

CUMBERLAND LOCAL HERITAGE REBATE PROGRAM 2019

Responsible Division: Environment and Infrastructure
Officer: Group Manager Planning
File Number: SC 481 (SUB 488)

SUMMARY

The Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program (herein 'Rebate Program') aims to assist and encourage owners of heritage listed properties in the Local Government Area (LGA) to undertake positive work on their properties to improve the appearance of these valuable assets. The Rebate Program recognises the additional costs that can be involved in undertaking works to properties, such as restrictions on materials that may be used or the need for specialised tradespeople and/or equipment.

This report recommends that the Rebate Program be run in 2019 in accordance with the Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program Guidelines. It is also proposed that the Rebate Program is run to coincide with the National Trust's Heritage Festival.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cumberland Local Heritage Committee:

- 1. Recommend that the Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program run in 2019 in accordance with the Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program Guidelines and as outlined in the report.**

REPORT

Background

The Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program was run in 2017 and 2018. This program was based on similar initiatives of the former Holroyd and Parramatta City Councils. In 2018, the Rebate Program was run from 30 April 2018 to 15 June 2018 to coincide with the National Trust Heritage Festival. The National Trust Heritage Festival is an annual event.

The aim of the Rebate Program is to assist and encourage owners of heritage listed properties in the LGA to undertake positive work to their properties to improve the appearance of these valuable assets. The Rebate Program recognises the additional costs that can be involved in undertaking works to heritage properties such as restrictions on materials that may be used or the need for specialised tradespeople and/or equipment.

All private owners of heritage listed properties, and private owners of properties located within a heritage conservation area, within the Cumberland LGA are eligible to enter. The Rebate Program is a part of a wider Council effort to promote greater interest in the history and heritage of the area.

Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program Guidelines

The Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program Guidelines (herein 'Guidelines'), adopted by Council on 5 April 2017 and amended on 28 March 2018, provide the policy for the running of the Rebate Program and are provided at **Attachment 1**. The Guidelines outline the following:

- Background
- Aim of the program
- Invitation to apply
- Eligible projects
- Projects not funded
- Assessment criteria
- Level of funding available
- Timing of projects
- What applicants need to do
- The process
- Further information

The annual total Council budget for the Program has increased from \$20,000 in previous years to \$50,000 in 2019 as per the resolution (C04/18-66) made by Council at its meeting on 18 April 2018 and allocated within the FY2019/20 budget. This increased budget of \$50,000 recognises the number of heritage items and heritage property owners that are within the Cumberland LGA and so the larger potential number of applicants for the Rebate Program. It is from this budget that rebate funding will be allocated to successful applications for projects to heritage items. The level of rebate funding allocation per property will be up to 50% of the project cost to a maximum of \$4,000 (whichever is less).

Program Commencement and Assessment

It is proposed that the timing for the Rebate Program coincide with the annual National Trust Heritage Festival, which runs from 18 April 2019 to 19 May 2019. Applications for the Rebate Program are proposed to open on Wednesday, 1 May 2019 and close on Friday, 14 June 2019. This period of just over six (6) weeks is consistent with previous years and will allow sufficient time for potential applicants to obtain quotes and complete the application form. These dates will also allow the Rebate Program to run concurrently with the Cumberland Local Heritage Awards (the subject of a separate report).

Applications for the Rebate Program will be invited via letters mailed to eligible property owners, as well as notices in local newspapers, local libraries, and Council's customer service and on Council's website. It is proposed that the application form for the Rebate Program be amended for clarity, and to reinforce the mandatory requirement for photographs and quotes to be provided as part of the application. The application form used in 2018 is provided at **Attachment 2** whereas the application form proposed for 2019 is provided at **Attachment 3**.

Received applications will be reviewed by Council officers and Council's Heritage Advisor to determine eligibility of the proposed works. The applications and the Heritage Advisor's comments (in a report) will then be provided to the Cumberland Local Heritage Committee (Committee) for their consideration at the next meeting. The Committee is then to discuss each application and agree on those to be recommended as successful, and the amount of funding to be allocated, which then forms the recommendation to Council.

Proposed Timeline

The proposed timeline for the 2019 Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program is as follows:

Week commencing Monday 22 April 2019	Preparation for the Rebate Program. Letters sent to owners of heritage properties inviting applications for the 2019 Rebate Program.
Wednesday 1 May 2019	Applications open for the Rebate Program.
Tuesday 30 April 2019 to Wednesday 1 May 2019 Tuesday 14 May 2019 to Wednesday 15 May 2019 Tuesday 28 May 2019 to Wednesday 29 May 2019	Notices to appear in local newspapers.
Wednesday 1 May 2019 to Friday 14 June 2019	Information available from the Council website, local libraries and customer service.
Friday 14 June 2019	Applications close for the 2019 Rebate Program.
Friday 14 June 2019 to Friday 21 June 2019	Council Officers and Heritage Advisor review applications, prepare advice and prepare the report for consideration by the Heritage Committee.
Tuesday 25 June 2019	Report and rebate applications to be sent to the Heritage Committee.
Tuesday 2 July 2019	Heritage Committee Meeting to discuss and agree recommendation for successful applications and funding allocation.
August 2019 (Tentative)	Report to Council with Committee recommendations of successful Rebate applications.
August/September 2019	Notify all Rebate applicants of outcome.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Letters will be sent to all private owners of items of heritage listed properties and properties within a conservation area, within the Cumberland LGA inviting them to submit an application for a Rebate. A brochure, providing an overview of the Rebate Program will also be included with the letter. Copies of this brochure will also be available from Council's Customer Service in Auburn and Merrylands Council offices and all local libraries within Cumberland.

Notices will also be placed in local newspapers and on Council's website and social media platforms advising of the opening of the Rebate Program and inviting applications. A media statement will also be released to promote the opening of the Cumberland Rebate Program as a positive news story.

The media statement, newspaper advertisement and letters to owners of heritage properties for the Rebate Program may be combined with those of the Cumberland Local Heritage Heritage Awards, if both initiatives are run in 2019.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program Guidelines adopted in April 2017 and amended in March 2018 will require an amendment to reflect the change in level of funding available from \$20,000 to \$50,000 (See **Attachment 4**). Upon Council endorsement of the amended Guidelines, those Guidelines will then form Council policy for the Awards.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are sufficient funds available in the current budget for the 2019 Rebate Program. The program has a total budget of (up to) \$50,000 to be allocated to successful Rebate applications.

CONCLUSION

It is proposed to run the Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program in 2019 as outlined in this Report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program Guidelines (dated 5 April 2017 and amended March 2018).
2. Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program Application Form 2018.
3. Proposed Cumberland Local Heritage Rebate Program Application Form 2019.
4. Amended Cumberland Heritage Rebate Program Guidelines.