



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 VALUE¹

No. 1 Police Quarters (1951), Office and Store (1953, 1974), Toilet Block (1953), and Cell Block (1951, c. 1970), together comprise a group of police buildings which reflect typical construction methods and building styles used by the Public Works Department of WA for utilitarian buildings in the remote regions of the north of Western Australia in the 1950s. (Criterion 1.1)

The Military Kitchen/Trackers Hut (c. 1940s), an essentially utilitarian structure with simple form and proportions constructed of flat iron sheets, is a landmark in Fitzroy Crossing as a result of its unusual aesthetic qualities and construction technique. (Criterion 1.3)

The place, with *Fitzroy Crossing Post Office (fmr)* and *Low Level Crossing, Fitzroy Crossing*, forms a significant cultural environment in that these structures are the only obvious remnants of the 'old' settlement of Fitzroy Crossing. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The place is significant for its connection, over a period of eight decades, with the imposition of European law on, and the delivery of welfare services to, Aboriginal people. (Criterion 2.1)

The place is important as a marker for the location of the first Fitzroy Crossing police station, built in 1895. (Criterion 2.2)

The place is associated with Constable Richard Henry Pilmer who built the first station and whose keen participation in the quelling of Aboriginal resistance in the 1890s is recalled by the Aboriginal people of today. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

¹ 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.

The place has the potential to reveal through archaeological investigation information about the earlier history of the police occupation on the site. (Criterion 3.2)

1. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Fitzroy Crossing Police Group has social value deriving from the interaction, both voluntary and involuntary, of numerous Aboriginal people with the succession of police constables and their wives who lived and worked there. (Criterion 4.1)

The landmark quality of the place as part of the "old" Fitzroy Crossing settlement contributes to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

The place has potential as a tourist destination within the State. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Fitzroy Crossing Police Group demonstrates the characteristics of the self-contained police stations that evolved from outposts established in remote parts of the Kimberley in the late nineteenth century. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

Fitzroy Crossing Police Group is in sound condition. No. 1 Police Quarters (1951), Office and Store (1953, 1974), Toilet Block (1953), Cell Block (1951, c. 1970) have all undergone some conservation works. There is a need to complete conservation works on No. 1 Police Quarters. Currently the management program for the Group appears to be in abeyance, however it is planned to be implemented in the near future.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Fitzroy Crossing Police Group has medium integrity. Whilst no longer used for police purposes the original intention of the place is clearly evident. The proposed use for interpretive purposes is compatible with the original use of the place.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Fitzroy Crossing Police Group has a high level of authenticity. No. 1 Police Quarters (1951), Office and Store (1953, 1974), Toilet Block (1953), Cell Block (1951, c. 1970) all date from post 1950 and remain substantially as originally constructed. Only the Military Kitchen/Trackers Hut (c. 1940s) predates the more recent development. This structure does not appear to have been altered, however its origins are unknown.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Dr Cathie Clement, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Rosemary Rosario, Architectural Heritage Adviser.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Situated on the Fitzroy River in the locality known as 'old' Fitzroy Crossing, the buildings in *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* relate to police use of the place from the 1940s. The buildings comprise the Military Kitchen/Trackers' Hut (c. 1940s), No. 1 Police Quarters, sometimes referred to as Sergeant's Quarters (1951), Cell Block (1951, c. 1970) and Office and Store (1953, 1974). Outbuildings include bough sheds and a garage located to the south of the Cell Block, and there are also physical remnants of other structures visible on the site. Some of these remnants may date from the period prior to 1940. An avenue of boab trees linking the Group to Russ Road is believed to have been planted by police in the 1960s to commemorate the people of the past.

