



# 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

*Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* is a fine Victorian Georgian building, and the police quarters is a fine Federation Filigree building. (Criterion 1.1)

*Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* is an integral part of the collection of civic buildings situated at the northern part of the centre of Bridgetown. It forms part of a significant streetscape in an historic town that contains many fine nineteenth century and early twentieth century buildings and which retains much of the ambience of a pre World War One country town. (Criterion 1.4)

### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

It is significant in the development of the town of Bridgetown. (Criterion 2.2)

It is significant as the surviving public building constructed by James Gibb, builder of Bridgetown, who was responsible for much of the building in Bridgetown in the late 1870s and 1880s. (Criterion 2.3)

### 11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

It is highly valued by some members of the community of Bridgetown for its contribution to the streetscape. (Criterion 4.1)

It contributes to the community's sense of place as an integral part of the collection of civic buildings situated at the northern part of the centre of Bridgetown. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

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### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

It is significant in exhibiting the principal characteristics of the design and function of late nineteenth century police station and lockups, together with police quarters of the early twentieth century. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

*Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* has been extensively repaired, adapted and had later accretions removed, revealing something of their appearance in the first quarter of this century. Work over the past two years has stabilised the place and left it in fair to good condition. There remain several locations where structural cracking in masonry walls is of concern. Generally the place is in fair to good condition.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

The place divides into two parts with respect to integrity. *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* (148 Hampton Street) is vacant and is currently not generally accessible to the public. While much of the fabric remains undisturbed and the meaning of the place remains clear, its lack of use is of concern. The place retains a moderate degree of integrity.

The former police quarters (144-146 Hampton Street) remain close to their original configuration, are well maintained and are in use as two residences. The original intent has been respected, continuity of use retained and the quarters therefore retain a moderate to high degree of integrity.

### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* has retained almost all of its fabric and therefore retains a high degree of authenticity. Fabric losses to the police quarters include the external laundries, picket fences and wc's. The principal rooms and front verandah to the quarters are close to their original state in terms of fabric and finishes, roof finishes apart. Only the rear extensions to the quarters completed in 1996 are significant alterations to the early concepts. The police quarters retain a moderate degree of authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Robin Chinnery, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Philip Griffiths, Architect of Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* comprises a Police Station and Lockup (1880) with Police Quarters attached (1907). The former Police Station and Lockup is a single-storey, brick police station and cells constructed for the police in 1880.<sup>1</sup> The Police Quarters is a single-storey, semi-detached brick building, constructed in 1907, to accommodate two policemen and their families.<sup>2</sup>

In 1852, A. C. Gregory made the original survey of the Geegelup area. By 1857, Edward Hester and John Blechynden had taken up large holdings in the Geegelup district, introducing sheep and cattle.<sup>3</sup> In 1862, John Allnutt began to establish an orchard in the district, which was to lay the foundations of the fruit growing industry in the area.<sup>4</sup> James Forrest (father of John Forrest) was appointed as a temporary policeman in the district in 1862.<sup>5</sup> The first permanently appointed policeman was Constable Abraham Moulton.<sup>6</sup> The police district he administered was large, extending north to Minninup (later named Donnybrook), east to Kojonup, south to the coast and west to Sussex (later named Busselton); most of his work was 'dealing with members of this particular tribe' (the Guglieup).<sup>7</sup> In 1866, Mrs. Moulton was appointed as postmistress for Geegelup.<sup>8</sup>

Tenders were called for a police station at Geegelup in February 1867.<sup>9</sup> The first police station was constructed on the south bank of the Blackwood River by C. Keyser at a cost of £205 in mid 1867.<sup>10</sup> It was occupied by Constable Moulton and his wife, who continued as the postmistress.

In April 1868, following his earlier reports that the European settlers were requesting that some lots should be laid out on the Geegelup townsite 'to induce some four tradesmen, carpenter, blacksmith, wheelwright and shoemaker, who are, and have been here for some time, to finally settle in

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1 Western Australia *Government Gazette* 16 March 1880.

2 P.W.D. Contract Book 1907-1908, p.71.

3 *Bridgetown Centenary Year 1868-1968* (Shire of Bridgetown, 1968) p. 4.

4 *ibid.*

5 Gaines, C. 'Bridgetown 100 Years of History' Typescript Thesis 1970, Battye Library, p.4; McAlinden, I. *People and Places: Short Stories* Paterson Brokensha Pty. Ltd., Perth, 1952, p.110.

6 Gaines, C. *op. cit.*, p. 4.

7 'Bridgetown Police Station' Typescript, Library and Resource Centre, Western Australia Police.

