



**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.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.5.3 Developing agricultural industries
- 8.10.5 Advancing knowledge in science and technology

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 302 Rural industry & market gardening
- 402 Education & science

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Gascoyne Research Station forms a spacious rural cultural landscape, combining low-key vernacular architecture with an understated tropical setting. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Gascoyne Research Station is illustrative of State Government support for land settlement and agricultural advancement, with various schemes developed since the late 1880s to improve farming conditions and encourage people to take up agricultural land. (Criterion 2.1)

Gascoyne Research Station is significant for its role in the ongoing development of tropical agriculture in the Gascoyne district, which is one of the region's major industries. (Criterion 2.2)

Gascoyne Research Station has been associated with the Western Australian Department of Agriculture and its officers since its establishment in 1940. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Gascoyne Research Station has scientific value for its role as a research station specialising in tropical agriculture, which undertook research to facilitate the

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from 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.

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

botanical understanding and horticultural development of the Gascoyne region, in particular with regards to irrigation. (Criterion 3.2)

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Gascoyne Research Station is valued by the farmers of the Gascoyne district for its association with the establishment of tropical agriculture in the region, and has value for Departmental employees who have worked and lived there since its establishment in 1940. (Criterion 4.1)

Gascoyne Research Station contributes to a sense of place for the local community in its central position within the Gascoyne River settlement. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

Gascoyne Research Station is rare as the only research station in Western Australia to specialise in horticulture for the northwest, and one of only two established in the State for research into tropical agriculture. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Gascoyne Research Station is a good representative example of an agricultural research station of the World War Two and immediate post World War Two period with only minimal adaptation for the tropical climate, and demonstrates a way of work and life for employees at the place. (Criteria 6.1 & 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Gascoyne Research Station is generally in good condition.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Gascoyne Research Station has retained a high degree of integrity. The place has continued to be used for the intended purpose, and although some dwellings are now vacant (House 1, House 9, House 10) or utilized as offices (House 2), they are still able to function as dwellings.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The original structure, form and fabric of the places that comprise *Gascoyne Research Station* is mostly intact. No structural alterations are evident to any of the buildings although most places have had extensive extensions to continue to facilitate the use. The trial plots have altered over time. Remnant plantings of fruit trees were being removed at the time of this assessment. *Gascoyne Research Station* demonstrates a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Irene Sauman, Historian, and Laura Gray, Heritage & Conservation Consultant, in September 2004, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Gascoyne Research Station comprises an office, eleven employee dwellings, packing shed, tractor shed, workshop, nursery, water tanks, outbuildings and trial plots of various tropical agricultural plantings established since 1940.

Pastoral stations were established in the Carnarvon district from the mid 1870s along the Gascoyne River. The townsite of Carnarvon was gazetted in 1883, situated at the mouth of the River. Coastal shipping was the only form of transport available for the region and a port was established at Carnarvon in 1886. The town developed as the commercial and service centre and summer resort for the inland pastoral areas.¹

Agriculture practice in Western Australia had been led by the Agricultural Society since the colony was first established. In 1894, the Government established the Bureau of Agriculture (later Department of Agriculture) to assist in opening up the State to farming and increasing wheat production, which was still insufficient for local consumption. One of the Bureau's first resolutions involved a request to Government to finance the establishment of agricultural colleges and experimental farms.² Between 1889 and 1894, agricultural areas had been surveyed in at least forty localities throughout the south and central regions of the State and the selected areas had become progressively borderline for agricultural and pastoral pursuits. The first experimental farms were established to demonstrate the viability of this lower class land.³

By 1911, the original task of the experimental farms was considered to have been achieved, and the farms were given a new purpose to produce pure seed wheat of standard varieties for sale to farmers, and to develop new and improved varieties more suitable to Western Australian conditions. The work required qualified people and, in 1921, a system of cadetships was established to facilitate professional training. Experimental Farms were renamed Research Stations to reflect their new status. The establishment of Research Stations was ongoing over the years, as various agricultural areas, and various types of agriculture, were established around the State.⁴

After World War One, agriculture was promoted at Carnarvon under the Soldier Settlement Scheme and a subdivision for tropical agriculture was established along the Gascoyne River, referred to in Departmental reports as the Gascoyne River settlement.⁵ The area surveyed comprised 4,101 acres of 12 miles of River

¹ Findlay, Merrill, *Carnarvon: Reflections of a Country Town*, Shire of Carnarvon, 1983, pp. 7-80; Map of the subdivision, 1932, DPI file, 1154/1922-01RO.

