



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.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is constructed in the Post-War International style, a design which reflects the architectural styles and values of the 1950s and 1960s period. (Criterion 1.1)

Western Australian artist Howard Taylor was commissioned to complete four murals for the terminal building. These include two works of birds and flowers of Western Australia located in Berth F and two works of trees and animals located in Berth G. (Criterion 1.2)

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is a prominent 20th century building on Victoria Quay. The building has landmark qualities from both the landward side, Fremantle, and from the Inner Harbour. The two 3 1/2 ton electric quay cranes are important industrial features of the Fremantle skyline. (Criterion 1.3)

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal, a purpose built passenger terminal and cargo-handling building, is a significant 20th century feature of Victoria Quay, Inner Harbour. The conveyor belts are still extant in the Passenger Terminal area of the building and two of the four 3 1/2 ton electric quay cranes are still in place. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is associated with post World War Two immigration which has had a remarkable impact on the development of Fremantle and the State. (Criterion 2.1)

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal was purpose built to service the needs of the huge passenger traffic that occurred after World War Two primarily as a result of the Federal Government's immigration policies. The building reflected Fremantle's significance as the Western Gateway to Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

* 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.

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal, along with the Fremantle Port Authority Building (1964) and the containerisation of North Quay, reflects the modernisation of port facilities that occurred during the post war mineral boom. (Criterion 2.2)

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal has national significance as the point of entry for tens of thousands of migrants arriving in Western Australia and Australia due to the Federal Government's post World War Two immigration policies. (Criterion 2.3)

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is associated with F. W. E. Tydeman, General Manager of the Fremantle Harbour Trust from 1950 to 1963, who initiated and directed the modernisation, mechanisation and containerisation of port facilities during the post war mineral and immigration boom. (Criterion 2.3)

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is associated with the architectural firm Hobbs, Winning and Leighton who designed the building in collaboration with the Fremantle Harbour Trust. (Criterion 2.3)

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is associated with Western Australian artist Howard Taylor who was commissioned to complete four works of art for the terminal building. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is associated with the hundreds of thousands of migrants who came through the facility in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of post World War Two immigration. The place has special importance as the site of first landfall and first impressions of Australia for these arriving migrants. (Criterion 4.1)

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal has associations with holiday makers arriving at the port aboard cruise ships, which continue to use the building as an access point for entry to Fremantle and Western Australia. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is the largest terminal building in Australia and is the only one of its class in Western Australia. *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* designed and built for the dual purpose of handling passenger traffic and general cargo and is the only terminal in Australia that has the capacity to berth two large liners simultaneously. (Criteria 5.1 & 5.2)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is representative of a building, designed in the 1950s and 1960s, to service the needs of those arriving at the port via passenger liners, the principal means of overseas and interstate transport during this period. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is in sound condition, considering the building's location on Victoria Quay and that it is subject to harsh elements. u condition is a direct result of the Fremantle Port Authority's maintenance and management programs.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal has a moderate degree of integrity. The original intention of the building remains considerably intact, although particular elements of its use servicing passenger traffic and general cargo have been removed or are no longer in use.

In January 1999, the building is being used as a function centre, exhibition hall, and, during the summer months, as a passenger terminal. The 1996 adaptation of the building to a function centre is compatible, considering the vast spaces that are available.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal has a moderate degree of authenticity.

In 1996, the building was refurbished and areas of the building were converted for its use as a Function Centre and Exhibition Hall.

At this same time, two of the four cranes were removed from the terminal, the remaining two are no longer operational. A substantial amount of the original conveyor system has also been removed. (The conveyor system remains only in the Upper Level Passenger Terminal.)

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Kristy Bizzaca, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Ron Bodycoat, Architect.

For the purpose of identifying the area of the site within which any cultural heritage significance shall apply to *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal*, the curtilage shall extend as follows and as shown on the attached plan:

a rectangular area extending from the outer face of the Wharf structure on the Quay side, inland to a line 10 metres away from the south east face of the Loading Platforms, upstream 10 metres beyond the face of the building and downstream to the extremity of the surviving crane rail.

