



HERITAGE
COUNCIL

*We're working for
Western Australia.*

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2023



WHO WE ARE

The Heritage Council is a statutory authority established by the *Heritage Act 2018*.

The Council is a body corporate and accountable for the finances and performance of the organisation under the Financial Management Act.

The Council comprises nine persons appointed by the Governor of Western Australia on the advice of the Minister for Heritage.

The Heritage Council is responsible for fulfilling a range of functions under section 17 of the *Heritage Act 2018*, including in summary to:

- Advise the Minister for Heritage on heritage-related matters.
- Maintain the State Register of Heritage Places.
- Provide heritage advice to referring parties and agencies.
- Provide or facilitate financial or technical assistance.
- Endeavour to prevent the destruction, deterioration of, or damage to, heritage places.
- Encourage public interest in, and understanding of, the cultural heritage of the State.
- Promote or provide education and training on heritage related matters.

HOW WE WORK TOGETHER

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage is the State Government department that supports the Heritage Council in carrying out its statutory functions, and also supports the Minister. It is accountable to both.

The Department carries out the statutory day-to-day operations, projects and service-delivery on the Council's behalf. Delegation of responsibilities from the Council to the Department occurs within the framework of a formal delegation policy that is reviewed annually.

Together, we contribute to the Government Goal of Better Places: A quality environment with liveable and affordable communities and vibrant regions and the delivery of the Government's '*Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity*' program.

This Strategic Plan is our direction and our guide for the next four years. Our plans detailing actions and key performance indicators to deliver our objectives are included in the Department's annual business plan for Heritage Services.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

In February 2019 the State Government released ‘*Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity*’, which establishes whole-of-government targets in six outcome areas to deliver better outcomes for all Western Australians. Priorities for the Heritage Council are linked to a number of outcome areas of the ‘*Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity*’ program.

The cultural heritage embodied in 1,376 places currently entered in the State Register of Heritage Places, together with the 24,000 historic places included in other lists and inventories are valuable assets that make a significant contribution to the economy, the environment, our community’s sense of place and quality of life. These are all key considerations for meeting the Government goal of “Better Places” and delivering the *Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity*’ program.

As such, it is important that we are resourced to carry out our responsibilities to provide for the conservation of places that are a significant part of the cultural heritage of Western Australia, while also being responsive to the changing environment. As well as significant challenges to address, there will also be opportunities for cultural heritage to contribute to the development of the State and its economy through adaptive reuse of heritage places and heritage tourism.

We will need to work effectively with relevant agencies to ensure cultural heritage is at the forefront of thinking, planning and designing for State Government planning and infrastructure programs such as METRONET and Infrastructure WA. A contemporary statutory and strategic planning framework that encourages excellence in heritage management and practice is required to meet the community’s expectations that all levels of government make a significant contribution to maintaining our heritage places – in both public and private ownership.

We operate in an environment characterised by many competing demands on constrained public resources. Responsible disposal of Government heritage assets and activation of the private sector where opportunities

exist through a balance of incentives – financial, technical and statutory – can foster the maintenance of heritage assets as a vibrant part of the economy and community. The State Government is the largest single owner of heritage places in Western Australia and sets the standards for observing good heritage management and conservation practices. We will collaborate with agencies to realise the heritage and economic potential of these assets.

Maintaining and creatively re-using our heritage places whether publicly or privately owned, also makes a significant contribution to sustainability. Using what we already have benefits the environment by leveraging the embodied energy of existing buildings, reducing waste and the energy inputs required for new materials and transport. This also serves to maintain the demand for the specialist services – professional, trades and materials – required to manage and care for these places.

In a State as large as WA, economic development is geographically uneven. Regional decline in township populations and infrastructure creates short and long-term challenges for heritage conservation and inevitably puts the sustainability of some regional heritage places into question. Complementary sectors of the economy such as hospitality, tourism and other arts and cultural activities that employ and engage thousands of Western Australians also benefit from strategies to make the most of our heritage estate. This is a key area for growth and our involvement both in the regions and metropolitan area.