² *Bureau of Agriculture Journal*, 7 August 1894, p. 132.

³ *Journal of Bureau of Agriculture*, June 1896, pp. 829-838; Shea, Greg & French, Dr Bob, 'Background historical information for the assessment of the heritage significance of buildings on Merredin Research Station', Dryland Research Institute, Merredin, 16 December 1998; Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, *Thematic History and preliminary heritage assessment of agricultural research stations*, June 2000, pp. 5-6.

⁴ Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, op cit, pp. 5-6.

⁵ Map of the subdivision, 1932, DPI file, 1154/1922-01RO.

frontage, beginning at the mouth of the River.⁶ In 1922, the Secretary of the North West requested 30 acres of the subdivision be set aside as an experimental plot and Lot 125 was duly gazetted Reserve 18009 for the purpose.⁷ The agricultural settlement initially struggled because of difficulties in clearing the land and obtaining a reliable water supply, and distance from the Perth market. The only transport available was the once a fortnight State Shipping Service. By the late 1920s, some banana plantations had been established and there was market gardening of tomatoes and beans by Yugoslav, Italian and Czechoslovakian migrants who were drawn to the area.⁸ Tropical agriculture was increasing in the area from the early 1930s, and Department of Agriculture officers reported fielding increasing requests for advice regarding irrigation and growing techniques.⁹

Development of the settlement for tropical agriculture was reported as having 'begun in earnest in 1933.¹⁰ *Gascoyne Research Station* plot remained undeveloped, and was the subject of several enquiries from farmers wanting to purchase or lease the land. The adjoining Lot 124 had not been taken up because it did not have a river frontage and in 1932, Lots 125 (the Research Station Reserve) and 124 were re-subdivided to give both lots a river frontage. The area of Lot 125 was increased from approximately 50 acres to 65 acres by this action. In 1936, the road on the east side of the Reserve was established and named Research Road.¹¹

It was reported in 1935 that bananas and pineapples, with beans as a cash crop, were giving encouraging results, and that a variety of other tropical and subtropical crops, such as citrus, grapes, papaya, passionfruit, tomatoes and lucerne could be produced under irrigation with proper management.¹² As the settlement progressed 'it was realised that experiments would be needed to discover the plants suitable for this area as well as economical ways of raising and handling the resultant crops'. *Gascoyne Research Station* was established with the aim to 'further the development and ultimate settlement of the North-West of Western Australia'.¹³

About thirty acres of *Gascoyne Research Station* land was described as 'sandy loam carrying mainly wattles and minga bark with a smattering of river gum and blackheart trees'. During 1938, five acres of this land was cleared and graded and divided into six blocks.¹⁴ According to Herbert (Bert) Day, first Officer in Charge of *Gascoyne Research Station*, the clearing was done by hand by someone known as Bottle'o'Bill, who charged 10/- per acre and cleared an acre a week. A house was constructed at the Station by builder Ken Illingworth and was

6 'An investigation of the terrace soils of the Gascoyne River at Carnarvon', *Journal of Agriculture*, W.A., September 1935, pp. 245-246.

7 Correspondence 2 March 1922 & map 1932, DPI file, 1154/1922-01RO, op cit; *West Australian Government Gazette*, 19 May 1922, p. 969.

8 Findlay, Merrill, op cit; Smith, Enga, *No Sermon too Hot: A history of the Parish of Saint Mary, Star of the Sea, Carnarvon*, St Mary's Parish, Carnarvon, 2000.

9 Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, op cit. p.15.

10 'An investigation of the terrace soils of the Gascoyne River at Carnarvon', op cit.

