



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

Derby Police Gaol with its harsh appearance has become a landmark in the town of Derby. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Derby Police Gaol has historic value as the only remaining structure from the Derby Police Station and Gaol constructed on the site between 1896 and 1906. It represents the continuous use of the site for police purposes from 1896, and the evolving history of law and order in the Kimberley region. (Criterion 2.1)

Derby Police Gaol is an example of a building constructed in the early part of the twentieth century to hold Aboriginal prisoners with facilities considered appropriate at the time for the tropical climate. The building, at a later period, was also used to hold non Aboriginal prisoners. (Criterion 2.2)

Derby Police Gaol has association with prisoners, their families and the police officers and the relationship between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people in the Kimberley. (Criterion 2.3)

Derby Police Gaol is the only known example of a grille or double grate to house prisoners, designed by the Department of Public Works in the early 1900s. (Criterion 2.4)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Derby Police Gaol has scientific value as it is a benchmark for the treatment of Aboriginal prisoners in the north of Australia up to the 1970s. It has the potential to be used as a research or teaching site being the only remaining structure from a complex of police buildings constructed at the turn of the century in a remote area of Western Australia. It has the potential to provide insight to life in the north of Western Australia at this period. (Criteria 3.1, 3.2)

11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

Derby Police Gaol is important to the people of Derby as one of the few remaining buildings relating to the early history and development of the town. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Derby Police Gaol is the only known example of a Native Shelter Shed gaol constructed from iron grille walls and concrete floor in the north of Western Australia in the first decade of the twentieth century. (Criterion 5.1)

Derby Police Gaol is unusual as it comprises an iron grille walling, or cage like, structure rather than solid walls with iron grilles to the openings. Originally, no bathing or toilet facilities were provided and the prisoners were held by chains connected to iron rings in the concrete floor. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Derby Police Gaol is an unique example of a Native Shelter Shed gaol constructed in the north of Western Australia in the first decade of the twentieth century. (Criterion 6.1)

Derby Police Gaol is representative of the manner in which Aboriginal prisoners were detained in the north of Western Australia at the turn of century. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The condition of *Derby Police Gaol* is poor as the roof is missing, most of the timber framing is missing or deteriorated, and the iron grilles are rusting. However, the concrete slab floor and fourteen of the sixteen ring bolts remain intact.

The remnants of *Derby Police Gaol* , primarily the grille walls and concrete floor, allow the significant values of *the place* to be interpreted.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Despite the removal of the roof and much of the timber framing *Derby Police Gaol* has a high level of integrity having been used for holding prisoners until 1975. Since the closure of the facility the grille has been allowed to deteriorate but will continue to have a high level of integrity if left in situ.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The structure is authentic in that the concrete slab and iron grille remain as originally constructed. The roof which was replaced in 1949-50 has been demolished (1994) but was recorded at that time to facilitate reconstruction. Later additions to the structure, including the showers and toilet block, relate to the continuing use of the building and do not detract from its authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary and physical evidence for this assessment has been drawn from 'Conservation Plan Derby Police Gaol (Native Shelter Shed)' prepared by Dr Cathie Clement, historian and heritage consultant, and Rosemary Rosario, architectural heritage consultant, for the Building Management Authority, December 1995.

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13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a detailed discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to The Conservation Professionals: 'Conservation Plan Old Derby Gaol (Native Shelter Shed)', (prepared for the Building Management Authority, December 1995).

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a detailed discussion of the physical evidence, refer to The Heritage Professionals: "Conservation Plan Derby Police Gaol (Native Shelter Shed)", (prepared for the Building Management Authority, December 1995).

13.3 REFERENCES

The Heritage Professionals: 'Conservation Plan Derby Police Gaol (Native Shelter Shed)', (prepared for the Building Management Authority, December 1995).