

Attachment 3
Demolition Report

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.

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.

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 or work. This is assessed on a case by case basis and a demolition report may be required for modification of less than 50% of a building 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 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.

Who should prepare a demolition report?

A demolition report should be prepared by a qualified and experienced heritage consultant.

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

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 in heritage conservation areas

Conservation and restoration of significant fabric is a priority for the Woollahra community. Demolition should also be considered as a last resort where buildings cannot be reasonably retained and conserved.

In addition to the documentation required above, any DA proposing full demolition in a heritage conservation area is to provide an assessment against the *Helou v Strathfield* planning principle. More specifically, the following questions are to be answered in the demolition report:

- 1. What is the heritage significance of the conservation area?*
- 2. What contribution does the individual building make to the significance of the conservation area?*

The starting point for these questions is the Statement of Significance of the conservation area. This may be in the relevant LEP or in the heritage study that led to its designation. If the contributory value of the building is not evident from these sources, expert opinion should be sought.

- 3. Is the building structurally unsafe?*

Although lack of structural safety will give weight to permitting demolition, there is still a need to consider the extent of the contribution the building makes to the heritage significance of the conservation area.

- 4. If the building is or can be rendered structurally safe, is there any scope for extending or altering it to achieve the development aspirations of the applicant in a way that would have a lesser effect on the integrity of the conservation area than demolition?*

If the answer is yes, the cost of the necessary remediation/rectification works should be considered.

- 5. Are these costs so high that they impose an unacceptable burden on the owner of the building? Is the cost of altering or extending or incorporating the contributory building into a development of the site (that is within the reasonable expectations for the use of the site under the applicable statutes and controls) so unreasonable that demolition should be permitted?*

If these costs are reasonable, then remediation/rectification (whether accompanied by alteration and/or extension or not) should be preferred to demolition and rebuilding.

- 6. Is the replacement of such quality that it will fit into the conservation area?*

If the replacement does not fit, the building should be retained until a proposal of suitable quality is approved.¹

Demolition Report Information

¹ *Helou v Strathfield Municipal Council* [2006] NSWLEC 66, available online at <https://www.caselaw.nsw.gov.au/decision/549f84273004262463abec2e>

Report requirements	Source of information
Historical overview	
Subdivision history	Subdivision applications - Council archives Deposited plans - Department of Lands (Land and Property Information Division) Land auction maps - Council archives
Date of original construction	Building application - Council archives Sands Directory - Council archives, Mitchell Library Rates books - Council archives
Name and details of original architect/designer/builder	Building application - Council archives
Comparative analysis on the style and on the architect/designer, including information on statutory listings, condition and level of intactness.	State Heritage Inventory, Trove, reference books or other sources
A4 copy of original plans (where available)	Building application - Council archives
Dates and description of changes	Building application - Council archives
List of current and past owners and occupiers and a statement on whether any are historically important	Sands Directory - Council archives, Mitchell Library Rates books - Council archives Certificate of title - Department of Lands (Land and Property Information Division) Australian Dictionary of Biography
Assessment of heritage significance	
Undertake an assessment of heritage significance using the NSW Heritage criteria, in accordance with the NSW Heritage Manual guidelines	Online at https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/heritagebranch/heritage/listings/assessingheritagesignificance.pdf
Provide a concise Statement of Significance	Based on research and assessment
Existing building and setting	
Description of existing building and setting , including all minor buildings, structures, trees and landscape features, and the immediate streetscape	Examination of existing building and site
Annotated colour postcard size photos of the existing building (all facades), other structures, mature vegetation and major landscape elements, and buildings adjoining the site	Existing building and site
Annotated site plan showing location from which photos were taken	Site survey and floor plans
Structural report (where existing structural condition is used to substantiate demolition - see also demolition in heritage conservation areas below)	Assessment of building by structural engineer

Demolition Report Information	
Report requirements	Source of information
Fabric analysis for each feature of the site (all rooms for a building), outlining period of construction, original fabric, materials and condition. Photographs must accompany the analysis	Existing building and site
Report conclusion	
<p>Conclusions on:</p> <p>whether or not the property has heritage significance</p> <p>why retention of the building is not viable</p> <p>what elements of the building and site are to be retained and integrated with the new development</p>	

Notes:

1. Research can be carried out at the Council's Local History Centre, located into Woollahra Libraries Double Bay Library at 451 New South Head Road Double Bay. Historical research can be undertaken and reports written by Local History staff, on a fee-paying basis. Refer to Council's website for further information.
2. Building applications, subdivision applications and development applications may be obtained on request from Council's Customer Service Section subject to the conditions of applications under the Government Information (Public Access) 2009.
3. If consent is granted to the application for demolition, an archival record of the building will be required, in addition to the demolition report, as a condition of consent.