



**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)

- 3.4.3 Mining
- 3.16 Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure
- 5.1 Working in harsh conditions
- 7.6.3 Policing Australia
- 7.6.4 Dispensing justice
- 7.6.5 Incarcerating people
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 106 Workers
- 107 Settlements
- 303 Mining
- 403 Law & order
- 504 Depression & boom
- 601 Aboriginal people

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Yalgoo Justice Precinct has aesthetic significance as a fine representative example of goldfields vernacular architecture. (Criterion 1.1)

The Courthouse (fmr) and Gaol (fmr), forming the Museum group within *Yalgoo Justice Precinct*, form a distinctive cultural environment that demonstrates associations with the law enforcement and justice in the Midwest region. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

Yalgoo Justice Precinct is associated with the discovery of gold in Western Australia and the development of the goldfield town of Yalgoo. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Yalgoo Justice Precinct demonstrates the response of the Public Works Department to the high demand for public buildings in the Goldfields in the least expensive and most expedient manner with the use of timber and corrugated iron. (Criterion 2.1)

Yalgoo Justice Precinct demonstrates the common practice of relocating goldfields' buildings as need arises and productivity wanes and waxes, and is an example of the use of corrugated iron because of its portability, light weight and low cost. (Criteria 2.1, 2.2 & 2.4)

Yalgoo Justice Precinct was associated with the West Australian Police Force and its officers and their families for 87 years from 1896 to 1983. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Yalgoo Justice Precinct has the ability to contribute to a wider knowledge of the cultural history and settlement of Western Australia and the operations of law and order in the remote goldfields. (Criterion 3.2)

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Yalgoo Justice Precinct has social value deriving from the interaction of the resident population with the succession of police officers and their wives who lived and worked there, and is valued by the local community as indicated by its inclusion in the Yalgoo Municipal Heritage Inventory and the establishment of the Courthouse Museum. (Criterion 4.1)

Yalgoo Justice Precinct contributes towards the community's sense of place for its associations with the early gold rush years. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

Yalgoo Justice Precinct is a rare example of a corrugated iron clad justice facility not only in the Midwest region, but also in the State as a whole, comprising the Courthouse (fmr), and Gaol (fmr). (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Yalgoo Justice Precinct represents a comprehensive justice facility located in the goldfields in the remote Midwest and represents a distinctive stage in law enforcement. (Criterion 6.1)

12.3 CONDITION

The buildings and elements that comprise *Yalgoo Justice Precinct* are generally in fair to good condition, and for the most part seem to be maintained.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Yalgoo Justice Precinct has retained a moderate degree of integrity. Despite the place no longer functioning as originally designed and utilised, and no

longer having police associations, the Courthouse (fmr) and Gaol (fmr), interpret the original functions although not in the original context as a consequence of the relocation of the Gaol (fmr) from the original site to the west of the Police Quarters. *Yalgoo Justice Precinct* clearly demonstrates the original intentions of the various buildings and elements.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The original structure, form and fabric of *Yalgoo Justice Precinct* are mostly intact. The Gaol (fmr) has been relocated from the original site to fifty metres to the north-east, interfering with the authenticity of the layout, function and intent of the precinct in its operational capacity. Relocation also presumes some intervention to the original fabric in the process but does not represent the authenticity or accurate understanding of the precinct. *Yalgoo Justice Precinct* demonstrates a moderate degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Irene Sauman, Historian and Laura Gray, Heritage and Conservation Consultant, in August 2007, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Yalgoo Justice Precinct comprises the Gaol (fmr) (1896), which was relocated fifty metres in 1999, and the Courthouse (fmr), which was built at Day Dawn in 1904 and relocated to Yalgoo in 1921. The Courthouse and Gaol form the Yalgoo Courthouse Museum.

The Yalgoo district was the country of the Widi people, which was bordered by the Baramaia lands to the east and Wadjari (Wadjiri) to the north. The remote Yalgoo community is Pia Wadjari and the people associated with the town are represented by the Yarrlgu Bunna Aboriginal Corporation.¹

The first Europeans in the Yalgoo area were pastoralists. Although early explorers and surveyors (1846, 1854) traversed the area, no settlement was established until early in the 1890s.² In this era, the pastoral holdings were still being developed, with the main industry being sheep.

