



HERITAGE
COUNCIL



2012/13
annual report

Foreword

Hon A P Jacob JP MLA
Minister for Environment;
Heritage

In accordance with section 61 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*, I hereby submit for your information and presentation to Parliament the Annual Report for the Heritage Council of Western Australia for the financial year ended 30 June 2013.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006*.

Yours sincerely



Marion Fulker
Chair

6 September 2013

Heritage is important in understanding the story of Western Australia – its history, identity and diversity.

Heritage is diverse and consists of places such as buildings and structures, monuments, gardens, cemeteries, landscapes, and archaeological sites.

As a community, we share the responsibility to identify and protect what is important, and pass on these places to future generations so they will understand what came before them.

In 1990, the State Government passed the *Heritage of Western Australia Act* to provide a framework in which to recognise, conserve, promote and celebrate heritage for the benefit of the Western Australian community.

The *Act* established the Heritage Council of Western Australia, as the State Government's advisory and statutory body on heritage, and the State Register of Heritage Places (State Register). The Heritage Council is supported by the State Heritage Office, which is a branch of State Government.

The State Register is a statutory list of places in Western Australia of cultural heritage significance to the State.

Entry into the State Register recognises the value and importance of a place and helps to promote its conservation into the future. Places are entered in the State Register after a rigorous assessment process, which includes extensive consultation with owners, local governments and interested stakeholders.

The State Register is currently comprised of 1353 places throughout Western Australia – from the Main Pump Station in Kununurra in our north, Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse in the south, and the Gwalia Townsite in the east.

The Heritage Council and the State Heritage Office work with Western Australians to recognise, conserve, adapt and celebrate our State's unique cultural heritage.

The 2012/13 Annual Report provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Heritage Council and the State Heritage Office to achieve these goals and ensure that heritage continues to be recognised as integral to the vibrant life and prosperity of Western Australia.

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1.0 Overview

1.1 Vision and Objectives

Our vision

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

Our mission

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

Our values

- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Innovation
- Diversity
- Respect
- Collegiality
- Excellence
- Service

Our Objectives

- The places that represent the story of Western Australia's history and development are comprehensively identified and chronicled.
- Western Australia's heritage places are conserved through sound conservation practice, successful adaptation and harmonious development.
- The importance of heritage places to Western Australia's identity and quality of life is understood and appreciated.

Background: The Trustee Bar and Bistro is housed within the WA Trustee building, part of the Heritage Award winning transformation of heritage buildings at Brookfield Place. Photographer Geoff Bickford

1.2 Highlights

This Annual Report provides a review of the operations of the Heritage Council and State Heritage Office for the financial year ended 30 June 2013.

Assessment and Registration

- 15 places were entered in the State Register of Heritage Places on an interim basis.
- 19 places were entered in the State Register of Heritage Places on a permanent basis.
- 1,353 places now entered in the State Register of Heritage Places.

Development Referrals

- 939 development referrals were determined during the year.
- The Heritage Council and the State Heritage Office have been actively involved in major WA developments including Perth City Link, Elizabeth Quay, and the Old Treasury Building redevelopment.

Grants Assistance

- First increase to the Heritage Grants Program since its inception in 1996.
- 20 projects shared in approximately \$1.25million of grant funding, delivering more than \$3.33million in conservation works to State heritage listed properties across WA.
- \$3.5million of the \$5million Goldfields Earthquake Restoration Fund has been allocated to projects since April 2010.

Heritage Advice and Assistance

- Launch of **inHerit**, the one stop online portal for State and local heritage listings.
- Development and release of **inContact**, a new online directory of heritage specialists.
- Establishment of a **heritage advisory service** framework for local governments.

Heritage Promotion

- Production of a documentary '**Convict Road Unearthed**' detailing the work involved in the excavation of segments of a convict road buried beneath the Great Eastern Highway, Belmont.
- Launch of a new monthly **eNewsletter** to keep stakeholders up-to-date with the latest heritage news.
- **Western Australian Heritage Award** winning projects showcased in the Asia Pacific region through cooperation between the Heritage Council and UNESCO, with Northbridge's William Street Revitalisation Project receiving UNESCO's Award of Honourable Mention.

1.3 Heritage Council Overview

On behalf of the Heritage Council of Western Australia, I am delighted to present the 2012/13 Annual Report, detailing the organisation's activities during the past 12 months.

