



Sustainable Management of Historic Heritage Guidance

Information Sheet 13

Relocation of historic buildings

Principles

Relocation will generally have a serious adverse effect on the significance of a place. Buildings are part of an environmental context. This may include gardens, outbuildings, fences, streetscape, and a wider townscape or landscape. Relocation removes buildings from these settings. The NZHPT encourages the retention of significant heritage buildings and structures on their original sites and in their original settings. Relocation should be discouraged except in circumstances where:

- The existing site or setting is not of significant heritage value.
- Relocation is required to save the building as a last resort.
- Continuity of heritage value cannot otherwise occur.¹

All relocation proposals must indicate the proposed new location for the building, why relocation is required, any risks to the structure, and what the new use of land is proposed for the original site of the historic building.

A 'last resort' should be understood to mean that there is a genuine physical threat to the place; not that it is inconvenient for the current owner to retain it. Where this latter argument is being proposed, discussions should focus around retaining the place and adaptively reusing it.

With regard to the relocation of any pre-1900 building, the archaeological authority process under the Historic Places Act 1993 may be relevant.

A conservation plan, prepared by a heritage professional, should inform and guide any proposal that involves relocation.

Any building that will be removed should be fully recorded and documented both prior to, and during the removal process.²

¹ Adapted from the NZ ICOMOS Charter

² NZHPT, *Guidelines for the Investigation and Recording of Buildings and Standing Structures*, Archaeological Guidelines Series No.1, 2 June 2006:

http://www.historic.org.nz/heritage/archsites_intro.html

Checklist for assessing proposed relocation of buildings

- Relocation should be discouraged except in circumstances where: the existing site or setting is not of significant heritage value; relocation is required to save the building as a last resort, and continuity of heritage value cannot otherwise occur. The following other matters may also be relevant:
 - Any genuine threats to the building that precludes retention in its current location should be considered and documented (e.g. severe erosion or landslip, inundation by dam construction etc).
 - The proposed relocation should allow an understanding of the remaining significance of the building (e.g. ensuring the new site allows similar views from the street and setting or that a corner building is relocated to a new corner site).
 - Future preservation of the building will be provided through a compatible use, improved physical condition, appropriate context or surroundings, and protection from vandalism and fire.
 - Where a building was designed to be relocatable or relocation has been a feature of its history, relocation may, in some circumstances be appropriate. However a full assessment of the potential effects of relocation should nevertheless be carried out.
 - Relocation should be informed by the concept of greater or total conservation benefit with respect to a large complex group of structures and buildings. It may be that the removal of minor structures may be justified to achieve the conservation of most significant places on the entire site. All other avenues should be explored before this option is considered (e.g. funding sources) and all decisions must be informed by a conservation plan.

If relocation is to be supported by NZHPT, the proposal should involve proposals to mitigate or remedy the adverse effects of relocation including provisions to protect to the building or structure by means of a heritage covenant.

Source: NZHPT, *Sustainable Management of Historic Heritage Guidance Series*, Discussion Paper No.2, Assessment of Effects on the Historic Environment, 3 August 2007.

The NZHPT welcomes any feedback and comments on this information sheet.

Comments can be provided to information@historic.org.nz. (Attention: Sustainable Heritage Guidance)