



The Office of the Victorian Government Architect provides strategic advice to the government about architecture and urban design. It supports government with advocacy and advisory initiatives, including design review, collaborative workshops, design quality teams, desktop reviews and input on briefs. One of our aims is to encourage awareness of the role of good design in protecting, enhancing and layering contemporary legacy in heritage places.

This publication is the seventh in a series that is helping to raise awareness of good design and promote discussion about its benefits and value. The publication has been developed together with Heritage Victoria and the Heritage Council of Victoria. It highlights key design principles and outlines some effective approaches to achieve good design.

What is a heritage place?

The term heritage is often applied to places that have special cultural values; many of these places are described in lists maintained by state and local governments. A heritage place has recognised heritage values, is inherited from previous generations and contributes to the identity of people, communities and nations. In practical terms, our heritage is all that we value and want to keep for future generations. In making value-based decisions about what is worth conserving for future generations, heritage practitioners are involved in a filtering process. Heritage is far broader than the material objects that are preserved from the past. It includes the assumptions, ideas and attitudes that shape the way we relate to others and how we interact with the natural and built environments.

The aim of heritage conservation is to ensure that the cultural significance of heritage items is maintained and valued over time. While changes may be necessary to adapt heritage buildings to new uses, it is important to ensure that these changes do not compromise the heritage significance of the place or its fabric. Heritage does not always mean 'old'. For example, Victoria's post-war architecture is an intrinsic and visible part of our history and legacy for the future.

In Victoria, all three levels of government, federal, state and local, have different roles in identifying, managing and protecting heritage places and objects.

At a local government level, all municipalities in Victoria are covered by land use planning controls, which are prepared and administered by state and local government authorities. The legislation governing such controls is the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as amended in 2000. Heritage Overlays are one such planning control. Heritage Overlays include places of local heritage significance, as well as heritage precincts.

At state government level, the Victorian Government's key cultural heritage legislation is the Victorian *Heritage Act 2017*, administered by Heritage Victoria. The Act protects and identifies heritage places and objects that are of significance to Victoria.



For a place or object to be included in the Victorian Heritage Register, it must meet at least one or more of the Heritage Council of Victoria's Criteria for Assessment:

Criterion A Importance to the course, or pattern, of our cultural history.

Criterion B Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural history.

Criterion C Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural history.

Criterion D Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or objects.

Criterion E Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Criterion F Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Criterion G Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Aboriginal peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

Criterion H Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.

Do as little as possible and as much as is necessary.

The Illustrated Burra Charter

cover

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY BOAT CLUB

ARCHITECT: Lovell Chen Architects

YEAR: 2012

PHOTOGRAPHY: John Gollings

This project demonstrates the ability to respect the neighbouring scale of the Melbourne University Boat Club (1909) acting as a 'bookend' to the row of boatsheds on the southern bank of the Yarra River. The new building is carefully considered and sensitive in siting, scale and setback. The addition is free-standing, with no structural connection to the existing building and from the outside, the three-storey steel-frame extension appears to be two storey, just like its neighbour. The building presents an enduring contribution to the public realm, while mastering a set of design objectives.

01. WERTHEIM FACTORY CHANNEL 9 STUDIO

ARCHITECT: Kerstin Thompson Architects

YEAR: 2013

PHOTOGRAPHY: Derek Swalwell

The redeveloped 1909 Wertheim Factory introduces a mixture of residential, community and retail use into the previous Wertheim piano factory, Heinz and GTV Nine. The project demonstrates the economic and cultural value in the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings at the scale of the individual dwelling, the residential complex and the broader neighbourhood. Its design is sensitive in scale and form, providing a range of dwelling types and a major public courtyard.

02. PADDINGTON RESERVOIR GARDENS, NSW

ARCHITECT: Tonkin Zulaikha Greer

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE: JMD Design

YEAR: 2006-2009

PHOTOGRAPHY: Brett Boardman

This project demonstrates the opportunity to re-purpose historical infrastructure through good design into an urban park. The raw industrial expression and Victorian era tree-fern garden is an example of inhabited ruins as public space. The re-designed Reservoir used a restricted pallet of three materials: steel, aluminium and concrete, to complement the historic brick, cast iron and timber.