It has been a year of major achievements for the Heritage Council with a number of new initiatives that respond to the challenges we face in the future care and management of the State's heritage.

In February 2013, the Heritage Council released its 2013/17 Strategic Plan, which was reviewed and updated to account for progress against the key objectives and delivery of priority projects for the 2012/14 Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan reflects the Heritage Council's view of the current and foreseeable future for heritage over the next four years, and is reviewed annually and updated as the Heritage Council adapts to environmental changes and recalibrates future directions.

Western Australia has entered an exciting period that requires strategic responses to the challenges of a fluctuating economy and growing population. Major planning strategies such as *Directions 2031* and the *Regional Centres Development Plan (Super Towns)* are guiding our State's development into the future. Already, major public works are well underway in metropolitan and regional centres.

During this time of growth, the Heritage Council has continued to look at ways to build support for heritage conservation and development that is in harmony with cultural significance, while meeting the needs of contemporary life.

Western Australia has a wealth of underutilised heritage buildings that provide unique opportunities to be sensitively adapted to revitalise our urban and regional communities.

To encourage more investment in heritage conservation and adaptive reuse, alternative ways to facilitate and attract funding is a priority for the Heritage Council.

The first step in this process is community engagement and support, and the Heritage Council is already ahead of schedule in this regard.

This year saw the implementation of the first funding increase in the **Heritage Grants Program** since its inception in 1996. It increased by 25 per cent, with an additional \$1.046million to be allocated over four years.

This resulted in 20 projects sharing in approximately \$1.25million of grant funding. Combined with owner contributions, it will deliver more than \$3.33million in conservation works to State heritage listed properties across Western Australia.

The funding increase is indicative of the importance of the work undertaken by the Heritage Council and the State Heritage Office to promote changes that make a real difference to owners of State Registered places.



Heritage Council Overview continued

The Heritage Grants Program is just one important initiative that encourages private investment in heritage conservation.

I would like to thank the former Heritage Minister, the Hon. G M (John) Castrilli MLA, who championed the cause of increasing grants to owners as well as a range of other initiatives that will assist the Heritage Council in meeting the challenges of the future. These initiatives included WA's first State Cultural Heritage Policy, the review of the *Heritage of Western Australia Act*, increase in penalties for illegal demolition of heritage places, and amendments to the existing *Heritage Act* to cut red tape for owners undertaking maintenance and minor works.

I welcome the new Heritage Minister, the Hon. Albert Jacob JP MLA, who has continued the carriage of these important initiatives, ensuring that the grant increases will continue through the next four years. The Minister is focused on progressing towards the introduction to Parliament of new, modernised heritage legislation. The Heritage Council looks forward to working with Minister Jacob over the next year to progress this.

Other initiatives that have been completed this year include:

- **inHerit**, an online portal that brings together information on more than 23,000 State and local heritage-listed places. **inHerit** assists in building capacity within local governments by providing a repository and management tool for local heritage inventory information. It also ensures that information on heritage listed places is available to the public and other stakeholders 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

- **inContact**, an online directory of heritage specialists. **inContact** assists owners, State and local governments and other stakeholders in finding the right professionals who are experienced in dealing with heritage issues.
- Development of a **heritage advisory service** framework to support local governments and their communities to effectively manage their heritage assets.
- Publishing a policy framework for development proposals. This is to promote consistent decision-making by the Heritage Council and the State Heritage Office, and to increase certainty of outcomes for owners of State Registered places.

I am also pleased to advise that the **Goldfields Earthquake Restoration Fund** is nearing completion. The State Government committed \$5million to assisting owners in the repair, restoration and conservation of their heritage properties in Kalgoorlie-Boulder following the April 2010 earthquake. About 70 per cent of the funds have now been allocated with the remainder likely to be dispersed this year. This has been a long running project, as some owners have been hampered by insurance delays and lack of the required skilled workers in the area.

However, we can see what can be achieved through the partnership and commitment of private owners, local and State Governments through the ongoing restoration of the Burt Street Heritage Precinct. It is just one of the many projects that are revitalising our regional and metropolitan communities. Those who view heritage as a barrier to development only need to visit

Heritage Council Overview continued

Brookfield Place and the William and Wellington Streets Precinct in Perth or William Street, Northbridge to see how the community has embraced the vibrant mix of old and new, and how heritage has added value to new developments.