This curtilage includes the Wharf structure of Berths F and G. Should the curtilage be extended into the Inner Harbour¹ itself to indicate the actual physical size of the two Berths, the consultants recommend that a survey of the area be undertaken.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is situated on Victoria Quay, Fremantle. Victoria Quay forms part of the Inner Harbour located at the mouth of the Swan River adjacent to the City of Fremantle. The Inner Harbour is Western Australia's major container and general cargo port.

Influenced by the granting of Responsible Government to Western Australia, the discovery of gold in 1890s and the decision to establish Fremantle as Western Australia's principal port, construction of the Inner Harbour commenced in 1892. Under the supervision of Irish civil engineer C. Y. O'Connor, work included the construction of North and South Moles, the blasting and dredging of the river mouth and bed, and the reclamation of land on the south side of the river establishing the area of Victoria Quay.

C. Y. O'Connor had a huge impact on the development of Western Australia, including the creation of the Public Works Department, the design and construction of the Inner Harbour, the extension of roads and railways, the design and construction of the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme, as well as other public works. O'Connor also designed the Bunbury Jetty on similar lines to Victoria Quay, with a timber jetty protected by moles.²

Consolidation of the Inner Harbour continued up to the mid-1920s. As the trade and tonnage handled through the port had reached full capacity, three major proposals for the development of the Harbour were put forward between 1927 and 1929.³ However none of these proposals were

¹ The Inner Harbour comprises Victoria Quay and North Quay, ending where the Swan River meets the ocean.

² Tauman, M., *The Chief: C Y O'Connor*, UWA Press, Nedlands, 1978.

³ For a detailed discussion of the three major proposals see Tull, M., 'The development of the Port of Fremantle, Australia's Western Gateway', in *Great Circle*, Vol 7, No 2, 1985. Proposals were prepared by Engineer-in-Chief of the Public Works department, F. W. H. Stileman (1927); Sir George Buchanan, eminent British consulting engineer (1927); and P. Rustat, of Sir Alexander Gill and Partners of London (1929).

accepted. In 30 April 1930, the new government, under Sir James Mitchell, claimed that there were no funds for public works. Although no port development was undertaken because of the cutbacks caused by the Great Depression, minor improvements were made to existing facilities and cargo-handling efficiency was improved.⁴

With the Great Depression and the outbreak of World War Two, the development of the Inner Harbour was kept to a minimum until the mineral boom of the 1950s and 1960s. The main construction occurred in the early 1930s when bulk handling facilities were adopted in the port, largely due to the inter-war agricultural expansion and the formation of the Co-operative Bulkhandling Company. During World War Two, a substantial part of the harbour was given over to naval requirements and works were primarily for defence purposes.

In 1948, F. W. E. Tydeman, a consulting engineer, prepared a report on the development of the Fremantle port.⁵ This report was only partly implemented because of ensuing arguments as to the best approach to upgrade the Inner Harbour. Tydeman himself was appointed General Manager of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, a position he held until 1963, and it was under his administration that the modernisation of the Inner Harbour was undertaken.

Mechanisation and containerisation were the primary programs introduced under Tydeman. Under the auspices of these programs, modern equipment was purchased, mechanical workshops built, methods of bulkhandling improved, berths modified and seven quay cranes were installed. The majority of these new works were concentrated at North Quay. From the time of these developments, North Quay became the focus for shipping and cargo handling in the port. Victoria Quay was, and continues to be, used by a range of trading and non-trading ships and its facilities used for port and other related activities. It was at the end of this period of development that the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* was built.

From the time of European settlement in 1829 until the mid 1970s, Fremantle was the main point of entry for migrants and visitors entering Western Australia. Victoria Quay, in particular the west end of the quay, became the centre for migrant and visitor facilities. The west end was the location of transit sheds and the immigration offices and information buildings.

