

POLICY NUMBER: 40 (C)

NAME OF POLICY: PUBLIC ART POLICY

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: December 2021

DATE APPROVED: December 2017

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Manager Community and Economic Development

REFERENCES:

Best Value Principles

Hepburn Shire Council has the responsibility to provide its ratepayers with best value, with all services provided by Council meeting the expectations in terms of quality and cost. In providing this, all services need to be accessible, responsive to the needs of the community, considerate of the natural environment and subject to continuous improvement.

To achieve the best over life outcome for Council's expenditures, which meets quality and service expectations, there will be periodic review of services against best on offer in both the public and private sectors.

All Council staff members are responsible for supporting best value principles in their normal day to day actions to ensure services are recognised by the community as delivering best value.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 2017-2021 Council Plan, Hepburn Shire Council's mission is to

... maintain, promote, protect and enhance the districts unique social, cultural, environmental and heritage characteristics. This will be achieved through effective, caring management and responsible governance. We will strive to gain maximum advantage for our community by protecting and enhancing our natural and built environment.¹

Public art in the Hepburn Shire will express these values and further increase liveability for present and future residents, and enhance its attractiveness as a visitor destination.

Hepburn Shire Council values the diversity and excellence of its arts practitioners. Along with heritage and the natural environment, the arts contribute much to the region's attractiveness for residents and visitors.

More art improves tourism and therefore economic development, takes people away from themselves, challenges the way they think and makes for happier communities.²

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the whole of Hepburn Shire Council and replaces previous policies or sections of policies referencing public art.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to assist the Hepburn Shire Council to make considered decisions on public art, its funding, commissioning, installation, maintenance and de-accessioning. It will also assist Council in response to requests, proposals and offers of donation of works of art in public places.

¹ Hepburn Shire Council Plan 2017-2021, 2017. p 9

² Response to Public Art Survey, May 2013

The aims of this Policy are to:

- Provide a strategic direction for the development of public art in Hepburn Shire.
- Encourage art installation in public open spaces.
- Identify principles Council and the community seeks to express through Public Art.
- Provide public art acquisition guidelines that govern funding, acquisition, management and disposal of public art.
- Provide guidelines for public art selection processes, location/display of public art and maintenance of public art.
- Provide guidelines for assessing sponsorship, donations, bequests and memorials.

4. DEFINITIONS

The following terms are referred to in the policy.

Term	Definition
Public Art	<p>In this policy public art refers to works of art in all mediums and styles that take place in, or are displayed in, public places or public domains of the Hepburn Shire to which the public has free and open access.</p> <p>This will include permanent works in outdoor places, artist designed street furniture, building elements, streetscapes, signage and gardens, ephemeral and temporary artworks including performance, projection and digital art.</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy, public art does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial promotions or objects that are commercially mass-produced such as fountains, street furniture, signage etc. • Works of art that are held in public or private collections, including those of artists, museums and art galleries.
Community	<p>This refers to a group of people living in a particular area. It can also refer to a social unit of any size that shares common values.</p>

Term	Definition
Artist	An artist is a person engaged in one or more of any of a broad spectrum of activities deemed to be art. Because the term 'artist' is often used to mean one engaged only with visual art, many prefer to use the term 'arts practitioner'. 'Artisan' or 'craftsperson' is included in the term 'artist'.
Community Art	Community art or 'community-based art' is a way of creating art in which artists collaborate with people who do not normally actively engage in the arts. It can utilise any art form and is characterised by interaction or dialogue with the community.
Artwork Materiality	This refers to the medium and process used to create the art.

5. POLICY

5.1. Why? The importance of public art to Hepburn Shire Council

Hepburn Shire Council recognises that public art projects have a special role to play in connecting communities. Public art and community art projects that are tailored to diverse sectors such as young people, older people, children, diverse cultures etc, lead to an enhanced sense of wellbeing of the participants, as well as greater community awareness of these sectors of our community.

Public art in Hepburn Shire will integrate the arts into everyday life and help tell important stories about its places, its people, and its common values and ideas.

