



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)

- 3.8.6 Building & maintaining railways

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 202 Rail & light rail transport
- 106 Workers

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The Cottage is a simple, well proportioned, vernacular cottage and displays attractive detailing in the texture and openings of the masonry fabric. (Criterion 1.1)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The Cottage is associated with some of the earliest railway construction in Western Australia, which was centred on the port at Geraldton and established to exploit the Murchison mineral fields to the north and the rich pastoral and agricultural lands to the south and east, and to provide better communications between Perth and the rapidly developing Geraldton region. (Criterion 2.1)

The Well, constructed in 1861, was one of a number of permanent water sources provided by the Colonial government on the main roads of the Colony to facilitate the movement of stock and travellers in the nineteenth century, and which were essential in aiding development in Western Australia's hot, dry climate. (Criterion 2.1)

The Cottage was constructed in 1886 as part of the Geraldton-Walkaway railway line, which was established by the Colonial government as part of

* 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.

the rail link between Perth and the port at Geraldton. All rail traffic between Geraldton and Perth, and Geraldton and the Murchison, passed through the Chapman Road railway crossing at Bluff Point, and included grain and sheep traffic to the port, daily passenger trains, and equipment and supplies to the goldfields. (Criterion 2.2)

The Cottage was built by railway contractor Edward Keane, who as well as constructing several hundred miles of railway lines in Western Australia, was also active in the public life of Western Australia, as member for Geraldton and Mayor of Perth. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The Cottage is valued by the local community for its early association with the railway from 1886 to 1995, and Two Mile Well as an important water source facilitating trade and travel in the early period of European settlement. (Criterion 4.1)

The Cottage contributes to the local community's sense of place for its associations and its distinctive position at the Chapman Road railway crossing. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The Cottage was one of a small number of houses built adjacent to road crossings on Government railway lines in the Colony in the 1880s and 1890s, as residences for the railway crossing gatekeepers, although it was never used specifically for this purpose. It is rare as a relatively intact example of a gatekeepers cottage on the Geraldton-Walkaway section of the line. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The Cottage is representative of gatekeepers' cottages and demonstrates the standard and style of accommodation provided for railway employees in the Mid West region of Western Australia in the 1880s. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The Cottage is in sound condition. Some maintenance work such as replacement of roof sheeting and reconstruction of the brick chimney has taken place relatively recently and it is clear the place is well maintained by the tenant in 2003. Responsibility for maintenance may need to be more clearly defined if the current leasing arrangement were to be terminated or altered. Some of the masonry and external timber work is deteriorating.

The opening of the Well has been covered over with timber planks and the timber framed windlass is no longer operational.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The Cottage has moderate integrity. It has retained a residential use but since at least 1995 has not had association with the railway employees it was intended to house. The proposed subdivision of the land and possible disposal of the house are likely to be issues affecting the long term sustainability of the Cottage.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The Cottage has moderate to high authenticity. There have been some changes to the form and fabric such as the removal of the early earth closet and wood shed from the site, and reconstruction of the chimney, but overall the Cottage is still representative of the original structure.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by John Taylor Architect and Katrina Chisholm, Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Railway Cottage (fmr), Bluff Point is a stone cottage built in 1886 on the Northern Railway line. It was built as a railway crossing gate-house for Western Australian Government Railways (WAGR) by railway contractor Edward Keane.

The Champion Bay and Greenough Flats districts were explored in 1839 by Lieutenant George Grey, and again in 1848 by Assistant Surveyor Augustus C. Gregory. Both considered the area suitable for pastoral and agricultural activities. A settlement was authorised on Champion Bay in what is now known as Geraldton following the opening of the Geraldine lead mine at Northampton in 1849. According to the Municipality of Geraldton's 1950 centenary publication, the township of Geraldton took its name from the mine. Geraldton developed as a port for the Murchison mineral fields to the north and a centre for the rich pastoral and agricultural lands in the Victoria district.¹

A railway line was opened from Geraldton to the mines at Northampton, in 1879. The Geraldton-Northampton line was referred to as the Northern line, as was the extensive network that ultimately extended from it. The line crossed Chapman Road and Ord Street close by the Well at Bluff Point.² The small amount of traffic on the roads and on the railway line, together with the slow speed travelled by the train, did not necessitate a gatekeeper at the crossing at this time.