03. THE SHRINE GALLERIES OF REMEMBRANCE

ARCHITECT: Ashton Raggatt McDougall

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE: Rush Wright Associates

YEAR: 2015

HERITAGE CONSULTANT: Lovell Chen

PHOTOGRAPHY: John Gollings

The Shrine Galleries of Remembrance demonstrates the importance of the original conservation management plan in helping to protect the significance and symmetry of the original additions through new southern courtyards that activate the public building 'in the round'. The design strategy is inventive and yet respectful of the Shrine's enduring historical and symbolic functions.

02



03



'Victoria's built heritage speaks eloquently of a rich history marked by constant growth and renewal. As its beneficiaries we seek to maintain and augment this legacy for future generations, and in making our contribution we enhance our appreciation of it.'

Stuart Macintyre AO

Heritage Council of Victoria

04. HAMER HALL REDEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECT: Ashton Raggart McDougall
 YEAR: 2014 (original construction date 1982 by architect Sir Roy Grounds)
 HERITAGE CONSULTANT: Philip Goad and Bryce Raworth
 PHOTOGRAPHY: John Gollings

The restoration of Hamer Hall demonstrates the capacity to sensitively restore heritage-listed 1982 interiors while also offering enhanced urban design outcomes. Through the insertion of a new terrace over the Riverbank Promenade and a civic stair from the Yarra River to St Kilda Road, the project rediscovered the historical interface with Princes Bridge. This skilfully resolved civic architecture respects the legacy of Sir Roy Grounds' raw exterior and John Truscott's plush interior.



04

05



05. WILLIAM BUCKLEY BRIDGE, BARWON HEADS

ARCHITECT: Peter Elliott Architecture
 + Urban Design
 YEAR: 2012
 PHOTOGRAPHY: Sean McPhillips

This project demonstrates how good design can ensure existing heritage infrastructure can be retained and new works sensitively added alongside to provide civic architecture that is fully considered and skilfully resolved. The new bridge responds to the 1927 timber bridge by repeating the rhythm of its piers at an increased span and incorporates a raised platform for fishing and views downstream towards the mouth of the Barwon River.

The Burra Charter – guiding heritage

The underlying philosophy of heritage conservation in Australia is expressed in the *Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Burra Charter* and takes its name from Burra in South Australia where the Australian Charter was drafted. The Charter sets a standard of practice for people who provide advice, make decisions about or undertake works relating to places of cultural significance, including owners, managers and custodians. The Charter defines the basic principles and processes to be followed in the conservation of Australian heritage places.

It identifies three levels for repair of heritage fabric including:

1. preservation – maintaining a place in its existing state and preventing further deterioration
2. restoration – returning a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing elements without the introduction of new material
3. reconstruction – returning a place to a known earlier state. This is distinguished from restoration by the introduction of new material.

Heritage asset management

The Victorian Government is custodian of a significant collection of heritage places and objects. Successful asset management relies on regular audits to maintain, protect and plan for current and future costs associated with a heritage place or object.

A key tool for successful heritage management is the Conservation Management Plan (CMP). A CMP is the principal guiding document for the conservation and management of a heritage place. It is a tool that allows owners, managers and approval authorities to make sound decisions about heritage places. A CMP identifies and prioritises the heritage values of a place, the conservation policies to be applied to protect that significance in the face of change, and a strategy through which the policies will be put into action.

— New work may be sympathetic if its siting, bulk, form, scale, character, colour, texture and material are similar to the existing fabric, but imitation should be avoided.

Burra Charter

Enhancing heritage through good design

Each generation contributes to the constantly evolving historic environment in its own way. To achieve this it is important to understand that good design adds value and that well-designed buildings and places make the most of heritage sites and their opportunities.

Good design is not only relevant to high-profile heritage buildings and public spaces. It makes a valuable contribution to small and modest heritage fabric, and reimagines new opportunities. Good design associated with heritage places is not a question of style, taste or replication, but of expertise, quality and skill in delivery.

Contemporary architecture and innovative design is an important part of the contextual approach to heritage fabric because it adds to the existing diversity and layering of architectural styles through time. This layering, which can retain heritage from successive periods, is a defining feature in Victoria's heritage. Appreciation of heritage includes the diversity of eras and elements that make up the physical environment, including gardens, objects and precincts. There is now a greater understanding that recent architecture can be highly valued and a desire to make the most of the environment through good design.

