



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

PERMANENT ENTRY

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)

- 2.4.5 Changing the face of rural and urban Australia through migration
- 3.26.2 Providing hospital services
- 9.1.1 Providing maternity clinics and hospitals

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 101 Immigration, emigration and refugees
- 404 Community services & utilities
- 504 Depression and boom
- 701 Other sub-theme - women

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is a well proportioned and visually pleasing example of a painted brick and tile Californian Bungalow style building, featuring prominent gabled entrances, wide verandahs with shallow arched masonry openings, French doors and tiled window awnings. It has been designed to intentionally adapt a style commonly employed for domestic buildings for use as a maternity hospital. (Criterion 1.1)

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr), comprising both the 1937 building and the former dwelling constructed c.1922, makes a positive contribution to the established streetscape of Heytesbury and Hensman Roads in Subiaco. The buildings are of comparable scale, form style and era of development as the surrounding residential development. The landscaping surrounding the former

* 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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

hospital buildings, although more recent than the buildings, contributes to their aesthetic value. (Criterion 1.3)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) illustrates the development of private maternity hospitals and the standard of accommodation of such a purpose designed facility in the inter-war period, the transition to wider public maternity care in the post-World War II period in which the State government took over this and other similar facilities, and their later conversion to other health uses. (Criterion 2.1)

The intentional domestic appearance of *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)* is indicative of the perception that maternity care was a domestic matter, while its function as one of a small number of larger maternity hospitals overtaking the plethora of domestic midwifery services in the 1930s and eventual take-over by the government to expand King Edward Memorial Hospital in 1957 demonstrate the transition of maternity care into the professional medical arena. (Criterion 2.1)

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) was built in 1936-37, during the recovery period that followed the Great Depression, and in 1957, during the so-called baby boom period when population was also increasing following government immigration programs, the place was taken over by the State government to serve as a much needed annexe to King Edward Memorial Hospital for post-natal patients. (Criterion 2.2)

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is a significant women's history site as it was constructed for, owned and operated by three women at its inception, employed substantial numbers of women due to the predominance of women in maternity nursing, provided medical services specifically for women from 1936 to 1981, and from 1981 to 2009 was used by the Child Protection Service as a facility named after Brenda Cherry, a prominent women professional in that field. (Criterion 2.3)

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) was built by P. Morgan for Nurses Craig, Johnston and Smith. (Criterion 2.3)

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is a good example of a purpose designed and built private maternity hospital constructed in the inter-war period. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) demonstrates the design of a private maternity hospital constructed in the inter-war period and as such has the potential to contribute to a wider understanding of the history of design and provision of maternity care in this State. (Criteria 3.1 and 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is valued by the community for its association with the provision of health services since 1937, particularly for women and new born infants during the periods it served as a private maternity hospital and as an annexe to King Edward Memorial Hospital. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) appears to be an uncommon example of a purpose designed and built private maternity hospital erected in Western Australia in the inter-war period, when it was more common practice for such facilities to be accommodated in substantial residences converted to this use, and demonstrates this design and function which was discontinued by the late twentieth century. (Criteria 5.1 and 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is one of three known examples of private maternity hospitals constructed in the inter-war period that were designed in the Inter-War California Bungalow style, which was a residential style, and is a good representative example of this style adapted for a hospital. (Criterion 6.1)

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is an excellent representative example of a private maternity hospital, a formerly widespread function that is no longer practised in Western Australia, and was one of the largest private maternity hospitals in the State when it opened in the 1930s. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is in fair to good condition as a result of continued occupancy, maintenance and care. There are no particular issues of concern. The sleep-out and other section of the former dwelling at the rear between the dwelling and the 1938 masonry addition are constructed of fibrous cement panels that are likely to contain asbestos.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) has moderate to high integrity. Although it is no longer used as a maternity hospital, it has been used for various health care and health related services throughout its history. The buildings are capable of ongoing use for health and community based services.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) has moderate to high authenticity. The external fabric of the original 1937 and 1922 buildings is largely intact. There have been some minor alterations to the buildings over time to accommodate changes of use from maternity to counselling services, but these have largely been accommodated within the original configuration of the place. Minor upgrades and changes have been made to service areas and bathrooms, the link structure between the main two buildings has been added and the whole site was landscaped in the 1980s.

The original design intent of the place is clearly evident despite minor adaptations.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Robin Chinnery, Historian, and Rosemary Rosario, Architectural Heritage Consultant, of Heritage and Conservation Professionals in January 2010, with amendments and/or additions by the Office of Heritage and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) comprises a single storey Federation Bungalow style house of brick, timber and fibrocement construction with an iron roof, and a former hospital of brick and tile construction in the Inter-War California Bungalow design style.¹ In c. 1922, the owner of Lot 22, builder Arthur Shaw, erected the house and then sold it. In 1936-37, the purpose designed private hospital was built on the adjoining Lots 20 and 21, and named Kensington Private Hospital, also known as Kensington Nursing Home, with several wards, an operating theatre and associated facilities, and an outbuilding of similar construction in the rear yard. In c. 1941, after the house became residential quarters for nursing sisters at the hospital, a living room of brick construction and a sleep-out of timber and fibrocement construction were added to the house. In 1957, the State government purchased Kensington Hospital, including the house, to become an annexe to *King Edward Memorial Hospital* (RHP 2438). In 1981, the place was converted to become the Brenda Cherry Centre.

