



**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)

- 2.4 Migrating
- 2.5 Promoting settlement
- 3.5 Developing primary production
- 3.9 Farming for commercial profit
- 3.12.2 Developing sources of fresh local produce
- 3.16 Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure
- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities
- 5.6 Working in the home
- 5.8 Working on the land
- 7.8 Establishing regional and local identity
- 8.11 Making Australian folklore
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 106 Workers
- 107 Settlements
- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 306 Domestic activities
- 602 Early settlers
- 603 Local heroes and battlers
- 605 Famous and infamous people

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

* 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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.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 1840 Cottage is a good example of the simple architecture of the Colonial period, echoing elements of the Victorian Georgian style but is primarily a vernacular building. (Criterion 1.1)

Cattle Chosen's built elements, being sited on the banks of the Vasse River and combined with mature plantings, comprise a rural cultural landscape that has evolved since 1834. (Criteria 1.3 & 1.4)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Cattle Chosen, settled by the Bussell family in 1834 as a family farm and remaining in the family as an active farm from that time to the present (2012), represents a pivotal moment in WA colonial history that led to the development of the Vasse region as an important agricultural district and service centre at the expense of the Augusta settlement. (Criterion 2.1)

Cattle Chosen was the first European settlement in the Vasse district, established from 1834 by John Bussell and his younger brothers and sisters, and the 1840 Cottage is the earliest remnant element of Colonial settlement on the property. (Criterion 2.2)

Cattle Chosen is representative of the conflict between settlers and Aboriginal people in the early years of the development of the Vasse region, as a result of major impacts on the Aboriginal people's traditional ways of living due to the attempts by Europeans to secure the expansion and development of Western Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

First settled in 1834 by John Bussell and his younger brothers and sisters after whom the town of Busselton is named, *Cattle Chosen* has been continuously owned and occupied by descendants of this important colonial family. (Criterion 2.3)

The 1840 Cottage was constructed by John Bussell as an addition to the main house, as a residence for himself and his new wife Charlotte (nee Cookworthy) Bussell. Both John and Charlotte Bussell, as heads of the large family of Bussells who came to the Vasse, were formidable local residents until John's death in 1875 and Charlotte's subsequent departure from the colony the following year. (Criterion 2.3)

Cattle Chosen is associated with other original European settlers to the area, the Laymans, Chapmans, Dawsons and Greens, who lived and worked at the place before establishing their own local holdings. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The historical artefacts collected at the place have the potential to reveal information about the way of life of early settlers in the area. (Criterion 3.1)

The 1840 Cottage is an excellent example of wattle and daub construction retained in good condition, and has potential to reveal information about this vernacular form of construction. (Criterion 3.2)

The place has the potential to reveal archaeological evidence relating to the former buildings on the site, and the change in social habits as the place moved from an isolated frontier farm to one located near a small regional town. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Cattle Chosen is valued by the local and wider community as an intact remnant of the early colonial history of the State that significantly contributes to the local community's sense of place, as demonstrated by its numerous heritage listings and use in architectural student projects, and, it being the subject of a 1926 book entitled 'Cattle Chosen' and articles about its history and value in several twentieth century publications. (Criteria 4.1 & 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The 1840 Cottage is a rare example of a residence from the early Colonial period which has retained high integrity and remains in good condition. (Criterion 5.1)

The 1840 Cottage is a rare example of an intact wattle and daub dwelling and a unique example of a two storey building constructed in this material. (Criterion 5.1)

Cattle Chosen is a rare example of a very early farm that has remained in operation since its establishment (1834) and has continued in the ownership of the original family to the present (2012). (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The 1840 Cottage is an excellent representative example of an early Colonial residence, notwithstanding its unusual feature of being raised above a partially-recessed basement. (Criterion 6.1)

Cattle Chosen is representative of the continuous development of a farming property since 1834, and retains a significant collection of historical artefacts, furniture and domestic fit-out dating from the earliest period of development. (Criterion 6.2)

Cattle Chosen is representative of the conflict between settlers and Aboriginal people in the early years of the development of the Vasse region, as a result of major impacts on the Aboriginal people's traditional ways of living due to the attempts by Europeans to secure the expansion and development of Western Australia. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

In November 2007, the place overall was in fair to good condition.

The 1840 Cottage is in good condition following extensive conservation works since 2001. The setting is maintained as a working farm and is in good condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The place has high integrity as it has been in continuous operation as a family farm since 1834. The 1840 Cottage no longer serves a residential purpose but its original intention is clearly evident.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The place has high authenticity. The original form of the 1840 cottage is substantially as constructed. Much original fabric remains, although externally hidden by the cement rendering. The corrugated iron roof is a replacement for the original shingle roof, but retains the pitch of the original.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

This document has been based on 'Cattle Chosen, 1840s Cottage, Busselton: Conservation Plan', prepared by Naomi Lawrance & Robyn Taylor for S. and P. Vines in September 2002, with amendments and/or additions by State Heritage Office staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence refer to 'Cattle Chosen, 1840s Cottage, Busselton: Conservation Plan', prepared by Naomi Lawrance & Robyn Taylor for S. and P. Vines in September 2002.