The Murchison Goldfield was proclaimed 24 September 1891.³ When the boundaries of the Murchison Goldfield were altered in February 1895, the Yalgoo Goldfield was declared.⁴ With the major Murchison goldfields finds in the 1890s, a gold boom period occurred, although the Yalgoo goldfields were marginal compared to areas further east. By 1900, the population in the Yalgoo townsite was 200, with 1300 in the district. The majority were engaged in the mining industry.⁵

The first public official appointed to Yalgoo was the Mining Registrar in June 1894. With the declaration of the Yalgoo Goldfield, Police Constable Fred Fox opened the Yalgoo Police Station in a tent on 27 February 1895. He reported that:

Yalgoo township consists of 2 wayside inns, 1 butcher shop, 1 baker shop, 5 grocery stores, 2 hop beer shops, 5 private houses & several tents. The miners generally speaking are inclined to be disorderly.⁶

Civil disorder had become common and widespread with the expanding population of the goldfields and theft and drunkenness were a cause for

¹ Tindale, Norman B., *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia*, ANU Press, Canberra, 1974, pp. 240, 257, 260; Maps on the Indigenous Affairs Department website, www.dia.wa.gov.au; Burke, Heather & Smith, Claire, *The Archaeologist's Field Handbook*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 2004, Appendix 8.

² 'Yalgoo Heritage Trail Heritage', Committee of Western Australia, 1989, p.1.

³ Heydon, P.R. *Gold on the Murchison*. Hesperian Press, 1986, p.1, citing the Government Gazette 24 September 1891.

⁴ Palmer, Alex. *Yalgoo Lap Industries*, 1985, Reprinted 1989, p.3, citing the Government Gazette 8 February 1895.

⁵ For more detail on the early history of the Yalgoo district refer to HCWA assessment documentation for P2776 Dominican Convent Chapel of St Hyacinth (fmr) and Conservation Plan for Yalgoo Railway Station. See also: Palmer op. cit., and Heydon, op. cit.

⁶ Pashley, A.R. (Don), *Policing our state: A history of police stations and police officers in Western Australia 1829-1945*, EDUCANT, Cloverdale, 2000, p. 505.

concern, requiring the establishment of justice facilities as a priority when a goldfield was declared. The escort of gold from mine to bank was a major activity of the Police in the early years and was undertaken by the Constables at Yalgoo.⁷

The Mining Registrar held the position of Warden until P.L. Griffith was appointed to that office in June 1895. No record of construction of the Warden's Quarters and Warden's Office (later known as a courthouse) has been located, but the Public Works Department *Annual Report* of 1896-97 noted that additions were being carried out to the Warden's Office 'by private architects employed by him'.⁸ Temporary quarters for the Registrar were also under construction at this time. The various structures for the Registrar, Police and Warden were located on Reserve 3226, a thirteen-acre site on Gibbon Street gazetted for government requirements.⁹

In April 1896, tenders were called for construction of Police Quarters and Lockup (Gaol) at Yalgoo, Nannine and Day Dawn. A contract was awarded to James Dawson for the Yalgoo Lockup (Gaol), with a price of £1,075 4s 2d. No tender acceptance was located for the Yalgoo Police Quarters.¹⁰

The following month, with an increasing number of licensed wayside houses, a rapidly increasing population, and the railway line from Mullewa only weeks away from reaching the town, Warden Griffith requested increased police numbers. Yalgoo, he argued, needed three constables while one constable was required for each of the outlying mining areas at Melville, Gullewa and Rothesay and two at Pingalling. In July, following a further request by the Yalgoo Progress Association, four extra constables were finally despatched to the district and were located at the various mining centres in tent camps. The town continued to be policed by two Constables with the aid of an Aboriginal Tracker. The first Tracker, who was with Constable Fox during his four-year service at Yalgoo, was Jimmy.¹¹

A report on the progress of the construction of the Police buildings was submitted on 24 August by Constable Fox.¹²

Under construction - Police quarters at Yalgoo is wood and iron with four rooms each 14 ft x 13½ ft, with a kitchen at each end, small stove & 16 ft of shelving in back kitchen. 8 ft verandah all round, and 6 chain of fencing, post, rail & 6 wires, bush timber. 130 ft frontage to Gibbons st.

