



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)

- 7.6.6 Providing services and welfare
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 306 Domestic activities
- 602 Early settlers

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Fairholme Group, comprising *Fairholme*, *Old Fairholme*, *Welbourne House*, mature trees, masonry and stone fences in front of *Welbourne House*, the entrance driveway to *Fairholme*, the landscaped area to the north-west of *Welbourne House* and the area of floodplain between the site and the river, are of significance to the community of Guildford and Western Australia who value them as a component of the historic town and representative of the settlement patterns of the area. (Criterion 1.1)

Fairholme is of aesthetic significance as a fine example of a mansion designed in the Federation Queen Anne style commonly employed for domestic suburban architecture in Australia in the decades immediately before and after 1900. The use of Art-Nouveau style decoration for the stained glass windows in the formal rooms of the house and in the carved fireplace surround in the ballroom are of particular note. (Criterion 1.2)

The site is of aesthetic significance for its contribution to the Market Street streetscape which is an attractive setting in itself and more significant because it is a component of the historic town of Guildford. The site, in particular *Fairholme*, has landmark value when viewed from the street, from the river and from the railway. Together with *Earlsferry* on the western bank, *Fairholme* marks the entry to Guildford when viewed from the river. (Criterion 1.3)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

The layout of driveway, service court and lawn in front of *Fairholme* provide an attractive and appropriate setting for the house and associated outbuildings of *Old Fairholme*. The avenue of Flame Trees between *Welbourne House* and the river have a distinctive impact on the riverside landscape and on views between the river and the house. (Criterion 1.3)

The buildings and site features, including *Fairholme*, *Old Fairholme*, *Welbourne House*, boundary walls in front of *Welbourne House*, the Sugar Gums in front of *Fairholme* and the mature cape Lilacs in front of *Welbourne House* together with the mature street trees of the adjacent streetscape, create a pleasing cultural environment. (Criterion 1.4)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

The place is part of the original subdivision of the Guildford townsite, one of the three original towns established and settled in the Swan River colony in 1829. (Criterion 2.1)

The gardens and landscape features of *Fairholme*, former Almond Grove (no longer extant) and *Welbourne House* illustrate the evolution of human occupation on the site. (Criterion 2.1)

Welbourne House is of historic significance for associations with the early settlement and development of Guildford from the 1840s. (Criterion 2.2)

Fairholme is historically significant as representation of the period of prosperity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century which occurred not only as a result of the gold rush but also as an outcome of the success of the pastoral industry in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

Welbourne House is of historic significance as the place where John Welbourne, a prominent citizen of Guildford responsible for the construction of a number of early town buildings, resided. It is also significant due to the refuge that the place provided for the monks of New Norcia in the 1850s. Furthermore, *Welbourne House* is of historic significance as the residence of Stephen Gardiner, head teacher at the Government Boys School at the beginning of the 1900s. (Criterion 2.3)

Fairholme is of historic significance as the place where Charles Smith, one of the emerging class of wealthy pastoralists who established mansions in and around Perth, Fremantle and Guildford in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, resided. *Fairholme* is also of historic significance for associations with Nathaniel Harper who, together with the government, purchased *Fairholme* and adjacent *Earlsferry* in 1950 for the establishment of the Nathaniel Harper Homes. (Criterion 2.3)

Fairholme is a good example of the Federation Queen Anne architectural style and incorporates some excellent examples of Art-Nouveau decoration in the stained glass windows and in the carved fireplace surround in the ballroom. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The site has the potential to yield through archaeological excavation, information on colonial elite domestic material culture. This could include information on origin, quality and quantity, changes in the material culture base through time, its use to maintain ties with the British homeland and to express a growing sense of national identity. (Criterion 3.1)

The site has the potential to yield information about the material culture associated with servants and to study how the master-servant relationship was defined and maintained through the use of space and material culture. (Criterion 3.2)

The site has some potential to reveal information about changing gardening activities. Remnant fruit trees, vines and rose bushes are important for their potential to yield information on the cultivation of productive and ornamental plants from the time of settlement of Western Australia onwards. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Fairholme Group is valued by the community for its association with the settlement and development of Guildford; by the descendants of the families who created them; and to the staff and clients of the Disability Services Commission and their families for whom the place is and has been home. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Welbourne House is a rare example of a building with the earliest stage of construction dating back to the 1840s. (Criterion 5.1)

