

12.1 FUTURE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF 34 CHERITON STREET, PERTH

- Attachments:**
1. Submission from the Museum of Perth dated 5 April 2021 - proposed future use of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth
 2. Submission from the Norwood Neighbourhood Association dated 13 April 2021 in support of proposal

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. NOTES that:

- 1.1 the Norwood Neighbourhood Association which operated a community garden at the rear of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth is in the process of being wound up; and
- 1.2 the Perth History Association Inc (Museum of Perth) has requested that the Minister for Lands grant it use and management of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth (either through a long term peppercorn lease, a management order or disposal) in order to upgrade the property and operate its office and training operations from the property, and facilitate the ongoing operation of a community garden at the rear of the property.

2. ADVISES the Minister for Lands that:

- 2.1 it is no longer necessary for the community garden portion of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth to be excised from the lot as the City of Vincent will no longer be overseeing the operation of a community garden at this site;
- 2.2 the City of Vincent's management order in respect to 34 Cheriton Street, Perth, can be relinquished, effective immediately;
- 2.3 the City of Vincent supports the Perth History Association Inc (Museum of Perth) being granted future use and management of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth, and recommends this occur simultaneously with the City's management order being relinquished;
- 2.4 the Norwood Neighbourhood Association will be wound up upon the City's management order being relinquished; and
- 2.5 the City of Vincent will continue to maintain the site until a divestment decision by the Minister for Lands is made.

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To relinquish the City's management order over 34 Cheriton Street, Perth on the basis that the Norwood Neighbourhood Association is being wound up. This means the City overseeing the management of a community garden at the rear of the lot is no longer required.

BACKGROUND:

At its 27 June 2017 Meeting (Item 12.1) Council resolved in part as follows:

- “2. *ADVISES the Department of Lands that the City of Vincent will not be extending the management order for No. 34 (Lot 1) Cheriton Street, Perth beyond the 30 June 2017 expiry date;*
3. *REQUESTS the Chief Executive Officer to liaise with the Department of Lands in order to seek approval for the Norwood Neighbourhood Garden portion of No. 34 (Lot 1) Cheriton Street, Perth to be excised through an agreement acceptable by all parties.*”

In accordance with Council's resolution, Administration has been in discussion with the Department of Lands and the Norwood Neighbourhood Association since mid 2017.

DETAILS:

In late 2020 Administration received notice that the Norwood Neighbourhood Association was no longer actively operating a community garden at the rear of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth and was in the process of being wound up. This meant that the community garden at the rear of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth, is no longer open to the public and is not being maintained or managed.

Around the same time Administration was approached by the Perth History Association Inc (Museum of Perth) in respect to the future use of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth. The Museum of Perth has identified the land as an appropriate location for its office headquarters and for hosting community training sessions. The Museum of Perth has made a request to the Minister for Lands to acquire the management order for the land, and would upgrade the property to a standard suitable for this purpose. The Museum of Perth's proposal is at **Attachment 1**.

The Norwood Neighbourhood Association has provided input to the Museum of Perth in respect to the future of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth and is supportive of the proposal. It is intended that a community garden open to the public would be part of the Museum of Perth's upgrade of the lot. The following comments have been provided by the Norwood Neighbourhood Association:

"It is very positive and exciting to have a realistic proposal to save the Cheriton Street house, in particular to use it as a local history centre. I even understand that the Museum of Perth is proposing to house a historical railway carriage in the backyard, which connects to the house's railway heritage.

I have discussed the proposal with a number of residents associated with the NNA over the years and they are very supportive. There are a few more I would like to contact and discuss but I feel that they would be very supportive.

The Museum of Perth proposal as it currently stands seems to make provision for the community garden to be preserved, which is a key objective for our group. There is even a suggestion that it will be integrated with the house, which would be great - as you know, participation was always limited by lack of amenities such as toilets."

The Norwood Neighbourhood Association have also provided a submission in support of this proposal as at **Attachment 2**.

