



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural heritage significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for individuals or groups within Western Australia.

In determining cultural heritage significance, the Heritage Council has had regard to the factors in the *Heritage Act 2018* and the indicators adopted on 14 June 2019.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 2.5 Promoting settlement
- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities
- 6.2 Establishing schools
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 107 Settlements
- 108 Government Policy
- 402 Education and science
- 404 Community services and utilities
- 602 Early settlers

11(a) Importance in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Western Australia's history;

The construction of *Albany State School Group (fmr)* in 1894-95 is representative of the expansion of educational facilities in Albany during a time when the population of Albany was expanding due to the Gold Boom in Western Australia.

The Primary School is a fine and intact example of a Federation Central Hall type school. The inclusion of a Central Hall was a feature that was to be included in the 1895 standard school design developed by the Public Works Department (PWD)

11(c) Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Western Australia's history;

Albany State School Group (fmr), has moderate potential to reveal further archaeological deposits and artefacts that may reveal information regarding the

early operation of the school during the 1890s gold boom period, and the education of Albany's children from 1895 to 1974.

11(d) Its importance in demonstrating the characteristics of a broader class of places;

The place is a good representative example of a group of public school buildings dating from the 1890s, and an associated Headmaster's House and former garden.

The Primary School is a fine and representative example of a Federation Central Hall type school developed by the Public Works Department (PWD).

The Primary and Infants School buildings and the Headmasters Quarters (fmr) represent the changing approaches taken by the Education Department and the Public Works Department, to provide school facilities from 1895 through to 2002.

11(e) Any strong or special meaning it may have for any group or community because of social, cultural or spiritual associations;

Albany State School Group (fmr) is valued by former teachers, students and individuals who have associations with the place for its role in the education of Albany's children from 1895 to 1974, and later for its use as a community education facility.

Albany State School Group (fmr) contributes to the community's sense of place due to many local residents having been educated at the place and because of the site's relatively prominent location within Albany.

11(f)¹ Its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by any group or community;

The Primary School and Infants School are very good examples of schools designed in the Federation Arts and Crafts style constructed of local granite and brick.

The Primary School includes a fine example of a large central hall of exceptional design quality with a high raking ceiling lined with painted jarrah boards supported by five elegant trusses.

The Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) is an aesthetically pleasing example of a house constructed of local Albany granite.

The interior of the Headmasters Quarters (fmr) retains many original elements, such as the pressed metal ceilings with matching roses, and fireplaces in most of the rooms, including the large rectangular drawing room.

¹ 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 prominent position of the Albany Primary School and Infants School buildings together with their steep, multi-gable roof, tall chimneys, and other distinctive design elements make the place a landmark in the central Albany area.

Albany State School Group (fmr) forms a significant precinct in the historic centre of Albany that contains a number of complimentary Victorian and Federation buildings.

Alison Hartman Gardens, including the mature Oak and Pine trees that were part of the early layout of the school, contributes to the historic streetscape of York Street.

11(g) Any special association it may have with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in Western Australia's history;

The Primary School (1895) was designed by Government Architect George Temple Poole who was responsible for the standardised plan and design of many public buildings in Western Australia during the Gold Boom period.

Alison Hartman Gardens is named after well renowned local school teacher Alison Hartman, who was the former Headmistress of Albany Primary School for over 30 years.

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 CONDITION

The Primary and Infants School buildings and Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) were all well-constructed using high quality materials and workmanship.

As part of the redevelopment of the site for student accommodation in 2017, the Headmaster's Quarter's was re-furbished and remedial repair and maintenance works were undertaken. It is proposed to reinstate the original cast-iron fretwork to the front verandah valance, which is in very poor condition due to corrosion and lack of maintenance. Works to the Primary School in 2017 include minor repair and maintenance works and minor adaptation works to bring the building up to modern office standards.

Alison Hartman Gardens is generally in good condition and the individual elements and grounds appear to be well-maintained.

12.2 INTEGRITY

The Primary and Infants School buildings and Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) display a high degree of integrity. Although no longer used for their intended purpose, the current use of the place as a regional educational office is a compatible one, as is the proposed future use of the site for student accommodation.

Alison Hartman Gardens have a moderate to high degree of authenticity having evolved over time from being a domestic scale garden for the Headmaster's Quarters (fmr), to serving as the Albany Primary School garden/playing field, and in more recent times, as a civic garden.

12.3 AUTHENTICITY

The School Buildings (fmr) display a high degree of authenticity. The external form of the buildings have had little modification since the early extensions and alterations of Albany Primary School in 1901. There have been a few relatively minor modifications internally, but the major room volumes are either intact or clearly discernible and a high percentage of the fabric is original.

In 2017, minor adaptation works to the Primary School to bring the building up to modern office standards, include the removal of existing partition walls, the installation of new glazed partitions, replacement light fittings, removal of existing kitchen fit out and re-purposing of spaces. A ramp is to be installed to the front entrance to provide compliant access.

The interior of the Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) displays a high degree of authenticity. The exterior of the residence has a moderate degree of authenticity as the decorative Victorian Tudor gable shown in historic photographs was removed sometime after c1935. As part of refurbishment works in outlined in 2017, there is a proposal to reinstate the original cast-iron fretwork to the front verandah using as many of the original cast iron panels as possible.

