



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)

- 2.3 Coming to Australia as a Punishment

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 106 Workers
- 403 Law and Order

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Warders' Cottages (fmr) have significant aesthetic value as competently designed and built two-storey terrace houses of limestone construction in the Victorian Georgian style. (Criterion 1.1)

Warders' Cottages (fmr) are, because of their scale and form, strong streetscape elements with landmark qualities in Henderson Street. The place, along with the *Fremantle Court House and Police Station*, the *Fremantle Markets*, the *Fremantle Technical College Annexe* and the *Sail and Anchor Hotel*, contributes to the precinctual qualities of Henderson Street. (Criteria 1.3 & 1.4)

Together with the *Fremantle Court House and Police Station*, *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* defines the western boundary of the former Convict Establishment precinct and forms part of the vista from William Street up the Fairbairn Street ramp to *Fremantle Prison*. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Warders' Cottages (fmr) forms part of the Fremantle Prison historical precinct and are associated with the development of the Convict Establishment from the early 1850s. (Criterion 2.2)

Warders' Cottages (fmr) are one of the earliest examples of terrace housing in Fremantle and in the state. (Criterion 2.2)

Warders' Cottages (fmr) are representative of workers' housing in the nineteenth century and is a reminder of the harsh conditions endured by prison warders. *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* were modelled on workers' housing

* 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.

in England and was constructed with little regard for differing climatic or environmental differences between England and Australia. (Criteria 2.2 & 2.4)

Warders' Cottages (fmr) have associations with the Imperial hierarchy who were responsible for the design and construction of these and other public buildings during the convict period in Western Australia dating from the 1850s. The place was designed by James Manning, Clerk of Works, under the supervision of Captain Henderson, Royal Engineer and Comptroller General of Convicts. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Through archaeological investigation, *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* have the potential to reveal information about the living conditions of prison warders in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Warders' Cottages (fmr) have value to the previous occupants and the families and descendants of previous occupants of the place since its construction in the early 1850s. (Criterion 4.1)

Warders' Cottages (fmr) are highly valued by the community for its historical associations with Fremantle, the *Fremantle Prison*, and in particular the Convict Establishment period, and thus contributes to the community's sense of place. This is illustrated by its inclusion on the Register of Heritage Places, the National Trust's List of Recorded Places and the Register of the National Estate. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Warders' Cottages (fmr) have rarity value as the earliest example of terrace housing in the state. (Criterion 5.1)

Warders' Cottages (fmr) are an early, rare and substantially intact example of housing provided for public servants in the state, specifically for prison warders who worked at the Convict Establishment, subsequently known as Fremantle Prison. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Warders' Cottages (fmr) share many of the principal constructional and planning characteristics of public buildings built during the convict period in the Victorian Georgian style; for example, the single storey limestone cottages built on Rottneest Island. (Criterion 6.1)

Warders' Cottages (fmr) are a representative example of early housing in this state modeled on accommodation provided for workers in England. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

In general, *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* are in good/sound condition. There are, however, some signs of deterioration of external stonework caused by a combination of dampness and inappropriate repairs.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Warders' Cottages (fmr) have a high degree of integrity. The place continues to serve as public residential accommodation, the purpose for which it was originally built.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Warders' Cottages (fmr) have a moderate degree of authenticity. It would seem that only relatively minor changes have been made to the original fabric of the building. The main change appears to have been the enclosure of the rear verandahs.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Lucy Williams, Historian and Heritage Consultant based on the research undertaken by Michal Bosworth and Erica Harvey for the Building Management Authority in 1990. The physical evidence has been compiled by Alan Kelsall, Kelsall Binet Architects.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Warders' Cottages (fmr) comprise three terraces; First Terrace, 19-29 Henderson Street (1851); Second Terrace, 33-41 Henderson Street (c.1853); and Third Terrace, 7-17 Henderson Street (1858) constructed for prison warders associated with the *Fremantle Prison*.