Lockup, wood and iron, contains 3 cells, one at 17 x 10 and two at 8 x 10, and 6 foot entrance hall with a lavatory and pan. 8ft verandah around 3 sides and a yard 25 x 44½ ft at the rear with galvanized iron fence 9 ft 9 in high.

600 gal tank for quarters and 400 gal for lockup.

7 Edmonds, Leigh, in assoc with Andrew Gill & Jenny Gregory, *Western Australia Police Service: Thematic History*, CAMS, WA Police Service & Centre for WA History, May 1998, p. 21; Pashley, op cit, pp. 24 & 506.

8 Public Works Department (PWD), *Annual Report*, 1896-97, p. 64.

9 Landgate, Reserves Index, Reserve 3226.

10 *West Australian Government Gazette*, 17 April 1896, p. 597 & 5 June 1896, p. 924; Pashley, A.R. (Don), op cit, p. 505.

11 Correspondence 26 May & 31 July 1896, Police Dept file, SROWA, CONS 430 Item 1640 & Item 2220; Palmer, Alex, op cit, pp. 58-60, citing Police Occurrence Books.

12 Police Dept file, Reports from North Eastern district to Commissioner, SROWA, CONS 430 Item 2753.

Quarters will be completed by next Saturday, 29-8-1896 but lockup not within a fortnight. No provision for an office tho one very much required, nor any provision for a table which is also very badly needed.¹³

The PWD considered timber and iron to be temporary materials, which were not cost effective in the long term because of ongoing maintenance requirements. The Department preferred to build in stone or brick, but had to resort to using the cheaper and lighter materials owing to the time and cost constraints of providing large numbers of buildings in the goldfields and developing agricultural areas during the period of unprecedented demand in the late 1890s and early 1900s.¹⁴ Later reports on the Police Quarters indicate that the timber used in the place was pine, which was again lighter to transport and easier to work than jarrah or other hardwoods.¹⁵

Plans for the buildings fit the descriptions given by Constable Fox and confirm that there was no dedicated Station building and no office, although the Quarters were referred to as 'Police Station and Quarters' in the PWD *Annual Reports*.¹⁶ In 1897, a contract was awarded to Spence & McClure for construction of Stables at a cost of £313 3s 6d. The Stables (not extant) comprised four horse stalls in the hipped-roofed centre section of the building, with a fodder room at one end and a harness room at the other, each under a break pitch roof.¹⁷

The Yalgoo public buildings, including the Police buildings, Mining Registrar's Quarters, Warden's Office, Warden's Residence and Post Office appeared on an 1899 site plan of Reserve 3226. The Police buildings formed a fenced complex fronting Gibbons Street, and the Post Office also fronted the Street, while the other buildings, including the original Courthouse, were set well back on the site.¹⁸

Conditions around the turn of the 20th century were hard, with patrols on horseback to outlying centres often taking several days in all kinds of weather. Hundreds of miles, on horseback, on foot, by bicycle and by train were covered in pursuit of offenders, with sometimes several modes of transport employed in the one day.¹⁹ When the Warden and Mining Registrar were removed from Yalgoo in 1901, the Constable in Charge also acted as Clerk of Court and Sheriff's Bailiff for the one day a month court sessions were conducted at the Warden's Offices by the visiting Resident Magistrate from Cue.²⁰

Yalgoo was a relief station for Aborigines who were ill or aged and unable to fend for themselves. The Constable in Charge was responsible for providing rations. In the early 1900s, influenza was prevalent among the Indigenous population and Constable George Pollard found that they had great faith in an

13 Correspondence 24 August 1896, Police Dept file, Item 2753, op cit.

14 PWD *Annual Reports*, 1895, pp. 1, 4 & 6; 1896, pp. 49 & 51-52; 1896-97, p. 57.

15 Correspondence, 12 August 1944, Police Dept file, Yalgoo police buildings, SROWA, WAS 76 CONS 430 Item 1937/4463 V3.

16 PWD Plan 4307, Yalgoo Lockup [Gao] & Plan 4252, Yalgoo Police Quarters, courtesy Dept of Housing & Works (DHW).

17 *West Australian Government Gazette*, 14 May 1897, p. 917; PWD Plan 5164, courtesy DHW.

