



**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)

- 3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction
- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 5.1 Working in harsh conditions
- 7.6.2 Controlling entry of persons and disease
- 7.6.3 Policing Australia
- 7.6.4 Dispensing justice
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 107 Settlements
- 108 Government policy
- 306 Domestic activities
- 401 Government and politics
- 403 Law and order
- 505 Markets

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton is a good example of the simple vernacular styling that characterised early settlements in Australia, a pared-back rendition of Victorian Georgian style architecture. (Criterion 1.1)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton, constructed in 1856 three miles from Busselton townsite as a bond store, Resident Magistrate's office and police residence to address a lack of local facilities, provides evidence of the

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

early European settlement of the Vasse region and the development of Busselton as government administrative centre for the area. (Criterion 2.1)

The struggle of the Resident Magistrate to receive government support for necessary infrastructure to maintain law and order in the town, and the eventual private construction of *Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton* on the Resident Magistrate's private land, are indicative of the early period of colonial government when limited resources were apportioned between the central Swan/Canning River and Avon Valley settlements and regional outposts such as Vasse. (Criterion 2.2)

The need to construct a bond store in the area, to secure quantities of liquor and bonded goods, and its replacement by 1857 with a larger and stronger building, despite the settlement not having a port at the time, is indicative of a period when the presence of foreign whaling ships in Geographe Bay during the whaling season caused chronic problems of smuggling and drunkenness for the fledgling settlements in the area. (Criterion 2.2)

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton was built for Captain John Molloy, Resident Magistrate of the Sussex District (including Vasse/Busselton) from 1830 to 1861. (Criterion 2.3)

At its construction in 1856, one room of the building was used to accommodate Police Constable Joseph Harris, who was appointed Resident Magistrate in 1861 and held the position until 1887. Harris continued to use the place as a residence until at least 1883, even after the Resident Magistrate's office was relocated to the new Busselton courthouse complex from 1862. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The handmade bricks used to construct *Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton* have the potential to reveal information relating to early construction techniques in the colony, and in particular the Busselton region. (Criterion 3.1)

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton is highly valued by the Busselton community and contributes to a sense of place as evidence of the early settlement of the region, as indicated by the strong oral history tradition associated with the building, its various heritage listings and the number of private individuals who seek out the owners of 22 Kent Street expressing interest in the historic building in their backyard. (Criteria 4.1 & 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton is a rare extant example of an early, privately constructed, government building outside of the main settlement areas of the Swan, Canning and Avon river catchments. (Criterion 5.1)

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton is the earliest remaining civic building in Busselton, and a rare example of an early brick building in Busselton, as there were many problems associated with early brick making in the area. (Criterion 5.1)

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton is an early example of a bond store in Western Australia, and unusual as such a facility constructed in a settlement that did not have a port at the time. (Criteria 5.1 & 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton is a good representative example of the simple vernacular construction of early buildings in Western Australia. (Criterion 6.1)

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton is representative of the practice of private individuals constructing buildings to lease to the government for civic purposes, which was government policy in the period when settlements were becoming established. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Overall, the place is in fair condition.

The roofing sheets are corroding and only one small section of guttering remains in situ, which is unserviceable. Some cracks in the external render have enlarged to holes through which the hand-made bricks of the building can be seen eroding, exacerbated by water leakage from the c.1980s plumbing, rising damp and falling damp. All the external doors are in poor condition and showing evidence of deterioration due to exposure to the elements. The door to Room Three (northern room) has entirely lost its glazing and one lower panel, and the remaining timber is warped and broken. Two of the sixteen glazed panels in the window to Room Two (central room) are missing. Internally, the pressed metal ceiling panels are rusting, especially in Room Three, and cracking and/or buckling, especially in Rooms One (south room) and Two. There is some deterioration of the timbers in the doorframe between Room Two and Room One. Internal rendering appears largely intact.

It is not possible to determine the structural integrity of the bricks hidden by the rendering, although where cracks reveal them they are deteriorating. The place appears to be reasonably structurally sound.

In November 2007, *Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton* remained as described in the 1999 conservation plan. However, the condition of the place has deteriorated since that time, largely as predicted by that plan.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton has moderate to high integrity. The place is no longer in use for its original purposes. It ceased to be a bond store in 1857 and a Resident Magistrate's office from 1862. It is not known when it ceased to have a primarily residential function, but this was its major use and remains clearly discernible.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton has high authenticity.

The majority of original fabric appears to remain as constructed, although the hand-made brick walls are encased in heavy rendering and the original roofing has been replaced quite early with corrugated iron sheeting.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

This document has been based on Conservation Plan for The Gulch, prepared by Research Institute for Cultural Heritage, Curtin University, in August 1999, with amendments and/or additions by Office of Heritage staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence refer to Conservation Plan for The Gulch, prepared by Research Institute for Cultural Heritage, Curtin University, in August 1999.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence refer to Conservation Plan for The Gulch, prepared by Research Institute for Cultural Heritage, Curtin University, in August 1999.

In November 2007, *Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton* remained as described in the 1999 conservation plan. It was primarily used for storage and as a 'blokes' retreat'.

The condition of the place has deteriorated since the conservation plan was undertaken, largely as predicted by that plan. The roofing sheets are corroding and only one small section of guttering remains in situ, which is unserviceable. Some cracks in the external render have enlarged to holes through which the hand-made bricks of the building can be seen eroding, exacerbated by water leakage from the c.1980s plumbing, rising damp and falling damp. A narrow garden bed runs along the front of the buildings (adding an additional source of potential moisture ingress) and there is some evidence of plants self-seeding along the other the walls. All the external doors are in poor condition and showing evidence of deterioration due to exposure to the elements. The door to Room Three (northern room) has entirely lost its glazing and one lower panel, and the remaining timber is warped and broken. Two of the sixteen glazed panels in the window to Room Two (central room) are missing. Internally, the pressed metal ceiling panels are rusting, especially in Room Three, and cracking and/or buckling, especially in Rooms One (south room) and Two. There is some deterioration of the timbers in the doorframe between Room Two and Room One. Internal rendering appears largely intact.

It is not possible to determine the structural integrity of the bricks hidden by the rendering, although where cracks reveal them they are deteriorating. The place appears to be reasonably structurally sound. Overall, the place is in fair condition.

The house at 22 Kent Street, in whose backyard *Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton* is situated, is an Interwar weatherboard and fibrous cement residence in good condition.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the comparative information refer to Conservation Plan for The Gulch, prepared by Research Institute for Cultural Heritage, Curtin University, in August 1999.

The Office of Heritage database includes only two older brick buildings in the Shire of Busselton: *Inlet Park & Chapman's Mill*, which includes a more

substantial 1850s Victorian Regency residence; and, Fairlawn Dwelling, the original 1839 residence of Captain John Molloy, which is in poor condition.

None of the other Busselton places in the database dating from before 1860 have an administrative, government or other official public purpose.

Outside of the Metropolitan and Avon Arc regions, only three pre-1860 governmental buildings remain extant: *Old Gaol, Albany*; *Residency Museum, Albany*; and, Old Geraldton Gaol & Warder's Cottages, Geraldton. All three are more substantial 1850s buildings than *Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton*. A further 22 pre-1860 places in the Metropolitan or Avon Arc regions are listed in the database as having a governmental use, which includes some governmental residences, wells, and private residences also used for a government function.

There are twelve other places in the database listed as Customs House or Bond Store. Only one of these is older than *Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr)*: the convict-constructed 1852 first stage of *Commissariat Buildings (fmr)*, Fremantle. All but two date from 1900 or before. All are associated with established ports. Seven are Registered.

Bond Store & Resident Magistrate's Office (fmr), Busselton is the earliest remaining civic building in Busselton, an early extant example of a bond store, a rare example of an extant early governmental building beyond the Metropolitan and Avon regions, and a rare example of an early brick building in the Busselton area.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Conservation Plan for The Gulch, prepared by Research Institute for Cultural Heritage, Curtin University, in August 1999.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research may identify when the place became known as 'The Gulch' and the significance of this name.