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.

### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 7.6.1 Developing local government authorities
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 107 Settlements
- 401 Government & politics
- 404 Community services & utilities
- 407 Cultural activities

## 11. 1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The ornate stucco modelling and erudite detailing of the pedimented frontage of *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is a fine example of the Federation Free Classical style. (Criterion 1.2)

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is a fine example of the work of P. W. Harrison and was reportedly the most elaborate and substantial Roads Board Office in the South-West when completed in 1908. (Criterion1.2)

The central Bridgetown area is set in rising topography and has a particularly picturesque townscape with a number of buildings from the Federation and Inter-War periods. *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* makes an important and complementary contribution to the townscape of the central Bridgetown area and its railway precinct. (Criterion 1.3 and 1.4)

## 11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from 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.
For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate,* Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* illustrates the design and standard of a Roads Board Office befitting a regional town in the South-West in the early 1900s. (Criterion 2.1)

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* was built in 1908, and is associated with the development of the town and district which was flourishing due to the growth of the timber trade and fruit growing industry following the opening of the railway in 1898. (Criterion 2.2)

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* was designed by well known architect P. W. Harrison and is a fine example of his design work in the Federation Free Classical style. (Criteria 2.3 & 2.4)

**11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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**11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)*, is highly valued by the local community for its long-term associations with the civic life of Bridgetown.

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is highly valued for its aesthetic qualities and contribution to the streetscape of Steere Street. (Criterion 4.1)

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* contributes to the community's sense of place as a significant element in the townscape since 1908. (Criterion 4.2)

**12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**12. 1. RARITY**

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**12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is a particularly fine example of the Federation Free Classical style in a regional area. (Criterion 6.1)

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is a good representative example of the types of facilities constructed by Local Government in the early twentieth century. (Criterion 6.2)

**12. 3 CONDITION**

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is in good condition and has been well maintained.

**12. 4 INTEGRITY**

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* displays a high degree of integrity. Although the building is no longer used for its original purpose of Local Government offices.

**12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

Although some elements have been altered and the boardroom to the rear partitioned, *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* displays a high degree of authenticity.

## 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Robin Chinnery, Historian, and Lynne Farrow, Architect in 2009, with amendments and/or additions by State Heritage Office staff and the Register Committee.

## 13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is a single storey Roads Board Office building of brick construction with an iron roof in the Federation Free Classical style designed by architect P. W. Harrison in 1908.

In 1852, A. C. Gregory carried out the original survey of the Geegelup area. In 1855, the first pastoral leases in the district were granted to Edward Hester and John Blechynden, and in 1862, John Allnutt began to establish an orchard in the district, which laid the foundation of the fruit growing industry.[1] In 1868, the Geegelup townsite was surveyed, and on 4 June, the town of Bridgetown was proclaimed by Governor J. S. Hampton, after whom the main street was later named.[2] On 9 June, the townsite was gazetted and the first 56 town lots were offered for sale.[3]

In the 1870s, the population of the district grew slowly, and there were 20 households, several stores and public houses in the town by 1879. Pastoralism and timber cutting were predominant as the fledgling fruit growing industry faced difficulties due to its distance from markets and the lack of a ready means of transport to the city and ports.[4]

In 1871, the *Roads District Act* established Road Districts each with a Roads Board empowered to levy rates for the purpose of establishing roads in the district. The local Roads Board in Bridgetown met at the home of member Henry Doust until 1874, when he moved into the Farmers' Home Hotel and then the Board met there.[5]

By 1872, Bridgetown comprised seven buildings. In 1877, the Mechanics' Institute was completed in Hampton Street in part to host large public meetings. In 1878, the Roads Board decided it could afford to rent a room in the Mechanics' Institute for its meetings.[6]

In 1887, Nelson Roads Board was gazetted. The Board was responsible for a very large area stretching from Donnybrook to the north, almost to Kojonup in the east, to the Indian Ocean to the south and Capel and Nannup in the west.[7]

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1 'Commemorating Fifty Years of Federation, 1901-1951: Nelson District Jubilee Celebrations' Battye Library PR 8679/BRI/51; & *Bridgetown Centenary Year 1868-1968* (Shire of Bridgetown, 1968) p. 4.

2 *Government Gazette* 16 June 1868.

3 *Government Gazette* 30 Sept. 1868.

