



**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)

- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 3.4.2 Fishing and whaling
- 7.6 Administering Australia

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 107 Settlements
- 305 Fishing and other maritime activity

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Individual elements, such as the Court House and Bond Store and Post and Telegraph Office, are good examples of public buildings executed in local materials and display fine aesthetic qualities in their massing and detailing. (Criterion 1.1)

The visual integrity and character of the *Cossack Townsite Precinct* remains intact and the topographical setting of the precinct is relatively intact. The estuarine setting and distinctive and rare mangrove flora add to the aesthetic qualities of the precinct. (Criterion 1.3)

The extant buildings concentrated along The Strand and Pearl Street, the historic commercial and administrative centre of *Cossack Townsite Precinct*, form a precinct of buildings of considerable aesthetic and historic interest. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The port was an important staging post during the gold rushes of the 1880s. From 1887, *Cossack Townsite Precinct* was the major access point for prospectors travelling to the Pilbara goldfields. (Criterion 2.1)

* 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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

Established in 1863, *Cossack Townsite Precinct* was the first port established in the north west of Australia. The port town provided a vital point of access for the settlement and development of the Pilbara region, and as such it illustrates an important phase in the development of Western Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

As Western Australia's first pearling port and precursor to the more widely known Broome, *Cossack Townsite Precinct* was an important contact point between Europeans and Aboriginal and South-East Asian people, who were heavily involved in the pearling industry from the 1860s to the 1880s either through choice or coercion. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.3)

Cossack Townsite Precinct is important as the precursor to the more widely known Broome pearling industry (Criterion 2.2).

Cossack Townsite Precinct is important in terms of Western Australia's multicultural heritage, with the fabric of the town illustrating the mid to late nineteenth century attitudes of Europeans towards 'Asiatics', as evidenced in the Asian Quarter and the segregated cemetery. (Criteria 2.2 & 2.3)

Cossack Townsite Precinct is associated with outstanding figures in the early development of the Pilbara region, including explorer F T Gregory, the Padbury, Wellard, Broadhurst, Withnell and Sholl families, and Cossack identities such as the Hall and Muramat families. (Criterion 2.3)

The notable group of public buildings centred around The Strand and Pearl Street were designed during George Temple Poole's term as Chief Architect of the Public Works Department. (Criterion 2.3)

Cossack Townsite Precinct contains major evidence of the response of European settlers to a remote environment characterized by scarcity, climatic extremes and the hazards of cyclones and tidal surges. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Cossack Townsite Precinct is a nationally significant archaeological site that has the potential to contribute to a wider cultural understanding of the cultural heritage of the State through use as a research site. (Criterion 3.1)

Cossack Townsite Precinct provides evidence of the early experiences of non-Indigenous people to live in and adapt to Pilbara's climate and environment. The buildings of the 1890s were constructed in stone (as opposed to the earlier timber buildings) and were designed to withstand cyclones. Many of the buildings were anchored to the ground by chains and represent a technical accomplishment for the period. (Criteria 3.2 & 3.3)

Cossack Townsite Precinct Asian quarter was the forerunner of Broome's Chinatown and its inhabitants represented an important part of the history of Western Australia's pearling industry, with links to the pastoral industry and the gold rush years. The precinct retains considerable potential in terms of both research archaeology and the tourism and educational aspects of public archaeology. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Cossack Townsite Precinct is valued by the Western Australian community as a frontier settlement associated with the early development of the Pilbara region and the establishment of a pearling industry, which provides evidence of an early multicultural society and the accommodation of the cultural diversity of European, Afghan, Chinese, Japanese, Malaysian, Filipino and Aboriginal people. (Criterion 4.1)

Cossack Townsite Precinct is a popular tourist destination that contributes to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Cossack Townsite Precinct is rare in Western Australia as a site that provides substantial evidence of the development of a frontier settlement over a period of forty years. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Cossack Townsite Precinct shows the characteristics of a frontier boomtown, with little private investment and most of the buildings constructed of timber rather than more permanent materials. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The standing structures are in fair to good condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Overall, the precinct has a moderate degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Overall, the precinct has a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment compiled by Jacqui Sherriff, Historian, in May 2004, which in turn is based on the documents listed at 13.4 Key References, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

The chronology is substantially taken from Gaye Nayton, 'Preliminary Historical Research on Cossack', Department of Archaeology, UWA, 1990.

The physical evidence is largely taken from Gaye Nayton, 'An Archaeological Zoning Plan for Cossack', Department of Archaeology, UWA, 1990. It is supplemented by information from other documents.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Summary¹

Following favourable reports arising from Francis Gregory's exploration of the area in 1861, Cossack was established in 1863 and was the first port in the north west of Australia. It provided a vital point of access for the settlement and development of the Pilbara region until the early twentieth century.

Cossack has had a variety of names. It was initially called 'Tien Tsin' after the ship that carried the area's first European settler, Walter Padbury, but has also been known as 'Port Walcott' and 'Butcher's Inlet'. In December 1871, Governor Weld visited the region and named the town in honour of the ship he was travelling on, *HMS Cossack*.

Cossack was the birthplace of Western Australia's pearling industry and was the home of the colony's pearling fleet until the 1880s. The town was an important contact point between Europeans and the local Aboriginal people, many of whom were involved in the pearling industry either through choice or coercion. The pearling industry also attracted (or involuntarily involved) a considerable number of south-east Asians and by the late 1870s had developed a distinctively Asian quarter known as 'Chinatown'.

Following the discovery of gold in 1877, Cossack was an important staging post for prospectors setting off to the Pilbara goldfields.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Cossack was a boomtown and home to people from many nations. The main township extended along the bank of Butcher's Inlet from the cemetery to the base of Nanny Goat Hill. All early buildings were constructed of timber with iron roofs. The first government buildings were also of iron and timber, but were replaced by small but imposing structures built solidly in stone to withstand cyclones in the 1890s. Some constructions also included bricks brought to Cossack as ballast in the sailing ships.

The population was subject to fluctuations and during the lay-season for the pearling industry; it would swell to over 1,000 people who used the town as a base. Official population figures show a peak of about 400 in 1894; by 1901 this figure had dropped to 164 permanent residents.

