



# 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)

- 3.7.3.1 Building & maintaining railways

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

- 202 Rail & light rail transport
- 106 Workers

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie*, though basic, are good representative examples of Public Works Department standard designs for a stationmaster's house and platelayer's cottages constructed of stone with iron roofs in the Federation Bungalow style. The buildings' proximity as a group of dwellings in a remote location provides a valuable sense of place. (Criterion 1.1)

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* provide a picturesque counterpoint to the open landscape. (Criterion 1.3)

#### 11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* are associated with the construction of the Kalgoorlie to Menzies Railway line in 1898. The cottages formed part of the activities at the various stations and sidings built along the line, and illustrate the way of life for the stationmaster and railway employees. The three cottages are the only remaining physical evidence of a station complex that comprised the extant buildings, two further residences, platform, station and house, goods shed, loading platform and stockyards. (Criterion 2.2)

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* are associated with the town of Goongarrie which initially developed as a business and administrative centre for mining interests in the area during the mid to late 1890s. The cottages are a reflection of the town's short period of prosperity as a result of the discovery of gold in the district and are significant built reminders of this past. (Criterion 2.2)

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* represent a fragment of the once important narrow gauge railway linking Kalgoorlie to Menzies. (Criterion 2.2)

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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.

### 11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* are highly valued for their historic value to the Goongarrie and to the wider Goldfields area and, as a result, contribute the community's sense of place. Interest in the preservation of the place from such organisations as the National Trust of Australia (WA) as well as Goldfields tourist authorities and historical groups is an indication of the importance of these cottages to the community. (Criteria 4.1 & 4.2)

Recent efforts of Westrail and the Shire to have the cottages vested in the Shire are further evidence of social value. (Criterion 4.2)

## 12 DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

### 12. 1. RARITY

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* are rare examples of remote locality stone and iron construction in the region. The buildings proximity as a group of dwellings in a remote location provides a valuable sense of place. (Criterion 5.1)

### 12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie*, are representative of the standard design for stationmaster's houses and platelayer's cottages constructed along the Kalgoorlie to Menzies railway in 1898, and used at various stations along lines constructed for the Western Australia Railways Department to designs by the Public Works Department. (Criterion 6.1)

### 12. 3 CONDITION

The structure and overall condition of the *Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie*, appear to be in fair to good condition. The platelayer's cottages exhibit signs of general neglect and lack of maintenance. The stationmaster's cottage is currently occupied and appears well maintained and in good condition throughout.

### 12. 4 INTEGRITY

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie*, essentially retain their original floor plan layout. Additional rooms and ancillary buildings and structures have been added to accommodate various lifestyle needs and requirements. The stationmaster's house remains in use as a residence and the platelayer's cottages are vacant. Overall the individual buildings retain a moderate to high degree of integrity.

### 12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The majority of the *Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie*, retain their original fabric. Additions to the platelayer's cottage include the infill of external verandahs to provide an additional room. External sanitary facilities have been demolished. Evidence of the location of these facilities still remains.

Generally the original fabric remains under applied finishes and retains a high degree of authenticity.

The stationmaster's residence has external enclosed verandahs and lean-to shade structures. Generally, the original fabric retains a high degree of authenticity.

Other evidence of the station, station platform, station house, goods shed, and stockyards is not visible at surface level.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Historians Kristy Bizzaca and Linley Chandler compiled the documentary evidence. Philip Griffiths and Lee Polmear, Architects, compiled the physical evidence.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* comprise a stationmaster's house and two platelayer's cottages constructed of stone, with iron roofs and are designed in the Federation Bungalow style.

Pukersgill, Frost and Cahill first prospected the Goongarrie field in 1893. Originally called 'Flying Gimlet', the field became known as 'The Ninety Mile' at the height of its prosperity.<sup>1</sup>

'90 Mile' was listed in *Wise's Post Office Directory* for the first time in 1895. Recorded at the town were a post office and store, a hotel and commercial agent.<sup>2</sup> From October 1895, land sales were recorded at the Goongarrie townsite.<sup>3</sup> More land was offered for sale in 1896<sup>4</sup> and approximately 80 lots were also made available from June to September 1897.<sup>5</sup>

