

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I deal with storm damage to my heritage property?

Dealing with storm damage to your heritage property is the same as handling other kinds of issues such as break-ins, vandalism, fire, and flooding.

Firstly, it is important to be safe at all times. Be sure to listen to the advice given by emergency services or officers like your local government building surveyor about whether your property is safe to enter or reoccupy. Secondly, if it is safe to do so, try and make your property as secure as possible so that no further damage can occur. Thirdly, call your insurer or broker to make a claim.

Do I need to do anything in particular when making an insurance claim for my heritage property?

No. The claim process is basically the same as any claim of damage to your property. It is, however, important for your insurer and/or your assessor to be aware that your property is a historic building and that specialist advice might be needed to ensure all repairs and works are carried out in a way that is in keeping with your property. Your insurance will generally cover the costs of returning your property to its condition before the incident, which includes any special requirements to retain its heritage value.

What kind of works to my heritage property would be okay?

If your heritage property has been the subject of either minor damage or major structural, replacement in compatible (like-for-like) materials is generally preferred. In some cases, repairs may be undertaken using modern materials in a matching design to the original.

Will I need to get planning approval?

Like-for-like minor repairs will not generally require planning approval, though it is advisable to discuss your plans with the local government planning officer first. Structural repairs or major works will usually require approval.

What happens if my property is beyond repair?

If there is a reasonable opportunity for repair, heritage places should be retained.

Approval for demolition may be given to buildings that are structurally unsound or damaged beyond repair. Works to clear the site and demolish remaining structures will require approval from the local government.

How do I make sure that my insurer and I get the right advice?

You or your insurer can contact the Insurance Council of Australia (WA) via their hotline on 1300 728 228 or the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage on (08) 6551 8002 with any general enquiries about claims as well as works to your heritage property.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage also has a directory of heritage specialists called inContact, which is available on the website: incontact.stateheritage.wa.gov.au. inContact lists structural engineers who have particular experience dealing with heritage places.

Your local council may also be able to assist you with the details of relevant contractors or put you in touch with a heritage advisor.

Contact us

Heritage Council of WA
140 William Street Perth
Locked Bag 2506
Perth WA 6001

T: (08) 6551 8002
E: info@dplh.wa.gov.au
W: www.dplh.wa.gov.au