Whilst not individually rare, the buildings and site features are all integral components of the town of Guildford which is a rare example of an historic town remaining substantially intact and now part of the broader Perth metropolitan region. (Criterion 5.1)

Fairholme and *Old Fairholme* together with the associated driveway, service court and associated areas demonstrate a way of life rarely practised in the State today characterised by a main house and associated servants quarters. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Welbourne House is a representative example of a building dating from the 1840s but with subsequent additions over time in response to the requirements of subsequent owners. (Criterion 6.1)

Fairholme and *Old Fairholme* are representative of a mansion and associated servants quarters and outbuildings developed in the early 1900s. The adaptation of *Old Fairholme* to provide servants quarters is representative of the changing prosperity of the State at the beginning of the 1900s. (Criterion 6.1)

Fairholme, *Old Fairholme* and associated outbuildings and garden areas including the remnant fruit trees and vines between the houses and the river, help to demonstrate a way of life practised by residents of Guildford in the period up to World War II. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Welbourne House is in fair to good condition considering its age, with problems of rising damp in some wall as is typical for buildings from the nineteenth century constructed without cavities and without a damp proof course.

Old Fairholme is in fair condition with some evidence of rising damp.

Fairholme is in fair to good condition. There is some superficial deterioration of the fabric generally. The verandah posts show evidence of rot and serious deterioration.

The avenue of Flame Trees below *Welbourne House*, Bougainvillea, Jacaranda trees, Crepe Myrtles and Wisteria vine adjacent to it appear to be in sound condition. It was not possible to determine at the time of inspection (1999), the condition of most of the deciduous plants including fruit trees, vines and the roses. The Jacaranda and Brachychiton tree in front of *Fairholme* appear to be in very poor condition. All other elements appear to be in fair condition.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Welbourne House is no longer used for residential purposes, however would be suitable for that purpose and has a medium level of integrity.

Old Fairholme is no longer used for servants quarters. The building was converted to school classrooms in 1950. However, it is no longer used for this purpose. The building has low integrity.

Fairholme was originally constructed as a residence, however has not been used as a private home since the 1940s. It is capable of being restored to residential use however, and has a high level of integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Welbourne House contains fabric from a number of different periods of construction. The original structure is difficult to differentiate from the subsequent additions. In terms of authenticity, the building has low to medium authenticity as a house dating from the 1840s.

Old Fairholme contains a fairly high proportion of original fabric and has a medium level of authenticity.

Fairholme was constructed in the first decade of the twentieth century and remains substantially as originally constructed. It has a high level of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Supporting Evidence has been taken from: Heritage and Conservation Professionals, '*Fairholme, Old Fairholme & Welbourne House Conservation Plan*' prepared for the Department of Contract and Management Services on behalf of the Disability Services Commission in February 1999.

Key sections used: 1.0 Introduction (p3-8), 2.0 Documentary Evidence (p9-30), 3.0 Physical Evidence (p31-72), 6.0 Analysis of Significance (p91-98).

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to Heritage and Conservation Professionals, '*Fairholme, Old Fairholme & Welbourne House Conservation Plan*' prepared for the Department of Contract and Management Services on behalf of the Disability Services Commission in February 1999.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to Heritage and Conservation Professionals, '*Fairholme, Old Fairholme & Welbourne House Conservation Plan*' prepared for the Department of Contract and Management Services on behalf of the Disability Services Commission in February 1999.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a Comparative Analysis refer to Heritage and Conservation Professionals, '*Fairholme, Old Fairholme & Welbourne House Conservation Plan*' prepared for the Department of Contract and Management Services on behalf of the Disability Services Commission in February 1999.

13.4 REFERENCES

Heritage and Conservation Professionals, '*Fairholme, Old Fairholme & Welbourne House Conservation Plan*' prepared for the Department of Contract and Management Services on behalf of the Disability Services Commission in February 1999.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Issues of Aboriginal significance have not been researched as part of this conservation plan, however it is note that in the event of any substantial redevelopment of the site these values should be canvassed.