11.   ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November, 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11. 1   AESTHETIC VALUE *

The former Police Station and Lockup is a modest building, based on a standard model which stylistically is a forerunner to the more exuberant Gold Boom period styles to follow. (Criterion 1.1)

The former Police Quarters is a building in a subdued Federation Bungalow style, based on a standard model of bungalow typical of accommodation for public servants of the level of police sergeants. (Criterion 1.1)

11. 2.   HISTORIC VALUE

Highgate Hill Police Station, Lockup and Quarters (fmr) date from the initial development phase of Highgate Hill, as do the 'Police Cottages' located opposite the site. The police establishment was a model of community policing, which continued for several decades, in which police facilities and a resident police officer were placed within walking distance of developing communities. (Criterion 2.2)

The murder of Sergeant Marks, from the Highgate police establishment, in 1928 was a notable event in the Highgate community, an event that helped to introduce a firearms licensing system in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

The former Police Station, Lockup and Quarters from 1942 became the centre for Police wireless communications and, from 1949, the centre for vehicle communications. This led to its later use for Traffic Branch, Road Traffic Authority and Road Safety Liaison Section, illustrating the changing role of policing in relation to road traffic and safety. (Criterion 2.2)

The drawings for the former Police Station, Lockup and Quarters are notated as being examined by Robert J. Haddon, W.B. Hardwick and Hillson Beasley, both Chief Architects of the Public Works Department. Haddon later became one of the most notable architects in the Art Nouveau style in Melbourne, Head of the Architecture Department at Melbourne University and the author of a number of books on architecture. (Criterion 2.3)

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*   For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Highgate Hill Police Station, Lockup & Quarters (fmr) is valued by past and present members of the police force, its union and historical society, as it represents several strands of the history of police activity in Western Australia over the past 100 years since 1897. These include the development of suburban police stations, the community role of policing, police communications and road safety. (Criterion 4.1)

Highgate Hill Police Station, Lockup & Quarters (fmr) is valued by members of the local community as part of the facilities which were an integral part of the early development of Highgate Hill and the St Albans neighbourhood. It forms part of a streetscape that contributes to the local community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Highgate Hill Police Station, Lockup & Quarters (fmr) is one of only a few surviving examples of suburban police stations built prior to 1900 in the Perth-Fremantle metropolitan area. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The Police Station is a good example of a suburban police station with lockup which demonstrates the characteristics of a community policing establishment of its period. (Criterion 6.1)

The former Police Quarters is an example of a police residence of its period, which has been extended and adapted to function as the Police Wireless Centre and later as the Police Road Safety Unit. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The condition of the brick structure of the former Police Station and Lockup is in fair condition; however, the other elements are in poor condition, particularly the verandah.

The condition of the former Police Quarters is poor to fair.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The integrity of *Highgate Hill Police Station, Lockup & Quarters (fmr)* is moderate. Originally designed for use as a suburban police station, the place has been adapted for use as a wireless station and communications centre. Later uses have included Traffic Branch, Road Traffic Authority and Road Safety Liaison Section.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The former Police Station and Lockup retains much of its original external fabric despite extensions and adaptations. Internally, the cell doors have been removed and sash windows added to each of the cells. The jarrah lining to

the ceilings of the cells has been removed. Some floorboards have been replaced. Overall, the authenticity is moderate to high.

The former Police Quarters has lost much of its original fabric externally and considerable original fabric internally. The building has been considerably altered in its adaptation as a communications centre for the police force. On the basis of its original design, the degree of authenticity is low: however, the building as adapted has a moderate to high level of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence was compiled by Simon Chester and Brendon O'Hara. The physical evidence has been compiled by Ian Hocking, Architect, Planner and Urban Designer. Additional information has been extracted from an independent submission by Simon Chester and Brendon O'Hara and added to the values and degrees of significance by HCWA staff.

13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Highgate Hill Police Station, Lockup & Quarters (fmr) consists of a Police Station and Lockup (1897) and Police Quarters (1906) contained within Perth Lot 1088 situated at 57 Lincoln Street, Highgate.