While the growth of Cossack was spread over 40 years, its decline was much more rapid. By the turn of the century, the pearling fleet had shifted its

¹ This summary is based on a brief history of Cossack presented in Cossack Task Force, 'Part 1: Cossack Townsite Study', c. 1986 and the Statement of Significance provided in Cossack Task Force, 'Cossack Conservation and Management Plan', July 1987.

headquarters to Broome and impetus from the goldfields waned with the discovery of gold in the Ashburton, Murchison and Eastern goldfields. The harbour, which had never been suitable for large vessels and whose tidal movements caused considerable delays in docking and turnaround, began to silt up and Port Hedland and then Point Samson were the preferred ports of call.

Cossack was forced to relinquish her position as the premier port of the north and the township was dissolved in 1910. Attempts were subsequently made to revive the town through the introduction of new industries. In 1913 a leprosarium was established on the peninsular opposite the town. A turtle soup factory was established in the Bond Store in the 1920s. People continued to live at Cossack until after World War II. Local legend claims that Mrs Muramat, the widow of one of Cossack's few Asian storekeepers and pearling masters, unsuccessfully tried to revive the pearling industry after World War II. However, by the early 1950s, the town was completely abandoned.

Interest in the town re-emerged in the 1970s, when the Cossack Project Committee (later the Cossack Restoration and Development Association) was formed with the aim of developing Cossack into a major tourist attraction. The State Government formed the Cossack Task Force in 1986 with the objective of redeveloping the town and conserving the existing buildings. Several buildings were restored in the 1970s and 1980s and a number of archaeological surveys undertaken in the 1990s.

The Cossack Precinct was vested in the Heritage Council of Western Australia in 1991 and the following year, Cossack Precinct and a number of individual sites were entered in the Register of Heritage Places. The Shire of Roebourne entered a Heritage Agreement with the Heritage Council and took out a 21-year lease on the town in 1996.

Chronology

1861 Expedition to area led by Francis Gregory.

1863 Gregory's reports of good pastures and fresh water at the Harding River aroused the interest of pastoralists and Walter Padbury's stock arrived at Butcher's Inlet in April.

1864 Withnell family arrived at Roebourne in April.

1865 Government Resident Scholl arrived.

1866 Township of Roebourne declared and marked out.

Roebuck Bay Company moved from Roebourne to Port Walcott (previously called Tien Tsin and later Cossack) in November under the direction of manager, Shakespeare Hall (one of Gregory's 1861 exploration party).

1867 Two policemen dispatched to Port Walcott with the duties of storemen and teamsters, rather than policing.²

New Perseverance beached at Port Walcott in January 1867 and subsequently used as quarters by the water police. The hulk may also have been used as a government store to hold goods before they were freighted to Roebourne.³

² Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary Historical Research on Cossack* Department of Archaeology, UWA, 1990. p.9.

³ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, op cit. p. 25.

Pearling at Port Walcott commenced with Mr Tays using Aboriginals to pick up pearl shell on the beaches.⁴ They gathered 12 tons of shells, six of which was lost along with the *Emma* and all hands en route to Fremantle in March.

A 12-metre lugger was built at Andover Station and wheeled to Port Walcott for pearling.⁵ Pearl fishers were successful and soon three ships were engaged in pearling, with another shipping pearls to Fremantle.

Mother of pearl shell was in high demand for its many decorative and functional uses at the time. The demand mostly came from overseas markets where the shell was used as a decorative inlay in furniture and cathedral altars and canopies, for handles for cutlery, manicure sets, paper knives, revolvers and daggers, for cigarette boxes, ashtrays and other decorative ornaments and to manufacture buttons. The shell was plentiful off the northwest Australian coast and along the Torres Strait, but collecting it was dangerous for the divers and labour was in short supply.⁶

Government Resident Sholl provided list of articles for the permanent establishment at Port Walcott in September, including articles necessary for running a government store.⁷

- 1868** Complaints from settlers that the money being spent on constructing a brick government office building at Roebourne would be better spent building a road across the marsh and a shed and jetty at Port Walcott.⁸

Many small boats off the Port Walcott coast were diving for pearl shell using Aboriginal labour. The Government Resident reported that Aboriginal children were abducted for pearling.⁹

- 1869** A man died while walking to Port Walcott in January and was buried there (may be first internment in Cemetery).¹⁰

Harper and Grant completed a jetty and derrick in February. The jetty was used to load wool from nearby stations, as well as pearl shell.

More reports of Aboriginals being carried off by pearlers, including women.¹¹ By early 1869, there were 14 small vessels pearling in the area, with an average crew of three Europeans and six Aboriginals.¹²

Port Walcott was damaged by a cyclone.

Order sent to lay out 31 town lots.

⁴ Legislation prevented the employment of ticket-of-leave convicts in new settlements, so Aboriginals were seen as the only source of cheap labour. For further information regarding the use of Aboriginal labour in the pearling industry, see K de la Rue, *Pearl Shell and Pasture*, Cossack Project Committee, 1979.

⁵ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, op. cit. p. 9.

⁶ See M A Bain, 'Some incidents in the heyday of Pearling', in *Early Days – Journal of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society*, volume 9, number 1, 1983. pp. 37-48.

⁷ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc.cit.

⁸ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id., p. 10.

⁹ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, op.cit, p. 11.

¹⁰ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc.cit.

¹¹ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, op.cit, p. 11.

¹² Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc.cit.

1870 Five town lots, including Lot 123, sold as a subdivision of Roebourne (called Butcher Inlet) to Knight and Shenton who built a store. The store was of weatherboard mahogany (most likely jarrah), with a shingled roof and verandah.

Lots 127 and 128 were purchased by R L Sholl (the Government Resident). Hotels were later built on lots 119 (Best) and 120 (Pearse).¹³

In August, the Sydney Morning Herald reported that Knight and Shenton's house/store and the hulk of the *New Perseverance* served all town purposes and that there were a number of temporary pearler huts. A hotel and store were about to be built.¹⁴

Causeway built across the marsh to Roebourne.

1871 Nichol Bay District gazetted.

Women prohibited from employment on pearling boats under the *Pearl Shell Fisheries Act*.

Port Walcott Police Force consisted of two mounted constables.

D Chapman applied for a liquor licence for his four-roomed house (two large public areas and two bedrooms) in March. By May, his house had been extended with the addition of a third bedroom.¹⁵

First meeting of the North District Roads Board held in March.

Governor Weld visited Port Walcott in December and his papers describe the port as consisting of one or two dwellings or stores, 75 Europeans, 350 Aboriginals and a few Malays working in the pearling industry in 30 small craft of 10 to 25 tons.¹⁶

The name of Cossack adopted in honour of Weld's ship, *HMS Cossack*.

Labour from Southeast Asia was recruited to supplement (and largely replace) the Aboriginal labour force working in the pearling industry. Malays were first introduced, followed by Filipino and Japanese divers. Many were 'purchased' in the labour/slave markets.¹⁷

1872 A further nine town lots sold [122 – Miles; 118 – E Best; 130 – Williams; 109 – R L Sholl; 116 – R N Sholl; 117 – I Best; 129 – English; 111 – E Chapman].

H P Loftie surveyed Cossack. Three buildings are shown faintly on the survey drawing: a store on Lot 123 and two buildings on Lot 122.¹⁸

Spencer and Barnett won the tender for constructing a Bonded Store (bonding warehouse) with a fireplace in the caretaker's room.¹⁹

¹³ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id, p. 12.

¹⁴ Cited in Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id, p. 11.

¹⁵ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id, p. 13.

¹⁶ Cited in Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc. cit.

¹⁷ For further information regarding the use of Asian labour in the pearling industry, see K de la Rue, *Pearl Shell and Pasture*, Cossack Project Committee, 1979; M A Bain, 'Some incidents in the heyday of Pearling', in *Early Days – Journal of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society*, volume 9, number 1, 1983. pp. 37-48.

¹⁸ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, op.cit, p. 14.

¹⁹ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc.cit.

31 ships and 52 dinghies collecting pearl shell.²⁰

A licence for the 'White Horse Hotel' was granted to David Stewart in February. By this time, Stewart had built a six room (three sitting rooms and three bedrooms) weatherboard house with an iron roof, detached kitchen and stockyard. The licence was granted conditional on Stewart enlarging the stockyard to accommodate 12 bullocks and building a room for drunks. ²¹

D Chapman's request for a liquor licence for the 'Governor Weld Hotel' was granted in March, on the condition that he built two additional rooms for the public, a substantial stockyard and a room for drunks.²²

The Roebourne Road Board repaired the road to the port.

F McRae and Co purchased Knight and Shenton's store and opened a branch of their Perth business.

A cyclone in March flooded and unroofed Mr Howlett's store (pine timber with iron sides and roof). The McRae & Co Store also lost its roof and Stewart's Hotel was twisted and unroofed. The light timber and thatch houses of misters Chapman, Best and Phillimore were destroyed. The jetty was also damaged and following the cyclone, the height of the Government Residency was reduced from 12 ft to 7 ft and the roof pitch lowered. The houses rebuilt after the cyclone were also lower and more strongly framed.²³

Mr Wrighton built a boat of ten to 12 tons at the port.²⁴ Malays brought to join the pearling workforce of Howlett, Cadell and others.²⁵ Mr Howlett's Malays lived on shore in a wooden building

Townsite of Cossack gazetted on 4 June 1872.

Thirty-nine European men as residents of Cossack signed a memorial for a post office dated 11 October 1872. Cossack was now the centre for supplies, laying up and repairing ships and home to the pearlery when they were in port. Mr Wyan was appointed the first post master, tidewater clerk and customs officer on 25 October and occupied a small room attached to the Bond Store. The Bond Store was also used as a Court House. ²⁶

1873 Copper and lead mines opened in the district.

Beginning of government efforts to control the pearling industry and the revenue it generated. An export duty of £3/ton was placed on mother of

²⁰ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc cit.

²¹ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc cit.

²² Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc cit.

²³ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id., p. 15.

²⁴ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc cit.

²⁵ For a discussion of Asians in Western Australia, see Ann Atkinson, *Asian Immigrants to Western Australia*, UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988; Ann Atkinson, 'Chinese Labour in Western Australia', in *Time Remembered*, Volume 6, pp. 164-78; S J Hunt, *Spinifex and Hessian – Women's Lives in North Western Australia 1860-1900*, UWA Press, Nedlands, 1986; J Gentilli, 'Western Australia's Chinese Immigration Policy', in *Early Days – Journal of the Western Australian Historical Society*, volume 9, number 2, 1984, pp. 77-95.

²⁶ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, op cit. p. 16.

pearl and a boat licence of £2 introduced to cover the costs of the inspector.²⁷

1874 Four town lots sold (142, 143, 144 & 145) and placed in the name of Shakespeare Hall's small children. However, the Hall family did not ever live on these lots; their family home was situated on Lot 116, which was originally bought by R N Sholl in 1872. The Hall home began as a two-roomed house with a detached kitchen c. 1874 and was enlarged with the addition of another two rooms separated from the original by a breezeway by 1886. Shakespeare Hall ran a store in Cossack from c. 1874 to c. 1888 (there is no evidence of where store was located).²⁸

1875 Eleven town lots sold [113 & 101 – C Tuckey; 103 – W Paterson; 132 & 115 – A Richardson; 104 & 110 – F McRae; 105 – R Eaton; 108 – W Ellery; 112 – I Bryan; 134 – S White Burns].

By this time, there were 989 Malays and 493 Aborigines employed on 57 vessels licensed at Cossack. With vessels from other ports, it has been estimated that there were as many as 1,800 Malays and 228 Europeans working in the industry. An inspection of 36 vessels in 1875 found many sick Malays and several deaths amongst the Malay population. No deaths were reported amongst the European and Aboriginal fishers.²⁹

The high number of Asians in the industry, as well as a number of Chinese who had been brought to the North West as domestic servants, led to the establishment of an Asian quarter or 'Chinatown' in Cossack. It comprised two Chinese stores, a Chinese bakery, one Japanese store and a Turkish bath, as well as many residences.

Second jetty under construction in October.³⁰

1877 Quarantine reserve established on lots 134 and 135.

The first direct shipment of wool from stations in the district was made to London in October. Cossack was now operating as an independent port, marking the growing independence of the North West as a separate region, conducting its own trade independent of Perth and Fremantle.³¹

1881 Steam shipping service established at Cossack.

Census figures show a population of 229 (double that of Roebourne). There was one Asian to every six Europeans listed as living in Cossack.³²

Town damaged by cyclone. Every pearling vessel foundered or was thrown on the beach; 12 luggers were lost.