Following the foundation of Perth on 12 August 1829, the townsite was laid out between Mount Eliza and Heirisson Island, facing the Swan River on the south, with a chain of swamps and lagoons to the north.² By the 1870s, the city centre of Perth was consolidated on the grid laid out in the early surveys.³ Construction and opening of the Eastern Railway from Fremantle to Perth and thence to Guildford (1881) resulted in a shift in focus from the river port to the areas in the vicinity of Perth Railway Station.⁴ From the 1880s, much of the area in proximity to the Railway Station was developed with small businesses and there was also expansion north of the railway line in the area later known as Northbridge.⁵

The initial sub-division for the future suburb of Subiaco lay between the railway and the park reserve (King's Park) and comprised large lots of four to ten acres in area.⁶ In 1891, The International Investment Land and Building Company Limited sub-divided Perth Suburban Lots 257 and 258, 10 acres in area, into residential lots⁷, of which Lots 20 and 21 of Lot 257 at the corner of Hensman and Heytesbury Roads, with frontage to Heytesbury Road, and the adjoining Lot 22 fronting Hensman Road, were the future site of *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)*.

1 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. 144-147 & pp. 206-209.

2 Campbell, Robin McK. in Pitt Morrison, Margaret, and White, John (eds.) *Western Towns and Buildings* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1979, p. 104.

3 *ibid*; & Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth* Perth City Council, Perth, 1979, p. 235.

4 Pitt-Morison, Margaret in Stannage, C. T. (ed.) *A New History of Western Australia* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1981, p. 532.

5 Sewerage, City of Perth, PWDWA 5647/14 and 15, 1896-1902, on microfiche at SROWA.

6 Morison, Margaret Pitt in Pitt Morrison, Margaret, and White, John (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 48.

7 Certificate of Title Vol. XXXVIII Fol. 152.

In the mid-1890s, the Western Australian Gold Boom brought a huge increase in population and led to the suburbanisation of Perth, with considerable expansion of residential and commercial building in the areas to the north, east, and west of the city, including Subiaco, which became a municipality in 1897. By 1901, there were 720 houses in Subiaco and a population of 2055, which increased to 2055 houses and 8926 people in 1911. In the early 1900s, 75% of the houses in Subiaco were of timber weatherboard construction with an iron roof.⁸

The corner lots changed owners and occupants many times. A house was built by 1903. For a period the Rate Books also recorded a blacksmith's shop on Lots 20 and 21 at street no. 91 Hensman Road.⁹

Meanwhile, in January 1920, Arthur Shaw, a builder, of Lawler Street, Subiaco, purchased Lot 22¹⁰, where he built a brick house with an iron roof in the Federation Bungalow style, of which it is a late example. In 1922, *Wise's Post Office Directory* listed 'new house' at street no. 87 Hensman Road, and Walter Bone was listed at this address from 1923.¹¹ On 17 July 1923, it was transferred to Misses Julia Aileen Edwards and Annie Susan Edwards, of 425 Rokeby Road, Subiaco¹², presumably as an investment as the house continued to be leased to Walter Bone, a butcher, until 1929-30, and then to other tenants.¹³ On 18 July 1932, Lot 22 was transferred to Mrs. Constance Helena Horrocks, of Cottesloe, who leased the house to various tenants through to 1938, when she sold it.¹⁴

'Lying-In Homes', the precursors to maternity hospitals, had been in existence in Western Australia in the nineteenth century, although most childbirth occurred at home with a midwife or doctor attending. Lying-in homes were often small arrangements of a few beds at a midwife's own home. By the early twentieth century this concept was being expanded such that much larger residences were devoted specifically to be private maternity homes.¹⁵ In the early 1900s and through into the inter-war period the conversion of large residences for use as private maternity or convalescent hospitals was a common practice in both metropolitan and regional areas of Western Australia.

Around the turn of the century, benevolent organisations also began to take an interest in providing maternity services for disadvantaged women, particularly unmarried women. In addition to providing midwives at the time of birth, some organisations also allowed pregnant women to live at the homes during their pregnancies. The first of these homes was the House of Mercy, which began in 1891 and had several locations around central Perth before settling in Lincoln Street c.1900. The Salvation Army established a similar home in North Fremantle in 1903, and the Sisters of St John of God provided charitable maternity services

⁸ Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth*, op. cit., pp. 235-236 & p. 245.

⁹ Certificates of Title Vol. XLV Fol. 201 & Vol. CCI Fol. 160; *Wise's Post Office Directory*, & Subiaco Rate Books, South Ward (1903) and Central Ward, SROWA Acc. 1330. For details see HCWA file PD09173.

¹⁰ Certificate of Title Vol. 729 Fol. 91.

¹¹ *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1922, p. 213, & 1923 to 1927.

¹² Certificate of Title Vol. 729 Fol. 91.

¹³ Subiaco Rate Books, op. cit., 1923 to 1927.

¹⁴ Subiaco Rate Books, op. cit., 1926 to 1938; & Certificate of Title Vol. 729 Fol. 91.

