



# Practice Note No 10

## GUIDELINES FOR DEMOLISHING A HERITAGE LISTED STRUCTURE

**The Tasmanian Heritage Council occasionally receives applications for substantial or complete demolition of a structure within a place that is listed in the Tasmanian Heritage Register.**

**The common reasons for proposing demolition include structural failure, public safety, in the way of proposed development or untidy sites.**

**This practice note aims to give guidance to property owners on the Heritage Council's attitude to demolition.**

### PROCEDURE

- An assessment of the heritage significance of the structure proposing to be demolished must be done.
- If the assessment shows the structure to be of heritage significance you must demonstrate that there is no prudent or feasible alternative to demolition.
- Safety issues relating to the public or to the structure must be addressed where appropriate, but they must include consideration of prudent and feasible alternatives.

#### For further information contact

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### ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE

The first question to ask is 'how significant is this particular structure?'

The structure may be of significance for historical, archaeological, rarity, creative, stylistic, or social reasons or for an association with an important person or organisation.

The structure may be of exceptional or no heritage significance or anywhere between.

It may be that part of the structure is of high heritage significance and other parts are of low or no significance.

The assessment of heritage significance can be made either by the owner employing a professional in the conservation industry, or by seeking the advice of a Heritage Adviser from Heritage Tasmania.

Please note that ruins or semi-ruins can still have heritage significance.

#### Structures of no heritage significance

Past alterations additions, repairs etc., may have altered the significance of a structure.

If you believe that a structure (or part of it) is of no heritage significance and wish to demolish it (or that part of it) then you must write providing an assessment of the structure to the Heritage Council.

If the Council agrees with the assessment then an 'exemption' will be immediately provided. An exemption means that you will not be required to submit a Works Application.

### Structures of heritage significance

The *Heritage Act* requires that the Heritage Council may only approve works which are likely to reduce or destroy the historic cultural heritage significance of a place **if satisfied that there is no prudent and feasible alternative to carrying out the works.**

***This requirement of the Act means that the Heritage Council can approve demolition of a structure of heritage significance only as a last resort.***

When the demolition of a structure (or part thereof) of heritage significance is proposed, the owner must complete a Works Application justifying the allegation that the owner has no prudent and feasible alternative to its demolition.

#### THE WORKS APPLICATION

The Works Application can be collected from your local council offices or downloaded at [www.heritage.tas.gov.au](http://www.heritage.tas.gov.au)

Please complete the form and lodge it with your local council.

They will advertise the works in your local newspaper. This gives other members of the public the opportunity to make submissions on the proposed works to the Heritage Council. The Heritage Council is required to make a decision on the application within 42 days.

### PRUDENT AND FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES

Where a structure is considered to be of heritage significance, different options for achieving the desired end result without demolition must be considered.

Alternative layouts, uses, adaptations and constructions should be assessed. Costs of alternatives are relevant.

**Public safety:** If there is a perceived danger to the public then the owner should immediately prohibit public access to that area.

Have an assessment carried out by an engineer with conservation expertise. The Heritage Council can advise on suitable engineers if required.

The engineer should assess the actual problem, the actual level of public danger and proposed remedial action. As part of remedial proposals retention of the significant structure must be considered.

The owner then should make immediate contact with the Heritage Council to allow it to consider the remedial proposal.

**Structural failure:** A structural assessment should be made by an engineer with conservation expertise. A Heritage Advisor from Heritage Tasmania may be able to provide preliminary advice.

The engineer should assess the actual problem and propose remedial action. As part of remedial proposals retention of the significant structure must be considered.

A Works Application should be completed and lodged through the particular local council. This Works Application will be advertised and passed on to the Heritage Council for its decision.

**Other reasons:** If the owner has other reasons which he or she believes satisfies the 'no prudent and feasible' request then the information should be supplied.