



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)

- 3.14.1 Building to suit Australian conditions
- 7.6.3 Policing Australia
- 7.6.4 Dispensing justice

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 403 Law and order

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The place is a good example of an office building constructed in the Late-Twentieth Century International style. The increasing use of curvilinear forms was characteristic of this style and the concave form of the headquarters building is the dominant aesthetic. The place demonstrates the principal characteristics of office buildings of the 1960s, such as the external expression of the concrete structure and the integration of passive sun-control devices in the design of the façade. (Criterion 1.1)

The Walsh-Pitman Memorial, a marble statue situated in front of the main entrance, is a fine example of commemorative sculpture. (Criterion 1.2)

The place is a prominent landmark, by virtue of the distinctive concave form of the tall headquarters building, which marks the eastern gateway to the city of Perth. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The place, designed by the Architectural Division of the Public Works Department of Western Australia, is the first purpose-built consolidated Western Australian Police Service headquarters in Western Australia, incorporating all the major branches and sections of the Western Australian Police Department. (Criterion 2.1)

The place is associated with the Police Commissioners and other officers who have worked from it since its construction, including G.O.A. Leitch (1975-1981), J.H Porter (1981-1985), B. Bull (1985-1994), R. Falconer (1994-1999) and

* 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.

B.E. Matthews (1999-) The Walsh Pitman Memorial, designed by police constable D. Cummings and carved in Italy, is associated with the many fallen police officers that it commemorates. (Criterion 2.3)

The construction of the tall headquarters building, with a purpose built radio mast, incorporated modern communications technology for the police in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.4)

The place demonstrates the shift in the design of office buildings from the glass-curtain walls prevalent in the 1950s towards more the environmentally responsive buildings in the 1960s. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The place is associated with the Western Australian Police Service during the second half of the twentieth century, and has social importance for both staff who worked in the building and community members who were served by the Police. It marked an improvement in the conditions under which members of the police force worked. (Criterion 4.1)

The place is important as a visual representation of Police services in Western Australia, and thus contributes to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The place is rare as it includes the only multi-storey office building of curvilinear form, designed in the 1960s, extant within Western Australia. The place is also rare as an intact multi-storey office building in the International style dating from the period. Many other such structures have been extensively modified or demolished.

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The place is representative of multi-storey office buildings constructed in the Late-Twentieth Century International style.

12. 3 CONDITION

The place is in good condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The place continues to be utilised for police purposes and therefore has a high degree of integrity. However, the police intend to vacate the complex, which will result in a reduction to the degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The place has a high degree of authenticity. The basic form and exterior of the place remains largely unaltered. There have been some modifications to the internal planning and finishes to accommodate changing operational requirements.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Wayne Moredoundt, historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Palassis Architects.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The *Western Australian Police Service Complex* comprises the Western Australian Police Headquarters, a nine storey administrative building (1975), the East Perth Lock-up and Central Police Station, an attached three-storey building (1965), and various ancillary structures.

Western Australia has had its own Police Service since its establishment as a British Crown Colony in 1829, initially comprising officers and men of British Army units sent to provide order in the colony. From around 1853, Police Headquarters were established at the main police station at Waterside in Bazar Terrace, below Mount Eliza. In 1861, an ordinance for the Regulation of Police was passed establishing a body of 148 paid officers. The *Police Act* of 1892 updated the 1861 statute, adding to police powers but retaining much of the earlier administrative structure.¹

From the 1890s, major gold discoveries drew thousands of new settlers to Western Australia. With an increase in population, there was a corresponding need for a larger number of police officers and subsequent pressure on existing police facilities. Sometime prior to 1905, Police Headquarters were relocated to a rental property in Irwin Street, Perth. After 1905, Headquarters were transferred to the new offices of the Commissioner of Police, at the Court Buildings in Beaufort Street.²

From the early 20th century, with the still increasing population of Western Australia came a corresponding need for increased numbers of police officers and greater provision of facilities. This expansion of police numbers was also stimulated by technological advances which broadened the scope of policing work, and by changes in employment conditions for police officers, specifically, a shorting working week.³ During 1950, the administrative headquarters of the Police Department were transferred to the building in James Street, formerly used as residential quarters for unmarried police officers in the metropolitan area.⁴

In 1953, the Criminal Investigation Branch took over the space in the Police Court Buildings vacated by the head office. However, owing to the large increase in Court work and the increasing necessity for extra Court room, together with the consequent increase in Crown Law Department staff, there was still a need for a suitable building to house all components of the Police Department, and vacate the Police Court Buildings entirely. Efforts to find additional space in nearby buildings to ease this position were only partially successful.⁵

By 1954, temporary premises were leased in Hay Street to accommodate a portion of the staff of the Police Traffic Branch, and the Road Patrol Section was transferred to these premises. Even with this move, the head office of the Traffic Branch was still very crowded, necessitating the provision of

¹ *Your Police: Information Sheet: Short History of the Western Australia Police Service*, 1997.
² Ibid.
³ Leigh Edmonds, *Western Australian Police Service: Thematic History*, CAMS, 1998, pp 33-34.
⁴ Police Department: Annual Report, 1950.
⁵ Police Department: Annual Report, 1953.

additional space. For the Commissioner of Police, the solution to these problems was to provide new buildings to house the Criminal Investigation and Traffic Branches. The Commissioner also suggested that owing to the continuing expansion of the activities of the Police Department, it would be necessary to accelerate the Department's building programme, for which purpose a considerable increase in funding was necessary. The Commissioner also suggested that consideration might be given to the appropriation, for future Court and Police requirements, of the whole of the area bounded by Beaufort, Roe and James Streets and the rear of premises fronting William Street, a large portion of which was occupied by Girdlestone High School and Perth Boys' School.⁶

The Police Headquarters complex on the site near the Causeway at East Perth was first mooted in 1959 by the then Commissioner of Police, J.M. O'Brien. A portion of the East Perth site was then occupied by the Metropolitan Transport Trust (MTT), with the rest a reserve. By this time, existing police facilities in James, Beaufort and Roe Streets were proving inadequate, with other Branches and Sections operating from various temporary premises throughout the city area. This need for increased facilities was especially apparent by the late 1950s, with the State Government planning for a stronger industrial base as well as increased agricultural production and exploitation of mineral resources. With this development would come an increase in the State's population and, therefore, a need to expand the resources and facilities of the Police Force.⁷

The site near the Causeway on which it was proposed to build the new Police Headquarters complex comprised Lots T11, T12, T13, and T14, at the eastern limit of the blocks of land between Hay Street and Adelaide Terrace. This location, on the outer edge of the Perth City area, meant that it was largely undeveloped during the 19th and early 20th centuries. A few cottages had been built there in the early 1900s and a tram workshop was constructed by 1925.⁸ These buildings were eventually demolished in the mid-1960s to make way for the Police Headquarters.

In 1960, the Minister of Police, J.J. Perkins, announced that new Police Headquarters were to be built on the land near the Causeway, and that the building would also contain new Courts. Plans were drawn up by the Public Works Department at this time and showed a six storey Administration Block, C.I.B. and Scientific Bureau, a three storey Central Police Station and Lockup, and a two storey Police, Local and Coroner's Court. These plans reveal the early planning of the concave Police Headquarters building, which was sited to complement the proposed circular shaped Courts to the south, although the Administration Building, as originally shown, also continued in a westerly direction, then with a convex curve, in a north-westerly direction.⁹

However, this plan was temporarily suspended, and on 21 June 1962 the Premier David Brand, announced that the East Perth Girls' School, in Wellington Street, would become the new Police Headquarters as the first step in a facilities building plan to cost one and a half million pounds. The shift to the new premises was to take place early in 1963, after the closure of the school and the transfer of pupils had taken place. It was also announced

⁶ Police Department: Annual Report, 1954.

⁷ Western Australian Police Service, File 68/111, p. 51, Leigh Edmonds, *Western Australian Police Service: Thematic History*, CAMS, 1998, pp 33-34.

⁸ City of Perth Rate Books, 1885-1910; Post Office Directories, 1915-1945.

⁹ CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 36875.

that a new Police Station and Cell Block would be built on the site at East Perth, at an estimated cost of 275,000 pounds.¹⁰ Plans for this stage of the development were drawn up in 1963.¹¹

It was planned that the Administrative Section, Licensing Branch, Firearms Branch and District and Chief Office then in the James Street Police Headquarters would move to the East Perth Girls' School, and the Criminal Investigation Branch and Fingerprints Section would take over the James Street building. The Police Canteen would not be moved to East Perth but would remain in its present position. The whole of the James Street Traffic Office would move to East Perth, although the Road Patrol Section would remain in Adelaide Terrace.¹²

In 1963, the MTT's portion was acquired and plans for a complete Police Headquarters complex, including Court Houses, were commenced. The first stage of this complex- the Central Station and Lock-up fronting Hay Street- was commenced in 1963 and completed towards the end of 1965. This facility was officially opened on 24 March 1966 by the Premier, David Brand.¹³

O'Brien's successor as Commissioner, R.T. Napier, continued to press for the advancement of the original plan for the complex, following his appointment in the latter part of 1965. In January 1968, after an in-depth survey of the projected requirements of all Branches and Sections, Commissioner Napier put forward a proposal for an additional building of six stories, plus a basement, with consideration for an additional two floors, in case Police requirements increased beyond the predicted levels.¹⁴

In response to the Police proposals, the State Government decided to construct the project in two stages, an Administration building to be completed by 1972, and a CIB Building to be built some time later. In the meantime, however, Commissioner Napier had dispatched his Chief Inspector, A.L.M. Wedd, and a PWD Architect, to obtain information about the most modern Police Headquarters in Australia at that time. As a result of this study trip, at the end of 1968 Napier reiterated the desire of the Police Department for the whole complex to be completed at the same time.¹⁵

On 21 January 1969, Premier Brand authorized the appropriate planning for the complete development, with a view to construction being commenced in 1970-71, at an estimated cost of 3.8 million dollars. According to the Premier:

As the population grows, the need for the Police Service and public protection grows with it. The new Police Headquarters will not only meet an urgent need for expanded police accommodation but will also ensure improved public access. The planning and building of the Police Headquarters- a six story structure- will take five years.¹⁶

Further research was immediately undertaken, with many members of the various branches and specialized sections contributing valuable ideas that could be included in, or provided for, in the new building.¹⁷ Draft plans for the complex were approved by Commissioner Napier on 30 July 1969, and by

¹⁰ *The Police News*, July 1962, p. 1.

¹¹ CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 40471.

¹² *The Police News*, July 1962, p. 1.

¹³ Western Australian Police Service, File 68/111, p. 51.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 49.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 87-92.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 90-91.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 93.

15 March 1971, tenders had been called for the construction project.¹⁸ By this time, preliminary work involving the driving in of piles had already been completed. Progress on the project was curtailed, however, when the State Government cut spending on capital works later in 1971.¹⁹

Also in 1971, the land on which the Police Headquarters complex was to be sited was vested in and held by the Commissioner of Police in trust for the objects and purpose of 'Public Building (Police)'. This action appears to have been taken as a result of complaints of vehicles parking in the area, denuding it of grass and endangering the piling works already completed. It also had the effect of bringing all the land together under one title.²⁰

On 27 June 1972, Commissioner of Police, A.L.M. Wedd, wrote to the Minister of Police, J. Dolan, urging that the Police Headquarters complex project be re-started, pointing to the difficulties fragmentation of the Department brought about and the inevitable reduction of efficiency if the situation was allowed to worsen.²¹

State Treasury approved the recalling of tenders for the East Perth project in August of 1972. Soon after the close of tenders in October 1972, the lowest tender- of 3, 817, 128 dollars- submitted by A.V. Jennings, was accepted, with the contract let on 1 December 1972.²²

The nine story building was designed by the Architectural Division of the Public Works Department, under the direction of the Principal Architect, S.B. Cann, was to accommodate the following branches and divisions- the Commissioner's Office, Administration, the C.I.B., the Firearms Branch, the Scientific Bureau, the Communications Branch, the Public Relations Branch, the Education Branch, the Liquor and Gaming Branch, the Metropolitan District Office, the Lost Property Office, Special Branch, the Youth Clubs Section, and an Auditorium.²³ It was the first consolidated Police Headquarters in Western Australia. The tunnel designed to connect the lock-up with the proposed court building was constructed from the lockup basement and under the nine storey building at this time. The proposed court buildings were not proceeded with because of budgetary constraints.

The physical occupation of the building took place on 2 April 1975, with the official opening held on 23 April 1975. According to the Premier, Charles Court:

The new Police Headquarters Building, overlooking the eastern gateway to the City of Perth, brings with it a new era of high speed communication for the Police Department in Western Australia. Incorporation of the latest communications equipment, combined with air-conditioning and carefully planned administrative and operational areas, will allow members of the Force to work in an atmosphere conducive to efficiency. The State Government sees the advent of the 4 million dollar headquarters- the most technologically advanced Police building in Australia- not only as a significant step forward for policemen (sic) in Western

18 A 1970 plan showed the provision made for a future building that would visually extend the Headquarters Building to be constructed during the first phase of the project. CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 1670/65. This idea for the second building was apparent on the concept plan of 1960. CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 36875.

19 Western Australian Police Service, File 68/111, pp. 139, 141, 144.

20 Ibid, pp. 145-157.

21 Ibid, pp. 161-162.

22 Ibid, pp. 161-162.

23 *Official Opening of the Western Australian Police Headquarters: order of ceremony*, Perth, 1975, not paginated.

Australia, but also one that conforms with the Government's policy of providing members of the State Public Service with office accommodation in keeping with the modern standards of the 1970s and beyond.²⁴

Structurally, the building comprised reinforced concrete columns and flat plate floors supported on clusters of reinforced concrete piles 40 feet deep. The external appearance of the building was designed to complement the existing Police buildings on the site. The ground floor, only, has a black granite plinth and black mosaic tiled columns. The upper floors had a finish of exposed aggregate render to columns and floor slabs. Between columns and floor slabs were situated clear anodised aluminium windows glazed with grey glass. Sun screening of windows was achieved with clear anodised aluminium sun screens and precast concrete panels.²⁵

As well as the main nine storey building, there was also a two storey auditorium and amenities block that joined on to the north-west corner of the main structure. Within the auditorium and amenities block there was a bar and associated facilities on the ground floor, and an auditorium on the upper level with stage, dressing rooms, and mezzanine projection room. Attached to the western side of the auditorium and amenities block was a single storey structure that contained a loading dock, motor room, store area and office.²⁶

A marble statue, known as the 'Walsh-Pitman Memorial', commemorating fallen police officers, was relocated from the former administrative headquarters building in James Street to the front of the new headquarters building. This statue had been designed by a police constable, D. Cummings, and carved in Italy. The unveiling of the statue, in 1929, was intended to coincide with the Centenary celebrations in Western Australia, although there was a short delay, due to damage sustained on route from Italy.²⁷ Since that time the names of fallen police officers and police assistants have been added to the statue, which is embellished with the words 'Justice', 'Protection' and 'Sympathy'.²⁸

The internal fitout of the building comprised sprayed vermiculite ceilings, sapelle veneered demountable partitions and dark brown acrilan carpet. The ground floor entry lobby was composed of teak wall panelling and a floor of durable Western Australian Breccia marble. The building was air conditioned from a central plant room with the final supply of air to office space from perimeter induction units. Exhaust air was collected in central shafts and returned to the Plant Room except in the case of fire when the complete system would change to total exhaust. Service areas were on a total exhaust type system. A 70 foot high pre-stressed concrete mast supporting radio antennae from the Communications Section, was erected on top of the building, which allowed control of the radio network used by the Police Department.²⁹ Typically throughout the building the floor covering comprised carpet to the offices, vinyl tiles to the lift lobby and corridors, terrazzo to the toilets and ceramic tiles to the kitchen and servery.³⁰

24 Ibid.

25 CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 1BA37, 1BB68, 1BA3F.

26 Ibid.

27 *Police News*, Vol 13 No.64, December 1929.

28 Site visit, 15 August 2001.

29 This information about the building is from the *Official Opening of the Western Australian Police Headquarters: order of ceremony*, Perth, 1975, not paginated.

30 CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 1670/65.

Since the headquarters building was constructed in 1975, five Commissioners of the Western Australian Police Force have worked from the building. They are G.O.A. Leitch (1975-1981), J.H Porter (1981-1985), B. Bull (1985-1994), R. Falconer (1994-1999) and B.E. Matthews (1999-).

Since the time of construction the complex has been altered and adapted to the accommodate the changing requirements of the Police Service. In 1978 the ground floor television and video studio was altered to incorporate acoustic panels.³¹ In 1980, the store section of the auditorium and amenities block was altered so that part of the store area was converted to a visitor's lounge. There was also a first floor addition constructed on top of the existing store section, a space that was to be utilized for a function room.³² Further changes to the auditorium were undertaken in 1986 when new change rooms were built and it was converted for use as a gymnasium.³³ In 1988 the grounds were redeveloped with new paving, brick fences and new flagpoles.³⁴ In 1995 Hobbs Winning Australia drew up plans for the internal refurbishment of the Headquarters building and also in 1995, plans were drawn up by Howlett and Bailey Architects for alterations and additions to the ground and second floors of the Lock-Up building fronting Hay Street.³⁵

In May 1990 the vesting of the land was changed from being held by the Commissioner of Police in trust for the objects and purpose of 'Public Building (Police)' to being held by the Commissioner of Police in trust for the objects and purpose of 'Police'.³⁶ It is intended that the site be transferred to the East Perth Redevelopment Authority. The East Perth Redevelopment Authority (Transfer of Land) Order 1999 does not mention a date of transfer, although it is likely that the transfer will be effected in 2001. The Commissioner of Police will then lease the site for approximately two years, until new facilities, some of which are being constructed at the Midland Railway Workshops site, are completed.³⁷

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The Western Australian Police Service Complex comprises a nine storey administrative building, constructed 1975, an attached three-storey police station and lock-up, constructed 1965, and various ancillary structures.

The place is located on a prominent site at the eastern end of Adelaide Terrace and effectively marks the gateway to this end of the city. Directly to the south of the place is the large roundabout which forms the intersection of the Causeway, Adelaide Terrace, Hay Street and Riverside drive. The concave form of the Police Headquarters fronts the intersection. A two-storey auditorium is linked to north-west corner of headquarters building. A single storey covered parking garage of a convex form abuts the western end of headquarters building, so that the whole forms a gentle 's' shape in plan. The access road to the complex is entered off Adelaide Terrace, at the south west corner of the site. Carparking bays are located along the access road which curves around the southern and eastern side of the headquarters building. A rendered fence with engaged piers encloses the staff carparking areas to

³¹ CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 1410/75.

³² CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 1C14B.

³³ CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 1C14B.

³⁴ CAMS Plan Room, PWD WA 1455/83.

³⁵ CAMS Plan Room, Plan 4168-13C, A1-01.

³⁶ Vesting Order 45/590, Government Gazette, 4 May 1990.

³⁷ Information provided by Clifton Coney Stevens, Project Managers, June 2001.

south-west of building. To the front of the headquarters building there is raised podium with a granite surface. Towards the front of the podium there is a marble statue commemorating fallen police officers. Behind the statue is a row of three flagpoles.

The Central Police Station and East Perth Lockup is sited along Hay Street and has a set back of approximately 2 metres. Along the front of the building there are garden beds planted with a variety of medium sized trees and shrubs, which obscure much of the ground floor elevation. Vehicular access from Hay Street is via a driveway which runs at street level through the centre of the building. A single storey stores building of rectangular form abuts the western end of the south elevation of the police station at a right angle. The area enclosed by the headquarters building, covered garage, police station, and stores building is used for carparking.

The headquarters building comprises a nine storey office building constructed in the Late Twentieth Century International style. The building has a distinctive concave plan form and is approximately 70 metres long and 18 metres wide. It is orientated on an east-west axis with the centre of the front elevation facing directly south. The structural system of the building comprises flat reinforced concrete floor slabs supported by a modular grid of reinforced concrete columns. The floor to ceiling heights are approximately 3 metres to all floors and 4.2 metres to the ground floor. The front elevation is divided into a regular grid of recessed bays by means of the projecting concrete framework. The bays are infilled with clear anodized aluminium framed windows which have a painted asbestos spandrel. With the exception of the ground floor level, vertical aluminium fins run up the full height of the north elevation. Above the ground floor bays and along the top of the building, there is a band of recessed panels finished in black mosaic tile. The recessed panels continue along all elevations. Columns on ground floor only have black mosaic tile finish. The main entrance is located to the centre of the ground floor level and is marked by a cantilevered concrete awning.

The infill panels to the east and west elevations are flush with concrete structure with the exception of the recessed panels clad in mosaic tile to the ground floor elevation and the top of the facade. An exposed aggregate concrete wall runs down the centre of the each elevation. Infill to either side of this comprises precast concrete grilles. Narrow strips in the grilles to either side of central concrete wall are perforated. Recessed behind these perforated grilles are aluminium framed windows.

The north elevation is divided into 11 vertical bays by means of projecting concrete fins. In between each bay is a narrow strip of blank wall. As per the south elevation, the bays have an infill comprising aluminium framed windows with asbestos spandrels. The bays are fitted with external horizontal aluminium sun-screens. Ground floor level bays to the north elevation have an infill of exposed aggregate precast panels surmounted by a row of aluminium framed windows. A tall, slender concrete mast with sculptural tripod legs is mounted on the top of the building. The asbestos clad lift motor room protrudes above roof level.

Abutting the north west corner of the building is the double height auditorium. It has a shallow concave form focussed directly north. The auditorium has a concrete frame infilled with precast concrete grilles. Below the auditorium is the bar area, the north wall of which comprises full height aluminium framed windows. An external concrete staircase is located on west side of auditorium. A single storey store building abuts the western side of the auditorium.

The plan of the building is based around a central service core which incorporates lifts, fire escape stairs, toilets and other service rooms. A lift lobby is located to the centre of the service core and is flanked on either side by a bank of two lifts. To either side of the service core are the main corridors which run lengthways, following the curved form of the facade. Office spaces are generally enclosed by timber veneered partitions, the layout of which partitions varies from floor to floor. The partitions are demountable to allow for flexibility in internal planning. A/C supply ducts are enclosed in timber veneered cabinets located along the north and south perimeters. Vertical riser ducts are also located at the perimeter of the building. The entry foyer and ground floor lift lobby have a marble floor, whilst general office areas typically have a carpeted floor. There is terrazzo flooring to toilet areas and vinyl floor tiles to some corridors and service areas. Ceilings throughout most of the building comprise a sprayed vermiculite finish, applied directly to the underside of the floor slab. A cafeteria is located to the western end of the seventh floor and the plant room occupies much of the eighth floor. Due to security restrictions a thorough inspection of the building interiors was not possible.

The Central Police Station and East Perth Lockup comprises a three-storey building constructed in the Late-Twentieth Century International style. The building has a rectangular form, approximately 100 metres long and 12 metres wide. The façade has been composed in such a way as to attain a carefully balanced sense of asymmetry. The front (north) elevation is divided into 18 regularly spaced bays by means of the projecting concrete framework. The ground floor level of the two middle bays is open, allowing vehicular access to the rear carparking area. This opening marks the division of the building into its two uses, the police station occupying the western half of the building and the lockup occupying the eastern half.

Infill panels to the ground floor level typically comprise exposed aggregate concrete panels surmounted by aluminium framed windows. Between the ground floor and first floor and along the top of the building are recessed panels clad in black mosaic tiles. The three bays at the western of the ground floor have an infill comprising aluminium framed windows and horizontal aluminium sunscreens. The main entrance is located to the east of these bays and comprises two sets of aluminium framed glazed double doors. Columns to ground floor level are finished in black mosaic tiles. Infill panels to the first and second floors typically comprise perforated precast concrete grilles (the floor slab to the second floor is recessed behind the grilles). The infill to the first and second floors, directly above both the vehicular entrance and the main entry, comprises aluminium framed windows and sunscreens with horizontal fins. The south elevation is essentially mirror image of north elevation. The most notable exception being the sunscreens which comprise vertical aluminium members with painted asbestos panels. Plant and lift motor rooms are located on the roof. A row of three flagpoles is fixed to the roof, directly above the entry. A stores building abuts the western end of the south elevation, set at a right angle to the police station. The stores building comprises a single storey structure of an undistinguished design.

A concrete tunnel at basement level runs from the lock-up and under the headquarters building. It is reached by means of stairs from both the lock-up and headquarters. This tunnel constructed to enable the secure movement of prisoners to the proposed court buildings (not constructed) is not in use.

The place remains largely as constructed. There have been some modifications to accommodate changes in use. In general these changes have

been limited to internal changes to accommodate changing needs. The headquarters building and the police station were designed to incorporate movable partitions to the office areas. On most floors these timber veneered partitions and the timber veneered A/C ducts under the windows have been painted white. New carpets have been fitted throughout. Changes to the lock-up have been limited to minor changes including new fittings, viewing panels and the fitting of emergency escape doors.

The whole of the place is in good condition. Identified defects include some cracking to the internal concrete walls and render, evidence of water penetration to the top floor. Externally there is evidence of spalling evident to the soffits and window joints. These defects can be remedied with the implementation of a carefully targeted maintenance programme.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The place may be compared to other multi storey office buildings designed in the 1960s.³⁸ Office buildings of this period displayed a greater three-dimensional quality than those of the post war period. This period also marked a shift from the use of vast expanses of glass curtain walling towards a more sculptural treatment of walls. The use of external passive sun-control devices, such as projecting concrete slabs, demonstrated an adaptation of the International style to local climate conditions. Multi-storey buildings of the 50s and 60s were typically single purpose, and occupied by one body (such as a bank, a government dept. etc). A landscaped parkland was seen as the ideal setting for such buildings. Interiors of the period strove to combine simplicity and richness. Internal partitions were generally modular and demountable to allow for maximum flexibility in layout. Linoleum & vinyl tiles popular as floor finishes (this was especially true of government buildings). Wall finishes included timber panelling (sometimes vertical timber battens).³⁹

There are no other International style multi-storey office buildings, dating from the period, in Perth, which display a curvilinear form. However, there are a number of buildings which exhibit the principal characteristics of the International style of architectural design as applied to multi-storey office buildings. Dumas House and Council House are both prominent examples of this style of architecture in Perth.

Dumas House comprises a fourteen-storey public office building constructed 1963-1965. The building is sited on an open piazza and has a rectangular form which is orientated on an east-west axis. The building has a composite structure of steel frame with concrete floors and a central reinforced concrete service core. The north and south elevations are clad in anodised aluminium framed curtain walling. The columns and floors slabs projected beyond the level of the curtain walling on the north and south elevations and act as a passive sun control device. The building is in good condition and continues to be used as offices for a government department. The basic form of the exterior remains largely unaltered although there have been modifications to the interior planning.

Council House comprises an eleven-storey office building set on an open landscaped piazza. The structural system consists of a steel frame with

³⁸ While the place was completed in 1975, the design and initial construction was undertaken in the 1960s.

³⁹ All broad comparative information is drawn from Taylor, J, *Post World War II Multi-Storey office buildings in Australia (1945-1967)*, prepared for the Australian Heritage Commission, 1994.

lightweight fireproofing and reinforced concrete floors. The building is clad in a double glazed aluminium framed glass curtain wall which incorporate a grid of distinctive 'T' shaped sun breakers. The building is in good condition and has retained its original use as the administrative office of the Perth City Council.

Other notable multi-storey office buildings from this period include the MLC building (1957), the T&G building (1960) and the SGIO building (1958), all of which have been extensively modified; and the R&I Bank (1961) and Commonwealth Bank (1962) which have been demolished.

International style multi-storey office buildings, dating from the period, which display a curvilinear form, were also rare in other states of Australia. One of the most notable examples of a building with a curvilinear form, dating from the period, is the AMP Building, Circular Key, Sydney. Constructed in 1959 its concave curtain walled façade faces north to the harbour with narrow smooth-walled surfaces to the east and west facades.

The place may also be compared to other police headquarters buildings in other states of Australia, in particular the Police Headquarters (1940-43), Russell Street, Melbourne. This building was constructed some three decades prior to *Western Australian Police Service Complex* and comprises a thirteen storey tower crowned by a metal radio mast and a four (originally three) storey podium building. It is rare as a surviving example of an Art Deco skyscraper and is also recognised as a dominant landmark building in the Russell Street streetscape.

13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research regarding the architects, who under the direction of the Principal Architect, S.B. Cann, in the Architectural Division of the Public Works Department, were involved in the design of the complex, could provide further insight into the design of the place. In addition, information regarding the study trip, at the end of 1968, by a PWD Architect, who accompanied Chief Inspector, A.L.M. Wedd, to obtain information about the most modern Police Headquarters in Australia at that time, could provide insight into possible external influences on the design process.