4 May, John 'Recollections' in *Blackwood Times* 16 March 1934; & *Bridgetown Centenary Year* op. cit., p. 7.

5 Battye, J. S. *Cyclopedia of Western Australia* Cyclopedia Company, Perth, 1913, Fasc. Ed. Hesperian Press, Carlisle, 1985, Vol. 1, p. 188; & H. Doust in *Blackwood Times* 1 Jan. 1909.

6 H. Doust, ibid; & May, John 'Recollections' in *Blackwood Times* 16 March 1934; & *Bridgetown Centenary Year* op. cit., p. 7.

7 *Conservation Plan for the Bridgetown Civic and Community Centre,* prepared for Shire of Greenbushes by John Pidgeon, April 2004, p12.

On 2 March 1891, the first railway in the South-West, the Boyanup-Bunbury line, was opened. It was connected to Perth with completion of the Bunbury-Perth South-West line in September 1893, and later that year the Boyanup-Bunbury line was extended to Donnybrook.[8] The building boom in the wake of the Western Australian gold boom brought increased demand for sawn timber and numerous spot mills were opened in the Bridgetown area, bringing an increase in population.[9] In 1898, the extension of the railway from Donnybrook to Bridgetown was opened, enabling the fruit growing industry to expand as a daily rail service gave access to city markets and the Goldfields. Following the completion of the railway many of the construction workers stayed to settle on holdings in the Bridgetown district, further boosting the local population, and the town and district continued to develop in the early 1900s.[10]

In 1890, as a result of further growth in the region, the Lower Blackwood Roads Board (Nannup) seceded from Nelson, followed by the Upper Blackwood Roads Board (Boyup Brook) and the Preston Roads Board (Donnybrook) in 1896. Greenbushes followed suit in 1900, Manjimup in 1903, and Balingup in 1905. Consequently the area under the jurisdiction of the Nelson Roads Board became much smaller and more manageable, allowing for easier planning of new roads, and the implementation of other local government services.[11] An increase in demand for fresh produce and timber and the establishment of a tin mine at Greenbushes saw improvements in road transport in the region as roads were constructed between small towns and settlements. More roads were also needed as postal services developed with the construction of post offices in various centres. However, the railway remained the main means of transport throughout this time.[12]

The Roads Board met in a rented office at the Mechanics' Institute for its meetings until 1900. Later a difference over the rent saw the Board move to rented premises owned by Mr. Stephens until *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* was completed in late 1908.[13]

On 31 January 1908, a meeting of Nelson Roads Board decided to 'take steps to purchase land and construct a Roads Board Office', and appointed W. G. Stephens, A. and H. Doust as a committee to inquire as to where land could be purchased' and to consider taking over the block of land purchased from the old show grounds.[14] They reported that a block in Steere Street and one in Hampton Street were well positioned for the purpose. The Board agreed to purchase 'Block No. 1 Steere St.' (Lot 1) from the Nelson Agricultural Society at a cost of £100.[15] After reviewing a draft plan by John Hurst, the Board decided to call tenders for

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8 Woods, P., Gunzberg, A. & Goss, P. *Bunbury-Boyanup Railway: 100 Years 1891-1991* Leschenault Railway Preservation Society Inc., 1991, pp. 4-7.

9 Gaines, C. *Bridgetown: One Hundred Years of History* Typescript, Perth, 1970 & 1976, p. 15.

10 Gunzberg, A. & Austin, J. *Rails through the Bush* Light Railway Research Society of Australia, Melbourne, 1997, pp. 216-217; 'Commemorating Fifty Years …' op. cit.; & *Bridgetown Centenary Year 1868-1968* op. cit., p. 7.

11 *Conservation Plan for the Bridgetown Civic and Community Centre,* prepared for Shire of Greenbushes by John Pidgeon, April 2004, p12.

12 Shire of Bridgetown- Greenbushes Municipal Inventory 2001, page11.

13 H. Doust, op. cit.; Bridgetown Road Board Office (fmr), HCWA place no. 3583. Minutes Books, Nelson Roads Board, 1894 to 1908, SROWA Cons. 1397 Items 84 & 85, the earliest extant Minute Books.

