



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.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

North Perth Police Station is a fine example of government architecture in the Federation Free style in the early 1900s. Its design is easily associated with the work of architect Hillson Beasley. (Criteria 1.1 & 1.2)

North Perth Police Station is an integral element in the Angove Street vista, and forms an harmonious scale and form within its residential context. (Criteria 1.3 & 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

North Perth Police Station is a feature of the development of the North Perth suburb, its construction represents the need for a permanent police station in this area. (Criterion 2.1)

North Perth Police Station represents the development of the Western Australia Police Forces, dating from its construction in 1908 as a part of the gold rush era and public works boom, to the 1960s and its changes in use. (Criterion 2.1)

North Perth Police Station is the first police station built in North Perth, and represents the continued presence of law and order in that suburb. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

The place demonstrates close associations with the administering police authority in North Perth since the 1900s. The place also demonstrates associations with the Chief Government Architect, Hillson Beasley. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

* 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* North Ryde NSW, Angus & Robertson 1989.

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

North Perth Police Station is valued by the local community for being a landmark feature of the North Perth townscape. It is also highly valued for its continued and reliable presence in the community as a police station. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

North Perth Police Station is a fine representative example of Hillson Beasley's architecture, and work undertaken by the Public Works Department in c.1900-1920. It is representative of Beasley's smaller works. (Criterion 6.1)

It is a good example of a police station and quarters. The building demonstrates the Officer in Charge's, and his family's, way of life at the police station, one which has changed over time. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The condition of the place is very good, no doubt a reflection of regular maintenance and repairs, in response to the continued use of the place.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The integrity of the place is high. The changes in use are allied with the original and continuing function of administering law and order.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The place demonstrates a high degree of authenticity with minimal intrusion to the fabric.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Laura Gray, Conservation Professional, with some assistance in primary research by Gillian O'Mara, Archival Researcher. The physical evidence has been compiled by Laura Gray. Additional research has been compiled by Heritage Council staff.

Due to the fact that the police station is still functioning, security restrictions are in place. PWD Plans available at Contract and Management Services (CAMS), and files pertaining to the place, are restricted.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

North Perth Police Station is a single storey building which exhibits a number of the stylistic details of the Federation period.

When James Stirling arrived in the Swan River Colony in June 1829, he brought a detachment from the 63rd Regiment to carry out duties of discipline and protection. It was not until March 1831, that Stirling appointed a Coroner, Justices of the Peace and Constables, to administer law and justice.¹

As settlement grew large enough to be called a town, a Constable was appointed to it. By 1840, Perth had a full-time paid Constable who also acted as a Bailiff. A regulated Police Force was established in 1849, prior to the arrival of the first convicts, but it was not until March 1853, that a superintendent was appointed to administer the entire Force.²

In the 1890s and 1900s, the enormous increase in population in Western Australian, associated with the discovery of gold, led to the suburbanisation of Perth. The huge increase in population, the subsequent increase in crime and civil disorder, the sudden availability of monies for public works and Western Australia's 1890 self government all had a significant impact on the development of the Western Australian Police Force.³ Western Australia's *Police Act* was passed in 1892.⁴

By 1906, the Police Force had grown from 207 men in 1890 to 492, with approximately 300 of these having joined in the six years previously.⁵ The regulation and expansion of the Police Force led to plans to establish a number of police stations in metropolitan and regional areas.

North Perth was gazetted as a municipality in 1901. In 1904, only 12% of North Perth had been built on, but by 1911 land under construction had trebled.⁶ The *North Perth Police Station* (1908) was built during this period of intensive development.

¹ Lawrence, R.M. (Senior Constable), *Police Review 1829-1979*, Police Department Public Relations Branch, Govt. Printing Office, 1979, p.9-13

² *ibid*, p. 13-14

³ Edmonds, L. in association with Gill, A. & Gregory, J., 'Western Australia Police Service Thematic History', Prepared for CAMS on behalf of the WA Police Service, UWA, May 1998, p. 21&22

⁴ *ibid*, p.21

⁵ *ibid*, p. 22

⁶ Stannage, C.T., *The People of Perth*, Perth City Council, Perth, Western Australia, 1979, p. 243

Police officers in towns initially covered their allotted area on foot. Although bicycles were introduced in 1897, many Constables still patrolled on foot.⁷ Records from the WA Police Library show that North Perth already had a Foot Constable before the station was built. In 1902, Joseph Foulkes (Number 137) patrolled the North Perth area, followed by James Strappe (152) in 1903.⁸ On 14 August 1907, tenders were called for the construction of *North Perth Police Station*.⁹ On 20 September 1907, the tender from contractors Franklin & Finlay for £816 was accepted.¹⁰ The construction works were scheduled for completion by 30 January 1908, and an overtime penalty of £1 a day was imposed on the contractor, in addition to a two month maintenance period. The *North Perth Police Station*, with attached quarters, was completed in 1908. G Allan was the supervisor for the project.¹¹ Hillson Beasley was the Chief Architect of the Public Works Department at the time.

