



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November, 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The three blocks of original Staff Quarters, comprising the Superintendent's Quarters and two other similar structures and including the Chapel extension to the northernmost structure, are of aesthetic significance as an example of buildings designed by the Public Work Department to withstand the climate of the tropical north of Western Australia in the period before the development of mechanical means of climate control in buildings. (Criterion 1.2)

The indigenous bushland setting of the Graveyard evokes a tranquillity appropriate to the place. (Criterion 1.3)

Recent landscaping around the former Staff Quarters reinstates the former gardens around these buildings and provides a contrast to the adjacent areas of pindan, grass and scrub that characterise the remainder of the settlement area. (Criterion 1.3)

The buildings, site and landscape elements of the place, together with the sites of the former residential units and the Graveyard, comprise a cultural environment the aesthetic qualities of which evoke, through their isolated location and open landscape setting, the harshness of the environment experienced by the former patients and staff. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The place was the only government facility in Western Australia in which provision was made for leprosy patients to live in whilst undergoing long-term medical treatment. (Criterion 2.1)

The establishment of the place ended mandatory transfer of leprosy patients from Western Australia to the Northern Territory, thus allowing more Aboriginal people from the Kimberley to remain in, or closer to, their own country. (Criterion 2.2)

The place is associated with the Sisters of St John of God, who tended to the needs of the leprosy patients and their families for five decades, and with Dr L. Holman, who provided medical care for fifteen years. (Criterion 2.3)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The place is a benchmark site which demonstrates the layout of a purpose-built facility designed to accommodate and care for leprosy patients in Australia. (Criterion 3.1)

The place has potential to contribute to an understanding of the conditions under which long-term leprosarium patients lived in the period from 1936 to 1986. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The place is highly valued by Aboriginal people in and beyond the Kimberley, and by the Sisters of St John of God, for its role in providing a home and medical care for leprosy patients. (Criterion 4.1)

The Graveyard contains the remains of 357 patients who died at the leprosarium over five decades and is of exceptional significance to the Aboriginal community. (Criterion 4.1)

The buildings and the Graveyard, with their poignant history, contribute to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The place, although no longer used as leprosarium, is the only facility of this type now extant in Western Australia. (Criteria 5.1 & 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The place demonstrates the characteristics of a medical facility in which long-term patients were housed, and sometimes forcibly detained, while being treated for leprosy. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby site is in sound condition. The grounds are well maintained and recently established gardens are an attractive component of the new Multi-Function Centre. Gravel roadways have been resurfaced. The buildings that are in use, in particular the three original blocks of Staff Quarters, are in very good condition. Other buildings require maintenance but are capable of conservation if considered desirable. The block of former patient accommodation is in poor condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby has low integrity. The original intention of the place, to provide for the need of patients suffering from Hansen's Disease in a place isolated from the general population, is no longer relevant due to the control of the disease in Australia since the 1980s. The current use of the place as a Multi-Function Centre is compatible to the extent of providing a use that can be incorporated in significant buildings without loss of significant fabric. In the long term the sustainability of significant values will depend upon the interpretation of significance in the development of the place.

The Graveyard retains high integrity and is capable of sustaining these values in the long term with appropriate conservation and management.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby has medium authenticity. Although the site retains only the three original blocks of Staff Quarters from the earliest phase of development, the other buildings and site areas represent the development and change that occurred during the history of the place associated with housing and treatment of patients suffering from Hansen's Disease. The Catholic and Protestant Churches and the Detention Centre remain from the 1950s. Other structures are generally of more recent origin. The loss of both original and more recent patient accommodation has reduced the authenticity of the place.

The Graveyard has high authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Dr Cathie Clement, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Rosemary Rosario, Architectural Heritage Consultant.

13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Set in extensive grounds, *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby* comprises a group of buildings that have been constructed at intervals since 1936. These buildings, some of which have been restored, include three blocks of original Staff Quarters (1930s), Detention Centre (1950s), service buildings and structures related to religious worship. The Graveyard within the Leprosarium grounds is of great importance.