By 1896/1897, the Goongarrie Post Office was under construction and £100 had been granted for the building of the Goongarrie Miners Institute.<sup>6</sup> Money, £10,766/13/3, had also been allocated for the construction of a concrete water tank for the town.<sup>7</sup> In 1897, the Post Office listing for the town included a postmaster, eight mine managers, one condenser proprietor, an auctioneer and agent, one restaurant, a butcher, a baker, the Royal Mint, and the Mines office.<sup>8</sup> Appointments for the Local Board of Health were made in October 1897<sup>9</sup> and, in 1898, five acres of land were reserved for use as a cemetery.<sup>10</sup>

After the discovery of gold in the Eastern Goldfields in the 1890s the Government soon determined that it was necessary to construct a railway as a means of communication to the area. The Eastern Goldfields Railway was built to Southern Cross in 1894 and continued to be extended eastward as new fields were developed and settled. In 1897, the railway reached Kalgoorlie and, from here, the Government established branches of the line

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1 *North Coolgardie Herald*, 24 April 1901.

2 *Wise's Post Office Directory*. 1895.

3 *Government Gazette*, 1895.

4 *Government Gazette*, 1896.

5 *Government Gazette*, 4 June 1897; *Government Gazette*, 2 July 1897; *Government Gazette*, 3 September 1897.

6 Report of the Department of Public Works, 1896/1897, pp. 81 & 86.

7 *Ibid*, p. 100.

8 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1897.

9 *Government Gazette*, 7 October 1897.

10 *Government Gazette*, 1898.

into various gold mining areas.<sup>11</sup> One of these branch lines was the Kalgoorlie to Menzies railway, construction of which was authorised in an Act passed on 27 October 1896.<sup>12</sup>

On 11 June 1897, tenders were called for the construction of the Kalgoorlie - Menzies Railway:

complete with Permanent Way and Stations (including the providing of all materials, except the Rails & Fittings for the Permanent Way, the Material for the Telephone Line, the Ironwork for the Turntable, the Weighbridge, and the 5-ton Cranes): length about 81 miles.<sup>13</sup>

On 1 September 1897, contractors Smith and Timms were awarded the tender at a cost of £137,851/9/5. Work commenced on the railway immediately as the date for its opening had already been scheduled as 22 March 1898.<sup>14</sup>

Stations constructed along the railway line included 'Paddington, Broad Arrow, Bardoc, Goongarrie, Menzies and other mining centres'.<sup>15</sup> Telephone lines were to be installed at the various stations and water tanks supplied.<sup>16</sup>

Paddington, <sup>Kurawa</sup>, Bardoc, Goongarrie and Menzies all had stations and facilities, with Menzies being the largest. The total number of stone cottages constructed on the 81 mile stretch of line between Kalgoorlie and Menzies was thirty-four; twenty-nine of these being standard design 'platelayer's' cottages and five second class stationmaster's houses.<sup>17</sup> At Goongarrie station, one stationmaster's house and four platelayer's cottages were constructed. Situated on what was Williams Street, to the south of the station, was a group of three platelayer's cottage (on the block between Hicks and Otto Streets). To the north of these, and also south of the station, were the fourth platelayer's cottage and the stationmaster's house. All of the quarters had latrines and a post and wire fence surrounded the stationmaster's house.<sup>18</sup>

The platelayer's cottages comprised of two rooms, with the living room having a stone fireplace. A verandah surrounded the cottage on all four sides.<sup>19</sup> At the two extant platelayer's cottages, the southern part of the verandah was enclosed for use as a kitchen at a later stage. There is evidence of the external fittings for a combustion wood stove and chip heater.<sup>20</sup>

The stationmaster's house was of larger and more formal design, with a central passage and two rooms situated on either side of the passage. Access to the stone kitchen, which was located on the north-western corner of the building, was through either the living room or the outside verandah. A verandah was constructed on the four main sides of the house. The building

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11 Higham, G. J., *One Hundred Years of Railways in Western Australia 1871 - 1971*, Australian Railway Historical Society (W.A Division Inc.), Perth, 1971, p. 8.

12 *The Statutes of Western Australia*, 1896.

13 *Government Gazette*, 11 June 1897.

14 *Government Gazette*, 3 September 1897.