When the first convicts arrived in the Swan River Colony in June 1850, there was no existing infrastructure to accommodate the convicts and their guards. The dispatch to advise the Colonial Government of the convicts' voyage arrived after the convicts did. Temporary accommodation to house the prisoners was found in existing premises in Fremantle. Captain Henderson, Royal Engineer and Comptroller General of Convicts, and James Manning, the Clerk of Works, arrived in the colony with the first contingent of convicts. The initial priorities were to provide facilities for the convicts, and plans were made for the construction of a gaol and associated buildings.¹

One of the buildings required was accommodation for the warders and their families. There was very little extra accommodation available and in a climate of demand, rental costs for properties in Fremantle were exorbitant. As the provision of quarters was a condition of employment, the construction of accommodation for the warders became pressing.²

The location of *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* was chosen because of its proximity to the Establishment (*Fremantle Prison*).³ In August 1851, Henderson submitted three types of designs showing accommodation for fifty-six warders. Henderson ordered work to commence before waiting for a response from England. The buildings' constructed differed in detail from the design types submitted; however, the design and the actual construction were based on

¹ James Semple Kerr, *Fremantle Prison: A Policy for Its Conservation*, prepared for the Department of Contract and Management Services for the Fremantle Prison Trust Advisory Committee, 1998, p. 3.

² Building Management Authority (R. Hoare, M. Bosworth, E. Harvey, A. Kiera, G. MacGill, R. Smith), 'Fremantle Prison Conservation and Future Use: Warders' Cottages', 1990, sections 2.2.01 and 2.2.02.

³ *ibid.*, section 2.4.02.

contemporary English workers' housing.⁴ Terrace housing was appropriate for England and other colonies where space was restricted. Despite having large amounts of available land in the Swan River Colony, the concept of the terrace house was used for *Warders' Cottages (fmr)*.⁵

By April 1853, the First Terrace, 19-29 Henderson Street (1851) and Second Terrace, 33-41 Henderson Street (c.1853) on Henderson Street had been constructed.⁶ Each terrace house provided accommodation for twelve families with two families in each house. All three terraces comprising *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* were constructed using convict labour and the stone was quarried from the same site as that used for the prison. A tramway was used to bring the stone down the hill from a quarry near the prison.⁷

The First Terrace, 19-29 Henderson Street (1851) was constructed on the southeast corner of Henderson and William Streets. The Second Terrace, 33-41 Henderson Street (c.1853) was constructed on the northeast corner of Henderson and William Streets. The Third Terrace, 7-17 Henderson Street (1858), was constructed adjacent to the First Terrace.⁸

In November 1851, Governor Fitzgerald proclaimed the First Terrace, 19-29 Henderson Street (1851) to be 'a very handsome approach to the principal Gateway of the future permanent Depot', but the warders and their families were not as complimentary about the facilities.⁹ A lack of privacy arising from shared facilities and an absence of fireplaces in the first floor rooms led to many complaints about the accommodation.¹⁰

There were two types of warders: 'disciplinary warders' who supervised the prisoners and 'instructing warders' who were skilled tradesmen who supervised the public works that convicts worked on. Instructing warders were usually sappers or miners. In addition, there was also a Superintendent and Deputy warden and assistant warders. Warders were generally not well paid and had to work to a strict set of regulations with little opportunities for financial reward. Most of the warders came from England although discrepancies in the conditions they were promised and what they received meant that many left their positions as soon as possible. Henderson was forced to recruit local men, adding to his burden of having a shortage of trained officers.¹¹

By 1858, construction had commenced on the Third Terrace, 7-17 Henderson Street (1858). This provided accommodation for six families, with three rooms for each family. Unlike the earlier terraces, a full-length verandah was constructed. This may have been for aesthetic reasons but may also have been to acknowledge the local climatic conditions.¹² Verandahs were

4 *ibid.*, sections 2.2.03 and 2.2.04.

5 *ibid.*, sections 2.4.01-2.4.03.

