



**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.

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Phillip Griffiths, Architect with Jannine Cullen and Robin Chinnery historian, in May 2004, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.26.1 Providing medical and dental services
- 4.1.5 Developing city centres

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 404 Community services & utilities

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is a fine example of a two storey brick and Donnybrook sandstone building in the Federation Free Classical style, with the front façade employing Georgian elements, which makes a strong visual contribution its streetscape setting. (Criterion 1.1)

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is an integral and significant part of the historic Murray Street precinct that stretches from Pier Street in the west to Victoria Square in the east, comprising mainly civic, government, and institutional buildings predominantly from the Federation period. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Perth Government Stores (fmr) illustrates the evolution of a significant public building, which was designed as the main centrally located State Government stores through varied uses since its construction. (Criterion 2.1)

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

Perth Government Stores (fmr) was one of a number of significant public buildings built by government between 1900 and 1914, a period of considerable activity in public works in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

Perth Government Stores (fmr) was built by well-known builder William Atkins, and was designed by the Public Works Department under the direction of Hillson Beasley, Chief Architect of the PWD from 1905 to 1916. (Criterion 2.3)

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is an example of the design excellence of the Western Australian Public Works Department architects and the achievement of builder William Atkins in the pre-World War One period. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is valued by the community through its association with the provision of health services for over sixty years, as further evidenced by its inclusion in the Municipal Heritage Inventory for the City of Perth. (Criterion 4.1)

Perth Government Stores (fmr) contributes to the community's sense of place as an integral part of a notable precinct of public buildings at the eastern portion of Murray Street, Perth, to the east of Pier Street. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is a fine representative example of a government building in the Federation Free Classical style in a context of government, civic and institutional buildings. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

Perth Government Stores (fmr) has been adapted on numerous occasions for a variety of institutional uses. Maintenance on the exterior has not diminished any values of the place, while change, maintenance and adaptation have impacted on the building interiors to a significant degree, particularly their presentation.

The place would appear to receive regular maintenance and is in fair to good condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Perth Government Stores (fmr) remains in use for government purposes. Most of the areas that were intended for offices remain in use for offices, while much of the storage space has been adapted for uses as offices. The basement and part of the ground floor area remain in use for storage, but for records rather than supplies.

Overall the place retains a moderate degree of integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The exterior of *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* remains little changed, with the Murray Street elevation retaining its features. Changes to the remaining elevations have been minor. The basement and part of the ground floor used for document storage are little changed and the front offices are intact, albeit in some cases divided by lightweight partitions. Much of the remaining space has been subject to numerous changes. The shell of the building and underlying fabric are authentic. Overall the place retains a moderate degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Robin Chinnery, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Philip Griffiths, Architect, with Jannine Cullen.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is a two-storey brick and Donnybrook sandstone building with an iron/custom orb roof, designed mostly in the Federation Free Classical style with the front façade employing elements of the Georgian style. In 1910, it was designed by the Public Works Department under Chief Architect Hillson Beasley and built by William Atkins. Various alterations and additions designed by the PWD were implemented in 1920, 1940, 1957 and 1968, and alterations designed by Colin Rule & Associates were implemented in 1985.

Following the foundation of Perth on 12 August 1829, the townsite of Perth was laid out between Mount Eliza and Heirisson Island, facing the Swan River on the south, and with a chain of swamps and lagoons to the north. Arrowsmith's plan (1833) shows the first layout of Perth, with the main streets following the lie of the land between the Swan River and the wetlands to the north. The plan shows Murray Street and Goderich streets, including the future site of *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* to the east of Pier Street.¹ Assistant Surveyor Hillman's (1838) plan of Perth also shows these streets.²

By the 1870s, the city centre of Perth was consolidated on the grid laid out in the early survey, and about 800 houses had been built.³ The construction and opening of the Eastern Railway from Fremantle to Perth and thence to Guildford (1881), resulted in a shift in focus from the river port to the areas in the vicinity of Perth Railway Station.⁴ Through the 1880s and early 1890s, sub-division of large Perth Town Lots increased and a mix of residential and commercial buildings were constructed in the areas nearest to the railway.⁵

In 1890, the granting of Responsible Government in Western Australia paved the way for a wide programme of public works and during the Western Australian gold boom the Public Works Department grew rapidly in the mid to late 1890s. The gold boom resulted in a building boom in Perth, with considerable expansion of residential and commercial building in the areas to the north, east, and west of the city, with many more of the large Lots sub-divided in the period 1892-1900. In the mid to late 1890s, a number of streets in Perth were re-named, including the westernmost portion of Goderich Street, which became an extension of Murray Street.⁶ In the late nineteenth century, government buildings built in this area included the Government Printing Office (1894) at the north-eastern corner

1 Pitt-Morrison, Margaret 'Builders and Buildings' in Stannage, C. T. (Ed.) *A New History of Western Australia* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1981 pp. 514-515.

2 Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth* Perth City Council, Perth, 1979 p. 31.

3 Campbell, Robin McK. in Pitt Morrison, Margaret, and White, John (Eds.) *Western Towns and Buildings* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1979 p. 104.

4 Pitt-Morrison, Margaret op. cit., p. 532.

5 Seddon, George and Ravine, David *A City and its Setting: Images of Perth* Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1986, p.149.

6 Stannage, C. T. op. cit., pp. 235-236 and p. 289.

of Murray and Pier Streets, and the administrative wing of Perth Colonial Hospital (1897, later re-named Royal Perth Hospital).⁷

In the period 1900-14, public works were continued in Western Australia, albeit at a somewhat slower pace than in the 1890s. Significant buildings constructed in Perth in this period include the Supreme Court, Parliament House, Perth Central Police Courts, Perth Victoria Library Additions, Perth Technical School, Perth Medical and Health Department Offices, Claremont Hospital for the Insane and *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* in Murray Street.⁸ There was continued use of stone or stucco 'dressing', which was 'used in conjunction with heavy masonry with deeply recessed windows and rows of classical columns and pilasters.'⁹ Innovations that first appeared in this period included electric lifts, and 'bituminous felt for waterproofing flat concrete roofs'¹⁰, as at *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*.

In March 1910, plans were drawn for *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*, which was 'to provide accommodation for all Government stores'.¹¹ The plans were initialed G. R. R. and were signed by Hillson Beasley.¹² Born at Canterbury, England, Beasley was articled at Dover, then worked as an architect in London, Carlisle and Oxford prior to travelling to South Africa, where he worked for three years in the architectural branch of the Public Works Department in Cape Town, before immigrating to Australia in 1886. After practising in Melbourne for 10 years, he had travelled to Western Australia during the gold boom period. He found employment as a draughtsman in the Public Works Department, and 'proved his ability so well' that he became Chief Draughtsman under John Grainger, whom he succeeded as Chief Architect in 1905.¹³

The main areas of the proposed *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* comprised a store at the basement, 73 ft. x 59 ft.; at the ground floor, a bulk store, 119 ft. x 60 ft., and a stationery store, 60 ft. x 40 ft.; and at the first floor, sample rooms, tender board¹⁴ and general offices etc., and a strong room. At the ground floor, there were also small offices, sample rooms, and checking counters. At the first floor, where the walls of the ground floor and rolled steel joists determined the size of the rooms, there were fireplaces to each room other than the contractors.¹⁵ The building was to be of brick construction, with freestone

7 Oldham, Ray and John George Temple Poole Architect of the Golden Years 1885-1897 University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1980, pp. 97-99 and pp. 102-103.

8 Le Page, J. S. H. *Building a State: The Story of the Public Works Department of Western Australia 1829-1985* Water Authority of Western Australia, Leederville, Western Australia, 1986, p. 375.

9 *ibid.*

10 *ibid.*

11 Report of Public Works Department, 1910-11, in *Votes and Proceedings* 1911-1912, Vol. 1, p. 33.

12 Perth Government Stores PWD 15565, initialed C.R.R., 18 and 21 March and 6 and April 1910, signed Hillson Beasley Chief Architect, SROWA Cons. 1647.

13 Battye, J. S. *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia* The Cyclopaedia Company, Perth, 1912-13, Facsimile Edition Hesperian Press, Victoria Park, Western Australia, 1985 Vol. 1, p. 499.

14 The tender office dealt with tenders for government stores and supplies. No information was found in the course of researching this assessment to show that the WA Tender Board was located in the building, although this is the recollection of long-term Perth resident Ron Davies (conversation with HCWA officers, 8 October 2004).

15 Battye, J. S. *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia* op. cit.; and Perth Government Stores PWD 15565, initialed C.R.R., 18 and 21 March and 6 and April 1910, signed Hillson Beasley Chief Architect, SROWA Cons. 1647.

dressings to the front facade, with the date '1910' above lettering reading 'W. A. GOVERNMENT STORES'.¹⁶

In late March 1910, plans drawn show the site in Murray Street, Perth, adjoining the Government Printing Office, which had been selected for the proposed *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* with the existing buildings which comprised the Old Women's Home.¹⁷ The elderly women were transferred to the former Lunatic Asylum at Fremantle (now Fremantle Arts Centre), disused since the new Claremont Mental Hospital had opened in 1909.¹⁸

On 23 June 1910, tenders were called for *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*, and the contract was awarded to W. Atkins at a cost of £14,478 1s 7d in August.¹⁹ William Atkins (b. Ireland, 1836, d. Perth) had arrived in Western Australia from Victoria in 1881, to take up an appointment as mill manager at Jarrahdale. In late nineteenth and early twentieth century, he became a successful and well-known contractor in Western Australia. He worked with J. W. Wright as a railway contractor, and later was in partnership with Robert Oswald Law. In 1891, Atkins and Law were awarded the contract to construct the first portion of the railway from Perth to Bunbury. In the 1890s, they built sawmills at Collie and Roleystone, and became well known throughout Australia for their jetty and wharf building. In Perth, their work included Perth Mint, Perth Boys' School, Boans and Surrey Chambers.²⁰

In 1911, *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* was completed, and installation of 'a complete system of lifts and travellers for handling heavy goods' was in progress in September that year.²¹

In November 1919, plans were drawn for the conversion of the ground and first floors of *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* for use by the Education Department and the Mines Department, whose stores were located in the basement of the building. At the ground floor, the bulk store area was partitioned to provide office accommodation, a classroom for correspondence classes, and a library for the Education Department. The stationery store was partitioned to accommodate the accountants and staff and records of the Mines Department, and the rooms nearby were also made over to use by this department. The former counter and office area was also partitioned for offices and toilet facilities, accessed from a corridor, which led from the stair lobby through to the waiting hall for the Education Department. At the first floor, which was altered for the Mines Department, the former boardroom was reduced in area when a stud wall was built to divide it from the extension of the corridor and stairs to a new mezzanine area to accommodate draftsmen and records. A new wall was also built to divide the former tender board office into two separate rooms, and glass partitions replaced some of the walls to the area previously used as the accounts room. At one side of the stair landing, a porter's office was built. In December, a plan was drawn showing the detail for the mezzanine floor, with the new room and

16 *ibid*; and Le Page, J. S. H. *op. cit.*, p. 381.

17 Existing Buildings, *Perth Government Stores*, signed Hillson Beasley, 31 March 1910, held by Department of Housing and Works.

18 Ewers, John K. *The Western Gateway: A History of Fremantle* Second revised edition, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands for Fremantle City Council, 1971, p. 193.

19 *Government Gazette* 23 June and 15 August 1910, p. 1548 and p. 2188 respectively.

20 Erickson, Rica (Ed.) *The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians pre-1829-1888* University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1988, p. 85; and Batty, J. S. *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 655.

21 Report of Public Works Department, 1910-11, *op. cit.*

alterations to openings at the west elevation.²² These works were duly implemented.

In early 1940, plans were drawn for alterations to *Perth Government Offices* comprising a new mezzanine floor and the necessary stairs. Other alterations included removal of some partitioning and building of new partitioning in other areas of the ground floor. Thus far it has not been possible to ascertain the date at which all or part of the place began to be utilised in association with the nearby medical services and the hospital. However, it would appear to have begun in the inter-war or early World War Two period, as this plan shows rooms designated as 'Drug Dept.' and 'Dispensary'.²³ In March 1940, tenders were called for the aforementioned works²⁴, which were duly implemented.²⁵

In the post-World War Two period, and through the late twentieth century, numerous alterations were made to *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*, in particular to the ground and first floors, of which the former was subject to the most extensive change. In contrast, the basement was little changed and eventually became more or less disused. In the 1950s and 1960s, the various plans for the place were drawn by PWD architects, whilst the later works were designed by private architects. In May 1952, a Sewerage Plan shows the basement, with dotted lines extending from east to west across the building. There are two closets in a small single storey brick building to the north-west.²⁶

An undated plan shows proposed additions to the first floor offices, including a bottle store, a new dispensary, bulk powder room, narcotic and spirits store and a stabilising room. The proposed works included conversion of the existing Board Room to Tender Board Room, and a new Board Room, a new amenities room, a new sample room, a changing room, conversion of the records room for use by the Inspector of Clothing, a new goods lift, and new timber steps and landing.²⁷ Later plans show these works were implemented.²⁸

In January 1957, plans were drawn for proposed new male and female latrines on the ground floor of *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*, and installation of a new goods lift.²⁹

In May 1962, plans were drawn for repairs and renovations to *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*, including removal of the stationery store, which was to be transferred to Royal Street, East Perth, and removal of the steel runway.³⁰

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- 22 PWD WA 21005, signed W. B. Hardwick, Principal Architect, 25 November 1919, and December 1919, held by Department of Housing and Works. Note: The two November drawings were initialed as traced by JLCG, and the December drawing, showing alterations for the new mezzanine portion were initialed as drawn and traced by C. R. R. (ibid.)
- 23 Perth Government Stores New Mezzanine Floor & Alterations, PWDWA 29139, drawn by H. O. A., 1 March 1940, signed by A. E. Clare, Principal Architect, 4 March 1940, held by Department of Housing and Works.
- 24 *Government Gazette* 8 March 1940, p. 338.
- 25 Offices Perth- Govt. Stores- Murray St. Alterations & Additions, 13 November 1968, held by Department of Housing and Works.
- 26 Metropolitan Sewerage City of Perth SROWA Cons. 4156 Item 26, 28 May 1952.
- 27 Proposed Additions to First Floor Offices, Perth Government Stores, File 590/45, January 1957, held at Department of Housing and Works.
- 28 Offices Perth- Govt. Stores- Murray St. Alterations & Additions, 13 November 1968, held by Department of Housing and Works.
- 29 Proposed New Male & Female Latrines, and New Goods Lift, Perth Government Stores, File 590/45, January 1957, held at Department of Housing and Works.

In November 1968, plans were drawn for alterations and additions to the offices at *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*, including removal of existing partitioning in some areas and building of new partitioning in other areas at the ground floor. At the first floor, works included removal of a 1920 wall and the later counter, doors and partition near the stair lobby, and a new door was to be cut through to the existing assistant controller's office. The plan shows the existing use of various rooms and proposed alterations in usage.³¹

In March 1969, plans were drawn for alterations to the ground floor of *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* including a new records store and the fitting of new partitioning.³²

On 22 May 1970, Class 'C' Reserve 30365, being Perth Lot 790, the site of *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*, one rood and 36 and six tenths perches in area, was gazetted for the purpose of 'Government Requirements'.³³

On 1 December 1975, *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* was recorded by the National Trust of Australia (WA).³⁴

