



## 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.

The wording of this document has been adapted from Summer Hill Farm Precinct Conservation Plan with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 2.4 Migrating
- 3.5 Developing primary production
- 3.9 Farming for commercial profit
- 3.11 Altering the environment
- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 5.8 Working on the land
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

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

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 106 Workers
- 107 Settlements
- 301 Grazing, pastoralism and dairying
- 405 Sport, recreation and entertainment
- 602 Early settlers

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

The natural features, buildings and general topography of *Summer Hill Group* create an attractive landscape. There are many locations around the site where views back to Summer Hill make picturesque compositions. (Criterion 1.1 & 1.3)

The random rubble stone homestead, stables, cattle barn, shearing shed and granary are fine, attractive, examples of Victorian Georgian architecture, as applied to a farm group. (Criterion 1.3)

*Summer Hill Group's* siting makes it an attractive landmark, the overall impact of the group of buildings being in respect to their composition, competent

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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.

execution and materials, together with their authentic and patinated appearance. (Criterion 1.4).

## **11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE**

*Summer Hill Group* provides evidence of the opening up of the greater Victoria Plains district between the 1840s and 1880s, and the establishment of agriculture and pastoralism in one of the earliest settled areas of Western Australia. It demonstrates the process of opening up the country, development, response to changing demand, economics, and farming practices, from the time of its establishment in the 1870s to the present day. (Criterion 2.1)

*Summer Hill Group* demonstrates living and working conditions for pastoralists in the late nineteenth century, together with adaptive uses for mixed farming, which includes pig and cattle husbandry, and growing vegetables and fruit. (Criterion 2.1)

*Summer Hill Group*, together with Canterbury, Tootra, Indarrie and Badji Badji, was one of the first farming properties to be settled in the district, in the 1870s, and provides a contrast to the extensive 1840s pastoral properties of New Norcia, Glentromie, Walebing and Berkshire Valley. Some of these properties were established by former shepherds, who grew to prosperity after acquiring property. (Criterion 2.1)

*Summer Hill Group* provided the original venue for ploughing matches in the district, which later developed into Victoria Plains Agricultural Show. The property also provided a staging post for the mail. (Criterion 2.2)

*Summer Hill Group* was established by John Halligan, an Irish immigrant, who constructed the first part of the homestead in the 1870s. He was amongst the earliest farmer settlers in this previous pastoral region and the most successful of those now known as the Marbro Settlers. Halligan began in Western Australia as a shepherd and went on to become a significant landholder and leading member of the community. (Criterion 2.3)

## **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

Due to the intact and original nature of much of its fabric and the amount of works, such as the paved roads and river banks, stock and stone wall, mud-bat brick, hand adzed beams, framing and other fittings, pug sites, stone wells, wooden troughs and farm implements, *Summer Hill Group* has the potential to contribute to an understanding of the design and construction of a late nineteenth century complex of buildings and stockyards designed for use in a pastoral and agricultural operation. The associated Homestead has had much adaptation but documentation of this and information obtained during the renovations has the potential to be of value. The cumulative changes provide an understanding of the impact of changes in farming techniques. (Criterion 3.1)

## **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Summer Hill Group* is valued by the local community and some associated members of the wider community for its associations with the early European settlers of the district. This value is emphasised by the inclusion of *Summer Hill Group* in the Municipal Inventory for the Shire of Victoria Plains. (Criterion 4.1)

*Summer Hill Group* contributes to the community's sense of place for its focal part in the development of the Marbro District, comprising those settlements surrounding the original settlement of Marlborough (Marbro). (Criterion 4.2)

*Summer Hill Group* was formerly a link in the early communication network of the larger district. It was a community meeting place, staging post and the scene of agricultural competitions, and as such contributes to a sense of place at a local and regional level, as indicated by its inclusion in the Shire of Victoria Plains Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1. RARITY**

*Summer Hill Group* is a complete group of farm buildings in largely authentic state, dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although there have been changes to the fabric, *Summer Hill Group* retains much original fabric. The place is highly legible as a grain growing and stock breeding complex. (Criterion 5.1)

The Shearing Shed located on *Summer Hill Group* is one of only a few shearing sheds from the 19<sup>th</sup> century still in regular use today in the district. The Stables, although now infrequently used for horses, also remains in use. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Summer Hill Group* is representative of a small scale vernacular farm building complex comprising of Stables, Cattle Barn, Shearing Shed and Granary in the Victorian Georgian style of architecture. (Criterion 6.1)

*Summer Hill Group* demonstrates the principal characteristics of working class rural existence on a mixed farm, together with the design and building techniques of the Victoria Plains of Western Australia from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the adaptive overlays of later farming practices. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

The setting and buildings of *Summer Hill Group* are in fairly good condition. Maintenance has been poor in the middle part of the twentieth century. The roofing on all buildings is in fair condition although many rainwater goods are missing. Much of the stone work requires attention and there are some local failures that are quite serious. Failure to keep the water off the walls or drain it away quickly has contributed to this deterioration, as well as the rotting of some structural timber. Termite damage has also had an impact on timber structures, however, this has been monitored since 1994 and no further damage has occurred since this time.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

Although still a sheep and wheat farm, *Summer Hill Group* is no longer in operation as a mixed farm. There are no pigs or cattle, the orchards are no longer commercial and no commercial vegetable gardens remain. The place retains a moderate to high degree of integrity.

### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Summer Hill Group* has suffered the loss of some of its detail, such as some opening treatments, but these losses do not impinge on the overall authenticity of the place. Notwithstanding the replacement of some doors,

windows and wall and roof sheeting, the remaining built elements retain a moderate to high degree of authenticity. The framed additions represent a later stage of development, but in most cases, much of the original fabric was left in place. As a result of the additional lifts of stonework, all of the roofs have been replaced, so the authentic fabric is generally confined to the lower portion of the buildings and their interiors. The planning and the majority of the fabric is original material or is a product of the shift of emphasis from pastoral to mixed farming to mainly grain growing. The degree of authenticity of *Summer Hill Group* compared to other such place that are not actually in ruin is unusual, but not unique in the Victoria Plains.

### **13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

Supporting evidence has been taken from 'Summer Hill Farm Precinct Conservation Plan', prepared by Erickson and Taylor with Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, for Jenny and Paul Sinclair in April 2001.

Key sections used: 1.0 Documentary Evidence (pp1-57), 2.0 Physical Evidence (pp58-117), 3.0 Analysis of Documentary and Physical Evidence (pp118-131), 6.0 Graded Zones of Significance (pp138-148).

#### **13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to 'Summer Hill Farm Precinct Conservation Plan', prepared by Erickson and Taylor with Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, for Jenny and Paul Sinclair in April 2001.

#### **13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to 'Summer Hill Farm Precinct Conservation Plan', prepared by Erickson and Taylor with Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, for Jenny and Paul Sinclair in April 2001.

#### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

For a comparative analysis refer to 'Summer Hill Farm Precinct Conservation Plan', prepared by Erickson and Taylor with Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, for Jenny and Paul Sinclair in April 2001.

#### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

'Summer Hill Farm Precinct Conservation Plan', prepared by Erickson and Taylor with Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd, for Jenny and Paul Sinclair in April 2001.

#### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

Although not assessed in detail, it is apparent that the Homestead has undergone many changes, but still retains a great deal of authentic fabric. It requires a detailed assessment of its own to determine the extent of authentic fabric.