6 *ibid.*, section 2.5.02. Another block for six families had also been constructed c.1851 for instructing warders, possibly near what is now known as South Terrace. These buildings are no longer extant, *ibid.*, sections 2.8.01-2.8.02.

7 *ibid.*, section 2.5.02.

8 *ibid.*, section 2.6.02. The blocks are referred to as W1, W2 and W3 in the 1990 report.

9 *ibid.*, section 2.2.05.

10 *ibid.*, sections 2.2.06-2.2.08.

11 *ibid.*, sections 2.3.02 - 2.3.04.

12 *ibid.*, sections 2.10.1-2.10.3.

constructed at the First Terrace, 19-29 Henderson Street (1851) and Second Terrace, 33-41 Henderson Street (c.1853) just prior to 1899.¹³

By 1866, the numbers of convicts and warders were declining. In the quarters meant to house thirty-two families only seventeen families were living there. The instructing warders' cottages (no longer extant) were built for six families but only housed four. It appears that other public service officers, such as the water police and the ordinary constabulary, occupied some of the surplus cottages around this time.¹⁴

In 1896, the Fremantle Council resumed the portion of land on which the semi-detached cottages for instructing warders were constructed. The loss of this accommodation resulted in increased pressure to provide additional facilities.¹⁵

The government appears to have been reluctant to fully maintain *Warders' Cottages (fmr)*. There were recurring problems arising from the lack of damp courses and ventilation, a result of the haste in which the original construction proceeded. The Commission of Inquiry into the Prison in 1899 did not seem to encompass the living conditions for warders. By 1900, the only improvements that appear to have been made to *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* include upgrading toilet facilities, minor repairs and the additions of the verandahs to the First Terrace, 19-29 Henderson Street (1851) and Second Terrace, 33-41 Henderson Street (c.1853). The authors of the 1990 Conservation Plan for the place concluded that *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* were not a maintenance priority within the entire prison complex and therefore did not attract funding for building works.¹⁶

A summary of the major changes made to *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* in the twentieth century included: re-roofing (First Terrace in 1902, Second Terrace in 1904, and Third Terrace in 1915); new bathrooms in 1910 (all blocks and again for the Second Terrace in 1978); fencing (First Terrace in 1906 and Third Terrace by 1911); laundries (First Terrace in 1915, Second Terrace the original wash houses were converted in 1909 and, Third Terrace in 1909) and sewerage to all blocks in 1916.¹⁷ In addition, the Second Terrace was converted from six cottages into three in 1911-12. This included demolishing every alternate staircase and cutting an opening through each alternate back wall to connect two cottages.¹⁸

Prison Warders were obliged to live in the accommodation provided by the Department of Prisons as part of their conditions of employment. In 1932, possibly motivated by the poor standard of accommodation, a request was made to enable officers who had served for ten years the option to leave the quarters. The request was refused and it was not until 1941 that the Department of Prisons decided they did not wish 'to compel officers to reside there'.¹⁹

13 *ibid.*, drawing after section 3.5 showing 'Interpreted Year of Construction: Warder's (sic) Cottages Floor Plans W1 W2 W3'.

14 *ibid.*, sections 2.2.09-2.2.11.

15 *ibid.*, section 2.2.12.

16 *ibid.*, sections 2.2.18 and 2.14.28.

17 *ibid.*, sections 2.7, 2.9 and 2.10. More detailed information about the changes can be found in these sections. Refer also to the analysis of evidence drawings in section 3.

18 *ibid.*, section 2.9.14. It is suggested in section 2.9.17 that the cutting of the openings was not done until 1914 or later.

19 *ibid.*, section 2.2.17.