In March 1985, Colin Rule & Associates drew plans for the proposed Communicable Diseases Control Centre, to be located in *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*. The works carried out as per the plans included new walls and partitioning at the first floor to accommodate the change in uses, and a new stair hall at the north. Alterations to the exterior at the west and east elevations included replacement of a window and door to the transformer room with a new fire door at the west, and removal of the existing escape stairs and building new brick stairs, and a new access door and ramp at the east. Air conditioning units were removed, and the windows were made good to match the existing windows.³⁵

In July 1986, Reserve 30365 was amended to comprise Perth Lots 790 and 954, and its area was reduced to 1930 square metres. The purpose of the Reserve was changed from 'Government Requirements' to 'Use and Requirements of the Minister for Works'.³⁶ In December 1986, Reserve 30365 was amended to exclude Perth Lot 954, and the area of the Reserve was reduced accordingly to 1779 square metres. The purpose of the Reserve was changed to 'Government Requirements'.³⁷

In the late twentieth century, *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* ceased to be used as the Communicable Diseases Control Centre and was converted to use as the Inner City Mental Health Service, in which use it has continued. In 2001, the place was included in the Municipal Heritage Inventory for the City of Perth in 2001³⁸ and been included in the City of Perth Town Planning Scheme. In May

30 Repairs and Renovations, Perth Government Stores, PWD 21005, 18 May 1962, held at Department of Housing and Works.

31 Offices Perth- Govt. Stores- Murray St. Alterations & Additions, 13 November 1968, held by Department of Housing and Works.

32 Alterations to Government Stores, Murray Street, March 1969, held at Department of Housing and Works.

33 *Government Gazette* 22 May 1970, p. 1347.

34 HCWA Place No. 2056.

35 Colin Rule & Associates, Proposed Communicable Diseases Control Centre, held at Department of Housing and Works.

36 *Government Gazette* 18 July 1986, pp. 2406-2407.

37 *Government Gazette* 12 December 1986, pp. 4811-4812..

38 HCWA Place No. 2056.

2004, the upper floors continue in the aforementioned use, whilst the basement is disused.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is a two-storey brick and Donnybrook sandstone building with an iron/custom orb roof, designed mostly in the Federation Free Classical style³⁹ with the front façade employing elements of the Georgian style. In 1910, it was designed by the Public Works Department under Chief Architect Hillson Beasley and built by William Atkins. Various alterations and additions designed by the PWD were implemented in 1920, 1940, 1957 and 1968, and alterations designed by Colin Rule & Associates were implemented in 1985.

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is located at 70-74 Murray Street, and signed as 'Murray House'. The place now operates as the 'Inner City Mental Health Service' department and a plaque commemorates its opening by the Honourable Barry Hodge M.L.A., Minister for Health on 15th November, 1985.

The main bulk of the place extends the full depth of the site and the land on which it is located slopes down from south to north. A laneway located along the west side of the place extends to the rear and lowest end of the site. A narrow walkway runs between the east of the place and the adjacent building. The eastern access path is gated at Murray Street. The site is situated between the imposing former Government Print Office (now Curtin University Business School) to the west and the Breast Scanning Clinic, with key Royal Perth Hospital buildings adjacent to the east. Colonial House and other significant buildings of earlier, similar and later eras, continue along the south and north sides of Murray Street, leading to the landmark St. Mary's Cathedral in Victoria Square to the east end of Murray Street. A footpath constructed in standard City of Perth exposed aggregate pavers separates the building from the road kerb. There are young street trees planted in the pavement zone.

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is part of a precinct or streetscape that extends from Pier Street to Victoria Square that includes many fine buildings dating from the Victorian (the original Colonial Hospital and parts of St Mary's Cathedral), through to Federation period, with one or two Inter-and Post War buildings, and a large Moreton Bay Fig Tree. The group is a very fine collection of predominantly government, civic, and institutional buildings that form a coherent precinct of places. *Perth Government Stores (fmr)* is an integral visual element in this group.