Community engagement and support is essential for these initiatives to be successful. We will continue to look at ways to build support for heritage conservation and development that is in harmony with cultural significance and meet the needs of contemporary life.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and updated as we adapt to changes in the operating environment and recalibrate future directions.

OUR VISION –

Heritage is integral to the identity, vibrant life and prosperity of Western Australia

OUR PURPOSE

By working together, we connect past and future generations through understanding and recognition, conservation and activation of the places that define the Western Australian story.

Our core functions are inextricably linked and include:

- Recognition and conservation of places of cultural heritage significance to the State.
- Provision of advice, training and support to Government, decision makers, owners and managers that ensures sustainable, responsible and best practice management of heritage places.
- Respecting, sharing and celebrating the stories and achievements associated with heritage places of importance to Western Australia's identity.

OUR PRINCIPLES

1. We perform our core functions under the *Heritage Act 2018* in a way that supports the sustainable economic, social, and environmental management and development of the state.
2. We act in a cost-effective manner, and in accordance with sound financial management principles and the *Financial Management Act 2006*.
3. We provide expert oversight of the conservation, management and operation of Fremantle Prison consistent with the UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

OUR VALUES

Professionalism – We are proficient, competent and reliable in all that we do. We value excellence and act with respect and integrity at all times.

Accountability – We practice fair and ethical decision-making. We explain things openly and take responsibility for our decisions and actions.

Collaboration – We work together, and with our stakeholders, to promote good heritage outcomes.

Helpfulness – We always seek to be helpful. We provide valued and timely service, respecting that our customers have individual needs.

Respect – We are serious about what we do, and understand our work is personal to our stakeholders. We support each other and celebrate our successes.

OUR FOCUS –



Places representing the story of Western Australia's history and development are comprehensively identified and chronicled



Western Australia's heritage places are conserved through sound heritage practice and harmonious development, and their full potential is realised



The importance of heritage places to Western Australia's identity and quality of life is understood and appreciated

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN –



Places representing the story of Western Australia's history and development are comprehensively identified and chronicled

Priorities

We work towards a register that is a comprehensive collection of places recognised for their cultural heritage significance to the State by:

- Including the iconic places that tell the story of Western Australia and the community.
- Within two years of proclamation of the *Heritage Act 2018*, finalising registration of places that have been interim registered under the *Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990*.

We operate with well understood criteria for entry to the Register that are open, transparent and inspire public confidence by:

- Adopting the National Heritage Convention – HERCON¹ criteria as a basis for assessment.
- Developing and rolling out a new guide to support the use of HERCON based assessments.

We promote consistency and high standards in heritage identification and listing practices by:

- Development and promotion of guidelines to assist government agencies in their review of inventories and heritage lists.
- Promoting inHerit² to State and Local Government as a central place for recording and managing government inventory information reflecting places of local heritage significance, valued by their community.

Measures – extent to which

- Three of the following six Prioritised Places are to be recommended for registration to the Minister for Heritage within the next five years, with one Place to be recommended within the next two years: Rottnest Island, New Norcia, Mundaring/ Kalgoorlie Pipeline, Kings Park, Canning Stock Route and Houtman Abrolhos.
- The registration of places that have been interim registered under the *Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990* has been finalised within two years.

- HERCON criteria adopted via legislation and guidelines for their use in assessment, developed and published.
- Preliminary reviews proceed to full assessment but are not then recommended for registration.
- Publications and online content updated to reflect new registration processes under the *Heritage Act 2018*.

- State Government agencies are consulted on the development of guidelines about State Government heritage.
- State and Local Government are actively following Heritage Council guidelines for updating their heritage inventory and lists and using inHerit to capture this information.

¹ National criteria for the assessment of heritage significance adopted by Environment Protection and Heritage Council of the Australia and State/Territory Governments in April 2008.

² Web portal for information about heritage places and listings in Western Australia.



