



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Beverley Railway Station is important to the local community as a prominent and unusual example of a Federation Arts and Crafts railway station, originally constructed with extensive refreshment room and kitchen facilities. (Criterion 1.1)

Beverley Railway Station is an important element in the townscape of Beverley. As part of the area housing the town's public, service and civic buildings, it is a visual marker for the railway line which runs through the centre of the town. (Criterion 1.3, 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Beverley Railway Station represents the importance of the railway system in the development of the agricultural areas, and their supporting townships, in the South West of Western Australia. (Criterion 2.1)

Beverley Railway Station acted as a terminus between the Government and the West Australian Land Company Ltd engines during the early years of establishment of the Great Southern Railway. (Criterion 2.2)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

Beverley Railway Station is important to the Beverley community. The formation of the Beverley Station Preservation Society, in 1974, and its efforts to save the building from demolition, followed by the leasing and restoration of the station, testify to this. (Criterion 4.1)

Beverley Railway Station has an important place in the community of the township, and the wider district, for its contribution to that community's sense of place - providing both a physical focus for the township, and a transport gateway for the district. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

Beverley Railway Station is a relatively uncommon example of the Federation Arts and Crafts style of architecture applied to a railway station with a single storey Main Station Building and a double storey Station Master's residence constructed in a country area. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

12.3 CONDITION

Beverley Railway Station was restored in 1985. In 1995, the Main Station Building exhibits some cracking extending to the ceiling in the south-east wall of the main bed room, and horizontal cracking of the lath and plaster ceiling adjacent to the wall, but otherwise is in good condition. The condition of the shed to the south-west of the Main Station Building and of the platform is fair.

Although, the condition of the building marked "Toilet" and the adjoining toilet structure to the north-west is poor, generally the condition of *Beverley Railway Station* is good.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Beverley Railway Station is currently used as a residence and as a business premises. The use of the place does not diminish the cultural heritage significance of the place and *Beverley Railway Station* retains moderate integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Apart from the demolition of the refreshment rooms and bar, the fabric of *Beverley Railway Station* has had little change. Demolition of the canopy over the railway line with the advent of diesel engine power, and the removal of instruments from the Instrument Room, do not substantially diminish the authenticity of the fabric as they are representative of changes in railway technology.

Beverley Railway Station has a high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Ham-Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by John Pidgeon, Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Beverley Railway Station, constructed of stone and brick with a shingle roof, which has since been replaced with iron, was built, in 1886, by Edward Keane for the Western Australian Government.¹ The building is a single storey construction with a second storey at one end housing the Station Master's Quarters.

In 1838, the Beverley area was settled by pastoralists who grazed their sheep on the native herbage. But, as Beverley was far from markets, agricultural progress was slow and in the 1881 census the population of Beverley was only fifty six, with seven dwellings and one hotel in the township.²

At that time the Government was looking for faster transport between Albany and Perth as the coach journey took five days. A railway line was suggested as a feasible solution to the problem, with the added benefit of opening up the land along the route to farming by providing efficient transport to the coast for produce.³

It was proposed to build the line - to be known as the Great Southern Railway Line - by the grant system, whereby the Government gave grants of land along the route to the builders of the railway at a number of acres per mile of line constructed. Because land along the route from Fremantle to Beverley had already been taken up, the Government constructed this section of the line itself and accepted the proposal of Anthony Hordern's West Australian Land Company Ltd. for the construction of the Beverley to Albany section.⁴

The Government section of the railway was known as the Eastern Railway Line and it was constructed in four sections. The last section, York to Beverley, was opened on 5 August 1886, with an opening ceremony attended by 160 people who had travelled by train from Fremantle.⁵

Two months later, the importance of the railway to the opening up of this area of the State was further illustrated by the proclaiming of a public holiday throughout the colony in honour of the Governor, Sir Frederick Napier Broome, turning the first sod of the Beverley to Albany section of the Great Southern Railway, at Beverley on 20 October 1886.⁶

Between 1886, and the opening of the Beverley to Albany section, in 1889, passengers travelled by coach from Albany and stayed overnight in Beverley

¹ *Western Australian Government Gazette*, 22 February 1886, p. 114.