Post World War Two immigration had a massive impact on the socio-economic development of Western Australia and indeed Australia as a whole. By the end of World War Two, the Federal Government had implemented the immigration policy 'Populate or Perish' in an effort to populate the country for defence purposes and to stimulate post war development. The program was initially directed at British immigrants who, as a result of policies of assimilation, were thought to be more easily integrated into the general Australian society. However, lack of numbers

⁴ Tull, M., *op. cit.*, p. 131.

⁵ Tydeman, F. W. E., 'Report on the Port of Fremantle', City of Fremantle, 1948.

forced the Federal Government to look towards the huge refugee population in war torn Europe for potential migrants.⁶

The Displaced Persons Scheme brought thousands of European migrants to Western Australia. The first displaced persons arrived in Fremantle on the 'International Refugee Organisation transport *General Stewart*' on 13 February 1948.⁷ Between 1948 and 1952, 19,000 displaced persons arrived in Western Australia.⁸ This number increased dramatically c. 1952 when the Federal Government's Department of Immigration focussed its attention on southern and eastern Europe as a source of migrants.

It was not until the late 1950s, at the peak of the post war immigration, that plans were made to establish a modern terminal building. The new *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* was seen to be a necessary step to modernising port facilities. The Fremantle Harbour Trust believed

With people all over the world travelling to a far greater extent than ever before, particularly Australians, and with Australia's extensive immigration programme and increasing interest in the economic "pie" of tourism, ship-passenger traffic through the Port of Fremantle has necessitated the construction of the up-to-date Passenger Terminal.⁹

For much of its history, the Port of Fremantle has been 'the Western Gateway to Australia'. Because of its geographical position, Fremantle is the first and last call for ships travelling from or to Europe and America via the Suez Canal or South Africa, and ships going to or from India and South-east Asia.

At the peak of post-war immigration approximately 200,000 passengers passed through the port every year. Some of these passengers were migrants, from both overseas and interstate, others were transit visitors. For many, Fremantle was their first contact with Australia. For migrants, Fremantle would not only be their point of entry to Australia, but what they saw at the port would make a lasting impression of their new country. As a result, it was believed that the Port of Fremantle was a place of special importance and that facilities at the port should reflect the place's significance.¹⁰

In 1957, the Fremantle Harbour Trust announced that planning was underway for an improved passenger terminal with berth accommodation. The Fremantle Harbour Trust had been informed that two 40,000 ton passenger liners, each with a capacity for carrying over 2,000 passengers, were under construction in England. It was said that these ships were being built specifically for the Australian trade and were expected to be on their first Australia run by 1961. The planning of the

⁶ Bizzaca, K., 'The Good Neighbour Council and Postwar Immigration in Western Australia 1949-1955', Honours Thesis, 1995, Introduction.

⁷ Peters, N., 'Arriving in the Lucky Country', in Gregory, J. (ed.), *On the Homefront: Western Australia and World War Two*, UWA Press, 1996, pp. 258.

⁸ Kerry Evans, 'Dreams and Disappointments: The Displaced Persons Scheme in Western Australia', in Gregory, J. (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 265.

⁹ Fremantle Harbour Trust, 'Port of Fremantle Inner Harbour', in 'Port Buildings', Pamphlet File: 387.1, Fremantle Local History Collection.

¹⁰ Fremantle Harbour Trust, 'Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal', opening publication, in 'Port Buildings', *op. cit.*

new passenger terminal took into consideration the accommodation required if two such ships were to berth simultaneously.¹¹

At this time the new Berth 10, North Quay had been built allowing for the long overdue maintenance of Berths F and G to be carried out. It was decided that during the maintenance of these two transit sheds that the buildings would be modified so that a second storey could be added for passenger facilities.¹² In 1958, the construction of the first stage of the passenger building at Berth F had commenced. (The two transit sheds, which had been situated at Berths F and G, had been demolished and the materials reused in other areas or sold.)