The Station originally comprised a charge room and two lockup cells. It was built in 1897 as a police station to service the needs of the community that had been established to the north of Perth during the previous decade.[1] Originally, a water tank was situated adjacent to the south-east corner of the verandah to catch the water run-off, with an earth closet and soak well at the south-east corner of the property.[2]

The Police Quarters was built in 1906 as accommodation for the officer-in-charge of the Police Station, who at the time held the rank of corporal.[3] The Police Quarters consisted of three bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and outside bathroom.[4] The residential design of the building has been altered over time - in particular, modifications were made in 1956 and 1968 to adapt the building to its use as the radio transmission centre, and later communications centre (the 'Wireless Station') for the Western Australian Police Force.[5]

At the time of the foundation of the Town of Perth in 1829, the area to the north of the town was characterised by a series of swamps and lagoons.[6] With drainage of the wetlands, this area was taken up from the 1840s for farmlets and market gardens.[7]

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[1]   Burton, Rev. Canon 'The Early Days of St Alban's Church, Highgate Hill, W.A.' c.1939, Battye Library PR 74, p.6.

[2]   Original plans held at CAMS under *Highgate Hill Police Wireless Department, set no. 30/6/0 on shelf 996, PWDWA 5305, 26 March 1897.*

[3]   'Report of the Commissioner of Police' *WA Parliamentary Votes & Proceedings 1905-1906* p.14.

[4]   Original Plans held at CAMS under *Highgate Hill Police Wireless Department, set no. 30/6/0 on shelf 996, PWDWA 12495, 28 April 1906.*

[5]   Original Plans held at CAMS under *Highgate Hill Police Wireless Department, set no. 30/6/0 on shelf 996, PWDWA 35101, 11 May 1956 and PWDWA 1325/68, December 1968.*

[6]   Stannage, C.T. *The People of Perth; A Social History of Western Australia's Capital City* (City of Perth, Perth, 1979) p.30.

[7]   Chinnery, Robin 'Assessment Documentation - Stirling Street Cottages', HCWA Database No. 11737, p.4.

Although only approximately a mile (1.6km) from Perth, Highgate Hill did not begin to develop as a community until the 1880s; at which time Harry Prately ran a hansom cab to the area.[8] One reason for this relatively late development was that, due to the convenience of river transport, development past Perth tended to follow the course of the Swan River upstream.[9] It appears that residential buildings in the vicinity of *Highgate Hill Police Station, Lockup & Quarters (fmr)* began in 1885-86, with two cottages erected upon portions of Perth Suburban Lot 147, and a cottage and a house at portions of Perth Suburban Lot 148.[10] The Stirling Street Cottages, which are on the State Register of Heritage Places on an interim basis, were built as rental accommodation around 1889.[11] In 1889, St Alban's Anglican Church was built on what is today the corner of Beaufort Street and St Albans Avenue. The church was established to service the spiritual needs of the local community and, in particular, residents of a small cluster of homes 'in the hollow of the east side of Beaufort Street.'[12] A photograph from c.1890 looking north of the Perth Town Hall shows St Alban's Church, the Stirling Street Cottages and a small number of houses to the east of St Alban's. The dirt track that is Lincoln Street is discernible and land to the north is virgin bush.[13]

The demography of Perth was radically changed by the massive immigration following the gold strikes and their aftermath, in particular after the great finds in the Kalgoorlie region in the mid 1890s.[14]

> The period 1894-1896, the crescendo of Kalgoorlie's golden era because of the richness of discoveries, was also an economic watershed for the entire colony. In just one decade the small, isolated, rural based economy saw a fourfold increase in population and a massive increase in capital which lifted infrastructure to a level hitherto thought impossible to achieve ... In 1890, the population of the colony was 48,502: by 1900 it had reached 179,967.[15]

In 1884, the population of the district of Perth was just over 6,000; by 1891, it was just over 9,500; and in 1901, it was nearly 44,000.[16] As elsewhere, there was a tremendous increase in the population of Highgate Hill in 1896 and 1897.[17] The enormous increase in population during the 1890s led to the suburbanisation of Perth. In 1881, there were 932 houses in Perth. During the mid 1880s, a minor surge in population had led to there being 1,700 houses in the municipality by early 1891. Nearly four years later - that is, by the end of 1894 - the number of houses had risen to about 2,500, an annual increase of only 200. Then came a spectacular increase between 1895 and 1897. Building license approvals (domestic, lodging houses and businesses) leapt to 1,064 in 1896, rising to 1,405 in 1897.[18] There was a significant variety

8   Stannage, C.T., op. cit., p.133.
9   Burton, Rev. Canon, op. cit., p.2.
10   Chinnery, Robin, op. cit., p.6.
11   Ibid, p.7.
12   Burton, Rev. Canon, op. cit., p.6.
13   Battye Library Pictorial Collection, BA 691/2 & BL 2865B/6.
14   Stannage, C.T., op. cit., p.193.
15   Appleyard, R.T. 'Western Australia: Economic and Demographic Growth 1850-1914', in Stannage, C.T. (ed) *A New History of Western Australia* (Nedlands, UWA Press, 1979) p.219.
16   Stannage, C.T. *The People of Perth*, op. cit., p.194.
17   Burton, Rev. Canon, op. cit., p.16.
18   Stannage, C.T. *The People of Perth*, op. cit., p.240.

in the type of resident in the Highgate Hill and North Perth area at this time.[19]

The development of the Police Force in Western Australia largely tracked the development of the state and did not escape the impact of the major gold discoveries of the mid 1890s.

