



Martindale Hall Conservation Park

Management Plan 2024



Government of South Australia
Department for Environment
and Water

A photograph of Martindale Hall, a large, multi-story stone building with classical architectural features. The building is constructed from light-colored stone blocks and features a series of windows with dark shutters. A prominent palm tree stands in the foreground, partially obscuring the view of the building. The sky is clear and blue. The building has a decorative balustrade on the roofline and a central arched entrance.

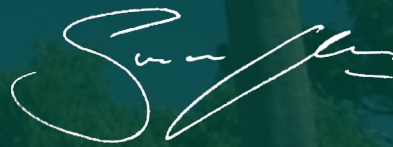
Acknowledgement of Country

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and waters we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country. The department works in partnership with the First Peoples of South Australia and supports their Nations to take a leading role in caring for their Country. Martindale Hall Conservation Park is located on Ngadjuri Nation (land) whose Country spans from Gawler in the south, to just east of Quorn in the north-west, and beyond Mannahill in the east.



Minister's foreword

Martindale Hall stands as an enduring symbol of Clare Valley's rich history and architectural heritage. Its stunning design, historical significance, and cultural contributions make it a vital part of South Australia's narrative. As visitors continue to explore the hall, associated outbuildings and object collections they are not only immersed in the elegance of a bygone era but also reminded of the region's journey from pastoral wealth to a vibrant tourist destination. Martindale Hall's placement within a conservation park not only enhances its historical and cultural importance but also contributes significantly to the preservation of the local natural environment. This synergy benefits both heritage preservation and ecological health. I acknowledge the community interest and involvement in the management of this park and also the contributions from those who helped in the development of the plan. I now formally adopt the Martindale Hall Conservation Park Management Plan under section 38 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*.



Hon Susan Close MP

Minister for Climate, Environment and Water

Developing this plan

This plan has been developed to outline the strategic management and protection of Martindale Hall Conservation Park, including its heritage assets. The plan will respect the gift of the Hall and approximately 19 hectares of surrounding land from the University of Adelaide to the State Government by ensuring that it remains dedicated to serving the people of South Australia. Simultaneously, it will define parameters in which the Hall, heritage assets, and its grounds may be used for a wider range of activities consistent with its heritage status.

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Directions for management

South Australia's national parks, conservation parks and recreation parks are managed to achieve the objectives of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972* (NPW Act). These objectives ensure that parks are managed primarily for conservation and protecting culture and heritage whilst strengthening public use and education about the park's purpose and significance. A park management plan is a legal document that outlines how a reserve will be managed in the years ahead. This plan outlines the strategic management framework in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the NPW Act.

The management of Martindale Hall Conservation Park will focus on preserving and protecting the state heritage listed property, while also facilitating tourism opportunities that complement the heritage values within a conservation park landscape.

The plan has been built around two key themes:

1. Providing visitor experiences
2. Protecting and enhancing heritage, cultural and natural values

These themes set the scene for the objectives and strategies that will guide long-term protection, enjoyment and collaboration with partners within the park. Operational plans and policies, such as the Martindale Hall Conservation Management Plan 2020, will support this plan of management and provide more detailed information to protect heritage assets, inform visitor service facilities, landscape management, bushfire management, and pest plant and animal control. This approach ensures that this management plan is flexible and able to guide a range of future management challenges.

Given the management of the park is strongly focussed around heritage, a Martindale Hall Heritage Conservation Policy is being developed by the department which should be understood in conjunction with this plan of management. This policy will further define the heritage values of the buildings and surrounds of the Martindale Hall property, and provide direction on the ongoing protection and management of them. Additionally, a Material Contents Policy will inventory the various movable items that make up the Hall's collection. It will detail the proper care and management practices for these items, as well as establish guidelines for loans or removal of items from the collection.

