



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)

- 8.5.4 Pursuing common leisure interests
- 8.10 Pursuing excellence in the arts and sciences
- 8.8 Remembering the fallen

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 307 Intellectual activities, arts and crafts
- 402 Education and science
- 408 Institutions

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Weld Hall has some aesthetic value in the symmetrical form of the building, with its dominant large arched windows and simple decorative features, although this has been somewhat compromised by unsympathetic additions and cracking due to the failure of footings. (Criteria 1.1)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Weld Hall has value for its association with early social and community development of Busselton. The evolution of the building illustrates the early patterns of growth in the region, which were characterised initially by the financial support of families and organisations such as the Mechanics Institute, and later by the Municipality of Busselton, (Criteria 2.1)

Weld Hall is a physical reminder of the Mechanics Institute ethos, which was to promote the educational and cultural development of communities throughout Western Australia and elsewhere. Once prolific, the majority of Mechanics Institutes have been replaced by the public library and adult education systems and their social function has all but disappeared. (Criterion 2.2)

Weld Hall is associated by name with the Frederick Aloysius Weld, Governor of Western Australia from 1869 to 1875. It is associated with several organisations, in particular the former Mechanics Institute, the RSL and the Repertory Club. (Criteria 2.3)

* 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.

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Weld Hall has occupied an important role in the cultural and social life of Busselton for over 100 years. It is highly valued by members of the local community as a venue dedicated primarily to cultural, artistic and literary development and is demonstrative of early reading rooms and libraries. It has associations with various organisations, including the Mechanics' Institute and Returned and Services League, which have made significant contributions to the local community. (Criterion 4.1)

Weld Hall has served as a community and town hall, a rehearsal and performance venue for the local district band and in a formal educational capacity as a substitute classroom. It has also achieved contemporary social value as a theatre, contributing greatly to the sense of place of the region. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The place represents a distinctive way of life and custom, epitomised by organisations such as the Mechanics' Institute and Working Men's Association, that no longer exist in the State. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Weld Hall is representative of an early reading room or library and features elements, such as the large arched windows, typically associated with buildings of this type. (Criterion 6.1)

The plain, largely unadorned, façade treatment is characteristic of the restraint of an era experiencing steady, rather than burgeoning, population growth, constructed with limited funding due to the Shire being in its infancy. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Despite a period of apparent neglect and the threat of demolition, *Weld Hall* is in a good condition. The practice of piecemeal additions, typical of country localities, is in evidence here, particularly at the rear of the building, however most renovations appear to have been undertaken with adequate funding and an appropriate degree of professional expertise.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The integrity of *Weld Hall* has been retained throughout the evolution of the place and the uses of the place have to date been compatible with the building and its original intent.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

A reasonable degree of authenticity remains in the façade. Alterations to secondary elevation, particularly at the rear, have compromised authenticity. Inside, individual decorative elements exist however the context has been considerably altered.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Attached are key sections of the supporting evidence prepared by Robin Kornweibel Architects, 'Weld Hall Busselton An assessment of the cultural significance and Conservation Plan' for the Shire of Busselton Western Australia, June 1999.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to Robin Kornweibel Architects, 'Weld Hall Busselton An assessment of the cultural significance and Conservation Plan' for the Shire of Busselton Western Australia, June 1999.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to Robin Kornweibel Architects, 'Weld Hall Busselton An assessment of the cultural significance and Conservation Plan' for the Shire of Busselton Western Australia, June 1999.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the Comparative Information refer to Robin Kornweibel Architects, 'Weld Hall Busselton An assessment of the cultural significance and Conservation Plan' for the Shire of Busselton Western Australia, June 1999.

13.4 REFERENCES

Robin Kornweibel Architects, 'Weld Hall Busselton An assessment of the cultural significance and Conservation Plan' for the Shire of Busselton Western Australia, June 1999.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