Construction of the Northern Railway line was followed by the completion of the Eastern Railway line from Fremantle to Guildford in 1881, and its extension to York by 1885. Other railway lines were planned to make the country more attractive for settlement. Because the Colonial government did not have the funds to construct these lines itself, it undertook to have them built by private operators under the land grant system.

In 1886, the Government entered into a contract with John Waddington's West Australian Midland Land and Railway Syndicate to build the Guildford to Walkaway section of a line between Perth and Geraldton. This was authorised by the *Guildford-Greenough Flats (Walkaway) Railway Act, 1886*. The land further north, between Walkaway and Geraldton was already largely settled, with no crown land available to grant in return for railway construction, so the Government undertook employ railway contractor Edward Keane to construct the line in this section of the route. Keane was

¹ Bain, Mary Albertus, *A Life of Its Own*, City of Geraldton, 1996, pp. 17-105.

² Geraldton map, accompanying 1901 census.

then contracted by the Midland Railway Syndicate to build the Guildford to Walkaway section of the line³

Edward Keane was an English civil engineer who migrated to Melbourne in 1876 and worked on railway construction in South Australia. Keane worked with J. W. Wright on the Guildford-Chidlow's Well section of the Eastern Railway, taking over when Wright experienced problems. He built the next section to York, and in 1885, was awarded the contract for the York to Beverley line and the Bayswater-Belmont branch line. Edward Keane was active in political life, representing Geraldton (1886-89) and Perth (1889-1891) in the Colony's parliament and was Mayor of Perth in 1891-92. He was also involved in the construction of the Canning Timber Mill, Ziz-Zag Railway and the Victoria Reservoir, and held the directorship of Perth's first water supply company.⁴

The first sod was turned for the Geraldton-Walkaway line by Governor Frederick Broome on 6 May 1886, and the line was opened on 1 July 1887.⁵ Keane's contract was 'inclusive of stations, gate-houses, water-tanks, pumps'.⁶ The Walkaway line joined the Northern line at Bluff Point, two miles north of the Geraldton town centre and immediately east of the Chapman Road crossing. The Cottage was built as a gatehouse, or gatekeeper's cottage, at the crossing. It was designed by the Railways Construction Branch of the Public Works Department, but no information on whom Edward Keane employed to build the Cottage has been located.⁷

There were at least five gatekeeper's cottages, including Railway Cottage (fmr), Bluff Point, built between Geraldton and Walkaway. They were constructed of local stone with an iron roof, and all were built to the same five-room plan.⁸ The cottages were situated at the railway crossings of: Short and McCartney roads, Walkaway; Bootenal road; Eastern Road, Utakarra; and, Chapman Road, Bluff Point. Another cottage is reputed to have been situated at Georgina Road, Walkaway but only a small shelter appears there on the 1899 PWD plans of the railway crossings.⁹

³ Appleyard, R. T. 'Western Australia: Economic and demographic growth, 1850-1914', in Stannage, C. T. (ed) *A New History of Western Australia*, UWA Press, Perth, 1981, pp. 227-233; *Guildford-Greenough Flats (Walkaway) Railway Act, 1886*, Statutes of Western Australia, Perth, 1886; Gunzberg, Adrian & Austin, Jeff, *Rails Through the Bush*, Light Railway Research Society of Australia, Melbourne, 1997, p. 210; Bull, T. J. 'A History of the Midland Railway Company of Western Australia', typescript, pp. 30-49.

⁴ Gunzberg, Adrian & Austin, Jeff, op cit, pp. 210-217.

⁵ Gunzberg, Adrian & Austin, Jeff, op cit.

⁶ 'Report of Railways', 1885, in *The Votes & Proceedings of the Parliament of Western Australia*, 1886, Paper 25, p. 8.

⁷ Geraldton map, accompanying 1901 census; PWD Plan 6528, site plans of the railway crossings on the Walkaway-Geraldton line.

⁸ WAGR plans, Bluff Point cottage No. 521; HCWA assessment documentation *Gatekeeper's Cottage (fmr)*, Place 11054.

⁹ WAGR, Works & Way Plan 2399, 1926, with later pencilled notations & EEL Plan 5318; PWD Plan 6528, site plans of the railway crossings on the Walkaway-Geraldton line; telephone conversation with Mr Paul Desmond, former owner of *Gatekeeper's Cottage (fmr)*, Short Road, Walkaway, June 2002.

The cottages were constructed as residences for the gatekeeper, who was responsible for opening and closing the gate at the crossing to allow trains and road traffic to pass through safely. The first gatekeeper's cottages had been built on the Eastern Railway line in the metropolitan area in 1881-1882. It is not known how many were built under the original contract for this line, but there were three built by the Public Works Department as extra to the original contract. There were also unmanned gates along the line. In total, there were thirty-two crossing gates provided between Fremantle and Guildford.¹⁰

No gates were constructed at the crossings on the Walkaway-Geraldton line. Although the line was completed in 1887, the Midland line connecting it to Perth was not opened until 1894, and in the meantime the traffic on the line was very light.

Until resumption of work on Midland Railway, fear there will be little or no traffic from this line, except perhaps at seasons. Propose to work in conjunction with Northern line, so as to reduce expenses to a minimum.¹¹

The lack of gates on the line is confirmed by the fact that in 1889 and 1890, there was no money spent on gate keeping on the Northern line, while gate keeping on the Eastern line cost just over £167 in 1889 and £218 in 1890.¹² While not occupied by a gatekeeper, the Cottage would certainly have been occupied by a railway employee, although the date of initial occupation is not known.

The discovery of gold in the Murchison provided an increase in traffic on the line from Perth to Geraldton. Extensions of the Northern Railway line were built to service the Murchison field, opening to Mullewa in 1894, Yalgoo in 1896 and Mount Magnet and Cue in 1898. All rail traffic between Geraldton and Perth and Geraldton and the Murchison, passed through the Chapman Road railway crossing at Bluff Point, and included grain and sheep traffic to the port, daily passenger trains, and equipment and supplies to the goldfields.¹³ The major safety measure employed at crossings at this time was a warning whistle from the approaching train.¹⁴

The Cottage is sited on Reserve 7666, which was gazetted for railway purposes on 1 March 1901. The Reserve comprised Geraldton Suburban Lots 23 to 27 inclusive and Lot 1374, the site of The Well. The Cottage

¹⁰ 'Report of Public Works, Railway & Roads and Bridges', 1881, in *Votes & proceedings of the Parliament of Western Australia*, 1882, Paper 18, Part 2, pp. 5-6; Minchin, R. S. & Higham, G. J., *Robb's Railway: Fremantle to Guildford Railway Centenary, 1881-1981*, Australian Railway Historical Society WA Division, Bassendean, 1981, p. 23.

¹¹ 'Report of Railways', 1886, in *The Votes & Proceedings of the Parliament of Western Australia*, 1887, Paper 24, p. 9.

¹² 'Report of Railways', 1889, in *The Votes & Proceedings of the Parliament of Western Australia*, 1887, Paper 8, p. 18.

¹³ Bull, T. J., op cit, p. 54; Gunzberg, Adrian & Austin, Jeff, pp. 206-207.

