commit resources and new budget towards the implementation of the Policy. Therefore, a timeframe for implementation of the policy is critical. This should cover the at least the following items:-

1. When an inventory of heritage places owned by the agency must be completed
2. When condition assessments and management plans must be completed by.

The key to the implementation of the Policy will be in how the state sector agencies are guided in their management of the cultural heritage assets that they own, funding that is allocated to these places, and how their management of these places is monitored in the future.

MCH or others will need to provide guidance documents and educational resources to agencies to support them in the implementation of the Policy. HPA would recommend the development of best practice guide as a future appendix to the Policy. This will allow the Policy to be kept simple, clear and concise. The guide can then be developed to assist agencies to enable full compliance with the Policy.

Similarly, resources will need to be created to help record and audit the agencies in the implementation of the Policy. These matters are not something that should be included in the Policy, but are critical to the success of the implementation of the Policy and need to be planned for.

We note that there is heavy reliance in the draft policy on the provision of specialist heritage advice by HNZPT and would suggest that additional resources and expertise would need to be directed to the agency in order to enable it to effectively fulfil this intended function.

HPA is supportive of the policy applying to 'all State Sector organisations' but believe that school Boards of Trustees should be linked to the Policy, rather than being specifically excluded. For many the heritage school buildings held in trust by School Boards are a key part of the cultural identity of communities.

Every 5 years schools are required to prepare 10-year property plans. These plans outline how each school expects to spend the property funding they have received from the Ministry of Education over the next 5 years and tentative projects for the subsequent 5-year period. Via this process schools should be required to review their cultural heritage inventory and report accordingly back to the Ministry of Education as per the PGMCH. The funding of this work would be a matter between the Ministry of Education and the schools.

It is also noted that for schools that require Archaeological Authorities the 5-year cycle could be linked into this same planning cycle.

Where heritage is identified by outside agencies such as Local and Territorial Authorities, government agencies should be encouraged to support approaches to schedule heritage items. In the past agencies have actively advocated against the scheduling and listing of heritage items. Recently the main block at Napier Girls' High was identified as a place to be scheduled on the Napier City Council District Plan. There was considerable pushback from the Ministry of Education. Reminding the Ministry of the 2004 policy was very helpful in advocating for them to support the scheduling.

Govt agencies should be required to seek advice from HNZPT for places scheduled in local authority district plans, but not listed by HNZPT. Not all scheduled places are listed and even important places which have recently been identified will not necessarily get onto HNZPT's list for many years because of their backlog of work.

Specific Comments

Interpretation

HPA recommends that the following notes should be added:

- Definition of Archaeological site. Suggest adding an explanation or note that reminds agencies that buildings and structures built before 1900 are also deemed to be an Archaeological site. Most people think about archaeology as being items under the ground and not things above the ground with respect to how the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act provisions relating to archaeology apply.

- Sites of significance to Maori – A comment noting that places / areas can include those with intangible value – these are really important to iwi/hapu but constantly ignored if there are no physical remains e.g., archaeological features.

Principles

Principle 6 refers to the Treaty of Waitangi but does not reference Te Tiriti o Waitangi. For Maori these are different documents with different interpretations.

Policies

HPA generally supports the principles as put forward in the draft PGMCH.

We would make the following recommendations: -

- 1 When land that contains cultural heritage is disposed of, the default position should be to have a heritage covenant added to the title with the intent to protect the cultural heritage item in perpetuity. The current wording of the Policy suggests this approach but does not set this as the default position.
- 2 All material relating to the management of cultural heritage by agencies should be deposited via a central repository and be publicly available, where appropriate – e.g., it would not be appropriate for it to be published for Defence or Justice buildings where national security interests might be compromised. This could be done in a similar way to the archaeological records held by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.
- 3 The auditing of the Policy is critical and HPA supports the annual reporting by agencies to MCH. In the past this has not occurred, and this was one of the major failures as to why the Policy did not succeed.
- 4 Rather than researching and identifying heritage places 'from time to time', HPA recommends that the policy require comprehensive research and identification of heritage places under agency care on a defined basis, e.g., this must be completed within 2 years of the Policy being implemented and then on a 5-yearly cycle.
- 5 HPA notes reference to 'periodic monitoring', and queries what this entails. We recommend the inclusion of a specific condition monitoring timeframe- e.g., this must be completed within 2 years of the Policy being implemented and then on a 5 yearly cycle.
- 6 An additional Policy needs to be added, which sets out the process by which an agency may seek an exemption from the Policy. We envisage that this should be undertaken through an application to MCH and signed off by the Minister for Arts Culture and Heritage.
The draft PGMCH states in Policy 6 that agencies must provide reasons for non-compliance. This implies an after the fact approach and will not help agencies to actively manage the exemption process.
The Policy does not advise what the implications for agencies that breach the Policy are.

Conclusion

HPA wishes to thank the Ministry for the opportunity to raise the matters outlined within this submission. We would also be more than happy to meet with Ministry officials to further discuss the matters raised if this would assist.

HPA wishes to acknowledge that they have seen the submission prepared by ICOMOS NZ and supports the content of their submission.

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

James Blackburne

President

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