



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)

- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 306 Domestic activities
- 602 Early settlers

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Wansbrough House and the Cottage are fine examples of buildings designed in the Victorian Georgian Style. The diachromatic Flemish bond brickwork, particularly at the north end of the house, is of good quality. The aesthetic value of the house and the cottage is enhanced by its complementary setting of mature landscaped gardens that slope down towards Bland Brook and by the low brick boundary wall on Avon Terrace that gives an appropriate entrance to the site. (Criterion 1.1)

The front garden wall with the recessed circular bay is a noticeable feature on Avon Terrace beside Bland Bridge. This wall, coupled with the substantial house behind it, gives the place landmark qualities. The mature eucalyptus and fruit trees in the gardens of *Wansbrough House* contribute to these landmark qualities by providing prominent vertical elements that contrast with the surrounding rural setting. (Criterion 1.3)

Wansbrough House, its front garden and wall contribute positively to the aesthetics of the streetscape of Avon Terrace and the heritage precinct of Blandstown. Blandstown, a cluster of Victorian Georgian style houses grouped around the Bland Brook Bridge, displays the characteristics of density and scale similar to an English country village that is rare within Western Australia. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Wansbrough House is part of Blandstown, a small rural community that developed in the locality of York in the 1830s. As such it has associations with

* 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 first European settlers and early colonial history of York and Western Australia. (Criterion 2.1)

Wansbrough House was an important place in the social life of early York and people met on many occasions at the place to dress for the various dances and balls held in the York town hall. (Criterion 2.2)

The place is associated with George Wansbrough, an important member of the early York and Blandstown communities. He was a foundation member of the York Municipal Council elected in March 1871, and his home, *Wansbrough House*, was an important centre of social interaction. (Criterion 2.3)

Wansbrough House is a demonstration of how, in the period of the early development of the State, buildings of good quality were achieved using local materials and traditional construction methods adapted to suit local conditions. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Members of the Wansbrough family occupied the place from its construction in 1859 until 1967. *Wansbrough House* is of social significance to the approximately 100 descendants of George Wansbrough still living in Western Australia. Some family descendants live in nearby country localities. (Criterion 4.1)

Wansbrough House contributes to the community's sense of place as an historic building and as the home of a prominent family that has contributed to the evolution of the present York community. (Criterion 4.2)

Wansbrough House is an important component of the Blandstown Precinct, an intact example of a small rural village that illustrates the State's early inland development, as classified by the National Trust (1984) and included in the Shire of York's Town Planning Scheme.

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Wansbrough House is rare as a good example of a Victorian Georgian building. The Cottage is an uncommon example of a more simply designed building that displays characteristics of the same style. While the Georgian style was the basis for most architecture in Western Australia in this early period of development, it was not a period in which a large number of buildings were built and now even fewer survive.

The grounds of *Wansbrough House* have rarity value as an integral part of the Blandstown Heritage Precinct. This precinct is a rare, virtually intact example of rural development within the State. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Wansbrough House is a representative example of a house built in the Victorian Georgian style, the style that was the basis for most architecture in Western Australia from the time of the first European settlements until at least the middle of the nineteenth century. (Criterion 6.1)

The grounds of *Wansbrough House* have representative value as a demonstration of the form of the ideal Georgian semi-rural garden.

As part of the Blandstown Heritage Precinct, *Wansbrough House* contributes to the townscape that demonstrates the characteristics of early rural development in this State. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Generally *Wansbrough House* appears to be in a sound condition. However, there are signs of damp and water penetration, particularly in the ceiling of the living area and bathroom on the east side of the building. There is also some cracking on the interior faces of the walls at the north west and south west corners of the building. The pointing of the rough stone foundation is extremely eroded throughout its exposed west and north sides.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Wansbrough House continues to be used for its original purpose retaining a high degree of integrity. The use of both the house and cottage as a 'bed and breakfast' establishment is consistent with original purpose and has allowed the original rural residential values of the place to be sustained.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Wansbrough House retains a high degree of authenticity. The major alterations carried out after the completion of the house in the 1860s are limited to the rooms on the east side of the house; the kitchen, living area and bathroom and the rear verandah.

The cottage is of similarly high authenticity as the house. The major changes to this building being the enclosure of the rear verandah, the removal of the internal wall and the installation of a raking ceiling.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Attached are key sections of the supporting evidence prepared by Kelsall Binet Architects with Robin and Ken Betjeman, 'Wansbrough House York Conservation Plan', prepared for Robin and Ken Betjeman in June 2000.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to Kelsall Binet Architects with Robin and Ken Betjeman, 'Wansbrough House York Conservation Plan', prepared for Robin and Ken Betjeman in June 2000.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to Kelsall Binet Architects with Robin and Ken Betjeman, 'Wansbrough House York Conservation Plan', prepared for Robin and Ken Betjeman in June 2000.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a Comparative Analysis refer to Kelsall Binet Architects with Robin and Ken Betjeman, 'Wansbrough House York Conservation Plan', prepared for Robin and Ken Betjeman in June 2000.

13. 4 REFERENCES

Kelsall Binet Architects with Robin and Ken Betjeman, 'Wansbrough House York Conservation Plan', prepared for Robin and Ken Betjeman in June 2000.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH
