

VHR Criterion and Threshold Guidelines

Revised Criterion G – Summary of main changes

April 2019

This document summarises the main changes to Criterion G in the *Victorian Heritage Register Criterion and Threshold Guidelines*, adopted by the Heritage Council of Victoria on 4 April 2019.

THE VHR CRITERIA AND THRESHOLD GUIDELINES – WHAT IS THE SAME?

01. The Heritage Assessment Criteria for Criterion G still aligns closely with the 2008 HERCON Criteria.
02. The three-step process for 1) satisfying the Criterion, 2) determining state-level significance and 3) exclusion guidelines, is still being followed for Criterion G.
03. Illustrated examples of Criterion G being satisfied are still provided.

THE VHR CRITERIA AND THRESHOLD GUIDELINES – WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Criterion G:

04. **More explanatory information** has been added to Criterion G, including a short definition of social value as it applies to the Criterion, with the aim of better clarifying what is required to satisfy this Criterion and the meaning and intent of each test. While this makes Criterion G slightly different from the others in format and structure, the Heritage Council considers that good guidance is more important than adherence to identical structure across the guidelines.
05. **Two changes have been made to the Criterion wording:**
 - a) The addition of 'present day'.

To provide clarity that the strong association must be with a community that exists NOW vs in the past (i.e. that it is relevant to Criterion G rather than Criterion A); links to update to exclusion criteria (i.e. new XG6).
 - b) The removal of the sentence explaining that this Criterion can include places of importance to Indigenous people as part of their continuing and developing cultural conditions.

This statement is unique to Victoria's criterion and its intent has been to clarify that places of significance to Aboriginal communities can be included in the Victorian Heritage Register provided they are 'not a place or object that is of cultural heritage significance only on the ground of its association with Aboriginal tradition' (s.8 of the *Heritage Act 2017*). It is the view of the Committee that by including this in one specific Criterion it limits the appropriate consideration of Aboriginal cultural heritage values under the other criteria.
06. **There are now three tests that need to be met to demonstrate that social value exists.** Time depth has been pulled out as a test on its own rather than being part of the evidence to establish strong or special attachment in order to draw attention to the fact that the duration of attachment might have occurred over a sustained period of time (a generation or many generations) but might also be of more recent origin, and may indeed have been interrupted or continuous. The current (2018) Threshold Guidelines, in requiring that evidence of an enduring attachment to place is substantiated, do not allow sufficient leeway for arguments to be put about different modes of time-depth.
07. **The concept of 'resonance' has been introduced as a new threshold test for state-level significance.** Resonance captures the way in which a place has exerted an influence at the state level and has been added as a key conceptual term that gives greater clarity in distinguishing places of local social significance from those that are directly connected with Victoria, both as a community and as a geo-political entity.
08. The exclusion guidelines have been updated to reflect – and provide additional clarity to – the changes made to the tests.

09. Illustrated Examples – the text for these has been updated as necessary and a new example added to better represent the different types of places and objects that may satisfy this Criterion.

The Rest of the VHR Criterion and Threshold Guidelines:

010. The inclusion of a definition of 'Place' at the start of the Guidelines to give additional clarity to a term that is used throughout the document (not just in Criterion G). In particular, it is important for any place to be recognised as being geographically defined, and to understand that its cultural heritage significance can be variously attributed through its material and/or cultural elements and associations.

011. Minor formatting and other changes to ensure the guidelines adheres to Victorian government publishing requirements.

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