15 Report of the Department of Public Works, 1896/1897, p. 51.

16 *Ibid.*

17 Kalgoorlie - Menzies Railway Line, Book 3, 1895, PWD Acc 1649, Item 05574/3.

18 Kalgoorlie - Menzies Railway Line, Book 3, Sheet 2, 1895, PWD Acc 1649, Item 05574/3, 1895. Other buildings at the Goongarrie station included the station building and passenger platform, a lamp room and latrines, a goods shed, a loading platform, sheep and cattle yards and an engine water tank.

19 Standard Drawing of Platelayer's Cottage, Western Australian Railways, PWD 3687, 22 June 1895, Kalgoorlie - Menzies Railway Line, Book 3, PWD Acc 1649, Item 05574/3.

20 Site Inspection, 3 March 2000.

had a high ceiling, with each of the four rooms from the passage having ceiling ventilation.<sup>21</sup> (The south-western portion of the verandah was later enclosed to form a bathroom and washhouse.<sup>22</sup>)

On 22 March 1898, the Kalgoorlie to Menzies railway line was opened Sir John Forrest.<sup>23</sup> In 1900, Robert Sayers is recorded as the stationmaster at Goongarrie and three engine drivers are also listed.<sup>24</sup> By 1901, there were three railway repairers, one ganger and two engine drivers at Goongarrie.<sup>25</sup>

In 1900/1901, a water supply was installed at Goongarrie station and a pumpers' quarters was constructed.<sup>26</sup>

By 1901, newspapers had already begun to report that Goongarrie was 'almost deserted'.<sup>27</sup> Instead of using the town as a base of operations, the prospectors of nearby fields such as Mulwarrie and Davyhurst went to Menzies for supplies and to carry out business.<sup>28</sup> In 1911, the hotel was still listed in the town but no other public buildings and/or facilities are mentioned.<sup>29</sup>

The majority of people shown as having resided in the town at this time were prospectors, miners and railway employees. In fact, it is around this time that the largest number of railway employees is recorded; including W. Carthew as stationmaster, eight fettlers and one ganger.<sup>30</sup> In 1912, this number had decreased to three fettlers, one ganger and stationmaster.<sup>31</sup> By 1915, no stationmaster was shown at Goongarrie and the town's population had decreased to fourteen.<sup>32</sup>

From 1928, facilities and structures appear to have been removed from Goongarrie station. In July 1928, the platform to the station building was demolished. A five-ton crane was taken from Goongarrie to Doodlakine and the goods shed was removed to Burekup. The siding at the station was also lifted and reused at the railway yards at Kalgoorlie.<sup>33</sup>

In July 1931, arrangements were made to supply the Goongarrie railway gang's cottages with water from Mundaring Weir, as had been done for the cottages at Broad Arrow. Prior to this time, water was supplied to the employees by roadside tanks, made available on request to the District Traffic Superintendent.<sup>34</sup>

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21 Standard Drawing of Station Master's House 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, Western Australian Railways, PWD 3588, 11 May 1895, Kalgoorlie – Menzies Railway Line, Book 3, PWD Acc 1649, Item 05574/3.

22 Site Inspection, 3 March 2000.

23 Higham, op. cit., p. 8; Report of the Government Railway and Tramways, 1899, p. 3.

24 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1900. No railway staff are listed in *Wise's Post Office Directories* from 1895 to 1899.

25 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1901.

26 Report of the Government Railway and Tramways, 1901, p. 37.

27 *North Coolgardie Herald*, 24 April 1901.

28 Ibid.

29 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1911.

30 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1911.

31 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1912.

32 *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1915. With the short boom period in the gold fields in the 1920s and 1930s, the population of Goongarrie reached 36 by 1939. *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1939.

33 Goongarrie Station Progress Plan, Kalgoorlie – Menzies Branch, WAGR, EEL Plan No. 5389, undated, Acc 1642, Item 120.

34 Memo from Chief Civil Engineer to the Commissioner of Railways, 4 July 1931, Goongarrie Water Supply, WAGR File 6882/1939, Folio 7, WAS 262/2 Acc 1240, SRO.