In 1909, records show that there was only one person stationed at the new *North Perth Police Station*, a Foot Constable.¹² This was James Strappe who had been the Foot Constable in the area since 1903 and, after the station had been opened, became the Officer in Charge.¹³

At the same time work had finished on the *North Perth Police Station*, new police stations were opened at West Perth, Perth Causeway, Victoria Park, Cottesloe and Maylands.¹⁴ North Perth was one of the eleven police stations built during the gold rush period, 1890-1910.¹⁵

Since the intense development of the gold rush era, the Perth metropolitan area maintained a certain level of growth until the 1950s and 1960s mineral boom. In this period, there is a general expansion of the Police Department and its facilities, in part a result of the boom period as well as the increasing numbers of the police departments.¹⁶

During the 1960s, *North Perth Police Station* facilities were improved. In September 1961, £1750 was spent building an additional room including furniture.¹⁷ A two car garage was added in 1965. In the mid 1960s, the *North Perth Police Station* included the main office, Officer in Charge's office, two cells and amenities.¹⁸

⁷ Lawrence, R.M. (Senior Constable), op. cit., p. 27-28

⁸ North Perth Police Station, Misc. File, WA Police Library

⁹ *Government Gazette* 16 August 1907 p.2931. The National Trust files document Thos O'Donnell living at the Angove Street address of the proposed police station in 1907, which suggests that there may have been a building on the site prior to the police station. This would have been demolished for the police station. (National Trust file No.66.)

¹⁰ *Government Gazette* 27 September 1907 p.3269.

¹¹ North Perth Police Station, Misc. File, W.A Police Library.

¹² 'Report of the Commissioner of Police', *WA Parliament Votes and Proceedings, 1909-1910*, Vol. 2,p.768

¹³ National Trust file No.66.

¹⁴ 'Report of the Commissioner of Police', *WA Parliament Votes and Proceedings, 1909-1910*, Vol. 2,p. 768

¹⁵ Edmonds, L. in association with Gill, A. & Gregory, J., op. cit., p. 24

¹⁶ Lawrence, R.M. (Senior Constable), op. cit., p. 37-40

¹⁷ North Perth Police Station, Misc. File, W A Police Library.

¹⁸ Edmonds, L. in association with Gill, A. & Gregory, J., op. cit., Appendix F

In May 1975, the toilet located some 40 feet away from the main building, in the rear yard, was demolished by a police van. It was recommended that new toilet facilities be constructed on the rear wall of the quarters, for \$2050. (Physical evidence indicates that the new amenities were built.)¹⁹

Until 1978, *North Perth Police Station* had operated continuously as a police station with the resident Officer in Charge in the attached quarters. In 1978, these quarters were vacated for the Lecturing Branch of the Police Department. In 1979, the Officer in Charge took up residence again. In more recent years, the OIC's quarters has again become a Police training area.²⁰ Police training was a particular development of the 1960s/70s, in an effort to improve the efficiency of the Police Force.²¹

Currently *North Perth Police Station* operates from the former police station and portion of the former quarters. The remainder of the quarters are used as the Mirrabooka District Training Centre.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

North Perth Police Station is located on the rise of Angove Street facing Fitzgerald Street. It is a domestic scale building that sits comfortably among its residential neighbours.

The building exhibits a number of the stylistic details of the Federation period. Hillson Beasley, Chief Architect at the time the police station was built, was a recognised practitioner of the Federation Free style of architecture, and *North Perth Police Station* demonstrates some of those stylistic details; the asymmetry, the use of contrasting materials, particularly the 'blood and bandages' of the double arched gable parapet, and the use of traditional building methods.²²

The single storey building is constructed of brick, in an English bond, with rendered reveals and features. The entire roof is constructed of corrugated iron sheets. The main roof takes the form of two gables running parallel with the length of the building across the site, and the street. The frontage features a gable parapet over the entry of the police station. The remainder of the front verandahs which extends across the width of the front, are roofed at a break pitch and hipped at the external corners. Each side wall is a double gable parapet wall. At the rear, the protruding kitchen wall on the south end also has a parapet gable, while the remainder of the back is a skillion verandah roof, with the c.1975 addition at a different break pitch.

The building comprises the working police station on the western side, and the former residence on the eastern side of the street frontage. The place functions as a working police station with staff training facilities, and associated staff amenities. The interior fabric throughout has, for the most part, been retained, with minimal interventions.

¹⁹ North Perth Police Station, Misc. File, W A Police Library.

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Lawrence, R.M. (Senior Constable), *op. cit.*, p.37

²² Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present* Angus & Robertson Publishers, North Ryde, 1989 pp.137, 138.

The former residential section of the station is located on the east side of the building, separated by a brick wall, dividing the verandah and frontage. The residential frontage has a symmetrical facade with a central brick parapet above the entry door which is detailed with coloured square leadlight sidelights and fanlight. Flanking the central door are double hung sash windows each side central within each front room. Each of those rooms still has the original fireplace and mantelpiece, although they have been painted. A larger room directly at the end of the entry hall also retains the fireplace, but boarded over, and a recent sliding door, replacing the original door, provides access to the kitchen which still has the original stove, cupboards, and mantelpiece in place.

The police station area has two entries from the front verandah. The entry signalled by the parapet opens into a small office which accesses a small hallway with a room on the east and two cells on the other side. The cells are remarkably intact. The room opposite the cells, has been completely refurbished, with a false ceiling, boarded fireplace and camera surveillance corner built-in. A door from that room also accesses the rear verandah of the residential section. The westernmost room of the building extends the depth of the building with doors onto the front and rear verandahs.

The rear elevation shows the main building in brick construction, and the amenities area also in brick of a more recent period, c.1975, and the original amenities area still clad in weatherboard. Several outbuildings are situated in the rear yard. Two are brick constructions and one is timber framed and clad with fibro-cement. The rear of the property is accessed from Albert Street.

13.3 REFERENCES

Lawrence, R.M. (Senior Constable), *Police Review 1829-1979*, Police Department Public Relations Branch, Govt. Printing Office, 1979,

Edmonds, L. in association with Gill, A. & Gregory, J., 'Western Australia Police Service Thematic History', Prepared for CAMS on behalf of the WA Police Service, UWA, May 1998,

13.4 FURTHER RESEARCH