14 Nelson Roads Board Minutes, SROWA Cons. 1317 Item 90, 1907-08, 31 Jan. 1908.

15 ibid, 14 & 28 Feb. 1908.

competitive plans for a building to cost no more than £300 to submit to ratepayers, which was advertised in March.[16] The Board considered Hurst's plan unsuitable and after examining proposals from architects F. W. Steere, of Bunbury, and P. W. Harrison, of Perth, decided in favour of Harrison and provisionally accepted his plan for the proposed Roads Board Offices at a cost not to exceed £350.[17]

Percy William Harrison (b. London, 1864, d. Perth, 1951) completed his articles with Thomas Watts, in Melbourne, and became chief draftsman at Watts & Son in 1885-92. In 1891, he became an associate of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects (RVIA) and was a surveyor for the Metropolitan Waterworks Board (1892-3) before the opportunities of the gold boom attracted him to Perth, where he went into partnership with P. D. Wyburn. In 1896, he became a sole practitioner and a foundation member of the West Australian Institute of Architects (WAIA). His notable design work included St Andrew of the Apostle, Katanning (P1329 *St Andrew's Church and Hall*) and St George's Church, Wagin, and he won design competitions for Municipal Offices, Bunbury (P3642 *Bunbury Council Chamber*), and the Presbyterian Manse, West Perth. He was Honorary Architect for the Ministering Children's League Convalescent Hospital (present day Wearne Hostel) and Victoria Institute for the Blind (present day Senses), and consulting architect to the Children's Hospital from 1911.[18]

In late March 1908, the Nelson Roads Board advised the Public Works Department (PWD) that if granted a £ for £ subsidy for the Roads Board Offices as a Grant-in-Aid, the Certificate of Title would be registered in the name of the Crown.[19] The Grant-in-Aid Scheme had been introduced in 1894, to assist with the funding of halls to be built in agricultural areas. It reflected the British tradition of government assisting construction of public buildings including Mechanics' Institutes, miners' and railway institutes, and workers' halls that provided a meeting place, a social venue, library, classroom, reading room and venue for lectures, in various combinations of these functions, some of which had been built in Western Australia in the preceding period. From 1894 to 1914, Grant-in-Aid was available on request from a community. The aid comprised land and/or funds towards construction, with the predominant occupation of the applicant community dictating the type of facility erected. The range of public buildings subsidised included agricultural halls, public libraries, and municipal and roads board offices.[20]

In April 1908, the Nelson Roads Board considered an amended plan from Harrison and decided to accept his plan that placed the building on the street alignment, without a doorway from the Public Office to the Secretary's Office, but with a doorway in the Hall instead.[21] The Supervisor was instructed to take levels and provide information re the position of the building to leave a 9 ft. wide right of

16 ibid, 28 Feb. 1908; & *Blackwood Times* 31 March 1908, p. 2.

17 Nelson Roads Board Minutes, op. cit., March 1908; & *Blackwood Times* 31 March 1908, p. 2.

18 Battye, J. S. op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 623-624; Considine and Griffiths Architects with Robin Chinnery 'Wearne Hostel, Cottesloe, Conservation Plan' Oct. 2000, p. 7, pp. 129-130; Annual Reports, Victoria Institute and Industrial School for the Blind, 1903-10; *& W. A. Mining, Building and Engineering Journal* 3 June 1911, p. 19; & Taylor, John, 'Percy William Harrison', at www.architecture.com.au

19 Nelson Roads Board Minutes, op. cit., 28 March 1908.

20 Candy, P. C. & Laurent, J. (Eds.) *Pioneering Culture: Mechanics' Institutes and Schools of Arts in Australia* Auslib Press, Adelaide, 1994, pp. 1-8 and 126-150.

21 Nelson Roads Board Minutes, op. cit., 10 April 1908.

way.[22] At a ratepayers' meeting, on 29 May, a motion was unanimously carried to accept the amended plans and specifications submitted by P. W. Harrison.'[23] The meeting was advised a government grant would fund half the cost with the balance to be met from rates and agreed the Board arrange a bank overdraft for £250. There was discussion about having a strong room, but after consideration of the matter, the Board decided to simply purchase a safe, as a strong room measuring 4 ft. x 4 ft., would take up a large portion of the office and provide no more accommodation.[24]