Alison Hartman Gardens has had a number of changes and reconfigurations over time. With the exception of the two distinctive mature trees, an Oak (*Quercus robur*), and Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*), the garden plantings do not relate to any early landscape schemes. The stone retaining walls and steps between the main school terrace (now a carpark) and lower garden areas appear to date from the development of the Albany State School site in 1895/6. The long central pathway that extends from the northeast corner of Headmasters House down to York Street is part of the original layout of the garden when it was developed as a residence.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Lynne Farrow, Architect, and Eddie Marcus, Historian, in May 2016, with amendments and/or additions by the Heritage Council and the Department.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Albany State School Group (fmr) comprises a single-storey red brick and granite Primary School (fmr) (1895), and a single-storey red brick and granite Infants School (fmr) (1898), both designed in the Federation Arts and Crafts style, and a single storey Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) (1880s), originally designed in the Victorian Tudor style and constructed of Albany granite, and the adjacent Alison Hartman Gardens.

Albany, situated on the northern shore of Princess Royal Harbour, was the first place in Western Australia to be colonised by British settlers, two years before the Swan River Colony. At the instigation of Lord Bathurst, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, Major Edmund Lockyer, of the 57th Regiment, at the head of an expedition fitted out in Sydney, arrived in Princess Royal Harbour on Christmas Day, 1826.²

During the ten years following the settlement of the Swan River Colony a road was opened up between Perth and Albany and on 23 June 1841 an overland monthly mail service was established. Already, the centre for the whaling industry in Western Australia, the opening of the road saw Albany become the major port for the State throughout the 19th century, including that for the mail steamers. Development of the town and region increased following the completion of the Great Southern Railway line in 1889.³

Around 1840, the first school in Albany was established by Lucinda Petronella Knight, wife of the first Albany Postmaster, who ran a small "dames' school" in her sitting room in a cottage on the Terrace.⁴ The school was very successful with attendance growing throughout the 1840s, so that there were fourteen boys and 24 girls in attendance by 1849.⁵ During the 1850s the school, having outgrown the Knights' house, was relocated to the empty soldier barracks on the site of present-day Lawley Park.⁶ This simple building was whitewashed, with niches in the walls to represent windows and doors.⁷

After the Church, who now ran the school, handed it over to the Government, the boys were taught by an ex-convict, Thomas J. Watson. However, it seems he was not a very good teacher and resigned (or was made to resign) within a short time.⁸ Probably in 1858 (although some sources say 1861), the now Government school appointed Thomas Palmer as the schoolmaster. Although also an ex-convict, he had been charged with forgery, and despite never having undertaken teacher

2 For more on the history of Albany, see: Garden, Donald, S, *Southern Haven: A History of the Port of Albany, Western Australia* (Albany: Port Authority, 1978)

3 'Albany's Hundred Years,' *Truth*, 22 January 1927, p. 10; Hicks, Bonnie, 'Albany Gov. Schools,' *Great Southern Voice*, 13 July 1988: 4-5

4 'Education in Albany,' *Albany Advertiser*, 22 March 1924, p. 3

5 Garden, Donald, S, *Albany: A Panorama of the Sound from 1827* (Thomas Nelson, 1977), pp. 91-92

6 Hicks, 'Albany Gov. Schools'

7 'Historical Sites,' *Western Mail*, 14 March 1940, p. 11

8 Hicks, 'Albany Gov. Schools'

training, he became a respected member of the Albany community, and continued as schoolmaster there until 1891.⁹

Following the introduction of the *Elementary Education Act* 1871, the Government school was relocated in 1871-72 to a brick building on the site of the present George Temple Poole designed courthouse in Stirling Terrace,¹⁰ and remained in operation until 1895/6. The *Elementary Education Act* 1871, placed education in the hands of a Central Board of Education, which was assisted by district boards of education. The Plantagenet District School Board controlled education in Albany and associated districts until 1909.¹¹ A school board was formed, with Mr Clifton, of P & O, as chairman; Mrs Hare, wife of the Government Resident, as secretary; and Rev Father Reilly as one of the members.¹²

In October 1891, Poole, Engineer-in-Chief and architect for the Public Works Office, called for tenders for an Infant Schoolroom to be added to the school on Stirling Terrace.¹³ By 1893, however, the population of Albany was declining and a proposed new government school costing £3,450, including land, looked unlikely to proceed at the time.¹⁴ By the following year, however, as a consequence of the gold rush, the Public Works Department (PWD) was calling for tenders for a new school, which was won by Charles F. Layton.¹⁵ Albany Town Lots 124 and 125 were purchased in 1894 for the construction of a new school at a cost of £1,750.¹⁶

The Primary School (1895, now part of Albany District Education Office) was designed by George Temple Poole, and was a Federation Central Hall type, which comprised an Assembly Hall with classrooms grouped around it, the design allowing for future additions. The Assembly Hall was of generous proportions, 40ft x 30ft (12m x 9m), with provisions for the Hall to be enlarged to 60ft x 40ft (18.5m x 12m). This was achieved by erecting a removable 'curtain wall' between the hall and a classroom at one end. This classroom had a tall five-light window facing east, to match an identical window on the west end of the Assembly Hall.¹⁷

The inclusion of a central Assembly Hall was a feature that was to be included in the 1895 standard school design developed by the PWD. By 1910, the Education Department had decided that no school with an average attendance of over 350 students would be without a main hall.¹⁸

The construction of the Primary School was finally completed in 1895, with the local newspaper describing it as the most imposing building in Albany, with the exception of the Town Hall. Constructed of brick with cement dressing, and a shingle roof, the newspaper went on to describe the building as being of modern school type of architecture:

9 Hicks, 'Albany Gov. Schools'

10 'Education in Albany,' *Albany Advertiser*, 22 March 1924, p. 3

11 Gregory, J., & Smith, L, *A Thematic History of Public Education in Western Australia* (Centre for Western Australia History UWA, 1995), pp. 7-8