8 *ibid.*

9 Western Australia *Government Gazette* 26 February 1867.

10 Western Australia *Government Gazette* 26 May 1867.

the place and induce others to follow.' T. Campbell Carey surveyed the townsite, and suggested that the town be named Bridgetown.<sup>11</sup>

The town of Bridgetown was proclaimed by Governor J. S. Hampton, 4 June 1868.<sup>12</sup> By 1872, the town consisted of seven houses, including the police station, a general store, a small building for a hotel and John Blechynden's and Joe Smith's houses.<sup>13</sup> The population increased slowly in the 1870s, with the pastoral industry and timber cutting predominant industries, for the fledgling fruit growing industry continued to have problems due to its distance from markets. In 1879, Bridgetown had grown to twenty households, several stores, and public houses.<sup>14</sup>

In 1880, *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* was built at Lot 38, Hampton Street to a design of the Government Architect.<sup>15</sup> It was built by James Gibb, at a cost of £423.<sup>16</sup> The building comprised an office, accommodation and cells. It was constructed of brick, with a jarrah shingle roof and a front verandah. The original plans were modified during construction to incorporate front and back steps, a window to provide light and air in the storeroom, a partition in the cells, and plates to the roof.<sup>17</sup> The stables from the old police station were re-located to the new site in Hampton Street; and a three railing fence was erected around the police grant 'to keep out cattle and sheep from trespassing.'<sup>18</sup> On 18 January 1881, Constable John Bovell moved from the old police station to the newly constructed *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown*.<sup>19</sup>

In April 1892, tenders were called for Additions and Repairs to *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown*.<sup>20</sup>

The building boom in Western Australia during the gold boom saw an increased demand for sawn timber, and numerous 'spot mills' opened in the Bridgetown area, with the first steam driven mill opening in 1895.<sup>21</sup> The expansion of the timber industry brought an increase in population. In 1898, the opening of the railway to Bridgetown provided the means for the fruit

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11 Letters from Assistant Surveyor T. Campbell Carey to Surveyor General Captain J.S. Roe, 2 February 1868 and 20 April 1868 in *Bridgetown Centenary Year 1868-1968* Shire of Bridgetown, 1968, p.3.

12 Western Australia *Government Gazette* 16 June 1868.

13 May, John 'Recollections' in *Blackwood Times* 16 March 1934.

14 *Bridgetown Centenary Year 1868-1968* Shire of Bridgetown, 1968, p.7.

15 Western Australia *Government Gazette* 23 September 1879 and 10 February 1880.

16 Western Australia *Government Gazette* 16 March 1880.

17 Correspondence from Constable John Bovell 1 October 1880, and from Sergeant Vincent 19 October 1880 in 'Bridgetown Police Station Letterbook, 4 September 1868 - 24 September 1884.'

18 Correspondence from Constable John Bovell 1 October 1880, and from Sergeant Vincent 19 and 22 October 1880 in 'Bridgetown Police Station Letterbook, 4 September 1868 - 24 September 1884.'

19 Correspondence from Constable John Bovell 20 January 1881 in 'Bridgetown Police Station Letterbook, 4 September 1868 - 24 September 1884.'

20 Western Australia *Government Gazette* 7, 14, 21 April 1892. [The acceptance is unrecorded in *Government Gazette*. P.W.D. Contract Book for this period has had pages removed, including those relevant to this building. Thus it is not possible to ascertain the details of this work.]

21 Gaines, C. op. cit., p.15.

growing industry to expand as it brought markets on the Goldfields within reach. Many of the railway construction workers remained to settle on holdings in the district after the completion of the railway, further boosting the population. In consequence, the police station at Bridgetown was upgraded to two men in January 1899.<sup>22</sup>

In February 1902, a tender was awarded to F. S. Warner, for repairs and maintenance at a cost of £96/13/9 to *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown*.<sup>23</sup>

Since the appointment of a second policeman in 1899, there had not been sufficient accommodation at *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown*. In 1907, plans were drawn up to extend the accommodation to provide for two policemen and their families. This involved the demolition of the southern section of the original building, and re-roofing with corrugated iron. Completed 12 March 1908, the alterations and extensions were carried out by Ward Brothers of Perth at a cost of £947/9/6.<sup>24</sup>

In September 1918, C. Bradbury was awarded a tender at a cost of £49/10/- for renovations to *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown*.<sup>25</sup>

In July 1926, A. Marcusse was awarded a tender for fencing at the place at a cost of £74/12/6.<sup>26</sup>

Further renovations to the police quarters and *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* were made in late 1926, by W. Burton at a cost of £165/10/10.<sup>27</sup>

Tenders were called for renovations and repairs 1 February 1950.<sup>28</sup>

22 July 1960, tenders were called for repairs and renovations.<sup>29</sup>

22 November 1968, tenders were called for the erection of a new police station, lockup, and court house in Bridgetown.<sup>30</sup>

17 October 1969 tenders were called for repairs and renovations to the Police Quarters of *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown*.<sup>31</sup>

On 26 March 1970, *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* was vacated when the new police station was opened. The police quarters continued to be occupied by some of the police officers and their families on a private agreement with Public Works Land Property Branch.<sup>32</sup>

Subsequently the police officers were accommodated elsewhere, and the building fell into disuse.

