



CITY OF GOSNELLS

# CITY OF GOSNELLS HERITAGE STRATEGY 2025 – 2029





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# Introduction

The City of Gosnells is located on the banks of the Canning River (Djarlgarra Beeliar) and is Whadjuk Noongar boodja (country). The Whadjuk Noongar people inhabited and used this land for many thousands of years prior to European colonisation. There are known sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance within the City of Gosnells including the Canning and Southern Rivers.

In November 1829, only two months after the first Swan River Colony land grants, land was allocated to colonists in the area which became known as 'The Canning'. Many homes and farms were established on this land, all of which included frontage to the Canning River. These properties included 'Maddington Park' and 'Thornlie', both later subdivided to become the suburbs of Maddington and Thornlie, and 'Chenies', which was purchased in 1862 by Charles Gosnell, a wealthy cosmetic company owner from London.

By the early 1900s, demand in the area was strong and a consortium of developers purchased the land owned by Gosnell, subdividing and marketing it as the Gosnell Estate. In 1907, when a new municipality was established, it was called Gosnells.

The City of Gosnells is committed to protecting and conserving its cultural heritage and engaging the community in the history and heritage of the area.



**Image:** Thornlie Swimming Pool entry, 1971



# Strategic Context

The City's heritage priorities are described in the City's Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033 which was developed through community consultation and internal review.

It sets out the long-term vision for the City's future and contains a set of priorities and goals to achieve the strategic vision: 'Making the City of Gosnells a great place'.

The Heritage Strategy has been designed to provide direction for the management of the City's heritage and is aligned to the City's Strategic Community Plan, particularly in relation to:

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 – COMMUNITY THE COMMUNITY IS PROUD AND HARMONIOUS

Goal	Outcome
Identify and celebrate our social heritage and contemporary culture.	There is increased knowledge and appreciation of the City's social history and contemporary culture.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4 – PLACES PLACES WITHIN THE CITY ARE ATTRACTIVE AND VIBRANT

Goal	Outcome
Identify, protect and conserve our historical buildings and places.	The City's built heritage is recorded and significant places are conserved and protected.



**Image:** Gosnells Road Board staff Margot Lankester, Margaret Langford and Mary Bryden, 1957



In the broader context, management of the City's heritage is guided by:

### **Heritage Act 2018**

The Heritage Act 2018 provides for the recognition and conservation of places of cultural heritage significance to the State and for the identification of places of local heritage significance.

### **State Planning Policy (SPP) 3.5 – Historic Heritage Conservation**

SPP 3.5 is a State Government policy which sets out the principles of sound and responsible planning for the conservation and protection of Western Australia's cultural heritage.

### **The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013**

The Burra Charter is recognised in Australia as the best practice standard for managing places of cultural heritage significance.

### **Planning and Development Act 2005**

Schedule 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2005 specifies the heritage related provisions to be included in local government local planning schemes. These provisions specify how the local government is to identify places and areas of heritage value so that development in that local government area is consistent with the conservation of heritage values.

### **Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972**

The Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 protects and manages Aboriginal heritage by requiring approval for activities that may impact or cause harm to Aboriginal cultural sites and objects of significance.

### **State Register of Heritage Places**

The State Register is a statutory list of places that represent the story of Western Australia's history and development. Places include buildings, structures, gardens, cemeteries, memorials, landscapes and archaeological sites. Inclusion on the Register is the highest recognition of heritage at the State level. Places are recognised for their value and importance to the State.

### **Local Heritage Survey**

Local governments are required by the Heritage Act 2018 to prepare a local heritage survey which identifies and records places that are, or might become, of cultural heritage significance within the local government area.



