



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)

- 8.1.1 Playing and watching organised sport

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 405 Sport, recreation and entertainment
- 407 Cultural activities

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Western Australian Rowing Club is valued by the community for its simply detailed two storey timber structure provides indicative representation of early river architectural culture. (Criterion 1.1)

The place is important in providing an architectural focus both historic and aesthetic to the recently upgraded Barrack Street Jetty and foreshore landscape environment. The building provides a visual reference in its setting, being an identifiable landmark on the foreshore from the City, Kings Park, South Perth and the river itself. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

West Australian Rowing Club boat shed houses the first rowing club established in Western Australia (in 1868) and is now the only remaining such building in the Perth district. (Criterion 2.1)

The place is highly significant as the last remaining building representing a diversity of recreational, social, industrial and transportation activities carried out on the river and foreshore during the first one hundred years of the colony. (Criterion 2.2)

West Australian Rowing Club has close association with WARC members since 1905 and is significant to the development and activities of the state's rowing fraternity and for the association with the Club of prominent members of the community throughout the history of the city. (Criterion 2.3)

* 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

The place is significant in contributing to a wider understanding of cultural history by virtue of its use as a reference or benchmark site illustrating the diversity on the now virtually non-existent city foreshore activities. (Criterion 3.1)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

West Australian Rowing Club is significant in its social and cultural associations for the western Australian rowing fraternity and respective users of the building and the foreshore. (Criterion 4.1)

West Australian Rowing Club is significant in contributing to the Perth community's sense of place through historic association with social, cultural and recreational use of the site where other historic riverfront sites or activities no longer exist. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

West Australian Rowing Club is significant as the only remaining example of timber river/boat shed architecture on the Perth foreshore and one of few remaining examples on the river generally and especially as it is still used daily for its original purpose. (Criterion 5.1)

The place is the last example on the Perth foreshore of cultural activity and diversity in a manner no longer operating. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The building is representative of rowing boat sheds and other piled buildings over the river which no longer survive and are no longer being built. (Criterion 6.1)

West Australian Rowing Club is significant as the building is representative of similar buildings previously existing along the foreshore for various activities, of which it is the sole survivor. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The fabric of the building appears to be in a good condition. The building underwent an extensive reconstruction, restoration and building program between 1994 and 1997 and since then appears to have benefited from a regular maintenance program.

The south side (the river side) is set just above water level and is in a very poor condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The integrity of the building is very high as the boat shed has continued to be used as an active rowing club since it was established. The viability and sustainability are assured with membership increasing, provided the building is protected and restored to allow continued use.

The building is of high integrity as it continues to be used as a rowing club that has an active membership.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

It is difficult to assess the degree of authenticity of the building, in that it is difficult to gauge the extent to which the fabric of the building is in its original state. This is because of the extensive building works that were carried out on it between 1994 and 1997. These were a combination of reconstruction, restoration and new building works. The materials used appear to be a mix of re-cycled timbers (some from the Albany Jetty), re-used from the boat shed (some weatherboarding that appears to be original but it is now not in its original position) and new materials that match the original.

The building is two-storeyed. Originally it had a simple rectangular plan with the only variation being the single storey lean-to that ran for the length of the west side of the building. Photograph 4 of the heritage assessment shows that by 1992 the function room that is on the upper level had been extended towards the west so that it coincided with the outer face of the original lean-to.

The building was extended on both its east and west sides as part of the 1994 to 1997 work. On the east, a two-storey extension occupies most of that face of the building. With the two storeyed part stopping short of the north and south faces of the building by about 3 metres. At ground floor level the new extension carrying through to both faces as a single storey lean-to. The two storied extension has a lean-to roof that is set just below the level of the fascia of the main roof of the building. The weatherboard cladding and windows of the extension are of a type that matches the original part of the building.

The west side of the building was also altered so that east and west faces of the building now match each other.

The south side balcony that was missing in 1992 was reconstructed as part of the recent works. The work appears to be an accurate reconstruction of the detail of the original, probably using PWD drawing 12077. Originally the balcony ran for the length of the south face of the building, whereas the reconstructed balcony also returns for about 3 metres down the east side.

The entry bridge to the building has been extended in width to match the full width of the north face of the building.

The building now stands on circular concrete stumps. The original timber stumps are encased within the new concrete work.

The upstairs function area has been reconfigured and has now been extended on both its east and west sides. Parts of the original walling were removed from within the room as part of the overall widening of the space. The alterations also included the installation of a new bar and toilet facilities.¹

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Attached are key sections of the supporting evidence prepared by Bruce Callow, Architect, with Tanya Suba and Shan Callow, 'West Australian Rowing Club Conservation Plan' prepared for the West Australian Rowing Club and HCWA in October 1992.

Key sections used: Documentary Evidence (p6-12).

¹ Condition update information from Alan Kelsall.
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13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to Bruce Callow, Architect, with Tanya Suba and Shan Callow, 'West Australian Rowing Club Conservation Plan' prepared for the West Australian Rowing Club and HCWA in October 1992.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to Bruce Callow, Architect, with Tanya Suba and Shan Callow, 'West Australian Rowing Club Conservation Plan' prepared for the West Australian Rowing Club and HCWA in October 1992.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a Comparative Analysis refer to Bruce Callow, Architect, with Tanya Suba and Shan Callow, 'West Australian Rowing Club Conservation Plan' prepared for the West Australian Rowing Club and HCWA in October 1992.

13.4 REFERENCES

Bruce Callow, Architect, with Tanya Suba and Shan Callow, 'West Australian Rowing Club Conservation Plan' prepared for the West Australian Rowing Club and HCWA in October 1992.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

The associations of the WA Rowing Club with prominent members of the community throughout the Club's history may warrant further research.

Further research is required to consolidate information between the history of the WARC and the early river foreshore environment.