06. STONEHENGE VISITOR CENTRE

ARCHITECT: Denton Corker Marshall Architects

YEAR: 2013

CLIENT: English Heritage

PHOTOGRAPHY: James Davies

The Visitor Centre at Stonehenge demonstrates the way that architecture can offer reversibility through minimal foundations and excavations into a site of ongoing archaeological significance. The aerofoil roof references the immediate hillside context supported by the 211 steel columns. This design uses external access as a strategy to protect the build quality and to deal with up to 6,000 visitors a day.



'A heritage property is protected when it's lived in and loved - they are heritage assets ... but you also have to bring them into the 21st century. They have to be part of our modern-day lifestyles and provide a value-add to the community.'

Tim Smith, Executive Director

Heritage Victoria, 2013-2017

Each generation contributes to the constantly evolving historic environment in its own way. To achieve this it is important to understand that good design adds value and that well-designed buildings and places make the most of heritage sites and their opportunities.

The value of good design can be recognised in heritage buildings, infrastructure and public spaces that:

- respect the rich cultural heritage we inherit and provide an on-going legacy in the built environment that fosters community pride and prosperity
- respect Aboriginal culture in place
- are sustainable, efficient, adaptable
- provide healthy environments for users to ensure wellbeing and productivity
- are inclusive, accessible to all, and provide safe, equitable, walkable built environments of high visual and physical amenity.

Good Design in a Heritage Context

In shaping our built environment we have a responsibility to past, present and future generations. Good design in a historic context links the past to the present and projects into the future by demonstrating an understanding and responding to the context of a place. Similarly, new development affecting an established and valued setting, such as a conservation area, must be memorably representative of its own time. Infill buildings can successfully provide for new modern demands within the context of the historic environment.

Good design should complement existing heritage buildings or conservation areas by respecting historic character, by adapting it or by contrasting with it without overwhelming heritage values. Infill buildings should complement the existing built form and leave a valuable legacy for the future. The careful consideration of scale, massing, setbacks and fine-grain streetscapes is critical when designing within a heritage context. An informed design response relies on understanding heritage values and assessing opportunities and constraints that arise from these.

Good design responds to its historic context through an informed analysis of its significance, character and quality. The design response should respect important relationships between the building, its neighbours and its setting, and may also create new ones. Good design will offer an understanding of the existing street grain, past patterns of development, key views, scale, materials and building methods. It will protect existing fabric and understand that heritage significance relates to the building as a whole three-dimensional form.

Good design will avoid extensive demolition that leads to façadism, where for example only the façade of a building is retained. Elements in addition to the façade contribute to an area's heritage significance, and can be the catalyst for a successful contemporary design. Careful consideration must also be given to the impact on the internal spatial quality and the relationship between the interior and the façade. Care also needs to be taken with retrofitting new uses into buildings where the introduction of services is intensive, including retrofitting heritage buildings with residential apartments.

07



07. RMIT LAWN PRECINCT URBAN SPACES STAGE 3

ARCHITECT: Peter Elliott Architecture
+ Urban Design

YEAR: 1997-2012

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE: Urban Initiatives
PHOTOGRAPHY: John Gollings

RMIT University Lawn demonstrates how good design can stitch together disparate heritage fabric, including the old Melbourne Goal, and reimagine it as public space. Originally a gravel car park hemmed in at the rear of the main buildings, this forgotten service area has been transformed into a place for reflection within the heart of the city.

'The best adaptive reuse does not dissociate the past but layers new uses and meanings on already valued places.'

Helen Lardner

'Reinvigorating Redundant Industrial Places: A Challenge to Victoria'
Architect Victoria, Summer 2015

Urban renewal and adaptive reuse in industrial areas

The legibility of industrial precincts in urban settings offers excellent opportunities for place making, regeneration, sustainability, mixed use and a tangible connection to the past. A heritage project can act as the catalyst for urban renewal and help to reinforce the natural grain and scale of the built form. It is a way to encourage distinctiveness in local areas.

Adaptation of industrial places to a new use is often the only option for heritage fabric when it is no longer considered viable. Through good design, remnant industrial places can be reinvigorated, interiors retained and past equipment integrated. This may also include capturing the opportunities inherent in past infrastructure including rail trails, viaducts, mines, bridges or waterfront piers.