Leprosy, now known as Hansen's Disease, has been in Australia since 1850 but was identified in the Kimberley only in 1908. Treatment was rudimentary with sufferers being detained, at that time, in such places as Bezout Island off Cape Lambert and, from 1913, on a piece of land where the incoming tide created an island off Cossack. The government sent four Kimberley Aborigines to this island lazaret when a doctor diagnosed fresh cases in 1921.¹

Before being sent to Cossack, the patients were held in the 'native hospital' grounds in Derby. Their detention and transfer, viewed as essential by Europeans, interfered with the social and cultural life of the Aboriginal patients and made it likely they would try to leave the grounds either to visit family and friends or to seek refuge from the authorities who were about to remove them from their country. Both scenarios caused concern within the European community as did the prospect of patients being shipped on a coastal vessel with other passengers.²

The 1921 situation demonstrated the difficulties and risks associated with managing contagious diseases in remote areas. In 1922, matters became more complicated when leprosy affected a mixed-blood Kimberley man who was 'counted a white man'. Officials, reluctant to house him with Aboriginal patients, decided he could be trusted to remain in his 'quarters' at Derby but this approach upset the West Kimberley Road Board. Another Aboriginal man was then 'retained in an outbuilding at the Hospital under suspicion' and the Commissioner of Public Health decided to investigate the extent of

¹ W S Davidson, *Havens of Refuge: A History of Leprosy in Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1978, pp. 4, 6, 9, 18–19 and 152–3.

² *ibid.*, pp. 18–19; State Records of Western Australia, hereafter SROWA, AN 120/4, Public Health Department, Acc 1003, 6708/1921, Leprosy at Derby, pp. 1–4, 6–7, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20 and 23.

leprosy around Derby, the latest methods of treatment, and whether the new patient, instead of going to Cossack, would accept 'accommodation and isolation upon some small area outside Derby, which would alleviate the concern of the local people'. The exact arrangements that were made are unknown but the 'Derby Isolation Depot' came into being and, by May 1923, the Commissioner had agreed to supply clothing to leprosy patients and to pay the mixed-blood man to exercise supervision over them, thus guarding against contact with outsiders. Difficulties still arose when patients required transport and, after a European man was found to have leprosy, the Road Board insisted that the patients be removed from the Derby area.³

In May 1924, Dr Cecil Cook, a Wandsworth Research Scholar, visited four Aboriginal leprosy patients held at the old Derby Residency—a building he saw as derelict and 'unsuitable for the housing and treatment of white cases'. He suggested 'that the whole of the Lazaret accommodation at Derby be condemned and the site abandoned' but, despite viewing Cossack as 'eminently more suitable as a site for a Lazaret than Derby', he did not suggest transfer of the Derby patients. Instead, he advocated that State and Federal authorities should cooperate and establish an up-to-date lazaret in the Darwin area for Western Australian and Northern Territory cases or, failing this, that the State should improve the lazaret facilities at Cossack.⁴ Cook also wrote:

If the community abrogates to itself the right to deprive those unfortunates of their liberty and to add to the horrors of incurable disease, the miseries of lifelong imprisonment, surely it also assumes the responsibility of housing them in comfort and endeavouring to ensure that their dragging years of decline shall pass with a minimum of suffering. Too long the leper has been an outcast and the object of public persecution rather than practical sympathy. It is to be hoped that the Lazaret of the future will be a haven of refuge sought by the leper, rather than a loathsome prison to be avoided if need be by suicide.⁵

Construction of the new Cossack lazaret began in 1925. Seven Derby patients and three from Beagle Bay (to the north-west) were sent there; the Derby lazaret was destroyed; and the Cossack facility then operated until 1931 when WA patients began to go to the new Commonwealth Government leprosarium on Channel Island, off Darwin. Records show that 443 patients were sent there prior to its closure in 1955 and, further, that at least 142 of these people were buried on the island. The last inmates were shifted to the East Arm Settlement on the mainland and most of the building material from the leprosarium was taken to Bathurst Island for reuse.⁶ The function of Channel Island and its graveyard give the place cultural heritage values comparable to those identified for *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby*.