Administration is supportive of this proposal as it would result in the restoration of the property built in 1912. The house was built on land that had been subdivided and sold to a variety of owners from 1883 as part of the Norwood Estate in East Perth. The land title was resumed in 1911 from then owner George Anthony Lefroy for the purpose of establishing the East Perth Loco Depot. Unlike other resumed houses at the time, 34 Cheriton Street and the house opposite were saved for future use. The first residents were Mrs Christian Cowan and son Robert Cowan followed by a succession of occupants, many Railway Department employees. In 2007 it came under the jurisdiction of the City of Vincent and did not meet the threshold for inclusion in the Municipal Heritage Inventory or the State Heritage Register, despite having some cultural heritage significance relating to East Perth's rail heritage.

It will also mean that the community garden becomes open to the public and amenities, including toilets, will be available to those using the community garden.

The proposed Museum of Perth community centre including an open community garden will also increase the public amenity of Norwood Park, and provide a community space for the residents adjacent to Norwood Park, which includes residents in the affordable housing operated by the Department of Communities.

CONSULTATION/ADVERTISING:

No further consultation is required.

LEGAL/POLICY:

Section 46 of the *Land Administration Act 1997* deals with management orders.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Low: It is low risk for Council to make this request to relinquish the management order.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the City's *Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028*:

Connected Community

We have enhanced opportunities for our community to build relationships and connections with each other and the City.

We are an inclusive, accessible and equitable City for all.

Our community facilities and spaces are well known and well used.

Thriving Places

We encourage innovation in business, social enterprise and imaginative uses of space, both public and private.

Sensitive Design

Our built form character and heritage is protected and enhanced.

Innovative and Accountable

Our resources and assets are planned and managed in an efficient and sustainable manner.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

This does not contribute to any specific sustainability outcomes of the *City's Sustainable Environment Strategy 2019-2024*, however will result in a community use of a currently vacant building.

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the following priority health outcomes of the City's *Public Health Plan 2020-2025*:

Reduced injuries and a safer community

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

The City currently spends \$4,000 per annum on the maintenance of 34 Cheriton Street, Perth, which includes \$1,500 per annum on a secure fence to prevent vandalism and trespass.

The City proposes to spend \$1,500 to bring the property to a suitable standard to be returned to the Minister for Lands. This will include cleaning of the gutters, tree pruning and removal of rubbish.



5 April 2021

David MacLennan
Chief Executive Officer
City of Vincent
99 Loftus Street
Leederville WA 6007

Dear Chief Executive,

34 Cheriton Street, Perth

Thank you for arranging our recent site visit of the property at Cheriton Street. The Perth History Association is familiar with the history of the property, and the plans over recent years for it to be developed into a community centre for surrounding residents operated by the City of Vincent.

We have engaged with representatives of the Norwood Community Garden located to the rear of the property, and have had productive conversations over a number of years with members of the local residential and business communities. I have read through the various reports and consultation papers regarding the property and have a good understanding of its potential.

We hope to work over the coming years to realise the vision of this property as an important community and cultural building, preserved and celebrated for future generations. In this letter I hope to outline our goals for the site, our model of operation, and propose a mutually-beneficial partnership with the City of Vincent.

Purpose of this letter

The Perth History Association seeks the support of the City of Vincent Council in our discussions with the WA State Government's Department of Planning, Lands & Heritage to either acquire the property through a disposal or transfer, or to enter into a long-term management order over the property with a peppercorn lease.

Works required

The property is in need of significant restoration including:

- replacement of ceilings;
- replacement of all exterior doors and windows;

- replacement of front, side and rear verandahs;
- plastering and repainting;
- full bathroom and kitchen renovation;
- installation of air conditioning;
- new fencing;
- landscaping to front, side and rear of the property;
- new planting and reticulation;
- new interior and exterior lighting.

The costs of these works, if procured by local or state government, would be prohibitive, and would seem in excess of the net value of such a restoration for the local community.