# Achievements

The City has implemented a number of initiatives over the years to protect, manage and promote its cultural heritage:

- The City of Gosnells Museum at Wilkinson Homestead with dedicated volunteers
- Preparation and review of its Local Heritage Survey
- Delivery of a range of activities and programs that promote the City's heritage including:
  - A variety of events delivered at Wilkinson Homestead
  - The award-winning Ghost Walks Program
  - Exhibitions and displays at the Museum and other City of Gosnells facilities
  - Local history talks and presentations
- Interpretation projects which acknowledge and raise awareness of heritage at significant sites throughout the City
- Development of the Thornlie Living History Collection located at Thornlie Library by the volunteer Thornlie Living History Group.
- Opportunities for community involvement through the History and Heritage Advisory Group and volunteering
- Incentives for owners of heritage properties
- Research assistance for the community through the community history collection
- Statutory mechanisms to protect and encourage retention of the City's heritage.

# Implementation and Monitoring

The City of Gosnells Heritage Strategy 2024-2028 contains actions to be undertaken within identified timeframes.

The actions are listed under three headings:

- Collection Management
- Community Engagement
- Places of Cultural Heritage Significance

The Strategy outlines actions and timeframes for implementation and will be monitored each year.

Funds required to implement actions contained within the Strategy will be requested in future budgets for Council's consideration.



## COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Action 1 – Develop and maintain local collections		Timeline
<p>The City maintains a collection of objects, documents and images with significance to the Gosnells district. These are managed as the Museum Collection and the Community History Collection. In addition, the City's Information Management Services section maintains a collection of items which are significant to the City as an entity (the Corporate Collection).</p> <p>The City aims to develop and maintain its collections in accordance with the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries (March 2023) and to ensure their relevance to the City of Gosnells.</p>		
1.1	Review and update collections procedures (including accessioning and deaccessioning protocols) for the City's collections.	2025
1.2	Identify 'gaps' in the City's collections and develop priorities for ensuring that the collections address as many areas of significance as possible.	2025
1.3	<p>Develop and implement a Significant Object Preservation Plan based on the items identified in the 2013 significance assessment<sup>1</sup> with the following priorities:</p> <p>Functional items</p> <p>Other items</p>	2026
1.4	Develop and implement a digitisation program.	2026
1.5	Investigate opportunities for the development of upgraded museum and storage facilities to ensure the ongoing protection and conservation of the City of Gosnells collections.	Ongoing

<sup>1</sup> The 2013 Significance Assessment, although now 10 years old, is considered relevant and applicable.



## COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Action 2 – Engage the community with the City of Gosnells Collections		Timeline
The City engages the community with the heritage collections and stories through provision of a museum at Wilkinson Homestead, a school education program, community outreach and exhibitions.		
2.1.	Develop and implement a program of regular activations to attract additional visitors to the Museum from across a broader demographic.	Ongoing
2.2	Develop and install new and updated exhibitions and displays at the Museum.	Ongoing
2.3	Deliver a schools education program at the Museum that is consistent with the relevant curriculum.	Ongoing
2.4	Deliver community information sessions about the heritage of local people and places, family history and other topics of interest.	Two annually 2025, increasing to four annually by 2028
2.5	Review and update 'Museum Boxes' to provide resources for teachers, seniors and other community groups.	2025
2.6	Engage with long-term residents of the City of Gosnells (50 years or more) with an annual event at the Museum.	Ongoing
2.7	Participate in City-run community events as appropriate to promote and showcase the City's history and heritage.	Ongoing
2.8	Implement a rotating program of displays at the City's libraries, community centres and other facilities as appropriate.	Ongoing
2.9	Develop and maintain the Community History Collection (as part of the City of Gosnells Collection).	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and promote the Thornlie Living History Collection located at the Thornlie Library.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to create living history collections for other City of Gosnells neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>	2026
2.10	Maintain an exhibition and display space at Gosnells Knowledge Centre.	Ongoing

