



**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)

- 3.19 Marketing and retailing

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 308 Commercial and service industries

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The place has aesthetic significance as a single storey corner shop building with glazed shopfronts and re-entrant entry doors dating from the 1920s. (Criterion 1.1)

The place is an example of an Interwar building, which incorporates detailing from earlier architectural styles, most notably the Federation Arts and Crafts style, in a romantic fashion. (Criterion 1.2)

The place, situated on the corner of Newcastle and Fitzgerald Streets, distinguished by its arched parapets with tripartite timber vents to the truncated corner and to the prominent parapet, which resembles a Dutch gable, to the Newcastle Street elevation, is a recognised landmark building in the Northbridge area. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The place reflects the expansion of commercial development in the city of Perth in the area north of the railway line in the years following World War Two. (Criterion 2.1)

The changing occupancy of the shops by proprietors of different ethnic backgrounds reflects the social and cultural changes that have occurred in Northbridge and the changing focus of the commercial life of the area. (Criterion 2.1)

The place reflects the changing nature of the locality due to major developments in the Northbridge area connected to the creation of the Northbridge tunnel. (Criterion 2.2)

* 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.

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The place is significant for its on-going role in providing goods and services to the public. (Criterion 4.1)

The place has value to both the Asian and non-Asian community for its contributions to the health care of those communities. (Criterion 4.1)

The place is highly valued by the community for its association with the history of Northbridge and for contributing to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The place is rare as an example of a row of shops, in close proximity to the City of Perth, which has retained its external shopfront detailing, in particular the glazed shopfronts, timber framed re-entrant doors and truncated corner entry.

The place is rare as an example of an architectural expression, which incorporates detailing from earlier architectural styles, most notably the Federation Arts and Crafts style, in a romantic fashion.

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The place is a representative example of a single storey row of shops which share the following broad characteristics: facades truncated at the corner, decorative rendered parapets concealing the roofline, cantilevered awnings and re-entrant doors to shop fronts.

12. 3 CONDITION

The building is in good condition although there has been some deterioration of the external and internal finishes.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The place remains in use as a commercial building, although it no longer functions as seven separate shops. It houses a herbalist shop, acupuncture room, offices and showrooms operated by one business. The place has a moderate to high degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The place has a moderate to high degree of authenticity. Although there have been some modifications to the internal layout to accommodate changing needs, most of the original fabric is intact and additions to the rear do not detract from the understanding of the place.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Robyn Taylor, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Palassis Architects.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The general neighbourhood around Fitzgerald, Newcastle and Aberdeen Streets was to remain largely undeveloped until the onset of the 1890s gold boom, which saw tremendous activity in land speculation and building in the city area.¹ Prior to this, there had been some increased settlement in the area north of the city following the opening of the railway in 1881. The railway, rather than the river, became the main transport route for goods and people between the port of Fremantle and Perth, and Perth and Guildford.² Another development, indicative of increased settlement in the district, was the establishment of the West Perth parish of the Catholic Church towards the end of the 1880s. This resulted in the erection of the St Brigid's convent buildings and school on the western side of Fitzgerald Street between John and Aberdeen Streets between 1889 and 1901.³ A c.1895 map of the 'City of Perth and Suburbs' reveals the scattered development of this part of Northbridge with pockets of building on the east side of Fitzgerald Street along Newcastle and Aberdeen Streets, while on the west side there are large areas of vacant land from the south-west corner of Aberdeen (where the future St Brigid's Church would be built during the early 1900s), to Leeder Street north of Newcastle Street. The area was to support a mixture of land uses from residential cottages and some mansions, particularly further east along Aberdeen Street, to shops and stores, stables and light industry.⁴ It may have been the proliferation of shops around the west end of Aberdeen Street and around the corner into Fitzgerald Street that discouraged the commercial development of Lot 156 until the 1920s.

In 1922, a series of shops were erected on James McConnell's land, Lot 156. These included a corner shop, No.109 Fitzgerald Street, and six shops Nos.377a to 388 Newcastle Street.⁵ The most consistent tenant of this group appears to have been Alfred Hadley, a bootmaker, who would occupy the premises at No.377a until c.1940. According to the rate books for 1922-3, all the shops appear to have been occupied. Mr J. H. Potter operated a general store in the corner shop at No.109 Fitzgerald Street; Mr Hadley is listed at No.377a; Mr Norton Sleight, a hairdresser, No.379; Mr J. Olifent, a plumber, No.381; Mr Con Salvans, a fish merchant at No.383; Miss A. Elliott, a draper shop and dressmaking establishment at No.385; and in No.387, Mr George Pittman operated a tailors and drycleaners.⁶

McConnell's actual ownership of Lot 156 and the buildings erected on the site is not entirely clear from the 1923 rate books. His name had been written into the ledger then replaced by a group name, Hyem, Hester & Co, land

