



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Terrace of Six Houses at 19-29 Holdsworth Street, together with *Warders Terrace* (1897) and *Seven Terrace Houses* (1898), contribute to the aesthetic qualities of the landscape by exhibiting characteristics of the Victorian Filigree style of building, which, although common in Melbourne and Sydney in the 1880s, were uncommon in Fremantle during the 1890s gold boom. Together, the places form a streetscape of differing architectural styles aesthetically unified by the use of limestone walls and corrugated iron roofs. (Criteria 1.3, 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Together with *Warders Terrace* (1897) and *Seven Terrace Houses* (1898), the group demonstrates the development of residential areas of Fremantle associated with the State's gold boom and the construction of the Inner Harbour deep water port in 1897. (Criterion 2.2)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

The group is significant as a demonstration of the standard of accommodation constructed for workers in 1903. Subsequent changes in occupancy and ownership reflect the upward mobility of migrants and their improving social and economic aspirations. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

The construction of row housing was common in inner city residential areas in Melbourne and Sydney in the 1880s, but by the 1890s the provision of public transport and a shift in social values favoured the construction of detached villas. In the 1890s Western Australia was party to this shift in

values, and consequently row housing was not a common housing model. A row of more than four houses, such as *Terrace of Six Houses* is relatively rare in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Terrace of Six Houses is representative of single-storey terrace housing built for investment purposes in 1903, and, generally, an intact example of working class accommodation. (Criteria 6.1, 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The condition of each house varies, but overall *Terrace of Six Houses* is in good condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Although all six houses have undergone some alteration and additions, the original layout, comprising three rooms and hallway, is evident in each house. *Terrace of Six Houses* continues to be used for residential purposes, and the group retains a reasonable degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Each house has been subject to alterations to verandahs and interiors. Each house has been extended, however original construction is evident. *Terrace of Six Houses* retains a moderate degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Terrace of Six Houses at 19-29 Holdsworth Street, Fremantle is in close proximity to *Warders Terrace* (1897) and *Seven Terrace Houses* (1898), both of which are entered in the Register of Heritage Places. Holdsworth Street forms part of the inner residential ring around the city centre.

Single-storey terraces of workers housing, are relatively rare in Western Australia. In the 1890s a number of two-storeyed terraces were constructed in the Victorian Filigree style in metropolitan Perth. In Fremantle, they included terrace housing at 203-209 High Street, 19-25 Point Street, and 18-20 Nairn Street. Two-storey terrace houses, generally intended for managerial occupants who could afford to pay higher rent, were spacious, with several rooms on both levels. By the early 1900s the housing market favoured detached single residences in suburban settings, and this included workers cottages.¹

In the late 1890s, construction of commercial and residential buildings in Western Australia reached record levels, due to the rapid influx of population associated with the gold boom. Following construction of the new inner harbour deep water port in 1897, there was increased opportunity for employment in the port, associated mercantile industries, and the railway workshops.² Between 1895-1905, retail business in Fremantle boomed and the population reached 20,000 in 1900.³ This boom continued until 1904, when the transfer of the railway workshops to Midland brought a drop in local employment and a subsequent slump in housing and retailing.⁴

The terrace houses in Holdsworth Street were all constructed in the period 1897-1904. Holdsworth Street was originally known as Queen Street, and later Doonan Street. Joseph Doonan (d. 1901), was at one time Comptroller of the Prison, and J. Doonan and Sons a well known storekeeper in Adelaide Street. In 1909-1910, the name of the street was changed to Holdsworth Street after Lionel Holdsworth who owned a considerable amount of property in the vicinity.

In 1903-04 a group of six, single-storeyed, three room terrace houses were constructed at 19-29 Holdsworth Street, Fremantle, as a property investment for Frederick Corbett.⁵

The initial tenants, according to the rate book of 1905, were Henry Bowker, a council employee; James Stoddart, a bricklayer; Eliza Hagan, a widow; Lawrence Shindle, a labourer; Isaac Crowle, a carpenter; and Maurice Scanlon, a fireman.⁶

¹ Reece, R. and Pascoe, R. *A Place of Consequence: : A Pictorial History of Fremantle* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1984) p. 56.

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.* pp. 53-57.

⁴ *ibid.* pp. 55-57.

⁵ Fremantle Rate Book 1905-1906.

⁶ *ibid.*

Frederick Corbett's relative Patrick, inherited the terrace in 1908, and maintained ownership until 1923. The terrace was then sold to George Francis, sea captain and pearler. At the time of his death, he had become a nautical assessor, and had assisted at courts of marine inquiry. He was also a large owner of Fremantle property.⁷ Francis, in turn, sold the terrace to William Bland in 1930, who owned it until 1941. Bland, described on the Certificate of Title as 'gentleman', both owned all the terraces and occupied one of them. However, when Sarah and George Hammer bought the group from Bland, in 1951, all six were again rented.