Correspondence between the Kalgoorlie and the Perth offices of the Public Works Department in February 1931 record that the Railway Department had let the four two-roomed cottages at 5/- weekly. When a prospective tenant for the Mechanics' Institute, Mr F. Miller, heard about this valuation, he wrote to the Public Works Department stating that in comparison he would only be prepared to pay 2/6 rent for the nearby Miners' Institute, the conditions there being poor by comparison to the Railway Department cottages. This was supported by the Kalgoorlie office who stated that the cottages 'are in a good state of repair, compact and convenient'.<sup>35</sup>

In 1931, the Kalgoorlie Public Works Department reported that those occupying the Railway Department's cottages at Goongarrie were employed by that Department.<sup>36</sup>

In April 1932, Mr. Miller complained to the Water Supply Department in Kalgoorlie about the cost of renting the Goongarrie Miners' Institute as a residence.<sup>37</sup> He went on to state that

The Railway Station Building, a fine structure with many apartments, warm in the winter and cool in the summer is let privately for 6/- per week and I am paying 5/- for a building not fit to live in, in fact if I were not here it would be probably used as a goat house.<sup>38</sup>

The Miners' Institute was eventually sold to Miller in February 1933, after which time it was dismantled and removed to Kalgoorlie.<sup>39</sup>

A memo from the Deputy Chief Traffic Manager to the Commissioner of Railways dated 18 December 1939 refers to prospectors renting several cottages at Goongarrie. At this time, there is also mention of a caretaker for the railway cottages at Goongarrie.<sup>40</sup>

In the 1946/1947, the Report of the Government Railways, Tramways and Ferries announced that a program of improvements was being carried out throughout the Department's properties. Funds were made available for the construction of extra rooms, washhouses, bathrooms, fly screens and doors, and the installation of electric light on application and subject to approval.<sup>41</sup>

In May 1946, the Commissioner of Railways was advised that the employee tenant of Cottage no. 430 (Platelayer's Cottage 1) had requested 'the provision of a washhouse, bathroom (with portable shower) and fly screens

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<sup>35</sup> Memo from the Public Works Department, Kalgoorlie to Perth, 17 February 1931 & Tenancy Agreement, 11 February 1931, in Goongarrie Miners' Institute, PWD File 980/28, AN/7 Acc 689, SRO.

<sup>36</sup> Memo from the Public Works Department, Kalgoorlie to Perth, 2 April 1931, in Goongarrie Miners' Institute, PWD File 980/28, AN/7 Acc 689, SRO.

<sup>37</sup> Letter from FJ Miller to Water Supply Department, Kalgoorlie, in Goongarrie Miners' Institute, PWD File 980/28, AN/7 Acc 689, SRO.

<sup>38</sup> Letter from FJ Miller to Water Supply Department, Kalgoorlie, in Goongarrie Miners' Institute, PWD File 980/28, AN/7 Acc 689, SRO.

<sup>39</sup> Correspondence in Goongarrie Miners' Institute, PWD File 980/28, AN/7 Acc 689, SRO.

<sup>40</sup> Memo from the Deputy Chief Traffic Manager to the Commissioner of Railways, 18 December 1939, Goongarrie Water Supply, WAGR File 6882/1939, Folio 34, WAS 262/2 Acc 1240, SRO. The name of this woman caretaker is not recorded in this file. It does appear that it was common for a caretaker to be appointed for the cottages. In 1929, Mrs C. E. Humphrey, who was married to one of the gangers, is listed as the caretaker. *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1929.

<sup>41</sup> Report of the Government Railways, Tramways and Ferries, 1947, p. 19.

and is prepared to pay the prescribed increase in rent.’<sup>42</sup> The memo went on to say that Accounts Department recommended that the estimated cost of the works, £55, be allocated and charged as ‘Betterments’. If approved, the improvements were to begin after 30 June 1946.<sup>43</sup> Similar works to Cottage no. 432 (Platelayer's Cottage 3), this time at a cost of £45, were recommended and approved in August on the same year.<sup>44</sup> The works to the two houses were completed in May and June 1947.<sup>45</sup>

In November 1947, the provision of a bathroom and washhouse was also applied for Cottage no. 431 (Platelayer's Cottage 2).<sup>46</sup> This work was completed by November the next year at £69/13/8 due to increase cost of material.<sup>47</sup>

In 1962, all five cottages and the detached washhouses were connected to the water supply at Goongarrie.