¹⁴ *Swan Express*, 31 March 1911, p. 2 & 7 April 1911, p. 3, regarding a double fatality at Johnston Street Crossing, Guildford.

straddled the boundary of Lots 23 and 24.¹⁵ The cottage was numbered Departmental Property (DP) 521 when property numbering was introduced by the Western Australian Government Railways (WAGR) shortly before 1910.¹⁶

Records of employee occupation of the Cottage have not been retained by WAGR, but it is known that it was occupied by the ganger of the Bluff Point gang for a number of years, prior to closure of the Geraldton-Northampton section of the Northern line in 1957.¹⁷ Maintenance gangs were stationed along the line and were responsible for maintaining a section of the track. At Bluff Point, an extra toilet block for the occasional use of the gang was located outside the north boundary of the Cottage yard.¹⁸ It is likely the gang camped on the Reserve at various times.¹⁹ There were line closures and rationalisation of services in the 1950s, as road transport was increasingly used. Buses operated by WAGR replaced most passenger trains in the 1950s and 1960s.²⁰

The Cottage continued to be occupied by a railway employee. In 1972, there were 52 railway employee houses in Geraldton, thirty-nine of them constructed after World War Two.²¹ The post-War railway houses were part of a concerted effort by WAGR to house its employees during a period of rapid growth in railway traffic and services. The houses were of weatherboard and fibro construction and comprised about two-thirds of the total number of houses constructed for WAGR employees in the State.²² A number of post-War railway houses were situated on Chapman Road.²³ There were thirteen pre-1910 railway houses remaining in Geraldton in WAGR ownership in 1972, and the tenant of the Cottage was paying one of the lowest rents for railway accommodation in the town, indicating a lack of modern facilities and alterations to the cottage.²⁴ By 1988, further rationalisations, and changes in technology and services, had resulted in a

15 DOLA, Reserves Index Enquiry, Reserves 7666 & 3651; Geraldton map, accompanying 1901 census.

16 Floor plan 'Bluff Point Cottage No 521', Properties Section, WAGR headquarters, East Perth.

17 Suba, T., Callow, B. & Grundy, G., *City of Geraldton Municipal Heritage Inventory*, 1996-97, Place no. 69, information provided by Geraldton resident Shirley Scotter.

18 Site plan, WAGR property file for Departmental Property 521, Properties Section, WAGR headquarters, East Perth.

19 Uhe (Rogers), Phillipa, *Survey of Railway Heritage in Western Australia*, National Trust of Australia (WA), March 1994, Section 1.

20 WAGR, *Annual Reports*, 1950-1958.

21 WAGR 1972 *Housing Review: Report on future housing requirements*, bound typescript.

22 Research conducted into various WAGR files for assessments of a number of railway houses and railway stations.

23 Telephone conversation with Celia Lofthouse, tenant of *Railway Cottage* since 1996, 19 March 2003.

24 WAGR 1972 *Housing Review: Report on future housing requirements*, bound typescript. Every new item added to a railway employee house, such as water heater, power points, Holland blinds, gas stove, sleepout, etc, increased the rent.

decrease in WAGR staff by almost 50%. The number of railway houses leased to private tenants increased as railway staff numbers fell.²⁵

The Cottage continued to be occupied by a railway employee. It would have been favoured over the railway houses constructed in the 1940s and early 1950s, which were weatherboard or fibro buildings that soon became dilapidated with the low level of maintenance provided.²⁶

In 1991, the realignment of Ord Street at the Chapman Road crossing resulted in Reserve 7666 being designated Lot 2930, and the area reduced by 317 square metres to 5.6051 hectares. The Well (Reserve 3651) was renumbered as Lot 2931.²⁷ During 1995-1996, The Cottage was unoccupied for about twelve months and, during this time, the French doors and three interior four-panel doors were removed from the cottage.²⁸

In 1996, Celia Lofthouse leased and occupied the Cottage. Ms Lofthouse undertook work on the cottage to make it habitable, including some interior painting, and believes that the missing original French doors and internal four-panel doors can be found elsewhere.²⁹ She offered to purchase the Cottage from WAGR, who were in the process of disposing of their residential properties. The Reserve required subdividing before any sale could proceed, and in 1997, WAGR provided Celia Lofthouse with an option to purchase when the subdivision had been carried out.³⁰ By 1999, when it became clear that WAGR wanted to withdraw the option to purchase in order to be able to subdivide the land without any encumbrance, Ms Lofthouse lodged a caveat on the portion of Lot 2930 that was subject to her lease in order to protect her interest in the Cottage.³¹

