

ARMADALE'S MINING HERITAGE SAVED

23/4/03

The State's oldest mining shaft is to be listed on the State's Register of Heritage Places and will be protected as a public reserve.

Planning and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan said the State Government had acquired a 3,200sqm area in Armadale, containing the Coles Shaft, for the community.

"Local history enthusiasts have campaigned strongly for this important site to be recognised and preserved," Ms MacTiernan said.

"Coles Shaft is important because it marks the beginnings of mineral exploration and the commencement of the mining industry in Western Australia.

"The Western Australian Mining Company began mining lead and copper deposits at the site in December 1846 and the shaft was sunk to about 15m in depth.

"It is now the only mine from the 1840s left on the Darling Scarp.

"Once a grille is constructed to protect the mine entrance, the reserve will be handed to the City of Armadale.

"The grille will be removable to allow archaeological and geological studies of the shaft.

"The State Government is working hard to redevelop Armadale and having its significant heritage sites recognised and accessible is an important part of that work.

"I believe this site can become part of an industrial heritage trail incorporating a nearby shale quarry and brickworks."

Until late last year the Coles Shaft site straddled the common boundaries between two residential lots in Armadale.

These lots were purchased and subdivided by the Department of Land Administration (DOLA) and have now been declared a Crown Land Reserve and Heritage Site.

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