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22 Typewritten record of staffing at Bridgetown Police Station, 1865 to 1937, from Library and Resource Centre, Western Australia Police.

23 P.W.D. Contract Book, 12 March 1897-13 January 1903, p.151.

24 *ibid*, 1907-1908, p.71.

25 *Western Australia Government Gazette* 19 September 1918.

26 *ibid*, 28 July 1926.

27 *ibid*, 4 October 1926.

28 *ibid*, 1 February 1950.

29 *ibid*, 22 July 1960.

30 *ibid*, 22 November 1968.

31 *ibid*, 17 October 1969.

32 Typescript information from Library and Resource Centre, Western Australia Police.

The former *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* was purchased by the Shire of Bridgetown in May 1989, recognising its significance as the earliest remaining government building in Bridgetown, and one of the oldest surviving buildings in the town. In 1992, it was leased out by the Shire as residences.<sup>33</sup>

The proposal to restore the place was opposed by some members of Bridgetown community, for in their view it was overdue for demolition.<sup>34</sup> In 1993-1994, a conservation project was carried out under the Conservation Incentives Programme. The building was in urgent need of conservation repair as it was suffering water damage due to a leaking roof, the steps were rotted, and rail and porch timbers were in need of replacement. The corrugated iron roof was removed, and also the old jarrah shingles; they were replaced with a new roof of 7,500 hand split jarrah shingles. Guttering was replaced as required, and a round section downpipe added to provide drainage from the roof. The side steps were replaced, as were the porch deck and rails including the rotted stumps, bearers and joists. The front steps were replaced as per the original plan. The main project was completed 25 August 1993, and the roof was sealed March 1994.<sup>35</sup> Subsequently the former *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* was opened to the public for trial. For some period thereafter the place was opened regularly to coincide with specific events, including Heritage Week and the Blues Festival, but there was little enthusiasm overall about the restoration and conservation.<sup>36</sup>

The Shire and the Bridgetown Historical Society would like to see the future development of an historical precinct extending from the Tourist Information Office south along Hampton Street, and incorporating the former courthouse, the *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown*, Bridgetown Post Office, and the Municipal Chambers. With this concept in mind, the Shire transported the former Yornup school to the rear of the site in March 1996, for inclusion in such a precinct. However, it appears that such a project may not have widespread community support.<sup>37</sup>

Currently the police quarters are rented out as residences, having been renovated and extended by the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes in 1995-1996, to designs prepared by David Singe, Architect. *Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* has not been opened to the public in 1996.

### 13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* comprises two distinct but physically connected parts. The former lockup (1880) is a single-storey brick construction shingle roofed Victorian Georgian style domestic scale

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<sup>33</sup> National Trust Assessment Form, Old Police Station and Police Quarters, Hampton Street, Bridgetown, 10 February 1992.

<sup>34</sup> Conversation by Robin Chinnery with D. Foley, past committee member of Bridgetown Historical Society, Memo, HCWA file PD 0254, 25 November 1996.

<sup>35</sup> Final report to HCWA for The Bridgetown Old Gaol Project, 1994.

<sup>36</sup> Conversation by Robin Chinnery with D. Foley, past committee member of Bridgetown Historical Society, Memo, HCWA file PD 0254, 25 November 1996.

<sup>37</sup> Conversation by Robin Chinnery with T. Clinch of Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Memo, HCWA file PD 0240, 25 November 1996.

structure.<sup>38</sup> The adjoining quarters is a duplex pair of residences constructed in brick with a replacement Colorbond roof and full width front verandah rendered in a very restrained Federation Filigree style.<sup>39</sup>

*Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* are sited on the east side of Hampton Street on rising land, set back from the footpath alignment and located, between the Bridgetown Post Office to the south and the much altered Bridgetown Courthouse (150 Hampton Street) to the north. The garden in front of the place used to slope down to the back edge of pavement, but is now retained by a low brick and stone retaining wall, behind which is brick paving and garden beds in front of the quarters. There is an expanse of lawn in front of the lockup. The south of the grounds between the former courthouse and lockup are simply covered with grass. A narrow path leads to the side entry of the lockup from the street. Directly behind the lockup, some 16 metres to the east, there is an utilitarian metal clad shed on steel stumps built for the Department of Agriculture and between the two buildings is lawn. There is a fence between the lockup rear yard and the quarters rear yard. On the south side of the fence line there is an eucalypt and oak tree, with an apricot and palm further to the south. The rear of the quarters has brick paving associated with the 1996 additions and beyond the paving to the east there is a twin carport cum garage with some storage area, built in pole construction, clad in corrugated zincalume (1996). Further east there is a timber framed, weatherboard clad schoolhouse with an iron roof in a very poor state of repair. The building was relocated from Yornup to the present site and set on new stumps. No works have been carried out since its re-siting and re-roofing. The place is deteriorating.