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Priorities

We work with key agencies to ensure heritage is actively supported in statutory and regulatory frameworks, and metropolitan and regional planning by:

- Encouraging a holistic approach within Government to include heritage considerations when establishing frameworks, policies and strategies.
- Providing advice to Government on the potential impacts and mitigation measures of State infrastructure projects.
- Engaging and contributing to the State's program for Planning Reform, and 'Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity'.

We build capacity in the heritage sector by delivering and facilitating training and education by:

- Improving the availability of information and case studies about the conservation and adaptive re-use of heritage places supporting sustainability and economic outcomes.
- Promoting good heritage practice throughout the sector through provision of advice, workshops, conferences, online information and partnering with training providers.

We increase investment in heritage conservation advocating best practice in heritage management and realisation of economic potential by:

- Providing and facilitating grants, incentives and advice.
- Revitalising selected disused and neglected publicly-owned buildings for beneficial conservation and economic outcomes.
- Identifying and working with heritage champions and key projects.
- Overseeing conservation and interpretation of all the heritage values of places under our management to promote a sustainable future for the asset.

We ensure all development proposals referred to us are assessed in an informed, reasonable, timely, consistent, transparent and understandable way after by

- Implementing accessible and comprehensive policy, evaluation and assessment frameworks.
- Increasing use of digital platforms to improve lodgement of grants, referrals and nominations.

Measures – extent to which

- Heritage is included in statutory and regulatory frameworks, metropolitan and regional planning documents.
- State infrastructure projects mitigate potential impacts on heritage values.
- Heritage places within METRONET footprint are mapped and taken into consideration.
- Heritage matters are considered in the State's planning reform program.

- Training and information sessions are used to inform stakeholders of requirements under the *Heritage Act 2018*.
- Publications and online resources promote good heritage practice and successful adaptation of heritage places.
- Conferences, workshops and online information are used and deliver key messages to the target audience.

- Grants leverage additional investment in conservation projects.
- Good heritage outcomes and economic uplift through returns to Government can be demonstrated on sales of heritage places under the Heritage Revolving Fund program.
- Private owners are revitalising heritage places and demonstrating good heritage outcomes and sustainable development.
- Management of Fremantle Prison is consistent with the UNESCO World Heritage Convention and its potential as a compatible-use heritage precinct is realised.

- Development referrals are determined within agreed timeframes.
- Development approvals issued for registered places are consistent with the *Heritage Act 2018*.
- Policies developed to respond to key strategic issues in heritage management.
- Electronic lodgement of referrals, grants and nominations are available.
- Publications and online content updated to reflect new referral processes under the *Heritage Act 2018*.



The importance of heritage places to Western Australia's identity and quality of life is understood and appreciated

Priorities

We work with partners and communities to promote engagement with the State's cultural heritage by:

- Undertaking regular regional visits and supporting heritage focussed conferences.
- Providing an annual sponsorship program.
- Identification of heritage places through the targeted plaques program.

We promote heritage champions and success stories to celebrate our State's heritage and those that care for it by:

- Delivering the annual Western Australian Heritage Awards.
- Proactively seeking media opportunities to promote excellence in heritage practice and good news stories.

We support heritage tourism opportunities State-wide to stimulate the economy and promote Western Australian cultural heritage to visitors by:

- Working with tourism authorities, representative bodies and other stakeholders on advocating cultural heritage tourism as an opportunity to attract new visitors to the State and contribute to the Government targets for tourism and economic growth.
- Improving access to heritage information to promote visitation and support businesses in their delivery of heritage tourism experiences.

Measures – extent to which

- A regular conference program and regional visits are delivered.
- Sponsorships support our strategic purpose, focus areas and key messages.
- Plaques provided to recognise and celebrate places entered in the State Register.

- Media coverage of the Western Australian Heritage Awards translates into advertising spend rate.
- Positive heritage stories are published in the media.

- Heritage tourism is included within the promotional campaigns of Western Australia's tourism bodies.
- Case studies on heritage tourism developed.
- Heritage tourism contributes to the State economy.