The Perth History Association has a vision for the site, and the necessary experience in heritage restoration, fundraising, research, project management and managing teams of contractors and volunteers to be able to restore and preserve the property while developing an expanded community garden to the rear, and a training and research facility for our legions of workplace training participants and local history staff.

The Station Master's house at Cheriton street is a generously proportioned building, near public transport and adjacent to an attractive local park. It is in a semi-commercial, residential zone which is in need of some care and attention. A restoration and activation of this property will contribute positively to the streetscape, and provide much needed activation and passive surveillance for the adjacent park, as well as an informal community and meeting space in the rear garden for neighbouring residents in State Government mid-rise public housing. We will establish a local history research office from the property, and create a bookable community meeting room in the front of the property; adding community amenity to the area for local residents, businesses and not for profit groups.

Our story

The Museum of Perth chronicles the social, cultural, political and architectural history of Perth. The Museum is run by the Perth History Association Incorporated (PHA), a not for profit association registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission. Further information about our staff, constitution and Board of Directors can be found here:

www.museumofperth.com.au

In recent years the PHA has focused heavily on the built architecture of the City and broader metropolitan area. Our staff and board have a range of expertise including, historical research techniques, community engagement, traditional and social media, exhibition planning and design, heritage interpretation, oral history recordings, long-form writing, biographical and genealogical research, volunteer management and heritage restoration. Our Museum Gallery at 8-10 The Esplanade Perth has welcomed more than 16,000 visitors since opening its doors a few years ago.

We have developed Local Government Research Partnerships with the City of Bunbury and the Town of East Fremantle. Our 'Streets of East Freo' project is a good example of a successful local history activity which we have delivered with only in-kind support; otherwise self funded through our own operations. Our website www.streetsofeastfreo.com showcases all of our

research. We have written brief histories of more than 1,100 heritage places in the Town, for example www.streetsofeastfreo.com/eastfreohouses/32maystreet, as well as 84 biographies of notable people. Our website is interactive allowing members of the community, residents and property owners to contribute their own stories of buildings, places and people within the town. This research project and website, as well as all other local history projects into the future, are delivered to the Town at no cost, in return to a peppercorn rent on an otherwise empty building. Our initiative in Bunbury is along the same lines (www.streetsofbunbury.com).

Our point of difference is that we can provide financially self-sustaining research, outreach, communication and historical services in partnership with local governments and community institutions. The PHA operates with nine paid staff and the assistance of more than a hundred community volunteers who contribute to our exhibitions and research. It appears our organisation is unique, to this extent, in the State. We provide a range of services including:

- digitisation and transcription of archival materials (like rates books, records, minutes etc);
- exhibition research and curation;
- website design and maintenance;
- social media & community engagement;
- graphic design, video creation & photographic slideshows;
- data analysis, data entry & archival research;
- walking tours;
- heritage building interpretation and restoration.

Funding

The Perth History Association utilises funding from a variety of sources, but especially Work for the Dole (WFTD) programs funded by the Federal Government's Education and Training Budget. There is an identified need for placements in the Perth City area. Each placement carries with it funding which allows us to cover the costs of staff and operations. The PHA is also able to tap into Lotterywest and philanthropic funding to support our ongoing work.

The house at 34 Cheriton Street is sufficient to provide for a community meeting room / local history library as well as three research offices and a kitchen / lunch room and workspace to the rear.

The rear garden is sufficiently large to accommodate a sizeable productive garden, delivered in partnership with the Norwood Neighbourhood Garden, and with the assistance of our federally funded training programs. The PHA owns an 1896 Midland Railways Train Carriage which we think would make a great addition to the community garden to the rear of the property to provide volunteers with a work-space and lunch-room as well as respite from the sun and rain. We would hope to work with the City of Vincent on the relevant approvals to achieve this.

We envisage being able to accommodate approximately 20 staff and volunteers within the building, and a further 10 or so in the rear gardens. Staff and volunteers will arrive by public transport to reduce impact on availability of parking in local areas. The additional impact of having 30 more daily workers in the area will assist neighbouring cafes with their trade.