By the late 1980s, the majority of warders had vacated *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* and a number of the cottages were vacant for a few years. The *Fremantle Prison* closed in 1991 and at approximately this time Homeswest tenants began moving into *Warders' Cottages (fmr)*. Formal transfer of *Warders' Cottages (fmr)* to Homeswest occurred in the early 1990s.²⁰

In 2001, Homeswest leases the buildings out for residential purposes.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Warders' Cottages (fmr) consist of three distinct limestone buildings comprising: First Terrace, 19-29 Henderson Street (1851); Second Terrace, 33-41 Henderson Street (1853); and, Third Terrace, 7-17 Henderson Street (1858).

Siting

The three, two storey, terrace buildings are located on the south east side of Henderson Street. Each terrace is set back about 1.5 metres from the 1000 mm high limestone wall that runs against the footpath along the north west boundary of the site.

First Terrace runs from the footpath on the south west side of William Street to the lane that leads from Henderson Street to the market. The front boundary wall has six gateways. The front façade of First Terrace faces across the pedestrianised part of Henderson Street to a ground level car park. The north east and south west boundaries of the rear yard are edged by limestone walls. The yard is divided along its width by timber picket fences, the lines of which coincide with the party walls of each house within the terrace.

The north east end of Second Terrace is against the edge of a lane that separates it from the Magistrates Court House. The south west end of the building is on the edge of the footpath beside William Street. The front boundary wall has three gateways providing access to pairs of houses. The front façade of Second Terrace faces the multi-storey car park located on the north west side of Henderson Street, between William and Queens Street. The south wall of the rear yard is cranked to follow the line of the Fairbairn Street Ramp. The rear yard is divided by profiled steel sheet fencing to provide three irregularly shaped yards, one for each pair of houses.

Third Terrace runs from Market Lane to the Fremantle Market building that continues around to South Terrace. The front boundary wall has six gateways. The front façade of Third Terrace faces across a paved open area to a single storey building, which serves as a food hall. The north east wall of the yard is largely formed by the rear wall of the former wash house. The yard is divided along its width by corrugated fibrous cement sheeting fences, the lines of which coincide with the party walls of each house within the terrace.

External form and style, and details of each of the buildings

Third terrace is different in appearance from Second Terrace and First Terrace but, because of their rectangular forms and simple repetition of symmetrical elements, all three share the broad characteristics of the Victorian Georgian style (c. 1840 – c. 1890).²¹

Second and First Terrace

²⁰ Information obtained from Contract and Management Services, January 2001.

²¹ Apperly, et. al., op. cit.

Second and First Terraces are similar in appearance. Each terrace is divided by slightly projecting piers into six equal bays, which originally, provided the six houses with individual entrances. In Second Terrace the houses have been combined in pairs to form three double size houses. There are no party walls projecting above the roofline.

Both terraces are composed of three parts. The main section is two storeys high and is flanked on the north side by a continuous single storey lean-to verandah running the length of the front façade. On the south east side the main section is flanked by a slightly lower, skillion-roofed section that runs for the length of the rear façade. This rear section is extended further at ground floor level by a single storey addition.

At ground floor level the houses within the terraces are composed with one centrally located window and a door beside one of the dividing piers. The planning of the houses alternates with one mirroring the planning of its neighbour, resulting in the entrance doors to the houses being grouped around the dividing walls.

The main body of the building has a hipped, corrugated iron roof. The walls are of painted, coursed limestone rubble. Chimneys are brick with a corbelled band near the top. Windows are timber framed double hung sashes. A single timber framed and corrugated iron sunshade shelters the two upper level windows within each bay.

The front verandah is of timber construction with a concrete floor and is divided by corrugated iron screens on the line of each wall pier.

The inscription 'VR 1851' is carved into the upper level wall of First Terrace.

A free-standing laundry of masonry construction is located approximately three metres away from the houses in each of the rear yards of the First Terrace.

Free standing lavatories, constructed of corrugated iron sheeting clad timber, stand against the rear boundary wall of each of the rear yards.

Third Terrace

Third Terrace is divided into six equal bays by slightly projecting piers to provide six houses with individual entrances. There are no party walls projecting above the roofline. At both levels the houses within the terrace are composed with one window to each side of the centrally located door.