Architectural firm Hobbs, Winning and Leighton were the consulting architects for the design of the building in collaboration with the Fremantle Harbour Trust. A. T. Brine & Sons Pty Ltd and the Fremantle Harbour Trust, in conjunction with 22 sub-contractors, constructed the building. Hobbs, Winning and Leighton and A. T. Brine & Sons went on to build the Fremantle Port Authority Building in 1964 and others.

Western Australian artist Howard Taylor was commissioned to complete four murals for the new terminal building. The two located in Berth F are of birds and flowers of Western Australia, and the two in Berth G are of trees and animals. Taylor also executed work for the later Fremantle Port Authority Building. These works are unique in scale and the murals in the terminal were meant to convey a 'sense' of Western Australia.

Berth F, Stage 1 of the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal*, was opened on the 12 December 1960 by Western Australian Premier Hon. David Brand, MLA. The first of the new 40,000 tons passenger liners berthed at the terminal on 23 December 1960.¹³ Between December 1960 and the completion of Berth G, Stage 2 of the building on 11 May 1962, over a quarter of a million passengers passed through the port.¹⁴

At the time of its completion, the Port of Fremantle was Western Australia's principal port and the third largest in Australia. The new *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* was said to be the largest in Australia. The opening of the second stage of the terminal was the first time that the terminal berths had accommodated two ships simultaneously; the *Castel Felice* and the *Fairsky*. Not only was the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* the largest of its kind, it was the only terminal in Australia with the capacity for two berths; 1,358 ft in length with the capacity to accommodate one ship of 45,000 tons and the other 30,000 tons.¹⁵

The 1,048 ft *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* was built for the dual purpose of usage as a passenger terminal and for ordinary cargo. Landing at the upper story promenade deck, the passengers had sole use of the second floor of the building and cargo went through the ground floor and two transit sheds. Four semi portal 3 1/2 ton electric quay cranes were installed at Berths F and G, two at each end of the building. The cranes

¹¹ *The Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners Annual Report*, 1957, p. 10 & 1958, p. 9.

¹² *The Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners Annual Report*, 1957, p. 11.

¹³ *The Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners Annual Report*, 1961, p. 6.

¹⁴ Fremantle Harbour Trust, 'Port of Fremantle Inner Harbour', in 'Port Buildings', op. cit.

¹⁵ *The Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners Annual Report*, 1962, p. 6

were used for normal cargo handling, discharging passenger's baggage and for placing the specially covered gangways into position.¹⁶ The total cost of the building was £866,000; £237,000 was spent on the wharf reconstruction of Berth F and £116,000 on Berth G.¹⁷

Services at the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* included immigration information, a tourist bureau, Western Australian exhibits, Traveller's Aid Society, Post Office mail box, newsagent, florist, banks and exchanges, gift shops, cafeteria and public telephones. There was also a passenger and visitors' lounge, writing facilities, rest rooms and toilets. Passengers had easy access to taxis, buses and trains at the nearby railway station and there were hire car firms also located at the terminal.¹⁸ Inquiry desks were staffed by uniformed Port Authority hostesses - an Australian first - who were available to answer questions during the length of time a ship was in port. Often migrants themselves, the hostesses had to have a broad knowledge of Western Australia as well as speak several languages, including Italian, Greek and Dutch.¹⁹

The design of the terminal included a conveyor system that was meant to ensure the simultaneous movement of passengers and cargo as well as the minimum of interference between the two. Baggage was relayed by fork lift into the transit shed, loaded onto an elevator conveyor belt, transferred to a revolving table, sorted alphabetically and placed on portable stillages. After the necessary declaration forms had been filled out, the passenger would then be accompanied by a customs official to inspection benches. Another conveyor belt carried the inspected luggage to collection windows in the Central Hall on the ground floor, where the baggage could then be collected.²⁰

Internally, the building consisted of the following accommodation at the ground floor Quay level:

Cargo Sheds F & G, two large cargo handling areas with 10 access doorways to the Quay and to the loading platform; stairways connecting to the Customs Halls on the level above and central conveyors to transmit passenger baggage from the Cargo Sheds up to the Customs Halls;

a central main access foyer with two passenger lifts, two central staircases and an up and down escalator; and,

a Baggage Room and Baggage Counter for the collection of passenger luggage; baggage was transmitted from the upper level down to the Baggage Room on a conveyor.