¹⁵ Flanagan, May, 'Lying-In (or Maternity) Homes in Western Australia from about 1860 to 1960', in *Early Days: Journal of Proceedings of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society (inc.)*, Vol.11 Pt.3. (1997) p.338.

at their hospitals.¹⁶ Babies delivered to unmarried mothers were frequently adopted out, often through arrangements made by the organisation running the maternity home.¹⁷

In December 1907, the State Children's Act was passed, which required lying-in homes to be licensed. In 1909 there were 117 such homes registered.¹⁸ By 1914 the number had increased to 147, of which 48 (263 beds) were in the metropolitan area. The following year, 1095 midwives were registered but only 244 had recognised qualifications, partly because no training facilities existed prior to 1910.¹⁹

The Health Act (1911) required the registration of midwives in Western Australia and also of maternity homes, whose proprietors were required to be registered midwives. As in the nineteenth century, most midwives continued to operate from their homes, and few private hospitals in the later sense of the term were established.²⁰

Nursing, including midwifery, was one of the few socially acceptable public occupations available to women at the time.²¹ As nursing became increasingly professionalised, it was one of only a handful of professions dominated by women. However, the number of women doctors remained small.²²

So far as is known in c. 1911, no purpose built private hospitals were dedicated solely to the care of women or to maternity care in particular. Thus midwife Elizabeth Baillie was notable for her innovation and enterprise in the development of the Rotunda Women's Hospital in Victoria Park, a two storey maternity hospital in the Federation Filigree design style, built for her in 1912-13. However, its use for this purpose was curtailed when it was compulsorily acquired by the Commonwealth Government in 1920, to become the Edward Millen Home, dedicated to health care of ex-servicemen, particularly those suffering from tuberculosis.²³

There was no public maternity hospital in this State until 1916, when the Government Industrial School (1897), at Subiaco, was converted to become the nucleus of King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH). KEMH was frequently overcrowded, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s, as the number of women who could not afford the fees of private maternity homes continued to increase.²⁴

On 29 September 1936, a building permit was issued for construction of a proposed maternity hospital, i.e. *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)*, at

16 Flanagan, 'Lying-In (or Maternity) Homes...' pp.341-43.

17 Register documentation for P01035 *Hillcrest*.

18 Flanagan, 'Lying-In (or Maternity) Homes...' pp.344, 351.

19 Department for Community Development, 'Roads: an index of locations and access to adoption records', 2004, pp.106-07.

20 Hobbs, Victoria *But Westward Look, Nursing in W. A., 1829-1979* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1980, pp. 52-54.

21 Menck, Clare, 'Sisters of Mercy in Australia: Responses to Health, Illness and Disease by a Women's Religious Order', 2008, pp.3-4.

22 Nugent, Maria, 'Women's Employment and Professionalism in Australia: Histories, Themes and Places', prepared for the Australian Heritage Commission, 2002, pp.21-22 & 28-30.

23 See Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd with Robin Chinnery, Historian, 'Hillview Victoria Park Conservation Plan' prepared for Landstart, July 2001.

24 Flanagan, 'Lying-In (or Maternity) Homes...' p.351.

the corner of Heytesbury and Hensman Roads, to be built by contractor P. Morgan at a cost of £3,300. The plans show 11 wards, each to open from a passageway and to open via French doors to the verandah, an operating theatre and sterilising room, a nursery, two bathrooms, office, staff dining room, kitchen and laundry; and an outbuilding comprising orderlies' quarters, drying room and wood store.²⁵ Although other hospitals are known to have included a morgue, no evidence has been found that any of the buildings at *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)* were used for this purpose.²⁶

On 23 October 1936, the transfer of Lots 20 and 21 to Nurses Evelyn Mary Smith, Amy Mildred Craig and Doris May Johnston, 'all of the corner of Heytesbury Road and Hensman Road', as tenants in common, was registered. They continued to own it through the 1940s. Amendments to the Certificate of Title as each of them married reveal each continued to reside nearby in Heytesbury, Rokeby and Bagot Roads respectively, and thus were conveniently located to continue operating their private maternity hospital.²⁷

On 1 December 1936, Lots 20 and 21 were mortgaged to secure the sum of £2,350, probably to fund building of the hospital, and then a further mortgage to secure the sum of £575 in May 1937²⁸, possibly to equip the hospital as it neared completion, and it opened that year.²⁹ Subiaco Rate Books recorded the change in ownership and noted 'Hospital', at 144 Heytesbury Road, from 1 February 1937, when the unimproved value of the lots remained £100 while the improved value increased from £450 to £3,500 with construction of Kensington Private Hospital as the place was recorded in *Wise's Post Office Directory* from that year. In early 1938, Misses Smith, Johnston and Craig purchased the house on the adjoining Lot 22 (87 Hensman Road) to provide staff accommodation. It was transferred to them as tenants in common on 2 March, when their address was registered as being 'corner of Hensman and Heytesbury Roads, Subiaco (i.e. Kensington Hospital)'.³⁰ From 1938, the house was no longer separately listed in *Wise's Post Office Directory*, which listed Kensington Private Hospital at nos. 87-89 Hensman Road and also at no. 144 Heytesbury Road. In the late 1940s, Sister E. M. Smith was listed at Kensington Private Hospital.³¹

In 1939, a list of 25 maternity hospitals in the State having seven or more beds listed *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital* as the fourth largest. It was noted by

25 Subiaco Municipality Building Permit Register No. 4, SROWA Acc. 1902 Item 1, p. 23; *Building and Construction* 2 Oct. 1936, p. 8; Building Committee Report, in Minutes, Municipality of Subiaco, SROWA Cons. 1330 Item 40, 13 Oct. 1936; & Proposed Maternity Hospital, cnr. Heytesbury & Hensman Rds., Subiaco, in KEMH – Kensington Hospital Annexe Valuation, SROWA Cons. 689 Item 1956/2688, approved 29 Sept. 1936. Note: The plans did not record the architect/designer of the place. The hospital with few changes was described as housing 22 to 24 patients when it was sold in 1957, indicating the 11 wards had two beds each. However, it is not known how many beds they were intended for when designed in 1936. In 1939, the hospital is listed as having 16 beds (see below).

