



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

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

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.3 Surveying the continent and assessing its potential
- 3.5 Developing primary production
- 4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development settlements, towns and cities

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 203 Road Transport
- 204 Droving
- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 602 Early settlers

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Spanning the watercourse at Gingin Brook, Junction Bridge has aesthetic value as an element in the rural landscape at Neergabby. This is particularly so when viewed together with *Junction Hotel (fmr)*. (Criterion 1.3)

The sandplain vegetation that obscures much of *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1* contributes to its natural aesthetic characteristics. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1 is significant for its role in opening up and sustaining the development of the (nearer) northern districts for

* 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.

pastoralism from the 1850s after available land in the immediate vicinity of Perth was taken up and used. (Criterion 2.1)

North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1 formed part of the main road for travellers, mail carriers and drovers with livestock, often in mobs of thousands, between Perth and Dongara before the Midland Railway reached Walkaway in 1894. The soak at the Boongarra reserve and Junction Bridge at Neergabby are important physical reminders of the resting places, water supplies and stock yards provided for drovers and travellers who undertook this journey. (Criterion 2.2)

The formal establishment of the North West Stock Route in 1889 (following the route of the North Road which was gazetted in 1862) is indicative of the numbers and importance of stock being driven either between stations or to markets and of the value of this livestock to the Western Australia economy. (Criterion 2.2)

Walter Padbury was particularly instrumental in lobbying the Government for and making personal contributions towards the development of amenities on *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1*, including Junction Bridge and stockyards at Boongarra and Neergabby. Padbury was personally responsible for establishing the route of *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1*. (Criterion 1.3)

North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1 is a physical reminder of the incredible difficulties encountered in droving stock through virgin bush over long distances in the nineteenth century. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1 has the potential to yield archaeological information about those who travelled it between the 1850s and the 1890s, despite being heavily overgrown, and facilitates the study of the natural vegetation along the route. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The value of the former North West Stock Route (including Stage 1) to the community was demonstrated in 1988 by a reenactment during the bicentennial celebrations. This reenactment served as a reminder of the conditions endured by stockmen travelling the route in the mid to late 1800s. (Criterion 4.1)

North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1 is valued by the local community of Gingin and Neergabby as a reminder of the pastoral development of areas north of Perth. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Notwithstanding repairs and maintenance over the years, Junction Bridge is one of the oldest timber bridges in Western Australia. It was constructed in 1863. (Criterion 5.1)

The specialised land use and function of *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1* for the movement of stock, together with the custom of droving, are no longer practiced. (Criterion 5.2)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1 is representative of the many stock routes (formal and informal) throughout Western Australia that developed as new areas were opened up for pastoralism and were maintained by the movement of people, livestock and goods between stations and areas of closer settlement. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

While there are few visible remnants of the time when this strip of land was used as a road and a stock route, the native vegetation along its course remains in good condition except where it has been replaced by pine plantations. The soak at Boongarra is also in good condition. Junction Bridge over Gingin Brook is in poor condition. Overall, despite being overtaken by alternative land uses, *North West Stock Route (fmr), Stage 1* is in a sound condition.

12.4 INTEGRITY

North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1 has not been used for its original purpose on any large scale since the 1890s. Nevertheless, parts of the route are still discernable, giving the place a moderate degree of integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Although *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1* has not been used for its original purpose since the 1890s, has since reverted to crown land, and has been planted with pines or subdivided into farming land, parts of the route are still discernible and much is physically unchanged. As such, the place has a moderate degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Jacqui Sherriff, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by HCWA staff (Ian Elliot).

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The North West Stock Route extended from Star Swamp, Waterman, in the south to Walkaway in the north, with a 5,000 acre reserve at Sorrento as the southern starting point. Although in use from the early 1850s, the North West Stock Route was not formally gazetted until 1889, and with only minor variations followed the line of the former North Road between Perth and Champion Bay (Geraldton), which was established in 1862. This assessment (Stage 1) covers a small portion of the North West Stock Route, a stretch of approximately 28 kilometres between Yanchep and Neergabby at the junction of the Moore River and Gingin Brook.