And at the upper Passenger Terminal level:

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ 'Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal - General Description', July/August 1963, in 'Port Buildings', op. cit.

¹⁸ Fremantle Harbour Trust, 'Port of Fremantle', in 'Port Buildings', op. cit.

¹⁹ Fremantle Harbour Trust, 'Port of Fremantle Inner Harbour'; Fremantle Harbour Trust, 'Port of Fremantle 1966 Handbook of Information', in 'Port Buildings', op. cit.

²⁰ Fremantle Harbour Trust, 'Port of Fremantle Inner Harbour', in 'Port Buildings', op. cit.

the Upper Foyer with lifts, stairs and escalators to and from the Lower Foyer, also providing visitor access to the Balcony on the Quay side;

two Passenger Terminals accessed off the Upper Foyer, incorporating Information Booth, Cafe, VIP Suites, Public Toilets and Staff Toilets; the Passenger Terminals provided access onto the Balcony running the full length of the Quay side of the building - intended for public viewing use;

two Customs Halls for the processing of passengers and baggage;

a Baggage Gallery running the full length of the building on the carpark face, equipped with conveyors to transmit passenger baggage to and from the Customs Halls to the Baggage Room at the ground floor level; and,

a Promenade Deck at both ends of the building intended for public use and, initially, as helicopter pads.

Stage 3 of the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* was never completed. Plans were made for an enclosed pedestrian and baggage overpass extending from the Central Hall over Victoria Quay, across the adjacent railway tracks to a passenger pick-up point in Beach Street. It was intended that, like the terminal, the overpass would be mechanised to facilitate the movement of passengers and their baggage.²¹

In 1962, the VII British Empire and Commonwealth Games was held in Perth. The Port of Fremantle was host to 5, 000 visitors who were accommodated in three 'hotel' ships and other naval vessels. Along with Number 10 transit shed which had been converted into a visitor's centre, the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* building was the centre of the port's activities and included a ceremony welcoming the British Royal family to the Games.²²

On 8 January 1968, Rachel Charlton, a young girl, arrived at the passenger terminal on board the *Castel Felice*. She was the 10,000th immigrant, sponsored by the State Government to arrive on Western Australian shores. The Minister for Industrial Development, the Hon. Charles Court, welcomed Rachel Charlton to Australia presenting her with a commemorative scroll and a toy koala.²³

By the early 1970s, the volume of passenger traffic going through the port had declined dramatically. While at its peak in the mid 1960s there had been approximately 200, 000 passengers a year, by 1973/74 there were only 97, 000.²⁴ This number was affected by the competition of air travel and by the late 1970s and 1980s there was only a small number of passenger liners still visiting the port.

²¹ Fremantle Harbour Trust, 'Port of Fremantle', in 'Port Buildings', op. cit.

²² *The Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners Annual Report*, 1963, p. 7.

²³ 'Ocean Voyages: Past and Present', exhibition by the Fremantle Port Authority, January 1999.

²⁴ Fremantle Harbour Trust, '1975 Port of Fremantle Handbook of Information', p. 27, in 'Port Buildings', op. cit.

Cruise ships slowly replaced the scheduled passenger liners.²⁵ Although the number of cruise ships arriving at the port never again reached the amount of traffic created by the huge passenger liners, cruise ships have remained steady visitors to the port especially over the summer months. In 1998, the Fremantle Port Authority became a founding member of 'Cruising Down Under', an organisation whose aim is to promote the Australian region as a cruise destination.²⁶

Visiting navies, most particularly the US Navy, have also regularly used berths F and G. Tuna fishing fleets also stopped at the terminal at various times during the year for refuelling, stores and recreation²⁷.

