

1 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy outlines Council's commitments to preserving heritage items in the City. One of the ways of achieving this is through the provision of a rate relief to owners of heritage listed properties. The Heritage Rate Relief Policy benefits owners and Council to build a relationship and encourages the conservation and maintenance of heritage listed properties in accordance with the NSW Heritage Act 1977.

2 PRINCIPLES

- Provide rate relief to owners of private properties that are listed in the Fairfield Local Environmental Plan 2013;
- Provide a fair and transparent administration of the Rate Relief Policy;
- The rate relief is to be granted automatically to eligible properties at a standard relief of 50% of the General Ordinary Rate, unless the owner chooses to decline to participate in the Heritage Rate Relief Program;
- The maximum amount of rate relief will be \$3,000 per assessment.; and
- Council reserves the right to withdraw the subsidy if it considers the item is not adequately maintained.

3 OBJECTIVES

- To promote heritage in the Fairfield Local Government Area;
- To provide a tangible benefit to owners of heritage listed properties; and
- To encourage the preservation of items of heritage significance by providing a subsidy and an incentive to the owners to adequately maintain heritage items.

4 STRATEGIES

- Inspect properties receiving the Heritage Rate Relief to ensure they qualify for the rate relief under this Policy;
- Identify if owners of heritage listed items are aware of the Heritage Rate Relief Policy and if they have utilised the benefit towards the upkeep of those items;
- Inform owners of heritage listed items and other stakeholders of the policy; and
- Maintain a centralised register of eligible properties, which is consistent with the items included on the NSW Heritage Inventory and Schedule 5 of the Fairfield Local Environmental Plan 2013.

5 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Heritage Act 1977
- Local Government Act 1993
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

6 RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- Fairfield Local Environmental Plan 2013
- Fairfield Heritage Study (Volumes 1 - 3)
- Fairfield City Council Operational Plan.

7 POLICY CONTEXT

Rate relief is one of the strategies for heritage promotion recommended by the NSW State Government. Fairfield City has approximately 100 listed heritage items; the largest group being residential properties that are between 60 and over 100 years old. Many of these properties need ongoing maintenance.

Fairfield City Council believes that the Heritage Rate Relief Program is a viable option to prevent neglect, inappropriate alterations and demolition of heritage listed buildings in the City by diverting rate funds to maintaining heritage items.

It is the intention of Council to ensure the administration and transactions relating to the Heritage Rate Relief Program are conducted in a fair and transparent manner. The Policy will have an impact on Council's rates revenue; however, this impact would be compensated by the owners directing their efforts into maintaining their heritage listed properties in accordance with section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 that prescribes the requirements when Councils provide financial assistance to others.

8 STAKEHOLDERS

- Owners of properties listed in Schedule 5 of the Fairfield Local Environmental Plan 2013;
- Heritage NSW; and
- Council.

9 IMPLEMENTATION

a) Council Resolution to Provide Rate Relief

In order to satisfy the requirements of s356 of the Local Government Act, a report in May of each financial year is to be forwarded to Council for a resolution to provide a rate relief to privately owned heritage items listed in the Local Environmental Plan for the next financial year.

In the first quarter of each calendar year, Council will write to property owners advising of their eligibility for the Heritage Rate Relief. **It is the owner's responsibility to have annual pest inspections and undertake routine maintenance. Owners who wish to decline the Heritage Rate Relief must do so in writing.**

b) Inclusions of Heritage Rate Relief Program in Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement and Operational Plan

In order to satisfy the requirement of s356 of the Local Government Act Council will include details of the Heritage Rate Relief Program in Council's Operational Plan.

c) Council's expectation of Heritage Item Owners Receiving Heritage Rate Relief

In order to receive the Heritage Rate Relief, the expectation of Council is that the rate relief will be spent on securing and maintaining the item and must include an annual pest control inspection.

Annual pest control inspections are essential to conserving historic building fabric. Majority of heritage items are structurally built from timber, in which termites are seen as a threat to buildings. It is essential for buildings to be regularly inspected for termites to ensure that any termite activity is located before serious damage has been caused to the structure of the building. Internal inspections should be conducted every 12 months. Council may request that any recipient of the Heritage Rate Relief provide proof that a pest inspection has been undertaken. Where a recipient has not complied with this expectation, the Council may request that a Pest Inspection be undertaken otherwise their eligibility for Heritage Rate Relief will be denied in for the following year.

(d) Removal of Heritage Rate Relief

Prior to any action being undertaken to withdraw the Heritage Rate Relief due to lack of adequate maintenance of the heritage item, the following process is to be followed:

- a) A formal written notice is to be sent to the owner/s of the heritage item that:
 - i. requires the owner/s to demonstrate in writing why the heritage rate relief/subsidy under the program should be continued; and
 - ii. allows the owner/s twenty-one (21) days to provide such information.
- b) If the owner/s fails to provide a satisfactory reason/s, then a second (2nd) formal written notice is to be sent to the owner/s advising that a recommendation will be made to Council to withdraw the heritage rate relief in accordance with the policy.
- c) Removal of Heritage Rate Relief will be determined via a formal resolution of Council, with the owner/s invited to the preceding Committee meeting.
- (e) Inspection of Heritage Items receiving Heritage Rate Relief
- (f) Council will inspect and record the state of each heritage item on the local schedule once every 3 years.

10 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Heritage Rate Relief Policy will be funded from current allocations in the 'Heritage' Program within Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement and Operational Plan.

11 REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years in commencement of this Policy.

12 AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by Council at the Outcomes Committee meeting on 8 May 2007 and came into force on 1 July 2007. Council has adopted amendments since this date as follows:

Review No.	Council Adoption of Amendment	Date of Amendment coming into force
Review No.1 2010	14 September 2010	29 September 2010
Review No.2 2013	27 September 2013	17 October 2013
Review No.3 2017	28 February 2017 (subject to Council resolution)	22 March 2017 (subject to Council resolution)
Review No. 4 2021	9 March 2021	15 March 2021

13 OWNERSHIP

The Manager Strategic Land Use Planning in the City Strategic Planning will be responsible for reviewing this policy.

The Manager, Financial Operations will be responsible for implementing this policy.

14 FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information regarding this policy can be obtained from the Strategic Land Use Planning Branch on (02) 9725 0222.