

DCS506E - Attachment - Fast Facts Information Sheet - Geraldton-Northampton Railway Precinct



FAST FACTS

GERALDTON TO NORTHAMPTON RAILWAY PRECINCT

The Heritage Council of Western Australia is recommending the Minister for Heritage considers finalising the entry for *Geraldton - Northampton Railway Precinct* in the State Register of Heritage Places. This information sheet aims to answer some commonly-asked questions.

What is the role of the Heritage Council of WA?

The Heritage Council of Western Australia is the State Government's advisory body on heritage matters. It is vested with functions and powers under the *Heritage Act 2018*. The Heritage Council is charged with the compilation of the State's Register of Heritage Places.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage is the Department that supports the Heritage Council and the Minister for Heritage.

What is the State Register?

The State Register is a statutory list of places that help tell the story of Western Australia's history and development. Entry in the Register is reserved for places that the Heritage Council has assessed as being of State cultural heritage significance. The Register's primary focus is on places dating from after European contact and settlement and includes places to which both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians retain a connection. The Register acknowledges the value and importance of a place, and helps promote its conservation into the future. There are currently 1,374 places in the State Register.

BELOW: Rail formation, Howatharra



Who decides what should be entered in the State Register?

The role of the Heritage Council of WA is to determine the State significance of a place. The Minister for Heritage makes the final decision on whether a place is entered in the State Register.

What is the heritage significance of Geraldton - Northampton Railway Precinct?

Geraldton – Northampton Railway Precinct was the first Government railway in Western Australia and its construction from 1874 marks the beginning of the development of government railways in the State. The place was constructed to service the galena (lead ore) and copper mining industry in Northampton and is an early example of the Government's attempts to support the industry and expand exports during this formative period in the State's development. The remaining fabric contributes to the cultural landscape of the area with its undulating and sometimes dramatic formations and cuttings, railway signs, and ruinous stone bridges.

What does entry in the State Register mean for Geraldton – Northampton Railway Precinct?

Entry in the Register will recognise and celebrate the distinctive heritage values of the railway precinct and will offer protection under the *Heritage Act 2018*, ensuring any major changes proposed for the place are in keeping with its cultural heritage significance.



ABOVE: Concrete bridge, White Peak

I spoke to someone about registration a number of years ago, why has it taken so long to be registered?

Yes, the first stage of the assessment process did start a number of years ago. Unfortunately, another major project had to be finished first. That has now been completed so consideration of registration can now start.

Can I still make changes to my property if Geraldton – Northampton Railway Precinct is entered in the State Register?

Yes. The entry of a place in the State Register does not prevent an owner from making changes to their property. Owners will continue to discuss their project ideas

and apply to the relevant local government authority (LGA) for approval for any development proposal, as required under the Local Planning Scheme. The LGA will refer the proposals within the precinct to the Heritage Council for advice as part of its normal referral process to other State agencies. The Heritage Council will advise the LGA on the heritage aspects of the proposal in light of the Geraldton – Northampton Railway Precinct's values. Referrals to the Heritage Council such as these are handled within the LGA's normal time frame so there is no delay in decisions on development applications. Owners can also discuss their projects with the Department's Development team should they wish to seek advice when preparing plans.

Does Registration affect ownership/public access?

No. Registration does not in any way affect ownership or public access to your property.

BELOW: Rail formation, Howatharra



Why does the Heritage Council still want to register this place given the railway is no longer operational or very visible?

The Heritage Council determined that the significance of Geraldton – Northampton Railway Precinct to the State’s story means that the place still warrants inclusion on the State Register. While the railway itself no longer operates, it continues to be very visible in the landscape in the form of formations, cuttings and other related railway artefacts.

What are the benefits of registration?

Registration recognises the place and its significance to the State story and ensures the story can continue to be recognised into the future. Registration also provides the opportunity to apply to the Heritage Grants Program to provide funding for any physical conservation works or preparation of conservation management planning documents.

How can I comment on the proposed registration of Geraldton – Northampton Railway Precinct?

Comments on registration can be made online through the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage’s Consultation Hub or by email to HCWAregistration@dplh.wa.gov.au.

The comment period closes Monday 6 September 2021.

What happens next?

Once the period for comments has closed, the Heritage Council will consider whether to recommend the finalisation of registration to the Minister for Heritage, who will make the final decision on whether a place is entered in the State Register.



ABOVE: Railway cutting, Howatharra