



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Loong 龍 Conservation Project

Update Number 04 | 15 March 2022

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Being carbon neutral



Image: Cover of the Greenhouse Gas emission assessment report, March 2022

During the first part of 2022, the conservation project team completed the first stage of a pilot project to examine the carbon footprint of the Loong 龍 conservation project and make reasonable changes to the methodology and materials in an attempt to reduce emissions. Alongside climate consultants Pangolin Associates, the team documented and analysed all elements of the project in detail - from the number of zoom meetings, travel and equipment used, to facility energy use, waste, and consumables. From there, recommendations for reducing emissions were presented, with several initiatives implemented in early March.



The Loong 龍, Chinese Dragon Conservation project is supported by the Victorian Government through the Living Heritage Grants Program.

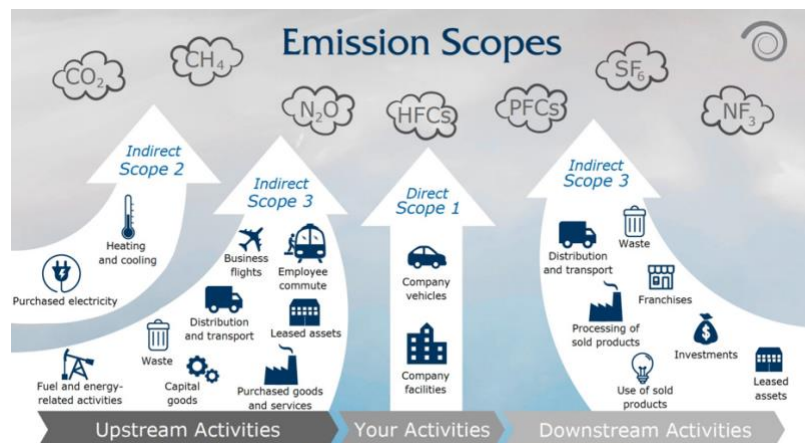


Image: Greenhouse Gas emissions scope

Testing treatment solutions

As part of Heritage Victoria Permit to conduct conservation treatment works, the project team completed many tests on Loong 龍 to decide which treatment solutions would work best to adhere loose elements, remove dust, and replace loss. Over a week, the team conducted tests onsite, researched treatments and prepared documentation for Heritage Victoria's approval of 33 different treatment methods. Samples of some of the testing are below.



Image: Loong 龍 before (left) and after (right) testing repair methods on the delaminating and lifting of sections of card present on the tip of each scale



Image: Repair of delaminating and lifting paper decals on scales

Removing deteriorating materials and previous treatments

From the 7th of March, a team of conservators worked onsite for four days to complete various tasks, including removing and repairing deteriorating materials and previous treatments. During Loong's 龍 long life, he has been cared for by Bendigo Chinese Association Community members who have applied traditional methods and household adhesives, paints and glues to areas of damage. Over time some household materials have deteriorated. The Bendigo Chinese Association repairs are part of the working life history of Loong 龍. Thus, removal of old repairs is considered carefully. The decision to either remove or stabilise these old repairs is made case by case.



Image: Grimwade conservator Dr Holly Jones-Amin working on detailed paint removal from mirrors



Images: Before (left) and during (right) removal of overpaint from mirrors surrounding Loong's 龍 cheek

Public engagement

The exhibition space where Loong is on display remains open to the public while the conservation treatment works are underway. Visitors can talk to conservators about the works and take photos of the activities as they occur. Documentation of the conservation work completed so far is also on display for visitors to browse.

Image: Conservator Dr Holly Jones-Amin continues treatment work as visitors tour the space



Repairing loose elements

Over time, parts of Loong 龍 have become loose or even lost. Part of the conservation project is to repair loose elements to ensure they are not lost. Loose elements include mirrors and ribbons. Other areas requiring stabilisation include reversing previous repairs to the papier-mache, adhering delamination board and stabilising fabric holes. Here are some examples demonstrating the team's repairs during their four-day visit in early March.



Images: Mirror on skirt before (left), during (middle) and after (right) repair



Image: Removing stitch repairs to cheek and pressing with a magnet (left), and the magnet is removed (middle), pointing out where stitches have been removed. Note that the stitches to the right are still to be removed

Filming the conservation project

To document and promote the project, the University of Melbourne has commissioned a videographer to visit the Golden Dragon Museum and film conservation works and interviews with conservators, students and community members. The resulting videos will be available on the Golden Dragon Museum and University of Melbourne websites to promote the project and document the outcomes of the project.



Image: Videographer Paul Burston filming emerging student conservator Isabel Walker

Image gallery

Images of Bendigo Chinese Association members and the University of Melbourne team working together in March 2022.





Get in touch

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