5.2. What? What will be included and considered in public art projects?

In assessing public art proposals the following will be considered:

5.2.1. Relevance to Hepburn Shire: its community, themes and concerns

- Public art may explore and encourage awareness of global, national or local issues and themes.

- Public art may interpret historical sites and tell important local stories.
- Public art may encourage community and visitor engagement with a particular place.
- Public art projects may be utilised to increase community connectedness.

5.2.2. Quality of the artwork and artist

- Public art will at all times reflect a high standard of artistic practice.
- Public art is usually made or designed by an artist, with or without community participation.
- While the quality of the artwork and artist are primary considerations, where other factors described above are equal, local arts practitioners will be preferred.

5.2.3. Artwork materiality

- Public art may include music, poetry, sound and light installations, temporary installations, street furniture, street lighting, gardens, paving, water features, sculptures, street theatre, parades, murals and street art.
- Multimedia, and digital art can create projected or screened, or electronically conveyed images and films, and soundscapes in public places may be movement activated or at specific times of day and night.
- Public art may include digital technology – as in virtual choirs, online exhibitions or digital interactive projects.
- Festivals may also include elements of public art such as exhibitions of actual or projected works of art, or parades and performances in public places. However, only those elements that offer free access to all can be considered public art.
- Landscaping and gardens may also be considered works of public art. Gardens developed with experienced landscape artists may help connect diverse sectors of the community and enhance significant and everyday places.

5.2.4. Durability of the work

- Public art will not be limited to works that are physical and permanent.
- Works of art in public places may occur for a short time or

have a long-term placement. Some works of very short duration may be able to be repeated, electronically or manually activated.

- Permanent works of art will be made of durable materials and be affixed to a location for an agreed lifespan (usually a minimum of 5 years).

5.2.5. Safety and suitability

- Council will assess permanent works for safety and durability.
- The public artwork project and maintenance costs will be considered.

5.3. Where? Potential sites for public art

The context of public art is important. Public art will be used to enliven sites and events throughout the Shire. These may be large-scale, small or very subtle. Some works will encourage quiet, extended contemplation.

Areas where people congregate such as town centres, lakes, public parks and gardens, children's playgrounds, walking trails, empty or under-utilised spaces, bare walls of buildings, and streetscapes may all be suitable sites for public art.

Public art for the Hepburn Shire should be designed or selected to consider the following:

- Suitability for a specific place, including character, heritage and position on the site.
- Public safety concerns – this may include the shape and nature of the materials used.
- Visual impact and spatial considerations.
- Present and future uses of the area.

5.4. How? How art works are accessioned by the Shire

Hepburn Shire Council may acquire or sponsor public art in any of the following ways:

- Purchase of existing works of art.
- Commissioning of works of art for specific sites or projects.
- Acceptance of donation of art works.

- Community arts projects or workshops where an artist works with the community on a project and the resulting works are displayed in a public place on a temporary or permanent basis.
- Projects funded by grants, philanthropic trusts, individuals etc.
- Integrated art: works that are developed as part of a capital works project.
- Partnerships with, or sponsorship of, public art by a group, organisation, government department, or commercial enterprise.
- Public art that is curated on a theme, commemoration or specific event supported by the Shire.
- Public art produced during Artist in Residence projects.

5.5. Funding sources for public art

5.5.1. Hepburn Shire Council

- A Budget bid for specific public art projects will be considered as part of Council's annual budget.
- Artful design: Working across Council departments to identify opportunities for arts practitioners to contribute to the overall design of public place projects.
- Integrated art: Where possible, utilise existing budgets for seating, paving, lighting, parks and gardens, special signage etc to commission unique objects designed or made by artists.
- Partnerships: Additional funding may be sourced through partnerships with local organisations, community groups and enterprises and local, state and federal government.

5.5.2. State and Federal governments and agencies, philanthropic trusts

Council will explore grants and other funding opportunities.

5.5.3. Private or business donation, bequests and sponsorship

Council will consider offers of existing artworks for public places, funded proposals for new public artworks, bequests and other offers of funding for public art in a fair, transparent and consistent manner.

5.6. Public Art Panel

Council's decisions on public art projects will be informed by advice from an independent Public Art Panel.