Transfers to Channel Island were seldom immediate and cases again began to accumulate. The Cossack lazaret had been destroyed and the Sisters of St John of God began to care for patients housed in a makeshift lazaret adjacent

³ Davidson, *Havens*, p. 19–21 and 23; SROWA, AN 120/4, Public Health Department, Acc 1003, 6708/1921, pp. 26–31, 34, 37, 40, 44–6, 48 and 60–1; SROWA, AN 120/4, Public Health Department, Acc 1003, 1765/1923, Leprosy in the North West, pp. 5, 12, 21, 55, 59, 64, 78, 124, 145, 156–7, 163, 166–70, 175–6, 181, 183–4 and 187.

⁴ Davidson, *Havens*, pp. 23 and [25]; SROWA, AN 120/4, Public Health Department, Acc 1003, 1765/1923, p. 235, and the report filed with p. 235.

⁵ Davidson, *Havens*, prologue.

⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 27–33; Australian Heritage Commission, RNEDB, Location of Channel Island Leprosarium, Darwin NT, report from URL <http://www.ahc.gov.au/net/rnedb.html> printed on 18 January 1998.

to the Beagle Bay Mission. Early in 1933, the Broome Road Board protested about this situation and, by the end of the year, Derby residents were complaining about 'some thirty or forty leprosy cases squatting in the vicinity of the native isolation hospital'. A Royal Commission ensued and, in July 1934, H. D. Moseley recommended that, if the State could withdraw from the Commonwealth arrangement for sending patients to Darwin, a leprosarium should be established on Sunday Island and, failing this, that a temporary holding area should be created approximately 10 miles (16 kilometres) from Derby. Moseley pointed to the distress Aboriginal people felt at being taken from their country and mentioned that some patients fled to avoid transfer to Darwin.⁷

In the twelve months to 30 June 1934, all but 10 of the 74 cases of leprosy diagnosed in the Kimberley came from the district patrolled by the Derby police. These patients went to Darwin but, when another 58 Kimberley cases were detected in the following twelve months, the people were sent to the Beagle Bay and Derby lazarets. A report written by the Minister for Health on 21 June 1935 stated that 'some 30 to 40 lepers [were] held in makeshift accommodation at Derby'; that transport to the Darwin leprosarium was difficult and costly; and that it would be 'much better for the State to provide its own leprosarium near Derby'. The Minister anticipated that the cost of building a leprosarium for 50 cases would be £8000 to £9000, with annual running costs of about £1800. He also anticipated that, as medical surveys were implemented and more cases detected, both construction and running costs would increase.⁸

On 1 July 1935, Cabinet resolved that a leprosarium should be erected near Derby. The Premier sought Commonwealth aid and the Commissioner of Public Health sent sketch plans for the proposed leprosarium to Derby for the District Medical Officer's comments. Neither the plans nor the proposal to erect the leprosarium on abandoned experimental blocks south of Derby impressed Dr Elwood Byron. He identified shortcomings in the site, building design, and provision for female accommodation. Alternate sites east of the town were investigated; the Commonwealth promised to pay £5000 towards the cost of construction; and the government, having decided to call for tenders, found that the cost was likely to be around £13,500. Then, because the lessee of the pastoral land on which the leprosarium was to be built had lodged an objection, a new location had to be selected. It was February 1936 before the latter issue was resolved. By this time, the West Kimberley Road Board was in favour of having a leprosarium built because the Depression was causing men to congregate in Derby and the work available for them was 'not nearly sufficient to go round'. The Broome Road Board was also eager for the work to commence because, although eleven patients had been transferred to Derby after a cyclone destroyed the Beagle Bay lazaret, newly diagnosed patients were being held in Broome.⁹

The government let the contract for *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby* to Mortimer and Thompson. Twenty-four men worked under the supervision

⁷ Davidson, *Havens*, pp. 40–1 and 45–8.

⁸ SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 4333/1934, Commissioner of Police. Annual Report to 30-6-34. Northern District Report, p. 7; SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 3449/1935, Commissioner of Police. Annual Report for the year ending 30-6-35. Northern District Report, p. 5; Davidson, *Havens*, p. 49.