² Dennis, Barry J. 'A History of the Economic Development of the Beverley and the Upper Avon Valley,' Teacher's Higher Certificate Thesis, 1968, p. 17.

³ Pustkuchen, O. E. *The Way Through: The Story of Narrogin*. (Artlook Books Trust, Perth 1981), p. 81.

⁴ *Western Australian Government Gazette*, 12 October 1884, p. 491.

⁵ 'Beverley Celebrates Railway's 100 Years', *The Avon Valley Advocate*, 13 August, 1986, p. 17-18. The architect is unknown, although the place has stylistic similarities to Temple Pooles work.

⁶ *West Australian Government Gazette*, 18 October, 1886, p. 651.

before boarding the train the next morning for the final leg of their journey to Perth. After 1889, Beverley was the terminus for both the Government and Company engines, and night passengers were still required to stay overnight in the town.⁷ In 1890, refreshment rooms, built by W. Gibbings, were added next to the Station Master's Quarters.⁸

The population of Beverley in 1891, was 146, with 26 homes and four hotels.⁹ The number of hotels is indicative of the impact the railway line had on the growth of the town. In 1892, Beverley was gazetted a municipality.

In 1897, the Government purchased the Beverley to Albany section of the railway from the West Australian Land Company and Beverley lost its function as a railway terminus.¹⁰ The town continued to grow, however, with new school buildings, two churches, a second general store, a local newspaper and a powerhouse, and the farming district prospered. There was an agricultural boom during the 1917-1927 period and Beverley continued to flourish.

Every day, passenger trains stopped at Beverley, on their way to and from Albany and Perth. The goods trains carried agricultural produce to the coast. Cereals, fruit, potatoes, bagged wheat, oats and chaff, and bales of wool were railed. Machinery and manures were brought back for the farmers.¹¹

But, during the depression and World War Two, the population of the area declined. By the 1950s, farming was generally fully mechanised and required less labour. Farm holdings became larger in order to be economic and this reduced population further.¹²

Beverley Railway Station reflected the times. In 1947, the District Engineer reported perishing mortar and plaster in the sixty year old building. As renovations would be expensive and only prolong the life of the building by a few years he strongly recommended a new station building.¹³ But the economic situation did not warrant this so railway staff and passengers continued to make do with the old building.

By the 1960s, rail transport was having increasing difficulty competing with road transport, and Westrail finances were tied up with replacing its narrow gauge lines with standard gauge.¹⁴ In 1961, improved passenger and freight trains were introduced. But new rail coaches cost \$300 000 compared to \$40 000 - 60 000 for a bus, so railway buses began to run on alternate days in place of the passenger trains.¹⁵

⁷ 'The requirements of Beverley: The Railway Terminus', *The West Australian*, 6 September 1892, p. 2; *Western Australian Government Gazette*, 1889, p. 313.

⁸ *West Australian Government Gazette*, 7 October, 1890, p. 746.

⁹ Dennis, p. 63.

¹⁰ *Yearbook of Western Australia*, 1897, p. 69.

¹¹ *The Western Australian Railway Gazette*, 20 August 1908, p. 6, & 20 October 1908, p. 7.

¹² Dennis, pp. 64-78.

¹³ Beverley Station Buildings & Improvements, 1937-1974. District Engineer's Report, 25 August 1947.

¹⁴ Beverley Station Buildings & Improvements, 1937-1974. Deputy Commissioner's Inspection Tour, 5-8 July, 1965.

¹⁵ White, Maurie. *The Mighty Heart*. (1992). The figures are converted from pounds.

In 1968, an earth tremor further damaged the walls of the station building, and in 1971, the living quarters were condemned. Only the offices were still in use.¹⁶

In 1974, Westrail Civil Engineering Branch prepared estimates for the reorganisation of the Beverley track and buildings, including removal of the station building and the unused refreshment rooms.¹⁷ Concerned residents formed the Beverley Station Preservation Society and fought Westrail over the demolition of the station building, finally winning a reprieve for the building. The refreshment rooms, however, were demolished.