18 PWD Plan, (unnumbered), Yalgoo buildings on Reserve 3226, 12 May 1899, courtesy DHW.

19 Palmer, Alex, op cit, pp. 58-60, citing Police Occurrence Books.

20 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1897-1910.

application of a mixture of one part Emu oil and one part eucalyptus oil, which they rubbed on their body, with favourable results. In April 1902, he reported that the dozen bottles of Eucalyptus oil he had ordered had arrived safely. Apart from colds and flu there was no other sickness for the year and behaviour was reported as good.²¹

Another reported event involving non-Europeans gives an indication of attitudes at that time and the way they could vary between the men on the ground and those following the official line from a distance. Chinese sandalwood cutter Gee Tau, known locally as Charlie King, was fined £5 for cohabiting with Aboriginal woman Wonegoora (aka Rosy). Charlie wanted to marry Rosy, and the Yalgoo Police and their District Superintendent had no objection as Charlie was of good character, owned three horses and a dray, and had worked in the Wurarga area for five or six years. The Geraldton office of the Department of Native Affairs, however, did not approve of marriage between white man and native but considered 'it is not quite as bad in the case of an alien'. They required, however, that Charlie pay £25 toward the future support of Rosy and any children they had, 'for when he eventually deserted her'. The report does not state if the marriage went ahead and likely it did not, as Charlie King did not have the money for the fee and could not borrow it.²²

In 1906, the large Gaol cell was converted to a bedroom for the second Constable and a doorway inserted in the front (east) wall of the building for access from the verandah. The four rooms of the Police Quarters at this time were marked as kitchen, sitting room and two bedrooms and would have provided accommodation for a married Constable and his family. A bathroom was installed on the north-east corner of the verandah of the Police Quarters, giving rise to a complaint some years later by a resident Constable that he had to traverse the verandah in full view of the street to reach it. The rooms of the Quarters were only accessed from the rear verandah and did not interconnect. There was still no mention of an office or dedicated police station building and one can only guess at what makeshift area was used for that purpose. It may have been one of the bedrooms in the Quarters if that room was not needed for that purpose, or perhaps the verandah of the Gaol.²³

In 1908, the Emerald Reward Mine closed and the population of Yalgoo rapidly decreased. As mining declined, pastoralism assumed greater importance for the region. Court sittings at Yalgoo were reduced to one day each month in March, June, September and December. In 1920, the population of the district was given as 349 and the need for two Constables at Yalgoo was queried by the Commissioner of Police, as the usual rate was one constable per 414 of population.²⁴ Inspector of Police at Geraldton explained:

Yalgoo is a very large district & embraces Pastoral, Mining & in a small degree Agricultural Industries, ie mining at Paynes Find & Warridier (sic), & the mounted

21 Police Dept file, Item 2753, op cit.

22 Police Dept file, Yalgoo, SROWA, CONS 255 Item 1907/0546.

23 PWD Plan 1920, Yalgoo Police Quarters, printing, repairs, etc, 1906, courtesy DHW; Police Dept file, Item 1937/4463 V3, op cit.

24 Police Dept file, Yalgoo police protection, SROWA, WAS 76 CONS 430 Item 1920/6969.

Constable here is continually kept going investigating complaints etc while the Constable in charge does a fair amount of travelling at times. He is also Mining Registrar Clerk of Courts Treasury Cashier etc. This Sub District is one of the largest in the Western District & embraces the Old Mt Wittenoom Police District ever since that Station closed & the Constable removed.²⁵

There was no reduction in the Police presence at that time.