The achievements of these projects have been recognised on a national and international stage. In August 2012, the William Street Revitalisation Project, Northbridge won the UNESCO Asia Pacific Award of Honourable Mention. The win was particularly pleasing as it occurred in the first year of an agreement between UNESCO and the Heritage Council, where Western Australian Heritage Award winning conservation and adaptive reuse projects would be shortlisted for nomination to the UNESCO Asia Pacific Awards.

This brings me to the **2013 Western Australian Heritage Awards**. I would like to congratulate the nominees, finalists and winners of this year's awards. These individuals and organisations make an invaluable contribution to the conservation, adaptive reuse and promotion of our State's heritage. This year, five Western Australian projects are entered in the UNESCO awards and I wish the nominees all the best.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Council members who have embraced the many changes and challenges faced by the Heritage Council this year and who have given their time so willingly and have diligently shared their heritage expertise.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the members of the Heritage Council's Register Committee and Development Committee for their commitment throughout the year.

And I express the Council's appreciation to the State Heritage Office management and staff for their achievements and service delivery. I constantly receive stakeholder feedback about the dedication of the team and the very proactive manner in which they engage.

It is the collective contribution of all of the above which provides the many positive results and events that have characterised 2012/13 as a successful year.



Marion Fulker
Chair
Heritage Council of WA



Above: Heritage Minister, the Hon Albert Jacob JP MLA and Heritage Council Chair Marion Fulker with the 2013 State Heritage Champions

1.4 State Heritage Office Overview

The State Heritage Office has spent this year consolidating many of the initiatives which began with the move to the Bairds Building 15 months ago.

The refresh of the brand and new website have gained traction within the industry, with the State Heritage Office brand now readily identified as a branch of State Government supporting the Heritage Council and the Minister for Heritage.

The refresh of brand has assisted in clarifying the Heritage Council and the State Heritage Office's services and messages within the community, promoting a deeper understanding of the roles and functions of each entity, and reducing the confusion between the different heritage agencies, groups and lists.

A number of projects have also been undertaken this year which have driven traffic to the website and promoted the new brand.

- In August, the State Heritage Office worked with City East Alliance, the WA Museum and the City of Belmont to safely excavate five salvageable pieces of timber road base from a 145-year-old **convict-built road**, uncovered during works to the Great Eastern Highway. The salvage work was completed within three days to ensure minimal disruption to the highway upgrade. Footage from the excavation was used to produce a documentary for the State Heritage website.
- In January, the State Heritage Office launched a monthly **electronic newsletter** to provide more timely and relevant information to owners, stakeholders and the general public. The electronic newsletter replaced the bi-annual printed Heritage Matters magazine. This is more cost effective, has a greater reach and enables links to further information.

As part of the 2013/17 Strategic Plan, the State Heritage Office has continued to work to establish and sustain positive long-term relationships with the owners of places in the State Register.

The Assessment and Registration team has developed a liaison officer model and now undertake most assessment work in-house. As well as creating significant efficiencies within the office, it is helping to build positive relationships with stakeholders, particularly owners, by assisting them to understand the real rather than the perceived effects of registration. The liaison officer model is being looked at throughout the agency as a way of better assisting owners of heritage places.

A closed trial was also held during the year to test the **Conservation Management Strategy** brief and determine both the amount of work involved in compilation and the value to owners once completed. The trial was successful, with the State Heritage Office now investigating options for a wider ranging pilot program. The Conservation Management Strategy provides property owners with a practical guide to the maintenance of their heritage property.



State Heritage Office Overview continued

The State Heritage Office is working to improve its information technology which in turn will improve productivity, visibility and access to information to provide better services to its stakeholders.

In 2012, the State Heritage Office commenced planning for the decommissioning of the Office of Shared Services. To create efficiencies in the adoption of new finance and human resource systems, the Office is working with the Department of Racing Gaming and Liquor, Department of Local Government and the Equal Opportunity Commission to form an agency cluster. The cluster concept includes shared capital and human resources for the delivery of finance and human resource services across all agencies in the cluster. The State Heritage Office, along with other cluster agencies, is scheduled to adopt new systems in late 2013.

Work has progressed on the replacement of the core heritage business system. Out-dated, and with limited support available, the business system no longer meets the needs of the agency or stakeholders that rely on access to heritage place information. In conjunction with this, the Office will implement an electronic records management system which will increase efficiency and reduce both the future costs and risks associated with maintaining hard copy archives. The capture of electronic versions of documents will also provide immediate access to these records in the future.