It is interesting to note that on this plan the stationmaster's house is described as being the ganger's house.<sup>48</sup>

In late 1968, J. W. Higgs wrote of his interest in the cottages at Goongarrie to the Secretary for Railways. In his letter, Higgs advised that he had spoken to the Kalgoorlie branch of the Railway Department (WAGR) with regard to renting the stationmaster's house at one dollar per week. He went on to offer \$500 for the outright purchase of the cottages and the land, mentioning that the cottages were in various stages of disrepair: ‘Vandals presumably having removed stoves, tanks, doors, baths, piping etc from many of them as well many windows will have to be replaced.’<sup>49</sup>

A memo shows that while ‘Sale of the land upon which they stand may therefore present some difficulties [due to its location within the station

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<sup>42</sup> Memo to Commissioner of Railways from Comptroller of Accounts & Audit, 20 May 1946, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 1, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

<sup>43</sup> Memo to Commissioner of Railways from Comptroller of Accounts & Audit, 20 May 1946, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 1, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

<sup>44</sup> Memo, 21 August 1946, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 3, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

<sup>45</sup> Report by the Civil Engineering Branch (Property no. 432), 26 June 1947, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 5, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO; Report by the Civil Engineering Branch (Property no. 430), Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 6, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO; Goongarrie Station Progress Plan, Kalgoorlie – Menzies Branch, WAGR, EEL Plan No. 5389, undated, Acc 1642, Item 120. The cost for the work at property no. 432 was detailed as £44/7/9, and the work at property no. 430 £61/2/9; the higher cost as a result of wages being more than originally estimated.

<sup>46</sup> Memo to Commissioner of Railways from Comptroller of Accounts & Audit, 26 November 1947, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 7, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO; Goongarrie Station Progress Plan, Kalgoorlie – Menzies Branch, WAGR, EEL Plan No. 5389, undated, Acc 1642, Item 120.

<sup>47</sup> Report by the Civil Engineering Branch, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 9, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

<sup>48</sup> A constructed plan of reticulated water supply, Goongarrie, Civil Engineering Branch, WAGR, Plan No. 52780, Acc 1781 Item 7294, SRO.

<sup>49</sup> Letter from JW Higgs to the Secretary for Railways, October 1968, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 10, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

boundaries], but apart from this, the offer is considered to be quite good.’<sup>50</sup> The five cottages at Goongarrie had been vacant since the transfer of the gang some time ago and that, as a result of their disrepair and stone construction, it was ‘most unlikely that they would ever be an economical proposition’.<sup>51</sup>

After some consideration, WAGR decided to offer Higgs a peppercorn lease of the properties for an indefinite period, thus removing responsibility for the buildings from the Department.<sup>52</sup> To this end, a letter was written to Higgs informing him that while he could purchase the buildings outright, the land was only available through a peppercorn lease.<sup>53</sup> In April 1969, the \$250 purchase of the cottages and lease of land, including access areas, was approved by the Minister for Railways.<sup>54</sup>

On 16 June 1973, the *Kalgoorlie Miner* reported:

Several unused sidings on the Kalgoorlie-Leonora railway will be demolished with the closure of the narrow gauge line – on July 20.

The West Australian Government Railways has advised the Boulder Shire the sidings will be removed in preparation for the construction of the standard gauge to Leonora.

The sidings are Paddington, Broad Arrow, Bardoc, Goongarrie, Comet Vale, Yunnadga, Jeedamya, Jessops Well, Melita, Gwalia.

The Shire President, Cr. W. Kenneally, said yesterday it was a waste of time retaining the sidings because of vandalism... platforms were all that remained of some of the sidings and railway buildings were generally in poor condition.<sup>55</sup>

In response to this, both the National Trust of Australia (WA Branch) and the Leonora Tourist Committee expressed concern about the preservation of the historic railway cottages at Bardoc and Goongarrie and WAGR plans for the buildings.<sup>56</sup>

In July 1973, WAGR replied that it would not dispose of the cottages without informing the various interested parties and that investigations were also being carried out to see if the cottages at Bardoc and Goongarrie could be

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<sup>50</sup> Inter office memo from Chief Civil Engineer to Actg Sect for Railways, 5 November 1968, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 11, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Memo from Actg Sect for Railways to Chief Civil Engineer, 13 November 1968, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 12, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO; Memo to Actg Sect for Railway from Chief Civil Engineer, 18 November 1968, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 13, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

<sup>53</sup> Letter from Actg Sect of Railways to J. W. Higgs, 26 November 1968, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 14, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

<sup>54</sup> Letter from J. W. Higgs to Actg Sect of Railways, 9 December 1968, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 15, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO; Memo from Chief Civil Engineer to Sect for Railways, 21 March 1969, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 16, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO; Memo from Commissioner of Railways to Minister for Railways, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 19, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

<sup>55</sup> *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 16 June 1973.