In 1921, the Yalgoo Warden's Office was destroyed in a storm. Tenders were called for replacement of the building with the Courthouse from Day Dawn. The 1899 site plan of Reserve 3226, showing the location of the Warden's Office, indicates that the relocated building was placed on, or very near, the same spot, and that the buildings appeared to have been of similar plan.²⁶

The Day Dawn Courthouse had been built in 1904 to replace a temporary court building, which had operated there in the late 1890s. The court at Day Dawn had been managed from Cue since 1905, with a sitting one day a month, similar to the situation at Yalgoo. The Courthouse was still in use at Day Dawn up to 1921, when its function there ceased in order to provide the same function at Yalgoo. Day Dawn court matters were then heard at Cue, which was barely six kilometres distant.²⁷

In 1923, in order to provide improved quarters for the two resident Constables, the police quarters at Nannine were removed to Yalgoo and located on Lot 94 in nearby Henty Street. The bedroom in the Gaol was then used as an office and the Gaol became referred to as the Police Station. The relocated Nannine Police Quarters was later destroyed by fire.²⁸ In the early 1930s, the question of Police numbers was again raised. There were some 200 men in the district either working a mine or prospecting, and some 220 Aborigines. The district was considered extremely quiet but the large distances negated any reduction in the police presence. Despite the quietness, Court sittings had been reinstated to one day a month.²⁹

By the 1940s, the Police Quarters and the Station (Gaol) were in a poor state of repair and in 1942 the Constable occupying the Quarters requested permission to occupy the former School Quarters. This was refused owing to the distance from the Police Station. A report on the condition of the Police Quarters in 1944 noted, among other things, that the verandah was collapsing, the pine floors splintering, internal walls moved when doors were shut, electrical wiring was in dangerous condition, and the guttering was hanging off. Constable A.T. Monck stated he was humiliated when anyone called at his home because of its condition, which included dirty internal walls due to lack of painting. The public, when visiting the Police Station (Gaol), walked across the sagging verandah floor of the Quarters to avoid the 'slop' in

²⁵ Correspondence 23 September 1920, Police Dept file, Item 1920/6969, op cit.

²⁶ Palmer, Alex, op cit, p. 36; *West Australian Government Gazette*, Day Dawn Courthouse tender, 1904, p. 1803 & tender for relocation, 19 August 1921, p. 1465; PWD, *Annual Report*, 1920-21, p. 38; PWD Plan, (unnumbered), Yalgoo buildings on Reserve 3226, 12 May 1899, op cit; PWD Plan 5560, Day Dawn Wardens Court, 12 June 1897, SROWA, WAS 399 CONS 1647 Item 05560 shows a stone building of three rooms. This structure was not built.

²⁷ *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1900-1922.

²⁸ *West Australian Government Gazette*, 1922, p. 2299; PWD file, Yalgoo Courthouse, SROWA, WAS 82 CONS 689 Item 1939/0108.

²⁹ Police Dept file, Item 1920/6969, op cit; *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1932.

the yard caused by the lack of drainage from the washhouse. Constable Monck was told that materials were not available for repairs.³⁰

On 16 December 1946, three Aboriginal women, Trixie Jones and Eileen and Maudie Wiluna, and two children were arrested at Yalgoo for having absconded from the Moore River settlement. On the night of the 18th, during the absence of Constable Monck to meet and search the Mullewa-Cue goods train, they escaped from the Gaol through the exercise yard by hammering nails into a lock until it burst open. The women were recaptured two days later and returned to Moore River. Shortly after the escape, a strong wind flattened part of the exercise yard wall and prisoners had to remain confined in the cells, despite the high summer temperatures. It was mid-1948 before repairs were completed on the Gaol and Quarters.³¹

In 1962, there was a report of an Aborigine named Ernie Carnamah who escaped from the Gaol by removing an air-vent in the cell and climbing through it and out through a vent in the roof. He returned the next day accompanied by his brother after a Police search failed to find him. He had originally been arrested for using obscene language and being idle and disorderly. To this was added the charges of escaping from custody and being an 'incurable rogue'.³²