⁹ Davidson, *Havens*, pp. 50, 58–9 and 61–2; SROWA, AN 120/4, Medical Department, Acc 1003, Item 251/1935, Leprosy - Derby Lazarette - Establishment of, pp. 27–9, 38, 40–2, 50, 52, 54, 55, 60 and 65.

of Mr H. Haywood from the Public Works Department, starting construction on 9 June 1936 and finishing on 24 November, two weeks ahead of schedule. The cost, just over £12,751, represented a saving of approximately £500 on the tender price of £13,687 after additional payments were made for the provision of electric lighting, a motor to run the lighting, a windmill, troughs, wire and drainage. Described as 'the best and most up-to-date in the Commonwealth', the place was said to represent 'a praiseworthy attempt on the part of the Government to deal with a pressing problem'.¹⁰

Set in grounds that covered more than 200 acres (81 hectares), with a creek in which patients could fish, the leprosarium's 37 structures included a two-building treatment block, two bathing blocks, eleven galvanised iron huts with four beds apiece for female patients, the same number for the males, a kitchen, dining room, meat house and store house, Superintendent's Quarters and two buildings for Staff Quarters. The treatment block contained an operating theatre, sterilising room, foot and hand bathing room, dispensary, office and two sick wards. The Superintendent's Quarters comprised two bedrooms, a living room enclosed with mosquito wire, a kitchen, bathroom and a wide verandah. Jarrah had been shipped from Perth for the project, and all the buildings had concrete foundations and protection against termites.¹¹

Mr F. Luyer and his wife, who had both worked at the Cossack and Derby lazarets, transferred 90 patients from Derby to the leprosarium in December 1936. The Commissioner of Public Health then inspected the new facility and, noting that the track over the marsh was unsafe following the start of the wet season, arranged for an all-weather road to be built to prevent the leprosarium being isolated. The Luyers remained until March 1937 when Mr W. R. Powell and his wife took over the management of the leprosarium. The Sisters of St John of God took over the care of the patients and the District Medical Officer, based in Derby, provided the necessary medical attention. In July, the Sisters requested a chapel, and this structure, a room attached to their quarters, was completed by November.¹²

Other work undertaken in 1937 provided fences, roads and wells, and it has been said that:

The Leprosarium was . . . easily extendable by the addition of more huts or extensions to buildings. As there were now a number of able-bodied persons in the Leprosarium as patients, and many of them had learned certain skills in various trades on stations, they required only supervision and materials to provide themselves with accommodation.¹³

By early 1939, the leprosarium held 120 patients. Mr G. L. Walsh took over as Officer-in-Charge on 31 May 1939 and the necessary new huts were constructed. The place also benefited from the provision of a truck which transported stores from Derby and brought in patients from other parts of the district.¹⁴

Trucks, aeroplanes, boats, horses and mules were used to search for leprosy sufferers in the north Kimberley in June 1939. Dr A. Davis, having finished a

¹⁰ SROWA, AN 7/14, Public Works Department, Acc 1124, PWD Contract Book 21 (10 January 1936 – 2 October 1939), p. 29; *Daily News*, 17 October 1936, cited in Davidson, *Havens*, p. 63.

¹¹ *Daily News*, 17 October 1936, p. 10.

¹² Davidson, *Havens*, pp. 28, 57 and 63–4; SROWA, AN 120/4, Medical Department, Acc 1003, 251/1935, pp. 92–5, 155–7 and 245.

¹³ Davidson, *Havens*, pp. 63–4.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 64; SROWA, AN 120/4, Medical Department, Acc 1003, 251/1935, p. 261.

leprosy survey in Fitzroy Crossing, joined police from Derby while Dr L. A. Musso, whose services were provided by the Commonwealth, joined police from Wyndham. The Inspector of Police reported that 'large numbers of Leprous natives were rounded up and conveyed to the Leprosarium' and that, on 30 June 1940, this facility held 178 inmates. During the 1939/40 year, 86 new cases were admitted, nine patients were discharged, 11 died and three absconded.¹⁵ The environment at *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby* may have been more pleasant than the earlier lazarets but it was still a place where sorrow and alienation dominated the lives of many patients.