The first Europeans to travel from the Greenough Flats and Champion Bay (now Geraldton) region to the Swan River were a group of 12 shipwrecked explorers who walked the 300 miles (480 kilometres) in early 1839 under very difficult circumstances. Led by Lieutenant George Grey, the expedition was encouraged by the Royal Geographical Society to study Aboriginal culture, as well as the fauna, flora and geology between Perth and Shark Bay. After being dropped on Bernier Island north of Shark Bay on 25 February, the expedition gradually lost all of its boats and most of the supplies and equipment.¹ Grey named the area after the young Queen Victoria and wrote in his diary 'It seemed certain...that we stood in the richest province of South-west Australia'.²

Despite the hardships of the trek south with no supplies and it being the end of a hot summer (with a drought the previous winter), Grey remained enthusiastic about the land they travelled through:

I pictured to myself the bleating sheep and lowing herds, wandering over those fertile hills...Mr Smith entered eagerly into my thoughts and views: Together we built castles in the air, trusting we should all see happy results from our present sufferings and labour.³

After his return to Perth on 21 April, Grey reported that the Province of Victoria had exciting possibilities and that there was some 'rough and inhospitable country in between'.⁴ Further explorations of the Victoria district followed, primarily at the urging of the York Agricultural Society, which was alarmed at the implications of the over-stocking of Avon Valley runs. By the end of 1847, seven expeditions and two official surveys had been made to the north of the

1 W. J. de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, Western Australian Experience Series, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1986, p. 1.

2 *ibid.*, p. 2, citing George Grey, *Journals of two expeditions of discovery in North West and Western Australia*, T W Boone, London, 1841.

3 *ibid.* Frederick Smith was a graphic artist and the only one of the party to die on the walk to Perth.

4 *ibid.*, pp. 6-7. The route taken by Grey and marked on cartographer John Arrowsmith's 1841 map of South-west Australia was to become, with only minor alteration, the road between Perth and Champion Bay.

Irwin River and three (including George Grey's) southward. All agreed that the Victoria district had favourable pastoral potential.⁵

In September 1848, Assistant Surveyor Augustus Gregory, led a 'Settlers Expedition' as far north as the Murchison River with the primary goal of finding new grazing pasture. Accompanied by three experienced graziers, Lockier Burgess, J. Walcott and Augustus Bedart, the expedition was successful and on return to Perth, Gregory gave the Avon Valley graziers the news they were hoping for – that there was good grassy land in the vicinity of Champion Bay and the Irwin River.⁶

Gregory's party also found galena deposits at the Murchison River and it was the exploitation of this mineral that led to a more defined and permanent track north of Perth and over the Moore River to Champion Bay. Several prominent Perth businessmen formed a private company to mine the galena, and by November 1849 all was in place to establish a military depot at Champion Bay. While 46 tons of equipment was sent north on the government schooner, *Champion*, another party led by Augustus Gregory travelled overland with men, horses and carts. E. G. Hester was the first of the party to return overland to Perth. The route he took south from Gingin Brook to Wanneroo approximated very closely the later official road and stock route.⁷

Horse breeding was the second industry instrumental in opening up the Victoria district, with several horse breeding stations established on the Greenough and Irwin rivers in the early 1850s. By 1858, horses were second to wool as the major colonial export.⁸

At the same time, Avon Valley graziers continued to push the government to open up lands in the north for pastoralism. There was a great deal of discussion regarding proposals to improve land regulations during 1849 and while the Governor was awaiting approval for changes from London, the colonial government called for expressions of interest for 'Depasturing Licences in the newly settled districts of the Bowes, Murchison and Irwin River'. Temporary licences were issued in September 1850. Approval for new land regulations arrived the following December. From January 1851, large areas to the north of Perth were opened up for settlement, with one of the first leases (Swan Lease 89) issued to Gerald de Courcey Lefroy.⁹

Shortly after the temporary licences were issued, four thousand sheep and 350 head of cattle were assembled in the York and Toodyay districts. They left for the northern districts in September 1850 with two experienced guides made available by the Government. Assistant Surveyors Augustus and

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 8-11.

⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 11-14. Augustus Gregory had been involved in several of the previous expeditions to the Victoria district.

⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 17-27.

⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 29-33.

⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 44-46; W. J. de Burgh, *Neergabby: A History of the Moore River and Lower Gingin Brook 1830 to 1860*, Shire of Gingin, 1976, pp. 24-25.