Police use of land in the vicinity of *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* dates from 1895 when two constables and their trackers built a police station from rough bush timber and iron on 'the north bank, where the Hall's Creek telegraph line crosses the river, the only place safe from floods for some distance around'. This station, described as having '3 rooms each 12 x 12, 1 room 8 x 10, & 1 room 8 x 12', provided both quarters and office space for the two constables. Their presence was required as part of a campaign being waged against Jandamarra (Pigeon) and other Bunaba people who were physically opposing the expansion of the West Kimberley pastoral industry. A police party killed Jandamarra in April 1897, several months after the government recognised the need for an ongoing police presence at Fitzroy Crossing and set apart a 1280-acre (518-hectare) reserve (No. 3779). Constable Pilmer, who had organised the construction of the police station, remained there until August 1897. In the contact stories still told by Aboriginal people from this area, his name has become synonymous with the killing of their forebears.²

Termite damage caused rapid deterioration of the 1895 building and, in 1906, having decided that the site in the paddock reserve was the best that could be obtained, the police had a contractor named J. Douglas build a new station. In 1923, new reserves were set apart on higher ground to the north-west, well away from the river, and the paddock reserve was cancelled. Reserve 18291 provided 2000 acres (809 hectares) for a new police paddock while Reserve 18292 provided two roods (2023 square metres) for a new police station. Arrangements were made to build the

² Richard Henry Pilmer (with editing and annotation by Cathie Clement and Peter Bridge), *Northern Patrol: An Australian Saga*, Hesperian Press, Carlisle, 1998, pp. 37, 41, 47, 60 and 74; *Government Gazette* (WA), 29 January 1897, p. 164; State Records Office of Western Australia, hereafter SROWA, AN 5/1, Police Department, Acc 430, 277/1903, Chief Office File; Howard Pedersen and Banjo Woorunmurra, *Jandamarra and the Bunuba Resistance*, Magabala Books, Broome, 1995, p. 96.

station in 1924 but, in 1926, it was noted that this plan was in abeyance.³ In the absence of extensive research, it is impossible to comment on the type or location of any buildings that may have been constructed between 1906 and the 1930s, either on the elevated new police reserves or at *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group*.

In August 1930, the senior constable at Fitzroy Crossing Police Station reported that the river had ceased to run and that the water in the pool below the station was not fit for human consumption. He had a bore sunk the following dry season and, with periodical repairs, this bore continued to supply water for *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* until at least the 1950s. The presence of this bore, and a 1939 notification of an alteration in the area and boundaries of the 1923 police station reserve (No. 18292), indicate that the government reused the reserve number in 1939 and applied it to 3 acres 1 rood 24 perches (1.4 hectares) of land where, or near where, the old police buildings stood beside the river. This land, described as Location 21, was surrounded by the land formerly reserved as the police paddock (No. 3779). The new elevated police paddock reserve (No. 18291) remained in place but subsequent references to the existence of Reserve 3779 indicate that the Lands Department ignored its 1923 cancellation and continued to view it as the police paddock.⁴ It therefore appears that the police, despite planning to relocate to higher ground, did not discontinue their use of *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* during the 1920s.

The two constables stationed at Fitzroy Crossing were replaced from time to time. Some were married, some single, and, at various times, the senior constable was required to undertake duties additional to his routine work. In 1935, for example, Constable L. O'Neill acted as Assistant Bailiff, Rationing Officer for the Aborigines Department, and Protector of Aborigines. He also issued ration orders to people on unemployment relief. In the twelve months to 30 June 1935, he and his fellow constable and trackers also did 16 patrols on which their plant of horses and mules covered a total of 4102 miles (6563 kilometres). On some of these patrols, the police chained prisoners by the neck, as they had done in this locality since the 1890s, and walked them back to Fitzroy Crossing. This practice continued into the 1940s.⁵

In December 1939, the Public Works Department drew up plans for new police quarters at Fitzroy Crossing. This building (since demolished) comprised a living room, a kitchen and bathroom separated by a large

³ SROWA, AN 5/2, Police Department, Acc 430, 277/1903 and 4051/06, Chief Office Files; *Government Gazette* (WA), 25 May 1923, p. 1006; SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 2714/1924, Annual Report for year ending 30.6.24, p. 4; SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 2179/1926, Annual report for year ending 30/6/1926, p. 7.

