



HERITAGE
COUNCIL



HCWA STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-26

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of land and waterways across Western Australia. The Department is committed to reconciliation to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to work together to provide a culturally-safe and inclusive environment.

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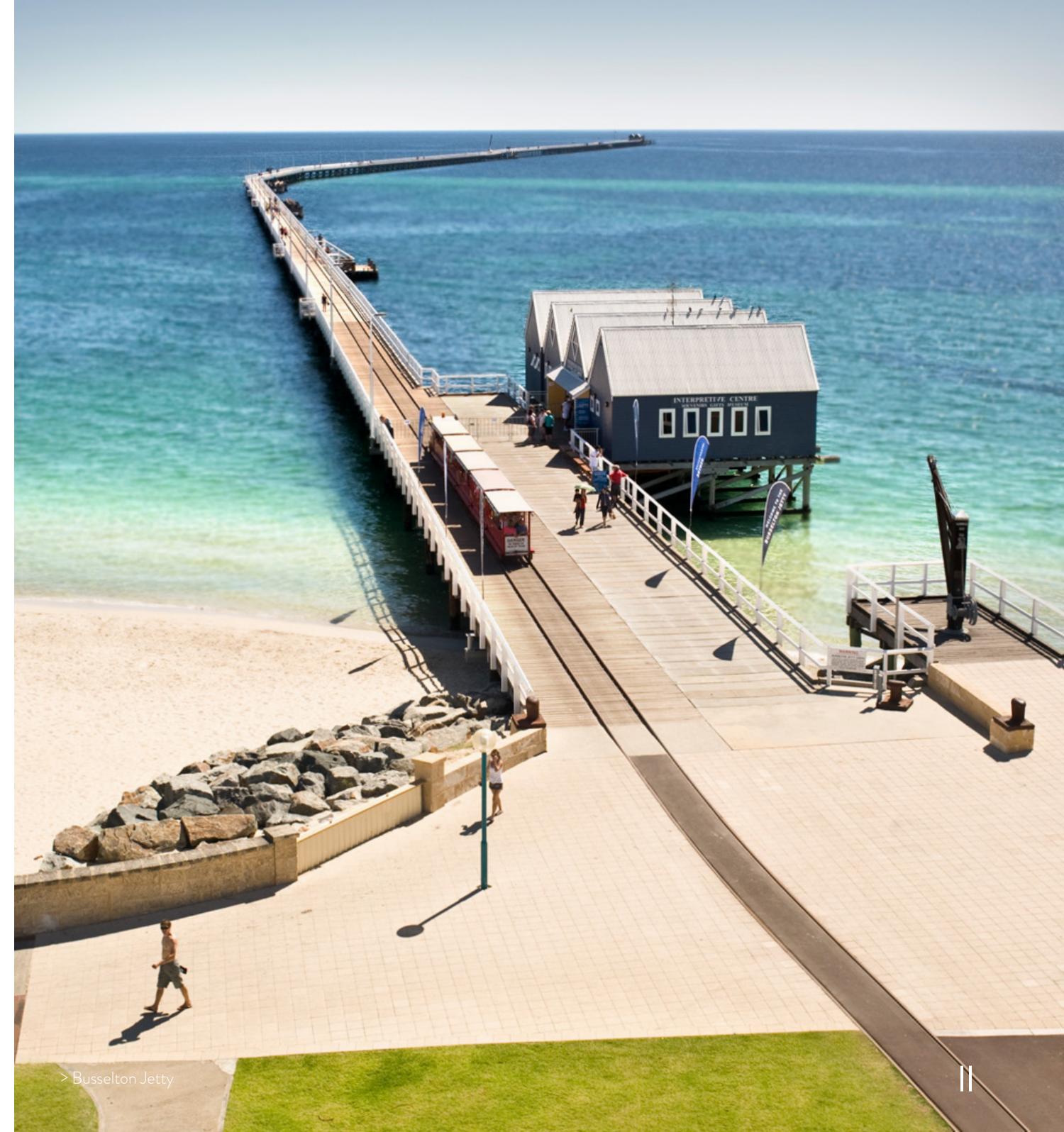
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BACKGROUND

WHO WE ARE

The Heritage Council of Western Australia is the State's expert body on matters concerning cultural heritage significance. The Council is made up of nine people who provide a balanced membership reflecting the functions of the Council. We are appointed by the Governor of Western Australia on the advice of the Minister for Heritage.