1883 Post office (government offices) constructed comprising post office in the upper eastern rooms, chemist shop in the upper western room and customs house and bond store downstairs.

1885 Fleet of 44 vessels operating out of Cossack, of which nine used diving dress comprising canvass suit and brass helmet (hard hat diving).

²⁷ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id. p. 17.

²⁸ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc cit.

²⁹ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id. p. 18.

³⁰ "The Inquirer" cited in Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, op cit. p. 18.

³¹ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id., p.19.

³² Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc cit.

Steamer service extended to Beagle Bay.

Broome named and surveyed.

A Select Committee headed by Maitland Brown was established to consider the closure of certain pearling banks for conservation. The Committee recommended that several banks be closed, including those closest to Cossack, which were fast depleting.

- 1886** From this time, the majority of the pearling fleet relocated to Broome, although Cossack remained a pearling port.³³

Government accepted a tender from W Atkins to build a 24-inch gauge tramway between Roebourne and Cossack.³⁴

- 1887** Municipalities of Cossack and Roebourne proclaimed.

Jimmy Withnell found gold on Mallina Station.

By this time, there were only about 100 Aboriginals employed diving for pearls and the majority of boats were no longer locally owned.³⁵

Five Chinese stores in Cossack and Roebourne.

Cossack damaged by cyclone. Twenty-two pearling vessels and 140 lives lost.

Public buildings in Cossack were the stone post office and customs house, the Mining Registrar's Office (later the Mercantile Store), the North-West Company store, a timber church and two timber hotels.³⁶

The horse drawn tramway across the tidal flats between Roebourne and Cossack was completed under the direction of resident engineer, William Lambden Owen.

- 1888** Lighthouse on Jarman Island completed.

Pilbara Goldfield proclaimed.

Galbraith's Store constructed.

- 1894** Aubrey Hall commenced shipping agent's business.

Thirteen pearling vessels lost in cyclone and remainder severely damaged.

Population of Cossack comprised 126 Europeans and 266 'Asiatics'.

- 1895** Stone Court House constructed by S Stansmore.

Post & Telegraph Office completed. Bake house on the same site constructed around this time.

Customs house and Bond Store completed by S Stansmore. Seawall and new tramline built as the customs house was constructed on the site of the original tramline station.

The North-West Mercantile store was also used as Mining Registrar's office from this time.³⁷

³³ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id., p. 20.

³⁴ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id., p. 21.

³⁵ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc cit.

³⁶ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id., p. 21.

Aboriginal labour used by householders.³⁸

- 1896** Stone school house constructed by W Sharp.
Stone police barracks and lockup built by S Stansmore.
Tender for construction of explosives magazine let to A Thompson.
Construction was completed in January 1897.³⁹
- 1898** Cyclone severely damaged the jetty and the majority of the buildings in Cossack. The Court House was the only building to survive mostly intact.
- 1901** Population of Cossack comprised 69 Australians, 19 Europeans, six Americans, one Canadian, 68 Asians (majority Japanese) and two Africans.⁴⁰
- 1904** Aubrey Hall was the agent for the Adelaide Steam Shipping Company, South British Insurance Company and the Balla Balla Copper Mines Company, as well as general shipping customs and forwarding agent for all stations within a 100-mile radius of Cossack.
New jetty built at Port Samson.
- 1910** Point Samson linked to Roebourne and Cossack by tramway. Tram barn, turntable and crane were relocated from Cossack to Port Samson. The Department of Harbour and Light took over responsibility for the tramway from the Railways Department.
Municipality of Cossack dissolved.
- 1913** Leprosarium (lazarette) established on the bank of the Harding River, opposite the township.
- 1920s** Brief resurgence of Cossack following cyclone damage to the Point Samson jetty.
- 1930** By this time, the two hotels were amalgamated into one, involving some building alterations. The staff comprised the licensee, his wife and a cook.⁴¹
Residents in Cossack were Harry Edney and his wife living near Nanny Goat Hill, Edney family living nearer the school house, Earnest Hall in the Hall house, Jim Ramsey living near Lookout Hill and Laurie Bruce living in the Post Office. A Greek family lived in the Court House and Japanese families lived in Martin's House, the mercantile store manager's house, and the Customs House and Bond Store. A Japanese family lived in the only house left in Chinatown. It is not known how long they remained. However, Japanese persons across the State were interned during World War Two, so it is likely that they did not remain in Cossack through to the end of the war years.
- 1931** Leprosarium closed and patients transferred to Darwin.
- 1933** John Hamley's Australian Canning Company set up a sea foods processing and canning factory in the Bond Store. The company found markets in England for turtle soup and oil extracted from turtles, sharks

³⁷ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id., p. 23.

³⁸ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc cit.

³⁹ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, loc. cit.

⁴⁰ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, ib.id., p. 24.

⁴¹ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990, op cit. p. 24.

and dugongs. Hamley also produced high quality shark leather through another company, Marine Industries Ltd. The projects failed in 1936.

- 1950s** Town of Cossack abandoned. Most of the lots reverted to the Crown in 1953.
- 1976** Cossack Management Committee (later renamed the Cossack Restoration and Development Association; CRDA) formed by residents in the Shire of Roebourne concerned with the deterioration of buildings at Cossack. CRDA subsequently held the lease of all buildings at Cossack and had the responsibility for maintenance and restoration of the precinct. The remaining lots were either owned by a small number of individuals or were unoccupied crown land.
- 1977** Town of Cossack classified by the National Trust.
- 1970s** Restoration works to Police Quarters Court House. Police Quarters subsequently used as the Caretaker's Residence. Court House subsequently used as a museum with support from the WA Museum and the Shire of Roebourne.
- 1981/84** Restoration works to Custom's House & Bond Store and Galbraith's Store. Customs House & Bond Store subsequently used for concerts, receptions, dances and art exhibitions.
- 1986** Minister for Planning, Bob Pearce, visited Cossack and subsequently established the Cossack Task Force, which was chaired by local MLA Pam Buchanan and comprised representatives from several government departments, the Shire of Roebourne and CRDA.
- Police Quarters unsafe for use as a residence/art studio due to termite damage.
- 1988** Cossack Bicentennial Project funded under the State Bicentennial Program completed in June. The \$150,000 project involved substantial stabilization work on the Post & Telegraph Office, as well as conservation work on the Police Barracks, Mercantile Store and Court House. Visitor and barbeque facilities were also provided.
- Opening of the Emma Withnell Heritage Trail as a means of explaining the history and heritage of Cossack to visitors.
- Archaeological survey of the Asian Quarter of Cossack identified elements of archaeological significance and made management recommendations.⁴²
- 1989** Westtrak took over management of Cossack following the disbanding of the Cossack Restoration and Development Association in December 1988.
- 1991** Cossack vested in the newly established Heritage Council of Western Australia.
- Archaeological survey of Cossack between Pearl Street and Nanny Goat Hill identified elements of archaeological significance and made management recommendations.⁴³

⁴² Jack McIlroy, 'An Archaeological Survey of the Asian Quarter of Cossack', project funded by an Australian Heritage Commission National Estate Programme Grant, 1988.

⁴³ Gaye Nayton, *Preliminary*, 1990. op. cit.

- 1992** Cossack Precinct and a number of individual elements of the precinct entered in the State Register of Heritage Places.
- 1996** Conservation Policy prepared by the Heritage Council of Western Australia, including recommendations for works and design guidelines for new development.
- Shire of Roebourne entered into a 21-year lease agreement with the Department of Land Administration (dated 1 July 1996) and a Heritage Agreement with the Heritage Council of Western Australia (dated 27 May 1996).
- 2000** Cossack Steering Committee and Interim Management Committee formed, with representatives from the Heritage Council of Western Australia, the Shire of Roebourne, the Pilbara Development Commission, the Department of Land Administration, the Western Australian Tourism Commission, LandCorp and the National Trust of Australia (WA).
- Native Title Claims registered by the Wong-goo-it-oo and Ngaluma/Injibandi people, with claim boundaries extending over the townsite.
- Restoration works to the School House, funded by the Heritage Council of Western Australia and the Shire of Roebourne.
- 2001** Cossack Historic Town entered into the Register of the National Estate as a registered place.
- 2001** Sustainable Management Study of Cossack completed at the request of the Cossack Steering Committee, with the aim of making recommendations for the establishment of a self-sustaining management operation at Cossack, based on tourism development and the potential for an increased resident population.⁴⁴
- 2002** Trailswest grant of \$50,000 enabled the establishment of a heritage trail through the town.
- 2003** Regional Infrastructure Funding Program grant of \$1,300,000 awarded to assist with the development of Cossack to enable essential services and provide additional infrastructure, including upgrading water, electricity and sewerage facilities.
- 2003** Interim report by University of Western Australia identifies the place as an archaeological site of national significance.⁴⁵

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The physical evidence is largely taken from Gaye Nayton, 'An Archaeological Zoning Plan for Cossack', Department of Archaeology, UWA, 1990. It is supplemented by information from other documents.

Cossack Townsite Precinct is located on Butchers Inlet at the mouth of the Harding River. The coastal flat is generally of flat or low lying relief, although

⁴⁴ Peter Farr Consultants Australasia Pty Ltd in association with The Planning Group, Palassis Architects, URS, Advance Tourism and Pat Barblett, 'Historic Town of Cossack Sustainable Management Study – 2001 and Beyond', for the Cossack Steering Committee, May 2001

⁴⁵ Alistair Patterson, 'Interim Report on archaeological fieldwork at Cossack (WA)', February 2003, on HCWA file P3239v.2.

there are coastal dunes of up to 20 metres. The coastal plain includes the tidal mangrove swamps and samphire flats as well as extensive mud and silt flats which are submerged at exceptionally high tides. One section of mangroves located approximately 100 metres south of the jetty is considered to be unique, exhibiting five Pilbara mangrove species.

Although only about 15 kilometres from Roebourne and a short distance from the townships of Point Sampson and Wickham, *Cossack Townsite Precinct* is not visible from any of these and the approach to *Cossack Townsite Precinct* via a long causeway gives the place an acute sense of isolation.

Many of the lots have been disturbed over the years through archaeological survey and the activities of bottle collectors and others.

Lots bordering Pearl Street

Lot 122 - North West Mercantile Store (former Mining Registrar's Office)

This is the site of some of the first buildings in *Cossack Townsite Precinct* and has a long history of commercial use. The present building was constructed in 1895 as the Mining Registrar's Office and accommodation and was constructed over part of a previous L-shaped wooden building built in the 1880s. It also covers two c. 1872 buildings. In 1907, the lot was purchased by Jiro Muramats, who operated the place as a store until World War II, when it was abandoned.

Located on the southwest corner of The Strand and Pearl Street, opposite the Customs House and Bond Store, the building was stabilised as a ruin in the late 1980s.

Through its integrity of fabric and consistency of materials with other buildings in the town, the place makes a substantial contribution to the townscape. Together with the Customs House and Bond Store, it defines the southernmost commencement of the town core.

As the only stabilized ruin in *Cossack Townsite Precinct*, the place has the potential to interpret the town's construction technology. The building also possesses the only cellar in *Cossack Townsite Precinct* able to be interpreted.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Classified by the National Trust 07/06/1977

Lot 123 - Knight and Shenton's Store (1870)

This was the first town lot to be purchased and the store built for Knight and Shenton in 1870 was the town's first substantial building. The timber store survived for over 100 years and over that time became a house, then a Japanese laundry. Occupation ceased at the outbreak of World War II. Also on the lot over time were a detached kitchen with chimney (also described as a timber house), stables and other outbuildings.

Stone chimney, timber and stone foundations extant. Archaeological investigation has discovered a series of structural changes through time to the building and its surrounds.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 109 - vacant lot

No maps show buildings on this lot.

Low historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 108 - Paxton's Boarding House (1870s/1880s)

A plan dated 1887 shows three structures on this lot, which was identified by a local resident as the site of Paxton's Boarding House.

Remains of dry stone walling and other structures extant.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 154 - Galbraith's Store (1888)

Galbraith's Store was the first building in *Cossack Townsite Precinct* to be constructed of local bluestone (ironstone) rock. Earlier stone buildings were constructed of sandstone from the sea front. The building was conserved in 1984 when the roof was reconstructed and some joinery replaced.

Galbraith's Store is located at the northern extremity of Pearl Street. The building has bluestone random rubble walls with some bastard tuck pointing and rendered quoining at door and window openings, with a custom orb zincalume roof.

Through its integrity of fabric and consistency of materials with other buildings in the town, Galbraith's Store contributes to the townscape, and acts as a visual stop to the end of the historic central core.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lots 106 & 107 – Court House (1895) and site of first police quarters and tramway stables

Designed by George Temple Poole, the building was initially planned as a 'T' shaped building but the plans were revised in 1895. The building was conserved in 1979 and subsequently used as a museum and visitor information centre.

Constructed of bluestone random ashlar with rendered quoining at the corners and rendered window reveals, the Court House has an imposing colonnaded verandah on all sides supported by large masonry piers. The metal roof rises in stages to a clerestory, adding height to the single storey building.

The Court House is the second largest building in the town and its style and materials demonstrates an intention of grandeur and prestige, befitting an important administrative building of law and order for the town and region.

Situated on the town's central intersection, the Court House makes a substantial contribution to the streetscape and provides a visual link between Galbraith's Store and the remainder of the historic core.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Classified by the National Trust 07/06/1977

Lot 124 - Post & Telegraph Office and Bakehouse (1894/95)

The Post & Telegraph Office is the earliest of the standing stone buildings and the Bakehouse may be the second oldest. Both buildings are shown on a photograph dated between 1887 and 1895 (Post Office without a verandah). Only the main walls of the two storey Post and Telegraph Office were standing before substantial reconstruction in the 1980s.

The Post and Telegraph Office has friable limestone (local shell limestone) walls, with ballast brick quoining to corners and window opening. Curved stone walls are located on either side of steps leading up to the ground floor entrance.

The place visually links the Bond Store complex with the main intersection of town and its presence makes a contribution to the integrity of the streetscape. It is the only two storey building in *Cossack Townsite Precinct* and although modest in plan, its height imbues it with a commanding presence, which visually consolidates the town's main intersection.

The Bakehouse is a small structure set back from the central intersection of similar construction materials to the Post and Telegraph Office. Works in the early 1990s involved the repair of walls and the replacement of windows and roof.

High historical and medium archaeological significance.

Classified by the National Trust 07/06/1977

Lot 125 - Customs House and Bond Store (1895)

Designed by George Temple-Poole and constructed in 1895, the building was a centre of activity during Cossack's early years, being the Government store for imported foodstuffs, alcohol and equipment. It was also the storage facility for wool and pearl shell exported from the area. By the mid-1920s, Cossack had ceased to be an important government centre and in 1927, the building became a café called 'The Strand'. The building was used as a turtle soup factory during the Depression and after that venture's failure, the building was used as a munitions store and then a holiday house.

The Customs House and Bond Store has coursed random rubble bluestone walls, with rendered quoining at door and window openings. The walls sweep in curves round the corner of Pearl Street and The Strand, effectively changing the sharp angle of the corner. The columns of the small colonnaded entrance are about half height.

The Customs House and Bond Store is the largest and most complex building in *Cossack Townsite Precinct*. It is sited on a high profile corner at the beginning of the Pearl Street axis and visually commands the southern end of the historic town centre. It is the only building with a curved corner wall, arched major openings and an arched colonnade. It makes a substantial contribution to the townscape. Its proximity to the wharf reinforces the port function of the building and town and its heavy design style gives the impression of permanence and strength.

High historical and low archaeological significance.

Classified by the National Trust 07/06/1977

Lot 126 - Police Quarters, Lockup & Service Buildings (1890)

The Police Quarters occupies a corner site at the *Cossack Townsite Precinct's* central intersection, but is not as prominent as the Court House due to its setback from the street. The building is constructed of coursed random rubble bluestone, with rendered quoining at door and window openings.

The Police Quarters makes a contribution to the streetscape in a more restrained manner than the other public buildings. This subdued presence reflects the status of the police function in the public administration as subservient to the Court House, which was a focus of law and order for the town and region.

The Lockup is located at the rear of the lot. The building is utilitarian in style and its structural fabric demonstrates its function as a place of detention and punishment. It has coursed bluestone walls with rendered quoining to corners, with original lime mortar pointed over with cement render (1989). The roof and some windows were replaced in the late 1980s.

The Lockup makes a contribution to the townscape through its form and construction.

A Cookhouse and toilets comprise the service buildings. The Cookhouse is located behind the Police Quarters and is constructed of coursed bluestone walls in lime mortar, pointed with cement mortar. The building has rendered quoining at corners and around doors, with brackets for cyclone shutters. The place was subject to works in the mid-1980s that diminished its authenticity.

High historical significance. Low archaeological significance over most of the lot, apart from the section between the Police Quarters and Perseverance Street.

Police Quarters Classified by the National Trust 07/06/1977

Area between the Police Quarters and the Asian Quarter (Chinatown)

Lots 127, 128 & 129 - Stock Yard (c. 1890)

These lots were used as a stock yard in the 1890s and were not built on prior to this. However, pearling camps may have been located on the higher ground close to Perseverance Street in the 1870s.

Low historical and low to medium archaeological significance.

Lot 130 - Union Bank (c. 1890)

The Union Bank purchased this lot in 1891 but had been leasing premises in Cossack since 1887 and it is speculated that this is the property the Bank had been leasing. It is likely that the building was constructed for the previous owner, William Williams, sometime after 1887. This stone building was the first and only bank in Cossack and was later occupied by two Chinese men and may have operated as a store.

High historical and medium archaeological significance.

Lot 131 Building site (use unknown) (1880s)

This lot contained a building in 1886. The lot was owned by the Resident Magistrate, R J Sholl and the building may have been associated with his sons' pearling business.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Pilot Street

Stone Ramp to Perseverance Street

The ramp is the only raised ramp of its kind in Cossack.

High historical and medium to high archaeological significance.

Lots 146 & 147 – Pead’s Boarding House (c. 1880)

The lot was purchased in 1877 and the boarding house is shown on the 1886 town plan. The place was popular with pearlers. The site had a long period of occupation by a large number of people.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 435 – Dry stone wall

Associated with the dry stone wall is a loose dolerite arrangement. The lot was subdivided from Pead’s in 1900 and there is no indication that structures were built on the site.

Medium historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 436

Rough beach rock alignment possibly connected to Asian pearling activities.

High historical and medium archaeological significance.

Lot 148 – Building site (1880s)

Rough beach rock alignment the same as Lot 436.

The 1886 town plan shows a complex of buildings and yards. As this lot was also owned by Pead, the structures may have related to stabling for the Boarding House.

Evidence of Asian occupation has been found to the front of the lot. No evidence of the 1886 structures has been found to date.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lots north of Perseverance Street and east of Pearl Street

Lot 105 – Rubbish mound, beach rock platform and water pump

The lot is associated with a long period of occupation and may have been home to an early pearler.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 104 – Stone foundations (1880s)

Prominent Cossack resident, F McRae, owned Lot 104. McRae was a storekeeper and acted as the town’s banker before the Union Bank was established. He was also involved in the pearling industry.

The stone foundations may be associated with a structure shown on the 1886 town plan.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 103 – A McRae’s Stone House (1880s)

The McRaes were prominent in the north-west in both the pastoral and pearling industries and this house was the only private dwelling in Cossack constructed of stone. It has not been determined when the house was built, but A McRae purchased the lot in 1880 and the 1886 town plan shows a large structure in the same position. The two previous owners were also involved in the pearling industry, giving the lot a long history of occupation connected with the industry.

Extant features comprise beach rock house foundations and wall remnants, with traces of possible fireplace along the southern wall. Three underfloor ventilation slots are visible in the western wall.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 102

This lot contains two artefact scatters interpreted as refuse from recreational use of the hill.

Medium historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 101

The site is a rock ridge and is unlikely to have been used.

Low historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 156

There is no historical record of this site having been used.

Low historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 157 – Dolerite platform and iron hoop

The site was owned by D Chapman whose main activity was centred on the Weld Hotel. The 1886 town plan shows a yard that may have been a stock yard.

Medium historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 158

There is no historical record of this site having been used.

Low historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 159 – Dolerite floor (1880s)

This lot was purchased by a pearler in 1879 and the 1886 town plan shows three structures in the north east corner of the lot, as well as a small building and yard closer to Perseverance Street. H Edney is shown as living on the lot in a sketch plan dating from the 1890s.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 160

There is no historical record of this site having been used.

Low historical and medium archaeological significance.

Lot 161

This site is a hilly area with no record of occupation.

Low historical and archaeological significance.

Asian Quarter (Chinatown)

Lot 149

This lot probably functioned as a buffer zone between Pead's Boarding House and the Asian Quarter. It was owned by the Roman Catholic Church but there is no record of building on the site.

Asian ceramics have been found on the site.

Medium historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 150

This lot was owned by the Roman Catholic Church and there is no historical record of the site being occupied. However, an archaeological survey found evidence of both European and Asian occupation. This suggests that European occupation of the site was either before 1886 or after 1900.

Potentially of high historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 151 – Muramat’s House

This lot was occupied by Jiro Muramat, the most successful of *Cossack Townsite’s* Asian businessmen. He was a pearling master who ran his own fleet and he also took over the general store and laundry.

Several structures associated with Muramat’s house have been identified.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 152 – Muramat’s building (c. 1880)

The lot purchased by an Asian pearler sometime after 1877 and was bought by Muramat in 1910. No structures are shown on the 1886 town plan.

Structures and artefact scatters have been identified.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 153 – Muramat’s building (1870s)

The lot was initially purchased by a pearler in 1879 and was subsequently owned by a merchant who purchased it in 1886 and Jiro Muramat, who bought it in 1911.

High historical and potentially high archaeological significance.

Area between Lot 153 and Cemetery

Some of this area may be part of the Asian Quarter as five sites were located during the 1988 archaeological survey. These sites are primarily scattered piles of building rubble and ceramics, beach rock and shell middens that were used to construct simple dwellings.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Asian Quarter beach front

Records indicate that lay up season camps were located on the beach front behind the mangroves.

Stone lines and building rubble scatters have been located in this area.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Asian area north of Perseverance Street

This area is close to the main Asian Quarter and was the site of market gardening activities.

European domestic rubbish sites, walls of market gardens and semi circular stone wall thought to be a dwelling or shed associated with the gardens have been identified.

High historical and archaeological significance for the market gardens

Medium historical and archaeological significance for the European occupation

Lots west of Pearl Street

Lot 121 – Building site (c. 1871; early 1880s)

E Chapman purchased this lot in 1871 and it is likely that the original Weld Hotel was built on this lot early that year. The original building had four rooms and was enlarged to five before the liquor licence was granted to D Chapman in 1872. The Weld Hotel was the first of *Cossack Townsite's* two hotels and was the second significant building erected in the town.

The Union Bank purchased the lot in 1883 and may have erected a temporary agency building.

The 1886 town plan shows two buildings on the lot, with one straddling the lot line shared with Lot 123 and is likely to have been the Weld Hotel. The other building is likely to have been the Union Bank agency.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 120 – Weld Hotel (1880s)

The lot was originally purchased in 1870 by F Pearce and was subsequently bought by D Chapman. It is the site of the second Weld Hotel, which was constructed sometime before 1886. The 1886 town plan shows one large and two smaller buildings on the lot. The hotel was rebuilt in the 1890s.

The site has a long history of occupation. The site of the 1890s Weld Hotel is evidenced by the form concrete foundations, as is the start of the 1890s White Horse Hotel on the adjacent lot (Lot 119). The two hotels were joined together to form one building after 1900.

The network of paths and concrete foundations relate mostly to the 1890s construction phase and cross the probable site of the pre-1886 hotel.

There are remnants of a small dry stone building on the site, which was probably the 1890s Dalton's Bulk Beer Store. There is also evidence of the road, which ran past the Weld Hotel, connecting the Strand and Perseverance Street.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 119 – White Horse Hotel (1872)

The White Horse Hotel was built by Stewart in 1872 and was six roomed weatherboard house with an iron roof, detached kitchen and stock yard. The 1886 town plan shows that a lot of building activity had been carried out on the site by this time. By the 1890s, there was an extensive complex of buildings with concrete foundations and paths.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lots 118, 117, 116, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144 & 145

These lots cover the south western extent of the 1886 Townsite. The functions of the buildings on these lots have not been identified, but they were probably domestic. Shakespeare Hall's house was located on Lot 116.

