

INTRODUCTION

This information sheet provides architects, builders and contractors with best practice advice for site preliminaries to be conducted before works commence on places listed in the State Register of Heritage Places.

It also provides guidance and a minimum standard of what should be included in a work specification when carrying out repair and maintenance works to State Registered places. It may also be useful for owners who are considering repair or maintenance to their properties.

To ensure consistent advice is provided, this document is used by the Heritage Council and Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (the Department) when assessing development proposals for State Registered places.

This document draws heavily from the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013* (The Burra Charter) and other published and unpublished documents sourced from heritage agencies in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom.

This document should be read and preliminaries prepared with consideration of the project contract type, specification and drawing documentation sets.

For further information on repair and maintenance refer to separate information sheets in the Maintenance Series which can be found at www.stateheritage.wa.gov.au

SITE PRELIMINARIES

1. Architects, builders and contractors are required to demonstrate experience in working on heritage sites. For example, specialist subcontractors with heritage experience should be engaged for face masonry, painting, plaster and stucco work. Inform all persons involved in undertaking works that the place is State Registered.
2. When working on State Registered places, the Site Preliminaries section of the works specification should contain the minimum following information:

"[Place name] is valued by the community as a significant heritage site and is entered in the State Register of Heritage Places, as such the place is protected under the Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990.

All works within the place should be carried out by suitably qualified tradespersons with skills and experience in working on heritage buildings, to the highest conservation standards. Use of traditional repair techniques and tools are required as befitting the significance of the place. Works shall be undertaken in accordance with the conservation principles outlined in The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013 (The Burra Charter).

The client/ principal's representative may make inspections during the execution of the work."

3. To establish clear lines of communication and ensure that all involved in the works know who to contact if any heritage issues arise, the contractor should ensure all personnel working on the site are to raise heritage issues directly with the Site Supervisor who should then discuss the matter with the client/principal's representative and wait for instruction prior to proceeding.
4. Protect the building site from vandalism and theft during the works.
5. Protect significant elements and features from potential damage during works.
6. Protect significant plantings from potential damage during works, a qualified horticulturist or arboriculturist should establish a tree or planting protection zone.
7. If a previously unreported archaeological site or feature is found, it should be immediately reported to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and work in the vicinity stopped until an assessment is made.
8. Where work orders, drawings or sketches are issued for works and these differ from what is found on site, do not proceed until the matter is clarified by the client/principal's representative.

REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORK

REPAIR WORK

1. Any works need to take note of the age and nature of the heritage element under repair.
2. Consider repair methods appropriate to the time of construction of the element. This may involve traditional repair methods, or where this is not practical, methods which will not change the character or understanding of the building fabric.

3. Repairs should reuse as much of the existing fabric as possible.

Note: Preservation of authentic fabric should take precedence over cosmetic considerations. This principle recognises that some of the authentic fabric will appear different from that expected and available today. It also recognises that the age of the element should remain obvious and that it is not the intent to return the element to an 'as new' appearance. For example, it is preferable to reuse a loose or partly worn fitting that is still functional, rather than replace it with a new equivalent.

4. Repair works should not introduce materials and components that were not part of the original fabric of the place.

Note: If the element was of a plain or simple design, do not replace it with a decorative version. Respect the utilitarian nature of places designed and built that way. Embellishment without prior justification is not best

practice. For example, do not introduce decorative brass fittings when they were not previously installed.

- Repairs should recognise that the place may not have been perfect in either its original or most recent state.

Note: Worn fabric should show the 'wear and tear' of time. Repairs should not attempt to change the original condition of the fabric or present it in an 'as new' condition. For example, an element not originally built 'straight' should not be made 'straight' during maintenance.

MAINTENANCE WORK

- Maintenance works should be carried out on the basis that any materials or elements requiring replacement should be done so on a like-for-like basis, where the material or element is original fabric.

If an element is so degraded that it must be replaced, it is preferable that the new element matches what it replaced in material, style, pattern, finish and colour. In some instances, it may be appropriate to use an element salvaged from within the same site. If this is not possible, then it could be salvaged from another site or specially made to match.

- The process of salvage is strictly controlled and no element should be relocated without direction from an appropriately qualified and experienced heritage advisor and the client/principal's representative.

- If a matching element is not available, a reasonable copy in current production may be acceptable.

The new element should be recognisable at close inspection and no attempt should be made to 'age' it. This principle should be applied at all levels ranging from doors to individual fixings.

- During maintenance works, first preference should be given to the use of techniques previously used on the element. Second preference is to use techniques practiced elsewhere on the site; and third preference is to use techniques recognised as current practice at that time.

Alternative modern techniques should only be used when traditional methods are ineffective and the work will not change the traditional character of the element. Specific direction should be sought from a conservation professional when non-traditional techniques are the only methods of preventing unacceptable loss of authentic fabric.

For example, metal components with previously bolted joints should not be welded. Previously nailed timbers may be screwed if nailing is ineffective. Use of liquid nails is generally not acceptable.