



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES – ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

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.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.26 Providing health services
- 7.6.1 Developing local government authorities
- 7.8 Establishing regional and local identity
- 8.1 Organising recreation

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 401 Government and politics
- 404 Community services and utilities

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Wagin Town Hall is an excellent and distinctive example of a rural town hall and municipal council office in the Inter-war Free Classical style. (Criterion 1.1)

Wagin Town Hall is a landmark at the intersection of two main streets in central Wagin, impacting on vistas along Tavistock and Tudor Streets. (Criterion 1.3)

Wagin Town Hall contributes to an historic precinct of one and two storey buildings opposite the railway station along the west side of Tudor Street, from Wagin Hotel to the street's termination at Federal Hotel. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The development of *Wagin Town Hall*, particularly the building campaigns in 1896, 1905 and 1928, reflects the growing confidence in, and importance of, Wagin as a major town on the Great Southern Railway. (Criterion 2.2)

Wagin Town Hall has been a central focus of social and cultural activities within the town since the first stage's construction as an agricultural hall in 1896, and was the seat of regional government in the area from 1909 to 1980 when it housed offices of both the Wagin Roads Board and Municipal Council, later combined to become the Wagin Shire Council. (Criterion 2.2)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from 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.

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

The 1928 extension and redevelopment of *Wagin Town Hall* was designed by prominent Western Australian architect Edwin Summerhayes. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Wagin Town Hall is valued by the Wagin community as a venue for social and cultural events since the first stage's construction in 1896, as demonstrated by its classification by the National Trust and its inclusion on the Shire of Wagin's Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places. (Criterion 4.1)

Wagin Town Hall contributes to the local community's sense of place as a social and aesthetic landmark in the main street of Wagin. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The 1928 extension and redevelopment of *Wagin Town Hall* is a fine representative example of a civic building designed by Edwin Summerhayes in the Inter-war Free Classical style of architecture. (Criterion 6.1)

Wagin Town Hall represents the development of a major country town streetscape from the late 1890s through to the late 1920s. (Criterion 6.1)

The place demonstrates the characteristics of social and cultural activities associated with the municipal authority in a major regional community, and its development since 1896. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The present condition of *Wagin Town Hall* is generally fair. Substantial works have taken place in recent times including roof replacement, extensive drainage and comprehensive rising damp works, but a number of issues still require attention.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The original intention of the place is clear. Much of the place still functions as originally intended, although the municipal council office and chambers relocated off the site in 1980. *Wagin Town Hall* in its entirety has a high degree of integrity due to continued use and development associated with its original social and community functions.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The building development of 1928 is considerably intact with no substantial or irreversible interventions occurring to the original fabric. Minimal additions and changes have taken place to facilitate the continued function of the place. *Wagin Town Hall* has a high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The wording of this document has been adapted from “Conservation Management Plan Wagin Town Hall” prepared by Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in association with Irene Sauman, Historian, for the Shire of Wagin in January 2003, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

Key sections used: Documentary Evidence pp.4-15; Physical Evidence pp.21-26; Comparative Information p.43.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to “Conservation Management Plan Wagin Town Hall” prepared by Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in association with Irene Sauman, Historian, for the Shire of Wagin in January 2003

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence, refer to “Conservation Management Plan Wagin Town Hall” prepared by Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in association with Irene Sauman, Historian, for the Shire of Wagin in January 2003

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the comparative information, refer to “Conservation Management Plan Wagin Town Hall” prepared by Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in association with Irene Sauman, Historian, for the Shire of Wagin in January 2003

There are six town or district halls in the HCWA database identified as having been constructed in the Interwar Free Classical style, of which three are registered. In addition to P1426 *Kulin Town Hall* and P1576 *Road Board Office (fmr), Merredin*, which are described in the conservation plan, this includes P0654 *Cunderdin Hall*, a brick and iron structure built in at least three main stages between 1910 and 1956 with a 1922-23 façade in the Inter-War Free Classical style.

There are 19 town or district halls in the HCWA database constructed in the 1920s, of which four are registered. In addition to P1426 *Kulin Town Hall* and P1576 *Road Board Office (fmr), Merredin*, these are:

- P3592 *Narambeen Civic Precinct*, which includes the 1923 Lesser Hall, a timber and fibrous cement-clad vernacular building and the 1927 Roads Board Building, which is constructed in a late rendition of Federation styling.
- P3832 *Memorial Hall, Mosman Park*, constructed from 1921, a two storey brick hall in the Interwar Functionalist style with adjacent walled picture outdoor cinema (Camelot Picture Theatre).

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

“Conservation Management Plan Wagin Town Hall” prepared by Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in association with Irene Sauman, Historian, for the Shire of Wagin in January 2003

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