⁴ SROWA, WAS 211, DOLA, Cons 3640, 6735/1924, pp. 4 and 31–3; SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 7567/1931, Const. Walter, 1231 – Application for refund of £37-14-6 spent in having bore sunk at Fitzroy Crossing Station. Water Supply – General file, vol 1, no pagination; *Government Gazette* (WA), 13 January 1939, p. 27; National Archives of Australia, hereafter NAA, (WA), K273/44, 1944/35, Fitzroy Crossing – PMG Acquisition of Site for Post Office, p. 13.

⁵ SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 3449/1935, Commissioner of Police. Annual Report for the year ending 30-6-35; personal comment made by Peter Ross (Fitzroy Crossing) to Cathie Clement, November 1994, that prisoners were still being brought in on chains from such places as Christmas Creek when he arrived in Fitzroy Crossing in about 1946.

verandah, and a mosquito room fitted with gauze. A wide earth-floored verandah sheltered the front and side of the quarters.⁶ Built a short distance to the west of the senior constable's quarters, without any provision for an office, this structure was known as the 'No. 2 Police Quarters' and it housed the less senior of the two constables.

The senior constable dealt with administrative matters from a room in his quarters but, by the late 1940s, these quarters were badly affected by termite damage. There was no electricity for refrigeration or fans but Constable H. H. Wilhelm built a 'cool room' behind the quarters where he and his wife could sit or sleep in comparative comfort. Modelled on rooms seen on some of the pastoral stations, this structure had walls of plant fibre packed between two layers of wire netting, an iron roof covered by thick straw, and a reticulation system where a hose dripped water onto the roof. The constables' wives had created a pleasant environment with gardens gracing the front of both lots of quarters. Each tracker had a 'room' on the river bank for his family but these people tended to live in the open. Cooking for everyone on site was done mostly in the 'Military Kitchen' (now known as the Trackers' Hut) situated at the rear of the police land. This arrangement, with the trackers and their wives doing much of the cooking, meant that the already high internal temperature of the police quarters was not increased by heat from a stove in summer.⁷

In 1947, Mr McNicol, the Public Works foreman carpenter from Derby, did 'repairs to Quarters 1 and additions to Quarters 2' at Fitzroy Crossing Police Station. The following year, after the size of Reserve 18292 was increased to 5 acres (2 hectares) by the addition of Location 24, the Inspector of Police complained that the quarters were 'an absolute shambles'. A remedy was organised and, on 20 June 1949, R. J. Gamble won a £6666 contract to construct new quarters for the senior constable, a cell and exercise yard, and latrines. Problems beset the project from the outset, requiring additional expenditure. A Lister engine had to be installed to pump water from the 1931 bore, because the planned installation of sewerage demanded a better flow than that produced by the windmill; extra work stemming from an 'alteration to the sewerage and the installation to the 2nd constable's house' involved demolition of a shed and removal of a concrete floor; and freight costs increased dramatically between the closing of the tenders and the commencement of construction.⁸

⁶ Heritage and Conservation Professionals. Fitzroy Crossing Sergeants Quarters Conservation Plan, prepared for the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley, March 1995, pp. 3 and 6 (Figure 1), presenting PWD(WA) Drawing 29092.

⁷ Personal comment, Mrs Ethel Wilhelm, wife of the late Constable H. H. (Boysie) Wilhelm (Perth), to Cathie Clement, 26 May 1999. The 'Military Kitchen' is constructed of flat iron sheets, some of which have been utilised to form large hinged shutters that can be opened to allow air to flow through the building. The stove is still intact but two heavy benches recalled by Mrs Wilhelm are no longer there. The building's origin is unknown but it is not inconceivable that it came from the RAAF Operational Base Unit established on nearby Noonkanbah Station during World War II.

