



## GET THE FACTS - HERITAGE INFORMATION SERIES

### 07. ESSENTIAL CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

The aim of conservation is to retain or recover the cultural significance of a place and must include provision for its security, its maintenance and its future. Conservation is based on a respect for the existing fabric and should involve the least possible physical intervention. It should not distort the evidence provided by the fabric. Conservation of a place should take into consideration all aspects of its cultural significance without unwarranted emphasis on any one at the expense of others. The conservation policy appropriate to

a place must first be determined by an understanding of its cultural significance and its physical condition. The removal of contents which form part of the cultural significance of the place is unacceptable unless it is the sole means of ensuring their security and preservation. Such contents must be returned should changed circumstances make this practicable. The Burra Charter is the foundation document for most criteria dealing with the protection of heritage places in Australia. Its guiding principle is that all decisions

to be made about the conservation of a place should be in accord with its cultural significance, which must be established before any work can be carried out. While it relates to heritage sites, its principles can readily be adapted to movable and intangible cultural heritage.