11 Correspondence 8 July 1930, 4 May 1932, 17 January 1933 & map 1932, DPI file, 1154/1922-01RO, op cit; DOLA Reserves Index, Reserve 18009.

12 'An investigation of the terrace soils of the Gascoyne River at Carnarvon', op cit.

13 'The Carnarvon Tropical Reserve', *Journal of the Department of Agriculture of Western Australia*, March 1942, pp. 1-6.

14 'The Carnarvon Tropical Reserve', op cit.

occupied by Bert Day and his wife in September 1940.¹⁵ House 2 has been described as the first building erected on the station and would therefore be this residence.¹⁶

By 1942, over 800 feet of cement drains had been laid to test the best types for local conditions. Irrigation was provided by sinking a cement well casing 27 feet into the River bed to tap the subsurface waters in the river sands, as the surface waters of the Gascoyne River were 'transient'. Water was pumped up to a spill pool which fed the irrigation drains. Investigations into various tropical fruits, vegetables and introduced fodders and grasses for the pastoral industry were also being undertaken in the early 1940s.¹⁷ Cotton trials were also begun in 1948.¹⁸

During the period of World War Two, the activities of *Gascoyne Research Station* were curtailed, with only minimal experimental work undertaken.¹⁹ Weather conditions caused considerable difficulties for the settlement. Cyclonic storms, drought, high temperatures, a grasshopper plague and shortage of labour resulted in a decline in the acreage under cultivation, but the shortage of imported goods meant higher prices for local produce, offsetting the lower production. Lack of sea transport during the war years necessitated the use of trucks to Geraldton and the railway from there to Perth. This was assisted by the sealing of the road between Carnarvon and Geraldton and after the war this transport route continued to be favoured.²⁰

In 1946, it was reported that work on *Gascoyne Research Station* had resumed.²¹ A new banana plantation was established and pineapples were introduced. Trials were undertaken on macadamia, cassava, tung oil, grapes, vegetables, rice, peanuts, various legumes, grasses and fodders, sisal hemp and maize. Plantains, silky oak, pines and river gums were also trialed for windbreaks.²²

Little information has been located on buildings constructed at *Gascoyne Research Station* in the 1940s. The earliest reference is for a contract let to R. J. Hooley of Onslow in July 1947 for construction of a three-room workmen's cottage. The plan indicates that this is House 6.²³ Suitable housing was a concern by 1953. Seven qualified Agricultural Advisers had been appointed to the North West branch of the Department but the crude living conditions in the region were causing concern as to whether they Department could retain their services. One *Gascoyne Research Station* officer was living with his wife at the Gascoyne Hotel. Two houses were urgently required at the Station. A labour only contract was entered into with a Mr Middleton, with timber provided by the State Saw Mills. Due to delays with transport and shortage of labour the houses

15 Day, Bert, 'Some early history of the Gascoyne Research Station', *Gascoyne Historical Society*, June 1993, pp. 8-9.

16 Correspondence 9 March 1964, Agriculture Department file, Gascoyne Research Station buildings 1966-69, SROWA, AN82/5 ACC 1558 Item 727/1964.

17 'The Carnarvon Tropical Reserve', op cit.

18 Agriculture Dept file, Gascoyne Research Station cotton experiments, 1948-1966, SROWA, AN82 ACC 1558, Item 279/63.

19 Agriculture Department, *Annual Report*, 1943, pp. 79-80.

20 Agriculture Department, *Annual Report*, 1943-1945.

21 Agriculture Department, *Annual Report*, 1946, p. 35.

22 Agriculture Department, *Annual Report*, 1947, p. 27 & 1948, p. 21.

23 'Carnarvon Tropical Reserve proposed workmen's cottage sketch plan', 20 December 1946, PWD file, SROWA, AN7 ACC 689 Item 424/1940; physical evidence & photos.

were almost twelve months in construction.²⁴ Houses 3 and 4 are of the same design and it would seem likely that these are the two to which this contract refers.²⁵

From the 1950s, the Department of Agriculture intensified its research programs. A special branch was initiated to investigate the agricultural needs of the northwest, and a program was implemented to improve use of *Gascoyne Research Station*. By 1957 the Department was operating 18 research stations, of which those at Carnarvon and Stoneville were specialising in horticultural research.²⁶

The work at *Gascoyne Research Station* predominantly involved test trials for irrigation routines, pest and disease control, weed control, fertiliser performance, and the performance of different varieties under varied conditions (eg. planting times). The intent of the research was to investigate anything that could potentially enhance production, efficiency and cost control in local plantations.²⁷

A 1960 sketch site plan of buildings on *Gascoyne Research Station* indicates that the office had recently been built (marked as 'new office' on the location, and with the L-shape configuration, of the original part of the current office building). Houses 1 to 7 were also on the site. House 2 (original 1940 residence) was occupied as the technical officers quarters, House 6 was the single men's quarters and Houses 7 and 8 were single room technicians huts. House 5 is shown some distance southwest of its current location and is almost certainly the dwelling reported in 1968 as having been relocated, at considerable cost, because the original site was subject to flooding. The packing shed was the only other building marked on the site in 1960.²⁸

The men occupying the huts (Houses 7 & 8) had to use the ablution facilities at one of the married quarters and in March 1966 it was stated that only single men would be stationed at *Gascoyne Research Station*, to alleviate the need to build another ablution block.²⁹ However, married men continued to be employed at the Station and the ablution block was not built.

The office building at *Gascoyne Research Station* was already inadequate by 1966. Station staff comprised the station manager and a typist-telephonist, who occupied the main room of the office building, agricultural adviser M. G. Hawson (office no. 1), technician A. Scott and inspector J. Hutchinson (office no. 2) and technician Tilley, field assistant Muller and agricultural adviser R. O'Farrell (office no. 3).³⁰ As well as Station staff, the office building housed the district office of the Department of Agriculture and the Agriculture Protection Board's vermin control and noxious weed unit, which covered the whole of the Gascoyne area.³¹

Renovations were needed to the open-sided packing shed, entailing a new roof and cladding on one wall to replace the layer of palm leaves, which had been

24 Gascoyne Research Station, wages staff quarters building, PWD file, SROWA, AN7 ACC 689 Item 500/1953.

25 Physical evidence.

26 Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, op cit, pp. 20-21.

27 Agriculture Department, *A Guide to Gascoyne Research Station, Carnarvon*, 1975.

28 Rough sketch plan of site dated 7 August 1960, PWD file, Item 500/1953; correspondence 2 October 1968, DPI file, 1154/1922-01RO.

29 Correspondence 28 March 1966, Agriculture Department file, *Gascoyne Research Station buildings 1966-69*, SROWA, AN82/5 ACC 1558 Item 727/1964.

30 Correspondence 18 April 1966, Item 727/1964, op cit.

31 Agriculture Department, *A Guide to Gascoyne Research Station, Carnarvon*, 1975, p. 1.

added as protection from the wind. Part of the packing shed was also used as a workshop. Finance for the work was approved and appears to have been undertaken over the following year or so.³²

In November 1967, the tender of John Crawford Building Company of Carnarvon was accepted for the construction of the technical officer's quarters (House 9) at a cost of \$22,817. The quarters were of a similar plan to those already erected or under construction at Wongan Hills and Merredin Research Stations.³³

One of the huts (House 7 or 8) was occupied in 1969 by Farm Hand Brian Heesom and his wife Christine, who was employed as a clerk typist at *Gascoyne Research Station*. The furnishings of the place comprised 2 single beds, 2 chests of drawers and 'an assortment of written off surplus furniture'. It was decided to only charge the usual rental for a married couple, despite both being employed, to ensure that no claim would be made for upgrading of furniture and provision of floor coverings.³⁴