By the 1890s, most of the occupation of the lots was business orientated, but many people both lived and worked within the same lot.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lot 110 – School and public hall (1896/97)

A building is shown on the site on the 1886 town plan. This may have been a school building, as there was a school in Cossack by 1884, which was also used as a church. A school building and public hall on the site were destroyed in 1894.

The single storey stone building was constructed in 1896/97 to replace the earlier building destroyed by cyclone. The building is constructed of local bluestone walls with lime mortar and quoining to corners.

The School is the only extant building remote from the town core. It is situated on Perseverance Street, adjacent to the tramway alignment. Extensive conservation works in 2000 effectively reconstructed the building.

High historical and medium archaeological significance.

Classified by the National Trust 07/06/1977

Lot 111 – Building and yard (1880s)

The 1886 town plan shows a structure and yard on this lot. It is possible that this structure is the same one identified as ‘Simpson’s’ in the 1890s sketch of Cossack.

High historical and potentially high archaeological significance.

Lot 112 – Building site (1880s)

The 1886 town plan shows a building on this lot. It was identified as ‘Truslove’s’ in the 1890s sketch of Cossack.

High historical and archaeological significance.

Lots 113, 114 & 115

Iron stone ridge.

Low historical and archaeological significance.

Lots 162 to 176, 115 & 132 to 138 (1880s)

These lots contain the western extent of Cossack in the 1890s and includes the site of the stone school house (Lot 168) although records from the 1890s indicate that most of the occupation in this area was domestic. Lot 115 or Lot 132 was the site of H Bartlett’s house.

High historical and medium to high archaeological significance.

Area behind Tank Hill

This area contained stock wells, a slaughter house dating from the 1890s and contains an Aboriginal shell midden.

Area behind Nanny Goat Hill

The site of three large wells.

Town Rubbish Dump

To the east of Nanny Goat Hill is an area that appears to have been used as the town dump. It contains discrete areas of artefacts that appear to be the remains of rubbish dumped by the cartload. The area also contains

the remains of three wooden wrecks (perhaps more), as this area of inlet is a likely area for cyclone driven boats to become stranded.

Beach frontage

Medium to high historical and archaeological significance

Wreck of a steamer lighter

The wreck of the steamer lighter is located in the mangroves and consists of the hull of an iron lighter and a large steam boiler.

Tramway foundations

The 2' gauge horse drawn tramway was completed in 1887. Rolling stock imported from England consisted of six passenger coaches (each drawn by one horse) and 12 goods trucks drawn in rakes (rows) by two horses. Two trams left from both Roebourne and *Cossack Townsite* daily, with a goods truck in between. The trams left both towns at the same time and met at the double line section six miles out, where drivers and horses were changed. The trip took about one hour and fifteen minutes. The Harbour and Light Department took over responsibility for the tramway from the Railways Department. The tramway was extended to Port Samson in 1910 and the car barn was removed to Port Samson c. 1911. The turntable and crane were also relocated to Port Samson about this time.

The few physical remains of the tramway include the foundations of the 1895 tram station in Douglas Street, the remains of an 1887 right of way at the northern western end of Pearl Street and a stone culvert on Fraser Street.

There is evidence that the tram rails were reused around house sites (for example, one of the cyclone anchor chains associated with the Knight and Shenton Store site consisted of an iron bar and tram rail).

Some years ago, Hammersley Iron sponsored the reinstatement of the line from Douglas Street towards Roebourne. About 200 metres of heavy rail was laid and some rolling stock placed on it near the School. The rail and stock has no historical relevance to *Cossack Townsite Precinct* and is visually intrusive.

Wharf and Sea Wall

The Wharf was the centre of Cossack's port functions and consists of a stone and concrete wharf (originally with a timber deck) covering the site of two former timber pile jetties. The wharf has a concrete face wall, with stone pitch end walls.

The extension of the Wharf structure to the Sea Wall is a strong visual element and it is from the Wharf that visitors can appreciate the sea level estuarine context of the town and gain extensive panoramic views across Butchers Inlet and up to the mouth of the Harding River and out to Jarman Island. The more recent boat ramp provides visitors with an appreciation of the high tidal movements of the port. The Wharf continues to be used for recreational activities.

The remains of *Silver Star* south of the Wharf and adjacent to the Sea Wall provides evidence of the difficulties ships encountered in the area.

Classified by the National Trust 07/06/1977

Cemetery

With its separate European and Asian sections, Cossack Cemetery is a poignant reminder of the tragedies and hardships of early frontier life.

Classified by the National Trust 07/06/1977

House by well behind Mt Beach

The history of the house is not known.

Remains of a small house and well, marked by palm trees in an isolated area.

Reader's Head Lookout

The site of the first port warning light before the lighthouse was built on Jarman Island in 1888.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Cossack was the first of Western Australia's two major pearling ports, the other being Broome. The township of Broome (gazetted in 1883) supported the pastoral industry in the hinterland and pearling operations at Roebuck Bay, which commenced in the 1880s as the pearl beds around Cossack were fished out. Pearl fishing continues on a small scale from Broome in connection with the cultured pearl industry that was introduced there in 1956. Like *Cossack Townsite Precinct*, Broome developed an 'Asian quarter' or 'Chinatown', which remains the town's commercial and retail centre.⁴⁶

Cossack Townsite Precinct is representative of a number of towns in Western Australia that were established over a limited number of years and then effectively abandoned. The majority of these towns, such as Wittenoom, Gwalia and Gwalla, were developed to support mining industries. All of these towns provide evidence of a contained period of development associated with specific industries.

Cossack Townsite Precinct is representative of a number of towns established around regional ports in the mid to late nineteenth century. Similar to Cossack, ports such as those established at Albany, Busselton, Bunbury, Geraldton, Onslow and Carnarvon serviced both the immediate town and hinterland, providing for the importation of goods and exportation of local produce.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

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13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH
