



Nomination for URBAN Award

SA Government Historic Buildings Conservation Program



Image: c/o SA Government

Due to outsourcing, privatisation and various Departmental changes, Heritage Services of the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, having the necessary resources and expertise and best placed to deliver specialist conservation work to Government-owned heritage assets, decided a new approach was required. To be able to allocate funds appropriately and in priority order of conservation need, a survey was commissioned of all assets that established the physical condition of each and enabled conservation works to be prioritised conforming with strict Treasury guidelines. Heritage Services utilises the annual Historic Buildings Conservation Program (HBCP) funding as “seed” money and partners with Agencies usually on a 50:50 funding basis.

HBCP funding can be committed for conservation works only, not maintenance. Each agency is responsible for the maintenance of its own heritage listed assets, so Heritage Services liaises with all Agencies to synchronize and coordinate the conservation and maintenance works. This optimises the funding, as real savings are realised on documentation, supervision, scaffolding, site setup, etc. and minimises interruption to building users and tenants.

An aspect covered that would otherwise go unseen is the seismic bracing that is installed in heritage assets during development/conservation work. This involves steel bracing to parapets, chimneys and tying walls to roof structure. Earthquake bracing is incorporated during the works such that it is non-intrusive and does not detract from the heritage character of buildings. Considerable expense and expertise is involved in executing this unseen work and the Government is to be applauded for adding this extra layer of protection to our iconic heritage-listed Adelaide and South Australian buildings and also improving public safety.