In the 1960s, the Courthouse was in poor repair, and although Court was still held one day a month the Justices dealt with their cases in the Police Station (Gaol). The Courthouse had no toilet facilities, running water, electricity or a detention room in which to hold prisoners. Bird droppings from swallows nesting in the roof space covered the building, which was described as 'bedecked with a full inch of "guano" (swallow variety)'.³³

The Justice Department had no further use for the place and the Courthouse was put on minimum maintenance, which meant it was to be kept secure and watertight. In 1971, the Shire of Yalgoo requested to take over the Courthouse and restore it for use as a museum. The Shire Clerk wrote:

It is difficult to convey the degree of importance which is attached, by persons who have spent the greater part of their lives in this region, to preserving items of local interest, however infinitesimal they may appear in context with the future of this State... The Old Court House is ideally situated for the purpose of attracting visitors and housing the collection.³⁴

The PWD handed over the Courthouse to the Shire at no charge, and an area of land containing the building and designated Yalgoo Lot 183 Reserve 32856 for a museum site was excised from Reserve 3226.³⁵ A Museum Committee was formed to clean up and restore the building and establish the museum collection.

30 Police Dept File, Yalgoo police buildings, Item 1937/4463 V3, op cit.

31 Police Dept file, Item 1937/4463 V3, op cit.

32 Correspondence, 23 February 1962, Police Dept file, Yalgoo escapes from in 1962, SROWA, WAS 76 CONS 3454 Item 62/1075.

33 Correspondence September 1970, PWD file, Yalgoo Courthouse, Item 1939/0108, op cit.

34 Correspondence from S.J.P. Southwood, Shire Clerk, Yalgoo, 23 March 1971, PWD file, Item 1939/0108, op cit.

35 Landgate, Reserves Index, Reserve 3226, 20 September 1974.

Yalgoo Courthouse Museum was officially opened in front of a large crowd on 31 August 1973 by Mr Jack Nevill, a long time Yalgoo resident and member of the Road Board and Shire Council since 1925. The Museum held items from all facets of early life in the district. Celebrations for the opening culminated in a ball held on the night.³⁶ A new road, named Museum Court, accessed the Courthouse Museum site.

The economic fortunes of the Yalgoo Shire took an upward turn in the 1970s with the discovery of tantalite and bauxite deposits. In 1983, a modern police station and quarters were built in Yalgoo on a new site. Yalgoo Lot 171, with Police Quarters, Gaol and Stables was acquired by the Yalgoo Shire for \$4,727 with the intent of developing the site and surrounding area as a caravan park. This project did not eventuate and the Stables were removed sometime prior to 1995. In that year, also, the boundary of Lot 171 was altered slightly in association with the former Road Board Office site adjoining on the south side and Lot 171 became Lot 1.³⁷

In 1996, the Courthouse and Gaol and Police Quarters were entered on the Shire of Yalgoo Municipal Heritage Inventory with a recommendation for entry on the State Register.³⁸

In 1999 the Gaol was relocated to a site beside the Courthouse. The verandahs and exercise yard were reinstated and the Gaol became part of the Museum. Financial assistance for the relocation and restoration work was provided by Normandy Golden Grove Operations Pty Ltd and a grant from the WA Centenary of Federation State Committee.³⁹ Yalgoo Lot 171 with the Police Quarters, was sold into private ownership.⁴⁰

In 2007, *Yalgoo Justice Precinct* comprises the Courthouse (fmr) and Gaol (fmr), which form the Yalgoo Courthouse Museum complex. The Police Quarters (fmr) do not form part of this assessment.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Yalgoo Justice Precinct, a group of single-storey corrugated iron clad buildings, comprises the Courthouse (fmr) and Gaol (fmr), which form the Museum. Sheds along the eastern boundary of the Museum site, and the freestanding shelters in the forecourt of the Museum, and the outbuildings associated with the Police Quarters (fmr) are of no significance.

Yalgoo Justice Precinct is located on the west side of Gibbons Street in Yalgoo townsite, midway between Henty Street (north) and Milligan Street (south).