The Cottage was classified by the National Trust in 1995 and, in 1998, it was listed on the City of Geraldton Municipal Heritage Inventory with a Category 2 management rating which recommended a high level of protection with maximum encouragement to the owner to conserve the significance of the place.³²

In 2000, the *Rail Freight System Agreement Act* was ratified and Westrail's freight transport operation passed to the control of private rail corridor operator, WestNet Rail.

In 2001, Reserve 7666 (Lot 2930) was further reduced in size with a sectioning off of rail corridor land. The remaining portion of Reserve 7666,

25 WAGR *Annual Report*, 1988, p. 22.

26 Research into numerous WAGR property files located at SROWA and the Properties Section, WAGR headquarters, East Perth; Telephone conversation with Celia Lofthouse, op cit.

27 DOLA, Reserves Index Enquiry, Reserves 7666 & 3651; Certificate of Title, Vol. 3068 Fol. 553.

28 Telephone conversation with Celia Lofthouse, op cit.

29 Letter to HCWA from Celia Lofthouse dated 10 September 2003.

30 Telephone conversation with Celia Lofthouse, op cit; research in various WAGR property files, Properties Section, WAGR headquarters, East Perth.

31 Telephone conversation with Celia Lofthouse, op cit; Caveat over part of Geraldton Lot 2930, 3 September 1999.

32 Suba, T., Callow, B. & Grundy, G., op cit.

with an area of 3.9267 hectare, was designated Lot 3046. Lot 3046 remained in WAGR ownership and is the subject of the proposed subdivision. The Well Reserve 3651 remains within the boundaries of Reserve 7666.³³

In the proposed subdivision, it is intended that Reserve 3651 would be included in public open space and the Cottage would be available for disposal as a residence.³⁴ The subdivision is understood to be in process in March 2003.

Two Mile Well

Wells were provided by the government on main roads for the movement of stock and travellers. Two Mile Well was sunk at Bluff Point c.1861.³⁵ The Well was situated two miles from the junction of Chapman Road and Phelps Street.³⁶ Afghan camel drivers used to water their camels at the Well before penning them in the stockyards on the opposite side of the road and travelling by train into Geraldton to transact business.³⁷

Lot 1374, the site of the Well, was gazetted Reserve 3651 on 6 November 1896, with an area of 0.10 acres (405 square metres) and vested in the Municipality of Geraldton.³⁸ Railway workers, particularly the Bluff Point maintenance gang, most likely made use of the Well at various times over the years. In 1962, Geraldton Municipal Council restored the Well, constructing a rectangular stone cover and erecting a windlass. In 1988, a Bicentennial Plaque was erected at the Well. It read:

This well was sunk in the 1860s and is located on the main Northern Road for use by travellers and their stock. During the 1870s, the well and surrounding land became part of a railway reserve. In 1896, the well was handed over to the Municipality of Geraldton. Council restored the well in 1962.³⁹

In 1998, the Well was listed on the City of Geraldton Municipal Heritage Inventory with a Category 2 management rating.⁴⁰

Railway Cottage (fmr), Bluff Point & Two Mile Well is one of a small number of relics of early occupation in the Bluff Point region. Other elements include the Bluff Point lighthouse, currently occupied by the Geraldton Historical Society, part of the original stone structure of the Church of St Lawrence the Martyr attached to the later church building, and the Bluff Point State School, now used as a camp school for children from inland towns.

³³ DOLA, Reserves Index Enquiry, Reserves 7666 & 3651; Certificate of Title, Vol. 3109 Fol. 274.

³⁴ Diagram of proposed subdivision and development of Reserve 7666 and adjoining railway land.