⁸ SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 7567/1931, no page numbers; *Government Gazette* (WA), 5 March 1948, p. 541; SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 2539/48, Annual Report 1947-48. General File. Northern Police District report, p. 11; SROWA, AN 7/14, Public Works Department, Acc 1124, PWD Contract Book 24 (20 September 1948 - 29

Gamble completed his work on 30 April 1951 but the police continued to experience disruption because, in 1949, the Department of the North West had decided that, rather than include an office in the contract let to Gamble, it would build one from materials salvaged from the quarters. Contractors named A. Pearce and J. Austin had demolished the old 'No. 1 Police Quarters' in the first half of 1950, at a cost of £30, but had not salvaged any of the termite-affected timber for the proposed office. Gamble had not responded to a July 1950 invitation to tender on plans for an office and store and, consequently, the police had to do their administrative work in a 'tin shed' until the government allocated £1500 for a new building in 1951. At this time, forage and saddle equipment was kept in a temporary shelter erected by Constable Wilhelm. He suggested that provision should be made to keep the five riding saddles and seven sets of packs in the proposed office and store but, when it was found that enclosing part of the verandah for this purpose would cost an additional £150, the suggestion was ignored. Similarly, an estimate of £350 for a separate forage shed led to rejection of a proposal for that structure. Tenders were then called for construction of the office and store on a 'labour only' basis. Two carpenters who had been working in Derby, R. Pilkington and A. Turner, did the work for £285 in December 1952 and January 1953.⁹

By 1954, the horse and mule plants at the inland Kimberley police stations were seen as an antiquated form of transport that should be replaced with jeeps or other suitable motor vehicles. Provision had existed since 1948 for constables to avail themselves, in special instances or cases of emergency, of 'the services of motor transports operating in the district'. Payment of an allowance of 1s. or 1s. 4d. per mile 'dependent on the nature of the country to be traversed' covered such instances and, in the year ending 30 June 1948, the Fitzroy Crossing police plant travelled 2093 miles (3349 kilometres) while motor vehicles traversed another 994 miles (1590 kilometres). In 1956, the phasing out of the horse and mule plant resulted in the cancellation of the police paddock, thus ending the police association with the elevated ground set apart in 1923.¹⁰

Police duties at Fitzroy Crossing were fairly routine from the 1950s. In 1965, a staff survey at the post office recorded that Fitzroy Crossing was 'little more than a village with only a half dozen or so buildings'. It was said to have 'remained static for many years' and to have little likelihood of 'ever progressing beyond its present status'. The town population was 'approximately 33 persons' and, with cattle raising the only industry in the district, the township served primarily as a meeting place for nearby cattle station personnel. But changes were occurring in the cattle industry and, indirectly, these were bringing about change in the wider district. The

June 1950), p. 147; SROWA, AN 1/7, Department of Public Works, Acc 689, 2628/1950, Fitzroy Crossing Police Station, pp. 2–3 and 70–4.

⁹ SROWA, AN 1/7, Department of Public Works, Acc 689, 2628/1950, pp. 23, 50, 61–2, 65, 67, 104, 110, 114, 127–8, 134, 138 and 140.

¹⁰ SROWA, AN 40/2, Department of North-West, Acc 1302, 24/53, Derby, no pagination, letter of 14 April 1955 from H C Strickland, Minister for North West, to the Minister for Police; SROWA, AN 5/3, Police Department, Acc 430, 2539/48, Annual Report 1947–48. General File. Northern Police District report, p. 2; *Government Gazette* (WA), 12 October 1956, p. 2488.

introduction of award wages for Aboriginal workers resulted in many Aboriginal people moving to such places as Fitzroy Crossing after the stations cut their work forces. Droving teams were being phased out too, and the expenditure of money on roads made travel easier not only for the trucks that now carried cattle to the ports but also for the tourists who were arriving in greater numbers to see parts of outback Australia.¹¹