Environmental sustainability

Good design captures the environmental sustainability opportunities and the embodied energy in existing heritage materials. Embodied energy is the energy consumed by all of the processes associated with the production of a building. Through a careful and considered approach, good design can ensure that reuse and recycling of building materials reduces energy consumption. Equally, when sustainable design initiatives are incorporated into heritage buildings and additions, they enhance the whole-of-life performance.

Key Steps – What to do

1. Understand the heritage and cultural significance of the place.
2. Engage heritage experts and allow sufficient time for research of existing heritage and cultural fabric and design supported by documents, including conservation management plans.
3. Seek advice from appropriately qualified designers and assessors.
4. Ensure early and creative consultation between the architect, heritage advisor and the relevant statutory authority.
5. Encourage design innovation in new additions to heritage places to help reduce long-term maintenance costs and environmental impacts.
6. Be aware that the procurement strategy will affect the design and define processes to protect the heritage fabric, design intent and quality.
7. Creatively incorporate existing building fabric which is heritage listed and of contributory character into new developments and recognise the benefits of embodied energy in existing materials.
8. Respect the existing built form, streetscapes and urban design as well as the intangible values of the former natural landscape and potential cultural heritage.
9. Consider the scale, form, materials, finishes and where possible functions of building elements in new developments.
10. Ensure that the documentation for a heritage place is available and current. Develop a 'live' conservation management plan.

08



08. NGV

ARCHITECT: Sir Roy Grounds

YEAR: 1968

PHOTOGRAPHY: John Gollings

The National Gallery of Victoria built in 1968 demonstrates the enduring quality of good design with its large palazzo-like rectangular form, with three internal courtyards providing light and external views to surrounding galleries. Contextual materiality is expressed through the bluestone clad, reinforced concrete exterior, and the warmth of the internal timber and relieved by the large entrance archway, water-wall and bronze Victorian coat of arms.

Good Design Principles + Value

Understand the wider context:

Protection of the setting or landscape is equally as important as protecting the heritage place. This may include past development patterns, the protection of heritage vistas or Aboriginal cultural landscapes.

Involve community and users:

A fit-for-purpose and contextual outcome that enhances the existing heritage place.

Retain and integrate cultural heritage:

A demonstrated understanding of, and continuity with, the past.

Adopt an evidence-based approach:

Where the reinstatement of a heritage place is historically informed (for example, conservation management plan) and respectful, based on plans, photographic or other physical evidence.

Identify the contributory elements:

Informs an understanding of the extent of the heritage fabric. Will seek to avoid façadism. Contributory heritage elements may also form the reference point for new architectural outcomes.

Respect and enhance the heritage place:

New additions are designed to integrate and complement the existing heritage fabric and scale on all elevations.

Create legibility:

New works will be distinguishable from existing heritage fabric and do not imitate.

Seek expertise and skill in delivery:

Specialist restoration and alteration of heritage fabric.

Facilitate urban renewal:

Reinvigorates redundant places and layers new uses through design, especially industrial places.

Create efficiency in structure and plan:

Reduced building area, reduced use of resources, lower costs.

Consider the broader landscape:

Understanding that the setting of a heritage item may contribute to the significance of the place.

Embed environmental sustainability:

Protecting existing fabric retains embodied energy while environmentally sustainable design features enhance whole-of-life design.

Consider universal design:

Designing an inclusive built environment while respecting the existing fabric.

Related websites

Heritage Victoria

www.heritage.vic.gov.au

Heritage Council of Victoria

www.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au

Australia International Council
on Monuments and Sites

www.australia.icomos.org

National Trust of Australia

www.nationaltrust.org.au

Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund

www.vhrf.org.au

Australian Institute of Architects

www.architecture.com.au

Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

www.aiala.org.au

Accessibility

This document is also available in PDF form on the internet at: www.ovga.vic.gov.au

Authorised and published by the Office of the Victorian Government Architect ©2016

The Office of the Victorian

Government Architect

Old Treasury Building
Level 2, 20 Spring Street,
Melbourne VIC 3002
PO Box 4912
Melbourne VIC 3001
+61 3 9651 6583
www.ovga.vic.gov.au



— *Understanding and being sympathetic to heritage buildings, materials and settings does not prevent good modern architecture. In fact it demands it.*