12 'Education in Albany,' *Albany Advertiser*, 22 March 1924, p. 3

13 'Advertising,' *West Australian*, 15 October 1891, p. 3

14 'Albany,' *W.A. Record*, 18 May 1893, p. 9

15 'The Public Works Department,' *Inquirer*, 14 September 1894, p. 23

16 State Register Assessment Documentation – P3463 1915 Block *Albany Primary School* 14/7/2000, p. 4

17 Oldham, Ray, & John Oldham, *George Temple-Poole: Architect of the Golden Years, 1855-1897* (UWA Press, 1980), p. 29

18 Adelyn Siew Al LI (2004), Mapping schools: exploring spatial histories of government primary schools in *Western Australia*, Thesis, Curtin University of Technology, p. 107

The ceilings are lined with match boarding, stained and varnished, and in the Hall is pierced with four ventilators, covered with perforated zinc. Moulded corners are also along the wall line. Light is provided in each of the classrooms by a three-light window and the roofs are similar to that of the main Hall. Cemented beaded dados are around the principal Hall and the other rooms. Throughout, all the rooms are fitted with map rails. The rooms are fitted with fireplaces with handsome mantelpieces, that in the Hall being an artistic combination of light and dark jarrah highly polished (and those in the classrooms) of credible workmanship.

The Assembly Hall, a really handsome and commodious room, is 25 feet high, with a roof made of jarrah, the three principals being supported on stone corbels with iron tie and king rods. The jarrah floor which is indeed a splendid one is made of 4" x 1½ in-batting, ploughed and tongued. All the doors are fitted with Hill's patent locks, and the windows with Preston's patent fanlight openers.

The playgrounds are extensive and the building is situated on an eminence from which a beautiful view of the Harbor and neighbouring hills is obtained. The water from the roof is conveyed to an underground tank capable of holding about 6,000 gallons.

The new building is a decided ornament to the town...¹⁹

On 6 July 1895, at the opening ceremony for the new school, the Minister for Mines, Edward Wittenoom, reassured gathered parents that the Government had no intention of providing too much education for Albany's children. They were not going to turn out "scientific boys and girls", much less "professors", instead the focus would be on "good, honest education".²⁰

The school students were segregated, with boys and girls taught in separate sections of the school. By 1897, the school had over four hundred pupils and was the largest mixed school in the colony.²¹ As the population continued to grow, the existing school space proved inadequate.

From 1898, separate Infants Schools began to be built in Western Australia as part of the philosophy of 'New Education', which focused on the needs of the individual child.²² In March 1898, the Minister for Education announced that tenders would soon be called for a new Infants School in Albany facing Serpentine Road to be constructed to meet the demand.²³ By May 1898, the contract, to a design by the PWD under chief architect John Grainger, had been awarded to G. Smith for £2,031.²⁴

In June 1898, Grainger visited the school and announced that, if not too costly, the playground would be levelled and gravelled. Work had already commenced on the new Infants School on Lots 124 and 125, with the additional removal of a three-room brick dwelling in the boys' playground, fronting Collie Street (then known as Stirling Street).²⁵ It is unclear if this residence, the site of which is now occupied by the school car park, was utilised by the caretaker or the headmaster at this time. Subsequently, the site once occupied by this residence had a 'Domestic Economy

19 Quoted Oldham & Oldham, *George Temple-Poole*, p. 29

20 'The Minister of Mines at Albany,' *Inquirer*, 26 July 1895, p. 2

21 Oldham & Oldham, *George Temple-Poole*, p. 29

22 Gregory & Smith, *Thematic History*

23 'News and Notes,' *West Australian*, 8 March 1898, p. 4

24 'News and Notes,' *West Australian*, 11 May 1898, p. 4; 'North v. East,' *Albany Advertiser*, 14 June 1898, p. 3

25 'Albany Infants School and Additions', PWD Plan 6140 (1897)

Centre' (also known as the 'Cookery School') erected on it,²⁶ which was demolished in 1936 having become an "eyesore".²⁷

The new Infants School was scheduled to be finished in November 1898.²⁸ The first Headmistress of the school, which opened January 1899, was Miss L. C. Gmeiner, who was supported by Mr Horton.²⁹ By 1904, the Infants School was in use for manual training purposes.³⁰

The Infants School was more conventional than Poole's Primary School, with a narrow central passage leading off into classrooms, and no central hall. Although constructed in different bricks to the original school building, the brickwork along the front elevation was laid in the same English-bond. Both buildings were initially clad in hand-split jarrah shingles, which were subsequently re-shingled in 1919, before eventually being replaced with terracotta tiles. The Infants School roof was replaced with an iron roof sometime after 1980.³¹ The Infants School became the district High School from 1917 to 1923, after which time Albany High School was constructed.³²

Although the Education Department had considered buying the York Hotel, on the corner of Serpentine Road and York Street, for staff accommodation, the asking price was too high.³³ Instead the Department purchased Lot S109 with an existing residence, on it for £1,650.³⁴ The exact date of construction of this residence is unknown, but it is thought to have been constructed c1880s. The residence, constructed of granite in the Victorian Tudor style was tenanted to local businessman, Charles Drew in 1897 for a period of five years before becoming the headmaster's house in 1902. At the time, the property was owned by prominent Albany citizen, William Graham, lawyer and Justice of the Peace, who had purchased the lot from his brother in law Horace Warburton, the proprietor of Albany Mill.³⁵ It is unclear who the residence was originally constructed for. It has sometimes been claimed that this building was the Governor's summer residence, but research suggests there was no official residence prior to the purchase of 'The Rocks' in 1912.³⁶

The Headmaster's Quarter's (fmr) originally included a Stables facing Collie Street.³⁷ The Stables were later adapted for use as a laundry and shed, and subsequently the school's carpentry room, before finally becoming a garage. This structure has since been demolished.³⁸

26 'Albany School: Repairs Etc.', PWD Plan 27405 (n.d., c.1910?)