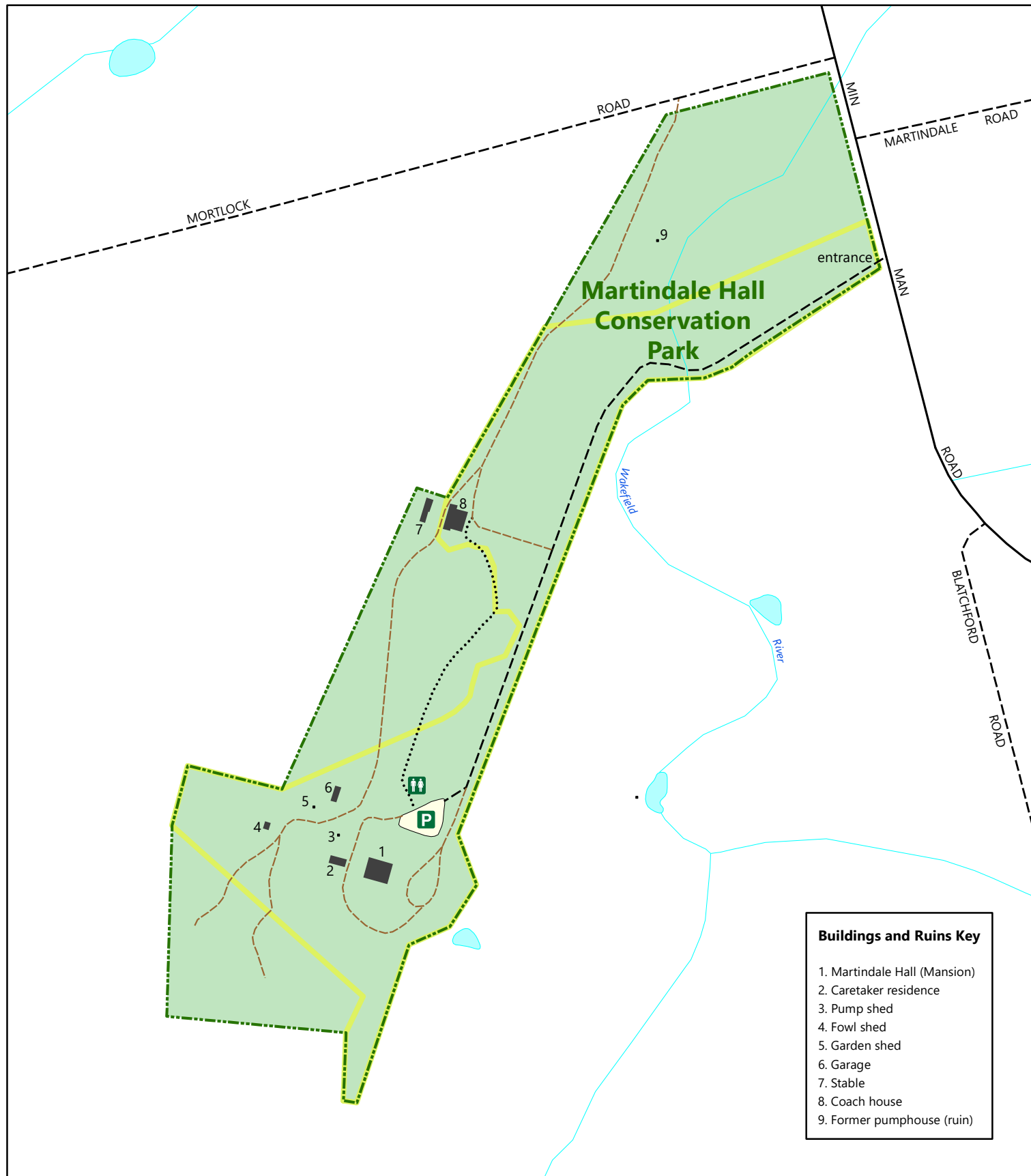
Martindale Hall Conservation Park is a state heritage listed property and is protected under the *Heritage Places Act 1993 (SA)*. Any proposals to alter or make restorations on the site will need to be compatible with the site's heritage values outlined in the Martindale Hall Heritage Conservation Policy, and will be subject to assessment and development approval under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* and *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.