In December 1829, Lieutenant Governor Stirling appointed the first constables. Between then and 1850, there were probably no more than 15 to 20 constables in the colony.[20] The arrival of convicts in the 1850s created a greater apprehension of crime. In August 1851, Governor Fitzgerald established a Police Force to patrol the streets of Perth and Fremantle.[21] By 1871, the Police Force had grown in strength to 146 and there were 36 police stations in Western Australia.[22] In 1890, Western Australia was granted full self government. The *Police Act, 1892* was among the first pieces of legislation passed when the new parliament met.

As previously discussed, beginning in the early 1890s (with the extraordinary riches of the eastern goldfields) there began a rapid period of expansion in Western Australia. Between 1890 and 1900, the population of Western Australia increased more than threefold from 48,502 to 179,967.[23] By 1904, the state had borrowed £15 million to spend on public works.[24] From the middle of the 1890s there was a rapid increase in arrests and reported crimes; especially drunkenness and burglary in Perth.[25] This brought rising criticism of the Police Force for failing to control crime, leading the Commissioner of Police to blame the increase on the 'floating population' and the 'influx of criminals' from the eastern states.[26] In 1896, the major goldfields were proclaimed and Wardens/Resident Magistrates appointed to each district. There was a rapid expansion in the size of the Force from 207 in 1890 to 448 in 1898.[27] Between 1888 and 1905, 72 new stations were opened[28], although not all in buildings owned by the Police Department.

In response to these demands, in the late 1890s the following stations were built in the Perth Fremantle Metropolitan area:

Claremont   1895
Highgate Hill   1897
North Fremantle   1897
Fremantle   1897
West Perth   1897
Leederville   1898

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19   Ibid, pp.243-247. Also, see Chinnery, Robin, op. cit., p.10.
20   Bentley, Mollie *My Grandfather was a Policeman: The Western Australian Police Force 1829-1889* Perth, 1993, pp.8-12.
21   Edmonds, L. in association with Gill, A. & Gregory, J. 'Western Australian Police Service Thematic History', prepared for CAMS on behalf of the WA Police Service, UWA, May 1998, p.16.
22   Ibid, p.18.
23   Appleyard, R.T., in Stannage, C.T. (ed) *A New History of Western Australia* op. cit., p.219.
24   Ibid, p.222.
25   Edmonds, L. in association with Gill, A. & Gregory, J., op. cit., p.22.
26   'Report of the Commissioner of Police' *WA Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings, 1897-98* p.5 and *WA Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings, 1905-06* pp.4-5, cited in Edmonds, L. in association Gill, A. & Gregory, J., op. cit., p.22.
27   *Source Book of Australian Criminal and Social Statistics*, p.147 cited *in* Edmonds, op. cit., p.22.
28   Edmonds, op. cit., p.50.

Beaconsfield   1898
Subiaco   1898
East Fremantle   1899

On 26 March 1897, tenders were called for the construction of 'Highgate Hill Police Station'.[29] The tenders were accepted on 27 April 1897 and, on 7 May 1897, the contract was given to W. Young for £464/09/06.[30] Completion was scheduled for 7 August 1897.[31]

The Police Station was built in the simple Victorian Georgian style[32] with verandahs on all sides, a water tank adjacent to the south-east corner and an earth closet at the south-east extremity of the property, with a soak well nearby. At the time of the construction of the Police Station, the Public Works Department had developed standard plans for police stations for differing climatic conditions and had developed a 'cottage style' station for Perth and the south-west of the state.[33] The verandah on all sides with a run off to the water tank would have been an appropriate design for a station built at 'Highgate Hill' at this time. The supply of water to residents of Perth had been a problem for some time; however, it was at its most critical in the summer of 1896-97, particularly in the Highgate area.[34] Although the original site plans for 'Highgate Hill Police Station', dated 26 March 1897, made provision for the inclusion of the Police Quarters, construction of the quarters was not commenced until 1906.[35]

The station was officially opened on 1 November 1897 and the maintenance contract was awarded to W. C. Mirfin.[36] In its first year of operation, the station was manned by one corporal and seven foot constables.[37] There does not appear to be a single complete record of officers who manned the station other than that contained in the Police Library's general database on police officers. However, reference is made to officers and various incidents involving officers from the station in newspaper reports and in other miscellaneous documents and source material. For example, shortly after the station had opened, two constables, O'Conner and McArthur, who were stationed at 'Highgate Hill' and were on the night beat on 25 May 1898, were fired upon when pursuing two burglars who had been caught attempting to break into the Queens Hotel on Beaufort street at 2.30am.[38] In 1899, the

29   *Western Australian Government Gazette,* 26 March 1897, p.562.

