



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)

- 4.3 Developing urban institutions
- 6.2 Establishing schools
- 9.2 Bringing up children

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 108 Government Policy
- 402 Education and science
- 404 Community services and utilities
- 408 Institutions

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The use of a limited palette of materials, forms and detailing has given the precinct, comprised of classroom block 'A', classroom and administration block 'B' and the covered assembly and toilet block, an identifiable and largely homogenous aesthetic character and a strong sense of place. (Criteria 1.1 & 1.4)

The place has some landmark value due to its location at the crest of a hill and its use of materials. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

East Fremantle Primary School is significant in the development of educational facilities in Fremantle and East Fremantle, and the development of the school through the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries constitutes an important part of their history. (Criterion 2.1)

The development of the place between 1898 and 1901 coincided with the period of major growth in Western Australia in the wake of the 1890s Gold Boom and with the proclamation of East Fremantle as a municipality. (Criterion 2.2)

The upgrading and additions of the 1970s, which incorporated the most recent design principles of open architecture for schools, reflect the changes in

* 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.

the design of school buildings, in accord with changes in educational philosophy and practice. (Criterion 2.2)

The place is associated with Architect John Pidgeon, who with the PWD was responsible for the design of the upgrading and additions (1973); with Senator Dorothy Tangney, who worked there as a Monitor; and with Alan Bond, who attended the school as a student. (Criterion 2.3)

The upgrading and additions of the 1970s ensured the preservation of the essential character of the place (including aspects of the standards plans of the period 1898-1901) with a design that sat well with the original and used materials to match the existing. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The adaptive works of the 1970s accommodated new methods of educational facility planning within the existing framework of an aesthetically significant hall and gallery school and shows a high degree of technical innovation. (Criterion 3.3)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

East Fremantle Primary School is highly valued by the communities of East Fremantle and Fremantle, and by the wider community of Western Australia, for its educational and social associations since the construction of the initial school buildings as Plympton School (1898) and Plympton Infants' School (1901). (Criterion 4.1)

The place is a minor landmark in East Fremantle, at the rise of Marmion Street, and as the main educational facility in the district contributes to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Classroom block 'A' is an uncommon school design comprising of two parallel ranges of fully enclosed classrooms separated by a narrow hallway which was apparently intended to be used principally for access. Superseding the hall and gallery school design, this design preceded the one-sided classroom range with a wide verandah that was used for teaching as well as access. The one-sided classroom range, later developed into quadrangle and finger designs, was common in larger schools from World War One and in the 1920s and common in small country schools utilising transportable structures from the 1920s to the 1950s. The design of the school with such a narrow hallway was not proven to be effective and may have been seminal in precipitating the widespread development of the school designs which followed. (Criterion 5.1)

The alteration of classroom block 'A' and classroom and administration block 'B' in the 1970s is an uncommon instance of open plan design, made popular in the early 1970s, through altering an existing school with fully enclosed classrooms rather than retaining fully enclosed classrooms for senior years and developing completely new structures specifically designed as open plan modules. (Criterion 5.1)

The use of limestone in Government school building following the colonial period is rare as is the continuance of its use in subsequent additions and alteration. (Criterion 5.1)

Classroom and administration block 'B', as altered by the 1970s work, is a rare example of a Government primary school in which the 1970s open plan is used in split levels on two storeys. (Criterion 5.2)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Classroom and administration block 'B' is representative of Western Australian Government hall and gallery schools constructed from the 1880s to World War One. (Criterion 6.1)

The gum trees of the bitumen paved area between the two school blocks are representative of a landscaping practice used in yards of Western Australian Government schools of the early twentieth century. (Criterion 6.1)

The place is representative of the late 19th and early 20th century practice of locating infants' and senior schools on adjoining sites but retaining the distinct identities and organisational structures of each school. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

The condition of the place is good to very good. Past management of the place has minimised intentional change and restricted the ingress of water into the fabric. Major redevelopment has been effected with some effort towards conservation to the structures of the site. Maintenance planning continues to ensure the usefulness of the structures.

12.4 INTEGRITY

The original intention of the place as a school is intact and its current use is compatible with the place's significance. The place has a high degree of integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Although the early school buildings have been modified from fully enclosed classrooms to open plan learning areas, a minimum of fabric was lost and accretions have been moderate. Externally, the fabric is in a state close to its early and original development. The place has moderate to high authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Attached are key sections of the Supporting Evidence prepared by Palassis Architects, 'East Fremantle Primary School, Conservation Plan', for Contract & Management Services on behalf of Education Department of Western Australia in April 2000.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to Palassis Architects, 'East Fremantle Primary School, Conservation Plan', for Contract & Management Services on behalf of Education Department of Western Australia in April 2000.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to Palassis Architects, 'East Fremantle Primary School, Conservation Plan', for Contract & Management Services on behalf of Education Department of Western Australia in April 2000.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the Comparative Information refer to Palassis Architects, 'East Fremantle Primary School, Conservation Plan', for Contract & Management Services on behalf of Education Department of Western Australia in April 2000.

13.4 REFERENCES

Palassis Architects, 'East Fremantle Primary School, Conservation Plan', for Contract & Management Services on behalf of Education Department of Western Australia in April 2000.

Rubinich, Tullio, 'Plympton to East Fremantle: A Century of Schooling 1898-1998, Fremantle: M.V. Kimberley Publications, 1998.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

There are only minor issues regarding the development of the place that remain unresolved. The earliest drawings for the school have not been located.