In 1978, the last passenger train ran from Albany to Perth.¹⁸ *Beverley Railway Station* was closed on 19 October 1984, one of fifteen stations closed in the South-West on that date as a result of Westrail's program of replacing attended stations with a regional centre.¹⁹ A new railway station was gazetted to the south of Vincent Street, but no station building constructed.²⁰

After the closure of the station, the Beverley Station Preservation Society negotiated a lease of the building and platform at peppercorn rent, and then sublet the property for commercial use. The rents received were used by the Society to finance restoration of the building.

The centenary of *Beverley Railway Station* was celebrated in August 1986, and attended by some 2000 people, among them the West Australian Governor, Professor Reid, who unveiled a commemorative plaque on the station's eastern wall. Professor Reid commented on the way 'railways subconsciously reinforce a sense of community'.²¹

Since February 1995, Westrail has employed a solicitor to handle the leasing of its unused buildings and *Beverley Railway Station* is now leased to a couple, with two children, who live in the old Station Master's Quarters and run a naturopathy and woodworking business from the premises. They have a five year lease with an option on a further five years.²²

The only trains now running on the Great Southern Line are goods trains and, very occasionally, Hotham Valley steam trains on a tourist day trip.²³

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

¹⁶ Beverley Station Buildings & Improvements, 1937-1974. Letter from Chief Civil Engineer to the National Trust of WA, 29 June 1972.

¹⁷ Beverley Station Buildings & Improvements, 1937-1974. Acting Commissioner's Inspection Tour, 5-8 May 1974 & Civil Engineering Branch estimates, 16 September 1974.

¹⁸ *Western Rails*. Magazine of the Western Australian Light Railway Preservation Society, Vol 2, No 2, 1978, p. 5.

¹⁹ *Western Rails*., Vol 8, No 4, 1984, p. 4.

²⁰ Western Australian Street Directory. (UBD 1988), map, p. 133; Telephone interview with Clive Nicholls, member of Beverley Station Preservation Society, 14 November 1995. Memo in HCWA File 0147.

²¹ 'Beverley Celebrates Railway History', *The Countryman*, 4 September 1986, p. 32; 'Beverley Celebrates Railway's 100 Years', *The Avon Valley Advocate*, 13 August, 1986, p. 17-18.

²² Telephone interview with Clive Nicholls, member of Beverley Station Preservation Society, 14 November 1995. Memo in HCWA File 0147.

²³ *ibid*.

Beverley Railway Station is sited on the north-western side of Vincent Street, the main street of Beverley. The Avon to Albany Railway runs on the north-eastern side of the station platform as a single track, running from north-west to south east and crosses Vincent Street at right angles, where it branches to the multiple tracks of marshalling yards to the south-east of Vincent Street.

The Town of Beverley is situated on the Great Southern Highway 130 km south-east of Perth. Vincent Street runs north-east from its junction with the highway. The Railway line runs approximately parallel with the highway some half kilometre to the east of it. Vincent Street is flanked by one and two storeyed buildings, spread at intervals, sometimes isolated and sometimes in groups, from the intersection with the highway to approximately a half kilometre to the north-east of the station. Some of these buildings have heritage significance.

The Main Station Building is positioned near the south-eastern end of the very long platform (approximately 150 metres). Midway along the platform, north-west of the main buildings, is a separate structure marked on the WAGR Plan 3885 as "Toilet". To the west of and separate from, the Main Station Buildings is a shed set at an angle of approximately 45 degrees to the other structures.

The platform is paved with bitumen and is of uneven texture with numerous cracks and blemishes. The north-west section of the platform, beyond the toilet building, is overgrown with tall weeds. Over the years, the bitumen surface has been built up so that it is above the floor level of some of the rooms of the Main Station Building which open onto it. The edge of the platform along side the track has a weather-worn jarrah kerbing. The platform and jarrah kerbing ramp down to ground level at each end. The platform is sheltered with a lean-to canopy supported on tubular steel columns for the length of the single storeyed portion of the building. A mesh fence has been erected between the columns to separate the tenants and their visitors from the passing railway traffic.

