



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **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\***

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown* has a pleasing massing of architectural elements, natural vegetation and interesting scale and detail. (Criterion 1.1)

Situated on the banks of the Blackwood River, *Bridgedale, Bridgetown*, together with the blue atlas cedar nearby, has a landmark quality in the area and has strong visual connections with the river. Because of its visibility across the river, the place defines the southern entrance to the town and contributes to the aesthetic qualities of the landscape. (Criterion 1.3)

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown*, the oldest building in the township, is an important element in the heritage precinct identified in the Bridgetown Townscape Project. (Criterion 1.4)

##### **11.2. HISTORIC VALUE**

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown* has a close association with the first years of European settlement of the Bridgetown district. The original ten acre site of the place was purchased by John Blechynden in 1859 under the newly introduced land regulations aimed at promotion of wider settlement of rural districts in the south-west of the State. The farm at Bridgedale, was the first property to be occupied in the townsite area and pre-dates the establishment of the town. Built circa 1868, it is the oldest building in Bridgetown. (Criteria 2.1, 2.2)

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown*, the second house on the site, was the family home of the Blechynden family until 1950 and demonstrates the continuity of development of the Bridgetown district. It is closely associated with the early phases of rural development along the Blackwood River. (Criterion 2.2)

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown* has a close association with the Blechynden family, whose members were influential in the original farming and development of the district. (Criterion 2.3)

##### **11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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*Bridgedale, Bridgetown* is used as an educational resource by school groups and the general public. (Criteria 3.1, 3.2)

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown* has potential to demonstrate mid-nineteenth century building technology and current conservation methodology and practice. (Criterion 3.1)

The blue atlas cedar has value as a horticultural specimen of considerable age and comparative rarity in the district. The tree has the potential to be used as a reference for monitoring the lifespan of the species in the district and, thus, contribute to the knowledge of horticulture in the State. (Criterion 3.1)

#### **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown* is the oldest building in Bridgetown and is highly valued by the general community as a place of historic and social significance. It has a close association with the early community life of the town and the district and was the venue for public meetings, social gathering and official receptions before community facilities were available in the town. The first school in the district, circa 1868, was held in a room in either the 'man's room' or the house. (Criterion 4.1)

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown* contributes to the community's sense of place by providing a link with the settlement and development of the area. The importance of the place has been supported by the community involvement in the conservation and management of the place. It is popular with tourists. (Criterion 4.2)

#### **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown* is a good example of a mid-nineteenth farm residence within some of its original setting. The setting of the place is enhanced by the retention of public open space nearby and the proximity to the Blackwood River. (Criterion 5.1)

The blue atlas cedar is an uncommon in the locality because of its species, age and size. (Criterion 5.1)

##### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown*, particularly the brickwork in the walls and the construction of the timber floor, demonstrates mid-nineteenth century rural building technology in the south-west of Western Australia. (Criterion 6.2)

The siting of *Bridgedale, Bridgetown*, close to a water source and on high ground above flood level, is characteristic of early settlement patterns and land function in rural districts. (Criterion 6.2)

##### **12. 3 CONDITION**

*Bridgedale, Bridgetown* is, generally, in good condition. Detailed considerations of the condition and conservation of the place may be found in

the Conservation Plan by Richards, O. and Pidgeon, J. 'Conservation Plan for Bridgedale, Bridgetown, Western Australia' (for the National Trust of Australia (W. A.), January 1993). This plan has been received by the National Trust and is currently being used as the basis for implementation of conservation works to the place.

#### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

The use of *Bridgedale, Bridgetown* as a local museum, and the furnishing and presentation of the rooms to be representative of the era in which the house was built, and lived in, is compatible with the original intention of the place as a residence. *Bridgedale, Bridgetown* has a high degree of integrity.

Integrity is addressed in detail in the Conservation Plan by Richards, O. and Pidgeon, J. 'Conservation Plan for Bridgedale, Bridgetown, Western Australia' (for the National Trust of Australia (W. A.), January 1993).

#### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

There have been additions and alterations to both the internal and external fabric of *Bridgedale, Bridgetown* since its construction. In some cases it is difficult to date the changes accurately. However, the fabric of the building is largely intact and recent restoration of the place has sought to conserve the cultural heritage significance of the place. *Bridgedale* has a high degree of authenticity.

For more detail refer to the Conservation Plan by Richards, O. and Pidgeon, J. 'Conservation Plan for Bridgedale, Bridgetown, Western Australia' (for the National Trust of Australia (W. A.), January 1993).

## **13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

### **13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

For a detailed discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to the Conservation Plan by Richards, O. and Pidgeon, J. 'Conservation Plan for Bridgedale, Bridgetown, Western Australia' (for the National Trust of Australia (W. A.), January 1993).

### **13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

For a detailed discussion of the physical evidence, refer to the Conservation Plan by Richards, O. and Pidgeon, J. 'Conservation Plan for Bridgedale, Bridgetown, Western Australia' (for the National Trust of Australia (W. A.), January 1993).

### **13.3 KEY REFERENCES**

Richards, O. and Pidgeon, J. 'Conservation Plan for Bridgedale, Bridgetown, Western Australia' (for the National Trust of Australia (W. A.), January 1993).