The presence of more people in the area focussed attention both on access to services and on the possible expansion of the settlement. The 1967 flood highlighted the shortcomings of the settlement's location and its fragmented layout, and, on 12 February, the postmaster recorded that floodwaters had left the post office, hospital and police houses 'on an island 120 yds wide _ mile long'. Floods of this magnitude also prevented aircraft from landing, limited the extent to which people could move about in motor vehicles, and isolated both the Aboriginal Mission (established on the elevated ground once held by the police) and the airport. *Low Level Crossing, Fitzroy Crossing* became impassable and the postmaster noted that a vehicle which passed over the crossing on 2 April 1967 was the first to do so since the river had flooded on 18 January. Modern communications were being demanded too and, in August 1967, some of the police land was taken in connection with the establishment of a radio-telephone receiving station near the post office.¹²

Another aspect of the growth in population was an increased need for incarceration and, by late 1968, unfavourable comment was focussing attention on the need to improve the cell block accommodation at Fitzroy Crossing. No funds were available immediately but the Public Works Department produced a drawing for a female cell and exercise yard attached to the end of the male cell and exercise yard. This drawing shows that, by 1968, the Military Kitchen was being used as the Tracker's Quarters. The design for the cell block additions was amended slightly at the end of 1969 and construction took place in the early 1970s.¹³

By 1969, the government was giving serious consideration to the question of how best to deal with future growth at Fitzroy Crossing. The Lands Department surveyed some 60 acres (24.3 hectares) of higher ground to the south-west of *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* and government departments with an interest in services in the locality were advised of an intention to gazette this land as a townsite. The objective was 'to cater for future planning for schools, hospitals and other public buildings, in addition to the residential requirements of the area'.¹⁴

¹¹ NAA (WA), K433/1, XP 1064, Fitzroy Crossing post office, p. [8]; *West Australian*, 8 April 1965, p. 2; Eric Lawford, 'Crowbar Saved My Life' in *Raparapa Kularr Martuwarra: Stories from Fitzroy River Drivers*, ed. Paul Marshall, Magabala Books, Broome, 1988, pp. 24–5; Kimberley Language Resource Centre, *Moola Bulla: In the Shadow of the Mountain*, Magabala Books, Broome, 1996, pp. 120–1.

¹² NAA (WA), K715/1, NN, [Postmaster's Diary] Fitzroy Crossing, 1950 to 1980; NAA(WA), PP520/1, 1972/175, [Property and Services Branch] Fitzroy Crossing – Postmaster General's Radio/telephone site, 1943 to 1974, p. 45; *Government Gazette* (WA), 4 August 1967, p. 1932.

¹³ SROWA, AN 40/7, Department of North-West, Acc 1302, P12/63, Police Buildings: Includes Crown Law. Police General; SROWA, PWD(WA), Drawings for Job Nos. 30/542/1 and 30/542/2.

¹⁴ SROWA, AN 40/8, Department of the North West, Acc 1591, 44/66, Fitzroy Crossing, p. 3.

It was possibly because of the planned relocation that land was taken from the east side of the police reserve in 1970. The small structure built there is said to have been constructed by the Public Works Department as a Community Welfare Office and to have been used on occasions as a court. In 1987, the government leased the land to the late Casey Ross, an Aboriginal woman with long standing ties to the area, for residential purposes. In the meantime, the Lands Department completed the survey work on the new townsite, and Main Roads Department built a new high level bridge downstream from *Low Level Crossing, Fitzroy Crossing*, thus making a river crossing available at all times. In January 1974, plans were drawn up for a new store to be added to the office and store at *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* and it was announced that a new Fitzroy Crossing Hospital was to be built at a cost of \$250,000. This announcement signalled the forthcoming relocation of services to the new townsite. A newspaper report published in July stated that the first buildings on the new site were 'expected to be the town's hospital and a policeman's house'. Other town facilities, including the police station, were to be transferred at a future time. The new hospital opened in June 1976 and, in December 1977, having relocated one of the constables, the government reduced that area of the police reserve by setting apart Location 24 as Reserve 30571 and vesting it in the National Parks Authority for housing purposes.¹⁵

