



# GUIDE TO DEVELOPING HERITAGE PLACES

AN OWNER'S GUIDE TO CONSERVATION,  
ALTERATIONS AND COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT FOR PLACES  
ENTERED IN THE STATE REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES





This brochure focuses on the development of properties entered in the State Register of Heritage Places.

If your place is listed in a local heritage survey or heritage list, contact your local government, which may have specific guidelines for locally listed heritage places.

# WHO WE ARE

Working with Western Australians to recognise, conserve, adapt and celebrate our State's unique cultural heritage.

## Heritage Council

The Heritage Council is the State Government's statutory advisory body on heritage.

The nine-member Heritage Council is established under the *Heritage Act (2018)*.

## Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage is a State Government department that supports the Heritage Council and the Minister for Heritage to recognise and celebrate our significant heritage places, and to assure their long-term viability into the future, through sensitive development and adaptation.

The Department carries out the Heritage Council's day-to-day operations, projects and service delivery, and is the contact point for enquiries and development referrals.

## How we work together

If a development or change to a place listed on the State Register of Heritage Places is proposed, it is referred to the Heritage Council for advice by the decision-maker, usually by the local government.

The Department assists the Heritage Council with the assessment of development proposals and provides administrative support to the Council.

In most cases, the development referral will be handled by the Department. This allows the Heritage Council to concentrate on major and sensitive developments.

If you are considering making a change to your property, you can contact our Heritage Development team to discuss your ideas and receive initial feedback and practical advice on your proposal.

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**LEFT:** The No.1 Fire Station, Perth (1901): A new service "pod" was built onto the back of this historic building to accommodate toilets, public stairs and elevator for the FESA Education and Heritage Centre - its design deliberately modern and distinct from the existing heritage architecture. Image supplied by FESA Education and Heritage Centre

# RESPECTING<sup>OUR</sup> HERITAGE

State Registered places help tell the story of Western Australia's history and development, and are physical reminders of how our identity and culture has been shaped throughout the years.



Our heritage is diverse and includes buildings, monuments, gardens, cemeteries, landscapes and archaeological sites.

Each one of these places contains elements that help tell its own individual story. It may be the design of a building, the material it was built from, the interior features like woodwork and cornicing, the paint colours or even the landscaping that are physical reminders of the place's story.

For this reason, it is important that any changes to a heritage place respect its significant elements. These elements are outlined in the Statement of Significance and the Assessment Documentation, which are available on our website.

With this in mind, places can be changed to meet contemporary needs and new uses. Sensitive development or adaptive reuse is often the best way to ensure a place is used and valued into the future. Reusing heritage places also amounts to a substantial environmental and financial saving in embodied energy. It avoids the creation of waste and the need for replacement building materials.

Additions and alterations do not have to be a reproduction of the original building. Generally, new development should complement the building's original scale, form and massing. The original or significant elements should be identifiable so that future generations can understand the story of the place.

There are many examples of traditional heritage homes with contemporary extensions or that have been successfully adapted into hotels, cafes, restaurants or office space. Similarly, warehouses and other industrial sites, schools and police stations have been transformed into apartments, modern offices, retail and hospitality spaces.

We have a range of publications and examples on our website that show how heritage places have been transformed through conservation and sensitive development.

**LEFT:** Princess May Girls School, Fremantle (1911): Structurally independent modules ensured minimal disruption to the original fabric of this historic building which is now the Fremantle Education Centre. Photographer Joel Barbitta, D-Max Photography

# GENERAL MAINTENANCE AND MINOR WORKS

Day-to-day maintenance and some minor works do not need to be referred to the Heritage Council for advice.

You can carry out maintenance work that does not involve removing or altering significant elements on your property or if you are simply replacing like-for-like materials.

General maintenance includes:

- cleaning gutters and downpipes
- repainting using the same colour scheme (damage to earlier paint layers should be avoided where possible)
- cleaning that is low pressure, non-abrasive and non-chemical
- replacing missing or deteriorated fittings or building materials, such as loose roof sheeting, with like-for-like material

Maintenance can also involve replacing electric wiring or other utility services. Works do not need to be referred to us if you are using existing routes or voids.

Similarly, gardening or landscape maintenance does not need to be referred unless it involves a major alteration of the layout, contours, structures, significant plant species or other significant features on the land, or there is a danger of disturbing archaeological sites.

There are also some minor works that you can carry out on your property without the need to seek our advice. These include installing temporary signage and fencing or scaffolding, and electronic security systems, as long as the works do not damage the building or place.

If you are unsure whether the work you propose to carry out needs to be referred, contact our development team for advice.

While these things do not need to be referred to the Department, you should check with your local government if you need any approval from them before you proceed.