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Action 3 – Encourage community participation by raising the profile of the City's Museum and heritage collections and resources.		Timeline
The history of the City of Gosnells is significant and the City has much to offer the community in terms of heritage. Raising awareness will encourage more visitors to the Museum and increase engagement with the collections.		
3.1	<p>Use a range of marketing techniques including social and digital media to promote the Museum collections, exhibitions and events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the City of Gosnells Museum Facebook page.</li> <li>• Update the History and Heritage pages on the City of Gosnells website as required.</li> <li>• Share highlights from the City's collection on Collections WA.</li> <li>• Promote events and exhibitions as appropriate.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
3.2	Provide 'user-friendly' online access to the City's community history collection and other community and family history resources.	2026



**Image:** McNamara's Wyalong fruit stall, Albany Highway Maddington, c early 1930's



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Action 4 – Provide the community with an opportunity to contribute to the preservation of the City's heritage.		Timeline
The City supports a History and Heritage Advisory Group (HHAG) which works with the City to promote and advocate for the protection of community history and heritage assets. In addition, the City engages volunteers in a range of capacities, including program support and historic research.		
4.1	Continue to support the HHAG: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide administrative support and assistance to the City of Gosnells History and Heritage Advisory Group.</li> <li>• Seek comment from the HHAG in relation to development applications for properties on the City's Heritage List as appropriate.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
4.2	Facilitate opportunities for volunteers to make meaningful contributions to program delivery and other initiatives.	Ongoing

  

Action 5 – Commence planning for the City's acknowledgement of Western Australia's 2029 bicentenary.		Timeline
Land in the area that is now known as the City of Gosnells was granted to European settlers shortly after the Swan River Colony was established in June 1829.		
5.1	Commence planning for the City's acknowledgement of the bicentenary	Ongoing
5.2	Seek funding opportunities for the publication of a contemporary update to the existing 'Gosnells Story'.	Ongoing



**Image:** Orange Room exhibition space  
Knowledge Centre, Gosnells



"We have buses and trains to Perth but no 'help' is available for love or money. They don't have maids in Australia so I don't see myself getting away from the children much."

Mary Hodgkin, letter to her mother  
27 January 1942

"...the country looks very pretty and the wild flowers are marvellous I am trying to do paintings of them as a record for when this interlude is over."

Mary Hodgkin, letter to her parents-in-law  
4 September 1942

of sketches.

ought to get to know her new home through and in botany. She began sketching local flowers in a series of notebooks, often in a location she found them in. Lacking ink after leaving Singapore, Mary used a lot of watercolour paints to add colour.

couraged her children to explore the surrounding area for new plants and to collect specimens for her. Between 1942 and 1944, Mary and her children collected many plants in the area between Gosnells and Kalbarri during their visits with neighbouring families. Her children, especially her sons, found plants often a source of inspiration and specimens regularly came home to sit in a jar on the table for further study.

At Mary sent her notebooks to the Western Australian Botanical Garden. The Government Botanist had them with annotations identifying the botanical names of the flowers. This book is a rare and comprehensive guide to native plant life in the Gosnells, Arrowsmith and other areas during the 1940s.



**Image:** Flora of the Foothills Exhibition, The City of Gosnells Museum at Wilkinson Homestead, 2023



## PLACES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Action 6 – Record and protect places of cultural heritage significance.		Timeline
A local heritage survey identifies and records places that are, or that might become, of cultural heritage significance within a local government area. The survey is a resource for local heritage planning and helps the local government make decisions that reflect local heritage values and supports the creation of a Heritage List or the designation of heritage areas, which identify places to be protected under the local planning scheme. <sup>2</sup>		
6.1	<p>Conduct a Local Heritage Survey review consistent with the guidelines prepared by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, and best practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise the review of the Local Heritage Survey (LHS).</li> <li>Update the InHerit online database, contributing to a state-wide centralised heritage resource which can be accessed and searched by the public.</li> <li>Prepare, update and implement conservation management plans for City-owned places.</li> </ul>	<p>2025</p> <p>2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
6.2	<p>Provide information and assistance to owners of heritage places within the City.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Heritage Conditions Rewards Scheme.</li> <li>Develop a 'Heritage 101' information session and materials to provide guidance to owners of heritage places and other interested parties.</li> <li>Promote the availability of funding to owners of heritage places, including the City's Grants Program and external grants and incentives as they become available.</li> <li>Promote the availability of heritage advice for owners proposing development of a heritage place.</li> <li>Review, update and adopt as required, policies/procedures/protocols to support and encourage the ongoing conservation and maintenance of places included on the City's Local Heritage Survey.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