In the 1960s, the northern section of *Gascoyne Research Station* site was heavily planted and developed while the southern portion, which was subject to flooding, was used for sheep grazing trials.³⁵ Periodic cyclones, floods and droughts led to the loss of important long-term trials. In 1970, a banana fertiliser and spacing trial was terminated in this way. Other experimental work being done at the Station in the 1970s included trials on citrus, pineapples, mangoes, dates, pawpaws, custard apples, olives, cashew nuts, macadamia nuts, avocados, grapes, beans and capsicums. In May 1970, a new experimental site was established at Rocky Pool, some 48km inland on the Gascoyne River.³⁶

In 1974, the Agriculture Department acquired the adjoining land, Lots 126 and 127 on the western side of Research Road, from Dudley Cooper Giles who had farmed there since 1938. These lots became part of *Gascoyne Research Station* operations.³⁷ There were three houses on Giles' property at the time of purchase. They comprised two timber-framed asbestos clad and iron roofed dwellings of 'old bungalow style', estimated at about thirty years old, and an unfinished worker's cottage of poor construction, about eight years old. Farm buildings comprised a packing shed and machinery shed in fair condition. One bungalow was sited on Lot 126 and the other buildings were on Lot 127. It was estimated it would cost \$26,700 to bring them up the standard of other buildings on *Gascoyne Research Station* and the full expenditure was not recommended. House 10, on the former Lot 126 (now lot 461) is the only one remaining of Giles' buildings.

Gascoyne Research Station office was enlarged with two rooms in the late 1960s or early 1970s. In 1977, the district office of the Agriculture Department was responsible for advisory services to approximately 120 pastoral leases in the Gascoyne and Pilbara regions and to 150 fruit and vegetable growers in the Carnarvon plantation area.³⁸

32 Correspondence 26 May & 16 October 1967, Item 727/1964, op cit.

33 Correspondence 22 March, 24 June 1965, 4 Feb, 28 March 1966, 15 November 1967 & Plan 8 July 1966, Item 727/1964, op cit;

34 Correspondence 4 July 1969, Item 727/1964, op cit.

35 Correspondence, 2 October 1968, DPI file, 1154/1922-01RO.

36 Agriculture Department, Annual Report, 1970, pp. 61-62 & 1972, p. 78.

37 Certificates of title, Vol. 1057Fols. 80 & 81, DPI file, 1154/1922-01RO, op cit; DOLA Reserves Index, Reserve 18009.

38 Agriculture Department, *Gascoyne Research Station*, 1977, p. 1

Since the early 1970s, various sheds for machinery, workshop and a nursery have been added at *Gascoyne Research Station*, as well as an open sided function centre with barbeque facilities. In 1983, the office building was enlarged with another addition.³⁹

From the 1980s, the Department of Agriculture began to place a greater emphasis on environment and soil conservation. While research activities continued across the State, conservation initiatives became an increasing focus of the Department.⁴⁰

In 1996, House 3 (numbered building 13 at the time) was entered on the Shire of Carnarvon Municipal Heritage Inventory with a high level of protection recommended.⁴¹ It is not certain why this particular residence was chosen, but it is typical of those constructed at *Gascoyne Research Station*, although the c.1940 date is incorrect.

Lots 126 and 127 were renumbered 460 and 461, for reasons unknown, and were officially added to the Station Reserve in 1996.⁴²

In 2004, the Shire of Carnarvon lists horticulture as one of its four major industries, with a value of \$51.3 million. Approximately 1020 ha is in use as horticultural land, being 161 plantations. Of this, approximately half the land produces vegetables, one third is planted with bananas, and the remainder is largely fruit trees. This horticultural industry survives due to carefully allocated irrigation quotas drawn from aquifers in the Gascoyne River. In addition to their economic value, the plantations are considered a characteristic feature of the area and tourist tours through the plantations are advertised.⁴³ *Gascoyne Research Station's* stated aims at its establishment, to 'further the development and ultimate settlement of the North-West of Western Australia', appear to have been substantially achieved.

In summary: House 2 is the original 1940 residence built for the Officer in Charge of *Gascoyne Research Station* at the time the place was established; House 10 is a late 1930s-early 1940s bungalow built for Dudley Giles on Lot 126 and purchased by *Gascoyne Research Station* in 1974; Houses 1, 5, 7 and 8 are most likely early 1940s dwellings, indicated by physical evidence and the fact that no documentary evidence for a later construction has been located; House 6 is a 1947 cottage; Houses 3 and 4 are 1953-54 constructions; House 9 is the 1967 technicians' quarters, and House 11 is a c.1970s transportable type dwelling, which replaced Giles' second bungalow residence on Lot 127 (Lot 460). The packing shed was the first farm building established, and the only one on the Station for several decades. It dates from the 1940s. The office was built in 1959-60 and extended in the late 1960s and 1983. The various other farm buildings and sheds date from the 1970s to the 1990s.

In 2004, House 2 is occupied as offices and Houses 1, 9 and 10 are vacant. *Gascoyne Research Station* continues in its operation as a research facility for tropical fruits and vegetables, as well as the centre of Department of Agriculture operations for the district.

39 Physical evidence.

40 Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, op cit. p.29.

41 Hocking Planning & Architecture, *Shire of Carnarvon Municipal Heritage Inventory*, 1996, entry C68; Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, op cit, Gascoyne Research Station entry [p.5].

42 DOLA Reserves Index, Reserve 18009.

43 Shire of Carnarvon website www.carnarvon.wa.gov.au 20 October 2004

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Gascoyne Research Station comprises an office, eleven employee dwellings (House 1- 11), packing shed, tractor shed, workshop, nursery, water tanks, outbuildings, and trial plots of various plantings.

The buildings that comprise *Gascoyne Research Station* are located in the vicinity of the juncture of Research Road and South River Road, on the banks of the Gascoyne River approximately 10 kilometres east of Carnarvon. Research Road is accessed off the Great Northern Coastal Highway and leads directly to the 'T' intersection where South River Road runs parallel to the river, which is on the north side. The office is located on the west corner of the junction, with three dwellings (House 4, House 3, House 5 from north to south) facing Research Road, south of the office. On the east corner, opposite the office is dwelling House 10. The office is skewed on the site diagonally addressing the corner. West of the office, along South River Road is House 1, and House 9 with House 2 behind. Fifty metres further along is a water tower and tank, with a larger capacity on-ground concrete water tank to the south, in the vicinity of the nursery shed. Another 100 metres west along South River Road, House 6 is located on the western boundary of the site, with House 7 and House 8 behind (south). The packing shed and other operational buildings are located south of House 2. House 11 is located 250 metres east of the Research Road intersection, on South River Road, in close proximity to another on-ground concrete water tank.

Gascoyne Research Station is identifiable by the road side plantings, at the north end of Research Road. The dwellings along the west side (House 3, House 4, House 5) are mostly obscured by the plantings. The site is divided into trial plots of plantings, delineated mostly by windbreaks of casuarinas. The dwellings are surrounded by lush green lawns and tropical plantings, including a variety of palm trees. In contrast, the operational buildings are surrounded by a flat gravel site accessed from South River Road, between House 1 and House 9.

The buildings on the site display no specific architectural style. The dwellings are predominantly purpose designed bungalows for on site residential purposes of government employees. Similarly, the office is purpose designed and the buildings in the operational area are functional to their purposes.

Office

The office is a single story painted face brick building that is an L-shaped form diagonal to the street corner, except for a recessed entry porch. It has a low pitched gable roof clad with pre-painted corrugated galvanized steel sheeting with no gutters or downpipes. The wide eaves overhang is bracketed along the two road frontages of the building. An internal courtyard has been formed by the later extension of a west wing that comprises two sections. The office and extensions have verandahs facing into the courtyard space. The verandahs are roof extensions supported by slender round steel posts on a concrete floor. A pipe rail balustrade is in place along the edge of the extension verandah. The office building has timber framed windows in configurations of two and three double hung sashes, with galvanised cyclone screens fixed on the exterior. The extension is made up of two separate sections end to end in a north south alignment. The extension is elevated off the ground, with a very low pitch roof clad with sheet steel, boxed eaves, square profile gutters and rectangular downpipes. There are aluminium framed sliding glass windows with galvanised cyclone screens. The interiors are austere, with walls of painted face brick and flat hardiflex sheeting, and timber floors.