**RIGHT:** GPO Perth (1914-1923): The original level 2 skylight structure was removed and replaced with a new roof level lantern skylight allowing more natural light into the historic building while atrium bridges provide a link across to levels 2 and 6. GPO Perth was the first State heritage-registered building in WA to achieve a 4 Star Green State rating. Image supplied by HBO+EMTB



# WORKS THAT NEED TO BE REFERRED

The following are examples of works that need to be referred to the Heritage Council:

- demolition
- relocation
- major and complex development plans
- alterations and additions
- construction of new buildings
- conservation and remedial works impacts the original fabric of the building
- excavations that may impact on archaeological ruins
- re-roofing in different material
- changes of exterior colour schemes
- interior works
- subdivision/amalgamation
- change of use

**BELOW:** Peshurst, East Fremantle (1897): This modern extension complements the scale of, and contrasts with the original brick and limestone walls, of this late Victorian grand residence. Turn to the back cover to view the front of Peshurst. Image supplied by Tim Brien



**ABOVE:** B-Shed Ferry Terminal, Fremantle (1902): Brightly coloured, self-contained ticketing pods provide a greater sense of awareness and distinction between the old and new, transforming the former cargo shed into a contemporary working ferry port terminal. Photographer Adrian Lambert, Acorn Photography

## PLANNING A CHANGE HOW TO APPLY

Development proposals relating to State Registered places must be referred to the Heritage Council for assessment. If the proposed development requires planning approval from your local government or a determining authority, such as the WA Planning Commission, it will forward the proposal to the Heritage Council on your behalf.

In most instances, the development referral will be dealt with by officers of the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage acting under delegation from the Heritage Council. Major or sensitive proposals may be dealt with by the Heritage Council.

The Heritage Council only advise on the heritage aspects of the proposal. Your local government or the decision-maker looks at all aspects of a development proposal such as adherence to local planning schemes, parking and traffic.

The officers under delegation generally provide advice on development proposals within 42 days. However, depending on the complexity of the project, our Heritage Development team aims to respond within 30 days.

We encourage owners to discuss the proposed development with our Heritage Development team at the concept stage and prior to lodging a formal application with the decision-maker.

# APPLICATION PROCESS

## STEP 1 (OPTIONAL)

Discuss your concept with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.



## STEP 2

Prepare your proposal (including supporting materials such as schematic drawings) and submit it to the decision-maker such as your local government or the WA Planning Commission.



## STEP 3

The decision-maker refers your proposal to the Heritage Council for assessment. Your plans will be considered in relation to your property's unique cultural significance and the recommendations of any guiding documents, such as a Conservation Management Plan or Strategy.



## STEP 4

The decision-maker considers your proposal in relation to Heritage Council advice and provides its decision to you. For State Registered places, the decision-maker's decision must be consistent with Heritage Council advice.

# CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

The Heritage Council and officers acting under delegation consider development proposals according to the following guidelines:

## Burra Charter

An internationally recognised guiding document that defines best-practice conservation from the International Council on Monuments and Sites Australia (Australia ICOMOS). Some basic principles of the Burra Charter in relation to the development of heritage places are:

- Maintenance is an integral part of conserving heritage places
- Places should reflect their original uses or otherwise have compatible uses
- Demolition of significant parts of heritage places is generally not acceptable
- New work should be readily identifiable as such and the imitation of significant aspects of the place should be avoided
- Development of a heritage place should be guided by its cultural significance
- Changes that reduce the cultural significance of a place should be reversible, and be reversed where possible.

The Burra Charter is available at [australia.icomos.org](http://australia.icomos.org)

## Statement of Significance

When a place is entered in the State Register of Heritage Places, its most significant elements are identified in the Statement of Significance and the Assessment Documentation. This is available online through inHerit, our online heritage places database.

If your place is listed on a local heritage survey or heritage list, contact your local government, which may have specific guidelines for locally listed heritage places.

## Conservation Management Plan

For some places, a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) may have been developed by a heritage professional. This document outlines the place's significant elements and guides the short to long term conservation and future management of the property through conservation policies. More information about CMPs can be found on our website.

## Conservation Management Strategy

A Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) is an owner's practical guide to the maintenance of a heritage place and is focused on its short to medium term maintenance and conservation. Amongst other things, it contains a Building Condition Assessment Report, conservation management schedule and maintenance schedule. More information about CMS' is available on our website.

Whilst it is not a statutory requirement to have a CMP or CMS, we nonetheless encourage owners to commission plans or strategies because they are a valuable resource and guide for the conservation of a heritage property.

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RIGHT: The Maisonnets, Nedlands (1934): Modern fixtures were used to update the kitchens and bathrooms in this Art Deco two-storey block of flats.

# INFORMATION TO INCLUDE WITH YOUR APPLICATION

There is various information you can include to help us accurately assess your project. The materials needed depend on the scope of your project. For example, simple re-pointing of a brick wall may only require a brief mortar specification and photos of the wall.

Other useful materials include:

## Property Details

Place name and number, location and ownership.

