



## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

### 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex*, built of local clay bricks and stone, exhibits an aesthetic style and colour that blends with the textural values and relationship to the site. (Criterion 1.1)

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex*, characterised by its simplicity of form, materials, texture and colour, contributes to the aesthetic quality of the streetscape of Clinton Street. (Criterion 1.3)

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex*, together with *Newcastle Court House* (1897) and *Police Stables* (c.1890), form a civic precinct which contributes to the townscape of Toodyay. (Criterion 1.4)

#### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* demonstrates to both residents and visitors to Toodyay the nature and type of legal administration and law enforcement found in nineteenth century rural towns in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* has a close association with Richard Roach Jewell, Colonial Clerk of Works, who contributed greatly to the building stock of Western Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

#### 11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* has the potential to yield information as a teaching site for architects, historians and students. The level of integrity of the place makes it an accessible reference site for the understanding of building technology in the convict period in Western Australia, in particular, the use of wall linings in cell 9. (Criterion 3.1)

#### 11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

As a tourist attraction, since 1962, *Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* contributes to the community's sense of place, enabling visitors to gain a greater understanding of the nature of European settlement of the Toodyay region. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

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### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* is a fine example of convict built architecture and the manner in which law and order was maintained at the time. The conditions of life in the lock-up of that period are still evident. The construction of additional quarters and day rooms, indicate the changing nature and scale of the operation. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* is in sound structural condition since undergoing extensive restoration work in 1962, 1980-81, 1982-83 and 1984.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* retains its original fabric but has lost its original function. The presence of displays has not diminished the cultural heritage significance of the place which retains a high degree of integrity.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* underwent restoration in 1962 and an extensive restoration program was carried out in the 1980s. The place retains a high degree of authenticity.

## 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* is a single-storey building complex completed, in 1864, to provide secure prison facilities for Toodyay.

Toodyay was a small village on the bend of the Avon River, near the West Toodyay Bridge. It flourished briefly during the 1850s; however, it was plagued by floodwaters and its decline began when a new town of Newcastle was gazetted in 1861.

The new town was located about 3 km upstream around the site of the convict depot, where a number of comparatively substantial buildings had already been erected. Thereafter, old Toodyay declined further.<sup>1</sup> Newcastle's name was changed to Toodyay, in 1911, following confusion with Newcastle in NSW.<sup>2</sup>

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* was Toodyay's third lock-up. The first was built in 1852, at the old townsite. The second lock-up, a cell at the Hiring Depot, soon became inadequate. After an escape in 1861 by Moondyne Joe, a ticket-of-leave man who stole the Magistrate's horse, saddle and bridle to make good his escape,<sup>3</sup> it was decided to build a stronger lock-up.

Plans for the *Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* were drawn up by Colonial Clerk of Works, Richard Roach Jewell in 1862. Jewell was responsible for the architectural design of Government buildings between 1853 and 1884. Much of Perth's colonial character is attributed to him. Jewell designed the *Perth Courthouse and Gaol* (1853-56) in limestone with simple blank arcades and recessed windows. His other works include, *The Cloisters* (1858), *The Deanery* (1859), *Government House* (1859-63) and other police buildings including, *Courthouse and Gaol*, Guildford (1866 additions), *Roebourne Police Station* (1874, 1882, 1887) and *Greenough Police Station and Gaol* (1870).<sup>4</sup>

The construction of *Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* took several years to complete. Convict labour was used, although the work was supervised by a stonemason (ex-convict) who was living in the area. He complained of having unskilled workers (convicts) working with him and reported that the job was taking longer to do because of this. The existing gaol complex is smaller than was originally planned. The facility was operational by 1865.

The complex comprised two rooms used as warders' quarters, a room used as the visiting Magistrates' Court Room, a kitchen and store room, located off the central exercise yard, and eight cells, one of which was larger than the others. Jewell's plan shows a particular timber lined security cell which also has an iron bar for leg irons. This cell was probably used for prisoners who were high risk, but it may also have been used for Aboriginal prisoners who were still shackled and chained until the 1900s.<sup>5</sup>

In 1879, a decision was made to upgrade *Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* to serve as a common lock-up for the Avon Valley. It continued as a lock-up and Police Headquarters until around the turn-of-the-century.<sup>6</sup> *Old Gaol and*

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1 Old Toodyay is now referred to as West Toodyay.