Conflict between settlers and Aboriginal people

By the end of 1836 the settlers at The Vasse received the security of six soldiers, later reduced to four, being based at Wonnerup. It was intended that a permanent Barracks be constructed either at The Vasse (now Busselton) or at Wonnerup ten kilometres to the east. However, a failure to choose between these two options resulted in nothing being constructed.¹ One consequence was that settlers thought themselves under continuous threat, and frequently took the law into their own hands.

By mid 1837 conflict arose in the South West between the European settler and the traditional owners of the land, mainly over petty theft by Aborigines of flour, livestock and similar provisions. A further deterioration in relationships resulted in a number of deaths of Indigenous people, including children, while settlers became increasingly afraid to venture out without protection.²

It has been noted that the attitude of the Bussells towards the Indigenous population was 'something approaching fear and grave mistrust'.³ Neville Green has documented some of the conflicts between the Bussells and the local Aborigines, details of which include deaths and kidnapping.⁴ The fears and reactions to the conflicts by the settlers at Cattle Chosen, as expressed through their diaries and correspondence, can be found in Rodger Jennings's history of Busselton.⁵

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence refer to 'Cattle Chosen, 1840s Cottage, Busselton: Conservation Plan', prepared by Naomi Lawrance & Robyn Taylor for S&P Vines in September 2002.

In November 2007, the 1840 Cottage remains vacant. Extensive sensitive conservation works have been undertaken since the conservation plan was prepared. Structural concerns resulting from deterioration of timbers in the basement have been rectified and these timbers repaired or replaced as

¹ Jennings, Rodger, *Busselton: 'Outstation on the Vasse', 1830-50* (Busselton: Shire of Busselton, 1983), pp. 122-23.

² *ibid*, pp. 123-24.

³ *ibid*, p. 143.

⁴ Green, Neville, *Broken Spears: Aborigines and Europeans in the Southwest of Australia* (Perth: Focus Education Services, 1984), pp. 215-24.

⁵ Jennings, *op. cit.*; see also Shann, E.O.G., *Cattle Chosen: the story of the first group settlement in Western Australia, 1829-41* (fac. Nedlands: UWA Press, 1978 [orig. 1926])

required. Timber and corrugated iron sheets over basement windows have been removed and window frames repaired. The lintel of the basement fireplace has been replaced with new timber to match the original, and deteriorating treatments to the random rubble walls have been repaired. White ant damage to timber studs, evident in the Parlour walls, has been addressed and the interior walls repainted to match the existing fabric. Early timber shelving to the Parlour walls has been retained and restored. The wattle and daub construction remains externally clad in chicken wire and cement render. Overall, the place is now in good condition.

Historical artefacts previously located in the building remain in storage with the intention that they be returned to the 1840 Cottage once works are completed.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the comparative information refer to 'Cattle Chosen, 1840s Cottage, Busselton: Conservation Plan', prepared by Naomi Lawrance for S. and P. Vines in September 2002.

Additional information added to the SHO database since the conservation plan was completed requires the following amendments to the comparative information of the Conservation Plan;

The database now includes 271 places from the early Colonial period (1829-1850), of which 76 have a residential function. At least ten of these listings are for historic sites of demolished residences. Many more relate to later period buildings sited on early properties where early elements are either completely absorbed into the later building or are remnant outbuildings of a demolished residence. Twenty-one of the listings are noted as constructed from 1850, which is likely to indicate c.1850s rather than precisely 1850, and therefore include places significantly later than *Cattle Chosen*.

The SHO database now includes 28 places constructed at least in part of wattle and daub. At least six have been demolished, and some may be incorrectly identified as wattle and daub, as information is contradictory. Half are residences. Twelve are on the Register of Heritage Places (including four residences) most of which are of later construction than *Cattle Chosen*. Only two other wattle and daub places are more than single storey, being P1132 *Maddington Homestead* (RHP; gutted by fire in 2004) and P2659 Old Flour Mill, Wandering.

The 1840 Cottage at *Cattle Chosen* is a highly intact example of an early Colonial residence, and is rare as a residence from the early Colonial period of high integrity and in good condition.

The 1840 Cottage at *Cattle Chosen* is rare as an early, intact and well-maintained example of wattle and daub construction, and as a two-storey use of the technique.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

'Cattle Chosen, 1840s Cottage, Busselton: Conservation Plan', prepared by Naomi Lawrance & Robyn Taylor for S&P Vines in September 2002.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH
