



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES – ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION**

### **11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

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

#### **PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)**

- 4.1.2 Making Suburbs
- 3.10.2 Encouraging women into employment
- 3.22 Lodging people
- 5.6 Working in the home

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

- 107 Settlements
- 406 Religion

#### **11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\***

*Tower House, Northbridge* is a good example of an intact, purpose built, substantial, two storey boarding house designed in the Victorian Italianate architectural style. (Criterion 1.1)

*Tower House, Northbridge* is a prominent landmark contributing to the picturesque setting of Francis Street and Russell Square. (Criterion 1.3)

The height of the building and its decorative tower can be clearly viewed from different vantage points in Russell Square. (Criterion 1.3)

#### **11.2 HISTORIC VALUE**

*Tower House, Northbridge* represents the development of substantial buildings north of the City, as a result of the 1890s gold boom. (Criterion 2.1)

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

*Tower House, Northbridge* is a good intact example of a substantial purpose built, boarding house, which operated from 1898 to the 1930s, and demonstrates the type of commercial venture or small business operation which was considered acceptable to single or widowed women in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. (Criterion 2.2)

*Tower House, Northbridge* is closely associated with the Greek Orthodox community and the congregation of the Church of Saints Constantine and Helene. From 1952 to 1985 it was used as a Rectory and was briefly used in the 1960s as a Greek School. The place is currently owned by the Hellenic Community of Western Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

### **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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### **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Tower House, Northbridge* is valued by the Greek community and the congregation of the Church of Saints Constantine and Helene, as it was purchased by the congregation, and used by them for various purposes from 1952 to the present day (2006). (Criterion 4.1)

*Tower House, Northbridge* contributes to the community's sense of place as a reminder of the early history of the area and for its role in the Hellenic community from 1952 to the present day (2006). (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

*Tower House, Northbridge* is a rare and excellent example of a two storey, Victorian Italianate designed boarding house. It is also rare as an ornate and finely detailed boarding house in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.1 and 5.2)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Tower House, Northbridge* is an unusual example of a boarding house as most were single storey and simple in design. It is an ornate and substantial two-storey boarding house and residence constructed in the Victorian Italianate style. (Criterion 6.1)

### **12. 3 CONDITION**

*Tower House, Northbridge* is in good condition. Externally, exposure to the elements has resulted in water ingress, and cracking to the timber joinery, however, the place has been subject to continued maintenance, and in 2001 internal renovations were carried out. In 2004-05 the City of Perth funded urgent conservation and restoration works on the place.

### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

*Tower House, Northbridge* has a moderate degree of integrity. The place was originally purpose built as a boarding house and operated as one until it was bought by the Hellenic community in the 1950s. Since then it was used as a Rectory and then a Greek School. It was later used as a restaurant and in 2001, the place was renovated and is now (2006) used as offices.

## **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Tower House, Northbridge* has a moderate degree of authenticity. Some alterations have occurred such as the removal of the verandah, enclosure of the rear verandah, and a double storey addition where the bathroom is located. Some other minor interior alterations have occurred such as the creation of doorways, closing fireplaces, installation of plasterboard ceilings and cornices to some rooms.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

This document is based on 'Tower House 115 Francis Street, Northbridge Conservation Plan' prepared by Palassis Architects, 2005; with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to the 'Tower House 115 Francis Street, Northbridge Conservation Plan' (pp 11 – 19), prepared by Palassis Architects, 2005.

#### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to the 'Tower House 115 Francis Street, Northbridge Conservation Plan' (pp 4 - 8), prepared by Palassis Architects, 2005.

#### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The Heritage Council's database does not provide for a specific 'boarding house' search however there are 41 places with 'boarding' in the name of the place, of which only one is on the Register of Heritage Places. (P2921) *Boarding House (fmr), Bunbury* 1890, which was purpose built as a boarding house in 1890. This place is not directly comparative to *Tower House, Northbridge* because it is a structure of three, semi-detached single storey terraces. Of the 41 boarding houses in the database none are in the Current Assessment Programme.

Of comparison in design are other two storey residences within the HCWA database. There are 71 two storey residences on the Register of Heritage Places, of which only three were designed in the Victorian Italianate style. (P003) *Albany Club, Albany* 1886, is a more simple expression of the Victorian Italianate design and has no tower. It was purpose built as a private residence and subsequently became a Men's Club. Of greater similarity is (P1035) *Hillcrest, North Fremantle* built in 1901, which is a two storey building with a tower and decorative elements. It was built as a private residence and was subsequently used as a hospital and aged care facility. (P3694) *Penshurst, East Fremantle*, 1897 was constructed as a private residence and continues to be used for that function. It is constructed of stone and its facade is dominated by two storey verandahs.

There are 26 two storey residences in the Current Assessment Program, of which only one was designed in the Victorian Italianate architectural style; (P1355) *Kobeelya (fmr), Katanning* built in 1902 has similar design and decorative features to *Tower House, Northbridge* although it was purpose built as a private residence it was subsequently used as a boarding house for girls. (P16174) *Joseph Chester's cottage, Perth* has some comparison to *Tower House, Northbridge* as it is a cottage which has a two storey addition constructed in 1929 which was purpose built as a boarding house. The style and age of this boarding house is not comparable but there are few purpose built two storey boarding houses in the database.

*Tower House, Northbridge* is rare in Western Australia as a two storey, purpose built boarding house, in the Victorian Italianate style.

#### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

Palassis Architects, 2005. Tower House, 115 Francis Street, Northbridge Conservation Plan. Prepared for the Hellenic Community of Western Australia Inc.

#### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

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