

Heritage

Western Australia has a diverse and rich natural and cultural heritage that gives us a sense of place, shapes our identity and contributes to our wellbeing. First Nations peoples have custodianship over First Nations culture and heritage. Our heritage includes objects, collections, stories, traditions, events and experiences inherited from the past; it also comprises natural, historic, and Indigenous places with both tangible and intangible values¹.

Natural and heritage are assets to be respected and protected for current and future generations. The Greens (WA) believe that heritage laws and practices in Western Australia should be based on a framework of International, Australian and Western Australian laws and standards governing heritage identification, appraisal, protection and sustainable use. The Greens (WA) also believe that Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums are essential repositories of cultural heritage.

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- to ensure that all natural and cultural heritage is respected and protected for current and future generations
- heritage laws that are holistic so that planning decisions protect all forms of heritage (built, social and natural), including First Nations heritage (see also The Greens (WA) [Planning](#) policy)
- legislation, agencies and infrastructure that are fit for purpose and work effectively to identify, register, conserve and prevent the deterioration, damage or destruction of our natural and cultural heritage
- heritage protection for memorials, trees, parks, landscapes, archaeological sites, rock art, geological monuments, palaeontological sites, spiritual and religious places, and intangible heritage such as the memories and stories of elders
- to improve the performance of local government in heritage protection by requiring integrity and timely action in the conduct of heritage surveys (see also The Greens (WA) [Local Government](#) policy)
- to improve current monitoring and reporting on the condition of heritage places and to prohibit the practice of demolition by neglect
- restore the custodianship of First Nations peoples over indigenous culture and heritage, including returning objects and human remains (see also The Greens (WA) [First Nations Peoples](#) policy)
- changes to funding and provisioning of important heritage collections and memory stores found in galleries, libraries and archives

Measures

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

- establish a strategic review of natural and cultural heritage in Western Australia and align heritage funding with priorities for action from this review

- foster sustainable heritage tourism in this state with the relevant stakeholders and embed the principles of:
 - adequate funding;
 - community consultation and participation;
 - inter-government cooperation and collaboration;
 - strategic planning; and
 - openness and transparency - in all heritage decision making.
- secure and promote ecotourism projects in involving First Nations cultural heritage where supported and approved by cultural knowledge holders. First Nations heritage policy should be guided by the principles of engagement, respect for culture, language and truth telling
- ensure consistent application of good practice national and international conventions and standards in heritage conservation including:
 - the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
 - the ICOMOS Burra Charter;
 - 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.
- promote adaptive re-use of heritage structures guided by heritage conservation values, recognising that restoration, reconstruction, adaptation and compatible use are preferred to façading* or other unsympathetic redevelopment
- encourage the use of conservation management plans to guide effective conservation management of all places and items on the State Heritage Register and ensure periodic checking of the status of places against registered plans
- ensure preservation by the State or First Nations knowledge holders from archaeological excavations
- develop world class interpretive and other learning spaces, including digital spaces, for Western Australia's natural, built and social heritage
- introduce and enforce stronger penalties for companies or individuals that damage heritage-listed sites, even if they do so through neglect

Footnote

1. Working definition based on the Commonwealth's Australian Heritage Strategy Report.

Glossary

* **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 2020

The Greens (WA) spokesperson on heritage is [Tim Clifford MLC](#) while [Robin Chapple MLC](#) is GWA spokesperson for aboriginal heritage