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is free standing with symmetrical external characteristics. The lower levels of the front or south elevation are built in pick finish quarry faced Donnybrook stone and the remainder of the ground floor in rusticated Donnybrook sandstone. The first floor of this elevation, sides and rear of the building are constructed in cut and struck brickwork laid in stretcher bond pattern. Various classical elements, such as cornices, keystones, voussoirs, pediments, accentuated sills and aedicules, generally made of Donnybrook sandstone, are used to emphasise and highlight the regular fenestration that appears on both ground and first floor levels.

The front (south) elevation is strong in its symmetry and comprises three main bays over the ground floor base, comprising two end bays with pediments and a

³⁹ 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, pp.104-107.

central bay over the rusticated Donnybrook sandstone plinth that runs the width of the ground floor.

Each end bay has a picked quarry faced Donnybrook sandstone foundation course, with smooth rusticated Donnybrook sandstone for the depth of the ground floor. Cut and struck brickwork in stretcher bond pattern continues for the first floor. Stone quoining and then brick pilasters frame the two pedimented bays.

There are two ground floor entrances. The main entrance to the place is centred at the ground level of the western bay. A fanlight set within the arch of stone-faced voussiors is screened with ornamental wrought ironwork. This recessed fanlight shelters double doors located at the top of four bull-nosed steps rising above the footpath. A round-headed window is centred at ground level on the eastern bay, mirroring the entry bay on the west. It has timber casement sashes.

The first floor level of each bay is continued in face-brick. A long, single vertical window is centred on each bay of the end bays. These timber double hung sashes are accentuated with a plain sill and ornamental aedicule in Donnybrook sandstone. The top glass pane of each window has horizontal and vertical glazing bars. Each end bay is then crowned with a Donnybrook sandstone pediment that rises above a stone-faced entablature. Consoles support the cornices.

The central bay is set back from the two end bays and includes the first floor balcony with a cast iron balustrade. Donnybrook sandstone cornices articulate the division between ground and first floor levels, above the first level fenestration and at the base of the roof parapet.

At the first level, single doors with fanlights and flat arches are located at each end of the central bay and provide access to the balcony, which has a malthoid floor and cast iron balustrade. Centred between these doors are a further three evenly spaced windows each with exaggerated sills and ornamental aedicules, while the central window has a pediment. The transoms of each door and upper panes of each window have horizontal and vertical glazing bars.

Central to this floor, above aedicules, the building namesake '1911 W.A. Perth Government Stores (fmr)' is set on a geometric designed plasterwork background, in bas relief. A decorative entablature frames the top of the signage.

The west elevation along the service lane is utilitarian in character. The lane is entered from Murray Street, with the exit along a second lane to Pier Street, off to the west. Characterised by cut and stack brickwork in a stretcher bond pattern, this elevation is interspersed with awning windows at each floor level. Single and two pane double hung sash windows with accentuated sills and fat arches run the length of the elevation, with a parapet wall hiding custom orb roof details. A skillion parapet at the south end of this elevation and perpendicular to the western bay pediment on the front elevation provides a visual effect that gives emphasis to the south bay and corner when seen at pedestrian level. The curved parapet softens the top edge of the shear brick face wall, before the introduction of further perforations later along the west elevation. Services are visible across this elevation and thread around the numerous fenestration and doorways. A side service entrance and fire escape is located approximately halfway along this façade, in line with laneway to Pier Street.

The east elevation is characterized by double hung sash windows, with four panes. Again, cut and stack brickwork in a stretcher bond pattern is evident.

Steel fire escape stairs with landing provides access to the side walkway. This too is a utilitarian elevation.

The north elevation is not visually accessible from the street. It faces onto a neighbouring carpark complex where the site drops away sharply.

The plan comprises a ground and first floor level at the front of the site, with a small section of second floor accommodation and there is a basement at the rear where the fall in the land gives access to the basement at a level very close to natural ground level.

While the original ground floor comprised entrance hall, sample room/s, stationery office and store, bulk store area and inspector/checking offices. It has been divided into numerous small offices and consulting room with a large section of the former storage space retained as file storage.

The main entry hall at ground level is substantial in size, dominated by a staircase of timber construction with cast iron balusters. Black and white tessellated tiles cover the entire floor of this space. An original access point behind the stair has been blocked with a new one to the right of the main entry created. The original 'Sample Room' adjacent to this space has been partitioned, with the eastern corridor, stationery office and secondary sample room hardly altered from the original plan. Floors are generally carpeted timber with plastered walls, plasterboard partitions and suspended ceilings. Fireplaces are generally blocked in.

Set behind these south facing rooms further back into the ground floor, the original 'stationery store' has had significant plaster partitioning. A new east /west corridor and two new north/south corridors have thus been created with numerous, low ceiling, partitioned offices set off them. The main load bearing walls thus remain with new perforations to access the new partitioned offices.

The large 'Bulk Store' set at the north of the ground floor plan, now provides storage for Government records and the original timber floors, steel columns and plastered wall have been retained. The original size of this large space has been modified, but its general open storage character remains discernible. Part of the southern section of this area has been partitioned for offices. Two northern bays of the Bulk Store have been partitioned to provide toilets and separate storage space.

There are two later staircases and one original staircase has been removed. One stair is located along the north side of the northern load-bearing wall of the original stationery store at the front of the plan to provide a fire escape for the whole of the building. A second timber staircase located at the northern end of the Bulk Store space, leads to northern zone of the first floor, directly above the partitioned ground floor bays.

Steel columns support a steel frame roof structure above the double volume former storage space. The ceiling to this major space is a metal strip acoustic ceiling. There is original timber floor construction with remains of vinyl flooring.

The original first floor comprised lobby, offices for inspector, store manager, records and contractors, with order room and clerks/ strong room, boardroom, accounts room and tender board office. These spaces remain legible.

The first floor entry lobby features by a large arch set on impostes with a keystone at the centre of the arch. This space and the north/south corridor, along with four south facing rooms retain much of the original format few changes, other than a

small amount of plaster partitioning, new acoustic ceilings and carpeting. Fireplaces have been blocked in.

The original 'Contractor's' room over the stair has not changed. The next three south rooms are large in floor area, with generous height ceilings. The original 'Inspector's' office has a blocked fireplace, however its high ceiling and view to balcony remain. The 'Store Manager's' office is another large room with the fireplace blocked, but arch recesses still remain and the picture rail is intact. View to the balcony from these rooms is still complete. The original 'Records' room (now staff room) has its fireplace visible and is mostly unchanged.

Moving north on the plan, the original 'Order' room now supports a partitioned space below the stair (that provides access to toilet facilities) set behind the 'Records' room. The 'Clerks' and 'Strong' rooms are partitioned into small offices and consulting rooms. The ground floor 'Bulk Store' stairway begins through a break in the 'Clerks' northern load-bearing wall.

Beyond these original rooms and the northern most wall, a double volume mezzanine now floats above two of the southern most bays of the 'Bulk Store' below. A new corridor with more partitioned offices continues along a singular north/south bay running along the eastern wall, terminating in further storage space located above two northern bays of the Bulk Store. Most of this relatively new partitioned zone is carpeted, with the original steel structure columns visible and new acoustic ceilings. A small area of original tongue and groove faced partitioning is still intact in the most north/east room.

A new concrete exit stairwell occupies the south/west corner of the original 'Bulk Store' room.

Central to the first floor space, the original 'Accounts' room remains intact, with lantern lights with stack ventilation flumes and clerestory windows on east and west sides providing natural light to this internal space. West of this space, the original 'Board' room is partitioned, extending the north/south corridor connecting the front lobby space with new mezzanine area.

Two original timber staircases remain, connecting the first floor with second floor toilets that have modern fit outs. Little else has altered on this floor.

While basement access is restricted it continues to serve as a storage space. It appears to comprise of timber floor with steel frame construction and plastered ceilings.

The elevations of the building have changed little, but the interiors have been the subject of numerous changes. The underlying structure of the place, the external walls and the rooms in the front or south section remain authentic. The remaining spaces have an authentic building shell by and large, while the interior is much altered.

The building appears to be reasonably well maintained and the maintenance has not diminished the value of the exterior of the place. Changes to the manner in which the interior has been divided has had a detrimental impact on the reading of many of the original spaces, though much of the change has involved lightweight construction that is essentially reversible.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Subsequent to the granting of Responsible Government in 1890, a wide programme of public works was commenced in Western Australia, which was

further accelerated following in the wake of the gold boom. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a number of substantial government buildings were designed and built in Perth, under Chief Architects John Grainger (1897-1905) and Hillson Beasley (1905-1917). Several were located in Murray Street, including the *Government Printing Office (3470)*, *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*, and *Chief Secretary Perth Medical and Health Department Offices (2053)*. The latter, built in 1911, opposite the Printing Office, covered an area of 90 ft. x 107 ft., and comprised basement, ground floor and first floor, as did *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*. The different purposes of the buildings was reflected in the treatment of the facades of each building, that to the Stores being of 'brick with freestone dressings'; and that to the Offices being 'of Donnybrook stone, with an arcaded entrance and oriel balcony above', the construction 'generally of a superior type'.⁴⁰

Other buildings completed by the Public Works Department in Murray Street under Beasley's direction include *Kirkman House (2049)* and the *Administration Building-Nurses Service (2048)* buildings at Royal Perth Hospital constructed in brick with stucco decorative treatments and steeply pitched tiled roofs.

It has been noted that 'Several landmark buildings' were designed under Hillson Beasley, most notably Perth Technical School, *Perth Government Stores (fmr)*, and Perth General Post Office.⁴¹

Other buildings that contribute the precinct include Cavanagh and Cavanagh's limestone construction *No.1 Fire Station (2051)*, the *Young Australian League Headquarters (fmr) (2052)*, designed by Oldham Boas, the terminating *St Mary's Cathedral* in Victoria Square, Salvation army Congress Hall (fmr) (2084).

Perth Government Stores (fmr) is a representative example of a government building constructed in the early twentieth century under Public Works Department Chief Architect Hillson Beasley.

Searching the HCWA database for comparable places was not straightforward as there are no directly comparable search terms however using the classification of 'government customs house or bond store' resulted in the listing of fifteen places.⁴² Of these places the following six are the most comparable in building materials and usage. *Geraldton Customs House Complex (3940)* although built in the 1930s has the dual purpose of storage and office space with a decorative façade of the building. *Old Albany Railway Station & Bond Store (3262)* is a collection of buildings constructed from 1854 to 1994 that include storage sites. *Customs House and Bond Store (2345)* in Cossack was built in 1895 to provided a multi purpose government store that serviced the small community in Cossack. *Customs House (fmr) (977)*, Fremantle built in 1908, is a two-storey structure built of similar style and materials. *Commissariat Buildings (fmr) (857)*, Fremantle, built between 1852 and 1898 consists of several buildings constructed to provide specific storage facilities for the government. *Old Albany Post Office (30)* built in two stages between 1868 and 1896 was used as a bond store.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

⁴⁰ Report of Public Works Department, 1910-11, in *Votes and Proceedings 1911-1912*, Vol. 1, p. 33.

⁴¹ *Creating the Public Realm: Public Architecture in Western Australia: 1829-2000* Exhibition Catalogue, LISWA and BMA, 1994, p. 5.

⁴² HCWA Database 18/10/05

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Although the place has been associated with the provision of public medical services and Royal Perth Hospital for more than 60 years, there is no mention of it in the history of the hospital, and the hospital does not hold any property file pertaining to the place. Further research in Education Department, Mines Department and PWD records may reveal additional information about the place.