27 'Annual Meeting,' *Albany Advertiser*, 2 April 1936, p. 4

28 'North v. East,' *Albany Advertiser*, 14 June 1898, p. 3; Oldham & Oldham, *George Temple-Poole*, p. 29

29 *Albany Advertiser*, 1 April 1899, p. 3

30 Oldham & Oldham, *George Temple-Poole*, p. 29

31 Oldham & Oldham, *George Temple-Poole*, p. 30

32 Hicks, 'Albany Gov. Schools'

33 Hicks, 'Albany Gov. Schools'

34 'The Detailed Estimates,' *Western Mail*, 25 October 1902, p. 12.

35 Certificate of Title Volume XI. Fol 296. 1883

36 *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 28 November 1912, p. 5).

37 'Albany Infants School and Additions', PWD Plan 6140 (1897)

38 The footprint of the structure in 2016 was much smaller than that of the earliest known structure on the site, and no longer runs the full length of the residence as shown on the following plans dated from 1933. 'Albany School: Drainage', PWD Plan 23166 (n.d., c.1922?); 'Albany Infants School, buildings & additions', State Records Office, Cons. 1647 Item 05802. Demolished in 2018 as part of the redevelopment of the site for new student accommodation.

The gardens of the Headmaster's Quarters were originally converted to be a garden plot for the school, so that students could study nature and horticulture, which was then part of the school curriculum. The gardens were frequently the site of annual Arbor Day events hosted by the School. The garden plot eventually became the school's playing grounds, and was divided by a central fence separating boys to the south side and girls to the north side.³⁹

Edith Alison Hartman was a well renowned and dedicated school teacher and former Headmistress of Albany State School for over 30 years. Born in Albany in 1906, she attended the teachers training college in Claremont before taking up her first position at Jingalup School near Kojonup. After working at schools in Demark and Katanning, she joined Albany Primary School where she taught until 1966, when she was forced to retire due to illness. The adjacent gardens were named in her honour in 1979.

In 1903, builder Charles Layton was once again engaged, this time to construct a retaining wall for the school.⁴⁰ Prior to 1906, the Girls and Boys conjoined Shelter Sheds (extant in 2016) had been erected.⁴¹

Increased pressure on classroom space meant some senior pupils were having to take classes at the Mechanics' Institute, rather than on the school site.⁴² When the new Infants School opened on Albany Highway in January 1915 (P3463 1915 Block, Albany Primary School), there was a reorganisation of Albany Primary School, which now became the State (or Senior) School, and had sufficient space for this purpose. The new (1915) school took Years 1 to 3, while the older complex operated for Years 4 to 7.⁴³

Around 1922, a plan shows a Manual Training Room to the southeast of the site, which has subsequently (date unknown) been demolished, and a Pavilion linking the Primary School to the Cookery School to its south, also demolished.⁴⁴

At some point after c1935, the decorative Victorian Tudor gable shown in historic photographs of the Headmaster's Quarter's was removed and replaced with a half-timbered gable.⁴⁵

In the 1940s the Government began closing one-teacher bush schools. Those at Elleker, Youngs Siding, King and Kalgan Rivers closed and the children were transported daily by bus to the Albany State School. Overcrowding saw classes having to be held in various halls and at P00026 Albany Forts. It was not until the construction of suburban schools (Mt Lockyer 1954, Spencer Park 1958, Yakamia 1970) that the pressure could be eased.⁴⁶

The site previously included a timber Lunch Room (c1950s), which was demolished at the same time as the Shelter Shed in 2017/8 to allow for redevelopment of the site.⁴⁷

39 H & H Heritage Assessment: Alison Hartman Gardens, Revised Draft 30 May 2016.

40 'Notes of the Week,' *Western Mail*, 15 August 1903: 33

41 'Albany School: Drainage Etc.', PWD Plan 12375 (1906)

42 'Albany Note,' *Daily News*, 1 February 1915, p. 1

43 'School History,' (n.d.), albanyprimary.wa.edu.au/page/54/School-History (accessed 11 April 2016)

44 'Albany School: Drainage', PWD Plan 23166 (n.d., c.1922?)

45 Dowson, John, *Old Albany photographs 1850-1950*, p.239, National Trust of Western Australia, 2008.

46 Hicks, 'Albany Gov. Schools'

47 'Albany Primary School & Quarters: Sewerage Installation', PWD Plan 18743 (1962); 'Albany School: Repairs & Renovations. The Lunch Room was extant on the 1962 plan, and is missing on a 1948 plan, giving it an approximate date of 1950s.

In 1964, a public meeting was held to discuss the future of both the Albany Primary School at Serpentine Road, and the Albany Junior Primary School located on Albany Highway. Student numbers had dropped at both schools in the early 1960s, as families began moving away from the central Albany area to the suburbs. It was therefore proposed that the two schools should be amalgamated, however this proposal was delayed for ten years.⁴⁸

In September 1973, plans were drawn up for 4 classrooms to be constructed at the Albany Junior Primary School site. Following completion of the new classrooms in late 1974, Albany Primary School in Serpentine Road was closed, and by December that year, its five classes were accommodated at the Albany Highway site. From this time, Albany Junior Primary School became known as Albany Primary School.⁴⁹

Around this time *Albany State School Group (fmr)* was appropriated by the Education Department for use as Regional Offices and a Resource Centre.⁵⁰ A 1983 report, commissioned by the Public Works Department to investigate the possibility of further construction on the site, describes the use of the various buildings that were extant at that time:

1. Top Block [1895] Brick & tile. This building contains the conference room, library, video & visual areas, & support & typist staff offices.
2. Bottom block [1898]. Brick & iron roof. This consists of seminar room & various offices.
3. Small shed [1950s]. Weatherboard, asbestos & iron. Used for storage. Possibly of no heritage value.
4. Large shed type building [c.1900]. Weatherboard & iron roof.
5. Toilet block [1922]. Brick & iron roof.
6. Old Headteacher's House [1880s]. Stone & iron roof. Used for superintendents & support staff.
7. Garage behind old house [1880s]. Brick (rendered) & iron in relatively poor condition.⁵¹

In 1980, the Assembly Hall was described as having taken on a new life, being "luxuriously carpeted, [and] gay with colourful displays of work, with young people still moving around and studying there".⁵²

In 2017, Advance Housing began work on a \$16 million project to provide a 40-bed student accommodation facility on the school site, supported by in part by State Government funding. The first stage of the project included the refurbishment of the existing buildings, beginning with the Headmaster's Quarter's.⁵³ The former Stables building to the rear of the house was demolished, as were the Shelter Shed and Lunch room⁵⁴

48 State Register Assessment Documentation – P3463 1915 Block Albany Primary School 14/7/2000, p. 17.

49 Ibid, p.17.

50 'Albany Infants School, buildings & additions', State Records Office, Cons. 1647 Item 05802

51 'Albany Infants School, buildings & additions', State Records Office, Cons. 1647 Item 05802. Dates added here for reference purposes, and were not included in the 1983 report.

52 Oldham & Oldham, *George Temple-Poole*, p. 30

53 <https://www.gsdw.gov.au/information/gsdw-bulletin/bulletin-47-3-Student-Housing/>

54 Information provided by project architects H & H Architects, on 19 July 2019.

In 2019, the second stage of the project will see the construction of the new accommodation facility in the current parking areas behind the existing buildings.⁵⁵ The former school buildings are to provide facilities for future student residents, along with office accommodation for Advance Housing, and the former Headmaster's Quarter's will continue to function as the regional Education Office.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Albany State School Group (fmr) comprises a single-storey red brick Primary School (fmr) (1895), and a single-storey red brick Infants School (fmr) (1898), both designed in the Federation Arts and Crafts style, a single storey Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) (1880s), originally designed in the Victorian Tudor style and constructed of local granite, and the adjacent Alison Hartman Gardens.

The place is set on a large L shaped Lot of 5,899 sq metres on moderately rising ground on the corner of Serpentine Road and Collie Street in the centre of Albany. The Primary School (fmr) is located on the north-west corner of the site, the highest point, set back about 3 metres from Serpentine Road, and about 4 metres from Collie Street. The Infants School (fmr) is located downhill to the east on Serpentine Road. Behind these two buildings is an area of bitumen car park, formerly a play area. The Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) is set to the south of this car park, with its rear facing west to Collie Street and its front facing east over Alison Hartman Gardens.

Headmaster's Quarters (fmr)

The Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) is constructed of golden Albany granite. The original tuck-pointing can be seen on the sheltered front façade. External corners, doors and windows are quoined with painted cement. The roof has a butterfly hip, and there are four tall rendered chimneys. A gable projection on the south side of the front (east) façade has half-timbered infill and a pair of arched windows in a projecting square bay.⁵⁶

The front and rear façades have hipped verandas. The front veranda is supported on pairs of chamfered posts and has a cast iron frieze. The front door adjacent to the gable on the south side of the veranda has glazed highlights and side lights. There are three individual double hung timber sash windows regularly spaced across the rest of the façade. There is a single door at the northern end with four regularly spaced double hung timber sash windows across the rest of the façade.

The front door opens into a generous entrance hall, about 3 metres wide. The drawing room and dining room open up to the south, and a smaller reception room opens up to the north. A long north-south corridor extends from the west end of the north. To the east of the corridor is the main bedroom and bathroom. To the west are a maid's room, bedroom and kitchen.

Room sizes are generous and the ceilings are high (3.9 metres). Finishes are also generous and of high quality. Floors are timber boards, skirting are high and moulded, walls are plastered, ceilings are pressed metal with matching roses and small cornices. Doors are four panel timber with moulded edges. There are back to back fireplaces in most of the rooms, and most of the mantelpieces remain. The

⁵⁵ Media Statement by Hon Alannah Mac Tiernan MLC, 15 January 2019.
<https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2019/01/Local-firm-wins-Albany-student-accommodation-tender.aspx>

⁵⁶ The decorative Victorian Tudor gable shown in historic photographs of the Headmaster's House was removed sometime after c1935.

rectangular drawing room is the most impressive room, 6.7 x 4.8 metres, with a marble fireplace flanked by niches on its short west wall and a pair of arched windows in a bay on the opposite east wall.

Primary School (fmr)

The basic form of the Primary School (fmr) is a tall gable on an east-west axis over a central hall (and adjacent classroom) with shorter pairs of gables butting in over classrooms on each of the north and south facades. There is a third gable at the east end of the front (north) façade and a hipped wing down the west side. The brickwork is laid in English bond and two moulded cement string lines run around the top of the footings and below the window sills. There are several tall moulded brick chimneys with painted cement bases and corniced cappings, some of which retain their original terracotta chimney pot.

The front (north) façade, is composed of four bays. The two central bays are part of the original construction and have projecting eaves with the upper half of the gable lined with half timbering. The bay to the east of the centre retains its central triptych window, but the group of three windows in the western of the two bays has been modified with the introduction of a door and porch in the place of the westernmost window, to provide an additional entrance. The bay on the east side of the façade was introduced in 1901 with matching details to the slightly lower gable apex. There are two small high level toilet windows in the centre and east of this bay, and a recessed porch behind a round brick arch on its west side. This porch now forms the main entrance. The westernmost bay of the façade was also introduced in 1901. Its roof is hipped and there is a single double hung timber sash window in its centre.