The Main Station Building is single storey at the Vincent Street end and of two storeys at the other end. It is constructed in the Federation Arts and Crafts style, which is an uncommon style for railway station construction.²⁴ The single storey section contains the railway offices and waiting rooms while the two storey section contains the former residential quarters for the Station Master. The walls are approximately 500 mm thick and are constructed of roughly squared granite stone set in lime mortar and rendered internally with smooth plaster and externally with a roughish cement coating painted white. The corners of the building and the door and window reveals are emphasised by brick quoins, protruding some 10 mm proud of the render surface and painted a dull red. The upper storey wall of the north-east elevation has a false quoin to provide the gable roof above it with a symmetrical appearance. The timber joinery is painted, the external doors panelled and part glazed; the windows are double hung. Internally, the doors are four panelled and the window reveals are timber lined with moulded architraves and nosed timber sills. The roof is steeply pitched, has numerous gables and is sheeted with

²⁴ 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) pp. 140-143.

lightly rusted unpainted corrugated galvanised iron. Chimneys penetrating the roof are in some cases plain brick and in others are decorated with an unusual motif worked in cement render.

The room nearest Vincent Street is known as the Baggage Room. It measures 5.6 metres (depth of the building) x 4.1 metres. The ceiling is of painted corrugated iron sheets (Custom Orb profile), fixed on the level under the ceiling joists. The ceiling has a considerable sag towards the centre of the room, though it is quite firmly fixed. The walls are painted a dark brown. A section of the plaster has been removed from the west wall to reveal the stone wall structure. The timber lined window reveals, unlike similar reveals in the other rooms of the building, are splayed. The floor is of 150 mm wide butt jointed boards running at right angles to the axis of the building. (The floor boards throughout the building are believed by the tenants to be Jam wood.) There are some areas where the floor has been patched with narrower boards.

The adjacent area to the north-west is occupied by the Waiting Room, facing the platform, and the Instrument Room, facing the rear yard. The ceiling of the Waiting Room is of painted fibro sheeting with cover battens and is fixed to ceiling joists on the level. The ceiling to the instrument room is of plaster sheet, flush jointed and fixed on the level. There are no cornices. The floor is of 150 wide, boards running parallel with the axis of the building. The floor of the Instrument Room has holes drilled, evidently to secure the base of instruments.

The next area is the Main Hall, measuring 5.6 metres x 4.2 metres. A set of double doors in the centre of the north-east wall opens onto the platform. A second set of double doors in the centre of the south-west wall opens onto a landing, with steps leading to the rear yard. The south-east wall contains a projecting chimney breast with fire place flanked by doors leading to the waiting room and instrument room described above. The north-west wall contains a wide opening leading to the ticket office on the platform side of the building and a standard width door leading to the Station Master's Office overlooking the rear yard.

The ceiling of the Main Hall rakes with the roof slope and is lined with painted oregon pine boarding with rounded quirks at the joints. There is an exposed under-purlin to each roof slope with decorative brackets against the walls at each end of each under-purlin. The floor is of 150 wide butt jointed boards running parallel with the axis of the building, with some areas of narrower tongued and grooved flooring replacing older boards.

The Ticket Office, measuring 4.2 x 2.4 metres, has a small ticket window in the centre of the north-east wall facing the platform, a fire place and chimney breast at the centre of the south-west wall and a door leading to the Station Master's Quarters at the west corner of the room. The Ticket Office ceiling and floor boards are continuous with , and match those in the Main Hall.

The Station Master's Office, measuring 3.2 x 2.7 metres, has a window in the south-west wall opening onto the rear yard, a door at the west corner opening onto a 1.0 metre wide annex, which in turn has a door leading to the Station Master's Quarters. There is a fire place at the north corner of the room. As with the Ticket Office, the ceiling and floor boarding are continuous with and match those of the Main Hall.

