



Heritage Toolkit

# Mildura Conservation Study (Andrew Ward Study 1988)

### Commencement

The Conservation Study (also known as the Andrew Ward Study, 1988) for the City and Shire of Mildura (now Mildura Rural City Council) was commenced in October 1986 and funded by the Council, the Federal Government's National Estate Program and the Historic Buildings Council.

### Objectives of the Study

The principal objectives of the study were:

- To identify, evaluate and document the built and environmental heritage of Mildura
- To place Mildura within the context of the history of Victoria
- To assess the importance of Mildura's heritage as a State and community

resource

- To develop a comprehensive program for the conservation of Mildura's heritage and its integration into the general planning framework of Mildura.

### Preparation of the Study

The consultant team for the study was led by Andrew Ward, architect and principal of Andrew C. Ward & Associates, architects and planners (with research assistance and the oversight of a steering committee).

The initial identification of items and sites of landscape importance, was undertaken in late 1986 by Geoff Sanderson, principal of Garner Sanderson Australia Pty Ltd, planners, architects, landscape architects.

## **Cultural Significance**

The following precincts have been identified to have cultural significance for the Council and in some instances are also considered to be of State significance.

The following precincts were identified within the city of Mildura:

- Deakin Avenue
- Chaffey Avenue
- Lemon Avenue.

The following items were identified with in the local area:

- Psyche Bend and Pumping Station
- Kings Billabong Pumping Station
- Red Cliffs town centre
- Meringur township
- Millewa South railway
- Kulnine station, Lock 9 and Millewa A Pumping Station.

In addition to those sites mentioned above there are many other sites identified in the study as being of social, cultural or historical significance in the Mildura locality.

## **Recommendations of the Study**

Recommended actions to be pursued by Council are presented at the end of each precinct analysis and are also contained in the individual data sheets for each item identified within the study.

### ***Natural Environment***

This study has shown that the man made natural landscape of the irrigation areas, in particular Mildura, Irymple, Nichols Point, Merbein and Birdwoodton are of State significance.

The combination of mature gardens surrounding block houses, offering shade and a luxurious environment in contrast with the ubiquity of vineyards is Mildura's principal characteristic, enhanced by the horticultural skills of the early block holders and the broad range of plant types available during the founding decades of the district.

It is recommended that appropriate funds be sought to undertake a study to identify and protect this natural heritage.

The diversity of the heritage of the far north-west Mallee appears to be underappreciated by visitors and by local communities.

### ***Themes***

It is recommended that the historic themes described in the background history of the study and analysed in terms of their surviving evidence be interpreted by a series of illustrated brochures available to visitors, schools and interested persons.

Obvious themes would include the era of the Chaffey Brothers which might deal with the town and district plan of Mildura, "Rio Vista", the Irymple distillery, the pumping stations, the Grand Hotel fountain and the roles of the Clubs established as a result of the Chaffeys views on temperance. The pastoral era and soldier settlement schemes also offer fertile ground for interpretive brochures.

### ***Council Support for Heritage***

Council participation in heritage programs is of value in its own right and as a demonstration of commitment to the community. The schedule of sites at risk within the municipality provides ample opportunity for Council initiated conservation action.

Within the city it is recommended that the provision of positive and non positive statutory guidelines prepared with a view to encouraging "Heritage sensitive" development decisions within historic precincts will facilitate the process of conserving significant items.

### ***Heritage Advice***

It is recommended that the gap between the recommendations of the study and practical application in the field be filled with provision of appropriate technical advice for Council officers and property owners, especially dealing with matters of design and historic resources management.

## **Outcomes from the Study**

### ***Heritage Advisory Service***

Council has provided a free Heritage Advisory Service to the municipality since approximately 2002. The main goal of a Heritage Advisory Service is to assist in the conservation and management of the municipality's heritage assets by providing expert heritage advice to councils, the community and owners of heritage properties.

### ***Thematic History***

A thematic history of Mildura was written as part of the Mildura (former Shire of Walpeup) Heritage Study undertaken by Council in 2012.

### ***Integration with Mildura Planning Scheme***

In response to the recommendation of the study the Mildura Planning Scheme now provides protection to recommended sites, through the application of a heritage overlay where appropriate.

### ***Tourism—The Alfred Deakin Centre***

Council's officers staff the Mildura Visitor Information Centre as part of the Alfred Deakin Centre complex at 125A Twelfth Street Mildura.

### ***Tourism—The Chaffey Trail***

Some of the items identified in the study now form part of the Chaffey Trail, a major tourist attraction for Mildura.

The Chaffey Trail:

- provides visitors the opportunity to take a self-guided tour of Mildura's places of historical interest

- Lets visitors discover the story of brothers George and W.B. Chaffey, who came to the region to devise an irrigation system
- Educates visitors about the history of Mildura and
- Allows visitors to explore Mildura's historic homes, the Psyche Bends pumping station and other attractions.

For more information on the Chaffey Trail visit <https://visitmildura.com.au/chaffey-trail.html>

## **Resources**

The Andrew Ward Study 1988 is available on Council's Website [www.mildura.vic.gov.au](http://www.mildura.vic.gov.au)

## **Further Review**

The Andrew Ward Study 1988 is due for review and updating in the near future and will include additional items identified since the study was written and considered to be of social, cultural and historical significance to the community. However, the basis of the information contained within the study remains relevant today.

## **More Information**

For more information on the Andrew Ward Study please contact Council's Strategic Planning Team on Tel (03) 5018 8419 or email [planning.services@mildura.vic.gov.au](mailto:planning.services@mildura.vic.gov.au)