The terrace has three parts. The two-storied main section is flanked on its north side by a continuous two storey lean-to verandah running the length of the main façade. A single storey enclosed lean-to verandah runs for the length of the rear face of the building.

The main body of the building has a hipped, corrugated iron roof. The walls are of painted, coursed limestone rubble. Chimneys are brick with a corbelled band near the top. Windows are timber framed double hung sashes.

The verandah is divided along its length by timber screens at upper level and by open balustrading at ground level. The verandah is of timber construction with decorative brackets to the upper level posts and boarded valances set below the upper level floor. The upper level has timber balustrading with square section balusters. The ground floor is a concrete slab.

A large, 20m long x 4m wide, washhouse stands against the east corner of the rear yard of house no. 17 Henderson Street. Smaller free-standing

lavatories/washrooms of corrugated iron sheeting clad timber construction stand against the rear boundary wall of each of the rear yards.

Internal layout and details

First Terrace

This information is based on survey of no. 25 Henderson Street.

The external form of the building reflects its internal planning. The main section of the house contains the living room at ground floor level and the main bedroom, which is located above it. The two-storey rear section contains bedrooms at both ground and first floor level. The inner half of the single storey, rear extension contains the kitchen while the outer half contains the bathroom and a sitting room.

The front door opens directly into the living room off the front verandah. The staircase leading to the first floor is in the corner of the room directly opposite the front door. A corridor runs past the staircase through to the kitchen at the rear of the house.

The walls and ceilings of the living room are of plaster. There is a fireplace in the east wall with a moulded timber surround. The floor is of 200 mm wide jarrah boarding.

The finishes in the ground floor bedroom are the same as those of the living room.

The kitchen has plastered walls and a boarded ceiling that is lined on the rake. A fireplace containing a wood stove is located diagonally in the northeast corner of the room. The room has timber boarded dado and built-in cupboards. The timber floor is covered with vinyl tiling.

The sitting room walls are plastered and the ceiling is lined on the rake with fibrous plaster. The floor is of concrete covered with vinyl tiling.

The staircase is of timber construction with winders at top and bottom.

At first floor level both bedrooms are entered off the stair landing. The inner walls of both the stair and the landing are lined with 300 wide timber boarding with beaded edges.

The main bedroom has plastered walls and ceiling. The ceiling profile, which follows the soffit of the roof structure, is raked at the edges and flat in the central portion. The flooring is of wide pine boards of variable width.

The rear bedroom is of the same construction as the main bedroom. The ceiling is lined on the rake and is fairly low, being approximately 1700 mm high at the external wall.

Second Terrace

This information is based on survey of no. 35 Henderson Street, which was formed by the combination of the former numbers 35 and 37.

Apart from the removal of one staircase and the cutting of openings in the party wall the planning of the houses does not appear to have been altered by the works carried out to combine them. The planning of the west half of the house, no. 35 (fmr), is a mirrored version of the east, no. 37 (fmr).

The external form of the building reflects its internal planning. The main section of no. 35 (fmr) contains a living room at ground floor level and the main bedroom, which is located immediately above it. The two-storey rear section contains a kitchen at ground level and a bedroom at first floor level. A

single storey verandah runs against the south wall of the house. At no. 35 (fmr), the verandah is enclosed to contain a laundry and connects with the bathroom that is housed in a masonry construction room attached to the outer face of the verandah. At no. 37 (fmr), the verandah is open.

The front door at no. 37 (fmr) remains in place but is not used. The front door of no. 35 (fmr) opens off the front verandah directly into the living room. A door in the northeast corner of the room leads to the rear part of the house. The enclosed staircase leading to the first floor is reached from the rear part of the house.

The living room has plastered walls and ceiling. The fireplace has a moulded timber surround. The timber floor is carpeted.

The kitchen has plastered walls and ceiling. A fireplace containing a gas stove is located in the west wall of the room. The room has built-in cupboards. The timber floor is covered by vinyl tiling.

