State Planning Policy Feedback  
Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning  
Reply Paid 15009 City East  
Brisbane Qld 4002  

By email: singleSPP@dsdip.qld.gov.au

To the State Planning Policy Manager,

RE: SUBMISSION ON THE QUEENSLAND STATE PLANNING POLICY – CULTURAL HERITAGE

ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) is a non-government professional organisation formed in 1965. It is closely linked to UNESCO, with members in over 100 countries, and it’s Secretariat in Paris.

In Australia, members participate in a range of conservation activities, including promotion of good practice, site visits, training, conferences and meetings. The Australian National Committee of ICOMOS (Australia ICOMOS) was formed in 1976. It elects an Executive Committee of 15 members which is responsible for carrying out national programs and participating in decisions of ICOMOS as an international organisation.

Australia ICOMOS (AICOMOS) acts as a national and international link between public authorities, institutions and individuals involved in the study and conservation of all places of cultural significance in Australia. Australia ICOMOS is the peak body for Australian professionals working in heritage conservation.

On behalf of Australia ICOMOS, I provide the following feedback after assessment of the Cultural Heritage section of the Draft Queensland State Planning Policy. We request that this feedback is included in the further development of the Cultural Heritage Policy and its Guidelines.

- AICOMOS supports reference to professionalism in conservation practices, eg Page 30 principle 1 ‘ensuring that potential impacts are assessed by professionals with specialist skills in the area of assessment’. This is recommended because there is a real risk with the one stop shop approach that impacts will be assessed without regard to specialist areas such as cultural heritage.

- AICOMOS recommends that Page 30 Principle 3 should be amended to include specific reference to cultural heritage such as eg 'ensure local planning instruments protect the cultural heritage values of Queensland's historic places whilst promoting compatible use'

- AICOMOS supports further clarification and appropriate descriptions in the heritage section as it is currently relatively vague when compared to the other sections. For instance the section could identify that local planning instruments identify places in accordance with valid heritage criteria. (in reference to those established in the Queensland Heritage Act 1992)

- AICOMOS recommends that there is recognition to early consideration of cultural heritage in development planning stage and to actively promote solutions which retain the cultural heritage significance of a place in compatible use.
• It is preferable that the document not use the term “enhance” Cultural Heritage Significance. Use of the word ‘enhancement’ is not considered good practice in this context. ‘Protect and interpret’ or ‘protect and promote understanding’ might be better. Terminology used in professional conservation practice in Australia is set down in the Burra Charter. ‘Enhancement’ of historic places has been considered inappropriate since the 1970s due to a history of well meaning but ill-informed attempts to enhance places of heritage value which resulted in removal of genuine historic fabric and loss of cultural significance.

• AICOMOS notes that the requirement to properly regulate heritage can be seen as onerous for all but the largest local governments. Therefore AICOMOS strongly supports a State government role in assisting local government through the provision of blue prints, guidelines and professional mentoring – For example some of the material that NSW and Victoria State Heritage departments have provided to Local Government in the past.

• AICOMOS supports reference to the Burra Charter as the reference for recognised best conservation practice, particularly in the development of supporting Heritage Guidelines.

• ICOMOS requests that we are provided with the opportunity to comment on and participate in the ongoing development of the Heritage Guideline when it is finalised.

In conclusion, Australia ICOMOS offer its support and assistance to the Queensland State Government, for the ongoing development of a planning policy on Cultural Heritage and feel certain that the special expertise offered by AICOMOS will contribute to the success of the Cultural Heritage Policy.

Yours faithfully

MS ELIZABETH VINES OAM, FRAIA, MICOMOS
President, Australia ICOMOS

Submission Prepared by Jacqueline Pearce
AICOMOS Queensland Representative