I would be happy to present to City of Vincent Elected Members, or to other members of the City's Executive, about our plans for the site if you believe that would be helpful. The Board,

staff and volunteers of the Perth History Association look forward to a future partnership with the City of Vincent to document, restore and activate this property, and help to bring the City of Vincent's stories to life.

Yours sincerely,



Reece Harley
Executive Director
Perth History Association Inc.
8-10 The Esplanade
Perth WA 6000
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Enc. Please see over the page a series of photographs which show you our gallery and two research offices at Perth and Fremantle.

Gallery at 8-10 The Esplanade Perth (2020)



Prior to restoration (2017)



Research Offices at 8-10 The Esplanade Perth



Research Offices at East Fremantle



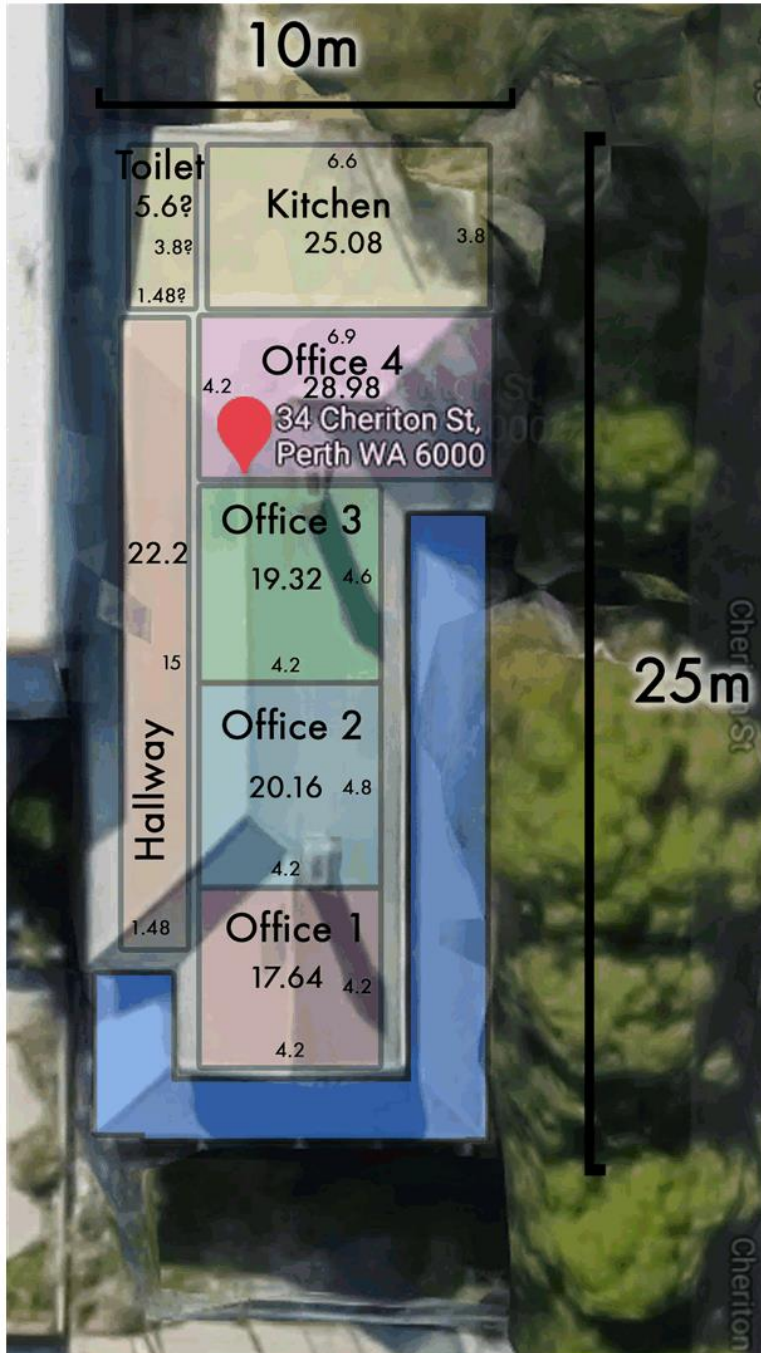
Research Offices in Bunbury



1896 Midland Railways Train Carriage



Site layout



Garden Vision

Raised planter beds, pathways in between, neat, accessible and beautiful to look at.



David Maclennan
Chief Executive Officer
City of Vincent
99 Loftus Street
Leederville, Western Australia.

Dear Mr Maclennan,

34 Cheriton Street Perth

I write in support of the recommendation being put to Council at its 27 April 2021 meeting concerning 34 Cheriton Street.

The Norwood Neighbourhood Association was incorporated in 2012 as a precinct group for the Norwood area, within the borders of Lord Street, the Graham Farmer Freeway and West Parade.

It was a functioning incorporated association from 2012 to 2018, subsisting on membership dues, grant funding from the City of Vincent and Lotterywest and miscellaneous fundraising.

Amongst its dedicated group of volunteers, the primary focus in recent years was the Norwood Neighbourhood Garden, located at the rear of 34 Cheriton Street. The community garden is small but well-run, with a self sustaining infrastructure of garden beds, composting stations, greenhouses, worm farms, a shed and a barbeque for 'kitchen garden' events.

Numerous events were held over the years, most recently just before Christmas 2020, bringing the Norwood community together over home made pizza and selling bottles of worm juice.

Overseeing the garden was the indomitable Anton Haynes of Summers Street. He was instrumental in setting up the garden, donating so much of his time and resources. Sadly for the community he passed away in January 2021.

As well as being passionate about the community garden, Anton was a passionate devotee of local history and had a particular interest in the railway heritage of 34 Cheriton Street. His dream of turning the house into a community centre was the subject of numerous discussions and correspondence over the years – with the City of Vincent, the Department of Lands and the National Trust.

With all the will in the world, and supportive councillors over the years, the proposal never got off the ground. The NNA simply didn't have the organisational capacity to take on the operation of a community centre, even if funding could be found to refurbish it (some 5 years ago the City funded the replacement of its roof).

The NNA in 2020 resolved that it ought to be wound up, reasoning that the operation of the community garden did not require the existence of an incorporated association.

The City had entered into a licence agreement with the NNA permitting it to access the garden, and requiring it to hold public liability insurance. That insurance policy remains on foot. The NNA's view was that it should be wound up upon expiry of the insurance but only if an arrangement could be made to retain the garden.

The situation remained in a holding pattern until communication from the Museum of Perth in February 2021 regarding the possibility of it taking over the 34 Cheriton Street site.

As immediate past Chair of the NNA, I consulted a range of residents and stakeholders linked to the NNA and Norwood area over the years. They all expressed support for the proposal.

In particular, support was expressed for keeping the existing house in some form (and not having it demolished and redeveloped), recognising the railway heritage of the house in some way, and keeping the community garden.

Further, Norwood Park and the community garden is lacking in toilet facilities, which has somewhat held back more active volunteer participation in the garden, particularly from elderly residents. A link between the garden and facilities in the house would remove this blocker to participation.

Finally, the prospect of volunteers becoming an adjunct of the Museum of Perth, would allow the NNA to disband formally, in accordance with its previously expressed intention.

The Museum of Perth is such an exciting and innovative initiative and would be a most welcome addition to the Norwood community.

On behalf of the residents I have consulted, I strongly support the recommendation to Council, with the clarification that, for liability reasons, it would make sense to disband the NNA upon expiry of its insurance policy (with a transition to either the Museum's insurance policy or the City's) given it has been prepaid, rather than immediately upon the relinquishment of the management order.

I would be happy to speak to any motion at the 27 April 2021 Council meeting.



Simon Thackrah

Immediate Past Chair, Norwood Neighbourhood Association

13 April 2021