At the east corner of the Station Master's Quarters, at ground floor, is a room known as the Card Room. It measures 2.5 x 2.2 metres, and is reached by entering from the platform through a door at the east corner of the room. The floor of the Card Room is some 100 mm lower than the platform level, and consists of 150 wide boards with large gaps between them.

The ground floor of the Station Master's Quarters is approximately 700 mm below that of the public rooms described above. The door in the north-west wall of the ticket office leads onto a staircase landing which gives access to a short flight of steps leading to the lower floor level of the stair well, or, turning left, leads up a flight of stairs which, returning on itself gives access to the upper floor. The lower floor level of the stair well is sheared with the kitchen, on the platform side of the building and the lounge, which overlooks the rear yard. The south east wall of the kitchen contains a chimney breast and wood stove. The ceilings of the kitchen and lounge are lath and plaster. The floor boards of the stairwell are 150 mm butt jointed and have been painted brown. The floor of the kitchen is covered with a linoleum and the floor boards of the lounge are 80 mm wide tongued and grooved boarding. The staircase including the balustrades is of dark stained timber.

The first floor consists of three rooms in addition to the stair well. The former main bedroom, now used as a lounge, with a chimney breast and fire place sits over the kitchen. The second bedroom sits over the former lounge and the smaller third bed room sits over the Card Room. The ceilings of these rooms are lath and plaster constructed on the level, with the exception of the stair well ceiling which follows the folds of the roof slopes. Carpet covers the timber floor boards.

To the north-west of the Station Master's Quarters is a single storey annex, contained behind a parapet wall which faces the station platform, and wrapping around the north-west face of the annex. The parapet wall is of rendered stone-work with brick quoins to match the walls of the rest of the main station buildings. The annex contains a partly roofed courtyard at the kitchen floor level and is connected to the kitchen by a doorway. At the platform level an area known as the Lamp Room is partly covered with a lean-to roof and is accessed from the platform.

Attached to the annex is a timber framed, corrugated iron clad storage shed, and in the west corner of the shed is a water closet, contained within its own corrugated iron walls and roof.

Separated by some 20 metres up the platform toward the north west is a gabled timber framed building (titled "Toilet" on WAGR plan 3885), and clad with 200 wide rusticated weather boarding. The gabled roof projects forward over the platform and is supported on tubular steel columns. The building consists of two rooms, each approximately 5.5 metres square. The room nearest the platform has a chimney breast and fire place at the centre of the south-east wall. The ceilings of each room are of plaster sheet with timber cover battens at the joints and timber scotias against the walls. The ceilings are coved to the slope of the roof. The walls are lined with horizontally fixed oregon pine boards with rounded quirks at the joints. The floor to the room leading off the platform is of wide butt jointed boards. The rear room floor is also of wide boards, but has had a 100 mm thick concrete slab laid over it. One board visible at the connecting door threshold is 300 mm wide. This rear

room contains water closets and showers, not in working condition together with the remnants of partitions.

Attached to and north-west of this structure is a timber framed toilet block containing a series of water closets. The ceiling is plain sheet with cover battens at the joints. The north west wall is lined with 125 mm wide horizontal boards and has a series of timber louvres behind the water closets. The other walls are lined as for the ceilings. The floor is of concrete.

The shed set to the south-west of and at 45° to the main station buildings, is a timber framed, horizontally fixed galvanised iron clad, gabled shed. Internally the ceilings and walls are pine lined, the ceiling coved with the roof slope the wall boarding fixed horizontally. The floor is timber. The shed is entered through a door in the east facing wall.

Changes to the fabric as demonstrated by Plan E.E.L. plan No 9257, of 24 June 1906, are the demolition of the refreshment rooms and bar which was a timber framed structure to the north-west of the main station building of which the building marked "Toilet" is the sole surviving part. The gable projecting out over the platform was repeated in a series of bays between this remnant and the main station building. The station canopy, now a lean-to structure, was indicated in the 1906 plan as a series of four gables supported on 150 x 150 mm timber posts, and were a reflection of the gables in front of the refreshment rooms. The platform under three of the bays of the canopy were paved with jarrah blocks. The roof, shown as shingled in the 1906 plan, is now covered with galvanised corrugated iron.