<sup>56</sup> National Trust letter dated 26 June 1973, National Trust Files: Menzies 1.

handed over to the National Trust<sup>57</sup> The National Trust was later informed that the cottages had already been privately sold<sup>58</sup>, but that

We [WAGR] have suggested to the Hon. Minister for Railways that he might refer the request to the Hon. Minister for Tourism with a suggestion that he might consider negotiating with the owners for purchase of one or two of the properties concerned.<sup>59</sup>

Although the transfer of the cottages at Bardoc and Goongarrie did not occur, the issue of preservation of the buildings was again raised several years later. In 1975, correspondence show that WAGR had attempted to make Higgs either rent out or demolish the three unused cottages at the southern end of the Goongarrie station area: 'Mr Higgs has obviously not been able to arrange the former and it is most reluctant to carry out demolition.'<sup>60</sup>

WAGR continued to inform the National Trust of its concern about the dilapidated appearance of the buildings and site at Goongarrie<sup>61</sup>, most likely with a view towards the cottages being leased by this organisation. However, in August 1975, the National Trust wrote that it was not in a position to acquire the cottages or look after them due to their isolated location.<sup>62</sup>

In 1974, the timber sleeper fences around the cottages were removed. All materials and structures such as sheds were left on site.<sup>63</sup>

Although only the stationmaster's house and the adjacent cottage were occupied by Higgs, he often rented the remaining three cottages to overnight visitors.<sup>64</sup> Potential use of the cottages for rental purposes is also indicated in a letter from Dr J. E. D. Fox at the Department of Biology, Western Australian Institute of Technology. Fox expressed his interest in renting the cottages at Goongarrie, as the area was likely to become a study site into the 'growth and regeneration of mulga'.<sup>65</sup>

A note referring to Higgs appears near Cottage no. 433 (Platelayer's Cottage 4 nearest the station) on the Goongarrie Station Progress Plan. This is the

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57 WAGR letter dated 12 July 1973, National Trust Files: Menzies 1.

58 WAGR letter dated 8 August 1973, National Trust Files: Menzies 1. The five cottages at Goongarrie were sold to Higgs in 1969 and the two remaining cottages at Bardoc to local farmer, W. W. Carter circa 1953. Memo from Commissioner of Railways to the Minister for Railways, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 20, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

59 Letter to N. J. Armitage, National Trust Administrator, 8 August 1973, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 21, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

60 WAGR letter, 10 June 1975, National Trust Files: Menzies 1.

61 WAGR letter, 13 August 1975, National Trust Files: Menzies 1.

62 National Trust letter to WAGR, 29 August 1975. The National Trust also informed the Eastern Goldfields Branch of the Royal Western Australia Historical Society of its decision in October of that year. National Trust letter, 22 October 1975, National Trust Files: Menzies 1.

63 Memo from District Engineer to Secretary for Railways, 10 June 1974, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 22, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

64 Eastern Goldfields Branch of the Royal Western Australia Historical Society, 20 October 1975, National Trust Files: Menzies 1.

65 Letter from Dr J. E. D. Fox, 25 March 1976, Goongarrie Departmental Property, WAGR File R6183, Folio 24, WAS 1208 Acc 4771, SRO.

only indication that Higgs may have been responsible for the demolition of this particular cottage.<sup>66</sup>

Since the 1970s, some renovation work has been carried out to the weatherboard (corrugated iron) enclosed areas of the two remaining cottages. The internal fittings for the combustion stove and heater have been removed, kitchen sinks and cupboards installed, new light fittings installed, and fibro ceilings put in place. The detached washhouses and toilets to these two cottages have also been removed.<sup>67</sup>

At some stage, the cottages at Goongarrie reverted to the ownership of Westrail.<sup>68</sup> In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the cottages were taken over as staff accommodation by the Julia Mines company, which had a processing plant near the site. The company's foreman occupied the stationmaster's house. After Julia Mines ceased operations in the area, the cottages were again returned to the control of Westrail. Since this time, the two platelayer's cottages have been vacant for most of the time.<sup>69</sup> The stationmaster's house has had several tenants in subsequent years.<sup>70</sup>

In late 1999, a storm damaged the two platelayer's cottages at Goongarrie. This caused much public concern about the preservation of the buildings. As a result, discussions were held between the Shire of Menzies and Westrail regarding the repair of the damaged cottages. Westrail provided money to the Shire for carrying out urgent works.<sup>71</sup> This involved re-fixing the roof sheeting that had been blown off during the storm, propping up portion of the verandah at one cottages and general cleaning and clearing.<sup>72</sup>

In January 2000, Westrail informed the Heritage Council of Western Australia of its plans to dispose of *Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* by vesting the place in the Shire of Menzies.<sup>73</sup> As the property falls under the auspices of the *Government Heritage Property Disposal Process*, a heritage assessment of the place was required.

In May 2000, only the stationmaster's house is occupied. The two platelayer's cottages are vacant.

## 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* are the last remaining examples of remote locality workers' cottages and stationmaster's accommodation in the region. The buildings, though basic, are representative examples of standards designs for station master's houses and platelayer's cottages constructed of stone and

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<sup>66</sup> Goongarrie Station Progress Plan, Kalgoorlie – Menzies Branch, WAGR, EEL Plan No. 5389, undated, Acc 1642, Item 120. No firm evidence has yet been found with regard to the demolition of the two platelayers' cottages.

<sup>67</sup> Site Inspection, 3 March 2000.

<sup>68</sup> No evidence has yet been found with regard to this matter.

<sup>69</sup> Phone conversation with Graham Duncan, Westrail, 1 May 2000; Phone conversation with Joe Flaymen, Westrail, 1 May 2000. Julia Mines also used the Menzies Railway Station as its base of operations. When the company left the area, it gave this property to the Shire of Menzies.

<sup>70</sup> Site Inspection, 3 March 2000.

<sup>71</sup> Meeting with Laurie Piggott & Joe Flaymen, 27 January 2000.

<sup>72</sup> Phone conversation with Graham Duncan, Westrail, 1 May 2000; Site Inspection, 3 March 2000. The current tenant of the stationmaster's house, who has been in residence since February 2000, is in the process of cleaning and carrying out minor repair work to the building.

<sup>73</sup> HCWA File: P15411; Meeting with Laurie Piggott & Joe Flaymen, 27 January 2000.

iron to standard Public works Department designs. The buildings proximity as a group of dwellings in a remote location provides a valuable and unique sense of place. The buildings stand as a cohesive group in a culturally modified landscape and contribute to the landscape as a focus element. There is little evidence of planting and garden beds, apart from remnants of loose feldspar garden edges and surviving cactus plants.

Generally, the platelayer's cottages comprise of two rooms, with the living room having a stone fireplace as shown in the documentary evidence. A concrete floor verandah encloses the cottages on all four sides. At the two extant platelayer's cottages, the southern part of the verandah is enclosed for use as a Kitchen. There is evidence of the external fittings for a combustion wood stove and chip heater. There are parts of corrugated iron rainwater tanks surviving. There are several tank stands that have lost their rainwater tanks.

The stationmaster's house is of larger with a central passage and two rooms situated on either side of the passage. Access to the stone kitchen, which was located on the north-western corner of the building, was through either the living room or the outside verandah. There is a perimeter verandah. The building has a high ceiling, with each of the four rooms from the passage having ceiling ventilation. The south-western portion of the verandah is enclosed to form a bathroom and washhouse.

### **Platelayer's Cottages No.1 & 3**

#### **External**

The platelayer's cottage comprise of two internal rooms and an enclosed verandah space. The simple rectangular plan is topped with a timber framed pitched roof with extended eaves to form a verandah to all four sides. The cottage can be divided into two sections, the original cottage with enclosing verandahs on four sides, and the enclosed section of southern verandah forming a kitchen space.