26 Email from Robin Chinnery, 11 August 2010, on HCWA file P09173

27 Certificates of Title Vol. 685 Fols. 111 & 153.

28 Certificate of Title Vol. 685 Fol. 153.

29 Subiaco Rate Books, Central Ward, op. cit., 1937.

30 *ibid*, 1935 to 1938; Certificate of Title Vol. 729 Fol. 91; & *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1937 to 1949.

31 *Wise's Post Office Directory* 1938 to 1949.

the Health Department as having 16 beds at the time. Ten of the hospitals in the list were in regional areas, the largest of which had only 11 beds.³²

An un-dated sewerage plan shows Kensington Hospital at the corner of Heytesbury and Hensman Roads and the house at 87 Hensman Road.³³

Prior to 1945, government policy had restricted public hospital beds, other than at KEMH, to medical and surgical patients, although this policy had not been strictly enforced, especially in regional areas. From 1945 on, maternity wards began to be included in public hospitals. Many private maternity homes either closed or were taken over by the government, as this expansion of public maternity beds dramatically reduced the demand for private maternity care. In addition, increasingly strict standards and a wartime price-control measures limiting fees had already caused numerous small private maternity homes to close. Childbirth, which had formerly been considered a domestic concern, had by this time shifted to be considered primarily a medical matter. Along with this movement was an understanding that all women should have access to maternity care, not only those who could afford to pay for private care.³⁴

On 11 December 1950, Kensington Private Hospital was transferred to Mrs. Winifred Eunice Willington (neé Porter), and as Matron she continued to operate the hospital in the early 1950s.³⁵

Following World War Two, Western Australia's population increased rapidly. The Federal government initiated policies to expand immigration, particularly to take in migrants and displaced persons from Europe after the war. There was also an acknowledged baby boom across the Australian population in this period. As a result, there was considerable over-crowding at KEMH as the number of deliveries per annum grew to double the number recorded in 1939, the last year in which additional bed accommodation had been provided. There was some acknowledgement of the problem and plans for expansion were considered in 1948, but were not realised. In the following years, the hospital continued to provide facilities for one fifth of the State's births by considerably overcrowding bed and nursery accommodation. In 1955-56, there was ongoing discussion and planning towards major additions and alterations to provide extra nursing staff quarters (the practice of nurses being accommodated on-site continuing as in the pre-war period), new wards, and a new boiler house and laundry, estimated to cost around £1 million. In March 1956, the Principal Architect (PWDWA) advised this could be reduced by about £200,000 if the gynaecological ward at the top floor was omitted. In December, the scheme put forward included two new post-natal wards that would increase accommodation from 26 existing beds to 48 and in the delivery section provide 22 ante-natal beds and 24 gynaecological beds.³⁶

In December 1956, the Medical Department advised the Principal Architect that Kensington Hospital, conducted under Matron Porter, was being offered for sale as a hospital and if not purchased for this purpose it was to be sold for any other

³² Department for Community Development, 'Roads: an index of locations and access to adoption records', 2004, pp.108-09, quoting Department of Health file no. 2280/59, Acc.3713. The three larger hospitals were KEMH (48 beds), St John of God Subiaco (30 beds) and Hillcrest Fremantle (18 beds).

³³ Metropolitan Sewerage, Municipality of Subiaco, SROWA Cons. 4156 Item 193, n.d.

³⁴ Flanagan, 'Lying-In (or Maternity) Homes...' pp.351-52.

³⁵ Certificates of Title Vol. 685 Fol. 153 & Vol. 1132 Fols. 500, 501 & 502.

³⁶ Correspondence & memos. in KEMH Buildings SROWA Cons. 1003 Item 1956/5109, 1956-57.

use 'provided she secures her price.'³⁷ The Department did not want the premises disposed of for any purpose other than a hospital and requested prompt valuation of buildings and equipment. In January 1957, the hospital buildings including orderlies' quarters and all furnishings and equipment was valued at £15,360; the adjacent 'Matron's cottage' at £2,640; and the land comprising Lots 20, 21 and 22 at £1,750; i.e. a total value of £19,750.³⁸ The Medical Department was advised total value of the buildings was £14,600 and value of all furnishings and equipment was £3,400.³⁹ In February, when the valuation was reviewed it was noted Matron said she had spent £3,000 on renovations the previous year, which was substantiated by the standard of the building, and it was in 'such good condition' the amount allowed for depreciation could be reduced by 15%.⁴⁰ Also the valuation on the verandah and sleep-out could be lifted a little. An additional £100 could be added for equipment as the earlier estimate was conservative, and the grounds were in 'excellent condition' and the value of these improvements should be increased.⁴¹ The amendments increased the overall value to £21,500 and the valuer suggested a maximum offer of £23,000, noting Matron said she preferred to convert the place to flats if she could not get the amount she asked.⁴²

In April 1957, Gordon King, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, advised he had examined the proposed scheme for additions to KEMH and considered allocating only 24 beds to gynaecology would not prove adequate. If an annexe were found it would be 'tantamount to adding 24 beds' to existing accommodation and those presently designated post-natal could be made available for gynaecological cases.⁴³ He noted the 'attractively designed maternity home' at the corner of Heytesbury and Hensman Roads, was convenient to KEMH and 'available for purchase at a moderate price.'⁴⁴ It appeared in good repair, and had a number of two and four bed rooms and 'other necessary facilities' for accommodating 22 to 24 post-natal patients.⁴⁵ KEMH's Board of Management considered the proposal and strongly recommended it as 'an ideal compromise solution to the dilemma' of inadequate gynaecological beds, and as an annexe it 'could function with particular accent on private post-natal cases at little additional cost to the Hospital ... with every possibility of providing an attractive return from Private Patient fees.'⁴⁶ It would require little adaptation for use by KEMH and its ready proximity would alleviate overcrowding for an interim period of two to three years before the proposed additional wings were completed and occupied. The Premier approved negotiations to purchase Kensington Hospital at up to £25,000.⁴⁷ Mrs. Willington

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- 37 U/Sec. Western Australian Medical Dept. To Principal Architect, PWDWA, in KEMH -Kensington Hospital Annexe Valuation, op. cit., 11 Dec. 1956.
- 38 Valuation, signed A. W. Smith, in *ibid*, 14 Jan. 1957.
- 39 Principal Architect to U/Sec. Medical Dept., in *ibid*, 14 Jan. 1957.
- 40 Memo. A. W. Smith, in *ibid*, 26 Feb. 1957.
- 41 *ibid*.
- 42 *ibid*.
- 43 Memo. from Gordon King in KEMH Buildings, op. cit., 24 April 1957.
- 44 *ibid*.
- 45 *ibid*.
- 46 KEMH Administrator, Rex Hutchinson, to U/Sec. Medical Dept., in *ibid*, 24 April 1957.
- 47 *ibid* & memos. in *ibid*, April-June 1957.

agreed to accept £24,000 for it including equipment and furnishings, and it was transferred to the Crown on 13 June.⁴⁸

The State government takeover of Woodside Hospital, East Fremantle, in 1951, and of *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)* in 1957, is evidence of the post-war transition from private maternity care to public hospitals. Very few private maternity hospitals continued in operation into the late 1970s, when the Salvation Army's Hillcrest Hospital, North Fremantle, ceased to be so used. By 1974, most maternity care was concentrated in ten maternity facilities in the state (nine metropolitan), of which six delivered over 1000 babies per year, and another four (three metropolitan) between 500 and 1000.⁴⁹ The transition to hospital-based medical care was so complete that a 2003 review of obstetrics services in Western Australia described 'traditional hospital-based Specialist Obstetrician led care', with no reference to this 'traditional' approach having only been the mainstream model for about half a century.⁵⁰ In the 1980s-1990s, the operations of the small public maternity hospitals were progressively transferred to other larger hospital facilities and the premises were converted to other uses under the Health Department and/or other government departments and/or ultimately disposed.

For more than 20 years *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)* served as an annexe to KEMH, providing an important facility for post-natal care etc. During this period the western end of the southern verandah was enclosed and the covered walkway between the hospital and the house was constructed. In c1981, the annexe ceased operation and the place was transferred to the Department of Community Welfare for use by the Children's Protection Service, and renamed in honour of Brenda Cherry, who had 'worked tirelessly for 21 years' in the Department 'to protect children and to befriend and help their parents.'⁵¹ To serve its new purposes most of the wards were converted to counselling rooms, the largest ward (Ward 10) to a conference room, the nursery to a clerical area, the operating theatre to a staff room, one bathroom to a male toilet and the other a female toilet, and the kitchen to a utility room. The plans show the rooms in the house converted to various uses and note the outbuilding was not to be occupied. Later plans show the proposed re-development of the landscape.⁵²

The Lots were re-numbered as shown on Plan 350: Lot 20 to 10217, Lot 21 to Lot 10218, each being 533 square metres in area, and Lot 22 to Lot 10219, 54 square metres in area.⁵³ On 4 September 1981, Reserve 37351 was gazetted and vested in the Minister for Community Welfare in trust for 'Community Welfare Purposes'.⁵⁴ On 14 October 1981, W. R. B. Hassell, Minister for Community

48 Memos. & correspondence in KEMH -Kensington Hospital Annexe Valuation, op. cit., May 1957; & Certificates of Title Vol. 685 Fol. 153 & Vol. 1132 Fols. 500, 501 & 502.

49 Department for Community Development, 'Roads: an index of locations and access to adoption records', 2004, pp.109, quoting Department of Health file number 2280/59, Acc.3713 p.197.

50 Department of Health Western Australia, 'Western Australia Statewide Obstetrics Services Review: Report of the Project Working Group', April 2003, p.20.

51 Plaque at *Kensington Hospital (fmr)*, site visit Robin Chinnery & Rosemary Rosario, 30 Nov. 2009.

52 Subiaco-Kensington Hospital Conversion for use by Children's Protection Service, PWDWA, May 1981, & Brenda Cherry Landscape Redevelopment, 22 Feb. 1982, held by BMW WA.

53 Plan 350 Perth Sub-Lots 257 & 258.

54 *Government Gazette* 4 Sept. 1981, p. 3829.

Welfare, officially opened Brenda Cherry Centre.⁵⁵ For the next 28 years, it accommodated various bodies concerned with children and their carers including the Foster Care Association and Jigsaw Adoption. The latter is a not for profit organisation founded by adults who had been adopted, together with birth and adoptive parents, to lobby for legislative change and greater openness about adoption, and is partly funded by the Department for Child Protection. Jigsaw played a significant role in legislation passed in 1987 and 1994 giving people who have been adopted and birth parents the right to access information and assists them in this process. Some of these birth parents and people who were adopted have an association with the place through its use as a maternity hospital and post-natal annexe, and for some re-visiting it in the late twentieth century has been an emotional experience.⁵⁶

In 1995, the 1937 hospital building was included in the Municipal Inventory for the City of Subiaco.⁵⁷

In July 2009, it was announced the State Government had earmarked numerous sites for disposal to fund education budget cuts including hospital sites and police stations, and Department of Education and Department of Child Protection sites including Brenda Cherry Centre.⁵⁸ In late 2009, *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)* was vacated and remains vacant in early 2010.⁵⁹

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) comprises an Inter-War Californian Bungalow style, single storey painted masonry building with a terracotta tiled roof constructed in 1937 and a former dwelling in the Federation Bungalow style constructed c.1922. The former dwelling was acquired to form part of the hospital in 1938, adapted and extended. Later, a steel framed glazed link was constructed between the two buildings. There is also a small brick and tile outbuilding located to the rear of the main building that was also constructed in 1937.

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is located on the north-western corner of the intersection of Hensman and Heytesbury Roads in Subiaco. The site is south-west of Subiaco's commercial centre on Rokeby Road. King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women is located two street blocks to the north. Hensman and Heytesbury Roads are typical residential streets with grass verges and narrow concrete slab pathways along both sides under a canopy of mature trees. Adjacent development comprises predominantly single dwellings contemporary with *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)*.

The site, identified as Reserve 37351, lots 20, 21 and 22, comprises an area of 1612 sq. m. with a frontage of approximately 53m on Hensman Road and 27m. on Heytesbury Road. The main 1937 Inter War Californian Bungalow style building is located on the corner of the site and addresses both Hensman and

⁵⁵ Plaque at *Kensington Hospital (fmr)*, op. cit.

⁵⁶ Anne Allpike, conversation with Robin Chinnery, site visit, 30 Nov. 2009. Research into the role of the hospital in encouraging and/or arranging adoptions for babies born at the place was beyond the scope of this assessment.

⁵⁷ Municipal Inventory, City of Subiaco, Adopted 28 Feb. 1995.

⁵⁸ WA Labor: Quick fix land sale to fund education budget, at <http://www.al.org.au/news/0709/21-01.php>

⁵⁹ Site visit, op. cit.

Heytesbury Roads. The c.1922 former dwelling is located on the northern portion of the site and addresses Hensman Road. Although the address of the place is Hensman Road, the design of the main building suggests that the primary entrance was originally from Heytesbury Road.

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is set back from the street boundary a distance of approximately 4.5m. There is a low masonry wall with piers on the Hensman and Heytesbury Road site boundaries. The wall comprises approximately four courses of red face bricks with a capping of header course brickwork. The openings in the wall for entrances and the ends of the wall feature brick piers. The brickwork of the wall matches the construction of the Californian Bungalow building but continues across the front boundary of the former dwelling on the northern portion of the site. The area between the wall and the building is landscaped with shrubs, trees, areas of lawn and a recent narrow winding brick paved path. There are wider brick paved and concrete slab entrance paths to the building from Heytesbury and Hensman Roads.

A bitumen sealed driveway on the western side of the site leads from Heytesbury Road to a carpark at the rear of the main building. There is a timber framed pergola over the entrance with a mature bougainvillea. On the northern side of the carpark there is a painted masonry and tile outbuilding that appears to be contemporary with the main hospital building. This building comprises two rooms and a toilet, all with doors opening onto the carpark.

There are two vehicular entrances from Hensman Road. The first is an ambulance entrance that leads to the metal framed link structure. The second, on the northern site boundary, leads to a garden area behind the former dwelling. This area comprises paved parking for several vehicles and area of lawn and trees that has been used as a children's playground, with a sandpit and a swing. There are mature palms in the back corners of the garden together with other trees and shrubs typical of inter-war period domestic gardens.

Fencing around the site varies and includes a timber picket fence on the northern boundary, fibrous cement on the western boundary of the former dwelling and the limestone and brick walls of the adjacent residence on the western side site boundary of the main building.

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) comprises the 1937 Inter-War Californian Bungalow style building, a steel framed and glazed link and the c.1922 former dwelling on the northern end of the site. The main building is L-shaped in plan form and comprises a central corridor with small rooms on either side. The external fabric of the building is painted face brick and there is a string course at dado height around the external wall. The roof is hipped with gables over the entrances and clad with autumn blend clay tiles. The roof pitch is approximately 27.5°, there is an eaves overhang of about 300mm and the eaves have a white painted fascia, ogee gutters and round downpipes. The two gables over the entrances on the south and east elevations are visually prominent and have painted timber bargeboards. The entrance on the south elevation is central giving the building a symmetrical facade, while the composition of the eastern elevation is asymmetrical.

There are street facing verandahs on both the southern and eastern elevations of the building. The verandahs have concrete slab floors and tiled skillion roofs supported on substantial masonry piers, a low brick wall along the front and

shallow pointed arched openings. The verandah ceilings are lined with fibrous cement sheets and the western end of the south verandah has been enclosed with fibrous cement panels. Timber framed French doors open onto both verandahs. French doors are timber framed and open inwards with original timber framed fly-screen doors on the outside. Both the doors and the screens are typical of the era comprising five panes separated by timber transoms. Windows are pairs of timber framed double hung sashes with horizontal glazing bars. There are deep timber framed tiled awnings over the windows on the east and west elevations.

Internally the main door on the east elevation leads to the vestibule. This in turn leads to the two passages that extend through the centre of both the west and east wings of the building. Rooms open off both sides of the central passages. The south wing comprises five rooms of equal size with French doors opening onto the southern verandah. Behind these rooms are the original service areas of the building. There is a large room opposite the eastern entry that has a recent opening in the wall for use as the reception area. This was probably a former office. The rooms along the eastern side of the building also open onto the verandah and are probably former wards. Rooms on the western side of this wing have windows overlooking the carpark. A utility room at the northern end has a sink and evidence of a former stove that has been removed. Opposite on the eastern side of the building is a large room that may have been a sitting room, or larger ward, and has been used subsequently as a conference room.

Internal rooms have utilitarian finishes typical of the era of the building. Ceilings are plasterboard, walls are painted plaster, floors are carpeted timber floorboards with 300mm high skirtings. Internal doors are flush panel, some with vision panels, and may not be original. Some internal doors are not original. There are original framed and panelled doors to the bathroom and to cupboards in the passage. The bathroom has original cream coloured terrazzo flooring with a green band and some original and some replacement tiling. Original tiles are located near the hand-basin. There are also original tiles in the large room on the north-west corner of the south wing.

There is a former external door opening from northern end of the building that leads to the metal framed glazed link structure. This door has a horizontal masonry awning supported on masonry brackets over the top. The link has aluminium framed glazing along both sides and is carpeted. On the northern side it leads into the vestibule located at the back of the former dwelling.

The former dwelling, built c.1922, is a single storey rendered masonry building with a pebble-dash finish. The roof is clad with custom-ord corrugated galvanised steel and is hipped with a front facing gable with timber shingled finish. There is a verandah on the front of the building supported on timber posts. The front elevation features a timber framed door with a fanlight and sidelights and two triple paned casement windows with fanlights. There is a galvanised steel timber framed awning over the front window. The building has a masonry extension with a hipped corrugated galvanised steel roof at the rear built in 1938. There is also a fibrous cement clad skillion roofed sleep-out on the south-western corner of the building.

Internally the former dwelling comprises four original rooms leading from the central entrance passage. The rooms have detailing typical of the early inter-war

era including simply profiled tapered timber door and window frames, elegant timber fireplace surrounds with mirrors, panelled doors and ceiling roses with an art-deco influence.

The masonry addition to the rear of the former dwelling is similar in style and detail to the 1837 hospital. The room has a brick and rendered brick fireplace with a timber mantle-shelf.

Both the 1937 Californian Bungalow style building and the c.1922 former dwelling are in good condition as a result of continuous use, maintenance and care over the period of their history. Both buildings, the addition to the former dwelling and the outbuilding are substantially intact.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr), built in 1936-37, is an uncommon, possibly rare example of a purpose designed and built private maternity hospital erected in the inter-war period.

Style

The place's design style, an adaptation of the Inter-War California Bungalow, which was a residential style, was appropriate to the suburban street and endowed it with a homely appearance rather than being institution-like, although the place cannot be mistaken for a residence. This was a deliberate choice deemed suitable for a maternity facility. French doors opening from each ward to the wide verandahs reflected prevailing ideas concerning the benefits of good ventilation for hospital and convalescent patients, and for mothers and infants.

The HCWA database includes 271 places in Interwar Californian Bungalow style, only 41 of which are not primarily residences (19 in the metropolitan area), although many of these also include a residential function of some sort. This includes two hospitals, St Gerard's Hospital, Wembley, and P13698 Tresilian Hospital (fmr), Nedlands, both of which were maternity hospitals. St Gerard's Hospital, Wembley, was constructed in 1938 for the Sisters of Mercy and operated as a maternity hospital until 1972. It is included in P02231 Catherine McAuley Group, which is currently being assessed for possible entry into the Register. Tresilian Hospital is believed to have offered maternity services from the 1930s to the 1970s.

P03458 *Rosella House*, Geraldton (1912) is another example of a private hospital designed with a domestic appearance, in this case derivative of Arts and Crafts styling. It is not specifically noted as providing maternity services.