In June 1908, at the instigation of the Public Works Department (PWD), the plans for the proposed offices for Nelson Roads Board were submitted to the Public Health Department. Further amendments were made to fulfil requirements of the Central Board of Health including provision of at least two ceiling ventilators and at least one privy and a urinal. [25] Tenders were called for erection of Nelson Roads Board Offices to be received by 14 July. The contract was awarded to A. K. Smith, with the lowest tender at £349.19s.10d., and Harrison was appointed to supervise erection of the building, which commenced promptly.[26] It comprised three rooms, the board room, secretary's room, in which the safe was installed, and public space, which was considered commodious at this period when many Roads Board Offices comprised only one room.[27]

In August 1908, the Roads Board was advised that under new regulations it was only entitled to a grant of £150 instead of £200 under the old regulations for the Roads Board Office. Subsequently the Minister for Works agreed to subsidise it to the extent of £200 provided the title deeds were lodged as security, which the Board arranged to do. In September, the Roads Board granted applications from the Agricultural Society, the Health Board and the Oddfellows to rent the 'Roads Board Hall' when it was completed.[28] The *Blackwood Times* reported

> The new office which is being erected for the Nelson Roads Board is a credit to the town. Perhaps, indeed, it is too much of a credit as there is much elaboration. Much could have been done away with had the Board been satisfied with a more humble housing. As it goes the Nelson will probably have the most elaborate office in the State and when the time comes for municipalising the town the office will be all ready for the accommodation of the staff.[29]

In early December, the Roads Board Office was completed and occupied for its intended purpose. The Druids Lodge was granted use of the Board Room for its fortnightly meetings at the same cost as the Oddfellows. The Agricultural Society congratulated the Board 'on the splendid office provision' and voiced appreciation for the use of the place for Society meetings.[30] On 30 December, a large number

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22 ibid.

23 Minutes of Ratepayers' Meeting in ibid, 29 May 1908.

24 Nelson Roads Board Minutes, ibid, June - July 1908; & *Blackwood Times* 14 July & 4 August 1908.

25 Memos in Bridgetown Nelson Roads Board Office, SROWA Acc. 1003 Item 1120/08, 25 & 26 June 1908.

26 Nelson Roads Board Minutes, op. cit., July 1908; *W. A. Mining, Building and Engineering Journal* 4, 11 & 25 July 1908, p. 22, p. 23 & p. 22 respectively; & Blackwood Times 4 August 1908, p. 3.

27 *Blackwood Times* 1 Jan. 1909.

28 Nelson Roads Board Minutes, op. cit., August – Sept. 1908; & Annual Report, Public Works Department, 1908-09, op. cit.

29 *Blackwood Times* 30 Oct. 1908, p. 3.

30 Nelson Roads Board Minutes, SROWA Cons. 1317 Item 91, Dec. 1908; & *Blackwood Times* 8 Dec. 1908.

of people, attended the official opening of the 'handsome Roads Board office'.[31] H. Layman, MLA praised the Roads Board's achievement and having travelled over much of the State in the past two years, he 'knew of no Board with more commodious or up to date offices.'[32] The place was known as Nelson Roads Board Offices until 1917, when it became known as Bridgetown Roads Board, and accordingly it became *Bridgetown Roads Board Office*, which continued in its intended use.[33]

In 1909, Thomas Rossiter was Secretary of Nelson Roads Board and Henry Doust continued as Chairman. In October, the Board agreed to grant use of the Board Room to the Hospital Committee and to the Bridgetown Fruit Growers' Association for their meetings.[34] From this period, through to 1936, the Roads Board Offices served their intended purpose.[35]

In 1926, the Mechanics' Institute approached Bridgetown Roads Board to take over their hall while they built a new one, but a new hall was not erected for some years.

In October 1933, the Roads Board successfully applied for the transfer of a small area of land to the Mechanics' Institute property from the adjoining land held by the Lands Department, which had been 'promised when the new hall was mooted some years ago' but not finalised.[36] The Board commissioned architect J. W. Jefferis, of Albany, who prepared plans for a new building comprising a hall to seat 600 people, dressing rooms, supper rooms, a room for the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) (later the RSL Returned Serviceman's League), a Ladies' Rest Room and Roads Board Offices at an estimated cost of £6,000. On 2 November, a ratepayers' meeting at the Mechanics' Institute discussed the proposed new hall ahead of the forthcoming referendum, at which the proposal to borrow £6,000 for this purpose was rejected.[37]