The carports, dwelling House 3, House 4, House 5, recreational area and the operations of the site, are accessed from the rear courtyard area of the office buildings. At the rear of House 4, outside the specific yard associated with the dwelling, are two double steel framed skillion roofed carports. South of the carports is an extensive lawned area, with a steel portal structure with a pre-painted corrugated galvanized steel roof, that forms a recreation focus of the site. The recreation area backs onto the designated yards of three dwellings (House 4, House 3 and House 5) that are delineated by a low fence.

House 1

House 1 is located on the west side of the office, at an angle to the South River Road frontage. The frontage of the place faces west onto the access road and into the operational area of the site. The dwelling is timber framed and asbestos clad and raised off the ground on timber stumps. The low pitched asbestos clad roof is predominantly hipped. There is a skillion extension along the north side, and verandah enclosures along the west side. The original timber framed casement windows remain in situ, although the verandah extensions have aluminium framed sliding glass windows, and the north extension has louvred windows. There is a corrugated iron clad gable garage with skillion side extension located in front of the dwelling on the south side. The place is vacant.

House 2

House 2 is located behind (south of) House 9, facing north (South River Road), with the access road into the operations area on the immediate east side of the building. The dwelling is at ground level. It is timber framed and asbestos clad with a low pitched corrugated iron clad hipped roof with break pitch surrounding verandahs that have been enclosed. There is skillion extension across the rear. The original windows are timber framed but the verandah enclosures have aluminium framed sliding glass windows. There is an ablution facility and other asbestos clad outbuildings at the rear. The building currently functions as an office facility.

House 3, House 4, House 5

Located south of the office, facing Research Road, are three employee dwellings House 4, House 3 and House 5, in order north to south. House 4 and House 3 are the same design, with an L-shaped floor plan. House 3 has a verandah extension along the south side. Each of the three dwellings has a lawn and garden with various eucalyptus, palm and tropical plantings, particularly along the east side (road frontage). The dwellings are all timber framed and asbestos clad and raised off the ground on timber stumps. The low pitched asbestos clad roofs are hipped, with the front section of House 3 and House 4 featuring vented gablets. The wide eaves are supported by brackets around the perimeter of each place. House 5 has a low pitched gable roof, also clad with corrugated asbestos. The windows in House 3 and House 4 are timber framed in sets of three casements with cyclone screens attached on the exterior. There is a recent pre-painted corrugated galvanized steel garage on the north side of House 3 and a timber pergola on the front (east) of the dwelling. House 5 has a verandah enclosure across part of the front enclosed with an asbestos dado with flywire above. There is a skillion garage at the rear (west) of House 5.

House 6

Located on the west boundary of the site, House 6 is set back from South River Road at an angle. It is a relatively small building with extensions obvious in the

roof form. The dwelling is at ground level. It is timber framed and the original building, parts of which are visible at the front, is of painted weatherboards. The remaining extensions on each side are asbestos clad. The hipped corrugated iron clad roof has break pitch verandahs and skillion extensions. The original windows are timber framed but aluminium framed sliding glass windows predominate, with louvred windows in place on the front extension.

House 7, House 8

House 7 and House 8 are two detached single room dwellings located some distance behind (south) of House 6. Each of the dwellings is at ground level. They are timber framed and asbestos clad with corrugated iron clad gable roofs that extend over the verandah on the north front of each place. The verandah has a dado wall on the north side and full asbestos wall on the south side, with louvred windows.

House 9

House 9 is a rectangular pavilion comprising a single room opening onto verandahs along the west side where there is a central covered connection to the ablution facilities on the east side. The main pavilion is aligned at right angles to South River Road. House 9 is located between House 2 and South River Road. The dwelling is timber framed and asbestos clad and raised off the ground on timber stumps. The expansive low pitched asbestos clad roof is hipped and extends metres beyond the walls of the building, supported by a steel frame and slender steel posts. There is a raised deck along the east side, under the verandah roof. The windows are timber framed with cyclone screens attached on the exterior.

