



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 wording of this document has been adapted from Fremantle Justice Precinct Conservation Plan prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals for The Department of Contract and Management Services in November 1999 with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 2.3 Coming to Australia as a punishment
- 3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction
- 5.2 Organising workers and work places
- 7.1 Governing Australia as a province of the British Empire
- 7.2 Developing institutions of self-government and democracy
- 7.6 Administering Australia
- 7.7 Defending Australia

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 106 Workers
- 108 Government Policy
- 403 Law and order
- 408 Institutions
- 602 Early settlers

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The former Courthouse, constructed of Fremantle limestone in 1899, is a fine example of a building designed in the Federation Academic Classical style by the Public Works Department. (Criterion 1.1)

The landscaped square on the corner of Henderson and Queen Streets has remained as open space throughout the history of the place from the 1850s to the present. (Criterion 1.1)

The two double storey terraces of Police Barracks (fmr), constructed of Fremantle limestone in 1897 and 1903, display elements of both Federation and Victorian Georgian styles, and provide a visual link between the Courthouse and Warders Cottages. (Criterion 1.1 & 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 Artillery Drill Hall (fmr) is a significant structure utilising a distinctive design comprising curved laminated jarrah ribs and curved iron T sections to support a 26 metre span, barrel vaulted roof. The 1940s brick extensions provide a strong and formal street presence onto Queen Street. (Criterion 1.2 & 1.3)

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex is linked visually to *Fremantle Prison* through the use of similar building materials and styles and the use of limestone boundary walls which link to the prison wall system. The strong axial link of Fairbairn Street also links the area visually to *Fremantle Prison*. (Criterion 1.3)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex formed part of the original convict land grant that was established as part of the Fremantle Convict Establishment in 1851. The site, originally used for barracks and warders' quarters, was taken over by the police in 1888, and since then has maintained links to both the Police and Fremantle Prison. (Criterion 2.1)

The Artillery Drill Hall (fmr) was built for the volunteer guard in Fremantle in 1896, who were responsible for civil defence, and was used as a training facility during World War II. (Criterion 2.1 & 2.2)

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex was built on the site of the convict establishment in Fremantle, which changed the face of Western Australia by facilitating the growth and development of the State. (Criterion 2.2)

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex is associated with a large number of individuals who have been involved with the development of the various buildings and facilities on the site throughout its history, including John Grainger, Chief Architect of the Public Works Department in the 1890s, who was responsible for the construction of the Courthouse, and prominent architect R.J. Ferguson, responsible for the adaptation of the site in the 1970s and for the design of the 1978 Police Station. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex has the potential to yield information through archaeological research on the layout and history of the Sapper's and Miner's Barracks which was located on the section of the site now occupied by the former Courthouse, Police Barracks (fmr) constructed in 1903, and the landscaped area on the corner of Henderson and Queen Streets. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The site of the *Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex* is valued by the community and particularly by those descended from the convicts and those who accompanied the convicts to Fremantle. (Criterion 4.1)

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex is valued by the community as an ongoing physical representation of policing and the judiciary in Fremantle. (Criterion 4.1)

The Artillery Drill Hall (fmr) has been of social importance for its role as a training facility for the volunteer artillery corps, and currently as the 'Fly By Night' musicians club. (Criterion 4.1)

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex is associated with all residents, employees and staff who have lived or worked there, and with those who have been involved in court cases and police operations, on both sides of the law, over the period of its history. (Criterion 4.1)

Fremantle Prison and the Fairbairn Street access road are a focal point of the City of Fremantle, and the clear link between *Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex* and *Fremantle Prison* contributes to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex is closely associated with *Fremantle Prison* aesthetically and historically, and contains a number of rare or unique structures, which located together, give the area a unique status in Fremantle and Western Australia. (Criterion 5.1)

The Artillery Drill Hall (fmr) is one of only two similar, but not identical, drill halls constructed in the 1890s as large open structures with curved roofs. The other is located at the Swan Barracks in Perth. (Criterion 5.1)

The former Fremantle Courthouse is a rare example of a public building designed in the Federation Academic Classical style in Perth in the late nineteenth century which remains substantially intact and has continually been used for its initial purpose until 1999. (Criterion 5.1)

Although substantially altered, the two terraces of Police Barracks (fmr) are a rare example of residential accommodation for a large numbers of staff and police officers on the Police Station site. (Criterion 5.1)

The precinct is a rare example of a site which is likely to contain archaeological evidence relating to the Sappers' and Miners' Barracks, one of the former buildings associated with the Fremantle convict establishment. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex is a representative example of a place where the Police Station, Courthouse and Lockup are located together on one site, as was typically the case for State facilities constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Western Australia. (Criterion 6.1)

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex demonstrates, through the presence of *Warder's Cottages* and the Police Barracks (fmr), the practice of accommodating staff associated with the practice of law and order on or adjacent to their place of employment. (Criterion 6.2)

The Courthouse (fmr) is designed in the Federation Academic Classical style, often used by the Public Works Department in the design of Courthouses and Government buildings at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. (Criterion 6.1)

12.3 CONDITION

Generally the buildings, structures and landscape features of *Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex* are in good condition.

The Courthouse (fmr) is in good condition externally with the exception of the stonework to the front elevation which shows evidence of deterioration.

The Lock-up, Police Barracks (fmr) (1897 and 1903), and the Artillery Drill Hall (fmr) were only inspected externally but appear to be in fair to good condition.

The Police Station (1978) was also only inspected externally but appears to be in fair to good condition. No assessment was made of the condition of the face concrete.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex has a high level of integrity in that a number of buildings are still used for their original purposes and therefore the character of the precinct has remained relatively intact. The precinct has been used principally for police, court and residential purposes from the 1880s.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Fremantle Courthouse (fmr) and Police Station Complex is largely intact although changes to the building and the site that occurred in the 1970s reduced the authenticity. Changes included the reconstruction of a number of limestone boundary walls and the demolition of the 1916 Police Station.

The Courthouse (fmr) has high authenticity being largely as originally constructed externally. Internally one of the courtrooms has been divided into two with stud partitions and a considerable amount of new fabric was introduced during restoration works following the fire in 1993.

The Lock-up has low authenticity having been substantially reconstructed in 1978.

Police Barracks (fmr) (1897 and 1903) have low authenticity having been substantially reconstructed in 1978. This involved the removal of gardens, yards and outbuildings.

The Artillery Drill Hall (fmr) has high authenticity being largely as constructed in 1895/6 and 1940.

The Police Station is authentic to its 1978 design.

The construction of Parry Street across Fairbairn Street and across the area of former Prison gardens reduced the authenticity of the site, although this area had been altered previously in the 1960s when carparks replaced earlier gardens.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Key sections of the supporting evidence have been taken from 'Fremantle Justice Precinct Conservation Policy', prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals for The Department of Contract and Management Services in November 1999.

Key sections used: 2.0 Documentary Evidence (p21- 41), 3.0 Physical Evidence 41-52), 4.0 Documentary and Physical (p53-84), 5.0 Analysis of Evidence 85-88), 8.0 Graded Zones and Elements of Significance (p99-106).

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence, refer to 'Fremantle Justice Precinct Conservation Policy', prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals for The Department of Contract and Management Services in November 1999.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence, refer to 'Fremantle Justice Precinct Conservation Policy', prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals for The Department of Contract and Management Services in November 1999.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

'Fremantle Justice Precinct Conservation Policy', prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals for The Department of Contract and Management Services in November 1999.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Issues of Aboriginal significance have not been researched, and in the event of any substantial redevelopment of the site these values should be canvassed.

In assessing the buildings comprising *Fremantle Court House (fmr)* and *Police Station Complex*, no internal inspections were undertaken.