*Old Gaol & Police Quarters, Bridgetown* are joined by a common wall but are not interconnected.

The lockup is a simple "L" shaped building with a broken back hip and gable roof extending over front and side verandahs. The roof was originally shingles and subsequently sheeted in corrugated iron, which has been replaced with a new shingle roof. The walls are made of soft red bricks laid in lime mortar in Flemish bond over a random rubble granite plinth. The lower walls are painted white. The verandah is carried on timber stumps and has a sawn timber board floor and its roof is carried on stop chamfered posts with a handrail and St. Andrew's cross balustrade. The windows are casements, except to the cells which are barred openings and in two cells are shuttered. On the southern wall there are rifle slots from the cell range corridor overlooking the southern garden area. Doors to the administration section at the front of the building are part glazed in eight panes and panelled. Doors to the secure areas are double skinned construction boarded doors. The rear and south side verandah are also boarded. There is evidence of the rear door to the office having been modified which accords with the documentary evidence.

The quarters are the product of two campaigns. The original section is a duplex pair of residences with a party wall rising through the roof line

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<sup>38</sup> Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present.* (Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989) pp.44-47.

<sup>39</sup> *ibid*, pp.108-111.

separating the house. The quarters are built in stretcher bond brickwork laid in lime mortar. The houses are symmetrically arranged about the dividing wall and the front elevation of each house is symmetrically arranged around a central corridor. The front four panel doors are flanked by 2 pane double hung sash windows. The side elevations are simply treated with only one window breaking the wall plane. The rear elevation is entirely the making of the Singe scheme completed in 1996. It is constructed in stretcher bond brickwork laid in cement mortar with timber double hung sash windows and fully glazed doors with side screens.

The lockup is a simple "L" shaped building plan with an office and lobby across the front of the building accessed both off the verandah and directly via timber steps from the northern garden area. This would have given a direct link to the courthouse to the north when the lockup was operational. Both front rooms have open fireplaces and timber surrounds. The office has a door in the east wall that leads into a second white washed timber floored lobby with a large cell to its north, apparently converted from a store. The cell is timber lined with a twin skin construction door and barred, shuttered windows and a timber floor. A door to the south leads onto the verandah. A further lobby similar to the adjoining lobby lies to the east and this lobby gives access to two smaller cells, which are similarly treated to the first. Adjoining the cells, still further east, is the kitchen which is only accessible from the verandah. It has timber floors which are in a poor state of repair. The kitchen has a large oven. A later w.c. is constructed in single brick walling under the eastern verandah on the north wall.

The quarters are identical mirrored plans. The original houses have a central corridor with bedrooms abutting either side of the party wall and living rooms on the outside faces of each place. The next rooms in sequence are the living rooms which also abut the party wall, each with a bedroom leading directly off the main living space. All rooms have fireplaces diagonally set in the corner of the room. All rooms have lath and plaster ceilings plastered walls, picture rails profiled timber skirtings, timber floors and 4 panel doors, except in the hall where a replacement gyp rock ceiling has been fixed. The places originally had bathrooms and pantries at the end of the open verandah with kitchens set back to back beyond the verandah. A laundry and w.c. for each house once stood in the garden beyond, but there is no surface trace of any of these elements.

Most of the alterations to the lockup took place at the time when the quarters were built in 1907. Little has changed since that time. The major changes have been to the quarters. The place had gradually acquired a number of minor changes and additional materials and finishes, as the documentary



evidence clearly demonstrates. David Singe's scheme for improving the quarters intended to keep the original kitchens and improved and extended the house to the rear, but when the alterations were constructed, the original kitchens were demolished. The new walls were erected on the same alignment as the original kitchen walls. The kitchens have been rebuilt, though in single leaf brickwork rather than the 9" brickwork that was used for the original. The present arrangement consists of new and larger bathrooms in the same location as the original ones; the pantries have been removed and the whole of the area has become a meals area. Beyond the kitchens is a pair of new living rooms and laundries separately accessed externally. The new rooms have concrete floors, plastered brick walls and flush gyp rock ceilings with cove cornices.

The place is attractively presented and has been restored in a reasonably appropriate manner. It is in good condition though there are areas for concern including the flashings to the replacement shingle roof, some structural cracking and some of the work that has been done to the quarters verandahs. The retaining walls to the street alignment are also of some concern and distort the original intent. The Shire appears to be maintaining the place in a proper manner and to have a commitment to its ongoing well-being.

### **13.3 REFERENCES**

National Trust Assessment Exposition 10 February 1992.