



Inspection schedule for maintaining heritage items

Department of Climate Change,
Energy, the Environment and Water



Acknowledgement of Country

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

This resource may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

© 2024 State of NSW and Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

With the exception of photographs, the State of NSW and Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (the department) are pleased to allow this material to be reproduced in whole or in part for educational and non-commercial use, provided the meaning is unchanged and its source, publisher and authorship are acknowledged. Specific permission is required to reproduce photographs.

Learn more about our copyright and disclaimer at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/copyright

Artist and designer Nikita Ridgeway from Aboriginal design agency Boss Lady Creative Designs created the People and Community symbol.

Cover photo: Garrison Church Millers Point. Effy Alexakis/DCCEEW

Published by:

Environment and Heritage

Department of Climate Change,
Energy, the Environment and Water

Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124

Phone: +61 2 9995 5000 (switchboard)

Phone: 1300 361 967 (Environment and Heritage enquiries)

TTY users: phone 133 677, then ask for 1300 361 967

Speak and listen users: phone 1300 555 727, then ask for 1300 361 967

Email info@environment.nsw.gov.au

Website www.environment.nsw.gov.au

ISBN 978-1-923357-13-6

EH 2024/0330

First published in March 1998; reprinted November 2024

Find out more at:

environment.nsw.gov.au

Contents

- Maintenance of heritage assets: Inspection schedule 1
- 1. Roof covering 1
- 2. Roof drainage 2
- 3. Eaves 1
- 4. External works 2
- 5. Fabric 3
- 6. Services 4
- 7. Painting 5
- 8. Joinery 6
- 9. Structure 7
- 10. Urgent maintenance 8

Maintenance of heritage items: Inspection schedule

Frequency of inspections will be influenced by the rate of decay and deterioration, particularly to buildings recently purchased or poorly maintained.

1. Roof covering

Building element	Inspect:	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
Slate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> slipped, cracked, broken or porous tiles 	7	50+
Terracotta		7	40
Copper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loose or raised sheet edges 	7	75+
Zinc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dented areas cracked soldered joints copper should not have through fixings 	7	40+
Steel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loose or raised sheet edges deformed surfaces from being walked on rust stains around fittings dissimilar metals at flashings loose fittings can indicate batten failure 	7	20-40
Membrane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lifting joints, surface blisters, cracks and physical damage check on hot days and after rain as surface dries, cracks can be seen wet as heat draws up moisture 	2	20
Timber shingles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> slipped, cracked, decayed or badly deformed 	7	60+
Flashings and cappings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loose or raised fixings lifted, slipped or deformed from wind damage capping tiles for cracked, broken, slipped or missing mortar bedding 	2	-
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> remove rubbish and leaves check vent pipes for missing or damaged caps 	4-12 months	-
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> walking on brittle roof tiles combining different materials that will react with each other resting on or testing membranes with sharp objects replacing original roof coverings unnecessarily light gauge flashings that are susceptible to wind damage and lift cement mortar repair to flashings inserted in masonry joints 		

2. Roof drainage

Building element	Inspect:	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
Stainless-steel Copper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bent or squashed gutters from ladders or overstraps 	7	70+
Cast iron	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cracked or broken pipes and defective joints retain broken sections for repair 	7	70+
Steel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rust stains around downpipe outlets, internal/external corners, beneath tree overhangs and offsets and shoes ensure gutter does not collect runoff from copper surface or flashings that will corrode gutter 	2	10+
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> gutter and downpipe joints for cracks, are there drips to the underside? Are there loose or missing brackets? growth, moss or stains surrounding downpipes can indicate blockages check for squashed or damaged downpipes that may restrict waterflow check if downpipes are connected to the stormwater system with adequate joints check stormwater drains are unblocked clear gutters, guards, sumps and rainwater heads of leaves and rubbish each autumn trim overhanging trees check if gutters are sagging and water falls to outlets ensure fittings sit correctly and are clear of debris check for nesting birds in downpipe offsets check if bird proofing is adequate 	2 4-12 months	-
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> combining different materials that will react with each other hosing leaves and debris into downpipe outlets placing ladders onto soft copper or stainless-steel gutters 		
Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> defects should be rectified prior to painting if programmed for the same year 		

3. Eaves

Building element	Inspect:	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • holes from old pipes where birds can nest • surface stains to fascia and soffit that indicate roof or valley gutter failure • check ventilation holes • identify cobwebs and wasp nests for removal • look for paint failure and/or decay to linings that can indicate roof covering failure 	1	-
		7	
Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defects should be rectified prior to painting if programmed for the same year 		

4. External works

Building element	Inspect:	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
Paving/ bitumen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> broken, lifted or undulating bitumen caused by heavy vehicles 	1	10–20
Concrete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> areas of ponding, does surface water drain away satisfactorily? loose or lifted pavers or growth from joints that could be hazardous to pedestrians check kerbs for damage and rubbish 	1	20–25
Bollards & wheel stops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> damaged or missing bollards and chains test bollards for stability check timber bollards for decay check car that wheel stops are in place to prevent damage and exhaust stains on walls 	2	–
Fences/ timber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> damage, decayed, loose or missing pickets, posts and rails check fence alignment 	7	10–15
Steel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check steel fences for damage, rust or missing panels 	1	15–40
Gates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> damage or dropped hinges test gates for operation, is hardware working? Are catches and hinges functional? Do hinges need oiling? check stops and hold open catches are functional or required 	7	10–15
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> planting trees near buildings allowing vehicles to park adjacent to buildings allowing timber fence posts to be concreted 		
Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> defects should be rectified prior to painting if programmed for the same year 		