The condition and appearance of the main station buildings is generally good, although there is some vertical cracking extending to the ceiling in the south-east wall of the main bed room, now first floor lounge room, with further horizontal cracking of the lath and plaster ceiling adjacent to the wall.

The condition of the building marked "Toilet" is poor, and the appearance, inside and out, is one of neglect. The same remarks apply to the adjoining toilet structure to the north-west.

The condition of the shed to the south-west of the main station buildings is fair.

13.3 REFERENCES

	References
Primary	
AVA	<i>The Avon Valley Advocate</i> . 'Beverley Celebrates Railway's 100 Years', , 13 August, 1986, p. 17-18.
BSBI	Beverley Station Buildings & Improvements, 1937-1974, WAGR/Westrail.
Countryman	<i>The Countryman</i> . 'Beverley Celebrates Railway History' , 4 September, 1986, p. 32.
Gazette	<i>Western Australian Government Gazette</i> .
Nicholls	Telephone interview with Clive Nicholls, member of Beverley Station Preservation Society, 14 November 1995. Memo in HCWA File 0147.
UBD	<i>Western Australian Street Directory</i> , UBD.
WA	<i>The West Australian</i> . 'The requirements of Beverley: The Railway Terminus', 6 September 1892, p. 2.
WARG	<i>The Western Australian Railway Gazette</i> , 20 August 1908, p. 6; 20 October 1908, p. 7.
WR	<i>Western Rails</i> . Magazine of the Western Australian Light Railway Preservation Society, Vol 8, No 4, 1984, p. 4.
Secondary	
Dennis	Dennis, Barry J. A History of the Economic Development of the Beverley and the Upper Avon Valley, Teacher's Higher Certificate Thesis, 1968. (unpublished)
Pustkuchen	Pustkuchen, O. E. <i>The Way Through: The Story of Narrogin</i> (Artlook Books, Perth, 1981).
White	White, Maurie. <i>The Mighty Heart</i> . (1992)
Yearbook	<i>Yearbook of Western Australia</i> .

CHRONOLOGY

Date	Details	Reference
1881	Need for railway from Perth to Albany established	Pustkuchen p. 81
1886	Station building at Beverley constructed by Edward Keane	Gazette 1886, p.114
	Line from York to Beverley opened	AVA 13/8/1886, p. 17-18
	Governor turns first sod of Beverley to Albany section of Great Southern Railway	Gazette 1886, p. 651
1889	Beverley to Albany section of line opened	Gazette 1889, p. 313
1890	Refreshment rooms constructed	Gazette 1890, p. 746
1892	Beverley gazetted a municipality	Dennis p. 63
1897	Beverley ceases to function as railway terminus with Government purchase of the Company line	Yearbook 1897, p. 69
to 1927	Strong growth of Beverley farming district and township	WA 6/9/1892, p. 2; Dennis p. 17, 63; WAGR 20/8/1908, p. 6; 20/10/1908, p. 7
1927 on	Decline of population	Dennis p. 64-78
1947	Station building in need of renovation and repair	BSBI 25/8/1947
1950s-1960s	Rationalisation of farming	Dennis p. 64-78
	Railways facing increased competition from road transport	BSBI 5-8/5/1965; White
Date	Details	Reference
1968	Earth tremor further damages station building	BSBI 29/6/1972

1971	Station building residence section condemned	BSBI 29/6/1972
1974	Station building listed for demolition	BSBI 5-8/5/1972, 16/9/1974
	Beverley Station Preservation Society forms to fight demolition	AVA 13/8/1986, p. 17-18; Nicholls
	Refreshment rooms demolished	BSBI 16/9/1974
1984	Beverley station closed by Westrail	WR 1984, p. 4
	Beverley Station Preservation Society leases station building and begins restoration	Nicholls
1986	Centenary of station building attended by Governor Reid	AVA 13/8/1986, p. 17-18; Countryman 4/9/1986, p. 32
1995	Building leased out by Westrail agent for commercial/residential use	Nicholls