



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES – Permanent Entry

1. **DATA BASE No.** 13523
2. **NAME** *Railway Dam, Merredin* (1865; 1895; 1896; 1901; 1939-49)
OTHER NAMES Merredin Peak Dam; Durdgutling; Durdgutting; Well No. 8.
3. **LOCATION** Gravel track, continuation of Benson Street, Merredin
4. **DESCRIPTION OF PLACE INCLUDED IN THIS ENTRY**
Portion of Lot 1452 on Deposited Plan 219868, being portion of Reserve 2914 and part of the land contained in Crown Land Title Volume 3018 Folio 219 as is defined in Heritage Council of Western Australia Survey Drawing 13523 prepared by Whelans, Lot 1177 on Deposited Plan 209959 being portion of Reserve 23520 and the whole of the land contained in Crown Land Title Volume 3145 Folio 587 and Lot 1121 on Deposited Plan 209959 being part of Reserve 23520 and the whole of the land contained in Crown Land Title Volume 3145 Folio 585.
5. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA** Shire of Merredin
6. **OWNER** State of Western Australia
(Management Order to the Shire of Merredin)
7. **HERITAGE LISTINGS**
 - Register of Heritage Places: Permanent Entry 07/12/2007
 - National Trust Classification: -----
 - Town Planning Scheme: -----
 - Municipal Inventory: Adopted 16/04/1999
 - Register of the National Estate: -----
8. **CONSERVATION ORDER**

9. **HERITAGE AGREEMENT**

10. **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**
Railway Dam, Merredin, a system of water catchment and storage comprising a well (1865) and a rock catchment (1895) with channel walls constructed of stone that feed a former railway dam, has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

the design and construction of the place represent creative responses to water collection and storage in a harsh environment, including the

systems associated with steam trains and the railways that are no longer practiced;

the place has the capacity to provide information on the Indigenous use of water sources and the subsequent appropriation of these by European settlers;

the place was important for its key role in the development and expansion of the Eastern Goldfields by providing a water source for travellers on the Goldfields Road, including European explorers, sandalwood cutters and settlers, and after the construction of the dam also for the steam locomotives of the Eastern Goldfield Railway line from 1895 to 1969;

the place is associated with explorer and surveyor Charles Hunt, who developed a series of wells and catchments in the district; and with Public Works Department engineers C.Y. O'Connor, who oversaw the provision of water to the goldfields regions through the 1890s, and William Herbert Shields, who designed the dam and other similar railway water supply facilities between the towns of Northam and Coolgardie; and,

the artificially-constructed features of the place complement and contrast with the natural environment, with low scale meandering stone catchment walls, imposing slab rock channels, a picturesque, water filled dam and raised dam embankments, providing a built aesthetic in the otherwise harsh natural goldfields landscape.