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09. THE CONCEPT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

In the Burra Charter cultural significance means 'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations'. Cultural significance is a concept which helps in estimating the value of places. The places that are likely to be of significance are those which help an understanding of the past or enrich the present, and which will be of value to future generations.

The meaning of these terms in the context of cultural significance comprise aesthetic value which includes aspects of sensory perception for which criteria such as

form, scale, colour, texture, design and material of the fabric is important; Historic value encompasses the actions of historic figures, historic events, phases or activities. Significance in this category will be greater where evidence of the association or event survives in situ, or where the setting is substantially intact, compared with examples where it's intactness has changed or evidence has not survived. Scientific value embodies research potential of a place or the degree to which the place is capable of contributing further to an understanding of a place. Social

value embraces the qualities for which a place has become the focus of a spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment and one that universally enjoys importance to a local or wider community group. The categorisation into aesthetic, historic, scientific and social values is always tempered by the relative rarity or representativeness in each category. Spiritual value is a recent inclusion into the Burra Charter embodying the more intangible or non-physical aspects of cultural heritage.