OUR OBJECTIVES

- Promote understanding and appreciation of Western Australia's cultural heritage.
- Recognise the importance of places of cultural heritage significance and their stories in understanding the course of WA's history.
- Provide for the identification and documentation of Western Australia's places of cultural heritage significance.
- Encourage and facilitate the conservation, continuing use, development and adaptive re-use of places of cultural heritage significance in ways that represent high standards of heritage conservation and are in harmony with cultural heritage values.





OUR CORE FUNCTIONS

- Provide advice to the Minister and referring parties and agencies on cultural heritage related matters.
- Assess and document places of cultural heritage significance and administer the State Register of Heritage Places.
- Promote and assist in the management and maintenance of State registered places through the provision or facilitation of financial or technical assistance or other conservation incentives.
- Endeavour to prevent the destruction or deterioration of, or damage to, heritage places.
- Advise and assist local government in identifying and conserving local heritage.
- Encourage public interest in, and understanding of, WA's cultural heritage.
- Provide education and training on cultural heritage matters.

HOW WE WORK TOGETHER

We are supported in carrying out our statutory functions by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (The Department). The Department carries out the statutory day-to-day operations, projects and service-delivery on our behalf. Delegation of responsibilities from the Council to the Department occurs within the framework of a formal delegation policy. Delivery of this Strategic Plan is achieved through an annual work program.

Together, we are accountable to the Minister for Heritage and contribute to the Government's goals and priorities.

For noting:

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

Under the *Heritage Act 2018*, the Heritage Council is the State's expert body on matters concerning cultural heritage significance, other than places:

- that comprise only the natural environment; or
- that have cultural heritage significance solely on account of their connection with Aboriginal tradition or culture.

In this document, the terms 'cultural heritage' and 'heritage' are used generically and interchangeably to refer to the 'heritage' to which the *Heritage Act 2018* applies, recognising that heritage places may have multiple attributes and values.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Aboriginal people of Western Australia as the traditional custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.





INTRODUCING OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Cultural heritage is integral to our lives as Western Australians and is uniquely placed to bring together communities and shape sustainable places for present and future generations.

Our heritage is rich and culturally diverse and consists of places such as buildings, monuments, gardens, cemeteries, cultural landscapes and archaeological sites, providing physical links between our past, present and future.

Our desire is to lead in the identification, conservation and protection of our cultural heritage, inspiring others to do the same and acknowledge and celebrate our heritage as a source of identity, healing, and enrichment, promoting its contribution as a sustainable and dynamic part of our future.

Acknowledging that heritage is a shared responsibility, we will support and engage with heritage owners, communities, and stakeholders to adapt places in ways that retain and explain cultural heritage values and contribute to a vibrant economy.

We encourage participation by empowering more people to foster greater understanding of their heritage, revealing and sharing the stories embedded in each place, and becoming champions for the heritage they care about both locally and across the state.

We will continue to work hard to make our processes efficient and transparent, removing obstacles and providing for greater stakeholder involvement in informing decisions about our heritage.

We face challenges from changes in how we work and live and how heritage is impacted by the effects of climate change. This strategy will be our guide for the future as we work proactively together to make our cultural heritage resilient to change, accessible, understood and valued by us all, now and into the future.

OUR PURPOSE, VISION, GOALS AND VALUES

PURPOSE

We provide leadership in the conservation and care of cultural heritage places in Western Australia for the benefit of current and future generations.

VISION

Our heritage is valued as the essence of what makes us Western Australian.

OVERARCHING GOALS

We aspire to have:

- the diversity of our cultural heritage places identified, and conserved through proactive stewardship and the sharing of stories and associations;
- Western Australians engaged with our shared heritage, understanding the contribution our cultural heritage places make to a sustainable future;
- all tiers of government working effectively and efficiently with a range of stakeholders in the recognition and conservation of our cultural heritage places for the benefit of current and future generations; and
- coherent, transparent, and integrated heritage processes that foster responsibility and accountability to protect, sustain and enhance our cultural heritage.

VALUES

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

Accountability – We practice fair and ethical decision-making, explaining things openly, taking responsibility for our decisions and actions.