In the 1980s and 1990s, plans were made to utilise the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* building as a function centre. As the 'Victoria Quay Function and Exhibition Centre', the building has become known statewide as a major venue for national and local trade exhibitions and functions. Since its use, the centre has been the host of various events including the Perth Holiday and Travel Show, the Bridal Fair, antique shows and the Western Australian Boat Show. It has also been used for functions such as balls and is sometimes used for training seminars organised for the staff of the Fremantle Port Authority.²⁸

A number of ceremonies have also taken place at the terminal over the years. One of the most significant having occurred in November 1995 when the Fremantle Port Authority paid tribute to *HMAS Perth* which was lost in the Battle of Sunda Strait in 1942 after departing Victoria Quay. A plaque commemorating the event was erected at the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* and another was presented to the Captain of the second *HMAS Perth*, marking the event and the ship's thirtieth birthday.²⁹

In 1996, the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* underwent a major internal refurbishment 'to enhance their commercial viability in an increasingly sophisticated and competitive market'.³⁰ These changes included carpeting, lighting, security, fire services and safety provisions (fire escape stairs were erected at the western end of the building and at the eastern end, fire escape doors and a fire wall were installed), and the upgrading of catering facilities. A concrete pile and deck repair program was also undertaken. Glass entry doors at F shed were added and at the western end of the building a toilet block was constructed to service the increased number of visitors to the site.³¹

On 14 September 1996, strong winds peeled away a 25m by 6m sheet of the metal roofing above the Passenger Terminal (Shed F). This caused minor water damage to the timber floors of the Custom Hall.³²

In 1998, *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* is continuing to serve its original use as a facility purpose built to deal with passenger traffic. While

²⁵ *The Fremantle Port Authority Annual Report*, 1997, p. 17.

²⁶ *The Fremantle Port Authority Annual Report*, 1998, p. 22 & 23.

²⁷ *The Fremantle Port Authority Annual Report*, 1995, p. 17.

²⁸ Site inspection with Dean Davidson and Ray Sewell, 12 January 1999.

²⁹ *The Fremantle Port Authority Annual Report*, 1996, p. 22.

³⁰ *The Fremantle Port Authority Annual Report*, 1996, p. 27.

³¹ *The Fremantle Port Authority Annual Report*, 1996, p. 5.

³² *Fremantle Community Gazette*, 20 September 1996.

the building is utilised in this way by the cruise liners that visit the port mainly in the summer months, the transit sheds continue to be used for general cargo and its use as a function centre complements the spaces provided by the building.³³

In the summer of 1998/1999, the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* showed 600 artefacts from the Titanic and her sister ships in the 'Olympic Britannic Titanic White Star Line Exhibition'.

The Port of Fremantle expected a number of cruise ships to visit the port in February 1999. The cruise ships which arrived in 1999 are said to be the largest number that have visited the port since the late 1970s.³⁴

In January 1999, the development plan for the Port of Fremantle Inner Harbour is in the process of being finalised. At this time, it is not known what impact these plans will have on the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal*.³⁵

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal, a Post-War International style building on Victoria Quay, Fremantle, is a substantial visual element of the Inner Harbour. The building is currently in use as a terminal for cruise lines, general cargo, associated customs, immigration and information facilities, and as a venue made available for hire by the Fremantle Port Authority for functions, exhibitions, trade fairs and similar public events.

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is sited at Berths F & G on Victoria Quay, the south eastern component of the Inner Harbour of the Port, adjacent to the public railway linking Fremantle to the City of Perth, and to the West End of the City of Fremantle. The building is a single structure located hard up to the timber quay, free of any adjacent buildings and serviced on the landward side by an extensive paved parking area. Formerly, the landward side of the building was serviced by a railway for the handling of goods to and from the Cargo Sheds F & G which form the ground floor of the building. The loading platform remains along the entire length of the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* but the railway connection has been discontinued and is no longer extant. On the wharf side of the building at Berth G are two 3 1/2 ton electric quay cranes, these cranes are no longer operational.

Cargo sheds formerly adjacent to the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* have been removed. E Shed at Berth E has been relocated to a site behind B Shed and C Shed at the point of public access to Victoria Quay, and sheds at Berth H on the up-river side of the terminal no longer survive. Consequently the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* now stands in an isolated location on the Quay, both physically and stylistically

³³ The conveyor belts have been removed from the Function Centre, Shed G, but are still extant in the Passenger Terminal area of the building. Only two of the four cranes are still in place. These features were removed during the 1996 renovations to the building. Site inspection with Dean Davidson and Ray Sewell, 12 January 1999.

³⁴ Site inspection with Dean Davidson and Ray Sewell, 12 January 1999.

³⁵ Ibid. No information can be provided until the plan is finalised and made public.

unrelated to earlier cargo buildings which formerly lined the southern edge of the Inner Harbour.

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is constructed as one long building comprising two transit cargo sheds F & G at ground floor level, separated in the centre by the main entrance to the Passenger Terminal facility which occupies the entire level above the cargo sheds. The building, designed in the late 1950s and constructed in two stages completed in 1960 and 1962, is representative of the architectural style for that period, usually termed Post-War International. The building is hard up to the Quay which accommodated cargo handling space and moving cranes on tracks for cargo loading.

Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal is a steel-framed structure with the framing exposed internally, concrete floor slabs and a low-pitched roof clad in long length Tri-Lok steel decking manufactured by John Lysaght (Australia) Ltd. The roof water components are aluminium, designed to minimise deterioration in an aggressive marine environment. Exposed gutters and fascias externally are painted metal. The overall size of the building, designed to accommodate two ships at berth at any one time, extends in rectangular plan form for 1,048 feet (320 metres) along the Quay.

The ground floor cargo-handling level of the building is clad externally in precast concrete panels with an exposed aggregate finish to the outer face, fixed to steel girts spanning between the structural frames. At the ground floor central entry to the upper level Passenger Terminal special precast feature wall panels are provided. Service doors at both faces of the Cargo Sheds are heavy duty steel sliding doors clad in steel decking. In recent years, four of these doors on the carpark face of the building have been converted to glazed aluminium framed entries to F Shed as part of its new use as an Exhibition Hall for public use. Apart from the cargo area doors, all external window and door assemblies are in glazed, natural anodised aluminium frames.

The upper level walls along the south east face of the building are faced with vertically ribbed steel decking as spandrils below aluminium framed highlight windows. The central upper level access on the Harbour side of the building, from the Upper Foyer of the Passenger Terminal and the Balcony, features special precast block and infill panel walling.

The loading dock and main entrance to the Passenger Terminal on the carpark side is protected for the entire length of the building with a cantilevered Gallery at the upper level, designed to accommodate the passenger baggage conveyors. The support structure consists of exposed steel beams cantilevering out from the main structural frame and the soffit of the Baggage Gallery concrete slabs.

On the Quay side of the building at Passenger Terminal level, the access doors to the original Passenger Terminal areas and Customs Halls, are protected by a cantilevered awning framed in steel and clad in translucent corrugated sheeting now painted to reduce glare. The end walls of the upper level of the building facing onto the Promenade Decks are clad in Lysaght Tri-Lok steel decking in single long lengths mounted vertically. The balustrading to the outer perimeter of the upper level Balcony and Promenade Decks is constructed in rust-proofed and painted steel tubing

with vertical, spaced balusters and a timber handrail now painted in lieu of the original clear finish.

At Passenger Terminal level, the building is internally finished with woodblock floors in Blackbutt, painted plaster wall panels, timber boarded ceiling to the Upper Foyer featuring Western Australian hardwood, timber veneered suspended ceiling panels below a timber boarded ceiling at roof level along the Quay wall to the two Passenger Terminal and Customs Hall areas, and open timber framed space frame suspended ceilings over the Customs Halls areas. Toilets and service areas are finished in glazed wall tiles, terrazzo floor tiles, suspended plaster ceilings, precast painted cubicle partitions and white vitreous china toilet fittings.