5. Fabric

Building element	Inspect:	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
Stone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loose, fretted, broken or missing mortar joints around windows, doors, along flashings, cornices and other projections • crumbling stone or surface salts that can indicate a moisture problem • signs of delamination that can affect the stability of stone, is there rising or falling damp? Has an appropriate mortar been used? • incompatible mortars where lime was originally used 	5	70+
Brickwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loose, fretted, broken or missing mortar joints around windows, doors, along flashings, cornices and other projections • crumbling brick or surface salts that can indicate a moisture problem • blocked/covered with soil ventilators, have original ventilators been replaced with an inappropriate type, e.g., terracotta instead of cast iron? • replace inappropriate ventilators • cracked or drummy render, has an appropriate mortar been used in joints? 	5	40–75
Timber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loose or missing weatherboards, corner stops and mouldings • check window sills and where boarding makes contact with ground for weathering and decay 	7	20+
Fibre cement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broken or damaged sheets • loose or missing trim and cover slips 	2	20–25
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • areas of grime, growth from joints, bird excretion and graffiti, is there any sign of termites? 	4–12 months	-
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • covering wall ventilators and damp proof courses • building up garden beds over damp proof courses, planting close to walls or continual watering of walls • applying to stonework anti-graffiti or protective coatings without proven effectiveness • inappropriate cleaning of masonry e.g., strong water jet cleaning or damaging detergents 		
Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defects should be rectified prior to painting if programmed for the same year 		

6. Services

Building element	Inspect:	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
Stormwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dish drains and sumps blocked water laying in sumps can indicate partial or total blockage or inadequate fall in line ensure hose taps discharge into gullies and that gratings are operable, sit square and not damaged check drains going into sewer system 	4-12 months	20-25
Sewerage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sumps for damaged grates and ensure these are not draining surface water 	2	20-25
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> taps for drips and ease of operation, are taps and surface-run pipes secured to walls or supports? look for wet areas within the property grounds and gardens during dry periods, this can indicate a broken pipe 	2	20-25
Electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> blown lightbulbs or damaged fittings fittings should be well secured to walls or stands check that stands and poles in parking areas are stable and undamaged 	1	-
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> hosing leaves and debris into stormwater drains 		

7. Painting

Building element	Inspect:	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
Window sills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paint deterioration and weathering 	3	-
Doors/ frames	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paint deterioration, failure, damage or grime 	3	-
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timber cladding for joints cracking, putty coming away, cracked paint, blisters or fading • stains can indicate a moisture problem 	7	7-10
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • painting surfaces never intended for painting, such as stone or brick • inappropriate colours • installing one way glass • excessive exposure to original lead-based paint 		

8. Joinery

Building element	Inspect:	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loose or damaged mouldings, architraves, decayed stiles, weathered sills sashes that bind or are decayed and broken, check strength by raising weight by hand and dropping- cord should carry weight at bottom of drop noisy pulley wheels that need to be oiled loose or decaying sash joints broken or cracked glass or putty check internal faces around windows for stains that indicate failed flashing 	2	10–15
Doors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loose jambs or damaged from locks being forced threshold stability, decay, excessive wear or damage damage to mouldings or stops allowing for satisfactory door operation firm door joints, missing or damaged mouldings operational locks and catches check if stops are required to prevent damage to doors or wall when opening 	2	10–15
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check that hardware operates properly, or is loose or damaged 	2	–
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> restricting fire exits with stored items installing fans or air conditioners in windows replacing hardware inappropriate for the building removing original hardware instead install new adjacent 		
Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> defects should be rectified prior to painting if programmed for the same year 		

9. Structure

Building element	Inspect:	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
Timber	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• secure and true members	7	-
Masonry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• straight and true• check for cracks	5	-
Steel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• check for rust and secure fixings	7	-
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• stable veranda posts• signs of structural distress such as movement or cracking which a structural engineer should inspect	7	-

10. Urgent maintenance

Building element	Urgent repairs	Frequency (years)	Life expectancy (years)
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> blocked or broken stormwater and sewer lines that require clearing or repair clearing of blocked gutters and downpipes broken water service or leaking faucets and toilet cisterns damaged or defective light fittings and switches failed incandescent light bulbs or fluorescent tubes storm damage to grounds or building fabric vandalism or break-and-enter damage to windows and doors broken or defective locks and latches, replacement of keys or lock cylinders 	As needed	-
Caution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify responsibility for repair costs generally, the street side of service meters is the responsibility of the supplier, the lesser or lessee is responsible for the building side check if repair costs are claimable against insurance and that the appropriate authorities have been advised 		