



**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
- 3.22 Lodging people
- 4.1 Planning urban settlements
- 4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities
- 7.6 Administering Australia
- 8.13 Living in cities and suburbs

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 107 Settlements
- 308 Commercial services and industries
- 311 Hospitality industry and tourism

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Stirling Terrace Precinct has high aesthetic value as a fine collection of late Victorian and Federation period buildings in a variety of architectural styles, due to the topography of its location, its segmented crescent plan form, mature trees, and harmonious collection of buildings and spaces. (Criteria 1.1 & 1.4)

Many of the buildings in *Stirling Terrace Precinct* are finely designed architectural elements in their own right, including Albany Court House (1898), the centre and western sections of R. Bell and Co. (various dates), the London Hotel (1909), former Union Bank (1885), Empire Buildings (1912), the former Western Australian Bank (1891) and former Drew Robinson & Co. store attached to the latter (1891 and 1916), the former Drew Robinson & Co. (previously Sandover & Co.) store to the east of the carpark (1891 and 1915), the former National Bank (1881), the former Drew Robinson & Co. building (now Dylan's on the Terrace) (1880s), the Royal George Hotel (1910-11), Glasgow House (1882 and 1911), Edinburgh House (1882), Taxi Rank and Women's Rest Rooms (1909), Queen's

* 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.

Park Rotunda (1897) and the former Albany Post Office (1869 and 1896). The former Liquor Store (construction date unknown), Edward Barnett & Co. building (the Terrace Centre) (1888), the White Star Hotel (1910), Argyle Buildings (1880s-1890s) and Everett Buildings (1908) are competently designed places that contribute to the aesthetic value of the precinct. (Criterion 1.1)

Within the precinct, G.T. Poole's designs for the Post Office and Court House demonstrate creative excellence and J.T. Hobbs design for the Sandover & Co store, which later became Drew Robinson & Co.'s store at 108-110 Stirling Terrace, makes innovative use of large plate glass windows. (Criterion 1.2)

Viewed from the harbour and from the western approaches to the town, *Stirling Terrace Precinct* as a whole is a landmark, strengthened by the strong vertical accents of the Royal George Hotel and the former Post Office. (Criterion 1.3)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

As the original commercial heart of the town, *Stirling Terrace Precinct* was significant in the establishment, early occupation, and expansion of Albany, the State's first settlement, and the surrounding district, providing retail, commercial, shipping, entertainment, hospitality and banking services for the town and the region, represented by a plan form that dates from the foundation of the settlement and buildings ranging from 1867-1915. (Criterion 2.1)

Stirling Terrace Precinct located next to the town jetty, was the commercial and social centre of the town from the 1830s to World War One, when Albany was a prominent town in the Colony and Australia, due to its role as the Colony's coal depot for the international mail and passenger service, which linked Europe to the eastern colonies. This role was expanded with the addition of regional railways and interstate telegraph links. (Criterion 2.2)

Stirling Terrace Precinct is associated with many individuals who played a significant role in the history of the State and the region. Some of the State's most prominent architects' works are represented in Stirling Terrace, including Public Works Department Clerk of Works, James Manning; Public Works Department Chief Architect, George T. Poole; prominent architect and military commander Lt. General Sir J. T. Hobbs, and eminent architect J. Herbert Eales. Other architects represented in the precinct include Perth architect J.C. Smith, together with T. Anthoness, local architects Robert Greenshields, E.N. Warne and G. Johnston and Melbourne architect George C. Inskip. (Criterion 2.3)

Stirling Terrace Precinct was the location of many businesses founded and run by significant Albany and regional identities including, Thomas Sherratt, Alexander Moir, John Robinson, Charles Drew, Frank Dymes, Edward Barnett, J.F.T. Hassell, and E.G. Everett. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Where *Stirling Terrace Precinct* was formerly the premier street of Albany and was valued as social and business focus of the town, the changed focus of business activities to York Street and relocation of services such as the Post Office and banks, has shifted the nature of the social values so that the precinct is now valued for its historic associations, the aesthetic values of the setting and the prominent townscape, and for the individual landmark buildings it incorporates. (Criterion 4.1)