The new police complex and court house opened in the new Fitzroy Crossing townsite in 1978 and, in March 1979, the remainder of the police reserve was handed over to the National Parks Authority for housing purposes. The State's first Aboriginal Ranger, Noel Nannup, and his wife lived in the former No. 1 Police Quarters from 1981 to 1987. Nannup was responsible for organising tourism activities at Geikie Gorge, Tunnel Creek, Windjana Gorge and Wolfe Creek Crater. The rapid growth experienced in tourism in this period can be gauged from the figures recorded for boat tour passengers at Geikie Gorge: 13,000 in 1980, rising to 26,000 the following year, and then steadily increasing to 48,000 by 1987. Nannup worked closely with the local Aboriginal people to ensure that their use of the national parks did not conflict with the purpose for which the land had been classified, and his empathy with them induced him to suggest that they should be running the boat tours at Geikie Gorge. That change came about in 1994, with CALM supporting the venture.¹⁶

The increase in tourism in the Fitzroy Crossing area stemmed partly from the sealing of the sections of the Great Northern Highway between Derby and Fitzroy Crossing (1970) and between Port Hedland and Broome (1977 to 1981). The river crossings between Port Hedland and Halls Creek were

¹⁵ Personal comment, Peter Ross (Fitzroy Crossing) to Cathie Clement, November 1994; *Government Gazette* (WA) 8 May 1970, p. 1261; SROWA, AN 40/8, Department of the North West, Acc 1591, 44/66, p. 4; SROWA, PWD(WA), Drawing No. A1 for Job No. 30/542/2; *West Australian*, 28 January 1974, p. 5; NAA(WA), K1209/1, NN, Fitzroy Crossing Post Office – correspondence, cards, photographs, press cuttings, 1960 to 1980, cutting from *West Australian*, 5 July 1974, p. 4; *West Australian*, 12 June 1976, p. 19; *Government Gazette* (WA) 23 December 1977, pp. 4691 and 4692.

¹⁶ Derby Chamber of Commerce/Derby Tourist Bureau, *Derby and Fitzroy Crossing Information Directory*, 1999, p. 23; *Government Gazette* (WA) 2 March 1979, pp. 574–5; Daphne Choules Edinger, 'A personal perspective on national parks in the Kimberley', a summary of a talk by Noel Nannup in *Boab Bulletin*, October 1994, pp. 4–5.

also improved, allowing people to travel on the main road at all but the worst periods of the wet season. Additional bridges were built between Broome and Fitzroy Crossing in 1986, the same year that Main Roads sealed the last unsealed section of Great Northern Highway, between Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek.¹⁷

In November 1988, the government revested the land containing *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group*, making it the responsibility of the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley, which held it in trust for Community Purposes. The Shire leased the reserve to Darlŋgunaya Aboriginal Corporation and, in 1994, the office and store was used for administrative work and there were plans to create a museum on the site. At present, the buildings are unoccupied and the Corporation intends to sub-lease the reserve to a local Aboriginal family involved in tourism.¹⁸

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Fitzroy Crossing Police Group is located in the locality known as "old" Fitzroy Crossing, approximately two kilometres north-east of the current town centre. The Group is located on the southern side of Russ Road which fronts the remaining lots and buildings of the old settlement, including *Fitzroy Crossing Post Office (fmr)*, now Darlŋgunaya Backpackers, and the site of the former Australian Inland Mission Hospital. Russ Road continues to the east to cross the Fitzroy Crossing via *Low Level Crossing, Fitzroy Crossing*. *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* comprises the westernmost group of extant structures in the old settlement.

The boundaries of *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* are defined by post and wire fencing and a front cyclone mesh fence with steel framing approximately 1.2m high. The Group includes the No. 1 Police Quarters (1951), Office and Store (1953, 1974), Toilet Block (1953), Cell Block (1951, c. 1970), Military Kitchen/Trackers Hut (c. 1940s) and a steel framed and clad garage. The approach to the site includes an avenue of mature Boab trees believed to have been planted by the police officers associated with the Group.