In February 1935, planning was underway for a proposed new Roads Board hall at Bridgetown. Around this time, the government agreed to a grant on a £ for £ basis of up to £1,000 for additions to the hospital to include a new maternity ward, operating theatre and casualty ward, evidencing growth and development in the district at this period.[38]

In April 1935, at the Annual Ratepayers' Meeting, it was proposed to raise a loan of £7,000 to build a new town hall and suggested the Roads Board Offices be leased or sold, with the revenue derived to be used toward the rent to be charged to the Roads Board for offices in the new building. The meeting endorsed the proposal to erect a new town hall as per the plans by Jefferis. Subsequently tenders were called and W. and W. C. Moyes were awarded the contract. On 25

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31 *Blackwood Times* 25 Dec. 1908 & 1 Jan. 1909.
32 Ibid, 1 Jan. 1909.
33 Nelson Roads Board Minutes & Bridgetown Roads Board Minutes, SROWA Cons. 1317 Items 91 to 107.
34 ibid, Nelson Roads Board Minutes, op. cit., Oct. 1909.
35 Nelson Roads Board Minutes, 1909-17, & Bridgetown Roads Board Minutes, op. cit., 1917-36.
36 *Blackwood Times* 10 Nov. 1933, p. 2.
37 Bridgetown Roads Board Minutes, SROWA Cons. 1317 Item 106, July – Nov. 1933; & *Blackwood Times* ibid, & p. 7, & 17 Nov. & 24 Nov. 1933, p. 2.
38 *Blackwood Times* 1 Feb. 1935, p. 2.

September, the Roads Board agreed 'that when the time was opportune that tenders be called for the purchase of the Roads Board hall property'.[39]

The new town hall (part of P249 *Bridgetown Civic and Community Centre*) was constructed by agreement in two stages, with the Mechanic's Institute building remaining on site and occupied until the new hall was completed. The new town hall was officially opened on 15 July 1936.[40]

In November, the Board decided to accept the only tender received for the purchase of Lot 1, from Lewis Wilks, who offered £550 for the land and Roads Board Hall and Offices, £40 for the ambulance van shed, car shed and stables, and £10 for the shelter shed etc., a total of £600.[41] On 6 October 1936, Lot 1 was transferred to Wilks, an accountant and land agent, of Bridgetown. It was leased for five years, from 25 May 1938, to Rural Motors (1936) Limited, of Bunbury, who operated a motor garage at the site.[42]

On 5 December 1945, *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* was transferred to Westralian Farmers Limited, which owned it for 45 years.[43] Reg Giblett recollects the company sold petrol from the place in the post-war period, but cannot recollect the specific use(s) of the building.[44]

In 1996, *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* was included in the Municipal Inventory for the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes.[45] In 1999, Bridgetown Historical Society prepared a heritage guide to provide a self-guided walk that included *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr),* but which mistakenly stated 'The building was constructed in 1887 when the Road Board was formed.'[46]

In 2017, *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is currently used for retail purposes.[47]

## 13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is a single storey brick building with a corrugated iron roof designed by architect P.W. Harrison in the Federation Free Classical style, constructed by builder A. K. Smith for the Bridgetown Roads Board in 1908.

Bridgetown is a small picturesque rural town with a population of about 2,500 located about 100 kms south of Bunbury. The town centre is sited on the east bank of the Geegelup Creek, a tributary of the Blackwood River. The main street is Hampton Street, which follows the creek in a roughly north-south axis. The railway runs along behind the lots bordering the east side of Hampton Street

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39 ibid, April - Nov. 1935.

40 *Bridgetown Civic and Community Centre – Register of Heritage Places - Assessment Documentation*, Heritage Council of Western Australia, 2004.

41 Bridgetown Road Board Minutes, op. cit., Item 107, 17 Oct. & 8 Nov. 1935. Apparently the property was not transferred in its entirety as Wilks offered £100 for the land on which the ambulance shed stood in June 1938, and subsequently the Board sought the advice of the local branch of the service. (ibid, 17 June & 5 August 1938.)

42 Certificate of Title Vol. 1050 Fol. 447; *& Wise's Post Office Directory* 1939, p. 280.

43 Certificates of Title Vol. 1050 Fol. 447 & Vol. 1813 Fol. 766.

44 Reg Giblett, op. cit.

45 Municipal Inventory Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Adopted 31 August 1996.

46 ibid.