Henry Gregory were to 'assist the drovers in locating water and camping spots and to guide them, wherever possible, past patches of poison'.¹⁰

The route taken by the Gregory brothers soon became well known and frequently used as pastoralists sent livestock north to stock their new runs, and to replace stock sent south to the markets at Perth, Guildford and Fremantle.¹¹

Although many people were involved in the development of the road north to Geraldton (and what was to become the North West Stock Route), one name stands out in particular. Walter Padbury, who arrived in Western Australia in 1830 aged 12 and was soon orphaned and left to fend for himself, was very influential in its development. After an early career as a shepherd, drover and livestock dealer, in 1844 Padbury established a home and slaughtering works on the west side of Herdsman's Lake (known as Limekilns Estate¹²) and a butcher's shop and general store in Perth. By 1869, when the Estate was sold to Henry and Somers Birch, it had a slaughterhouse, boiling down works and tannery.¹³

Padbury also secured land in the newly opened northern districts in 1851 for himself and purchased stock fattened on the other stations for his butchering business.¹⁴ In 1854, he selected leases at Boongarra and the Junction (Neergabby) where he built substantial stock yards. While he obviously had a vested interest in the development of the road (not wanting stock to lose condition on the journey south to his slaughterhouse at the Limekilns), he was also concerned with the welfare of others. In January 1855, he wrote to the Government:

It being of great inconvenience and much importance to the squatters north of Perth on the Moore River and in its vicinity that a straight line of road should be marked between Perth and that locality so as to enable them to reach Perth with their stock direct instead of driving them...round by the Swan along a road deeply flooded during the winter season[.] I undertake to mark a straight line between Perth and the junction of the Gingin Brook with the Moore River for a sum not exceeding £6.0.0 finding a bullock team to enable the work to be performed without any cost to the Government.¹⁵

The proposal received immediate approval and the line of the road was marked with blazed trees within a few months.¹⁶

Major Logue provided the first detailed description of droving south on what was to become the North West Stock Route. On 1 September 1855, Logue, Julius de Borlay and their stockmen left Ellendale (north-east of Walkaway) with cattle for Perth and joined up with a mob of Padbury's cattle at Cowalla.

¹⁰ de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., p. 47.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 59.

¹² Limekilns Estate comprised Perthshire Locations Am, Al and Ak, totalling 1,234 acres. The name was derived from the previous owner of Al, Henry Trigg, who had established a quarry and limeburning works there. (de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., p. 71).

¹³ de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

¹⁴ Padbury's northern interests included Cockleshell Gully and Yatheroo.

¹⁵ de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., p. 74, citing C.S.O. correspondence dated 8 & 19 January 1885.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

On reaching the Junction of the Gingin Brook (Neergabby), the cattle were drafted and from here, were driven in separate mobs, with Padbury's taking the lead. They followed the line of blazed trees without difficulty, and there was plenty of feed and water at Boongarra, where they camped the night. They began to run into other people's cattle coming the other way south of Yanchep Lake. They arrived at Padbury's paddock at the Limekilns on 20 September, 21 days after leaving Ellendale. The main problem for Logue and his men was cattle breaking away at night. Four bullocks were lost on the way and one lame bullock and calf had to be left behind. No stock was lost to poison, a hazard on much of the road north of Neergabby.¹⁷

Padbury again petitioned the Government for improved facilities for the northern stock runs in May 1859, this time in association with Robert de Burgh of Cowalla Station:

It being very desirable that there should be a straight line of communication between Perth and Champion Bay and more particularly to parties interested in driving stock. Mr. R. Shaw of the Moore River had made an offer to construct a good bridge over the Gingin Brook...close to its junction with the Moore River and to make a line from thence to Munbenia on the lower part of the Hill River, a distance of about 50 miles...¹⁸

Surveyor General Roe agreed to the proposal. The trail was blazed north to Hill River, but the bridge was not built. ¹⁹

Commonly known as the North Road, the Perth to Champion Bay Road was formally gazetted in May 1862 and followed the line blazed by Padbury as far as Neergabby in 1855 and the 1859 extension to Hill River:

