

Announcing the Retirement of Denis McLeod AM

By Denis McLeod

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Dear Colleagues,

It is both a moment of reflection and celebration as we announce the forthcoming retirement of Denis McLeod AM, founding partner of McLeods Lawyers, effective 31 December 2025.

Denis retires after more than five decades of remarkable service to the legal profession, the planning sector, and the community of Western Australia. Most recently, Denis was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the 2024 King's Birthday Honours, recognising his significant service to the law, to urban planning, and to the community of Western Australia.

Denis established McLeods in 1980, having already founded and led Denis McLeod & Co from 1971. With a deep commitment to local government and planning law, Denis transformed what began as a one-man practice into the leading specialist firm in local government and planning law it is today. Along the way, he has advised countless councils, represented clients at every level of court, and drafted foundational planning schemes and local laws across the State.

Beyond his courtroom and advisory work, Denis has been a prominent thought leader and educator in the field of planning law. In that regard he:

- co-authored the WA Planning Digest during the first five years of the operation of the independent planning appeal tribunal;
- has been General Editor of the Presidian publication *Planning & Development WA* from 2011 to the present;
- in 2015 authored the text *WA Planning Law Handbook*;
- was a long-time lecturer and Adjunct Professor in planning law at both UWA and Curtin University; and
- has established a fund at Curtin University to promote the interest of integrity in the application of planning law.

His influence on the development of planning law in WA is unmatched. A dedicated contributor to the profession, Denis also:

- served as a member of the Council of the Law Society of WA for 16 years;
- was a member of a number of Law Society committees, including 30 years to the present as Convenor of the Environment, Town Planning and Local Government Committee;
- in 2012 was recognised as the Law Society's Lawyer of the Year;
- in 2020 was awarded Life Membership of the Law Society of WA; and
- is a Foundation and Life Member of the Local Government Planners Association.



Denis's commitment to community is equally enduring. He founded and serves as Trustee of the Shirley McLeod Foundation, has served as Honorary Solicitor to the Royal Western Australia Historical Society, and the York Society, for over two decades, and continues to act as Trustee for the Katharine Susannah Prichard Foundation.

On a more personal note, Denis is known for his deep generosity, humility, and enduring sense of duty. His wisdom, wit, and warmth have enriched the lives of those fortunate enough to work with him. He often credits the loyal support of his wife Lynette and long-time assistant Suda as essential to his ability to serve so steadfastly across decades.

We hope you'll join us in wishing Denis all the best in retirement.

Kind regards,

David Nicholson

Managing Partner