This year, a number of milestones were achieved in the management and reporting for the agency:

- The Heritage Council adopted a new set of key performance indicators to better reflect the results of the agency's efforts towards achieving efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of cultural heritage services.

- The Heritage Council had no recommendations as a result of the Internal Audit.
- The Heritage Council's Record Keeping Plan 2013-18 was approved by the State Records Office and an online record keeping training system was adopted.

The agency took an innovative approach to cost reduction associated with Heritage Council and Committee agenda preparation, through the introduction of iPads. Not only are the costs associated with these less than monthly printing and couriering costs, but the Heritage Council now has ready access to previous agendas and this information is more secure.

The achievements of the State Heritage Office through the year are due to the efforts and commitment of the Office staff with the support of the Heritage Council. I would like to thank everyone for their dedication and support in what has been a challenging but highly productive 12 months.



Graeme Gammie
Executive Director
State Heritage Office

1.5 Significant Issues Impacting the Agency

The fluctuating Western Australian economy and a fast growing population drive an ever increasing demand for new solutions to our State's infrastructure, housing and construction needs, much of which is focused in areas of historic development.

This dynamic and fast changing environment sees governments at all levels responding through the review and development of policies, strategies and plans that address the current and foreseeable needs of our communities. This is a responsible and positive move but can present risks where heritage is seen predominantly as a constraint, or its real contribution to the community's quality of life is not sufficiently recognised.

The [State Cultural Heritage Policy](#), the first of its kind in Western Australia, was adopted by the State Government in February 2011. It observes that all government agencies and local governments have a responsibility in recognising, promoting and protecting our cultural heritage. This provides a framework for the Heritage Council to promote the inclusion of heritage considerations as an integral component of key planning strategies and processes.

The conservation and use of historic places contributes to the character and identity of Western Australia, and supports a sense of place and belonging that is so important to the health and well-being of our communities. Good heritage management, driven by vision and innovation in the recognition, care, adaptation and ongoing use of heritage assets is central to achieving a balanced approach to the preservation of our rich cultural heritage and broader individual and community needs.

However, places must be fit for contemporary purpose, safe and accessible within the National Construction Code and State-level statutory framework that puts an increasing focus on compliance. Actionable strategies are needed to manage the requirements for compliance whilst safeguarding the fabric and spirit of our heritage places.

The overwhelming majority of owners are committed to the care of their heritage places, however, there are some that need encouragement to do so. The most effective strategic policy mix includes:

- incentives to maximise the activation of private co-investment in heritage conservation
- a suite of services that enables owners to get good heritage advice and access to heritage professionals and trades
- (conversely) effective disincentives to respond to genuine cases of deliberate damage and neglect.

Heritage conservation goals cannot be achieved without an adequate workforce of professionals and skilled tradespeople. There is a serious shortage of these people in heritage conservation. This presents challenges for the whole sector: property owners, the State Heritage Office, and State and local government.

Significant Issues Impacting the Agency continued

Working within this environment requires sound, contemporary legislation to ensure that the statutory framework achieves its goals of being enabling, open, transparent, simple to operate and understand, and able to reflect best practice in the recognition and care of heritage places. Western Australia's existing heritage legislation does not meet these requirements.

To address these challenges, some of the initiatives that the Heritage Council and State Heritage Office have worked on this year include:

- **Development of a policy framework** to ensure consistent, informed and timely advice is provided by the Heritage Council and State Heritage Office.
- Development of the **inContact** directory of heritage specialists to ensure owners have access to professional advice and to build capacity within the heritage industry.
- Further enhancement of the **inHerit** heritage places database to support local government heritage management and provide up-to-date information on heritage listings to stakeholders and others.
- Initial scope of works commenced for an **education and training program** to build capacity in heritage planning and management in State and local government, and promote improved heritage training and education opportunities throughout the State.
- Refinement of a liaison officer model for **assessment and registration** purposes to assist owners to understand the implications of heritage listing and potential for development and adaptive reuse.
- Continued liaison with government agencies to promote and reinforce the **Government Heritage Property Disposal Process**.
- Continued liaison with the Department of Planning to ensure that clear and positive statements supporting the protection of the State's heritage places are included in the draft State Planning Strategy.
- Improvements to the **Heritage Grants Program** and activation of increased funding to encourage co-investment in heritage conservation.
- Continued work to progress the review of the *Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990* with a view to the drafting of contemporary legislation.