47 Site visit, Robin Chinnery, April 2010.

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is located on Lot 21, Steere Street, approximately 100 metres east of the junction of Hampden Street, which is the location of the offices of the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes and the geographical centre of town. The town centre contains a number of buildings with heritage significance, including *Wesfarmers Building (fmr), Bridgetown,* which occupies the same Lot. The railway reserve runs along the west boundary of Lot 21, with a single track located about 7 metres from the west façade of *Wesfarmers Building (fmr),* and the two buildings define the north end of the Bridgetown Railway precinct.

Lot 21 is a large Lot of 2,842 sq. metres, which is irregular in shape and has a short battle axe handle in the north-east corner which fronts onto Rose Street. *Bridgetown Road Board Building (fmr)* is located on the south-east corner of the Lot, on the street frontage and about 2.7 metres from the east boundary. *Wesfarmers Building (fmr), Bridgetown* is sited on the western half of the Lot.

The remainder of the site is used for carparking and storage of materials, and is fenced.

*Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is constructed of red brick with lime mortar pointing which is visible on the side and rear facades but is not apparent on the front façade, which is dominated by a richly rendered parapet wall decorated with a number of classical elements. The dominant feature of the asymmetrical front façade is a pedimental motif with a deeply moulded cornice supported by pairs of fluted pilasters at each end and a single central pilaster. Ionic capitals cap the pilasters. The central section of the pediment features an oval cartouche flanked by foliate swags. The apex is surmounted by pairs of shells and acanthus leaves and a simpler form of this motif is repeated on the corners. The single central pilaster divides the wall into two bays which each contain a single large window. The effect of the pilaster continues below the window sills although the paired pilasters have been combined to form a single wide element. The timber framed windows are original although they have been modified to a single large pane of fixed glass. The entrance to the porch on the left side creates an asymmetrical element, with the entablature and cornice of the pediment continuing over with a frieze of balusters above and supported on a single pilaster.

The internal layout of *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* consists of an entrance porch, with entry doors recessed into the front plane of the building. A large public space is immediately to the east, while an entrance hall continues to the north of the entry doors. The entrance hall provides access to the former boardroom, on the north side of the public space, which is now divided in two by a plasterboard partition wall. To the north of the entrance hall is the secretary's room, now used as a kitchen, with a small store to its north now used as a toilet.

The internal spaces are generous, with the public area about 6 metres deep, and with the south wall tapering along the boundary alignment, varies in width from 5.3 to 6.6 metres at the east side. The boardroom is about 6 metres deep and 4.5 metres wide. The secretary's room is 1.6 metres wide and 3.5 deep. The public space has a high pressed metal ceiling with a central ceiling rose. The ceiling to the entrance porch and entrance hall is also high and appears to be lathe and plaster. In the rear rooms, a lower plasterboard ceiling with 75 mm cornice has been introduced, indicating that the pressed metal ceiling is likely to be beneath.

Floors are carpeted but presumed to be jarrah board, with original tessellated tiles in the entrance porch. Joinery is generous and of high quality, with double panelled timber doors with highlights over the entrance hall and two sets to the public space, double hung timber sash windows to the rear rooms, although the windows to the public space have been modified to fixed glazing, 125 mm moulded timber architraves and deep moulded timber skirtings. The two large spaces have fireplaces in projecting chimney breasts with original timber mantelpieces, with the boardroom having a more ornate surround than the public space.

The condition of the building is generally good and it appears to be well maintained.

## 13. 3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

In regional areas, Roads Board Offices were established as symbols of local government, and reflected a source of pride and optimism in the growth of a district. As a result, Roads Board Offices were generally substantially constructed in brick or stone, in a classical style.

There are approximately 125 places on the SHO database that comprise Roads Board Offices or former Roads Board Offices. Of these places, 25 are on the State Register, including 23 which are located in regional areas.