The rear (south) façade reflects the front façade, with the same pair of original gables in the centre, and the door and porch introduced similarly. The recessed wing to the east, under the main gable roof, also has a triptych window. The hipped roofed additions of 1901 project forward by about four metres on the west side. The west façade has 15 tall double hung timber sash windows with highlights over that extend up to the eaves. These windows are arranged in groups according to the room use behind: one for the small room on the south end, four for each of the three classrooms and two for the teacher's room.

The layout of the Primary School (fmr) is based around a large central hall, which has two former classrooms to the north, two to the south, and one to the east. The main entrance opens into a hallway with toilets and a small room on the east wall. At the end of the hallway an original door opens into a large conference room (9 x 6 metres) (the original infant's classroom). An original three leaf multi light glazed door with Diocletian highlight in the centre of the south wall opens into the central hall, and a single door at the south end of the west wall opens into a small room that was part of the original adjacent classroom. The other part of the classroom now forms a corridor to the west. The southern classrooms were altered in 1901 when their dividing wall was removed and a corridor was constructed down the west side to form a corridor identical to the northern corridor. The eastern wing contains five rooms, a meeting room at its northern end, a classroom now subdivided into smaller areas to the south, a teachers' room, and two classrooms.

The internal spaces and finishes are generous. Floors are timber, walls are plastered, skirtings are 50 x 50 mm square splayed jarrah, and doors are timber panelled with multi-light glazing above. Windows are double hung timber sash, with four lights to each sash. Ceilings are high. They are lined with timber boards on the rake in the 1895 areas. Many of the early standard PWD timber fireplaces remain.

The large (12 x 9 metres) central hall is an impressive space with a high raking ceiling rising to about 7.6 metres at the apex, which is lined with painted jarrah boards supported by 5 elegant trusses with iron tie rods springing off stone corbels. The west gable apex has a bank of 5 windows which lets in daylight at a high level and there is an original perforated vent in each of the four ceiling bays. Each of the long walls has a glazed door with wide sidelights and a multi pane Diocletian highlight over, and there is a standard PWD timber fireplace on the south wall.

Infants School (fmr)

The Infants School (fmr) is a complementary building to the Primary School (fmr), but less ornate. Similar details are the granite footings capped with a painted cement render string line, red English bond brickwork, and large gable roof with smaller gables butting in to its northern plane. The detailing to the barge boards, gable infill and chimneys is simpler.

The building is composed of two large gabled wings, set perpendicularly and joined by a small lower roofed section. The gable walls are blank, with a louvred ventilation panel at the apex. The front (north) façade is constructed against the pavement with two lower gables in the centre of the western wing. Each of these lower gables has a central double hung timber sash window. There is a hipped porch over the front door, on the western side of the small gables. The east (side) façade has a set of three double hung timber sash windows. The granite footings are quite high at this point and a round dressed granite arch at its south side allows access to a covered area under the building that was intended as a play area. The south façade clearly shows the two perpendicular gabled roofed sections. The eastern wing is a blank brick gable wall on tall granite footings with two arches similar to that on the eastern facade. The western wing has a group of three windows at its east and west sides, a group of two windows west of centre and has a chimney rising out of the wall slightly to the east of centre. There is a timber weatherboard porch in the corner between the two sections, and a flight of metal steps with timber tread leads down to the car park.

The layout of the Infants School (fmr) is based around an L shaped corridor. The front entrance door opens at its west end. A kitchen, pantry (former toilets and cloakroom) and small room open off to the north and two classrooms open to the south. The corridor returns to the south where a third classroom opens off the east side, and there is an exit door on the south wall. The two southern classrooms were originally open to each other but are now separated by a partition. All classrooms are 6.7 metres deep, the western classroom is 11.5 metres long, and the other two are 8 metres long. The two smaller classrooms have banks of three windows on their long external walls, and the larger classroom has 5 windows arranged in a group of three on the west and a group of two on the east side.

Finishes are similar throughout. The floors are timber, walls are plastered and painted brick. There are no skirtings in some of the areas, which may have been the original treatment, and where skirtings do exist they are contemporary. Windows are double hung timber sash with highlights over and extend up to the ceilings. Internal doors are four panel timber, with the upper panels now glazed and highlights over. Ceilings are plaster, and are 4.2 metres high in the classrooms, 3 metres high in the kitchen and hallway. Each of the classrooms retains the original timber PDW fireplace, and some of the original blackboards remain.

Alison Hartman Gardens (former School Gardens)

The gardens are a modest but attractive parkland located in the civic centre of Albany on York Street, and form a landscaped forecourt to the Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) as well as contributing to the setting of the adjoining Albany Public Library (not included in this assessment).

The gardens have continued to provide a landscaped setting to the Headmaster's Quarters, which in its earliest configuration, consisted of a formal garden with an oval-shaped planter bed positioned centrally overlooking York Street. The existing pathway marks the alignment of the original pathway that lead up to the house from York Street (pictured in photos dating back as early as 1890). Along with the remaining brick-lined spoon drain, these are the only built elements which appear to remain from the earliest garden layout when the house was a private residence.

With the exception of the mature trees, including two distinctive trees, an Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*), the garden plantings themselves do not appear to relate to any early landscape schemes. The mature Norfolk Island Pine is a distinctive element in the streetscape of York Street, which is believed to have been planted c1900 as part of landscaping to the school grounds. A third distinctive tree, an Acacia (*Acacia melanoxylon*), suffered storm damage in 2016, and was removed.

The stone retaining walls appear to date from the development of the Albany Primary School in 1895/6 when the upper terraces were formalised, and the stone steps were likely designed to allow pupils access between the main school terrace (now a carpark) and lower garden areas. The existing garden edging comprises mostly concrete kerbing, which is of little significance.