## Drawings

It is handy to provide drawings at A3 size and digitally, where possible. Drawings required will depend on the complexity of works proposed but may include:

- site plan of existing building(s) and curtilage

- floor plans and elevations (including originals if available)

- site plan and elevations of proposed works with new construction/alteration(s) hatched to clearly differentiate new from old

- demolition plan showing any buildings, structures and landscape elements affected

## Specification

If the project is at the detailed drawing stage, submit a written explanation of proposed finishes, colours, materials, style and form.

## Photographs

A visual record of the setting, landscape features, buildings or parts of a building that the proposed work will affect.

## Heritage Impact Statement

For larger and more complex proposals, a Heritage Impact Statement identifies how the works will affect the cultural heritage significance of a place. The Statement should be prepared by a heritage professional.

## Conservation Management Plans and Strategies

Where a Conservation Management Plan or Strategy exists for the place, the proposed development should address its findings and any urgent works identified.

If you are unsure about what information to include, please contact our Heritage Development team.

**BELOW:** Mackays Aerated Waters Factory, Perth (1928): An outstanding example of a sustainable adaptive reuse project that has transformed the former factory into Square One, a mixed-use development comprising 35 contemporary apartments, office and retail outlet, whilst preserving, enhancing and interpreting its industrial heritage. Photographer Johnathan Trask, Trasku Industrial Photographics



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**How long does the development assessment process take?**

The Heritage Council and officers acting under delegation generally provide advice on proposals to change heritage places to your local government within 42 days. In most cases, a response is issued within 30 days.

**Can I upgrade my bathroom, kitchen and/or laundry?**

If you plan to live or work in a heritage place, it is reasonable to expect service areas such as the bathrooms and kitchen to be up to current standards, with contemporary fixtures. These changes can be undertaken in a sensitive manner so that the heritage significance of the place is not diminished. There are many examples where contemporary fitting and fixtures have revitalised heritage spaces. Check out our website and publications for examples of what other owners of heritage places have done.

**Where can I get advice on conservation and development?**

We offer practical advice and have a variety of guidelines and publications that can assist you. For complex proposals, or plans involving unique issues, we suggest you use a professional with heritage experience. A list of consultants who are experienced in dealing with heritage properties is available on our website. Look for inContact, your heritage specialists directory.

**What if I want to make changes to a recent building located on the same site as a heritage building?**

In most cases, the whole land title is registered, not just the immediate area around the heritage building or structure. Sometimes the registration will include buildings that do not necessarily contribute to the significance of the place. Changes to or removal of these buildings or structures may impact on the setting of a registered place therefore any proposed changes to them are still required to be referred to the Heritage Council.

**Can I subdivide my block?**

Subdivisions of a registered area (known as a curtilage) can occur as long as the heritage values and settings of the place are respected. The Heritage Council has approved many subdivisions. Subdivision applications are also subject to relevant town planning legislation. Contact our Heritage Development team for more information.

**Can I change the internal layout of my heritage place?**

Entry in the State Register does not mean a place cannot be changed to meet contemporary needs or adapted for a new use. Where possible, these changes should allow for evidence of the original layout to be visible so that the story of the building's past continues to be understood.

**Can I relocate my heritage building (including garages and other structures)?**

The original location of a building is an integral part of its history and significance. For this reason, relocation of buildings is not generally considered acceptable unless it is the sole means of ensuring a building's survival.

Some structures such as mining offices and school rooms were constructed as transportable buildings and, in some cases, their relocation may continue to be acceptable depending on the context of any proposed new location.

**Is the garden of my heritage place subject to the same controls as the buildings?**

This depends on the unique assessment and significance of your property. Sometimes the landscape elements of a place form part of its significance and therefore will need referral. For advice, call our Heritage Development team.

**How do I meet universal access requirements?**

Public buildings should accommodate access for all people. Sometimes this can be challenging in heritage buildings with narrow doorways, steep staircases and changes in floor levels. There are a number of consultants with experience in this field who can help you achieve both heritage conservation and universal access. To contact a consultant, search inContact, our online heritage specialists directory or call our Heritage Development team for advice.

**What if my place is not State Registered but is included in a local government Municipal Inventory or Heritage List?**

If your place is listed on a local Municipal Inventory or Heritage List, contact your local government, which may have specific guidelines for locally listed heritage places.

**What if the property is owned by the State Government?**

Where a State Government-owned place, that is heritage listed or may be of heritage significance, is being disposed of for a new use or into new ownership, the Government Heritage Property Disposal Process (GHPDP) applies. Read more about the Government Heritage Property Disposal Process on our website or contact our office for more details.



**LEFT TO RIGHT:** Penshurst, East Fremantle (1897).

Image supplied by Tim Brien;

Matso's Store, Broome (1910). This attractive timber-framed building was Broome's first bank, then a general store, and is now the award-winning Matso's Broome Brewery, incorporating a microbrewery, commercial kitchen and modern amenities.

Image supplied by Matso's Broome Brewery.



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FRONT COVER: Worker's Cottage, Perth (circa 1890s): This passive solar addition complements the scale and cultural significance of this simple worker's cottage in the heart of the historic Brookman and Moir Streets Precinct.

## Contact us

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