House 10

House 10 is located on the east corner of Research and South River roads with a frontage aligned parallel with South River Road. The dwelling is at ground level. It is timber framed and asbestos clad with a low pitched corrugated iron clad roof with a gable. The roof is break pitch over the surrounding verandahs that have been enclosed except for the north west corner. The windows are timber framed with cyclone screens attached on the exterior.

House 11

House 11 is located several hundred metres west along South River Road. The dwelling faces west, rather than the road frontage (north). It is elevated from the ground on metal stumps, and is timber framed and clad with vertical profile asbestos. The low pitched gable roof is asbestos clad. There is a verandah along part of the west front.

Operational area.

The buildings in the operational area are predominantly steel framed and clad sheds, although the packing shed is a timber framed asbestos clad building. The packing shed has a saw tooth gable roof clad with corrugated asbestos sheeting. There are skillion extensions along the west side of the building, clad with hardiflex sheeting with aluminium framed sliding glass windows. On the interior of the packing shed, there is a steel frame and trusses associated with the considerable in situ equipment and conveyor systems. The remaining workshops and machinery sheds in the operational area are steel framed and corrugated galvanized steel clad recent sheds with low pitched gable roofs.

The outbuildings associated with each dwelling, the carports, the recreation shed, the water tanks, and the steel clad sheds and nursery shed in the operational area, are of little or no heritage significance.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Gascoyne Research Station was established in the World War Two and immediate Post World War Two reconstruction period. The only other research station established during this period was Kununurra (Kimberley) Research Station in 1945.⁴⁴ After the World War Two, a large number of research stations were established to supplement the five pre-World War One and five interwar research stations previously established, in response to the enormous growth of the State and Post War reconstruction and development. These included: Abydos-Woodstock (1947-48); Bramley (1950-52); Wokalup (c.1951); Wembley (1950s); Swan viticulture (1954); Stoneville horticulture (1955); Newdegate (1955); Badgingarra (1959); Medina (1963); Fitzroy Crossing (1965); Manjimup (1967); Mt Barker (1968); and Northam (1969).

Architecture

Generally, house styles at research stations varied little in the first half of the twentieth century, but cladding material changed from weatherboard in the early 1900s to fibrous cement by World War Two. Examples of married men's quarters (Houses 2, 3, 4 and 5 at *Gascoyne Research Station*) are found at Wongan Hills, Salmon Gums, Merredin, Avondale and Esperance Downs. The single men's quarters (House 9) is a specific building type that evolved in the post-war period. Other examples remain at Wongan Hills, Salmon Gums, Badgingarra, Katanning, Manjimup, Mount Barker, Newdegate and Vasse.⁴⁵

The steel-framed, rectangular farm buildings of the later twentieth-century are common to all the various types of research stations in the State.

Gascoyne Research Station includes good representative examples of architectural styles typical at research stations across the State.

Use

Almost all the stations established prior to World War Two were for research into wheat and sheep production so their buildings were similar, with wheat silos and shearing sheds, etc, while those established Post War were for more varied uses.⁴⁶ Avondale Research Station (1924) and Merredin State Farm Manager's House (fmr) 1904, are the only related places entered on the State Register. Both are associated with wheat and sheep research.⁴⁷

Kununurra Research Station is the only other station established for research into tropical agriculture and was developed during a similar period to *Gascoyne Research Station*. The buildings at Kununurra are non-typical Post War residential and administration buildings. The Kununurra station's association with the Ord River Irrigation Scheme gives it a different character to that of *Gascoyne Research Station*.⁴⁸

44 Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, op cit, p. 10.

45 Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, op cit, pp. 13-15.

46 Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, op cit, pp. 11-12.

47 HCWA database.

48 Kelsall Binet Architects & Kristy Bizzaca & Associates, op cit, p. 18.

Gascoyne Research Station is rare as one of two research stations in the State constructed for research into tropical agriculture.

Gascoyne Research Station is a good and representative example of a research station in Western Australia.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Agriculture and Public Works department files located at the State Record Office and Planning & Infrastructure files located at their offices in Midland, as referenced in the footnotes.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