Museum group: Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station and Gaol (fmr) are off Gibbons Street, at the west end of Museum Court. Museum Court is an expansive asphalt area between the Shire of Yalgoo administration office

³⁶ *West Australian*, 'News of the North', 5 September 1973, p. 5.

³⁷ PWD file, Yalgoo police station & quarters, Reserve 17555 - disposal of, SROWA, WAS 82 CONS 4119 Item 1982/1391; Landgate, Reserves Index, Reserve 17555 Yalgoo Lot 171, excised from Reserve 3226 in 1920 for police purposes, and cancelled in 1984; Certificate of Title, Vol. 1660 Fol. 901, 9 February & 23 October 1984; Landgate, Survey Diagram 90317, 27 November 1995.

³⁸ Suba, T., Burgess, H., & Aris, K., *Shire of Yalgoo Municipal Heritage Inventory*, 1995.

³⁹ Explanatory sign attached to the Gaol.

⁴⁰ Certificate of Title, Vol. 12212 Fol. 802, 2 September 2002.

(south) and the Telstra facility (north). The Museum group is located 100 metres or so south-west (rear) of the Police Quarters (fmr), with no visual or physical connection. Although there are views of the Courthouse (fmr) and Gaol (fmr) from Gibbons Street, the views are significantly impacted by the Telstra facility on the north corner of Museum Court, on Gibbons Street, directly in front of the Museum group.

The site of the Museum group is natural earth that slopes from the rear (west) to the front where it is accessed at the west termination of Museum Court. The site is fenced with steel framed chain link fence and has double steel gates at the entry. The Courthouse (fmr) and Gaol (fmr), within the Museum site are also visually impacted by elements on display and shelters constructed for display purposes. Open-front steel-clad sheds extend along most of the north boundary. Further to that are two free standing steel framed open-side shelters for specific machinery/vehicle displays, both situated in front of the Courthouse (fmr) and the relocated Gaol (fmr).

There are no plantings in the Museum area.

Yalgoo Justice Precinct is typically Goldfields (Midwest) vernacular architecture in the basic bungalow design of the Federation period that does not respond to any specific architectural style guides. The buildings are single storey timber framed structures clad with corrugated iron wall linings and roof sheeting.

The Courthouse (fmr) is located in the south-west corner of the Museum group, facing east (Gibbons Street). The single storey timber framed rectangular building is clad with horizontal sheets of corrugated iron that have been painted. It is raised off the ground on timber stumps with concrete edging filling the space between the stumps around the main building perimeter. The hipped roof has vented gablets, and is clad with short length sheets of the original corrugated iron that has been painted. The roof has three distinctive air vents along the ridge. The perimeter verandahs are included under the main roof. The verandah is supported by simple stop chamfered square timber posts. The verandah floor is at ground level, several steps down from the floor level of the building. Part of the verandah floor is concrete, but the majority is recent random stone with concrete joints.

The windows throughout are timber framed double hung sashes with vertical steel grilles over. The doors are original flush-grooved four panel with original hardware. The entry to the Courthouse Office at the north end is a single door, and the main entry into the Courtroom has a set of double panel doors.

The floor plan is a rectangle that comprises two rooms. The south end is the larger space of the Courtroom, with a smaller office room behind on the north end. Both rooms are accessed at the front (east), and are interconnected, and the Courtroom also opens onto the west side verandah, aligned with the elevated bench area, and the dock. The interior retains a significant degree of original fabric in the tongue and groove timber floorboards throughout, painted ripple iron wall cladding and lining to the coved ceiling. The original Courtroom fitout remains in situ including the raised bench, railing and gate across the south end, separating the public area from the courtroom proper, the witness box and prisoner dock. Midway along the rear edge of the verandah is a square concrete water tank on a random stone foundation.