The grounds around the buildings are overgrown with grass and shrubs and the landscape context of the site includes a number of mature indigenous trees. The landscape of the site merges with the natural landscape of the Fitzroy River banks to the south and with the open area of local pindan and scrub to the west. The No. 1 Police Quarters is the dominant building on the site and is located on the western side addressing Russ Road. It is set back approximately 4ms from the front boundary fence. The Office and Store is located parallel to the No. 1 Police Quarters on the eastern side of the site, also addressing Russ Road. There is a gravel driveway between the two buildings leading to a steel framed and clad garage. Immediately behind the Office and Store is a group of three buildings comprising the Toilet Block, the Cell Block and the

¹⁷ Leigh Edmonds, *The Vital Link: A History of Main Roads Western Australia 1926–1996*, UWA Press, Nedlands, 1997, pp. 220–1, 301, 315–6 and 318–20.

¹⁸ *Government Gazette* (WA), 11 November 1988, p. 4435; observations made, and information collected by, Rosemary Rosario and Cathie Clement in November 1994 and May 1999.

Military Kitchen/Trackers Hut. There is a concrete slab partially submerged in the ground to the south of No. 1 Police Quarters. To the west of the quarters, building materials are stored on open ground and, still further west, there is evidence of metal of various shapes and sizes having been discarded. Further investigation would be required to show whether any of this material indicates the former presence of either No. 2 Police Quarters (1939) or other police buildings.

No. 1 Police Quarters is a rectangular timber framed building constructed on 200mm x 200mm concrete stumps which elevate the building approximately 1.00m above the ground. The building is rectangular in plan with a central living area and verandahs which were originally open but have subsequently been enclosed, to the back and front. Entry to the building is via timber steps to the front or back verandahs. Small sections of the original timber balustrade remain extant in both locations. On the western side of the building is a kitchen, pantry, laundry and toilet and on the eastern side are two bedrooms and a bathroom. Physical evidence indicates the building to have been constructed as a mirror image of the original documentation. The reason for this being unknown.

No. 1 Police Quarters is constructed with timber tongued and grooved floorboards and suspended concrete floors to the laundry, bathroom and toilet areas. The external walls are clad with flat asbestos cement sheets with matching cover strips to sheet joints. The top section of the external walls was originally open with fly-wire for ventilation purposes, however this has subsequently been enclosed with flat asbestos sheet linings. The roof is hipped with small gable ends facing east and west. Original timber gable vents have been replaced with flat asbestos sheet. The roof sheeting was originally corrugated asbestos cement sheets with timber storm battens, however this has been replaced recently with corrugated zincalume as the result of a grant from the Lotteries Commission of WA. The roof drainage has similarly been replaced from asbestos gutters and downpipes to zincalume. The building has wide eaves of approximately 1.2m supported on a timber batten on steel eaves brackets fixed to the face of the building. Windows are timber framed and comprise three paned casements in pairs or threes. Originally designed as floor length openings with metal louvres in the lower sections, the windows have generally been altered with fixed panels of asbestos cement replacing the louvred sections. The original windows remain extant however in the southern wall of the central living area where they open into the space of the enclosed verandah. Windows to the kitchen and the enclosed front and back verandahs are not original and comprise an eclectic collection of timber framed hopper and casement windows that may have been relocated from other buildings. At the time of inspection all the windows had been removed from the building for the purpose of conservation and the openings enclosed using fly-wire.

The internal fabric of the No. 1 Police Quarters comprises timber tongued and grooved floor boards and walls and ceilings lined with flat sheet fibrous plaster with timber battens to sheet joins. The wall linings to the bathroom, kitchen, pantry, laundry, toilet and enclosed verandahs are flat sheets of asbestos cement. The original windows and louvres to the central living area remains extant on the southern side but on the

northern side (facing the front of the building) have been removed. The back verandah has been enclosed with windows and the front verandah has been partially enclosed with asbestos sheets and a window. The original front door, entry steps and a section of the original timber balustrade remain extant. The bathroom contains original bath and basin and the kitchen contains timber cupboards. There is a fireplace but no stove. There is a sheet metal chimney on the outside of the building on the western side serving the kitchen.