In 1942, a team of 25 men built a hospital for male patients and, after Japanese aircraft attacked northern towns, the Sisters camped in the bush with their charges whenever they anticipated an enemy attack. About sixty patients seized this opportunity to return to their country. Police patrols searched for these people and other leprosy sufferers but, after 1949, fewer Aboriginal people remained in the bush beyond the stations and missions and the need for patrols lessened. This change meant patients no longer faced the humiliation and discomfort of being brought in on foot, often over great distances, chained by the neck so they could not escape from the mounted police. Another positive change was the introduction of 'new chemotherapeutic agents and antibiotics' which gave doctors greater control over the manifestations of leprosy, removing most of the unsightly lesions and reducing the need for life-time isolation.¹⁶

The need for the leprosarium did not do away with advances in treatment. In 1952, builders named Mente, Fritz, Unterwegoer and Hinterwegger used what was described as fine craftsmanship to construct additions there.¹⁷ Other construction, described below, also occurred during the 1950s.

New cases continued to appear and, between 1956 and 1976, sixty-four were recorded in and near Derby. For 15 years within this period, Dr L. Holman was in medical charge of the leprosarium. He is credited with undertaking surgery that assisted with deformities caused by leprosy, increasing the detection rate for new cases, and instituting treatment that did not necessarily involve committal. By 1976, a new long-acting drug named acedapsone was available and, because it needed to be injected only at ten-week intervals, early discharge for outpatient care became more common. By the end of the year, only 38 patients remained in the leprosarium.¹⁸

The Sisters of St John of God continued to work at *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby* until its closure in 1986, and their efforts, as well as being appreciated by the patients and their families, were recognised through the award of honours to individual sisters. In 1948, in recognition of voluntary work at the leprosarium and elsewhere in the north-west, Sister M. Gertrude received an M.B.E. that was one of the first secular awards given to a St John of God sister

¹⁵ Davidson, *Havens*, pp. 75–7; SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 3155/1940, Commissioner of Police. Annual Report for year ending 30-6-40. Northern District Report, p. 6.

¹⁶ Daly, Sister M Alphonsus M.B.E. Healing Hands, Typescript, Derby, c. 1980, p. 20; Choo, Christine. 'The Impact of War on the Aborigines of the Kimberley' in *On the Homefront: Western Australian and World War II*, ed. Jenny Gregory, UWA Press, 1996, p. 140; Davidson, *Havens*, pp. 83 and 85–94.

¹⁷ SROWA, AN 1/7, Department of Public Works, Acc 689, 2628/1950, Fitzroy Crossing Police Station, pp. 128 and 131–2.

¹⁸ Davidson, *Havens*, pp. 108, 110–14 and 131.

in Australia. Sister Alphonsus Daly later received the same award for her work.¹⁹

Few documents associated with the construction and physical development *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby* have been discovered during the course of this study. A site plan dated 1944 provides a layout of the buildings on the site at that time.²⁰ The Superintendent's Quarters, Married Accommodation and Staff Quarters with an attached Chapel were located on the western side of the site. These three original buildings are extant. The south-eastern structure is identified as the Superintendent's Quarters. The original hospital buildings (no longer extant) are shown in the centre of the site. These comprised an Administration and Treatment Block and Sick Ward Block. To the south-east of the hospital buildings were the original kitchen, dining room, stores, service buildings, and structures including a tank stand, an engine room and a laundry. Some of these structures are extant although, on the basis of physical evidence, considerably altered from original detail. To the north-east were the original male shelters and male dormitories and to the south-east were the female shelters and dormitories. None of these structures remain.

A plan of the site from 1956 shows incremental changes that had occurred in the intervening years. The Roman Catholic Church and the Detention Centre are shown on the northern side of the site. The Detention Centre is marked as 'new' indicating that it was probably built circa 1956. Both these structures are extant although only the floor, structural frame and roof of the Catholic Church remain. Some additional buildings associated with the hospital are shown, however none of these are extant. The Protestant Church, extant, is indicated as 'new' and there are some additional dormitories and married accommodation units – none of which are extant.²¹ At the end of 1957, a contract was let to Jones and Paul for hot water services and laundry extensions.²²

No more recent site information has been identified although physical evidence indicates that a substantial building program was probably carried out in the 1960s and/or 1970s resulting in new treatment blocks, refurbishment of the kitchen and dining rooms, new patient blocks and the construction of various other stores, classrooms and service buildings. It is probable that replacement of the patient accommodation shelters with modular demountable units, two of which remain extant on the site, was also carried out in this period. Some of this work may have been covered by a contract let to V. Volodka on 20 November 1961, with a completion date of 29 January 1963, for additions worth £73,888. No research has been undertaken to link that contract to specific structures.²³

Since its closure in 1986 the Bungarun facility has undergone a program of refurbishment at a cost of \$700,000 from the State Government to develop it into a Multi-Function Centre for education and conference purposes. The work has included refurbishment and restoration of the three original Staff Quarters, water services, rewiring of buildings, regravelling to existing roads

¹⁹ *West Australian*, 10 June 1948, pp. 3–4; Daly, *Healing Hands*, p. iv.

²⁰ Derby Leprosarium Block Plan 1944, PWD WA Dwg No. 29844, 19.7.1944.

²¹ Derby Leprosarium General Layout Plan, Department of the North West, 10.9.1956.

²² Contract and Management Services, Contracts Book 2.

²³ Contract and Management Services, Contracts Book 1; Interview with Trevor Mitchell, caretaker, 6 May 1999, indicated that a new hospital was built in 1976 of which the Treatment Block remains. This has not been confirmed through documentary sources.

etc. The place is currently used as a conference centre, however a number of buildings remain unused.²⁴

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby is located on a substantial gazetted reserve (No. 21474) which includes the settlement area comprising former Staff Quarters, treatment facilities, classrooms, lock-up, Catholic and Protestant churches, kitchen, dining room and service facilities and the sites of the former living accommodation (no longer extant) for patients suffering from Hansen's Disease (Leprosy). *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby* reserve also includes the Graveyard located approximately 0.5km to the east of the main settlement.

Since the closure of *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby*, some of the buildings have been demolished and other have been restored and adapted for use as a Multi-Function Centre. The remaining structures provide evidence of the original planning of the place, with staff accommodation on the western side, hospital and service facilities in the centre of the site and patient accommodation on the eastern side of the settlement. *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby* underwent numerous building programs during its period of service resulting in extensive changes to the site as new buildings replaced older facilities. Comparison of documentary and physical evidence indicates that the three staff accommodation buildings on the western side of the site are the earliest extant structures dating from the original building program. The kitchen and service areas probably contain some remnant structure from the early phases of development. The Roman Catholic Church (frame, slab and roof only extant), the Protestant Church and the Detention Centre date from the 1950s and the majority of other buildings are of recent origin.

Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby is located approximately 10kms east of Derby, in an isolated area of indigenous vegetation, and is separated from the town by tidal mudflats. The original purpose of the place determined its isolated location. To reach the site from Derby by road involves a journey of approximately 25 kms via the Derby Highway, Gibb River Road and Bungarun Road. Meda and Birdwood Downs Stations are located immediately to the east of the Bungarun reserve.

The following description of the site and buildings refers to the attached current site plan provided by the caretaker, Mr Trevor Mitchell. Building numbering is as indicated on the plan and has not been altered by the consultants.

The settlement as it exists today does not exhibit much evidence of considered site planning, although buildings located adjacent to each other are generally oriented the same way on the site. The main entrance from Bungarun Road is at the southern end of the settlement. From the entrance a gravel entrance road runs to the north. The first building evident on the western side of the entrance road is the caretaker's accommodation. Beyond this are the three original residential blocks, the northern most of which has two substantial extensions on the northern end—the first to provide a chapel for the Sisters of St John of God, the second probably circa 1970s. The three blocks are constructed as a group with the central building located further west behind the other two blocks. This area also contains several smaller structures including a residential building of more recent origin, a swimming pool enclosure and a bough shed constructed since the closure of the Leprosarium.

