



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)

- 3.1 Inspecting the coastline
- 3.7.1 Shipping to and from Australian ports
- 3.10.1 Regulating waterways

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 106 Workers
- 201 River and sea transport
- 209 Technology and technological change
- 309 Technology and technological change
- 507 Water, power, major transport routes
- 601 Aboriginal people

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The complex comprising the 1902 lighthouse, the 1858 former lighthouse and keeper's quarters (ruin) and two sets of later keepers' quarters and keepers' quarters (1902 and 1908), together with associated structures, form a complex of elements that are fine examples of architecture in their individual right, expressed in Victorian Georgian and Federation Bungalow and Free Classical styles. (Criterion 1.1)

Breaksea Island is part of the complex of islands, bays and headlands that make up the harbour system to Albany. Breaksea Island is one of the harbour's natural landmarks. Breaksea Island has natural heritage value as a significant element in the seascape off Albany. Viewed from up to a kilometre or so distance, the remaining structures that make up the lightstation complex have landmark value. (Criterion 1.3)

The developed part of Breaksea Island, with its collection of buildings constructed over a period of time, makes up a small, but important lightstation precinct. (Criterion 1.4)

* 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.

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

In a single location, the structures at Breaksea Island indicate the importance of Albany as a harbour, the navigational aids that were constructed to improve the safety for shipping and the development of a lightstation through time. (Criterion 2.1)

The lightstation at Breaksea Island is indicative of a time when Albany was the principal port of Western Australia, a phase of history that pre-dates the development of Fremantle Harbour. (Criterion 2.2)

In 1898 the lighthouse was established as a Lloyd's signalling station, the first in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

The 1858 lighthouse and keeper's quarters is associated with the use of Imperial convict labour in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Due to the completeness of the complex as a whole and the 1858 lighthouse in particular, *Breaksea Island Lighthouse* has some potential as a benchmark site value for lightstation development in Western Australia. (Criterion 3.1)

the place is a significant conservation reserve, being an important breeding area for the Little Penguin, the Flesh-footed Shearwater and the Great-wing Petrel. It is also one of the few known locations of the fern, *Asplenium obtusatum*, a Declared Rare Flora species. (Criterion 3.1)

Two archaeologically sensitive areas, identified during the course of the inspection, have the potential to provide important information regarding the way of life of convict labourers and subsequent lighthouse keepers. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Breaksea Island Lighthouse is valued by some sections of the community for its former use as a manned lightstation and is an object of curiosity as a set of buildings and ruins high on the top of Breaksea Island. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Breaksea Island Lighthouse has rarity value as a complex of structures, being the second lighthouse in the State, illustrating part of the history of development of lightstations in Western Australia. Further, the remains of the 1858 lighthouse and quarters building is the largest and most complete of its type in the State and therefore has a high degree of rarity value. (Criterion 5.1)

Breaksea Island Lighthouse provides substantial evidence of manned lightstations through time, a practice that has now ceased. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Breaksea Island Lighthouse is representative of lightstation architecture through time, from 1858 to 1908. (Criterion 6.1)

With its complex of functioning elements and the ruins of previous structures, outbuildings, animal pens and the like, *Breaksea Island Lighthouse* is representative of lightstation living conditions through time from 1858 to the

termination of manned lightstations as a mode of operation in 1926. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

With the exception of the 1902 lighthouse, which is in good condition, the remaining structures and elements are in fair to poor condition. The 1858 lighthouse and 1902 and 1908 quarters are in very poor condition and may in some instances be dangerous. Maintenance to the 1902 lighthouse has been regular and effective and to the other buildings, irregular, and they have suffered the consequences. There is no management program for the structures other than the 1902 lighthouse.

The landscape is generally in fair to good condition. The rabbit population is large and control of rabbits is required. Destruction of the introduced garden plant *Cotyledon orbiculata* would be ideal, but is not vital.

12.4 INTEGRITY

The original intention of all components of the *Breaksea Island Lighthouse* is legible. The buildings are either used for their intended purpose, or have been abandoned. The 1902 lightstation is readily capable of future conservation, the 1902 and 1908 quarters buildings will require more effort and the 1858 lighthouse and keeper's quarters are in a fragile state. The integrity of the site as whole is high.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

With minor exceptions, such as the light system and the addition of solar power and batteries, the structures and elements of the *Breaksea Island Lighthouse* remain authentic. The place retains a very high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Attached are key sections of the Supporting Evidence prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, McDonald Hales and Associates, Muir Environmental, 'Breaksea Island Albany: Conservation Assessment', for The Australian Maritime Safety Authority, May 2000.

Key sections used: Historical Background of Breaksea Island Lighthouse (p10 - 11), physical evidence by lot description (11 -13, 15 - 19).

Also used: Letter from the Hon Minister for the Environment and Heritage to the Director, Heritage Council of WA dated 3 January 2002. (HCWA File P 3353)

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, McDonald Hales and Associates, Muir Environmental, 'Breaksea Island Albany: Conservation Assessment', prepared for The Australian Maritime Safety Authority, May 2000.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, McDonald Hales and Associates, Muir Environmental,

'Breaksea Island Albany: Conservation Assessment', prepared for The Australian Maritime Safety Authority, May 2000.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the Comparative Information refer to Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, McDonald Hales and Associates, Muir Environmental, 'Breaksea Island Albany: Conservation Assessment', prepared for The Australian Maritime Safety Authority, May 2000.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, McDonald Hales and Associates, Muir Environmental, 'Breaksea Island Albany: Conservation Assessment', prepared for The Australian Maritime Safety Authority, May 2000.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

The documentary evidence suggests that the Breaksea Island as a whole may have social significance to the Aboriginal community so that further works on the Island, including conservation works should include consultation with Aboriginal people as part of the process.