<sup>2</sup> The preparation of a local heritage survey is a requirement of the Heritage Act 2018, whilst the deemed provisions of the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 require that local governments establish and maintain a heritage list to identify places that are of cultural heritage significance and worthy of built heritage conservation.

## PLACES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Action 7 – Create and implement appropriate planning, development and conservation provisions for heritage places within the City.		Timeline
<p>The City of Gosnells has a role in support of State Planning Policy 3.5: Historic Heritage Conservation (2007) through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that appropriate heritage provisions are included in its Local Planning Scheme.</li> <li>Ensuring that heritage places and areas are carefully identified consistent with common standards provided by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.</li> <li>Ensuring that due regard is given to heritage significance in development assessment, planning schemes and planning strategies.</li> <li>Adopting local planning policies affecting places entered in the City's local planning scheme Heritage List.</li> </ul>		
7.1	Review, update and adopt local planning policies to guide the development of places on the City's Heritage List.	2025
7.2	Provide advice in relation to heritage places owned and managed by the City.	Ongoing



**Image:** The City of Gosnells Museum at Wilkinson Homestead



## PLACES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Action 8 – Care for, and provide opportunities for the community to learn about, and engage with, the history and heritage of the City of Gosnells.		Timeline
There are buildings and sites of historic significance as well as places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance within the City of Gosnells. The following actions will ensure that they are well cared for, and that the community is aware of their existence and relevance to the City's history.		
8.1	<p>Acknowledge and interpret as appropriate, places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance within the City of Gosnells.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with Aboriginal cultural heritage groups and other Aboriginal stakeholders, to identify appropriate opportunities for interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the City of Gosnells.</li> <li>Increase awareness and celebration of Aboriginal cultural heritage.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
8.2	<p>Facilitate the ongoing use of Wilkinson Homestead as the site of the City of Gosnells Museum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide input into the City's strategic documents to ensure that the heritage values of the site are promoted and celebrated.</li> <li>Maintain and support the City of Gosnells Museum at Wilkinson Homestead.</li> <li>Promote the Wilkinson Homestead grounds as a hireable venue.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
8.3	<p>Protect and conserve the Kenwick Pioneer Cemetery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review, update as required and implement the Conservation Plan for Kenwick Pioneer Cemetery.</li> <li>Investigate opportunities for online, searchable access to Kenwick Pioneer Cemetery burial and historic information.</li> </ul>	<p>2025</p> <p>2028</p>
8.4	<p>Provide onsite recognition and interpretation of the City's heritage places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update existing onsite interpretation at places of historical significance as required.</li> <li>Provide appropriate recognition of additional places included on the Local Heritage Survey.</li> <li>Develop a plan to provide interpretation of places of cultural heritage significance within the City.</li> </ul>	<p>2025</p> <p>2025</p> <p>2026</p>
8.5	Provide opportunities for residents and visitors to conduct family history and other research, providing appropriate access to the City's history and heritage resources.	Ongoing





Image: Gosnells Hotel, Albany Highway  
Gosnells, c1910





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This document is available  
in alternative formats.

05/25

**Image:** James sisters, daughters of Amy and Frank James of Thornlie Homestead. Lucy (1887-1958), Norah (1885-1968), Kate (1892-1990), Corona (1900-1984), Madge (1902-1987) c.1911