The various plaques and commemorative elements located within Alison Hartman Gardens, including the Matthew Flinders memorial cairn (1974), the Heritage Trail plaque (1988), the remains of the 'Gateway to the Hinterland' sculpture (1989), and the Peace Pole (2011), are associated with the contemporary civic functions of the garden and are of little significance. Likewise, the granite boulders extending west towards the School, were likely introduced between 1974-1979 when Alison Hartman Gardens was established.

Archaeological Assessment

The place comprises three buildings located on a large corner block across an area with a moderate incline. There have been several phases of construction on the site, including demolition of earlier structures, levelling of some areas, and landscaping, all of which are likely to have had an impact on the potential for extant archaeological deposits to be present.

The Headmaster's Quarters (fmr), Infants School (fmr) and Primary School (fmr) all have timber floor boards. There is potential for archaeological deposits or artefacts to be present beneath timber floorboards, although where these are tightly fit or of 'tongue and groove' construction, this is less likely. Work undertaken in the Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) has already exposed archaeological artefacts, including letters, old school books and pictures dating from the 1950s, and these are on display in the Primary School Building.⁵⁷

Given the age of the buildings, and the apparent lack of floorboard disturbance during renovations, there is moderate potential for archaeology to be present in

⁵⁷ Information provided from Howard & Heaver Architects to State Heritage Office on 20 December 2016.

underfloor deposits and in the vicinity of the Headmaster's Quarters (fmr)⁵⁸, Infants School (fmr) and Primary School (fmr). In general, there appears to be moderate potential for archaeological deposits or artefacts to be present across the site, in the form of under floor deposits, sub surface deposits or artefact scatters.

Although earlier structures, including a three-room residence, the Manual Training Room, Cookery School and Pavilion, are known to have been present on the site, the record of their demolition and consequent levelling of the areas, and the construction of a bituminised car park in the surrounding areas indicates that there is little likelihood of any extant remnants of these buildings.

Alison Hartman Gardens exhibits a number of changes and reconfigurations since the construction of the original buildings on the site. The stone retaining walls and steps between the carpark and lower garden areas are thought to date from the construction of the 1895 Primary School (fmr). The long central pathway that extends from the northeast corner of Headmasters House down to York Street is part of the original layout of the garden when it was developed as a residence in the 1880s. Although there is likely to have been sub surface disturbance in the gardens associated with the construction of drainage, retaining walls and landscaping, this is unlikely to have been comprehensive across the entirety of the garden area. There remains moderate potential for archaeological deposits and artefacts to remain in the Alison Hartman Gardens, either associated with the early structures, in the form of scattered and isolated artefacts associated with the use of the area from the 1880s to the present, and evidence of changes made to the garden layout over time.

Re-development of the site for new student accommodation

In 2017, the first stage of a project to redevelop the site for student accommodation included the refurbishment of existing buildings, beginning with the Headmaster's Quarters (fmr).⁵⁹ The former Stables building to the rear of the headmaster's house was demolished due its poor condition. The Shelter Shed and Lunch room, and a brick toilet block were demolished to allow for future vehicular access into the site⁶⁰.

In 2019, the second stage of the project will see the construction of the new accommodation facility in the current parking areas behind the existing school buildings.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Primary Schools

Schools built prior to 1914 were typically constructed in what is known as the Central Hall design, where the classrooms are arranged around a large hall that served as a common teaching and play area. Albany Primary School was an early example of a school of this type to be built in Western Australia, in the year that the design was introduced.

Schools built in the 1890s displayed obvious architectural influences from the Arts and Crafts movement, most obvious from the steeply pitched roofs which were

⁵⁸ The extent of the disturbance to the underfloor deposit of the Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) is not known, however it is likely more artefacts and deposits may be present.

⁵⁹ <https://www.gsdw.gov.au/information/gsdw-bulletin/bulletin-47-3-Student-Housing/>

⁶⁰ Information provided by project architects H & H Architects, on 19 July 2019.

massed to reflect the articulation of the plan, half-timbered gables, tall double hung sash windows (grouped in threes), elegant chimneys, and asymmetrical elevations.

These design elements were a hallmark of George Temple Poole who was the Chief Architect of the PWD during this time, and to some degree this continued under the design leadership of John Henry Grainger (1897 to 1905). Under the leadership of Hillson Beasley, (1905 to 1917), architecture of the PWD was more restrained.

Schools entered in the State Register comparable to the Primary School include:

- P03135 *North Fremantle Primary School (fmr)* - RHP (1894): a fine example of the Federation Arts and Crafts style, with distinctive roof massing, half-timbered gables, and elegant chimneys with distinct cornices. Internally the classrooms are arranged around a central hall
- P02174 *East Perth Primary School (fmr)* - RHP (1895): the principle south elevation incorporates high pitched gabled roofs, round headed windows, and brick walls above a limestone base.
- P01933 *Cottesloe Primary School and Cottesloe School for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired* - RHP (1897, central hall not erected until 1910): a fine example of the Federation Arts and Crafts style with varied roofscape, prominent corbelled and half-timbered gables, arched windows and label moulds, vaulted arcade and English bond brickwork.
- P02434 *Subiaco Primary School* -RHP (1897) - designed by George Temple Poole. Comprises the Senior School, an 1897 brick building designed in the Arts and Crafts style with a central hall and additions (1900-1912) in a consistent style. The Infants School (1901-1968) and Intermediate School (1914), are brick buildings in the Federation Free Style, and Girls Toilets (1957).

The Primary School at *Albany State School Group (fmr)* is a fine representative example of the Central Hall design from 1894.

