



## 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.

The wording of this document has been adapted from Old Butter Factory Historical Precinct Conservation Plan with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.5 Developing primary production
- 3.12.2 Developing sources of fresh local produce
- 3.9 Farming for commercial profit

#### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 310 Manufacturing and processing

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

The Butter Factory building is a good example of post WW1 industrial architecture of a simple robust form, reflecting its original manufacturing function. In association with the Boiler House and Stack, the Butter Factory building is the most prominent building within the *Old Butter Factory*. (Criterion 1.1)

*Old Butter Factory* has scenic vistas across the wetlands of the Vasse Estuary, which may be appreciated from the rear of the site. The position of *Old Butter Factory*, set back from the street, and the mature plantings of trees and gardens, contribute to the pleasant ambience of the place. (Criterion 1.3)

#### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Old Butter Factory* was established by the State government from 1918 to replace the earlier outdated 1898 dairy in the Fairlawn district of Busselton, which was the first butter factory to be established in Western Australia. The change of use of the place from butter factory (1918) to powdered milk factory and depot (1960) and then to museum (1975), reflects the history and changes to the dairy industry in Western Australia in general, and in the south-west in particular. (Criterion 2.1)

---

\* 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.

*Old Butter Factory*, as a major regional centre in both its original role in agriculture and its current use as a museum, was crucial to the early development of Busselton, and continues to contribute to the town's tourism. (Criterion 2.1)

As an operating factory, *Old Butter Factory* played an important role in the local and regional economy, and in the local dairy industry, which was assisted by the increase in dairy farming resulting from the post WWI Group Settlement Scheme implemented in the south-west of Western Australia. The factory also produced ice for locals before the availability of domestic refrigerators. (Criterion 2.2)

*Old Butter Factory* was established in order to assist Western Australia's dairy industry in becoming self sufficient, to reduce import costs, and encourage primary industry. Cream for butter production was supplied from farms in the surrounding Vasse region, and the butter sold back to locals and further abroad. *Old Butter Factory* was crucial in making dairying viable in an area beyond the immediate Perth hinterland, allowing for the supply of long-life dairy products to areas over long distances, where products such as milk and cream would not survive. (Criterion 2.4)

### **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

*Old Butter Factory* has the potential, as an educational site, to yield information pertaining to the use of the place as an early butter factory in Western Australia. The Boiler House (1930s) and Stack (1918), and the few remaining items relating to the working of the factory, including the Lancashire Boiler and Cream Can Washing Tank, provide insight into the workings of the factory. (Criterion 3.1)

### **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Old Butter Factory* is highly valued by the local community as a reminder of a former place of employment, for the important role it played in the local dairy industry and for the produce once available from the place. The building has now acquired contemporary social value for its development as a community based museum and tourist attraction, and as a research centre for the local historical society. (Criterion 4.1)

*Old Butter Factory* contributes to Busselton community's sense of place as an important reminder of the establishment and early development of Busselton and the dairy industry in the State, and to a lesser degree as a reminder of the Group Settlement Scheme. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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

*Old Butter Factory* is one of only seven known examples of early butter factory buildings left in the State and contains several important items of equipment from the early period of operation. The 1898 factory it replaced was the first butter factory to be erected in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Old Butter Factory* is a representative example of the earliest butter factories to be built in this State. The external design of the building is reminiscent of the earlier 1898 building it replaced. (Criterion 6.1)

### 12.3 CONDITION

*Old Butter Factory* is in sound condition and structurally adequate. Major extensions were carried out to the west end and upper level prior to the factory ceasing operations in 1973. Since 1975, the current tenants have undertaken gradual alterations, additions and maintenance works, including electrical rewiring, re-roofing, and re-concreting and levelling of some floors.

Cracking is evident internally over some openings, and there has been considerable erosion of the mortar over the years, most of which has been inadequately patched. Dry rot to the upper level floors, referred to in the 1975 National Trust Assessment Report, appears to have been attended to. There is evidence of mildew in some of the ceiling panels and the rendered wall to the Pottery Club has a considerable problem with rising damp due to the absence of damp proof membrane, however none of this adversely affects the structural adequacy of the building.

Works undertaken in 2001 include installing a spoon drain in the forecourt carpark and adjacent access drive, cleaning brickwork, replacing sawn plank lapped boarding to the south side of the Boiler House, replacing barge boards, removing sheeting and re-roofing the ventilator ridge, and re-roofing and replacing the skylight of the timber room.

### 12.4 INTEGRITY

*Old Butter Factory* has a moderate degree of integrity, with limited capacity to be identified with its former function. Its current use as a museum encourages the retention of those elements which contribute to the story of its former use. However, its use as a Museum and headquarters for the local Pottery Club has resulted in the loss of most of the special features or equipment connected with its original purpose. Collectively, the buildings on site not directly relating to the operations of the former Butter Factory detract from the integrity of the place, although they are useful interpretative elements .

