



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Interim Entry

1. **NUMBER** 2345
2. **NAME** *Customs House & Bond Store*
3. **LOCATION** Cnr Pearl St & The Strand, Cossack
4. **DESCRIPTION OF ELEMENTS INCLUDED IN THE ENTRY (GENERAL)**

Designed by George Temple-Poole in 1892 and constructed in 1895. Built of local field stone squared on site with the outer facing left rough-hewn. One corner has a small colonnade with white columns and arches.

The building was the centre of activity during Cossack's early years, being the Government store for importing foodstuffs, alcohol and equipment, and exporting pearlshell and wool.

By the turn of the century Cossack had ceased to act as an important Government centre and in 1927 the Customs House became a cafe called 'The Strand'. This cafe may have operated in conjunction with the 'Turtle Soup Factory' which apparently ran during the Great Depression. After the failure of the Turtle Soup Factory the Customs House was used as a munitions store and a holiday house.

5. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA** Roebourne
6. **OWNER**
7. **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF PLACE (ASSESSMENT IN DETAIL)**

The place has been assessed by the Australian Heritage Commission and has been entered in the Register of the National Estate with the following statement of significance:

From 1872 to c 1900 Cossack was a port of entry for the stations of the Pilbara the base of the pearling fleet and Pilbara goldfields. Example of an important building in a remote area.

The place has been assessed by Ray and John Oldham with the following statement of significance:

Constructed of great blocks of the local stone, squared and coursed and left rough-hewn on the face, the wall sweeps in a powerful curve round the corner of Pearl Street and the Strand. One of Temple-Poole's favourite architectural devices was to use the arc of a circle to change the sharp angle of a corner; and here it is employed most effectively.

Across half the front of the building, at the other end, is the entrance - a small colonnade whose white columns and arches stand out dramatically in the blinding sunlight against the blackness of deep shadows behind. The columns, on a large concrete base, are shortened to about half the full height. This is

another architectural detail which became fashionable a little later, and which this architect introduced as early as 1895.

The place has also been assessed by the Building Management Authority in the course of preparing a conservation proposal for the buildings at Cossack with the following statement of significance:

CREATIVE AND TECHNICAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

Soundly constructed under adverse conditions, the buildings demonstrate robust yet sophisticated detailing of brick, stone and concrete.

Surviving documentation shows a high level of recognition of the cyclonic conditions, with well detailed and executed holding down devices.

DEMONSTRATION OF A WAY OF LIFE

The buildings are representative of typical government buildings of the late 1800's to the turn of the century. They demonstrate the activities of the port and reflect civic and social needs of the developing community at Cossack during this period.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Cossack was the first port in the North West of Western Australia. It was officially named in 1871 by Governor Weld on his visit in HMS Cossack. The buildings demonstrate the town's historical role as a port of Roebourne (linked by tramway) and surrounding areas involved with pearling, pastoral and mining industries.

TOWNSCAPE

The grouping of civic buildings shows how scale, form and fabric are tools for establishing relationships between the buildings and their setting in order to reinforce the quality of both.

SCARCITY/UNIQUENESS

The buildings represent the last remaining physical evidence of the townsite which demonstrates its cultural and historical significance in the history of Western Australia.

8. REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES (DATE OF GAZETTAL)

Interim Entry 24/3/1992

9. CONSERVATION ORDER

10. HERITAGE AGREEMENT

11. REFERENCES

Register of the National Estate