



## Threads of Conservation

Social fabric • Fabric and place • Conserving fabric

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Louise has wide experience in the cultural heritage sector as a heritage architect. She is experienced in both heritage consulting and as a built heritage specialist. She has extensive experience in heritage assessment, preparation of conservation management plans, the principles of building conservation, architectural design and heritage advisory roles within local government.

As a Director at Context she is actively involved in delivering heritage projects, for a range of government, community and private clients. Louise has worked as a heritage advisor in rural Victoria for many years, most recently in Mount Alexander Shire in central Victoria; and has recently been involved with preparing heritage strategies for several municipalities.

### The warp and weft of a community – weaving together the threads of local heritage

#### Paper Abstract

In Victoria heritage strategies are required to be undertaken in order that prioritisation of state government heritage funding is made more responsive. Strategies can be done in a variety of ways from a simple checklist and prioritisation, to a full-blown council strategy that sits alongside an environment or arts strategy. A heritage strategy template was developed by Heritage Victoria that sets up the minimum processes required; and many municipalities have followed this approach. Others however, took the opportunity to develop their own approach, and it is our experience with three different municipalities that is the subject of this paper.

Context was commissioned to undertake three strategies in three very different municipalities; one inner urban, one peri-urban and one rural. This paper compares and contrasts this work and looks at what has been achieved through the development and implementation of the strategies.

This paper will examine how local heritage may be both very similar and very different across different geographies and demographics. The issues that engage populations in the country, the urban fringe and the inner urban areas range widely from neglect to development pressure, as do their places of value, from ancient red gums to valued local collections. Attitudes range from engagement to indifference, and municipal directions from community driven to top heavy.

This paper will explore what has been the real benefit in undertaking heritage strategies and how might this be of lasting use in the promotion and enjoyment of local heritage. What began as an exercise in distributing heritage funding fairly has become much more in the hands of communities and municipalities that are seeking more appreciation and recognition of their own heritage.