### 12.5 AUTHENTICITY

*Old Butter Factory* has a low degree of authenticity. Areas within the original building have been modified to accommodate new uses and the building is no longer recognisable as a butter factory. Additions and modifications carried out over the years, and particularly in the last twenty years, have greatly diminished the authenticity of *Old Butter Factory*. Many important functional elements associated with the butter making process have been lost. Parts of the building have been enclosed for the protection of Museum exhibits, which has resulted in the introduction of various new and recycled materials. The other buildings on site compromise the authenticity of the place.

## 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Supporting evidence has been taken from *'The Old Butter Factory Historical Precinct Conservation Plan'*, prepared by Robin Kornweibel Architects for Shire of Busselton in February 1999.

Key sections used: 2.0 Analysis of Cultural Heritage Significance (pp13-58), 3.1 Assessment of Significant (pp 52-56)

### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to 'The Old Butter Factory Historical Precinct Conservation Plan', prepared by Robin Kornweibel Architects for Shire of Busselton in February 1999.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to 'The Old Butter Factory Historical Precinct Conservation Plan', prepared by Robin Kornweibel Architects for Shire of Busselton in February 1999.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a comparative analysis refer to 'The Old Butter Factory Historical Precinct Conservation Plan', prepared by Robin Kornweibel Architects for Shire of Busselton in February 1999.

Additional Comparative Information prepared by Lynley Forgione, Heritage Council staff:

Dairying in Western Australia began with the establishment of the colony in 1829, although it was not promoted as a commercial venture until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Numerous dairies were established either as part of the daily operations of farms, or as small family dairy's. 10 each of these types are listed on HCWA's database. The date of the establishment of these dairies (for those with dates listed) ranges from 1843 to 1933, with 10 of the 13 with dates established in 1920 or prior. Family owned dairies, operating as company's, tended to be divided between country areas and areas once farming land, but now residential suburbs of Perth, such as South Perth and Como, in order to supply a wider and general public, (5 rural & 5 suburban listed). On the other hand, the farm dairies listed on the database are located largely in rural areas (8 of the 10 listed).

The Group Settlement Scheme, the need to develop a West Australian dairying industry due the high percentage of imported produce, and other factors such as scientific developments in farming led to the development of larger, commercial dairy produce factories, most of which were constructed in the 1920s and 1930s, in rural areas.

HCWA's database lists 7 larger dairy produce places, not including butter factories which are listed below.

NAME	LOCATION	DATE EST.	HCWA #
<b>Capel Dairy Co</b> Still operational	Capel	1930	P14908
<b>Ravenswood</b> Last remaining building of what was Ravenswood Dairy Supplies	Margaret River	1920	P4983
<b>Peters Creamery</b> (Brownes Dairy)	Brunswick Junction	1920	P3166
<b>Stirling Creamery</b> (McFarlane's Creamery)	Capel	c1920s	P15089

<b>Boyanup Creamery</b>	Boyanup	No date	P15173
<b>Balingup Cheese Factory</b> Now a craft shop	Balingup	1933	P0703
<b>Serpentine Falls Cheese Factory</b> Now vacant	Serpentine	1932	P8602

## BUTTER FACTORIES

NAME/DETAILS	LOCATION	DATE EST.	HCWA #
<b>Old Butter Factory</b>	Busselton	constructed in 1918 to replace an earlier 1898 factory	P3568
<b>Narrogin Butter Factory (fmr)</b> constructed by The Great Southern Co-operational Butter Company Ltd	Narrogin	constructed c1918 and began operation in 1919	P1795
Butter factory constructed and equipped for operation, yet no butter was ever made there, due to successive years of dry summers and diseased cattle.	Ravensthorpe	1921	P14062
Butter Factory became Goundrey's Old Butter Factory (fmr), a winery, and is now a shop.	Denmark	1926	P14338
<b>Butter Factory (fmr) site</b>	Harvey	Probably constructed in 1929 by South West Co-operative Dairy Products Ltd, although a butter factory operated at McFarlanes Harvey Creamery from 1920.	P12013
<b>Margaret River Butter &amp; Cheese Factory</b> now a fruit & vegetable market	Margaret River	1929	P4938
<b>Boyanup Butter Factory</b> Now Master's Dairy- continues to function as a dairy	Boyanup	began operation in 1931 (1929 on database)	P14977

### 13.4 KEY REFERENCES

'The *Old Butter Factory Historical Precinct* Conservation Plan', prepared by Robin Kornweibel Architects for Shire of Busselton in February 1999.

### 13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

-----