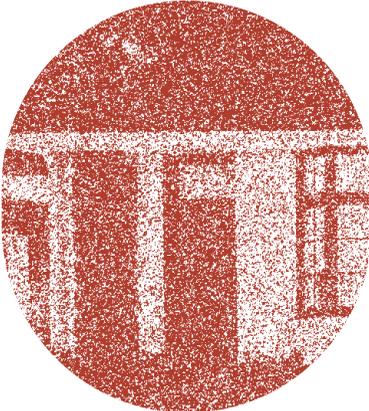
Collaboration – We work together, and with our stakeholders, to promote good heritage outcomes.

Effectiveness – We seek to be efficient, proactive, and responsive in what we do.

Respect – We are committed to what we do and aim to deliver positive outcomes for all our stakeholders.

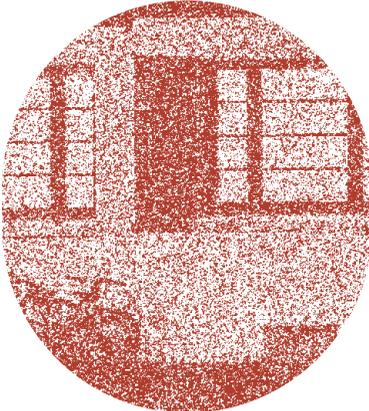
OUR FOCUS AREAS

1



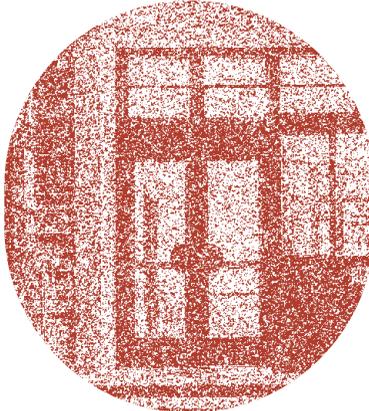
A State register of heritage places that is representative, clear, concise, and current.

2



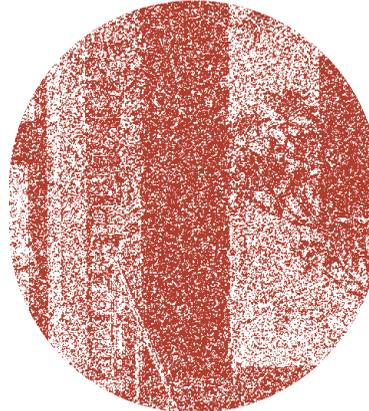
Western Australia's cultural heritage is understood, and all its values appreciated.

3



Cultural heritage places have a sustainable future.

4



Partnerships that enable and encourage cultural heritage conservation.

5



An efficient, effective, and capable Heritage Council.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIONS

FOCUS AREA 1

A State register of heritage places that is representative, clear, concise and current.

GOALS

1. The Register represents the diversity of the State’s significant cultural heritage places valued by the Western Australian community.
2. Registration documents are sufficient to support sound and consistent decision making.
3. The role of the Register is well understood and the information it contains is easily accessible and is kept up to date.
4. A shared approach engaging with communities in recognising, respecting and conserving the diversity of heritage values of places entered onto the Register.

ACTIONS

Review and analyse the Register and develop a plan to ensure documentation is current, presented in accordance with appropriate standards and address gaps in representation.	Streamline the registration documents for places of State significance to include sufficient information to identify the cultural heritage values of a place, for ongoing protection and conservation for the benefit of current and future generations.	Develop clear threshold criteria for places to be entered onto the Register and make this publicly available with supporting guidelines.	Engage with stakeholders to promote greater awareness of the Register, its function and relationship to local heritage places.	Investigate options for identifying community knowledge as a resource for understanding the social and wider cultural heritage values of places proposed for the Register.
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FOCUS AREA 2

Western Australia’s cultural heritage is understood and all its values appreciated.

GOALS

1. The layers of shared history and stories associated with Western Australia’s cultural heritage places are recognised, understood, respected and appropriately shared.
2. The social, economic, and environmental benefits of cultural heritage are identified and well understood.
3. Cultural heritage conservation, its benefits, and the role of those involved in its management are widely understood.