2 Erickson, R., *Old Toodyay and Newcastle*, (Toodyay Shire Council, 1974), p. xii.

3 *ibid.*, p. 8.

4 Tanner, H. (ed) *Architects of Australia*, (The MacMillan Company of Australia Pty Ltd, 1981), p. 41.

5 'The Old Newcastle Gaol - 1865', (brochure, n.d.).

6 Precise date of closure unknown.

*Police Station Complex* was rented as a dwelling up until World War II, after which time it fell into disrepair.<sup>7</sup>

In the early 1960s a joint effort between the Tourist Development Authority and the Local Government Authority, the first of its type in Western Australia, saw the development of *Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* as the State's first regional museum.

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* was officially opened by the Industrial Development Minister Charles Court (in the absence of Premier Brand) on 7 July 1962.<sup>8</sup> A plaque on the wall near the entrance records:

Newcastle Gaol, 1869. This building was restored in 1962 by the Toodyay Shire Council in conjunction with the W.A. Tourist Development Authority to preserve for future generations the way of life in the pioneering days of the state.<sup>9</sup>

The museum incorporated a courtroom scene and various cells had been set up to display turn-of-the-century artefacts that were used in the district, and various records of Toodyay's history from 1836 to the turn-of-the-century.

During his opening address, Mr Court commented that, "... the Toodyay museum would not only be a most unusual (sic) tourist attraction, but would be of tremendous educational value to children and help them play their part in future development."<sup>10</sup>

In 1978, the Toodyay Gaol Museum became an official regional museum under the *Museum Act 1969-73*.

The place received Commonwealth National Estate Grants Program funds in 1980/81, 1982/83 and 1983/84 to conserve the building.

In 1994, *Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* continues to be used as a museum. It has become a well known tourist destination, drawing people's attention to the European settlement and development of Toodyay.

## 13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* comprises a lock-up sited a short distance from the Avon River on rising ground above the town. Opposite the complex is the Police Stables. The stone building constructed c.1890, compliments the lock-up and has been restored with National Estate funds 1975/76.<sup>11</sup> *Newcastle Court House* (1897), is located 400m from the intersection of Fiennes and Clinton Street. All buildings are visible from the intersection and form a civic precinct.

*Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* is a simple, single-storey, random rubble stone structure with a steeply pitched, timber framed hipped roof covered in jarrah shingles. The shingles were later replaced in 1962.

Originally the complex took the form of a central exercise yard bounded on the western side by a row of eight cells of equal size, and one of a larger size that confined native prisoners, and partially on the eastern side (Clinton Street) by an administration block that comprised warder's quarters, left of the entrance, and on the right, a visiting Magistrate's court room. The remainder of the yard was enclosed by 4.3 metre high walls.

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<sup>7</sup> 'Toodyay Shire Council submission', (1980, 1p.).

<sup>8</sup> *Central Districts Herald Tribune*, 11 October 1962, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> 'Toodyay Shire Council submission', (1980, 1p.).

The administration block was extended in 1864, to include a second room for warder's quarters, left of the entrance. A kitchen and storeroom was built in the exercise yard against its northern wall. The two existing doorways on either side of the original administration block were bricked-up, and an entrance door, to allow direct access of guarded prisoners through the yard without the use of the administration block, was made through the wall on the southern side of the exercise yard.<sup>12</sup>

The walls of *Old Gaol and Police Station Complex* are constructed of hand-faced granite and stone, of varying size and shape, collected from the site. The use of building materials taken from the site strengthens the aesthetic relationship of the structures to the site in their colour and texture. The external and internal leaves of the walls were bonded with mud and stone chips, filling all cavities resulting in a solid wall approximately 610 mm thick. The external leaf was protected from weathering by roughly grooved, mortar sealed joints. Cement rendered stone buttresses were erected where the ground sloped away. The walls were faced internally with mud render, dug from pits near the site. The render provided an even surface for applied whitewash or lime plaster.<sup>13</sup>