³⁵ Map of Geraldton, 1901.

³⁶ Norris, Constance, *Geraldton on the Sand: Champion Bay Western Australia*, Geraldton Public Library, 1964, p. 8.

³⁷ Suba, T., Callow, B. & Grundy, G., op cit, Place 69; information provided by Stan Gratte to Celia Lofthouse.

³⁸ DOLA, Reserves Index Enquiry, Reserves 7666 & 3651.

³⁹ Suba, T., Callow, B. & Grundy, G., op cit.

⁴⁰ Suba, T., Callow, B. & Grundy, G., op cit, Place no. 70.

In 2003, the Cottage continues to be occupied and well maintained.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The Cottage is a single-storey masonry vernacular cottage with a hipped corrugated iron roof constructed as a residence for a railway crossing gatekeeper in 1886. The place also includes a detached fibre-cement Wash House immediately to the north of the Cottage and a lock-up, sheet metal clad Garage towards the north-east boundary. The Well is located just north of the Cottage, outside of a fence surrounding the cottage and associated outbuildings.

The place is located on the east side of Chapman Road, in Bluff Point, a residential suburb on the outskirts of the City of Geraldton. Chapman Road and the railway line head north from the Geraldton city centre, roughly parallel with the coast of Champion Bay. The road is a well established route being the principal exit and entry to the town to and from the north until the construction of the North West Coastal Highway. The Well stands close to the footpath, approximately twenty-five metres north of the Cottage. The well has low stone walls in a square plan form with the remains of a timber framed windlass over the opening which has been covered with timber planks. A low plinth featuring a Bicentennial commemorative plaque has been erected apart from the Well.⁴¹ The railway line turns to the east just south of the Cottage creating an irregular shaped site with a curved southern boundary. The Cottage and associated outbuildings are situated within an area defined by a caveat on the title fronting Chapman Road and close to this southern boundary. Low corrugated fibre-cement fences border the area defined by the caveat. Timber gates at the north corner allow vehicle access from Chapman Road to the lock-up garage and an inoperable wire mesh gate leads directly to the main entrance of the Cottage from the footpath. The land has a gentle fall towards the road and features some relatively dense planting around the Cottage.

The stone Cottage has a square plan form with a timber framed verandah along the front elevation and corrugated iron clad infill along the north. The roof pitch lowers over the verandah while the infill area along the north has a separate lean-to roof, beneath the main roof. A small porch also extends over a central opening in the rear elevation. A face brick chimney rises above the north hip. The brickwork appears to have been reconstructed and does not feature any corbelled courses or cappings as might be expected from the initial period of construction.⁴²

Walls of the Cottage have been constructed in coursed, squared rubble stone which has been white-washed. Door and window openings have cambered brick arches formed with two courses of headers over the lintels. The solid masonry walls are of a deep dimension enabling the three facets of the bay window in the front elevation to be contained entirely within the

⁴¹ Further information, such as the depth of the well, is not available at this time.

⁴² The chimney at Gatekeeper's Cottage along Eastward Road, Utakarra is corbelled around the top edge.

reveal. The timber framed window has small panes in the upper sash while a timber framed fly screen has been fitted externally over the two larger panes of the lower sash.

Timber posts support the verandah roof with a solid balustrade of fibre cement cladding infill between the posts. The verandah is enclosed at the northern end with weatherboard cladding and has a timber boarded soffit beneath the roof sheeting. The floor level of the verandah at the front of the Cottage is raised above the ground on a brick plinth with three concrete steps located off-centre, along the verandah edge, directly opposite the front door.

The interior layout comprises a hallway dividing the two front rooms, (a larger sitting room to the north featuring the bay window and a smaller bedroom to the south), and leading to two further bedrooms at the rear of the Cottage.⁴³ A passage at right angles to the hall now gives access to the kitchen in the east corner. It is possible this passage was once a pantry as shown on a similar, but mirrored plan of the Gatekeeper's house (fmr), at Bradley.⁴⁴ Fireplaces are located in the internal walls of the kitchen and sitting room. Although not adjacent, the two fireplaces appear to share a flue with only one chimney apparent above the roof.

