



# 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.

### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Geraldton Court House* is the longstanding judicial centre of the Geraldton region, and its form, style and prominent location clearly identify it as an important public building. (Criterion 1.1)

*Geraldton Court House* is a fine example of a building constructed in the Federation Free Classical style. It has a five bay façade with three, fine columned bays in rendered masonry and a bay of three windows at each end in face brickwork. (Criterion 1.2)

*Geraldton Court House* was designed to be the centrepiece of the new town centre of Geraldton. *Geraldton Court House* has been a landmark in Geraldton since its construction in 1898. (Criterion 1.3)

*Geraldton Court House* is located at the end of the northwards vista along Marine Terrace from central Geraldton. It is also a landmark from the Indian Ocean and from Mt Scott, which is located behind the town centre. (Criterion 1.3)

### 11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

*Geraldton Court House* illustrates changes in government services in a regional centre in Western Australia and how the administrative facilities have effected the structuring of the town. (Criterion 2.1)

The place has been associated with law and order since the convict era, when the site was the location of the Pensioner Barracks. (Criterion 2.2)

*Geraldton Court House* has been associated with the justice system and administration of Geraldton since 1898 and demonstrates Geraldton's status as a regional centre serving the burgeoning areas of the Murchison Goldfields and the important agricultural regions of the Mid West throughout the twentieth century. (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.

*Geraldton Court House* was designed to a focus of the new town centre of Geraldton, associated with the second and third railway stations, new jetty and future town hall. (Criterion 2.2)

*Geraldton Court* is an important example of the work of the Public Works Department of Western Australia in the period of expansion and development that accompanied the 1890s gold boom. The building exhibits stylistic influences of Chief Architect John Grainger. (Criteria 2.2 & 2.4)

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

*Geraldton Court House* has the potential to yield information through archaeological investigation about the Pensioner Barracks and associated structures. (Criterion 3.2)

*Geraldton Court House* has the potential to yield information about the construction of the public buildings, Geraldton and the State through the time capsule which was placed beneath the foundation stone in 1897. (Criterion 3.2)

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

*Geraldton Court House* has been the seat of justice in Geraldton since its construction in 1898. Its role has been marked by its strong civic presence, located prominently in the town centre. (Criterion 4.1)

*Geraldton Court House* has been a prominent public building since its construction in 1898 and, as a result, contributes to the local community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1. RARITY**

Public buildings of this size are comparatively rare in non-metropolitan Western Australia and are limited to places which were important regional centres during the gold boom era. The place is one of three similar buildings constructed in Kalgoorlie, Coolgardie and Geraldton. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Geraldton Court House* demonstrates the principle characteristics and style of large government justice and administrative buildings constructed at the turn of the century. (Criterion 6.1)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

In general, *Geraldton Court House* is in sound structural condition and is well maintained.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Geraldton Court House* has a high degree of integrity.

### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

The west, north and south facades of *Geraldton Court House* are highly intact.

Internally, there has been a great deal of alteration to the fabric of the place. There is some confusion caused by the similarity in detail between the original, old and new fabric from the 1988-1989 redevelopment.

Externally, *Geraldton Court House* has a high degree of authenticity. Internally, the place has a low degree of authenticity.

### **13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

Attached are key sections of the supporting evidence prepared by Hocking Planning & Architecture, 'Conservation Plan for Geraldton Courthouse', prepared for the Ministry of Justice, August 1998.

Please note: The study area for the Conservation Plan included the Sunseeker Hotel, Marine Terrace and the Police Station, Chapman Road. This heritage assessment focuses on *Geraldton Court House* only. The Sunseeker Hotel has since been demolished.

The Site Plan shows the recommended curtilage which extends around the *Geraldton Court House* building.

#### **13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to Hocking Planning & Architecture, 'Conservation Plan for Geraldton Courthouse', prepared for the Ministry of Justice, August 1998.

#### **13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to Hocking Planning & Architecture, 'Conservation Plan for Geraldton Courthouse', prepared for the Ministry of Justice, August 1998.

#### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

For a discussion of the Comparative Information refer to Hocking Planning & Architecture, 'Conservation Plan for Geraldton Courthouse', prepared for the Ministry of Justice, August 1998.

#### **13.4 REFERENCES**

Hocking Planning & Architecture, 'Conservation Plan for Geraldton Courthouse', prepared for the Ministry of Justice, August 1998.

#### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

The significance of the place to the local Aboriginal community should be investigated.