Use as maternity hospital

A list of maternity hospitals and lying-in homes known to have operated in Western Australia between 1899 and 1980 notes around 500 places. The list includes midwives who offered small lying-in homes within their own homes and some midwives not associated with a particular address, which likely indicates midwives who only delivered babies in other people's homes. Within the metropolitan area, approximately 80 places on the list appear to be hospitals rather than midwives operating in isolation. Many of these are in the inner or western suburbs, including eighteen in Perth, North Perth or West Perth, eight in

Claremont, six in Subiaco and five in Cottesloe. There were also concentrations near Fremantle and Guildford/ Midland, with eight in each of these areas.⁶⁰

The HCWA database includes 25 places identified with the keyword 'maternity', ten of which are in the metropolitan area.

P02438 *King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women*, Subiaco, which was the first government maternity hospital when it opened in 1916 and continues to be the primary maternity hospital for the State, is entered in the Register. It is a large complex of buildings, the oldest being the Federation Free style former government industrial school (1897), with later buildings in the Interwar Functionalist, Interwar Californian Bungalow and Post War International styles.

A small number of converted residences that served as private maternity hospitals have been entered on the Register of Heritage Places, including *Hillcrest* (RHP 1035) and *Woodside* (RHP 0792), two of the most substantial Federation period two storey residences built in North and East Fremantle respectively for well known members of the Fremantle merchant elite. In private ownership, *Woodside* served as a maternity hospital from 1924 to c. 1945-46, and then was converted to flats, before being purchased by the State Government in 1951, and re-converted to a maternity hospital that opened in 1953.⁶¹ The Salvation Army's provision of maternity care for unmarried mothers and their babies at *Hillcrest* for an almost unbroken period of 52 years and the initiation of midwifery training at the place in 1910 was unique in Western Australia. The 1978 conversion of *Hillcrest* from a maternity hospital to provide aged care facilities appears uncommon. P01033 *Ocean View* (RHP), Beaconsfield, a single-storey Victorian Regency style residence constructed in 1887 for prominent businessmen Elias Solomon, was used as a maternity hospital from 1920 to 1941. At Guildford, the bungalow residence (1895) at *Johnson's Complex* (RHP 2465) was converted to become 'Seaton Ross' maternity home, which operated from 1930 to 1946. In Geraldton, P03715 *Geraldton Residency*, the 1861 limestone home of the resident magistrate, was converted to operate as Geraldton Maternity Hospital from 1924 to 1966. P05959 *Bona Vista*, Mt Lawley, constructed c.1917 as a two-storey Federation Filigree style residence, operated as Faversham Maternity Hospital from 1932 to 1939. It was entered in the Register on an interim basis in 2007 but did not progress to permanent entry and the registration lapsed.

Sections of P00875 *Museum and Arts Centre, Fremantle* (RHP) were used by the government as a lying-in home, labour ward and midwifery training school from six years from early 1910 when the place was a women's home. Women from the Women's Home in Murray Street were transferred into the building after

⁶⁰ Department for Community Development, 'Roads: an index of locations and access to adoption records', 2004, pp.74-99. Data is drawn from a wide range of sources including Health Department files, Family Court adoption papers, and Telephone and Post Office Directories. The report notes that the list is probably not comprehensive, as in the early period maternity services were not required to be registered, and a formal listing of names or addresses for places licensed after registration was initiated has not been located.

Note: numbers are approximate as some places appear in the list more than once due to changes in name or address or vagueness of the original records.

⁶¹ HCWA Place No. 0792.

the occupants of Fremantle Asylum (the building's previous use) were moved to Claremont Hospital.⁶²

Two maternity facilities known to be purpose built are included in the HCWA database. P17281 Swan Maternity Hospital, West Perth, was purpose-built in 1913 for use as a private maternity hospital by Alice Stockley. It is a much-altered Federation Queen Anne style building, designed to present to the street as a residence. In 2009, the place was considered for entry into the assessment program and it was determined that it did not meet threshold for an assessment. P02176 *Edward Millen Home (fmr)*, East Victoria Park (RHP), was purpose-built in 1912 as a maternity hospital in the Federation Queen Anne style for midwife Elizabeth Baillie, one of the first group of registered midwives in the State. The original building is a grand two-storey element unlike the deliberately domestic appearance of both Swan Maternity Hospital and *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)*.

As many private maternity hospitals either used existing residences or were intentionally designed to have a residential appearance, the maternity function of most of the large number of former maternity homes known to have operated has not been recognised in existing heritage lists. It is not known how many maternity homes were purpose-built.

Conclusion

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is an uncommon example of a purpose designed and built private maternity hospital in Western Australia, and one of three known examples of private maternity hospitals built in the inter-war period that were designed in the Inter-War California Bungalow style, which was a residential style.

Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr) is an excellent representative example of a private maternity hospital, a formerly widespread function that is no longer practised in Western Australia, and was one of the largest private maternity hospitals in the State when it opened in the 1930s.

13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

KEMH – Kensington Hospital Annexe SROWA Cons. 689 Item 1956/2688.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research in files relating to KEMH may reveal when the western end of the southern verandah was enclosed and when the covered walkway between the hospital and the house was constructed, and about the use of the place during the period it served as the annexe to KEMH.

Further research may reveal what, if any, role *Kensington Private Maternity Hospital (fmr)* staff had in encouraging and/or arranging adoptions for children born at the place.

Further research may reveal additional information about its use under the Department for Community Welfare.

⁶² Flanagan, 'Lying-In (or Maternity) Homes...' p.346.

Further research may identify whether any portion of the place was previously used as a morgue.