30   There is some conjecture about whether this amount included a quote for construction of police quarters. A drawing of the police quarters appears on the original 1897 site plans. Included in details of the award of the contract to W. Young, held on the Highgate Hill miscellaneous file at the Police Records Library, is a reference to 'Standard Drawing for Police quarters PWD 3136 28.9.94'.

31   *Western Australian Government Gazette,* 4 June 1897 p.1082; Misc. File, WA Police Library.

32   Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture; Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present* (Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989) p.42.

33   Edmonds, L. in association with Gill, A. & Gregory, J., 'Western Australia Police Service Thematic History', prepared for CAMS on behalf of the WA Police Service, UWA, May 1998, pp.22 and 50.

34   Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth; A Social History of Western Australia's Capital City* (City of Perth, Perth, 1979), p.275.

35   Original plans held at CAMS under *Highgate Hill Police Wireless Department, set no.30/6/0 on shelf 996, PWDWA 12495 28 April 1906.*

36   Highgate Hill Police Station, Misc. File, WA Police Library.

37   'Report of the Commissioner of Police', *WA Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings, 1897-98*, p.23.

38   *The Western Mail,* 27 May 1898, p.28, col C.

officer-in-charge of 'Highgate Hill Police Station' was Michael Leen (police number 88). He had joined the police force in Perth in 1892 and was posted to 'Highgate Hill' between 1 May 1899 and 16 January 1901. He returned to take up residence in 'Highgate Hill' in 1912, buying a house on Lord Street. Leen and his wife had eight children who attended the Sacred Heart school in Highgate.[39] He rose to become an Inspector and died in 1929 while still in service.[40] During this time there were a number of police officers who lived in the area, including a number who lived at the so called 'police cottages' opposite the station.

In April 1906, plans for the Police Quarters were finalised. The Chief Architect at the time was Hillson Beasley and the plans bear his stamp. The tender was awarded on 31 May 1906 to C. H. Carter to build the Quarters for £500.[41] Although the building, as originally designed, is distinctly Federation in style, it is hard to characterise it as any one particular style.[42] The first officer-in charge of the police station to take up residence was Corporal Patrick O'Halloran.[43]

'Highgate Hill Police Station' was in use as a police station until 1941. In 1928, the resident officer-in-charge was Sergeant Alexander Mark.[44] Although not on duty, on 7 March 1928, he answered a call made to the Police Station from the barman of the Brisbane Hotel in relation to death threats made by a Mr Edward Kelly; a person who had been committed to mental institutions in a number of countries. Kelly, who had been drinking heavily, left the Brisbane Hotel after threatening the barman and returned with a Harrington and Richardson revolver he had purchased. He fired a shot at the barman, which narrowly missed its mark. Sergeant Mark, who by this time had arrived at the hotel, bravely tackled Kelly and was shot in the abdomen. Although shot, Mark (with the assistance of the barman) overpowered and arrested Kelly. Sergeant Mark, aged 58, with 30 years service to the police force and community, died two days later.[45] The death of Sergeant Mark incensed Police Commissioner O'Connell, who since 1921 had been calling for a greater degree of control over firearms. In his 1928 report to Parliament, the Commissioner requested control over the licensing and regulation of firearms. Partially as a result of the tragic death of Sergeant Mark, firearms licences became compulsory in Western Australia and the issuing of licenses was administered by the Police Department from 1 January 1930.[46]

'Highgate Hill Police Station' was closed on 2 December 1940. This was primarily brought about by the opening, in the same year, of the newly built Inglewood Police Station, with its modern facilities. It had been built in

[39] Mrs P. Strong, sole surviving daughter, telephone conversation with Brendan O'Hara, 20 October 1998.

[40] Records of Police Officers, WA Police Library.

[41] *Western Australian Government Gazette*, 8 June 1906, p.1725.

[42] Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. op. cit., pp.134-135. The building does exhibit some influence of the Federation Queen Anne style.