The Gaol (fmr), is located in the north-west corner of the Museum group, facing east (Gibbons Street), aligned with the Courthouse (fmr) parallel with the rear fence (west) of the site. The single-storey timber framed rectangular building, which was relocated to the site, is clad with horizontal sheets of corrugated iron that have been painted. The building is raised off the ground on timber stumps, and there are several steps to both entries (office and cells), on the front. The rear is at ground level. The hipped roof has vented gables, and is clad with short length sheets of the original corrugated iron that has been painted. The main roof features low-pitched skillion vents front and back. The roof breaks pitch over the verandahs to the front and sides. The verandah is supported by simple stop chamfered square timber posts. There is no verandah floor. There is a round painted corrugated iron water tank under the verandah on the south side. At the rear is a wall height enclosure with a timber skillion roof frame covered with chicken wire (reinstated exercise yard).

Two windows are in place on the north and south walls. They are small awning windows located high on the walls, with metal grilles on the interior. The doors are vertical timber lined ledge and brace doors with original hardware including the shot bolts. The interior doors are similarly lined although the cell doors are double timber lined. The cell doors and door into the office (former large cell) also have a sliding panel with a view hole, although the steel grille door to the office has been removed. The cell doors and the external doors each end of the cell corridor have double door configurations with steel grille doors also in place. The door opening on the east side of the office from the verandah is not original, as confirmed by the documentary evidence.

The floor plan is a rectangle that comprises a room on the south side (office/former cell) with a central access door into a wide corridor that runs front to back, where it accesses the exercise yard, with timber doors and steel grille doors at both ends. On the north side there are two cells. Both have two doors (timber ledge and brace and steel grilles), and each cell is corrugated iron lined in its entirety with a small window high on the north wall. The interior retains a significant degree of original fabric in the tongue and groove Oregon timber floorboards throughout, corrugated iron wall cladding with vertical steel battens throughout, and corrugated iron lining to the coved ceiling. Metal conduits remain in place on the walls and ceilings evidencing the lighting fitouts.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Of the 44 Police Stations and Quarters on the State Register, none are of corrugated iron clad construction. P09110 Sandstone Police Station, House and Gaol (fmr) which is also located in the Mid-west region, is the only other place on the HCWA database that comprises a group of police buildings of corrugated iron clad construction, however the construction date for this place is unknown.

Police Stations and Quarters in the Goldfields region.

Of the 44 Police Stations and Quarters on the State Register only one is located in the Goldfields Region. This is Coolgardie Post Office & Associated Buildings (1894), which was originally a police station and quarters with

attached gaol. It is not comparable, being of a much larger scale and constructed of stone.

Between 1892 and 1912, 71 police stations were opened in the goldfields and 35 were closed.⁴¹ Among those constructed in 1896, at the same time as at Yalgoo, were the Lockups at Nannine, Day Dawn and Mount Magnet, and Police Quarters at Nannine and Day Dawn.⁴² Surviving plans indicate that these were all built to the same design. None of these have survived, including the Nannine Police Quarters relocated to Yalgoo in 1923.

The only police facility of similar timber-framed corrugated iron clad construction that has been assessed is P1470 *Leonora Police Station Group* (fmr), which has been assessed recently and recommended for interim listing. This group is a more complete collection of Police buildings, comprising: four-cell Male Lockup, including exercise yard (1899); former Station Building (1900-09); Stable (1900); the single-cell Female Lockup, including exercise yard (1907); and, Sergeant's Quarters (1911). The buildings are of similar style but not the same layout. The Lockup and Station were constructed first and the Quarters and Courtroom were then added to the Station building, reflecting the development of the Leonora district. These buildings appear to have been a later variation of those built several years earlier at Yalgoo.

P01450 Old Police Complex Laverton which is on the HCWA database comprises a group of police buildings, of which only the Lock Up is of corrugated iron clad construction.

The elements of *Yalgoo Justice Precinct*, in spite of the relocations, exhibit original form and considerable original fabric.

Yalgoo Justice Precinct is a fine example of a timber framed corrugated iron clad justice complex in the West Australian goldfields and a rare example not only in the Midwest region, but also in the State as a whole.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

⁴¹ Conole, Peter, *Protect & Serve: A history of policing in Western Australia*, WA Police Service, Perth, 2002, p. 115.

⁴² *West Australian Government Gazette*, 17 April 1896, p. 597.