The interior finishes generally include timber floors with simple timber skirtings and architraves to door openings. The thick masonry walls are plastered and painted and have wide, timber lined jambs. Decorative plaster wall vents of at least two different patterns are evident although the authenticity of ceiling fabric has not been established or whether cornices have been utilised. The kitchen has a steeply raking ceiling over the northern portion of the room. Other noteworthy interior features include the high timber mantle above the built in stove in the kitchen fireplace and moulded timber architrave around the sitting room fireplace.

The Cottage appears to correspond closely with an early floor plan although some of the facilities shown on a 1949 site plan are no longer extant. The latter plan shows a stone earth closet and adjacent wood shed at the approximate location of the current lock-up garage. The earth closet was connected to a septic tank on the site which was also shared by a brick WC for 'occasional' gang use on the other side of the boundary or fence line.⁴⁵ There is some deterioration to the stone fabric and external timber work of the Cottage. It is not known when lattice was removed from the front verandah but repairs to roof sheeting and the brick chimney appear to have taken place recently.⁴⁶ In 2003, the Cottage is not permanently occupied but

⁴³ Interior access was not available on the day of inspection but the tenant has provided a set of recent, interior photographs and confirmed that the interior layout is similar to the floor plan 'Bluff Point Cottage No 521', Properties Section, WAGR headquarters, East Perth.

⁴⁴ HCWA place No. 11054.

⁴⁵ Site plan, WAGR property file for Departmental Property 521, Properties Section, WAGR headquarters, East Perth.

⁴⁶ A note on drawing, 'Bluff Point Cottage No 521', Properties Section, WAGR headquarters, East Perth, indicates 9' of lattice was provided on 1 June 1951, along the northern end of the front verandah.

is in regular use and well maintained. The opening of the Well has been subject to some vandalism and covered with timber planks, while the windlass is no longer operational.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Residential accommodation for railway crossing gatekeepers was constructed at no less than six crossings on the Geraldton-Walkaway section of railway line, in 1886, and at least three such houses were built on the Fremantle-Perth line in 1881.

On the Geraldton-Walkaway line, the McCartney Road cottage was occupied as the Bradley's school from c. 1900 until the 1950s. It is currently in private ownership and in good condition.⁴⁷ The cottage at Short Road is privately owned and occupied but is in poor condition.⁴⁸ It has been assessed as below threshold for the State Register. The cottage at Bootenal Road and the building at Georgina Road have been removed, and the cottage at Utakarra is unoccupied and boarded up.⁴⁹

On the Fremantle-Perth line, a residence believed to have been constructed as a gatekeeper's cottage is situated at 65 East Street, East Guildford. It is of a different construction and floor plan to the cottages on the Geraldton-Walkaway line, being a brick and iron residence of four main rooms. It has been assessed as below threshold for the State Register.⁵⁰

The Cottage was one of over 2,000 railway employee houses provided by WAGR between 1879 and the 1990s.

There are 239 wells listed on the HCWA database. Of these, 165 were built before 1870. Coffee Pot and Waggrakine Well is on the State Register. The Coffee Pot is a ruin of a single storey stone cottage. The well was surveyed in 1870 but was used prior to that date by travelers.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Remnants of a former structure believed to be located within the garden surrounding the Cottage were not evident at the time of inspection, but may be revealed with more detailed investigation.

⁴⁷ WAGR, Works & Way Plan 2399, 1926, with later pencilled notations & EEL Plan 5318; *Geraldton Guardian*, 14 December 1995, p. 21.

⁴⁸ HCWA documentation, *Gatekeeper's Cottage (fmr)*, Place 11054.

⁴⁹ Telephone conversation with Mr Paul Desmond, op cit.

⁵⁰ HCWA documentation, *Gatekeeper's Cottage (fmr)*, Place 14798.