[43] *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1907, p.305.

[44] Ibid, 1928, p.48.

[45] 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1927-1928*, p.1; *Honouring the Brave*, nd. and no named author, (Mt Lawley) p.10 Battye Library; and in Lawrence, R.M. (Senior Constable), *Police Review 1829-1979*, Police Department Public Relations Branch, Govt. Printing Office, 1979, p.30; and information provided by Mr B. R. Purdue, archival researcher and police historian, 7 October 1998.

[46] Lawrence, R.M. (Senior Constable), *Police Review 1829-1979*, Police Department Public Relations Branch, Govt. Printing Office, 1979, p.30.

response to the needs of the burgeoning population of the community north of Mt Lawley.[47]

The Police Force 'wireless' capability was first established in 1930, and shortly afterwards, in November 1930, two Bentley automobiles ('mobile police stations') were equipped with receiving and transmission capabilities. The Bentleys (which were powered with eight cylinder motors and were considerably faster than other contemporary vehicles) would receive and transmit to the Applecross Wireless station (at Wireless Hill) which was connected to Central Police Station by a direct line. The introduction of the Bentleys was intended to obviate the need for further police stations in the following few years.[48] In 1935, tenders were called for the installation of a full wireless facility at the Central Police Station in Roe Street, which was installed in 1936.[49] Commissioner Hunter was keen to have this facility extended to all police stations to avoid the requirement for telephone communications on urgent matters. His requests to Parliament, in both 1940 and 1941, for funds for this purpose was ignored.[50]

This was all changed, in December 1941, by the entry of Japan into World War Two. In late 1941, or early 1942, as a covert operation, the wireless facility (call code 'VKI' -License No.1258) was 'speedily' transferred (in fact almost in one day) solely by police officers to the former police station at Highgate. The location of the new wireless station was kept secret; however, Commissioner Hunter stated his view that the facility was too 'vulnerable' if it remained at the Central Police Station, which might have been a bombing target.[51] The recently built sewer vent adjacent to the station served as an excellent antennae mast and anchored VKI to its location even when the buildings were no longer considered adequate.[52] Antennae at the top of the vent can still be seen today. Also, in response to Japan's entry into the war, in the six months to 30 June 1942 all police stations were provided with wireless receiving capabilities.[53] By 30 June 1950, 28 police stations (including all stations out to Northam), 5 police cars, 1 truck and the police launch *Cygnet*

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[47] 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1940-1941,* p.1. Battye Library PR1796.

[48] 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1929-1930.* p.2 *and 1930-1931,* p.1. Battye Library PR1796.

[49] 'Police Wireless Service - General File', Vol 1, Acc 430 no. 2060/1935, Public Records Office; and 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police'. *1935-1936,* p.5 and *1936-I 937,* p.5, Battye Library PR1796;'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1939-1940,* p.6 and *1940-1941,* p.5, Battye Library PR1796.

[50] 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1939-1940*, p.6 and *1940-1941*, p.5, Battye Library PR1796.

[51] 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1941-1942*, p.3, Battye Library PR1796.

[52] 'Police Wireless Service - General File', Vol 5, p.22 - report from Sergeant S.C. 'Jimmy' Austin to CIB dated 21 February 1952. Sgt. Austin comments on the cost of erecting a new mast if the Wireless Section were to be relocated. He says that although the building was inadequate, the antennae fixed to the top of the 120 foot sewer vent at the current location was certainly adequate, even if the Wireless Station were switched to FM. Acc 430 no. 4038/1951, Public Records Office.

[53] 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1941-1942* p.3, Battye Library PR1796; Lawrence, R.M. (Senior Constable), *Police Review 1829-1979,* Police Department Public Relations Branch, Govt. Printing Office, 1979, p.34; 'Police Wireless Service - General File', Vol 3, Acc 430 no. 1240/1944, Public Records Office; Mr G.O.A. Leitch, Q.P.M., former Commissioner of Police, telephone conversation with Brendan O'Hara, 26 October 1998; and Mr D. Pashley, Police Historian, telephone conversation with Brendan O'Hara, 27 October 1998.

had wireless receiving capabilities.[54] It is also very likely that at this time the Highgate police facility was used by the Commonwealth Department of Defence as part of a communications network involved in tracking the movements of Japan in the Pacific War Zone and in Australia.[55] The officer-in-charge of the wireless section from its inception in 1930 right through to 1966 was Constable (later, Sergeant) S. C. 'Jimmy' Austin who was recruited from the Navy because of his technical qualifications and Morse Code experience. He headed up a tight knit dedicated team, which included Sam Watson, Ted Thornton and Frank Conole. The facility operated around the clock.[56]

Such was the secrecy surrounding the location of the wireless section, that it was not until 1956 that the Commissioner of Police disclosed in his Annual Report that it was located at the site of the former Highgate Hill Police Station.[57] In 1956, the main wireless operations were transferred from the former Police Station and Lockup to the former Police Quarters, to accommodate additional equipment and services which included the conversion to VHF.[58] This gave rise to the first of the significant alterations to the Police Quarters.[59] By the end of the 1959 financial year, Commissioner J. M. O'Brien was able to report that:

> The Wireless Station in Lincoln Street, Highgate Hill, operates a 24 hour service; and in addition to the two way Morse system which enables the department to communicate direct with the headquarters of other Police Forces within the Commonwealth, it is now possible to send to and receive messages by radio telephony from all District Police Offices in the State, with the exception of Broome.
>
> The cars used for patrol duty in the Metropolitan area, the police launch, four vans and 37 other motor cars and utilities are also fitted with two way wireless sets,

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[54] 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1949-1950,* p.13, Battye Library, PR1796.

[55] See discussion under 'Further research' later in this assessment.

[56] Records of Police Officers, WA Police Library. The General Files of the Wireless Section contain some interesting insights into the lives of the officers. Such was the dedication of these officers and the pressure on resources that annual leave would not be taken for years at a time, in one case accruing for six years; see 'Police Wireless Service - General File', Vol 5, p.64.

[57] 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1955-1956,* p.5. However, the Commissioner still felt under an obligation to disguise the fact that the Wireless Section had been located at Highgate since 1942. He states that the former *Highgate Hill Police Station* 'formerly let to private ownership, was recovered during the year …' The files from the Wireless Section, which are no longer restricted documents, refute this statement, as do the plans from 1956 which show the former station and lockup was used for the Wireless Branch throughout. It is also confirmed in discussions with former serving officers, including former Commissioners Leitch and Bull and the only surviving police officer who worked in the Wireless Section during this period. The statement may be partially true as the plans reveal that the wireless operations, which were located in the former station and lockup, were moved to the former police quarters. The use of the former police quarters immediately prior to this is unclear, although it is extremely unlikely that the building would have been let to private ownership that wasn't a government controlled use.

[58] 'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1955-1956,* p.5.

[59] Original plans held at CAMS under *Highgate Hill Police Wireless Department, set no.30/6/0 on shelf 996, PWDWA 35101, 11 May 1956.* Major changes included the removal of the wall and fireplaces between the two eastern bedrooms, which became a new transmitter room; a new workshop adjacent to the transmitter room; relocation of the bathroom and a new store room in place of the laundry.

> while all police stations within the radius of the metropolitan area are now equipped with wireless receiving sets.[60]

Although in 1962, a remote controlled VHF relay station was established at Lesmurdie and, later, a remote controlled receiving station was located at Kings Park to compliment the wireless station's capacity, by 1966 the Commissioner reported that the radio service was operating to full capacity. Instead of effecting piecemeal additions, he suggested that the whole department should be moved to the new proposed police headquarters.[61] However, funding for the proposed new headquarters was not forthcoming and in 1969 the second significant alterations were made to the former Police Quarters with the addition of another transmission room, a new carport and new plant room.[62] *Highgate Hill Police Station, Lockup & Quarters (fmr)*, as it is today, is substantially the same as it was in 1969 after these alterations.

In 1975, the Wireless Branch - then called the 'Radio Section' and subsequently renamed the 'Communications Section' - was transferred to the new Police Headquarters in East Perth near the Causeway. The buildings that started out as an unassuming Victorian police station and federation police quarters had exhausted their use as the communications hub of the Western Australian Police Force. 'Perhaps no section of the Force received a greater boost than the Communications Section from the change to the new Headquarters Building', stated Commissioner G. O. A. Leitch in his 1975 Annual Report.[63] He further stated that 'the combination of Telex, VHF, high powered HF Mobile and Walkie Talkie transceivers provide an efficient and comprehensive coverage both inter and intra-State and compares most favourably with the best in Australia.'[64] These were all facilities that had been developed by the Radio Section at Highgate.[65] At the time of the transfer of the wireless branch to Highgate, police wireless capability was restricted to two converted Bentleys. In its final year of operation at Highgate, the 'wireless station' VKI had two-way radio capability for all metropolitan stations, 338 vehicles and 2 launches; telex links interstate and to all district offices throughout the state; a country mobile communication network of 39 base stations and 95 mobiles; high powered transceivers for use by the Traffic Branch, Heavy Haulage Stock Squad and CIB and comprehensive ultra high frequency personal portable systems for patrolling constables.[66]

Since 1975 the place has been used for miscellaneous police purposes. Its current use is the Road Safety Section and Bicycle Education Unit of the Police Department.