The park is on the Country of Ngadjuri people, who have maintained a connection to Country for countless generations. The plan recognises the important role First Nations play in the management of their lands and waters. As part of implementing this plan, the department is committed to working with Ngadjuri People to better understand how traditional and contemporary Indigenous knowledge, heritage and cultural practices can guide its implementation.

Working collaboratively with the private sector to attract visitors without adversely impacting the park's heritage value is a priority of this plan of management. Experiences that provide engaging, contemporary and meaningful interpretation of the park's heritage using the heritage infrastructure in the park such as the Hall, stable house, manager's house and coach house, will enhance visitor experiences and increase visitation. It is envisaged that the grounds of the park could be utilised for temporary events such as weddings and corporate events, using removable infrastructure that safeguards the heritage values of the park.

Expanding opportunities for visitors to experience the park's offerings in new ways that are respectful to its heritage values, will be considered and assessed on their individual merits in association with the appropriate legislation and policies. The provision for low scale tourism accommodation that is respectful of the site's heritage values and is outside the heritage curtilage of the park may be considered.

Martindale Hall Conservation Park's compact size restricts the variety of habitats available and results in smaller wildlife populations, making it more vulnerable to loss of genetic diversity and invasive species. The park contains the rare barren cab-grass (*Eragrostis infecunda*) and other native grasses such as brush wire-grass (*Aristida behriana*), fine-hairy spear-grass (*Austrostipa puberula*) and common wallaby-grass (*Rytidosperma caespitosum*). Pest plants and animals that threaten the park's biodiversity and heritage value will be controlled.



- Buildings and Ruins Key**
1. Martindale Hall (Mansion)
 2. Caretaker residence
 3. Pump shed
 4. Fowl shed
 5. Garden shed
 6. Garage
 7. Stable
 8. Coach house
 9. Former pumphouse (ruin)

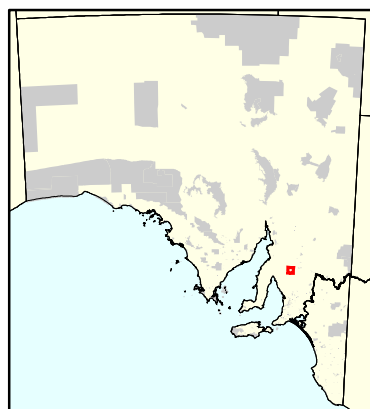
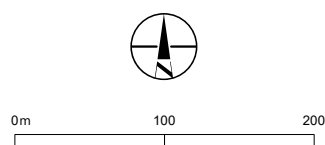


Figure 1

Martindale Hall Conservation Park



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| | Sealed road | | Buildings/ruins |
| | Unsealed road | | Martindale Hall Conservation Park |
| | Management track (not for public use) | | Heritage Curtilage |
| | Pedestrian track | | Waterbody |
| | Public toilets | | Watercourse |
| | Public car park | | |

Significance and purpose

Martindale Hall was originally built in 1880 for pastoralist Mr Edmund Bowman Jr, however the site and the surrounding land was sold to Mr William Tennant Mortlock in 1892. Martindale Hall and the surrounding estate remained in the family for many years and in 1972, the Mortlock family bequeathed the Hall and the estate to the University of Adelaide, so that the property could be used “by the Waite Agricultural Research Institute for a long range program of animal husbandry research”. Although some of the contents of the building remained with the Hall, the Mortlock Estate gifted other items to the National Trust of South Australia and the university incorporated other items into its collections.

