



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES Register Entry

1. **DATA BASE No.** 27015
2. **NAME** Customs House and Sub-Collector's Residence, Broome
OTHER NAMES Broome Historical Museum (Customs House); Customs Residence
3. **LOCATION** 67-69 Robinson Street, Broome
4. **DESCRIPTION OF PLACE INCLUDED IN THIS ENTRY**
Lot 4 on Diagram 69750 being the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 1727 Folio 480; Lot 3 on Diagram 69750 being the land contained in Certificate of Title Volume 1727 Folio 479.
5. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA** Shire of Broome
6. **HERITAGE LISTINGS**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register of Heritage Places: • National Trust Classification: Broome Historical Museum • Local Planning Scheme – Heritage List: Broome Historical Museum Museum Reserve Broome Museum/Customs House/Sailmakers Shed/Museum Reserve • Local Heritage Survey: Broome Historical Museum • Register of the National Estate: Broome Historical Museum • Aboriginal Sites Register: ID 13729 Reserve 21801 Broome ID 12886 Illangarami ID 12410 Lintapitjin/Lot 2065 Port Dr ID 30274 LSC11 	<table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Registered</td> <td style="width: 50%;">19/03/2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Classified</td> <td>07/06/1983</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adopted</td> <td>28/08/2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adopted</td> <td>28/08/2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adopted</td> <td>28/08/2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adopted</td> <td>28/08/2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Permanent</td> <td>18/04/1989</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Registered Site</td> <td>-----</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Registered Site</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Registered Site</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Registered	19/03/2024	Classified	07/06/1983	Adopted	28/08/2014	Adopted	28/08/2014	Adopted	28/08/2014	Adopted	28/08/2014	Permanent	18/04/1989	Registered Site	-----	Registered Site		Registered Site	
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7. **ORDERS UNDER SECTION OF THE ACT**

8. **HERITAGE AGREEMENT**

9. STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

What is significant?

Customs House and Sub-Collector's Residence, Broome comprises the Broome Historical Museum, located within the former Customs House (c.1897), and a North-West Bungalow style dwelling, constructed for the Sub-Collector of Customs (1911/1912). Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The original off-form concrete structure of the former Customs House, now operating as Broome Historical Museum and referred hereafter as Customs House, and its surrounding verandah with cast iron columns displaying moderate features of the Federation Bungalow architectural style through its simple massing, use of deep shady verandahs, and broad roof planes.
- The North-West Bungalow dwelling originally constructed as the Sub-Collector's Residence, demonstrating a strong vernacular expression with its light framed timber construction, roof generously extending to shelter the verandahs, narrow linear planning with windows on all sides, and being raised above the ground.
- The close proximity between the Customs House and the Sub-Collector's Residence, and also the wider context of Roebuck Bay, which reinforces their association with customs management and the movement of goods in and out of Broome.
- The tropical plantings, including the established Moreton Bay fig trees to the south of Customs House and the Mango Tree to the east of the Sub-Collector's Residence, which contribute to the setting of Broome.

Elements that are of secondary significance include the administration and archive buildings (c.1980s) associated with the operations of the Broome Historical Museum at Customs House. The half open shed and fibreglass swimming pool (both 1990s) to the east of the Sub-Collector's Residence are also of secondary significance for their contribution to the setting and demonstrating continued use of the building as a private residence.

Elements that do not contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The remaining outbuildings and structures to the south and west of the Customs House including the gazebo structure, ablution block and old WC.
- The steel sheeting enclosing the original verandah of the Customs House and timber boarding encasing the cast iron columns.
- The kitchenette located to the north-west of the Customs House.
- The small overhang extension to the south-east of Customs House to accommodate a museum exhibit.
- The bedroom and laundry building addition (c. 2012) to the east of the Sub-Collector's Residence.
- The steel cyclonic shutters, and kitchen and bathroom fit-outs to the Sub-Collector's Residence.

- Modern Fencing.

How is it significant?

Customs House and Sub-Collector's Residence, Broome is of historic, aesthetic, social and scientific value and satisfies the following factors relevant to cultural heritage significance:

- A. importance in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Western Australia's history;
- B. importance in demonstrating rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Western Australia's heritage;
- C. potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Western Australia's history;
- D. importance in demonstrating the characteristics of a broader class of places;
- E. strong or special meaning it has for any group or community because of social, cultural or spiritual associations;
- F. importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by any group or community;
- H. importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by any group or community.

Why is it significant?

Customs House and Sub-Collector's Residence, Broome is of historic value for its association with customs operations and the movement of goods in Broome during a period in which the town was a significant port in the state. Occupied by the Commonwealth Customs Department from c.1906 to 1979, the place reflects the growth of maritime trade and industry in the region, in particular the prominent pearling industry based at Roebuck Bay from the early 1900s (Factor A).

Customs House and Sub-Collector's Residence, Broome is of aesthetic value, as a prominent feature in the landscape, and forming part of a recognisable historic precinct close to the Broome foreshore. A demonstration of customs facilities in tropical climates, the construction of the Sub-Collector's Residence includes modifications to the standard architectural styles to address the climatic conditions. Customs House is also an early extant example of the use of off-form concrete wall construction pre-1900 in Western Australia, built to withstand cyclones, of which only a few examples remain in the North-West (Factors D and F).

Customs House and Sub-Collector's Residence, Broome has social and scientific value, with considerable importance to the local and wider community and visitors for its association with the Broome pearling industry, contributing to the community's sense of place. Operating as the Broome Historical Museum since 1981, Customs House is a popular tourist and education site, celebrating the history of the region through extensive archive collections, research, and interpretation of historic material (Factors C and E).