There are 6 Roads Board Offices on the Register that are designed in the Federation Free Classical style, or that exhibit elements of this style:

- P618 *Cuballing Civic Group* (1898 onwards) – includes a Roads Board building in the Federation Free Classical style, that was originally constructed as an agricultural Hall.
- P641 *Cue Municipal Chambers (fmr)* (1896) – a single story rendered granite building the in the Federation Free Classical style.
- P1559 *Menzies Town Hall & Shire Offices* - includes the brick and iron former Menzies Roads Board Office (1896), a single-storey face stone building, stucco decorated with a corrugated iron roof and a two storey central front tower in the Federation Free Classical style.
- P1907 *Northampton Roads Boards Building* (1898 1964) – designed in the Federation Free Classical style, the place comprises a main hall and two ancillary rooms constructed of brick and stone infill walls, with a corrugated iron roof. With its symmetrical fenestration, brick detailing, well-proportioned elements and simple form, the place is a good example of a brick and rendered stone building.
- P3960 *Katanning Town Hall Buildings* (1896-1999) – comprises a complex of single and two storey structures in brick, stucco brick and concrete wall construction with metal roofs in the Federation Free Classical, Inter-War Chicagoesque and Post War International styles, incorporating the Agricultural Hall, Mechanics' Institute, the Town Hall, and the Shire Offices.
- P1640 *Mt Magnet Shire Office* (1898) – a fine example of a Federation Free Classical style building with extensive stucco decoration.

Other comparable places on the database include;

- P586 *Corrigin Town Hall and Road Board Offices (fmr)* – the Roads Board Office (fmr), built in 1923 and designed in the inter-war free classical style, is constructed of stone and brick, and exhibits classical stucco detailing and balustrade details to the parapets.
- P01324 Kalgoorlie Roads Board Office (fmr) (1901) – comprises a two storey building with a highly decorative facade, including a pedimented parapet, in the Federation Free Classical style, which reflects the affluence of the goldfields at the turn of the century.
- P00141 Road Board Office (fmr) Beverley (1908) – comprises a single storey brick and iron building, similar in style to Bridgetown Roads Board Office with the dominate feature of the façade being a decorative pediment with motif with a deeply moulded cornice supported by pairs of fluted pilasters. Also designed by P.W Harrison.
- P02544 Agricultural Hall (fmr) Tambellup (1907) – formerly Road Board Offices, comprising a Federation Free Classical single storey rendered brick building with symmetrical façade. (In the assessment program)
- P1750 Road Board Office (fmr) Pinjarra 1910) - a single storey brick building in the Federation Free Classical style. (In the assessment program)

The following regional Roads Board Offices in a variety of architectural styles are also on the Register:

P323 *Bruce Rock Shire Offices* (1928);P1227 *Irwin Roads Board Office (fmr)* (1910); P1919, *Nungarin Roads Board Office (fmr)* (1922); P1920 *Alice Williams Memorial Building, Nungarin,*(1936); P3629 *Narembeen Civic Precinct*, (1923); P18402 *Esperance RSL Building* (1896); P0308 *Broomehill Shire Hall & Road Board Offices (fmr)* (1920 to 1928); P474 *Road Board Office (fmr), Nanson* (1913); P478 *Chittering Road Board office (fmr)* (1929); P1159 *Greenough Road Board Office (fmr)* (1906); P1576 *Road Board Office (fmr)*, Merredin (1925), and P15408 *Upper Gascoyne Road Board office (fmr)* (1912). There are a further four Roads Boards Offices on the assessment program;

- P1081 Road Board Office (fmr) Gingin (1911); P4896 Quairading Roads Board Office (fmr) (1925); P1787 Nannup Road Board Office (fmr) (1920) and P2723 Wickepin Town Hall (former Roads Board Office) (1919).

Architect P. W. Harrison:

Architect P. W. Harrison, who designed *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)*, in 1908, was responsible for the design of a number of Roads Board Offices and Halls, in the Federation period. One of the earliest was the first stage (1897) of P3642 *Bunbury Municipal Chambers* designed in the Federation Free Classical style, for which he won the design competition. In 1908, subsequent to his design for *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)*, Harrison designed Beverly Roads Board Office, completed in 1909[48], which has external similarities to *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)*. It is included on the Municipal Heritage Inventory (MHI) for the Shire of Beverley. In the early 1920s, the Corrigin Roads Board requested

48 *West Australian* 10 & 19 Oct. 1908.

Harrison design Corrigin Road Board Offices (fmr) in 'a similar design of the Beverley offices'.[49] Roads Board Offices;

Conclusion: *Bridgetown Roads Board Office (fmr)* is a fine and intact example of a Roads Board Office building in a regional town designed in the Federation Free Classical style, and a fine example of the design work of architect P.W. Harrison.

## 13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

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## 13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

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[49] Road Board Minutes, Corrigin Road Board, Sept. - Nov. 1922, held at Shire of Corrigin.