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Site and Setting

Both the buildings are set back some 30 metres from Lincoln Street. The front 25 metres was originally set up as separate fenced area which had to be traversed to get to the front yard of both the Police Station and Lockup and the Quarters.

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[60]   'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1958-1959,* p.8.

[61]   'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1965-1966,* p.10.

[62]   Original plans held at CAMS under *Highgate Hill Police Wireless Department, set no.30/6/0 on shelf 996, PWDWA 1325/68, December 1968.*

[63]   'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1974-1975,* p.9.

[64]   Ibid, p.10.

[65]   Ibid.

[66]   'Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police', *1973-1974*, pp.8-9 and *1970-1972,* p.7.

Former Police Station & Lockup (Cottage)

The photographic survey and the sketch undertaken at the same time on 9 October 1997, shows the cottage to demonstrate the changes listed in the documentary evidence. The documented changes to the cottage only partly reflect the current situation, although the current role of the cottage appears to be largely as it has been since shown on the PWD drawing dated December 1968.

The existing floor plan is clearly that of the former Police Station, however, the store enclosing the east verandah extends as far as the door opening on the north side and the window on the south verandah. A chain link enclosure occupies a further bay of the south verandah. The west verandah has been infilled as part of an enclosed metal shed linking the former Police Station and the former Residence.

Externally the basic original form can be discerned. The roof profile remains as original. The north (front) facade is much diminished by the enclosure of the eastern verandah and the blocking of the west verandah. The building form and style has been confused by the additions and by the insertion of a double hung window in the cell wall. Neither the original east or west facades can be viewed. The south facade has been altered and added to as the north facade, plus a further chain mesh store has been added in the centre of the verandah. There is no discernible evidence of the former water tank, earth closet, cowshed or former fencing. The whole immediate setting of the place has been changed.

The original brick walls and chimney remain in fair condition, as does the roof. The verandah flooring has been replaced with plywood, which is delaminating.

Internally the original spatial layout is readily apparent. A number of key details have been changed or lost and a number of intrusive additions have been made. The fireplace in the former charge room has been blocked up and the fireplace surround stripped away. The cell doors have been removed. The cell ceilings have been replaced, the highlight windows enclosed from outside and double hung sashes cut into the north and south external walls. Door head height shelving has been constructed along the west wall of the charge room above the cell doorways and within the cells.

Comparative Places

A Standard Drawing for Police Quarters, dated 1894, is similar in layout and style to Highgate. Since this standard design predates the Highgate design it is reasonable to assume that it was a design influence. The longevity of standard models for both police stations/lockups and police quarters is demonstrated in the comparative places cited.

The North Perth Police Station and Quarters was constructed in 1907 and is a notable example of community police facility from that period. It is a combined station and residence, with little adaptation and a high level of authenticity. It is recognised in the Town of Vincent Municipal Heritage Inventory to be a place recommended for entry into the State Register of Heritage Places.

The Highgate pattern of station layout and the space standards of the station are similar to that of the 1928 Palmyra police station and lockup. The Palmyra layout has the addition of a cross passage to isolate the cells from the station.

Comparatively the Palmyra former Police Station and Lockup is a similar model from a following period, but has been less adapted, has greater

integrity, is in better condition, its authenticity is relatively intact, and its original setting can be better appreciated.

Former Police Quarters (Police Road Safety Unit)

The former Police Quarters, later the Police Wireless Depot, is now occupied by the Police Road Safety Unit.

The photographic survey and the sketch undertaken at the same time on 9 October 1997, shows the former Police Quarters to demonstrate the changes listed in the documentary evidence. The documented changes to the quarters, as shown on the PWD drawing dated Dec 1968, largely reflect the current situation, apart from the gutting of the laundry and the demolition of the former earth closet and its replacement with a brick block of male and female toilets. Internally there is now a wide square arched opening between the former living room and the former east bedroom/later the operations room, and the whole of the east rooms have been opened into one continuous space, although these changes are not recorded. There is also no apparent physical evidence of the subdivision of the former operations room into three offices for radio units and an operations room, although changes to the fenestration occurred, ie. the two double hung windows to the front bedroom were bricked up and a small aluminium framed window inserted close to the north corner of the east facade.