Along with the defining topography of the Princess Royal Harbour, Mount Melville and Mount Clarence, *Stirling Terrace Precinct* is one of the elements that contribute to the local community's sense of place and to the identity of Albany throughout the State. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

Stirling Terrace Precinct is a rare townscape, being located in topography of high aesthetic value in its own right and planned to take advantage of harbour views, with a town plan form that dates from the foundation of the settlement, and a set of finely designed buildings ranging in construction dates from 1867-1915. (Criterion 5.1)

Stirling Terrace Precinct is rare as a townscape from a time when the connections between the most prestigious parts of a town were located such that the principal views, port and rail activities were built within a concentrated area, with the town's principal commercial, civic and hospitality overlooking them, a type of design not practiced after the advent of land use planning that separated these activities. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Stirling Terrace Precinct is a fine example of a late nineteenth century and early twentieth century townscape, dating primarily from 1867 to 1915. (Criterion 6.2)

Stirling Terrace Precinct is representative of a range of activities and support infrastructure associated with the foundation and development of a prominent nineteenth century town with port, rail, post and telegraph services. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Generally the public domain of *Stirling Terrace Precinct* is in good condition, although cumulative maintenance and improvements have altered the ability to read some of the historic and aesthetic values. The condition of the individual properties varies. Typically verandahs have been removed and replaced with cantilevered and suspended awnings, which are causing many of the structures stress for which they were not designed, while also simplifying the aesthetic values of some of the more complex buildings. With the deterioration of the stucco and, in some instances, brickwork, painting has been used as a maintenance strategy and this has also had the unintended effect of obscuring historic finishes and reducing the visual complexity of the buildings. Further, during re-roofing at various times, roofscapes have been simplified by removing chimneys and vents, thus reducing the texture of roofscapes and the silhouettes of some buildings.

12.4 INTEGRITY

The purposes for which *Stirling Terrace Precinct* is used vary somewhat from the traditional uses, though many early functions have been retained. The commercial business has tended to become second tier or businesses that are not location dependent. Banks have relocated to York Street and the Post Office has been relocated. Hotels, hospitality, justice, public parks and entertainment remain on the terrace. The integrity of the place is therefore moderate to high.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The basic planning layout of *Stirling Terrace Precinct* remains as it was when first recorded by Hilman in 1835. The topography has been left more or less intact and the buildings arranged to suit the original town plan and the topography. Though much detail has altered, the townscape is strongly representative of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The main changes relate to the treatment of the public domain, including paths, roads and street furniture, and to the buildings that had verandahs, which were later removed. Also, many buildings were painted when it was clearly the design intention for the underlying materials to be left unpainted. Further to this, many of the shopfronts of commercial buildings have been modified in a variety of ways. Some buildings such as the Albany Court House and the former Post Office retain a high degree of authenticity. Few buildings interiors were inspected in this study and those that were indicated that the degree of authenticity of the interiors of buildings is highly varied. The degree of authenticity of the streetscape and buildings exteriors varies from very high to moderate.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The wording of this document has been adapted from Stirling Terrace, Albany Conservation Plan (Considine & Griffiths with Kris Bizzaca, 2001) with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to “Stirling Terrace Albany Conservation Plan” (pp 1- 33) prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd with Kris Bizzaca, Historian for the City of Albany in March 2001.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence, refer to “Stirling Terrace Albany Conservation Plan” (pp 34 – 128) prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd with Kris Bizzaca, Historian, for the City of Albany in March 2001.

The precinct was visited by Regional Adviser Jacqui Sherriff in March 2005, and it was confirmed that there has been no significant change since the conservation plan was completed.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a comparative analysis refer to “Stirling Terrace Albany Conservation Plan” (pp 33 –35) prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd with Kris Bizzaca, Historian, for the City of Albany in March 2001.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

“Stirling Terrace Albany Conservation Plan” prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd with Kris Bizzaca, Historian for the City of Albany in March 2001.

13.5 MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

It is the intention of the Heritage Council that development within the historic precinct will be guided by “Design Parameters for Stirling Terrace Heritage Areas” prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd for the City of Albany in September 2000. Development proposals that are not in accord with these guidelines will need to be given careful consideration by the Heritage Council.

13.6 FURTHER RESEARCH