1 City of Perth, Thematic Historical Framework, p.H/23. (Undated) Copy of document held by the City of Perth.

2 City of Perth Municipal Inventory, Historical Notes for those places in the Northbridge area.

3 National Trust of Australia (WA) files for St Brigid's Convent Buildings. The architect was Michael Cavanagh.

4 City of Perth rate books and post office directories for the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

5 The rate books and post office directories do not provide a particularly clear history of No.109 Fitzgerald Street/377 Newcastle Street. The entry for 1922 has No.377 on the other side of the road, which may have been an error as the occupant is given as Mr Hadley the bootmaker, although there are other entries for 377 and 377a which are confusing. Sometimes the rate books record 109 Fitzgerald Street as a notation above the entries for Newcastle Street with no details about the occupant. The first shop is generally listed as No.377a Newcastle Street, with 377 sometimes listed on the other side of Fitzgerald Street.

6 Post Office directory for 1923. Against Mr Pittman's name is 't/r and drycleaners'. Presumably 't/r' is a shortened form for 'tailor'.

agents.⁷ However, in that year's entry, the group's name is also crossed out and that of William Padbury is entered as the owner of Lot 156.⁸ It is possible that it was Padbury who developed the site. The word 'shop' is listed against each street number but no occupants are listed. However, the post office directory for 1924 lists Mrs L. T. Lornton operating a store at No.377 (presumably No.109 Fitzgerald Street, although J. Potter is still listed at this address in 1925) and Alfred Hadley in 377a, then the Perth Upholstery Company in the end shop at No.387, indicating a rapid turn-over for No.387. The other four shops are listed as vacant. In the 1925 post office directory, apart from Nos. 109 and 377a, the rest of the shops in Newcastle Street are listed as vacant. However, the rate books list 'Munda Potter' for 109 Fitzgerald Street, Hadley for No.377a, and Joseph Ford (with no shop description) for No.379. The impression is gained, from these and subsequent entries that the shops were to experience a chequered history in terms of the tenure of the various tenants and the nature of the goods and services being offered. Apart from Mr Hadley the bootmaker, the watchmaker Mr D. Sonnadere had a relatively long tenancy at his shop at No.383 from the late 1920s to the late 1930s. Others who were to operate their business for varying periods of time between the late 1920s and the late 1940s included Mr E. Cole, a tobacconist and hairdresser; the Murray River Publishing Company and newsagency in 1932/33; a drapers, dressmakers, milliners, and in the late 1940s a repairer of musical instruments in No 379, and a fruit shop in No.109. What these listings also indicate is that certain stores did not maintain a specific identity in terms of what was sold. Instead, they appear to have undergone frequent adaptations depending on the tenant moving into the premises. In a number of instances, the post office directories only list the names of the tenants and not the nature of their business.

Some of the names listed in the post office directories during the 1930s and 1940s indicate something of the demographic changes that were taking place in Northbridge resulting from post-war immigration. Names such as Grassines, Triani, Ruberffoni, Frankina, Lehane, and Re; the latter becoming a famous family name in Northbridge with the establishment of the Re Store in Lake Street, which specialised in imported Italian foods and wines.⁹ In 1938, Padbury sold the property to Gerald Joseph Charles.¹⁰ However, ownership was to change in 1944 when Stanley Williams Hart acquired the property as one the principals of the group Hart & Co.¹¹

During the 1960s and 1970s, following the release of plans to develop a north-of-the-city bypass, large tracts of land and properties between Newcastle and

⁷ The rate books entries are sometimes difficult to read when corrections and over-writing has occurred. Entries are hand-written and only micro-fiche copies are available at the State Records Office. The micro-fiche vary greatly in quality. This entry is difficult to make out. Hyem, Hester & Co were land agents on Perth at the time., and it seems likely that this is who the entry refers to.

⁸ Little information could be found on William Padbury. It could be assumed he was connected to the well known Padbury family, in particular Walter Padbury who owned the stores in Guildford. There is a listing for a William Padbury (b.31/08/1867) who worked as a manager of the Guildford store. It is noted that he was 'unsuccessful in business'. See, Erickson, R., *The Bicentenary Dictionary of Western Australians*, Vol.III, K-Q, p.2401.

⁹ See 'Re Store had humble start' in *North of the Bridge*, December, 1995, p.18; and 'Re Store gives Northbridge its aroma', in *Business News*, Oct.19 - Nov.1, 1995, p.21.

¹⁰ City of Perth rate book for 1938.

¹¹ City of Perth rate book for 1944. Certificate of Title Vol.1055, Folio 488 lists four members of the Hart family and one other person, William Norman Dunstan as tenants in common.

Aberdeen Streets were resumed by the government.¹² Lot 5 (former Town Lot Y156) was acquired by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority in 1975.¹³ During the subsequent years it appears the shops were leased out to a variety of groups including the Boys Scouts Association, which operated a second hand furniture store for charity.¹⁴ The company Slate and Tile also used a number of the shops to promote its products.

From c1987, a Chinese Herbal shop operated from No.385-387, which was taken over by Mrs Mimi Hui in 1989.¹⁵ The Chinese Herbalist Ginseng Tong¹⁶ (Store), together with its other services and goods, now occupies the entire suite of shops which are linked by internal door-ways. The business provides a wide range of traditional and modern Asian health services to both the Asian and non-Asian community. According to Mrs Hui 80% of her clientele are non-Asian. She continues to operate the traditional Chinese herbalist store in Nos.385 and 387, while the other shops which had been occupied by Slate and Tile,¹⁷ contain treatment rooms for acupuncture and massage; offices, storage spaces, and a showroom for various products. The business could well be one of the largest and possibly most comprehensive centres of its type in the metropolitan area.¹⁸ The showroom, Austnetic Zone Pty Ltd, which is part of the enterprise, occupies 109 Fitzgerald and 377a Newcastle Street. A large strong room is located at the back and between Nos.383 and 385 that is used for storage of herbs and other products. The strong-room had existed prior to The Chinese Herbalist,¹⁹ and may have been installed by the watchmaker Mr Sonnadere, who had operated from No.383 during the late 1920s and 1930s.

In June 2000, title to Nos.377-387 was acquired by the East Perth Redevelopment Authority.²⁰

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Shops and Offices, 109 Fitzgerald Street & 377-387 Newcastle Street comprises a row of single storey attached shops constructed in 1922.

Shops and Offices, 109 Fitzgerald Street & 377-387 Newcastle Street is situated on the south-west corner Newcastle Street and Fitzgerald Streets, Northbridge. The land to the south and west of the place was cleared during the construction of the Northbridge tunnel, leaving the building standing isolated on its corner. On the north-west corner of the intersection is a substantial two storey commercial building dating from the late nineteenth century. The building has a truncated corner and a rendered parapet concealing the roofline. Along the Newcastle Street and Fitzgerald Street elevation of the building there is a verandah to the first floor with a timber balustrade and a corrugated iron bull-nose verandah. The lots on both the north-east and

¹² *The West Australian*, Advertising feature celebrating the opening of the Northbridge Tunnel, 20 April, 2000. '40 years in the planning', article by George Hackett, former Director, Strategic Planning for Main Road, p.5.

¹³ Certificate of Title, Vol.1055, Folio 488. Dated 30 September 1975.

¹⁴ Discussion with Mrs Mimi Hui, current proprietor of 377-387 Newcastle Street.

¹⁵ Discussion with the proprietor Mrs Mimi Hui, 16 March, 2001.

¹⁶ According to Mrs Hui, the Chinese word 'tong' means a shop for herbals.

¹⁷ A photograph taken in 2000 shows Slate and Tile advertising on all the shop fronts except the last two shops, Nos.385 and 387.

¹⁸ Discussion with Mrs Hui's cousin, 6 April, 2001.

¹⁹ Discussion with Mrs Hui.

²⁰ Certificate of Title, Vol.1055, Folio 488. Registered 30 June, 2000.

south east corners of the intersection are vacant. Along this section of Newcastle Street there are no street trees and the pavement is constructed from concrete paving slabs.

Shops and Offices, 109 Fitzgerald Street & 377-387 Newcastle Street comprises a row of seven attached single storey shops with no set back from the street. The architectural style of the building is not readily identifiable although the facade does incorporate some of the indicators for the Federation Arts and Crafts style, namely roughcast walling and parapets with a rounded apex.

The six shop fronts along Newcastle Street (Nos. 377, 379, 381, 383, 385 and 387) each have offset re-entrant doorways flanked by metal framed plate glass windows. The windows are set above a plain rendered plinth and the doorways have a tessellated tile surface. The entry to each shop comprises a glazed timber framed door with a narrow sidelight and a fixed transom window above. Much of the original door hardware appears to be intact. The shopfronts are essentially identical, however the side to which the doorway is offset alternates with the central four entries being mirror images. Above the plate glass windows to each shop is a leadlight window.

The north east corner of the building is truncated to accommodate the entry to the corner shop (No. 109 Fitzgerald Street). The doorway to this shop differs from the others in that it is only slightly recessed.

There is a return cantilevered metal awning to the north and east elevations which extends over the full width of the pavement. The awning has a flat roof and a mini-orb lining to its underside. Above the level of the awning is an arched parapet with a roughcast finish capped by rendered cornices. The parapet to the truncated corner incorporates a tripartite timber vent, comprising a central arched vent, which is flanked on either side by a square headed vent. Above No. 381 and No. 383 the parapet resembles a Dutch Gable, having curvilinear sides and arched cornice at its apex. To the centre of this parapet is a timber vent of the same design as that found at the truncated corner. There is no parapet to the shop on either side. A terracotta-tiled gable roof rises above the parapet level. The roofline is segmented by the parapets to the party walls between each shop. The external joinery to the north and east elevations is generally painted dark green whilst the façade below the level of the awning is painted turquoise. The parapet is painted a dark cream colour.

The rear of the building sits under a corrugated iron roof. The west and south (rear) elevations comprise face brickwork laid in a stretcher bond. There are two paired timber framed double hung windows to the centre of the west elevation. The brickwork to the northern end of this elevation is painted turquoise. To the rear of Nos. 387 and 385 are skillion roofed sections with red face brick walls. There is a window to the rear of No. 387, which has been boarded up. The window has a brick sill and a soldier course brick lintel. To the east of the skillion section the brickwork is painted turquoise. The fascia board to the centre of the rear elevation is missing. To the eastern end is a simple brick parapet, which incorporates a low brick chimney with a rendered cornice.

The floor plan of the building comprises a linear strip of rectangular, one-room shops. The shopfront display area to the front of the shops is mostly lined with vertical timber boards. All shops are interconnected by a series of doorways located in the party walls. Internally, walls are typically finished with a finely textured render and ceilings are plaster. Floors are 110 mm T & G timber boards with a carpet finish and splayed timber skirting board. The

only exception being the floor to the rear of No. 387, which is painted concrete. There is a metal duct running along the rear wall to Nos. 383-377.

The party wall between Nos. 387 and 385 has been almost entirely removed, thus forming a single large space. These two shops are slightly deeper in plan and have storerooms to the rear. There is a small room fitted with a safe door located to the eastern side of the southern end of No. 385. A metal duct runs along the east wall of this shop. The ceiling has a plaster scotia cornice and is fitted with fluorescent strip lights. There is a skylight with a lattice screen to the centre of the room. A steel truss spans the ceiling in place of the party wall.

There is a doorway in the east party wall of No. 385, which leads to No. 383. The doorway has a timber architrave and is not fitted with a door. The floor to No. 383 steps down one level. The room is subdivided by a 2100 mm high ply and glass partition with a flush timber door. The shop front display area to the east side of the doorway is fitted with a timber framed sliding window. The rear wall of the room comprises painted face brick.

A flush timber door with a glazed pane opens in the east party wall of No. 383 to shop No. 381. The shop front display area to the west side of the doorway is fitted with a timber framed sliding window, as per No. 383. There is a large opening with a shallow arched head located on the east wall of No. 381. The opening has been sealed up and incorporates a flush timber door that accesses No. 379. The floor to shop No. 379 steps down a level. There is a small section of 90mm moulded timber skiting board along the east wall of this shop.

The party wall between No. 377 and No. 109 has been removed creating a larger open planned space. A steel truss spans the ceiling. There is a split-level floor, No. 109 being stepped down. Internal joinery to both shops has been painted turquoise. The ceiling has a plaster scotia cornice. The entry door to No. 109 on Fitzgerald Street is presently not used.

Generally the place remains largely as constructed, although there have been some modifications to the internal layout. These modifications include the removal of party wall between shop Nos. 387 385 and Nos. 377 and 109 and new door and door openings between each of the shops. Some of the shopfront displays have been modified. Externally there has been a brick addition to the south (rear) elevation at the western end.

The building is in good condition although there has been some deterioration of the external and internal finishes.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Shops and Offices, 109 Fitzgerald Street & 377-387 Newcastle Street may be compared to shop buildings of a similar age, scale and form which are sited on a corner. There are numerous examples of such structures extant within the Perth Region, many of which share the following broad characteristics: facades truncated at the corner, decorative rendered parapets concealing the roofline, cantilevered awnings and re-entrant doors to shop fronts.

Shops and Offices, 109 Fitzgerald Street & 377-387 Newcastle Street may also be compared to single storey shop buildings dating from the inter-war period, which exhibit similar detailing. Hay Street, West Perth, and shops on the corners of Bennett and Hay Streets, East Perth, are other examples, although the detailing of the parapets is simpler.

215–229 Bulwer Street, Perth, an example of lesser importance, comprises a row of attached single storey shops with prominent stepped and arched parapets. The parapets, which incorporate tripartite timber vents, have a roughcast finish and are capped with rendered cornices. The parapet is not continuous along the full length of the façade thus exposing sections of the roof, which is clad in ceramic tiles.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research is required to find out the names of the architect and builder, and dates of changes to the interior fabric of the buildings. Further research is required into the tenure of the buildings.