



# REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

## 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Although the individual components of *Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* may not, in isolation, have a high degree of significance, the components, in forming the camp, are important to the overall significance of the place. (Criterion 1.4)

### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* has a close association with the military history of Australia, and with Western Australia in particular. (Criterion 2.1)

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp*, spread over an area of approximately 18 hectares and, at its peak, capable of housing 600 German and Italian POWs in Livingston (timber) huts, is representative of the Australian Government's compliance with the requirements of the Geneva Convention in relation to the detention of prisoners of war. (Criterion 2.2)

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* was constructed to house German and Italian POWs assigned to agrarian labour to offset the shortage of rural man power experienced in the State's South West during the World War Two. (Criterion 2.2)

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* has a close association with the administration of the Rural Employment Scheme in the Western Command. *Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* also has a close association with a number of farms in the south-west, to which prisoners were sent on work release. (Criterion 2.2)

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* has a close association with the Australian, Italian, German men who passed through the camp - either as personnel or as internees of the camp. The prisoners had a significant impact on Western Australia through the provision of labour for agriculture and the timber industries. (Criterion 2.3)

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* has a close association with Dr Morel of the International Red Cross who advised on the treatment of prisoners and the establishment of facilities. (Criterion 2.3)

### 11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* has the potential, with moderate interpretation, to be used as a teaching and archaeological site for aspects of the history of the second war and to demonstrate the way of life for prisoners of war in Australia. (Criteria 3.1, 3.2)

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

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* is highly valued as an historical location relating to the World War Two. The place contains physical evidence and artefacts of the period. Management plans and assessments have regarded the tourism potential of the place as being particularly important. (Criterion 4.1)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1. RARITY**

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* is the only example of a permanent specialised prisoner of war camp in Western Australia. (Criteria 5.1, 5.2)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

Despite its ruined condition, *Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* demonstrates the principal physical characteristics of a prisoner of war camp. (Criterion 6.1)

With moderate interpretation, *Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* is able to demonstrate the land function and design of a prisoner of war camp, and the legal and social demarcations associated with the running of such a camp. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

The condition of *Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* is that of a ruin; however, a substantial archaeological record remains which is still almost intact. The camp layout can be seen clearly, although the part of the camp which contained the sleeping huts has been subject to mining work, then rehabilitated. The foundations of the main structures are complete. The mess hut floors (earthen and bituminised) can be clearly seen. The high jarrah (*E. Marginata*) stumps on which the guard towers were positioned are still in place as are the flower gardens, in the shape of card suites, constructed by the prisoners at the end of the war.

For a detailed assessment see Wesson, J. 'An Archaeological Assessment of the Abandoned Marrinup Town Site and Prisoner of War Camp, W. A. (unpublished report. Centre for Pre-history, University of Western Australia for Department of Conservation and Land Management, 1990); and, Churchill, T. 'Marrinup Townsite and POW Camp. Conservation and Recreation Development Plan' (Department of Conservation and Land Management, Departmental use only plan, October 1990).

In his assessment of the place, Ron Bodycoat (August 1995) reports that 'works carried out by CALM to date and management [of the site] are generally appropriate'. He indicates that some of the earlier management strategies need to be adjusted but that the current understanding of the sensitivity and fragility of the site by CALM officers in Dwellingup is 'commendable and appropriate'.

Overall, *Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* is in sound condition.

#### **12. 4 INTEGRITY**

The remains of *Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* have a high degree of integrity. According to Wesson, the setting of the place is very similar to that which it would have been in the 1940s; however, it is not feasible to reinstate or recreate the original buildings. That which remains is sufficiently indicative of the form and function of the place.

#### **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp* has a high degree of authenticity as the remains of a prisoner of war camp. Despite some mining works on site, there is little or no introduced material and the current conservation of the place is being undertaken in accordance with the principles of the Burra Charter.

## **13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

### **13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

For a detailed discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to the Reports by

- Wesson, J. 'An Archaeological Assessment of the Abandoned Marrinup Town Site and Prisoner of War Camp, W. A. (unpublished report. Centre for Pre-history, University of Western Australia for Department of Conservation and Land Management, 1990).
- Churchill, T. 'Marrinup Townsite and POW Camp. Conservation and Recreation Development Plan' (Department of Conservation and Land Management, Departmental use only plan, October 1990).
- Bodycoat, R. Duncan Stephen and Mercer, Architects 'Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp, Dwellingup, W. A. Conservation Review' (prepared for the Ministry of Premier and Cabinet, July 1995).
- Johnston, R. Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp - A History. (1986).

### **13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

For a detailed discussion of the physical evidence, refer to the Reports by

- Wesson, J. 'An Archaeological Assessment of the Abandoned Marrinup Town Site and Prisoner of War Camp, W. A. (unpublished report. Centre for Pre-history, University of Western Australia for Department of Conservation and Land Management, 1990).
- Churchill, T. 'Marrinup Townsite and POW Camp. Conservation and Recreation Development Plan' (Department of Conservation and Land Management, Departmental use only plan, October 1990).
- Bodycoat, R. Duncan Stephen and Mercer, Architects 'Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp, Dwellingup, W. A. Conservation Review' (prepared for the Ministry of Premier and Cabinet, July 1995).

### **13.3 REFERENCES**

Wesson, J. 'An Archaeological Assessment of the Abandoned Marrinup Town Site and Prisoner of War Camp, W. A. (unpublished report. Centre for Pre-history, University of Western Australia for Department of Conservation and Land Management, 1990).

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