The ground floor level of the Main Entrance Foyer is finished in vinyl tiles on the concrete floor slab, suspended plaster ceiling, precast terrazzo stair treads and risers, painted steel balustrade framing infilled with clear wired glass and polished timber handrails, and painted wall paneling.

In service areas, the insulated main roof of the building is visible.

Art works are featured on the south-east internal walls of both Passenger Terminal areas. Sculptured and hand-painted panels in decorative friezes feature Western Australian plants and wild life. These art works are unique and important examples from the now distinguished Western Australian Artist, Howard Taylor.

The alterations carried out in 1996 by the Fremantle Port Authority were intended to enhance the use and commercial viability of the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* in what had become an increasingly sophisticated and competitive market. The main alterations, clearly evident on site, are as follows:

Ground Floor Quay Level:

- conversion of Cargo Shed F for use as an Exhibition Hall; alteration of four original steel cargo doors in the south east wall to glazed aluminium framed assemblies for public access; the provision of internal public toilets

- the provision of more steps and a ramp from the Loading Platform to the carpark

- the provision of escape stairs from the upper level at both ends of the building

- removal of the conveyor formerly for transmission of passenger baggage into the Baggage Room from the Customs Hall above Cargo Shed G

- the introduction of brick fire walls to separate the Exhibition Hall and Cargo Shed G from the Baggage Room

- removal of two of the four cranes from the wharf; these were specifically provided for the new Terminal for cargo handling and for placement of the special closed gangways for passenger access to and from the ships; the surviving two cranes and the tracks on the wharf and the upper level of the Terminal building are in place but are no longer operational.

Passenger Terminal Upper Level:

conversion of the Passenger Terminal and Customs Hall above Cargo Shed G for use as a Function Centre; upgrading of the Public Toilets and Kitchen facilities

the introduction of a temporary air-conditioning system to the new Function Centre; apart from toilet exhaust, no other part of the entire building is air-conditioned; the environmental conditions are generally unsatisfactory in extremes of weather

the introduction of ceiling fans to the Passenger Terminal and Customs Hall and vertical blinds to glazing above doorhead height to the Harbour face of both of these areas; general upgrading of light fittings throughout the public areas of the whole building

removal of the conveyor formerly for transmission of passenger baggage from the former Customs Hall, Berth G into the Baggage Room on the level below

the provision of escape stairs at both ends of the building from the Promenade Decks

removal of the conveyor system originally installed in the Baggage Gallery on the south east face of the building at the upper level, and conversion of the space for storage and service space to the Function Centre

recently, the Cafe in the Passenger Terminal above F Shed (the Exhibition Hall) has been completely refurbished

adjustment to glazing in the south east wall of the Upper Foyer to reduce glare.

The condition of the *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* and its present appearance is sound and well presented, as the direct result of appropriate maintenance and management by the Fremantle Port Authority. It is the intention of that Authority to maintain the Terminal building in its current use and management at least for the immediate future. There have been no conservation reports prepared for the building prior to this Heritage Assessment. The Fremantle Port Authority is, however, in the process of preparing a Port Development Plan for the entire Port of Fremantle and Inner Harbour.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

To investigate other passenger terminals in Australia. The only other known passenger terminal of similar importance is the *Overseas Passenger Terminal, Circular Quay* in Sydney. Like Fremantle, Circular Quay, a part of the Sydney Harbour works, was considered to be Australia's 'Eastern Gateway'. However, the terminal was not built to the scale of Fremantle and was only able to berth one liner at a time. The *Overseas Passenger Terminal, Circular Quay* was also distinctly separate from other parts of the working harbour. The *Port of Fremantle Passenger Terminal* had the dual purpose of dealing with passenger traffic and general cargo.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Agniesha Kiera, David Hutchison, Russel Kingdom, Jack Kent, Lorraine Stevens and Tanya Suba, 'Victoria Quay and its Architecture – its History and Assessment of Cultural Significance', City of Fremantle, Fremantle 1991.

HCWA Assessment, *Victoria Quay*, September 1998.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

The investigation of other passenger terminals in Australia.