The exterior of the buildings features quoins of hand made fired bricks, recessed jarrah lintels supporting the window and door openings and relieving brick arched lintels. The top of the walls of the exercise yard was capped with semi-elliptic, terracotta bricks, cement rendered and covered with broken glass.<sup>14</sup>

The cell doors were constructed of two diagonally opposed layers of boarding covered with tongue and groove boarding, clinch nailed, to give a finished door thickness of approximately 50 mm. The doors have iron bolts and hinges. The cell doors contain nine small air holes which were also used by guards as inspection holes for observing convicts. The holes also allowed the convicts their only view of the exercise yard. The double doors leading to the exercise yard have a full length central protection strip of iron to cover the lap of the doors. The cells contain strip windows to the external walls, located approximately 3.4 metres above floor level, and set into hand-worked pine frames with vertical bars. The windows of the Administration block are also protected with bars.<sup>15</sup>

Floors are timber throughout except in the two room extension to the north, which are cement rendered stone. The ceilings of the cells were at eaves height and were whitewashed planks. The ceilings have been removed in the administration block but were probably located at the eaves line, and constructed of planks similar to those in the cells or of lath and plaster. Galvanised iron gutters were once attached to the eaves.<sup>16</sup>

Stone paths led down the front of the cells, across the yard, between the doors of the administration block. A structure containing four pan-type toilets (no longer extant) hung from the south wall of the exercise yard. A shallow drain runs north to the side of the cell path, across the length of the yard and passes beneath the stone wall.<sup>17</sup>

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12 *The Architect*, Vol 3, September, 1960, p. 29.

13 *ibid.*, p. 30.

14 *ibid.*

15 *ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

16 *ibid.*

17 *ibid.*, p. 33.

The structures are devoid of decoration with the exception of whitewashing to the lower section of the some of the external walls, and the delicately spoked, semi-circular fanlight that adorns the door of the entrance hall. With the exception of fireplaces located in each room of the administration block, the interiors are austere. Leg chains for the native prisoners are still fastened to iron bars, located on the rear wall of the larger cell.<sup>18</sup>

In 1980-81, restoration work was carried out to *Old Gaol and Police Station Complex*. Much of the work was confined to rebuilding and patching of major cracks to walls. The north wall of the kitchen and part of the north wall of the exercise yard and cell block was rebuilt. The west wall of the cell block, north wall of the exercise yard and the east wall of the kitchen and quarters were restored and cleaned of insect damage.<sup>19</sup>

The program of restoration work continued through 1982-83. Major cracks in the external walls of the cell block and cells 8 and 9 (native cell) were repaired. The interior lining of cell 9 (iron was built into the walls to prevent prisoners from scraping the mortar from the stonework<sup>20</sup>) was restored.

In 1983-84, restoration work continued to the walls and included repointing of stone and brickwork, patching of cracks, rebuilding of stone walls, replastering, painting of interior walls and ceilings, installation of new ceiling framing and cornices, refixing and restoration of floor boards, installation of new doors with hinges and bolts to cells and the south wall of the exercise yard, electrical wiring and lights to cells 1-7, replacing of roof gutters, new brick paving to the exercise yard and a new drain to discharge into the adjacent creek west of the building.<sup>21</sup>

A shed to the rear of the complex has been incorporated into the museum and exhibits farm machinery.

### 13.3 REFERENCES

National Trust Assessment Exposition.

Australian Heritage Commission Data Sheet.

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<sup>18</sup> Erickson, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> See Chitty, I. D., 'Restoration Work to Newcastle Gaol Toodyay', (National Estate Grants Program 1980/81) for full description of works.

<sup>20</sup> Erickson, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> See Chitty, I. D., 'Restoration Work to Newcastle Gaol Toodyay', (National Estate Grants Program 1983/84) for specification and drawings.