

# **Demolition Reports**

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**Guide for preparing  
demolition reports for properties  
not listed as heritage items and properties  
not within a heritage conservation area**

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## **Introduction**

Demolition of a building requires approval from the Council through the development application process. Demolition means the pulling down or removal of the whole or part of a building. Consent for the demolition of a building may be sought by itself, as part of a proposal for a new building, or with alterations and additions.

When assessing an application for demolition the Council considers a range of planning matters, including the impact of the demolition on any heritage significance the building may have. This assessment occurs to varying degrees irrespective of whether a building is listed as a heritage item or whether it is located within a heritage conservation area.

For many years Woollahra Council has been active in carrying out studies and investigations that have identified heritage items in the form of buildings, structures, landscape features, and trees. These items are listed in Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 1995. The studies have also resulted in the identification and listing of numerous heritage conservation areas, which are also identified in Woollahra LEP 1995. The Council continues to undertake studies and to list new items and areas.

A building may be of potential heritage significance even though it is currently not listed in the schedule of heritage items or contained within a heritage conservation area.

Therefore, in addition to undertaking heritage studies, the Council assesses the potential heritage significance of a building proposed for demolition as part of its development application process.

### **Why is a demolition report required?**

A demolition report is required to provide information about the potential heritage significance of an existing building. This information is used to assist the Council with its assessment and determination of a development application.

### **When is a demolition report required?**

A demolition report must be submitted with a development application that seeks consent for the total or substantial demolition of a building, other than those buildings listed as a heritage item or within a heritage conservation area. Substantial demolition comprises the demolition of 50% or more of a building's fabric.

**Note:** An application that involves the demolition of a building currently listed or proposed to be listed as a heritage item or a building located or proposed to be located within a heritage conservation area must be accompanied by a statement of heritage impact (refer to Council's guideline for preparing a statement of heritage impact).

### **Pre-DA consultation**

Where total or substantial demolition is proposed and a property owner requests a pre-DA consultation with Council's officers, the owner or their representative must provide a demolition report with the information they submit to Council.

### **Timing the preparation of a demolition report**

A demolition report should be prepared before design options are drawn up. The report may also be prepared before a property is purchased. In both instances the report will provide

information that will enable conclusions to be formed on whether or not a building has heritage significance, and the scope of works that may be carried out, including total or partial demolition.

The report may be prepared in-conjunction with a site analysis plan

#### **Who should prepare a demolition report?**

A demolition report may be prepared by a qualified and experienced heritage consultant or by a suitably qualified and experienced person in the building design industry.

Statements in a report regarding the structural condition of a building that are used to substantiate demolition must be supported by written documentation from a qualified and experienced structural engineer.

#### **Content and format of a demolition report**

The minimum information that must be provided in a demolition report is listed in the following table. Sources for the information are also mentioned.

In addition to the material listed in the table, the report must include the following:

name of the author and his/her qualifications and experience

signature of the author on each numbered page

date of the report

Two bound A4 copies of the report using portrait format must accompany the development application

#### **Requirement for further information**

After the report has been examined and a site inspection has been carried out by one of Council's Heritage Officers, further information may be requested from the applicant to determine whether the property has heritage significance.

### Demolition Report Information

<u>Report information</u>	<u>Source of information</u>
<b><u>Historical overview</u></b>	
Subdivision history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Subdivision applications - Council archives</li> <li>▪ Deposited plans – Department of Lands (Land and Property Information Division)</li> <li>▪ Land auction maps – Council archives</li> </ul>
Date of original construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Building application – Council archives</li> <li>▪ Sands Directory – Council archives, Mitchell Library</li> <li>▪ Rates books – Council archives</li> </ul>
Name and details of original architect/designer/builder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Building application – Council archives</li> </ul>
A4 copy of original plans (where available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Building application – Council archives</li> </ul>
Dates and description of changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Building application – Council archives</li> </ul>
List of current and past owners and occupiers and a statement on whether any are historically important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sands Directory - Council archives, Mitchell Library</li> <li>▪ Rates books – Council archives</li> <li>▪ Certificate of title – Department of Lands (Land and Property Information Division)</li> <li>▪ Australian Dictionary of Biography</li> </ul>
<b><u>Existing building and setting</u></b>	
Description of existing building and site, including all minor buildings, structures, trees and landscape features, and the immediate streetscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Examination of existing building and site</li> </ul>
Annotated colour postcard size photos of the existing building (all facades), other structures, mature vegetation and major landscape elements, and buildings adjoining the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Existing building and site</li> </ul>
Annotated site plan showing location from which photos were taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Site survey</li> </ul>
<b><u>Fabric analysis/condition report</u></b>	
Structural report (where existing structural condition is used to substantiate demolition)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assessment of building by structural engineer</li> </ul>
<b><u>Report conclusion</u></b>	
Conclusions on:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ whether or not the property has heritage significance</li> <li>▪ why retention of the building is not viable</li> <li>▪ what elements of the building and site are to be retained and integrated with the new development</li> </ul>	
<b><u>Notes:</u></b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research may be carried out at the Council’s Local History Centre, located in Sherbrooke Hall – Foster Park. Access is off Sherbrooke Avenue, Double Bay (days and hours limited).</li> <li>2. Building applications, subdivision applications and development applications may be obtained on request from Council’s Customer Service Section (conditions and a fee are applicable).</li> <li>3. If consent is granted to the application for demolition, an archival record of the building will be required as a condition of consent. If the demolition report satisfies the standard archival condition, copies of the report must be submitted to the Council at the time set out in the condition.</li> </ol>	