It is hereby notified for general information that it is the intention of the Government to survey and lay out, as soon as convenient, a line of road between Perth and Champion Bay, with a view to the same being cleared and opened up for use as a public line of communication...The intended road will be one chain wide, and will pass as near as may be found convenient along the tracks at present in use from Perth by the eastern side of Three island Lake, and of the Lakes Goollelal and Joondalup, through the western parts of locations 105, 111, at lake Nowergup, and 113, by the western sides of Lakes Yoonderup, Nambibby and Yanchep, thence to Lake Boongarrup, and to a projected new bridge over Gingin Book, a little above its junction with Moore River. The road will then extend about 25 miles in a northerly direction, crossing the Moore between locations 136, and 333, and crossing the Smith River about 42 miles further N. by W., near the east boundary of Mr. R. Brockman's lease 588, where a tuart tree is marked with the letter B. Thence it will nearly follow the present track to Champion Bay.

A branch from the above road will ascend the right bank of Moore River from the crossing above-mentioned, to location 171, and thence take a northerly direction through the public reserves at Yatheroo and Dandaraga, and onwards to the Bay.

Parties are warned against fencing across or otherwise obstructing these lines.²⁰

The road became the mainstay for the coastal areas between Perth and Dongara and was used by increasing numbers of travellers and drovers of livestock.²¹ Camels came later (from 1887) when trains of 50 or more

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 67.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 77, citing C.S.O. correspondence dated 2 May 1859.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *Government Gazette*, 20 May 1862, p. 86. (Notification dated 13 May 1862).

²¹ de Burgh, *Neergabby...*, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

would cart water north to the Murchison Goldfields.²² In 1863, a new Government road was surveyed and laid out from Ellen's Brook through Gingin to the Moore River, forming a crossroads with the North Road at Neergabby.

The proposed bridge over Gingin Brook was not built before the severe floods of the 1862 winter. Annoyed by the inconvenience of long waits at the Brook in times of flood, travellers and stockowners put increasing pressure on the government to rectify the situation.²³ Again, Padbury and de Burgh were instrumental in progressing the situation, collecting £32 in subscriptions for the construction of a bridge over the Gingin Brook at Neergabby. Padbury forwarded to the Government a quote for £65 provided by R. Cousins. The Government agreed to make up the difference 'having perfect confidence that you [Padbury] will see the work is properly performed'.²⁴ As the bridge had to be lengthened to 100 feet (the original quote was for a bridge 75 feet long), Cousins' final account was for £108.8.0. By this time, subscriptions amounted to £51.5.0 and again, the Government agreed to pay the difference. The work was undertaken in early 1863.²⁵

A number of reserves were gazetted along the road for 'water and stopping places for teams'. Two reserves were established between Yanchep and Neergabby, one at Yanchep Lake (Reserve 1228) and the other at Boongarra (Reserve 911). The reserve at Boongarra was surveyed in 1867 by Surveyor J Cowle.²⁶ As with several others, a stockyard and timbered well were established at Boongarra.²⁷

By the late 1880s, thousands of stock and many travellers used the North Road. In 1889, the North West Stock Route was formally established, with the reservation of land for the convenience of travelling stock and their drovers. A strip of land 40 chains wide, starting from Dongara and following the coast road towards Perth' was set aside as a 'Stock Route and Commonage for travellers and stock'. This half-mile stock route ended in a 5,000-acre reserve at Sorrento and North Beach, and included Star Swamp, with tracks leading to Subiaco railway station, North Fremantle and W.

22 de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., p. 35.

23 de Burgh, *Neergabby...*, op. cit., p. 46.

24 de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, p. 78.

25 *ibid.*, p. 78, citing C.S.O. correspondence dated 13 & 21 April 1863. The names of some of those who donated towards the cost of the bridge give an indication of the owners of stations between Perth and Geraldton: Hamersley and Co., M. Morrisey, W. Padbury, M. Logue, K., A., & M. Brown, T. & L. Burges, J. Drummond, R. de Burgh and G. Shenton.

26 Field Book 2, p. 30. Information from Geographic Names (DOLA) suggests that Boongarra may be the locality mentioned in George Grey's 1839 journals as 'Boongarrup'. (G Grey, *Expeditions in Western Australia*, Volume 2, p. 347.)