The Office and Store is a T shaped building comprising a two roomed office built in 1953 and a storeroom addition constructed in 1974. The building is constructed on a concrete floor slab and is timber framed with flat asbestos cement wall cladding. The roof is hipped with small gabled sections at either end of the ridge. Original gable vents have been replaced with flat asbestos cement sheet. The roof extends over a concrete verandah at the front and is supported on four 100mm x 100mm timber verandah posts. The ends of the verandah roof are lined with flat asbestos cement sheet. Windows are timber framed glass louvres with steel mesh fixed externally for security purposes. Internally the building comprises three rooms. Internal walls and ceilings are lined and battened.

The Toilet Block constructed in 1953 comprises a timber framed structure on a concrete slab with vertical and horizontal corrugated iron sheet walls and a corrugated iron roof with timber storm battens. The structure contains a urinal and a toilet.

The Cell Block constructed in 1953 and extended in circa 1970 is a timber framed structure on a concrete slab with vertical corrugated galvanised iron sheet cladding. There is a corrugated galvanised iron roof over the cells and flat metal deck roofing with light panels over the exercise yard areas. The original part of the building comprised a single cell for male prisoners, unroofed exercise yard and a toilet and urinal. The subsequent extension comprised a second cell, for female prisoners, an enclosed exercise yard, toilet and shower. The cells are lined with unpainted tongued and grooved boarding which dates from circa 1970 and is inscribed with numerous names, dates and messages. The exercise yards have sides enclosed with steel mesh.

The Military Kitchen/Trackers Hut built circa 1940 is located behind the Cell Block. This building is unrelated to the other buildings within the Group in terms of style and construction techniques. The Military Kitchen/Trackers Hut is a building which appears to be transportable, constructed of flat sheets of galvanised iron riveted and welded together to form walls and with a simple gabled corrugated iron roof. The building has a number of hinged shutters and two iron framed twelve pane windows on the south side. There is a Metters stove inside the structure built into a fireplace and chimney constructed of steel sheets. The chimney is similar to chimneys often associated with timber framed buildings in rural areas. The building has been erected on a concrete slab which extends beyond the walls of the structure. It is unlined and the walls and roof are only the thickness of the steel sheets with some lightweight steel vertical, horizontal and diagonal framing evident internally. The building is painted white internally and externally. The

building is unusual and unlike other structures generally encountered in the Kimberley or elsewhere.

The documented changes that have occurred over time, as the various buildings of the *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* have been extended or altered, are clearly evident in the fabric of the place. The extensions to the Office and Store constructed in 1974 are as documented, the Toilet Block remains as originally constructed and the extensions to the Cell Block constructed in circa 1970 are clearly evident. Alterations to the No. 1 Police Quarters are clearly identifiable from physical inspection.

The buildings and structures within the *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* are generally in fair to good condition. Office and Store, Toilet Block and Cell Block were painted and restored by the DarlNgunaya community members in the early 1990s, however the building have subsequently become neglected through lack of use over the past couple of years. The Military Kitchen/Trackers Hut is in good condition due to the durability of the structure and materials used in its construction. The No. 1 Police Quarters has undergone a program of conservation as a result of a Lotteries Commission grant and a second program is planned for current funding. Works have been based on a conservation plan for the No. 1 Police Quarters (Fitzroy Crossing Sergeants Quarters) prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals in March 1995. Completion of the conservation work is expected to be carried out by community members.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

13.4 REFERENCES

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

An attempt should be made to identify the precise location of the original Fitzroy Crossing police station before any interpretation material is prepared, either for *Fitzroy Crossing Police Group* or in connection with any local heritage trail.