



## INFORMATION PAPER REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

### BACKGROUND

1. The Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990 creates the Register of Heritage Places as a comprehensive list of places throughout the State having cultural heritage significance. The Act also refers to the Data Base and requires local municipal authorities to prepare Municipal Inventories.

A primary function of the Heritage Council is to provide advice to the Minister for Heritage on the entry (and removal) of places into (from) the Register. The make-up of the Council was designed specifically to be a broadly representative, expert body which could provide credible and consistent advice on heritage significance.

### STATUTORY BASIS FOR THE REGISTER

2. Section 46 of the Heritage of Western Australia Act establishes the Register of Heritage Places. Section 47(1)(a) empowers the Minister to direct that a place be entered in the Register where it -
  - (i) is of cultural heritage significance; or
  - (ii) possesses special interest related to or associated with the cultural heritage, and is of value to the present community and future generations; and
  - (iii) that the protection afforded by this Act is appropriate notwithstanding that the place may be afforded protection by the operation of any other written law or law of the Commonwealth".

The process of entry of a place in the Register is set out in Attachment 1.

3. Cultural heritage significance is defined in Section 3 of the Act as -

*"in relation to a place, the relative value which that place has in terms of its aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance, for the present community and future generations"*.
4. The definition of what should be entered in the Register is elaborated in Section 47(2) with the following preamble -

*"without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) and with the intent that there should be compiled a comprehensive register of heritage rather than merely an index of examples...."*

5. Section 47(2) goes on to list some of the features which may be taken into account in determining significance -
- (a) *any distinctive features or scarcity value, the character of the environs of the place, its landscape or townscape value and, in the case of a building, its beauty and proportions, the degree of unity of its materials, design and scale, and any contribution it makes to the significance of any area, precinct, group of buildings, or amenity or which it forms part, or to its setting or the setting of any other place or feature;*
  - b) *Any strong association which the place has with any historic personage or significant event or discovery or any development or cultural phase, or whether or not the place provides a notable example of a particular period or type important for general educational, architectural or archaeological reasons that distinguish it from other such examples, or has intrinsic merit and is commonly agreed to be -*
    - i) *a work of art in itself that enriches the environment; or*
    - (ii) *held in high public esteem or sentiment; and*
  - (c) *in the case of places of particular scientific or other special interest, the extent to which the place has contributed, or may be likely to contribute, to knowledge or research."*
6. Section 48 of the Act enables the Minister to register a group of places as an Historic Precinct even though the component places individually may not satisfy cultural heritage significance criteria.

#### SCOPE OF THE REGISTER

7. The Register is intended to include all places on land, in estuaries or adjacent to the coast which cross a threshold of significance and where that significance relates to human values.

Currently, Council will focus on places of non Aboriginal significance. Where there is overlap with Aboriginal issues they should be taken into account.

#### PURPOSE OF THE REGISTER

8. The Register is designed as a planning tool and as a vehicle for public education about heritage issues generally. It is protective in that it is linked directly to the development approvals process. Entry of a place in the Register does not mean that it cannot be modified, redeveloped or even demolished. Entry imposes on decision-making bodies such as the Department of Planning and Urban Development and local municipal councils a requirement to consult with the Heritage Council and to take heritage values into account in future development decisions.

Whilst it is clearly desirable to conserve in situ the State's cultural heritage, this may not be achievable in all cases. The referral mechanism for heritage places will ensure adequate documentation of any place to be moved or demolished so that information about that place is not lost completely.

**CRITERIA OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE  
FOR ASSESSMENT OF PLACES FOR ENTRY INTO THE  
REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES**

## *Nature of Significance*

### **1. AESTHETIC VALUE**

**Criterion 1.**            *It is significant in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics .*

- 1.1            Importance to a community for aesthetic characteristics.
- 1.2            Importance for its creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement.
- 1.3            Importance for its contribution to the aesthetic values of the setting demonstrated by a landmark quality or having impact on important vistas or otherwise contributing to the identified aesthetic qualities of the cultural environs or the natural landscape within which it is located.
- 1.4            In the case of an historic precinct, importance for the aesthetic character created by the individual components which collectively form a significant streetscape, townscape or cultural environment.

### **2. HISTORIC VALUE**

**Criterion 2.**            *It is significant in the evolution or pattern of the history of Western Australia.*

- 2.1            Importance for the density or diversity of cultural features illustrating the human occupation and evolution of the locality, region or the State.
- 2.2            Importance in relation to an event, phase or activity of historic importance in the locality, the region or the State.
- 2.3            Importance for close association with an individual or individuals whose life, works or activities have been significant within the history of the nation, State or region.
- 2.4            Importance as an example of technical, creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement in a particular period.

### 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

**Criterion 3A** *It has demonstrable potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the natural or cultural history of Western Australia.*

- 3.1 Importance for information contributing to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality, reference or benchmark site.
- 3.2 Importance for its potential to yield information contributing to a wider understanding of the history of human occupation of the locality, region or the State.

**Criterion 3B** *It is significant in demonstrating a high degree of technical innovation or achievement.*

- 3.3 Importance for its technical innovation or achievement.

### 4. SOCIAL VALUE

**Criterion 4** *It is significant through association with a community or cultural group in Western Australia for social, cultural, educational or spiritual reasons.*

- 4.1 Importance as a place highly valued by a community or cultural group for reasons of social, cultural; religious, spiritual, aesthetic or educational associations.
- 4.2 Importance in contributing to a community's sense of place.

## ***Degree of Significance***

### 5. RARITY

**Criterion 5** *It demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the cultural heritage of Western Australia.*

- 5.1 Importance for rare, endangered or uncommon structures, landscapes or phenomena.
- 5.2 Importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design no longer practiced in, or in danger of being lost from, or of exceptional interest to, the locality, region or the State.

## 6. REPRESENTATIVENESS

### **Criterion 6** *It is significant in demonstrating the characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments in the State.*

- 6.1 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a range of landscapes or environments, the attributes of which identify it as being characteristic of its class.
- 6.2 Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristic of the range of human activities (including way of life, philosophy, custom, process, land-use, function, design or technique) in the environment of the locality, region or the State.

### ***Condition, Integrity and Authenticity***

**Condition** refers to the current state of the place in relation to each of the values for which that place has been assessed. Condition reflects the cumulative effects of management and environmental events.

**Integrity** is a measure of the likely long-term viability or sustainability of the values identified, or the ability of the place to restore itself or be restored, and the time frame for any restorative process.

**Authenticity** refers to the extent to which the fabric is in its original state.

Because it is important that the Register be credible it is desirable that places in that Register have at least reasonable levels of condition and integrity. However it is possible for a place of poor condition or integrity to be entered in the Register on the basis of a value where these things are relatively unimportant eg. an historic ruin.

Places entered in the Register should also have a high degree of authenticity although it will be possible to include places which exhibit evolution of use and consequent change where this is harmonious with the original design and materials