HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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 *

The two main structures, the station building in the Federation Arts and Crafts style and the goods shed, an industrial building with an office, are particularly important for their collective effect and their spatial relationship which reveals something of the functional and organisational nature of the site. (Criterion 1.1)

Walkaway Railway Station Museum is a very competent design of its genre where the simplicity of its design contributes to its charm and elegance. (Criterion 1.2)

The station building and the goods shed are key structures in Walkaway and the most important group of buildings in the town. (Criterion 1.3)

Because of the size of the site and the Spartan setting due to the loss of surrounding structures, the railway group is, to a large extent, the streetscape in Padbury Street. (Criterion 1.4)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

The railway station at Walkaway played a vital role in the connection of the Midland Railway Company railway line to Midland and the Western Australian Government Railways line to Geraldton. Walkaway was the terminus for the only privately owned passenger railway in Western Australia. The construction of the station building, together with the construction of the railway line from Geraldton marked the beginning of the Walkaway locality and the development and growth of a communication and transport system in the region. (Criterion 2.1)

The railway station at Walkaway and the means of transport and communication provided by the railway played an important role in the development of the surrounding agricultural areas. (Criterion 2.2)

The place has associations with the eminent Public Works Department Chief Architect, George Temple Poole, who was responsible for the design

* 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.

of a large number of public buildings in the City of Perth, the majority of which are heritage listed. The station building has close similarities to Poole's Claremont Station Building. The place is also associated with Edward Keane, one of the leading early railway builders in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

As one of the State's earlier railways and one upon which so little has been done in the way of succeeding layers of development, the site has some scientific value in its potential to yield information on a late nineteenth century railway station complex. (Criterion 3.1)

It is possible, through research on this site, that a wider understanding of the nature of a late nineteenth century railway station complex would be available through archaeological and further documentary research. Many other railway station complexes of a similar nature have been altered or removed and their sites substantially built over. Walkaway provides an understanding of the development of a town around a railway complex and the connection of the Midland Railway with the Western Australian Government Railways line. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The social value of the place is high, though through its closure as a working railway station, the nature of its importance has changed. Many people living in Walkaway today regard the station with affection. Its role in the development of the townsite of Walkaway and the region are important to the community. (Criterion 4.1)

The place is also valued by the community for its growing importance as a place with an educational role as a museum and as a place visited by tourists. The strong expressions of interest in the retention of the buildings and the establishment of the museum, by the local community and the Shire of Greenough, are evidence of the social value of the place. (Criterion 4.1)

The place is an essential part of the existence of the people of Walkaway and contributes to the community's sense of place, both as evidence of the days when Walkaway primarily existed as the railway station complex and for its role as the community's museum. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Walkaway Railway Station Museum has some rarity value as a late nineteenth century railway complex with a good deal of the more substantially constructed buildings intact within the complex site and in its immediate environs on what was originally a railway reserve. The Walkaway station building is the last station building to be constructed in Western Australia where the Station Master's house was incorporated into the design. (Criterion 5.1)

The place is important for its demonstration of a railway station complex. The site is evidence of a form of railway operation and railway workers' existence that has long passed. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The group of buildings are representative of railway institutions, and to a minor degree post and telegraph offices, of the late nineteenth century, in spite of the adaptive changes to the buildings. The representative value, without interpretation or conservation, is reduced by the loss of the various outbuildings, fences and other site elements. (Criterion 6.1)

The place occupies an important position in its capacity to demonstrate, with the aid of interpretation, the manner in which a late nineteenth century railway complex operated. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Overall, the place is generally in a poor to fair condition.

The station building:
Square stone rubble walls, in local instances, are suffering from the long term effects of rising and falling damp. Some of the stonework is very badly deteriorated in small areas. There is cracking over most windows. The lintel on the south side window appears under designed and is bowing. Rendered ashlar block walls are in fair condition with the exception of major structural cracking on the centre line of the two east windows. The east wall of the former post office is in very poor condition. All joinery is in general need of refurbishment and few windows are operable. Sash lifts, parting beads and hardware are missing in many instances and need to be replaced. All sash cords need replacing. Galvanised iron roof sheets are in need of repair and, in some instances, replacement. Guttering and downpipes should be replaced. The platform and eastern verandah appear to be in a reasonable condition. The enclosed northern verandah ceiling and wall are in poor condition in parts and require repair. The platform surface is in very poor condition and the timber kerb to the platform has been damaged. Internally, cracking is evident over a majority of the doors and windows. There are cracks to various degrees in the ceilings of many of the rooms. Floors are in reasonable condition although the waiting lobby boards are in need of repair and concrete flooring has cracked in some areas.

The goods shed:
The walls show deterioration in lower sections. The lower vents are missing and all walls require repointing, especially at the lower levels. Joinery is in fair condition, but requires repair and repainting. The roofing is very poor in places and corrugated iron sheets are beginning to lift. Gutters are in poor condition and all downpipes are missing. Timber floor boards show termite damage near the east entries but appear in fair condition.

Landscaping:
The gravelled forecourt to the station building is in need of regrading and the ramp leading to the station building is in poor condition. Trees grouped at the sides of the station are in fair condition, as is the rose garden. The remainder of the site is in an unkempt state and the corrugated iron fence which surrounds the Station Master's house yard is in poor condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The place has a high level of integrity. Although the place is now a museum, its original intention as a railway station complex remains obvious.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Walkaway Railway Station Museum has a high degree of authenticity. There is a great deal of authentic fabric existing in both the main structures and much of what is visible is authentic. Although there has been adaptive work in all structures, there is an enormous amount of authentic fabric that survives, in addition to spatial authenticity in many of the rooms. Changes occurring around the area of the joining of the station building and the post office residence have cluttered internal spaces. Nevertheless, the original concept is still legible to a certain extent and most changes to the spaces are quite superficial.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Attached are key sections of the supporting evidence prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd: 'Walkaway Railway Station Precinct Conservation Plan' (prepared for the Walkaway Station Museum Committee December 1996).

13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence refer to Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd: 'Walkaway Railway Station Precinct Conservation Plan' (prepared for the Walkaway Station Museum Committee December 1996).

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence refer to Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd: 'Walkaway Railway Station Precinct Conservation Plan' (prepared for the Walkaway Station Museum Committee December 1996).

13. 3 REFERENCES

Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd: 'Walkaway Railway Station Precinct Conservation Plan' (prepared for the Walkaway Station Museum Committee December 1996).

13. 4 FURTHER RESEARCH