Externally, the random rubble stone walls and short length corrugated iron roof remain largely intact and in good condition. The stone is weathered granite. The wall openings have dressed quoins and windows sills have a stucco finish. The verandahs have concrete floors and the roofs are supported on square timber posts that show no evidence of ornament, though the original drawings indicated that stop-chamfered posts were required. Over time, the verandahs have been infilled with flyscreen doors added, external water tanks and latrines removed or relocated, and fitted out with modern services and fixtures.

The southern verandah has been enclosed with a stud wall and clad in vertical corrugated iron to provide a kitchen space. From the external elevation, window openings and a sheet metal fireplace can be seen. These features however, have been sheeted over on the inside.

#### **Internal**

The cottage is divided into three spaces, kitchen, living and sleeping areas. The internal spaces also remain largely intact including the ledge and brace doors, double hung windows, fireplace, timber mantle, unpainted jarrah dado wall lining, painted plaster rendered walls and plaster ceilings, timber architraves and skirtings. The timber floor has been covered with carpet. The plaster ceiling to Platelayer's Cottage No.3 living room is almost completely missing exposing the timber lath background, which is in good condition.

The addition of electricity and associated fixtures and fittings, though convenient, are obtrusively installed.

The kitchen area has a plasterboard lining to the walls and ceiling. There is evidence of a kitchen bench and sink and a location for an electric stove that all have been removed. Hydraulic services remain in place with water from a mains supply and supplemented with rain water tanks positioned on timber sleeper stands.

### **Stationmaster's Residence**

#### **External**

The stationmaster's residence can also be divided into two sections, the original residence with enclosing verandahs on four sides, and the enclosed section of southern verandah forming a ablution facility and the verandah to the western side enclosed with shade cloth. There are several external structures abutting the residence including pergolas with shade cloth to part of the north and east elevations, and a lean-to structure attached to the eaves of the southern verandah. Four water tanks on stands surround the building with three to the southern elevation and the remaining tank to the north east corner. In addition, there are several sheds adjacent to the residence all enclosed by a corrugated iron and cyclone mesh fence.

Like the cottages, the random rubble stone walls and Dutch gable corrugated iron roof remain largely intact. Overtime, the verandahs have been infilled with concrete, flyscreen doors added and external water tanks added.

The south-west corner of the verandah has been enclosed with stud walls and clad with fibrous cement sheet to provide an ablution facility incorporating a shower, basin and toilet.

#### **Internal**

The cottage comprises of a centre corridor with four rooms, two either side. The internal spaces also remain largely intact including the solid panel doors, double hung windows, fireplace and mantle, rendered walls and plaster ceilings, timber architrave and skirting. The timber floor has been covered with carpet to the living areas, and vinyl to the kitchen.

The addition of electricity and associated fixtures and fittings, though convenient, are obtrusively installed.

### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* are closely related to the construction, maintenance and operation of the Kalgoorlie to Menzies Railway in 1898. A number of stations and sidings were built along the line including those at Paddington, Kurawa, Bardoc, Goongarrie and Menzies; Menzies being the largest facility.

The total number of stone cottages constructed on the 81 mile stretch of line between Kalgoorlie and Menzies was thirty-four; twenty-nine of these being standard design 'platelayer's' cottages and five second class stationmaster's houses. At Goongarrie station, one stationmaster's house and four platelayer's cottages were constructed.<sup>74</sup>

In the early to mid 1970s, concern was raised with regard to the preservation of the stone cottages as a result of the closure of the narrow gauge line on 20

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<sup>74</sup> Kalgoorlie – Menzies Railway Line, Book 3, 1895, PWD Acc 1649, Item 05574/3.

July 1973. At this time, *Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* numbered among the few cottages still remaining.<sup>75</sup>

In May 2000, *Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* is believed to be the only railway workers cottages still existing along the Kalgoorlie to Menzies line. Those at Broad Arrow, which remained until the 1990s, were due to be demolished as part of the expansion of the mine immediately adjacent in the late 1990s.

*Three Railway Cottages, Goongarrie* are amongst the few remaining obvious pieces of evidence of a once important regional railway line.

#### **13. 4 REFERENCES**

No key references.

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

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<sup>75</sup> *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 16 June 1973.