Infants Schools

Schools entered in the State Register that also have a separate Infant's School include:

- P01933 *Cottesloe Primary School and Cottesloe School for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired* – RHP (1897): designed in the Federation Arts & Craft style, by George Temple Poole. Includes a separate infant's school, constructed 1901, and amalgamated into the main school in 1959. Also includes a Shelter Shed.
- P02174 *East Perth Primary School (fmr)* (RHP) (1895) – Includes an Infant school constructed c.1901. School closed and was converted to children's court in 1975.
- P02241 *Newcastle Street School:* (RHP). Infant school constructed in the 1890s in the Federation Arts & Crafts style. Closed, along with the adjacent primary school, in 1928.
- P03135 *North Fremantle Primary School (fmr)* – (RHP) Constructed in 1894 in the Federation Arts & Craft style. The Infant school was constructed in 1900 across the road from the primary school. Amalgamated 1926.

- P03463 *1915 Block, Albany Primary School* (RHP) The place only includes the 1915 infant school, designed in the Georgian Revival style, which was amalgamated with the primary school in 1974.
- P07596 *Claremont Primary School Precinct*. (RHP) Infant school constructed 1903; closed along with the primary school in 1964.
- P13390 *Geraldton Primary School*. (RHP) – includes an infant school (1915) which amalgamated (date unknown) with an adjacent primary school.

A further six primary schools entered in the State Register are noted as having had a separate Infant School in the early years of the 20th century:

- P02180 *Highgate Primary School* – (RHP) comprising a Senior School (1895) and former Infants' School (1900) in the Federation Arts and Crafts style; former Teacher's Quarters in the Federation Queen Anne Style (1898); Shelter Shed (c.1948), former Manual Training Room (1914) and Pavilion Classroom.
- P02434 *Subiaco Primary School* (RHP) – designed by George Temple Poole. Comprises the Senior School, an 1897 brick building designed in the Arts and Crafts style with consistent additions (1900-1912), an Infants School (1901-1968) and Intermediate School (1914), both brick buildings in Federation Free Style, and Girls Toilets (1957).
- P02505 *Old Midland Junction School* (RHP) (1895-1902) – comprises three single storey Federation Free style brick and iron buildings, which include the 'Main Building', the 'Infants School' and the Headmaster's House.
- P03459 *Victoria Park Primary School* (RHP) (1894-1935) – Comprises a group of nine school buildings.
- P03608 *East Fremantle Primary School* (RHP) (1898) – constructed in the Federation Romanesque style. The place comprises two limestone masonry teaching blocks, a limestone masonry covered assembly area and various other structures.
- P09394 *Maylands Primary School* – (RHP) a complex of single storey brick and timber and iron buildings, in the Federation Free and Federation Arts and Craft styles, comprising a Senior Primary School (1903), Shelter Shed (1905), Junior Primary School (1915), Out of School Care Centre and an Arts and Crafts Centre (1920).

The Infants School (fmr) which forms part of *Albany State School Group (fmr)* is an example of a school which changed from a Central Hall design to a corridor design, which typified the design of schools across Western Australia from the late 1890s to the early 20th century.

Victorian Tudor style

The Headmaster's Quarters (fmr) is a single storey c1880s residence constructed of Albany granite. It was originally designed in the Victorian Tudor style, however, the decorative gable shown in historic photographs was removed sometime after c1935. As a result of this loss of fabric, the current residence now presents more as a Victorian Italianate building, however for the purpose of this assessment, the comparative information focuses on places in the original Victorian Tudor style of the building.

There are 14 places in the Victorian Tudor style on the database, all of which are entered in the State Register. The following 4 places are comparable single storey buildings in this style:

- P0044 *Pyrmont* (RHP) (c1870s) – a single story stone and iron residence in the Victorian Tudor style, located at Serpentine Road, Albany. This is the most comparable place to Headmaster’s Quarters (fmr).
- P1270 *Offices and Dental Surgery*, Kalgoorlie (RHP) (1898) – a pair of single storey brick and iron semi-detached buildings in the Victorian Tudor style built for residential purposes and later adapted for commercial use.
- P1881 *Northam State School* (RHP) (1878) – a single storey brick school building in the Victorian Tudor style with a curvilinear parapeted gable at the centre of the main façade.
- P842 *Film and Television Institute*, Fremantle (RHP) (1855) – former Fremantle Boys School

The ten other places noted as being in the Victorian Tudor are more substantial buildings, or groups of buildings that contain individual elements in this style:

- P875 *Museum and Arts Centre*, Fremantle (RHP) (1861-1886) - the building displays an eclectic mix of styles including Victorian Tudor.
- P898 *Christian Brothers College*, Fremantle (RHP) (1882 onwards) – the classroom room block includes elements of the Victorian Tudor style.
- P2095 *Government House and Grounds*, Perth (RHP) (1864-1904) including P2096 *Government House Ballroom* (1899).
- P2100 *The Deanery*, (RHP) Perth (from 1859)
- P2119 *The Cloisters*, Perth (RHP) (from 1858)
- P2120 *Barracks Arch*, Perth (RHP) (from 1863)
- P2879 *Convent of Mercy and School (fmr)*, York (RHP) (from 1872) – in part in the Victorian Tudor style.
- P14470 *Swanleigh Precinct*, Middle Swan (RHP) (from 1850) – in part in the Victorian Tudor style.

Victorian Tudor is a relatively uncommon architectural style applied to residences in Western Australia, and therefore the Headmaster’s Quarter’s (fmr) is an uncommon example of such, albeit that the most distinctive feature of the building, the decorative gable, is no longer present.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research may reveal more about the construction of the Headmaster’s Quarter’s (fmr), including the date of construction and by whom and for whom it was constructed.