²⁴ Interview with Trevor Mitchell, 6 May 1999.
Register of Heritage Places - Assessment Doc'n
12/05/2000

This area shows evidence of extensive landscaping including lawns, shrubs and small trees. This landscaping is recent and has been developed as part of the refurbishment of the place for a Multi-Function Centre.

The three original residential blocks (Nos 44, 39 and 36) are rectangular timber framed buildings with external cladding of flat asbestos cement sheet and hipped roofs of corrugated galvanised iron in short sheet lengths with sections of tubular steel fixed as storm battens. The buildings are elevated above the ground on concrete stumps in the manner typical of Kimberley construction. Kitchens and bathrooms are constructed as separate but attached structures on the north-eastern and south-eastern corners of the buildings respectively. These are clad with painted weatherboards and the kitchens have brick chimneys. The buildings are typical of Kimberley architecture of the period and comprise a core area of three rooms which open onto wide enclosed verandahs. Internal wall linings are flat sheets of fibrous plaster and internal doors are pairs of timber framed French doors. Verandahs are enclosed with banks of timber framed glass and metal louvres. The kitchens have vertical tongued and grooved timber panelling to dado height with flat asbestos cement panels above. Bathrooms are lined with flat asbestos cement sheets. Building No. 36 has two substantial extensions to the northern end. The first extension follows the style of the original building and was extended to provide chapel for the Sisters of Saint John of God. The extension takes the form of an additional hipped roofed structure to the north of the original building, linked through the verandah and comprising a single central room, presumably originally used for a chapel. The second extension which provides residential accommodation is a flat roofed structure linked to the end of northern end of the former chapel block. This building (No. 35) is similar to other more recent structures on the site and is constructed on steel posts with external walls of flat asbestos cement panels and a flat metal deck roof concealed behind deep fascias.

All the original residential buildings have been restored, are in good condition and are being used as part of the Multi-Function Centre.

The caretaker's accommodation (No. 45) is a timber framed, asbestos cement sheet clad building with a white painted hipped corrugated iron roof. The building comprises three bedrooms and living rooms and follows the general style of the original residential buildings, but is of more recent origin. There is a steel framed and clad garage (No. 9) adjacent. Behind the caretaker's accommodation is the concrete swimming pool under a steel framed, corrugated iron roofed enclosure. To the north of the swimming pool enclosure is a bough shed of recent origin and a small residential building (No. 38) with a steel frame, asbestos cement flat sheet cladding to walls and a flat metal deck roof concealed behind deep fascias. The building comprises a bedroom and bathroom.

To the north of the settlement area and to the east of the entrance road is the remnant structure of the former Catholic Church (No. 32). This comprises a steel frame and corrugated iron roof over a green concrete slab which incorporates a raised dais at one end. The building has been partially demolished and has lost external wall sheeting. Immediately east of the former Catholic Church is the Detention Centre (No. 30). This building comprises a central core structure constructed of concrete blocks, a corrugated iron roof with verandahs enclosed with steel mesh. The building is overgrown and in poor condition.

The former Protestant Church (No. 16) is located on the southern side of the settlement area, to the east of the entrance road and virtually parallel to the

caretaker's accommodation. This structure is substantially intact and comprises a timber-framed structure constructed on a concrete floor slab. The building is clad externally with horizontal panels of corrugated galvanised iron to the walls and vertical panels of corrugated galvanised iron to the steeply pitched gabled roof. The building has an arched door opening and is in fair condition.

The central portion of the settlement area comprises the hospital treatment, school, and services buildings. All the buildings in this area are of comparatively recent origin, probably constructed during the 1960s and 70s. These buildings are generally deteriorating due to lack of maintenance and use.

To the south of the Detention Centre is the Treatment Block (No. 5). This is the only structure extant of the hospital buildings believed to have been constructed in the 1970s. It is a large steel framed rectangular structure with walls clad externally and internally with flat asbestos cement sheets. The roof is flat metal decking concealed behind deep fascias. There are wide timber verandahs around the sides of the building. Internally the building contains treatment rooms which retain some original medical fittings. There are two classrooms located in the area generally south of the Treatment Block (Nos 48 and 2). These are of similar construction to the other buildings on the site and feature steel frames and flat asbestos sheet cladding, one has a deep fascias concealing the metal roof, the other has a low pitched metal roof.

