

Heritage

Heritage is the environment, objects and places that we inherit from the past and pass on to future generations. It is inseparable from Culture as a way of understanding and living in the world (see also The Greens (WA) [Arts & Culture](#) policy). “Heritage” in this policy includes “cultural heritage”.

The Greens (WA) believe that:

- heritage is an asset to be respected and protected for current and future generations
- a system of active heritage protection rather than documented destruction is optimal, with all levels of government – local, state and federal – working together
- heritage laws and practices in Western Australia should reflect our international commitments, including:
 - the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
 - the ICOMOS Burra Charter for buildings, precincts, places or landscapes;
 - the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries for objects;
 - the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage for practices;
 - the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity; and
 - the United Nations World Heritage Convention and its associated guidelines.
- there needs to be rationalisation on the state and federal registers of heritage places, and clarification of the roles, relationship and interaction between the WA State Heritage Office, the Australian Heritage Council and the National Trust of Australia (WA)
- heritage should reflect the diverse nature of our State’s history from pre-European settlement to present-day society, including the contributions made by Aboriginal, immigrant and contemporary Australians
- Aboriginal peoples have custodianship over Aboriginal culture and heritage (see also The Greens (WA) [Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander](#) policy)
- by reference to the Burra Charter and the heritage legislation of the Commonwealth, a comprehensive, inclusive list of criteria for establishing “cultural significance” should be developed, based on aesthetic, historic, scientific, social, spiritual and environmental values for past, present or future generations
- holistic legislation is optimal in order to maintain our heritage and prevent the deterioration, damage or destruction of places that have cultural heritage significance
- the emphasis on our built heritage should be broadened to ensure the protection of memorials, trees, parks, views and other aspects of natural heritage, archaeological sites, rock art, dinosaur footprints, spiritual and

- religious places, and intangible heritage such as the memories and stories of our elders
- increasing funding and financing of developments and projects involving our shared heritage, by Government, non-government, private sector and private individuals, is in the public's interest
- libraries, museums and other collecting institutions are essential repositories of cultural heritage
- an education and learning strategy is essential to raise the profile and status of heritage and to promote greater understanding of its value and relevance, including its tourism potential

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- heritage laws that are holistic and provide protection for built, social, natural and Aboriginal heritage, in planning decisions (see also The Greens (WA) Sustainable Settlement policy)
- a review of the criteria for the statutory identification and conservation of heritage across all levels of government and to improve that identification and conservation by:
 - providing adequate funding;
 - ensuring community consultation and participation in heritage decision-making is legislated; and
 - strengthening the cooperation and collaboration between state and local government and heritage and planning agencies.
 - to ensure regulatory processes for heritage protection are open and transparent, simple to operate and understand, reflect community expectations and best practice in the recognition and protection of heritage in Western Australia
- to promote local economic development through heritage conservation which provides job creation, the revitalisation of city and regional centres, and encourages heritage tourism
- to encourage a viable future for heritage assets through the adaptive re-use of heritage places, recognising the embodied energy in existing heritage places, and through seeking new uses for places that are compatible with their original use
- to establish a heritage bank, making funds publicly available to restore and maintain representative examples of the state's heritage
- to improve current monitoring and reporting on the condition of heritage places
- tourism planning and marketing integrated with the management and interpretation of key heritage assets
- Aboriginal peoples to have the right to free prior and informed consent before activities which will impact on heritage are permitted (see also The Greens (WA) [Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander](#) policy)
- local councils to identify any aspect of heritage whether natural or man-made, tangible or intangible and to compile and maintain a shire inventory of heritage listings, and such listings to have statutory protection (see also The Greens (WA) [Local Government](#) policy)

- intentional demolition and demolition by neglect to be prohibited by statute, with penalties for non-compliance
- financial and non-financial incentives should be provided to assist owners to preserve heritage places, such as grants, differential rating and positive marketing
- statutory identification to be extended to moveable cultural heritage and natural heritage, which includes natural landscapes and geological monuments
- conservation management plans to be in place to guide effective conservation management of all places and items on the State Heritage Register
- to promote adaptive re-use of heritage structures guided by heritage conservation values, recognising that restoration, reconstruction, adaptation and compatible use are preferred to façading¹ or other unsympathetic redevelopment

Measures

The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and actions that:

- update the status of heritage places not less than every five years
- provide that the ownership of objects from archaeological excavations, whether of heritage significance or not, belong to the State or the traditional owners where relevant
- promote the independence of the State Heritage Office by guaranteeing adequate funding and making it directly accountable to the Western Australian Parliament improve state funding for organisations dedicated to the protection of heritage, such as the National Trust, the Western Australian Museum and the State Library, in order to achieve common heritage objectives
- require conservation management plans to guide effective conservation management of all places and items on the State Heritage Register
- improve funding for maintenance of State owned places
- promote and fund the digitisation of heritage records for the purpose of increased public access

Glossary

1. **Façading** – is the practice of demolishing a building but leaving its façade intact for the purposes of building new structures in it or around it.

Heritage policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2017