Members Sought for New Heritage Council

Heritage Minister Karl Hampton today announced that nominations are being sought for members of the new Heritage Council.

The new Heritage Council will come into being when the new Heritage Act commences in 2012.

“The new Heritage Act helps meet the Territory 2030 target of ensuring Territorians continue to have access to a wide range of facilities and activities that enhance the great Territory lifestyle,” Mr Hampton said.

“Key features of the new Heritage Act include interim protection of sites once a site is nominated and the Heritage Council considers the site significant and seeks public comment.

“The new Act also includes increased penalties and improved provision for on-the-ground enforcement as well as expanded rights of review.

“The role of the new Heritage Council is similar in many ways to that of the existing Heritage Advisory Council, which is to advise the Minister about a wide range of matters in relation to heritage management in the NT.

“However the Council has new responsibilities in terms of making decisions about proposed work to heritage places.

“Under the existing Act, only the Minister or the Minister’s Delegate can make decisions about work, and there is no distinction between major and minor work.

“Under the new Act, the Heritage Council makes decisions about minor work.”

The new Heritage Council will have 11 members comprising:

- A representative of the National Trust;
- A representative of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority;
- A representative of an organisation representing the interests of local government;
- A representative of an organisation representing the interests of property owners;
- Six people appointed by the Minister with expertise or experience relevant to the Administration of the Act; and
- A representative of the Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport.
The new Act requires the Minister to ensure, as far as practicable, that at least two members of the new Heritage Council are of Aboriginal descent.

“The existing nine-member Heritage Advisory Council will continue to fulfil its duties until the commencement of the new Heritage Act,” Mr Hampton said.

“The expanded Heritage Council introduces for the first time representation from local government and property owners, while still allowing for the majority of positions to be filled by people nominated from within the community.”

Go to www.nt.gov.au/heritage for more information.

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