The changes to the floor plan and the facades can be readily discerned as there have been only cursory attempts to match materials and little attempt to match the style of the original, externally or internally. Ceiling heights internally have been lowered where rooms have been adapted. Fireplaces have been removed from the former bedroom and kitchen spaces, whilst the fireplace surround has been removed and the remaining single chimney blocked. All original light fittings and electrical switches, door and window furniture have been replaced. Little of the original interior fabric remains and only part of the original layout remains.

The basic original form of the place can be discerned on the north and west facades, only partly on the east facade and not on the south facade. Decorative detail has been removed from the front facade, eg verandah posts and dentil blocks along the underside of the rendered and timbered gable.

The original brick walls and remaining chimney remain in fair condition, as does the roof. The verandah flooring has been replaced with a concrete slab.

Comparative Places

Perusal of the Town of Vincent draft Municipal Heritage Inventory shows that 54 of the 205 listings are for places which date from post World War I. The majority of these have been little adapted and retain much of their authenticity. In the streetblocks north of Lincoln Street there are a number of residences of the same period, which have been less adapted, retain more authenticity and would be more representative than the former Police Quarters as residences of their period.

The Lodge at Government House Lodge was designed in 1904, by William Hardwick[67], for the accommodation of the Governor's Orderly and his family. It also functioned as a gatehouse and, therefore, contained an office and porch opening to the main entry into the Government House Grounds. The Lodge contained the same number of rooms as the former Police

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67   Hocking Planning & Architecture, 'Government House Lodge, Perth: Conservation Plan', March 1998.

Quarters, with the office substituting for the third bedroom. Space standards and the quality of the facilities are almost identical. The layout of the Lodge is formed around an L shaped passage, as the Lodge had to have three major facades, unlike the former Police Quarters which only faced Lincoln Street. The Lodge is in Federation Queen Anne style appropriate to its location, whereas the Police Quarters were in a modest Federation Bungalow style. The authenticity of The Lodge is high and adaptations have generally been in character.

The former Police Quarters at Palmyra, dates from 1928, and provides identical accommodation and space standards as the former quarters at Highgate. Constructed 21 years later the Palmyra Quarters are a variation on the plan form of the original Highgate Quarters, adapted seemingly for the Between the Wars Bungalow style. The Palmyra Quarters are intact with a high level of authenticity.

Ancillary Structures

The site now contains a number of industrial structures and mobile facilities set in a broad area of bitumen paving. These changes have removed evidence of former outbuildings and structures, fences and screens. The site is now managed as a drive up facility with a regional function within a secure perimeter, whereas it was established as a walk up facility to serve a local community.

There is a proximity of historical places, some of which have heritage significance, in this section of Lincoln and Smith Streets. There has been no apparent intention for these places to form into a precinct. The so called 'Police Cottages' were the first to be constructed and established a terrace of modest cottages set close to the northern boundary of Lincoln Street. The Police Station and Lockup was next to be constructed, although the Police Quarters were planned at the same time. The intention was for the police establishment to face Lincoln Street but to be set a long way back from the southern boundary of Lincoln Street. When the police establishment was first planned Smith Street did not continue south of Lincoln Street. By the time of construction of the Police Quarters the extension of Smith Street had apparently been committed.

13. 3   REFERENCES

Key references are:
* PWD 3503 Highgate Hill Police Wireless Department Ref 30/6/0 Shelf 996.
* PWD Contract Books 9/1910 to 23/1929 and 23/1929 to 28/1945.
* *WA Government Gazette* 1897 and 1906-50.
* *WA Votes and Proceedings of Parliament*
* *Wise Post Office Directory* (Microfiche)
* Perth City Council Rate Books at Battye Library Perth.
* List of Policeman's names held at Police Academy Library in Maylands.

13.4   FURTHER RESEARCH

It appears almost certain that *Highgate Hill Police Station* was used by the Commonwealth Department of Defence in the early to mid-1940s as a communications facility, which included the transmission of information concerning Japan's involvement in the Second World War. One source that might provide direct information on this, if it is accessible, is the second volume of the General File of the Wireless Station. Volumes 1, 3-5 are held at

the Public Records Office (accession 430), however Volume 2 (which would appear to cover the years 1936-1944) is not with this collection. It may be located at the Australian Archives Office. Information concerning the use of the place for defence purposes has been provided to the author on a strictly confidential basis by a person who has received a first-hand account. Further, according to one former senior serving officer it was not uncommon for Commonwealth Departments to utilise local police communications facilities.