In 1954, the terrace was sold for the first time as individual houses. The new owners were Bucchianico, Di Carlo, Tommaso, Zoite, da Silva and Inferera - all described on the title deeds as labourers. The new owners formed part of Fremantle's growing Italian population. This numerical growth was accompanied by changes in lifestyle.⁸ The trend in ownership was for a mixture of occupier owners and owners - the ratio being 3:3 in 1980, and 4:2 in 1995.⁹

The terrace retains its original three-roomed structure and mixed social milieu. House number 19 is still owned by Bucchianico; number 21 to Bucchianico and Valentini. These houses are rented. Owner-occupiers for house numbers 23 to 29 are Salmon, Phillips, Sim and Mulroney.¹⁰

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Terrace of Six Houses is a row of six, single-storey, three-roomed, terrace houses in a Victorian Filigree style.¹¹

The design is representative of a style of building, that was beginning to lose favour in Melbourne and Sydney, in which the Victorian fashion of cast-iron balustrades and brackets were the norm at the time.¹² The terrace is constructed to the building line of Holdsworth Street.

Terrace of Six Houses in plan, is formed by two end houses that mirror each other, enclosing a pair of two houses that in plan are mirror images. Each house has access to a rear right-of-way that connects to Knutsford Street at the western end.

The terrace is built of red, tuck pointed brickwork with medium pitched gabled roofs clad in corrugated galvanised iron. The six houses are separated by firewalls that are embellished with classical detailing on their ends, and blind archways to each side.

The facade to each house has asymmetrical fenestration that is protected by a verandah with a bullnosed roof, also clad in corrugated galvanised iron,

⁷ *West Australian*, 10 April 1934, p. 69.

⁸ Bosworth, R & M., *Fremantle's Italy* (Gruppo Editorial Internazionale, Rome, 1993), p. 135.

⁹ Conversation with Mr A. Sim, 31 March 1995.

¹⁰ For ownership details see Heritage Council file no P0942.

¹¹ Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P., *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture, Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present* (Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989), pp. 60-63.

¹² Australian Heritage Commission, eds, *The Heritage of Western Australia, The Illustrated Register of the National Estate*, (The Macmillan Company of Australia, Melbourne, 1989), p. 17.

that is below the main roof. The verandah roofs to houses numbers. 19 and 21 have been replaced by a lean-to roof. The verandah to house number 23 has been reinstated with a bull nose profile.¹³

The verandahs were originally supported on thin, classical, timber posts, and screened with decorative cast-iron balustrade, friezes and brackets. The cast-iron features give the houses a light filigree character. The verandah detailing has been altered over the years. Houses numbers. 25, 27 & 29 have had the filigree character reinstated. The filigree on 27 is original, and the filigree on 25 and 29 is a modern aluminium copy with additional decoration.¹⁴

The raised floors are timber throughout. Fenestration to the street facade included an entrance with a four-panelled, timber door with etched sidelights and top lights, and a single, double-hung sash window with a concrete sill. Chimneys were prominent; however, only a single chimney to house no. 27 and a double chimney to houses numbers. 19 and 21 remain.

The interiors each comprise three rooms and a side-wall hallway that stretches the length of the building. At the rear of each property is a free-standing water closet with a pitched roof. The interiors featured ceiling roses, hallway arch and timber fireplace mantles - some of which are extant.

In the 1950s, houses numbers 19 and 21, were extended on the western sides to provide a kitchen, and extended at the rear to accommodate a bathroom and laundry. Both houses retain original fireplaces. Alterations to the facades were also believed to have been carried out in the 1950s. The alterations to each house are identical and include new concrete verandah floors, rendered walls, rendered balustrade with doric columns supporting a lean-to verandah roof.

Alterations to house number 23 were also believed to have been carried out in the 1950s. The house was extended to accommodate a kitchen, dining room, bathroom and laundry. Because of termite damage, the timber floors were covered in concrete and a parquet floor laid over. Alterations to the facade include a new concrete floor and soffit lining to the verandah, rough-rendered walls, replacement of original window with a wider window of three lights with two casement sashes and a marble sill, new marble threshold and new door, concrete flower boxes, cast-iron verandah posts and balustrade, and new verandah roof. In the 1970s, the owner fixed a dado the length of the hallway, on one side. Hand rails were fixed to the dado. The fireplace has been removed but the house retains original ceiling roses.

In 1957, house number 25 was extended to accommodate a kitchen and an informal dining room. The house was further extended to the water-closet with a bathroom and laundry. The fireplace was removed, the verandah floor was tiled and the verandah details were reinstated with original profiles, with the exception of the balusters.

¹³ Details of conversation with Mr Sims on 8 January 1996. See file note held on HCWA file. 0942.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

Although, house number 27 has been altered, it appears to be the most intact. The side wall of the rear room has been removed and the area extended in timber to accommodate a bathroom (the room had earlier been converted to a kitchen), and a shed was also built to the rear of the property. In the 1950s, the enclosure was re-built in brick to accommodate kitchen fittings. The fireplace had been fitted with a Metters wood stove, which is no longer extant. The fireplace interior is now tiled, and the original mantle remains. A doorway has replaced the rear window to give access to the rear yard. The water-closet has been upgraded and the shed replaced by a brick structure adjacent to the water-closet, housing a small bathroom. The verandah details of 27 are original with the exception of the support posts.

The interior of house number 29 has been significantly altered. In 1983, an opening was made into the rear wall of the third room to form an entrance into a new kitchen. A mezzanine level was created over the kitchen for use as a bedroom.¹⁵ Access is via a stair in the second room which now functions as a dining room. The verandah floor is now concrete, the entrance door has been replaced and the verandah details have been reinstated.

13.3 REFERENCES

National Trust Assessment Exposition, 8 September, 1980.

¹⁵ For plans see HCWA file no. 0942.