The laundry has plastered walls and a ceiling lined on the rake. The floor is of concrete tiling.

The staircase is of timber construction with winders at top. The outer walls of the stair are lined with 300 wide timber boarding.

The main bedroom is entered off the stair enclosure. The main bedroom has plastered walls and ceiling. The ceiling profile, which follows the soffit of the roof structure, is raked at the edges and flat in the central portion. The timber floor is carpeted.

The rear bedroom is of the same construction as the main bedroom. The ceiling is lined on the rake and is also low, being approximately 1700 mm high at the external wall.

The rooms of no. 37 (fmr) match those of no. 35 (fmr). At ground floor level the front living rooms are connected by a doorway set in the party wall near to the front door. In the kitchen, the wall that separated the two houses has been removed and the equivalent kitchen space in no. 37 (fmr) has no cupboards and now serves as a dining room.

The removal of the stair from no. 37 (fmr) means that the first floor bedroom in this part of the house can only be reached by walking through the bedroom in no. 37 (fmr).

The construction and finish of the rooms in no. 37 (fmr) are the same as those in no. 35 (fmr).

Third Terrace

This information is based on the survey of no. 9 Henderson Street.

The external form of the building reflects its internal planning. The main section of the house is two rooms deep and contains four rooms at each level. A single storey enclosed verandah runs against the south east wall of the house.

The front door opens directly into the living room off the front verandah. The kitchen is entered from the living room and is the second room on the front face of the building. A corridor that continues the line of the front door runs between the two back rooms of the main body of the house. This corridor leads from the south east corner of the living room through to the rear verandah. The room off the north east side of the corridor is a bedroom with a window overlooking the rear verandah. The room on the south west side, which also has a window overlooking the rear verandah, provides access to

the bathroom situated at the west end of the verandah and to the staircase that leads to the first floor.

The walls and ceilings of the living room are of plaster. There is a fireplace in the north east wall with a simple timber surround. The floor is of 150 mm wide jarrah boarding. Doors are timber four panelled type.

The walls and ceilings of the kitchen are of plaster. The fireplace is enclosed. The timber floor has vinyl tile finish. The room has built in cupboards.

The two rear rooms are finished similar to the living room. The staircase is enclosed by a timber partition lined by lapped timber boarding. The staircase is of timber construction with winders at the mid flight change of direction.

The rear verandah is enclosed by studwork walls lined with fibrous cement sheeting. The bathroom is formed by the enclosure of the south west end of the verandah. The room is clad externally with timber weatherboarding and lined internally with fibrous cement sheeting. The enclosure of the bathroom pre-dates the enclosure of the remainder of the verandah. The bathroom is separated from the verandah by a partition lined on both sides up to door head height. Above door head height the partition is filled in by 'v' jointed t&g boarding. The ceiling is lined on the rake with fibrous cement sheeting and the timber floor is covered by vinyl tiles.

At first floor level the staircase opens directly onto a small room and both the main bedroom, located above the living room, and the rear bedroom, situated over the ground floor bedroom, open off this space. A smaller bedroom, which is located above the kitchen, is entered from the main bedroom.

All the rooms at first floor level have the same finishes as the living room. The ceiling profile follows the soffit of the roof structure across the width of the building and results in the ceiling being raked at the outer edge, against the external wall, and flat in the central portion.

Appearance and condition of the building to date.

Generally the buildings appear to be in a good/sound condition. There are however some signs of deterioration of external stonework caused by a combination of dampness and inappropriate repairs.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Building Management Authority (R. Hoare, M. Bosworth, E. Harvey, A. Kiera, G. MacGill, R. Smith), 'Fremantle Prison Conservation and Future Use: Warders' Cottages', 1990.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Archaeological investigations, particularly of the rear yards, have the potential to yield information about workers' conditions.

No research on people who have lived at the place has been undertaken. This may reveal further information about Prison Warders.