



Built Heritage Issues



Our built heritage provides us with physical evidence of the past and it reminds us of where we have come from. Our built heritage links us to events, people and innovations which have shaped our environment. Each generation has a responsibility to protect significant heritage places for future generations. Documenting and maintaining our heritage is crucial to ensure that our links with the past are preserved so that the community can appreciate and benefit from its inheritance.

Without heritage, we lose an important perspective on the present, and the history that has occurred in the evolution of our culture. The number of places and objects listed on heritage registers is a measure of how well we understand the extent of our heritage.

The South Australian Heritage Register provides information on places of non-Aboriginal heritage value to the state and it is maintained as an electronic database. Places of local heritage significance are managed by local councils and the Australian Government is responsible for the National Heritage List of places with outstanding heritage value to our nation. South Australia has three places listed on the National Heritage List: Australian Fossil Mammal Sites (Naracoorte), Ediacara Fossil Site (Nilpena), and Old and New Parliament Houses.

Built heritage adds significantly to the experiences of national and international tourists visiting South Australia and brings major economic benefits to the state. Built heritage can provide a unique visitor experience and helps connect people with important historical associations, telling the story of the development of South Australia.

Trends



Number of State Heritage Places on the South Australian Heritage Register has increased.



Number of local heritage places designated in council development plans has increased.

“Built heritage adds significantly to the experiences of tourists visiting South Australia.”

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What is the Current Built Heritage Situation?

Condition Indicator

Number of State Heritage Places entered in the South Australian Heritage Register

The South Australian Heritage Register is a computerised database that provides a list of places (mostly buildings) of heritage value to the state. Places are entered in the register by the State Heritage Authority. The register also contains State Heritage Areas, such as the townships of Port Adelaide and Goolwa. These are areas of significance, not just individual places.

Identification of heritage places and areas occurs through nomination by members of the public or through heritage surveys. Almost all regions in South Australia have now been surveyed for heritage places and the number of sites being added to the South Australian Heritage Register has slowed down, with only 9 being added since 2003. There is now a focus on effective management of the properties already listed on the register.

Number of local heritage places designated in council development plans

The protection of local heritage is managed through the **Development Act 1993** and heritage places are listed in Councils' Development Plans as well as being recorded in the South Australian Heritage Register. Of the 68 local government bodies in South Australia, 32 have established authorised Local Heritage lists in their Development Plans. The number of local heritage places designated in council development plans has increased by 2,699 since 2003.

Neighbourhood character

The loss of local neighbourhood character is of increasing community concern. Rapidly changing streetscapes in some regions of the state can impact significantly on community pride and local identity. Although local neighbourhood character and heritage may overlap, they are not the same thing, and to improve heritage management the differences need to be made clearer. As the state government continues with policies to achieve a higher population target of 2 million by 2050 there is a potential for conflict within heritage management, which may result in increasing pressure to demolish heritage buildings as well as alter local neighbourhood character.

Maintaining our built heritage

Many buildings, sites and objects entered in the South Australian Heritage Register are at risk of deterioration and ultimately could be lost. One way to prevent this is to have methodical monitoring and maintenance of heritage buildings. Often specialised craftspeople and professionals are needed to maintain and care for our built heritage, however most of the expertise in this area is held by older members of the community, which means that these skills will be lost unless younger people also learn these skills.

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Responding to built heritage issues

To help protect places and areas of heritage significance for present and future generations, specific legislative safeguards have been created. This legislation guides the identification, registration, conservation and development of heritage places. The state government also has a range of policies in place to help improve the management and use of our built heritage. *Heritage Directions* is the government's policy framework for South Australia's built heritage.

State government departments are working with local government and community groups to promote state and local built heritage and talk about the history and local character within communities.

“Often specialised craftspeople are needed to maintain and care for our built heritage.”



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Taking action for built heritage

You can help to take action to safeguard local and state heritage by:

- Making an application to the Heritage Branch of the Department for Environment and Heritage to protect a place worthy of listing in the South Australian Heritage Register.
- Nominating to protect something of significance. You will have to make a nomination through your local council where they will make recommendations in a Development Plan.
- Join a community organisation in your area such as the North Adelaide Preservation Society, or create your own community organisation.
- Participate in the annual Schools Heritage Competition.

Impacts of Losing Built Heritage



Culture

Well-conserved and interpreted heritage places add to the social infrastructure and cultural identity of local communities.



Economy

Heritage provides opportunities for tourism, particularly for regional areas without other significant tourism drawcards. The destruction or deterioration of a heritage place results in a loss of the economic opportunity it provides.

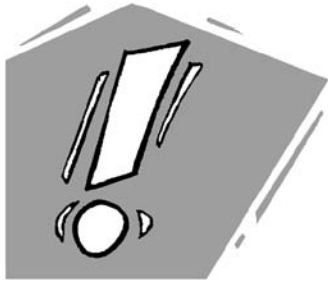


Land Resources

The construction of new buildings consumes a lot of energy and the demolition of old buildings can result in a lot of waste – approximately 30% of waste disposed as landfill is waste building material.

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Attention!!

What is adaptive re-use?

If an item is no longer used or it is not working well, it may be modified or used in a different way to make it more effective or useful. This process is called adaptive re-use and can help to preserve heritage buildings and ensure that there are viable on-going uses for our built heritage places.

It is commonly thought that heritage buildings can't be touched but this is not the case. Built heritage adaptive re-use projects can respect and retain the significance of the building while at the same time adding economic value both for the present and in the future. Examples of adaptive re-use of our built heritage in Adelaide include the Sturt Street School, State Records building and the Balhannah mine.

Adaptive re-use of our built heritage is also good for the environment. Construction of new buildings uses a lot of energy, including the extraction of raw materials and the demolition of the old building. Demolition materials can also contribute to landfill if they are not fully recycled. Approximately 30% of the waste we send to landfill is composed of waste building material.

In order to create a more sustainable future, the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings should be a vital part of environmental planning.

For more information on adaptive re-use visit:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/publications/protecting/pubs/adaptive-reuse.pdf>

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Research Ideas about Built Heritage

- 1 What is meant by 'built heritage'?

- 2 Why is built heritage important? How does it relate to our identity and culture?

- 3 How have human activities impacted on built heritage in your community, South Australia, Australia and globally?

- 4 What does the State of the Environment report tell us about built heritage issues in South Australia?

- 5 What might happen in the future if things continue as they are?

- 6 What are government, business and industry doing to preserve built heritage in South Australia?

- 7 What can we do individually, or in communities, to reduce our impact on built heritage?

Resources

For more detailed information on the issue and actions you can take see the State of the Environment report for South Australia 2008.

This is available at:
www.epa.sa.gov.au/soe



This fact sheet is part of a set of 20 fact sheets about the key environmental issues identified in the State of the Environment report 2008, produced for the Environment Reporting Education Resource. You can access the fact sheets and learn more about taking action for the environment at the Education Resource website:
www.epa.sa.gov.au/soe.
For more information call the Environmental Education Unit of the Department for Environment and Heritage (08) 8463 3911.



Government of South Australia
Department for Environment
and Heritage