To the south of the classroom buildings is a gravel road which runs east west across the settlement area from a point more or less parallel to the original Superintendent's Quarters (No. 44). On the southern side of the road opposite the classroom buildings is the Mechanical Store (No. 14) and an accommodation building similar to the one located in the area to the west of the entrance road (No. 38). The Mechanical Store is steel framed with a corrugated iron gabled roof over a concrete slab. Three external walls of the building are clad in corrugated iron sheets and the fourth is open with steel mesh gates. The building is in generally fair to good condition.

At the end of the roadway is a group of structures comprising the Butchers Store, Cool Room and Tank Stand (Nos 41, 12 and 15). The Tank Stand is a large steel framed structure that supports two large water tanks. Adjacent are the Cool Room, a timber framed structure with corrugated iron walls and hipped corrugated iron roof containing the former cool rooms, and a flat asbestos cement sheet clad building with a concrete floor and metal deck roof and deep fascia which was previously a store. Both buildings have been recently painted dark green but are not in use and are in fair condition.

Further to the east of the settlement area is a group of buildings comprising the Kitchen, Dining Room and two stores buildings (Nos 10, 11, 34 and 37). The Kitchen is constructed of concrete blocks with a low pitched corrugated iron roof and steel framed windows whilst the Dining Room is constructed on flat asbestos cement sheets on a steel frame with a metal deck roof and deep fascias. Both are in fair to good condition and are used as part of the Multi-Function Centre. The two stores buildings are long rectangular steel framed structures with flat asbestos cement cladding, metal deck low pitched roofs and deep fascias. These buildings appear to be currently unused.

The gravel road continues to the south of the kitchen group past the Power Shed (No. 23) which is the eastern most structure extant on the site. The Power Shed is a low concrete block structure with a low pitched metal deck roof. It is located inside a fenced enclosure which is overgrown with grass.

To the south of the Power Shed and gravel road, on the south-eastern corner of the settlement area is a residential building (No.19) which previously housed Leprosarium patients. This building is not one of the original shelters but probably dates from the 1960s or 70s. The building comprises two rectangular wings which were originally joined by an ablutions block which has been removed. The blocks each contain six rooms which open onto a common verandah. They are steel-framed structures with flat sheet asbestos cement cladding and single pitched corrugated asbestos roofs. They are painted pink, which may indicate use for female accommodation.

At the eastern side of the settlement is an area of open ground which was the location of shelters that originally housed the Leprosarium patients. The male shelters were located to the north and the female shelters to the south. The shelters are shown on early photographs and drawings to be individual corrugated iron structures. These are no longer extant, however open areas represent their original location.

The road past the Power Shed continues east from the settlement area and enters an area of dense vegetation on the far side of the site of the former residential shelters. This track leads to the Leprosarium Graveyard. The Graveyard is fenced and comprises regular rows of graves marked by white timber crosses set in a grassed area surrounded by trees and indigenous vegetation. The Graveyard is regularly maintained and in good order. Some families have recently erected more elaborate graves to individual former residents.

Generally *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby* site is in fair to good condition. The grounds in the area to the west of the entrance road are well maintained and the recently established gardens are an attractive component of the new Multi-Function Centre. The area to the east of the entrance road comprises grass, scrub and pindan. The area is generally well maintained as are gravel roadways which have been resurfaced. The buildings that are in use are generally in very good condition. Other buildings range from fair to poor condition. Most are capable of conservation if considered desirable. The former patient accommodation block is in poor condition.

13. 3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Channel Island, off Darwin, served as a leprosarium between 1931 and 1955. This function and the island's graveyard give the place cultural heritage values comparable to those identified for *Bungarun (Leprosarium), Derby*.

13. 4 REFERENCES

No key references.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further documentary research is required to determine when the more recent buildings on the site were constructed and whether they have been relocated on the site. Also to determine whether the Tank Stand, Cool Room, Kitchen, Dining Room and Laundry retain elements of construction from the 1930s, 1940s or 1950s. This information is not considered likely to impact on the assessed significance of the place however.