27 For a full list of watering holes and wells associated with the North West Stock Route, see Mary Connor & Martin Gibbs, 'Historic Watering Holes Survey: The Old North Road - Wanneroo to Walkaway coastal stock route, Western Australia', prepared for the National Trust of Australia (WA), April 1994.

Osbourne's butchering works at Osborne Park. With only minor variations, the Stock Route followed the line of the 1862 road.²⁸

By this time, Daniel King's Junction Hotel (established 1874) near Junction Bridge at Neergabby was flourishing. There was a racetrack and cricket pitch, as well as accommodation for travellers and a large reserve for stock.²⁹ With heavy horse and cart traffic, frequent repairs were made to Junction Bridge which were 'often carried out jointly by the Swan Road Board and Walter Padbury'.³⁰

In addition to travellers and drovers, the North West Stock route was also used by the overland mail service to Champion Bay and kangaroo hunting parties who camped at the swamps and waterholes along the way.³¹

In 1902, the Government was requested to repair the well at Boongarra, but refused on the grounds that there was insufficient traffic on the stock route and that there were alternative wells available to travellers and drovers.³²

The Midland Railway had a significant impact on the volume of traffic on the North West Stock Route, even before the line was completed. When the Midland Railway Act was passed in 1886, it allowed for the developers to receive 12,000 acres of land for every mile of land constructed and the Midland Railway Company selected all unalienated land along both sides of Gingin Brook and the lower Moore River. Leases outside this area were either forfeited or rendered useless through lack of access to the River or Brook and the shepharding of stock from other areas ceased.³³

The Railway reached Gingin in April 1891 and Walkaway in November 1894, and even though it was several miles east of the North West Stock Route it had an immediate effect on the volume of traffic on the North West Stock Route. Patterns of communication changed to east-west instead of north-south travel, as the train was used (for people, goods and livestock) for at least part of the journey.³⁴

Probably the last person to ride *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1* regularly on horseback was Bob Spiers, Mary Lindsay's station manager in the 1920s. Mrs. Lindsay held a vast tract of land adjoining the Stock Route at Yanchep, extending west to the sea and north to Jurien Bay. Prior to World War Two, summer holiday makers also used the Stock Route during the summer months, as favourite camping spots at the many protected bays between Yanchep and Dongara were accessed by bush tracks from the old Stock Route.³⁵

²⁸ de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., p. 84.

²⁹ de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., p. 86. The Junction Hotel was the only wayside inn between the Balcatta Hotel (opposite the Star Swamp Reserve) and an inn at Allanooka, 160 miles north of Neergabby.

³⁰ de Burgh, *Neergabby...*, op. cit., p. 62.

³¹ *ibid.*, p. 109; de Burgh, *Neerbabby...*, op. cit., p. 47.

³² de Burgh, *Neergabby...*, op. cit., p. 108.

³³ *ibid.*, pp. 90-91; de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., p. 160-162.

³⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 90-91; de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., p. 160-162.

³⁵ de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, op. cit., p. 154.

Regular use of the North West Stock Route was briefly revived in 1942 when it was the only road available to the Army for movement up and down the coast. It was used until Army engineers cleared their own tracks in more strategic places.³⁶ Even after the War, sections of the Stock Route were used by kangaroo hunters, apiarists, dingo trappers and holiday makers until 'a network of better roads to the new farms and coastal towns gradually superseded it'. In 2002, the bitumen Brand Highway is never far from the North West Stock Route, which has been disguised nearly everywhere by native scrub, pine plantations and farms.

As part of the bicentennial celebrations in 1988, a group of stockmen reenacted the movement of stock on the North West Stock Route (from Geraldton to Wanneroo).³⁷

In the 1998 Large Timber Structures study, Junction Bridge was identified as having the 'oldest surviving timber bridge piers known in Western Australia' and was recommended as warranting further assessment for heritage listing.³⁸ *Junction Hotel (fmr)* (north of the Bridge and immediately adjacent to the study area of this assessment) was included in the State Register of Heritage Places in 2000.³⁹ *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1* has been nominated for the 2002 review of the Shire of Gingin Municipal Heritage Inventory.⁴⁰

Residents of Gingin/Neergabby have formulated a proposed bridle/walk trail following the route of *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1* through Yanchep National Park to Neergabby. This proposal is currently under consideration by land owners and stakeholders.⁴¹

Western Power plan to commence the construction of a transmission line supported by poles and towers from its gas turbine generating station at Pinjar to a substation at Cataby in July 2002. This is the first stage of a transmission system development in the Great Northern Region of Western Australia. As part of the planning process, Western Power undertook consultation with affected stakeholders and commissioned environmental and social impact studies.⁴²

The transmission line comes into contact with *North West Stock Route (fmr), Stage 1* in two places: between Hombracht and Walbing roads (where Wanneroo Road crosses the former stock route); and, at Gingin Stock Route Nature Reserve (Reserve 34761; Conservation of Flora and Fauna).

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 162.

³⁷ HCWA file P15873.

³⁸ Institution of Engineers WA Division, 'Large Timber Structures in Western Australia', Volume 2, Section 1, 1998, p. 1334.

³⁹ Heritage Council of Western Australia, 'Register of Heritage Places: Permanent Entry – Junction Hotel (fmr)', November 2000. See also Ronald Bodycoat Architect, 'The Old Junction Hotel, Gingin – Conservation Plan', prepared for the Shire of Gingin, December 1999.

⁴⁰ HCWA file P15873.

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² Western Power, 'Proposed Pinjar to Cataby Transmission Line: Public Environmental Review', Volume 1, June 2001, p. 1; Correspondence from Western Power to HCWA, 20 May 2002, HCWA File P15873. See also John Cleary Planning, 'Pinjar to Cataby: Proposed Transmission Line Landscape Study', prepared for Western Power, May 2001.

Western Power plan to minimise the impact on Gingin Stock Route Nature Reserve, a long, narrow reserve encompassing a section of *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1*:

Wherever possible the proposed transmission line has been aligned within adjacent private property rather than within the Gingin Stock Route Nature Reserve. However, due to land use activities adjacent to the Reserve, i.e. intensive agriculture employing pivot irrigation systems to the west and an orchard and wildflower farm to the east of the Reserve, it will be necessary in some sections of the Reserve to locate the transmission line in the Reserve. Where this does occur the transmission structures have been located wherever possible within cleared or degraded areas.⁴³

Other methods to minimise impact include using existing access tracks. Fifteen transmission structures have been planned within or alongside the Nature Reserve – seven poles (northern end of Reserve; five in Reserve; two alongside Reserve on private property) and eight towers (five in Reserve; two alongside Reserve on private property). The decision to use poles at the northern end (rather than towers) was based on a recommendation from John Cleary Planning that low profile structures be used to minimise visual impact.⁴⁴ This heritage assessment was commissioned by Western Power in May 2002 to document and identify the cultural heritage values associated with *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1*.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

North West Stock Route (fmr), Stage 1 comprises part of the southern portion of a former stock route reserve that once ran from Star Swamp, Waterman, to Walkaway following the general route of the 'Old North Road'. The section assessed herein as Stage 1 extends generally northwards for a distance of approximately 28 kilometres from Yanchep National Park, 50 kilometres north of Perth, to *Junction Hotel (fmr)* (P1080) at Neergabby near the junction of the Moore River and Gingin Brook. The width of the former reserve was generally 804.8 metres (40 chains or half a mile) for most of its length with occasional small variations where other cadastral boundaries intruded. The northern five kilometres of Stage 1 narrows to a width of 100.6 metres (5 chains). Besides the *Junction Hotel (fmr)*, a registered place, physical elements associated with the 'Old North Road' and the former stock route that are still extant on Stage 1 include an excavated soak at Boongarra and Junction Bridge, a timber bridge over Gingin Brook. Despite now passing through native bush and pine plantations, the route of *North West Stock Route (fmr) Stage 1* can be identified and followed for much of the distance between Yanchep and Neergabby.

Northwards from Yanchep Beach Road for about 10 kilometres, the section of former stock route under examination can be approximated by Ghost House Road, a restricted entry management track on the western side of Loch McNess within Yanchep National Park (not visited), then Bindiar Rd through to Boongarra. A major thoroughfare, Breakwater Drive, is crossed

⁴³ Correspondence from Western Power to HCWA, 20 May 2002, HCWA File P15873.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

prior to reaching Boongarra. Within the National Park, native sand plain vegetation predominates, principally Banksia, Hakea, Xanthorhea, Zamia, Smokebush, Feather Flowers, Kangaroo Paws and eucalypts such as Marri and Tuart. Beyond the park boundaries, much of the native vegetation has been replaced by pine plantations, generally *Pinus radiata*.

At Boongarra on Smokebush Road, a rectangular soakage (about 8 metres by 5 metres) has been excavated to a depth of about 3 metres. The excavated earth is held back by large logs and bullrushes are growing in the water. No stockyard remnants were observed here during the site visit.

Northwards of Boongarra for a further 13 kilometres, the former stock route can be approximated in part by following a combination of sand tracks and firebreaks through State Forest No. 65 to the southern boundary of Reserve 34761. The former reserve crosses Wanneroo Road on this stretch. Once again, the vegetation alternates between natural bush and pine plantations.

The next 3.5 kilometres is Reserve 34761, the Gingin Stock Route Nature Reserve, a 100 metre wide strip of natural sand plain vegetation that replicates the exact boundaries of the former stock route.

The final 1.5 kilometres is partly cut up by semi-rural subdivisions but can be followed via Chitna and Gingin Brook roads. Close to the end of this section, the original road bridge across Gingin Brook, Junction Bridge, (now unused) is situated a short distance upstream of its replacement. This old bridge is on a direct line to one of the major stopping places on the route, *Junction Hotel (fmr)*. The 3.2 metre wide timber bridge runs between earthen abutments lined with stone to prevent erosion. Over the watercourse, the 20 metre, six span structure is supported by five sets of three piles strengthened with cross bracing. The roadway across the bridge is flanked by timber balustrading. The bridge is in poor condition. The southern piles appear to have rotted and are partially collapsed, leaving that end of the bridge sagging and unstable.

Along the course of Stage 1, apart from Boongarra, Junction Bridge, and *Junction Hotel (fmr)*, there are few visible remnants associated with the former stock route, nor is its original use as the 'Old North Road' apparent. Nevertheless, the greater part of Stage 1 of the route remains in its natural state, much as it would have been when it was used for droving stock.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

As new areas of Western Australia were opened up for grazing, stock routes were established to facilitate the transport of livestock, goods and people, particularly before the introduction of railway network, better roads and road trains.

Perhaps the two stock routes that provide the best comparison for the North West Stock Route, in terms of scale and longevity, are the Canning Stock Route and the DeGrey-Mullewa Stock Route.

The Canning Stock Route extends from Wiluna to Halls Creek and was surveyed in 1906/7 by A. W. Canning. Used mainly by cattle drovers, there were approximately 50 wells along the route, many of which are still extant.

Canning Stock Route was created as a temporary reserve in 1906 and was not ever made permanent. Canning Stock Route was last used in 1958 and is now a heritage trail.⁴⁵

The DeGrey-Mullewa Stock Route was established in the 1870s, which as the name suggests extended from Mullewa through the north west to the De Grey River. A number of wells were established along the Route, many of which are still extant.⁴⁶

A number of minor stock routes have also been identified by Municipal Heritage Inventories. These include Hassell's Stock Route (Shire of Tambellup), the stock route from Yerecoin to Wedge Island (Shire of Victoria Plains), Pauley Stock Route (Shire of Wickepin) and a number of stock routes in the Shire of Wickepin.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

W. J. de Burgh, *The Old North Road*, Western Australian Experience Series, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1986.

John Cleary Planning, 'Pinjar to Cataby: Proposed Transmission Line Landscape Study', prepared for Western Power, May 2001.

Western Power, 'Proposed Pinjar to Cataby Transmission Line: Public Environmental Review', Volume 1 & 2, June 2001.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

An assessment of the entire stock route from Wanneroo to Walkaway should be undertaken as Stage 2. This assessment will require expanded documentary evidence and physical descriptions of the remainder of the route.

⁴⁵ Tanya Suba, 'Shire of Wiluna Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places', prepared for the Shire of Wiluna, 1995; R. & E. Gard, *Canning Stock Route: A Traveller's Guide*, 2nd

⁴⁶ Whelans Consultants, 'Shire of Mullewa Municipal Inventory', prepared for the Shire of Mullewa, 1996.