ACTIONS

Truth telling around the shared history of places is recognised, understood, and respected.	Support research into the social, economic, and environmental benefits of cultural heritage conservation and promote these benefits.	Improve stakeholder engagement across the range of our activities.	Work with stakeholders to clarify and communicate the respective roles, responsibilities, and processes for heritage conservation in Western Australia.	Explore opportunities to partner with other initiatives and projects that promote Western Australian heritage and history.
Through innovative techniques, explore opportunities for proactive engagement across an inclusive range of demographics.			Undertake and participate in statewide heritage activities to promote the Council’s role and work.	

FOCUS AREA 3

Cultural heritage places have a sustainable future.

GOALS

1. We are recognised as a leader and influencer of best practice heritage conservation and recognise others that do the same.
2. Heritage conservation is better resourced, and funding is leveraged wherever possible.
3. Stakeholders are provided timely advice on best practice heritage conservation, based on sharing of knowledge and experience.
4. Innovative and sustainable practices in cultural heritage conservation are identified to help address challenges arising from climate change.
5. Custodians and management agencies are supported by a sustainable workforce of professionals and tradespeople, skilled and experienced in heritage conservation.

ACTIONS

Promote the diversity of stories and case studies of successful conservation of heritage places.

Encourage entrepreneurial investment to create an external funding source to support ongoing conservation of heritage places.

Identify opportunities to implement the strategies identified in the HCWA's Statement of Strategic Intent for Natural Hazard Risk Reduction for heritage places.

Engage with tertiary education, training, professional and trade bodies, to encourage collaborative partnerships that will enable the development of best-practice cultural heritage knowledge, guidance and skills development.

FOCUS AREA 4

Partnerships that enable and encourage cultural heritage conservation.

GOALS

1. Understand Western Australian Government programs and priorities and be proactively engaged with processes and projects that impact cultural heritage.
2. Heritage stakeholders and champions approach and value working with us.
3. Under-utilised Western Australian Government heritage assets are identified and activated demonstrating great adaptive re-use and attracting good operators.
4. Local governments are supported in the identification and protection of heritage places important to their communities.
5. Mutually beneficial partnerships are created through collaboration and collective intelligence to enable efficient use of resources.

ACTIONS

Identify opportunities to proactively respond to government drivers, programs and priorities.

Promote the active involvement of all stakeholders and communities in the conservation of heritage places.

Encourage government entities to become exemplary heritage stewards and assist them through creation of support materials, delivery of information sessions and incentives.

Partner with relevant agencies and stakeholders to efficiently deliver on mutual goals.

Collaborate with the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Council of Western Australia to identify opportunities for shared initiatives around recognition, conservation and promotion of places where Aboriginal stories coincide or coexist with other cultural heritage places.

FOCUS AREA 5

Heritage Council
efficiency, effectiveness,
and capability.

GOALS

- 1. We are recognised as efficient and effective with clear policies and processes.
- 2. We have adequate resources and manage our workload to address strategic programs while managing statutory functions efficiently and effectively.
- 3. Our policies, processes and technical information are easily accessible.
- 4. We demonstrate responsible leadership by making all custodians accountable for the conservation of their heritage places.

ACTIONS

Review and seek feedback from stakeholders on how we can improve our processes and make information easily accessible.	Investigate the provision of independent technical advice to assist in decision making.	Implement a recurrent program for training and capacity-building for Council members.	Investigate a process to support development condition and compliance monitoring of State registered places.
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PROGRAM AND PRIORITIES

Our strategy is designed to be flexible and adaptable to respond to changes in the environment in which we work. This strategic direction will be represented in the Department's Strategic Plan. A rolling work plan will be developed with the Department that takes account of available resources, our statutory priorities, relevant programs and priorities of the State Government and opportunities that arise to work effectively with our stakeholders and the community. This plan will be represented in the Department's annual business planning.

EVALUATION AND MONITORING

The work plan will include activities that support our strategic goals and actions including identifiable outcomes as a measure of success in implementing our Strategic Direction. We will review our key areas of focus regularly to ensure that we're staying on the right path and have foresight to be proactive in response to changes that are needed. Delivery of our key performance indicators and progress against our Strategic Direction will be reported through the Heritage Council's Annual Report and our monthly newsletter "Heritage Matters".