In 1980, Martindale Hall was entered on the Register of State Heritage Items and continues to be protected under the *Heritage Places Act 1993* as a State Heritage Place. The State Heritage Register notes that the site is ‘closely associated with the pastoral and economic development of South Australia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries’. It is described as ‘an outstanding example of the grand country mansions constructed by wealthy pastoralists...’ as well as ‘illustrating a way of life that no longer exists in South Australia’ and ‘remains as a testament to intergenerational pastoral empires’.

In 1986, the university proposed that the Hall and a parcel of approximately 19 hectares of land be gifted to South Australia as part of the Jubilee 150 celebrations. The state government accepted this offer and in 1991 the land was proclaimed as the Martindale Hall Conservation Park under the NPW Act.

Today, Martindale Hall is recognised as a place of considerable heritage significance for South Australia. For many years it has been leased to the private sector as a tourist attraction and venue for events and accommodation. It is currently managed through a short-term caretaker arrangement with a local tourism operator. This arrangement has provided visitors with an opportunity to access the Hall as a museum, where visitors can see rooms that are preserved as the original owners would have displayed them.

Challenges and opportunities

Key challenges and opportunities in the protection and management of the park:

- Managing Martindale Hall Conservation Park in a way that supports and acknowledges the historic and enduring connection between the local community and Martindale Hall
- Ensuring that any use of Martindale Hall, associated buildings and ruins, and surrounding land, would protect its heritage values, whilst also ensuring that the public has ongoing access to it
- Identifying partnerships that enhance the park’s heritage significance, deliver engaging visitor experiences, provide financial sustainability and deliver benefits to the regional economy
- Identifying opportunities for universal design upgrades to Martindale Hall to enable better public access and facilitate emergency access and egress while remaining sensitive to the heritage setting
- Providing interpretive material that educates visitors on the heritage value of Martindale Hall and supports appreciation of the cultural and natural values of the park
- Managing the ongoing deterioration of the exterior and internal fabric, finishes and objects of Martindale Hall
- Maintaining healthy ecosystems within a modified landscape to ensure that they continue to provide habitat for native species
- Collaborating with Ngadjuri People and stakeholders such as neighbours, researchers, volunteers and environmental and heritage groups to understand, monitor and manage threats for effective heritage, cultural and environmental outcomes.



THEME 1:

Creating visitor experiences

Martindale Hall Conservation Park, encompassing the majestic Hall, its preserved interiors, the coach house, stable house, manager's house (caretaker residence) and ruins on the property, exudes a sense of historical integrity that captures a bygone era of South Australian grandeur. More recently, visitors have been invited to immerse themselves in a unique experience akin to a living museum, offering a nostalgic journey back to an era of refined living on a vast pastoral estate. Today, set within the landscape of a conservation park, the Hall and surrounds has the potential to further grow into a heritage centred tourism destination, making a vibrant contribution to the cultural and economic landscape of the Clare Valley region.

The visitor experience for Martindale Hall Conservation Park is founded on three key principles. When evaluating potential adaptive reuse projects within Martindale Hall Conservation Park, it is important to adhere to the visitor experience guiding principles to ensure compliance with the park's management plan.

Visitor Experience Principles:

1. Honouring the gift of Martindale Hall to the state by ensuring that it remains accessible for the people of South Australia to enjoy and appreciate.
2. Facilitating partnerships that support an engaging and financially sustainable place that delivers positive heritage conservation outcomes.
3. Any future use within Martindale Hall Conservation Park must uphold the heritage values as outlined in the Martindale Hall Heritage Conservation Policy.

In addition to compliance with this plan of management, development proposals would also undergo formal assessment and approval processes under other relevant legislation including the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, *Heritage Places Act 1993 (SA)* and *Native Vegetation Act 1991*. The Planning and Design Code State Heritage Place and Heritage Adjacency Overlays applies to the entire conservation park. Policy under this overlay identifies that development should not dominate, encroach or unduly impact on the setting of the State Heritage Place. New developments and upgrades to existing infrastructure must be sympathetic to the heritage values that will be outlined in the Martindale

Hall Heritage Conservation Policy. They must also ensure inclusive experiences and access for all abilities where possible as per the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*.

Best practice heritage conservation recommends that retaining an appropriate area of land, or curtilage, around a heritage asset can be integral and essential in retaining and interpreting a site's heritage significance. Through the development of a Martindale Hall Heritage Conservation Policy, a heritage curtilage has been identified by heritage experts (Figure 1) which provides guidance for the management of the park and the future uses that could be envisaged within and outside of the curtilage.

Future uses envisaged inside the heritage curtilage could include:

- Adaptive reuse for tourism and ancillary purposes of the coach house, manager's house and stables, ensuring heritage values are maintained and that it is accessible and inclusive for all
- Temporary events or uses that do not impact the heritage significance of the conservation park e.g. weddings and other celebrations, art exhibitions, produce markets, open air concerts, and theatrical performances
- Provide engaging, contemporary and meaningful interpretation opportunities that activate the Hall and the collective buildings/ruins, present the collections, enhance visitor experience and increase visitation. Any interpretive experiences need to consider the heritage values of the park
- Walking trails that connect visitors from existing or envisaged carparks to heritage assets. Any future use or development i.e. lift installation or air-conditioning upgrades that could change the internal layout, past room uses and historic decoration of any rooms of high integrity heritage value will need to refer to the Martindale Hall Heritage Conservation Policy and Martindale Hall Conservation Management Plan.

Future uses envisaged outside the heritage curtilage

- Low scale camping/pod style accommodation, separate tourist accommodation and ancillary office
- Short term activation and events with temporary infrastructure
- Low intensity agriculture activities such as viticulture and horticulture through a lease/licensing agreement, subject to the provisions of the NPW Act and in accordance with the objectives of this plan.

Future uses which change, dominate or encroach on the pastoral, open space nature of the site as enforced under the Planning and Design Code State Heritage Place and Heritage Adjacency Overlays will not be supported.

Any leasing or licensing ventures will be privately operated and managed under arrangements with the Minister for Climate, Environment and Water. Responsibilities of maintenance and repair of the buildings and other infrastructure like the septic tank, fire detection, painting of exterior and interior of buildings and maintenance of roads and fences will all be outlined in the lease agreement. Conditions of any lease/license will ensure that the general public is still able to access and enjoy the conservation park grounds, the Hall and its adjacent heritage assets.

It is important to share and interpret the site for visitors, whilst ensuring people are able to experience a window into life as it would have been for the Bowman and Mortlock families. Engaging, contemporary and meaningful interpretation that uses low impact technology or development will be supported. Incorporating memorial elements in the design of visitor facilities and interpretive material will recognise the historical significance of the area and will be supported within the confines of the heritage values of the site. Sharing First Nations cultural knowledge, stories and interpretation of the site, where appropriate and endorsed by Ngadjuri Traditional Owners, will provide a valuable insight to the visitor experience.

Objective and strategies

Ensure any future use of Martindale Hall maintains the heritage values whilst allowing public access and enriching the visitor experience.

Seek partnerships that support an engaging and financially sustainable place and deliver positive heritage conservation outcomes.

- Collaborate with commercial tourism operators to preserve and present the park's heritage significance, deliver engaging visitor experiences, provide financial sustainability and deliver benefits to the regional economy.
- Facilitate opportunities for the provision of small-scale tourist accommodation and improved visitor facilities to support heritage-based tourism.
- Investigate opportunities for land acquisition, leasing or partnerships with adjoining land holders to improve the heritage setting of Martindale Hall and facilitate alternative uses and sensitive future development of the site.
- Support leases and licenses that are aligned with the heritage values of the site.
- Investigate funding models that are appropriate and sustainable that recognise and support the partnership between government and the private sector.
- Support appropriate adaptive reuse of the coach house, manager's house and stables, ensuring heritage values and the visitor experience principles are respected.
- Provide engaging, contemporary and meaningful interpretation opportunities that activate the Hall, present the collections (Material Objects), enhance visitor experience and increase visitation.
- Ensure all uses, restoration works and any minor development in the park retains and reinstates the heritage significance and is consistent with the Martindale Hall Conservation Management Plan.



THEME 2:

Protecting heritage, cultural and natural values

Martindale Hall is a state heritage listed property and together with its surrounding land is proclaimed as a conservation park under the NPW Act. It is a place of considerable heritage significance for South Australia. The Hall and associated heritage assets on the park are leading examples of classically derived Australian 19th century architecture. The Hall interior, which remains largely intact and in reasonable condition, is highly significant for offering visitors historic and cultural insights into the different lifestyles and tastes of the Bowman and Mortlock families.

A Martindale Hall Heritage Conservation Policy will support this plan of management and will operate to further define the heritage values of the Hall and surrounds, and to provide direction on the ongoing management of those heritage values. The collections within the Hall are also of state and local importance with many objects listed on the South Australian Heritage Register and protected under the *Heritage Places Act 1993*. A Material Contents Policy will also aim to ensure the preservation and safeguarding of the collections at Martindale Hall for future generations.

Although the size of the conservation park surrounding the Hall is relatively small, it presents an opportunity to make a contribution to regional biodiversity goals whilst respecting the historical values of the park. Historic photos suggest that the land along the Wakefield River in the park was partially cleared with canopy species only remaining. Any significant conservation works will need to refer to the Martindale Hall Heritage Conservation Policy to ensure that the heritage significance of the site is respected. Any significant change to the landscaping around the Hall should be undertaken in accordance to a Landscape Management Plan that considers the cultural significance and setting, significant views and amenity.

Bushfire mitigation activities are part of prevention and preparedness in the park and are guided by the relevant fire management plan. They will be developed and implemented to manage the safety of visitors and to help lessen the risk and spread of future bushfires. Climate change projections for the region indicate decreasing rainfall and an increase in temperatures, leading to extreme fire danger days.

Government recognises the importance of Martindale Hall and its surrounds, particularly to the local community, and is committed to providing a strategic management framework for the future conservation, management and use of the conservation park. This plan of management recognises key community concerns raised in previous consultation processes, noting that the heritage values and collections need to

be appropriately protected and that the public should continue to have access to Martindale Hall and its grounds. Opportunities for First Nations and volunteer involvement in activities that contribute to cultural, biodiversity and heritage conservation outcomes will be supported where appropriate in consultation with any commercial operator or lessee.

Objective and strategies

Maintain the site as a conservation park whilst protecting its heritage and cultural values

- Maintain and repair Martindale Hall by undertaking sensitive reconstruction works, as identified in the Martindale Hall Conservation Management Plan, focusing on the front rooms and contents with the highest heritage value.
- Manage relevant contents in accordance with their listing as State Heritage Objects under the *Heritage Places Act 1993* and in alignment with the Martindale Hall Material Contents Policy.
- Develop a Landscape Management Plan that considers the cultural significance and setting, significant views, amenity and bushfire risk, addresses management and maintenance, and is consistent with the Martindale Hall Conservation Management Plan.
- Ensure any future lease and license agreements clearly define responsibilities for heritage conservation and maintenance of Martindale Hall and align with the Martindale Hall Conservation Management Plan, Martindale Hall Heritage Conservation Policy and Martindale Hall Material Contents Policy.
- Restore and revegetate native riparian vegetation along the Wakefield River to enhance its ecological value.
- Support opportunities for First Nations collaboration and volunteer involvement in activities that contribute to the protection of park cultural and heritage values.
- Implement pest control programs to improve habitat and reduce impacts in areas that have potential for better conservation outcomes.
- Manage fuel loads to reduce the risk of bushfire risks to heritage assets, visitors and the community.



For further information please contact:

Department for Environment and Water.
Phone Information Line (08) 8204 1910, or see
SA White Pages for your local Department for
Environment and Water office.

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