- The Public Art Panel will comprise members with a wide range of professional and community art expertise, especially in the area of public art, art curatorship, architecture and design.
- Relevant Council officers such as engineers, planning, heritage, arts and tourism will be co-opted as required, but without voting rights. The Public Art Panel will have representation across the Shire and be appointed through expressions of interest to Council.
- The selection of the Panel will be made by Council. Selection will be based on relevant expertise, geographic representation across the Shire, and diversity of culture, gender and age.
- A maximum of 10 people will form the base Panel, with additional short-term members selected from communities or groups involved with a special project, or to provide special expertise for a project that requires it.

5.7. Process

5.7.1. Public Art Selection and Management Process

A designated Council officer will be primarily responsible for planning and delivering the Shire's program of public art activities.

All new public art proposals must be outlined in a project brief that draws out information as required in sections 5.2 and 5.3 of this policy.

The brief will be initially assessed by a Council officer who will determine if it is within the scope of this policy. If it is deemed suitable then it will be considered by the Public Art Panel.

These measures will ensure the Public Art Panel only deal with relevant proposals.

The Public Art Panel will advise on the brief and make recommendations to Council, assessing the proposal against:

- Quality of the artwork and artist
- Durability of work

- Safety and suitability
- Relevance to Hepburn Shire
- Artwork materiality

The Public Art Panel will provide advice to Council for Council to make the final decision. All Public Art proposals, successful or unsuccessful, will receive a written response.

5.8. Donations and Bequests

Donated work must meet the assessment criteria in section 5.2 and 5.3, in addition, Council may:

- Require or propose a donation from the artist towards ongoing maintenance or installation of any donated works.
- Donors will be required to sign an agreement granting ownership of works donated to Council.
- Donations and sponsorship will be acknowledged on appropriate signage and documented in the public art register.
- The acceptance of a donation does not imply any rights of that organisation or person to control management of the project.
- Loans of artworks to Council will not be considered.

5.9. Communication

Hepburn Shire Council is committed to open, transparent communication regarding public art projects in the Shire. To achieve this Council will:

- Maintain an email contact list. It is the responsibility of local artists to ensure Council has their up to date email address. When a public arts project is identified, the relevant details will be forwarded and recipients encouraged to further circulate the information.
- Widely publicise public art opportunities through local media, Council

website, and specific arts networks such as ArtsHub and ArtsAtlas.

- Promote existing public art online and, where possible, in printed form.

5.10. Accessioning/recording of public art works

All permanent and semi-permanent works of public art in the Shire will become part of the Shire's collection. When received all works will be catalogued, photographed, and assessed for condition.

The following details will be recorded in a suitable database: Name of artist, date of artwork, title if any, medium, date of acquisition, name of commissioning body or sponsor, donor and image.

5.11. Maintenance of works of art

Artworks in public places are significant and valuable assets for Hepburn Shire Council.

All new works of art installed in public places must be supplied with maintenance instructions, preferably written by the artist. Works of art that are subject to the vagaries of weather, interaction with people and natural decaying processes, will be inspected as required to assess and prevent damage.

Inspections of permanent works will be carried out as required to ensure safety and the integrity of the work and avoid the necessity for costly repair at a later date.

Donors or sponsors of permanent public art may be requested to provide a yearly maintenance budget. Similarly, when funding is being sought for a public art project, maintenance will be included in the budget, if appropriate.

5.12. Deaccessioning works of art

From time to time works of art in the public domain may become damaged beyond reasonable repair, or cease to have public relevance, or the site may be so changed that the work no longer fits or suits the site. In the case of works posing a risk to the public immediate removal may be necessary.

In these cases the Public Art Panel will consider the following options and advise Council on the most suitable option:

- Relocation of a work to a more suitable site

- If total removal is required donors in the first case, or artists, will be offered return of the artwork
- Donation of work to a school or other public utility
- Sale of work, with funds raised used for other public art projects
- Destruction of artworks will only be considered as a last resort.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

Any enquiries about the Public Art Policy should be directed to Council's Community and Cultural Development Officer, 03 5348 2306.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

The Manager of Community and Economic Development will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this Policy.

8. REVIEW

The Policy will be reviewed every four years.