



## 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)

- 3.5 Developing primary production
- 7.1 Governing Australia as a province of the British Empire
- 9.7.3 Remembering the dead

#### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 602 Early settlers
- 604 Innovators

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

The environment surrounding the grave is highly valued for its aesthetic characteristics with the view from the *Sir Richard & Lady Spencer's Grave* looking out to Middleton Beach and the ocean. The grave itself is aesthetically pleasing in its rectangular structure, arched iron railings and symmetry. (Criterion 1.1)

*Sir Richard & Lady Spencer's Grave* is a landmark on Strawberry Hill and contributes positively to its environment. (Criterion 1.3)

The site is a significant element of the cultural environment created primarily by Strawberry Farm buildings and garden. (Criterion 1.4)

#### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Sir Richard & Lady Spencer's Grave* is a valuable indicator of the early evolution of State, post 1829, and the contribution of prominent individuals in setting the tone, culture and industry of Western Australia. (Criterion 2.1)

The site is historically significant for its association with the early growth of the Albany settlement and surrounding regions. (Criterion 2.2)

The significance of the site is primarily through its close association with Captain Sir Richard Spencer, who had a distinguished naval background and had fought in the Napoleonic Wars before migrating to Western Australia. Sir Richard Spencer, knighted before he left England, was recruited by

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\* 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.

Governor Stirling for the position of Government Resident for King George Sound. Arriving with his family in 1833, he bought 'Strawberry Farm', which became an important centre of social activity for the region. Lady Spencer made a significant contribution in her own right as the hostess of 'Strawberry Farm' and was noted for her work to improve the general conditions of the settlement continued during the years following her husband's passing.<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Spencer's influence included his role in the development of fine merino wool exportation from the Albany region. He is also remembered for his understanding attitude with the original occupants, the Meananger Aborigines.<sup>2</sup> Both the location of the grave and the flagstaff, which were erected in 1842, were as he had requested.<sup>3</sup> The grave's well defined and prominent location is symbolic of the privileged and influential position that the Spencers enjoyed from 1833 until their deaths, 1839 and 1855. (Criterion 2.3)

### 11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

*Sir Richard & Lady Spencer's Grave* holds importance for the Indigenous community of Albany. Strawberry Hill was formerly the land of Mokare (d. 1831), a prominent Indigenous man who had been a pre and post settlement guide and companion to French and British explorers.

For the Albany community as a whole, the site is significant due to the view it affords. (Criterion 4.1)

The grave contributes to the community's sense of place as a carrier of the history and memory of the early occupation and settlement of King George Sound, and to the Spencers in particular.. (Criterion 4.2)

## 12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

### 12. 1. RARITY

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### 12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The site is representative of the graves of early pioneers.

### 12. 3 CONDITION

*Sir Richard & Lady Spencer's Grave* is in very good condition.

### 12. 4 INTEGRITY

The site has a high degree of integrity. Its original use is completely intact.

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<sup>1</sup> G.E.E. Warburton, *Letter: 8 November 1840*, cited in Crabb, Dawn, *The Way to St Werburgh's*, Albany Advertiser, 1974, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Municipal Inventory of the City of Albany*, Vol. 1, p. 17 & Vol.2, pp. 55, 62.

<sup>3</sup> Crabb, Dawn, *op.cit.*, p. 52.

## **12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

The place has a high degree of authenticity and its original fabric has been retained. It is important to note, however, that the hillside grave used to be a chamber and was later filled in following an attempted robbery.<sup>4</sup>

## **13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

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### **13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

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### **13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

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### **13. 3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

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### **13. 4 REFERENCES**

No key references.

### **13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

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<sup>4</sup> *Municipal Inventory of the City of Albany*, Vol.1, p. 67.