



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)

- 5.6 Working in the home
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements
- 9.3.2 Bringing up children

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 305 Domestic activities
- 602 Early settlers

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

St Davitt's is a fine example of a Federation Queen Anne style residence, which retains most of its original external features and the intended qualities of the internal spaces. (Criterion 1.1)

St Davitt's provides visual contrast and adds to the visual complexity of Busselton as one of a number of places in the town that were originally located in substantial landscape settings, but which over time, have been eroded by urban development. (Criterion 2.1)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

St Davitt's is a substantial Federation period residence built in 1896 as the family home for a successful and well-known prospector, and typifies the type and standard of accommodation to which such people aspired in this period, and the desire for a coastal retreat from the goldfields. (Criterion 2.1)

St Davitt's was built as a suburban residence in Busselton at a time where there was considerable development and building activity in the town, which was fast developing as both a holiday and a trade centre following the Western Australian gold boom period and the opening of the railway to the town. (Criterion 2.2)

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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

St Davitt's was built for well-known prospector F.W.P. Cammilleri (Mayor of Busselton, 1904-07), following his discovery of the renowned lode at Brown Hill that became known as the Oroya Shoot, and for his wife, Kate Bayliss Cammilleri (nee Layman) a descendant from the earliest European settlers in the Busselton district, and was their family home until their deaths in 1943 and 1946 respectively. The residence continued to be owned and occupied by members of the Cammilleri family until 1959. (Criterion 2.3)

St Davitt's was built by well-known Busselton builders Hough and Donald, who together and individually were responsible for numerous notable projects in the Shire of Busselton and elsewhere, including Caves House (1902, 1938) and extensions to the Busselton Jetty, and is a good example of their residential work. (Criterion 2.3)

St Davitt's was owned and occupied from 1959 to 1986, by members of the medical profession who played a significant part in the lives of the community, namely Dr. A.G. Hemsley (1959-62), Ailsa Carrick (1962-72) and Meave Monks (1962-86). (Criterion 2.3)

St Davitt's is a good example of a Federation Queen Anne style residence designed and built to superior standards, in which local materials were used, in particular stone quarried nearby and local timber, probably brought from Yelverton's Mill at Quindalup. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

St Davitt's has social significance to the community of Busselton as one of the most substantial and best-known residences, built in the period of rapid development in the town during the late 1890s, and for its association with F.W.P. Cammilleri and the Cammilleri family. The inclusion of *St Davitt's* in the Shire's Municipal Heritage Inventory is a further measure of the significance of the place. (Criterion 4.1)

St Davitt's contributes to the community's sense of place as indicated by it being generally known as 'Cammilleris' place' nearly fifty years after the last Cammilleri moved out, reflecting its long association with this family. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

St Davitt's is rare in the town of Busselton as one of a small number of Federation period residences of stone construction built in the 1890s that have survived to the present (2005). (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

St Davitt's is a good example of the Federation Queen Anne style of architecture and of the standard of accommodation to which the more affluent citizens of Busselton, especially those arriving from the goldfields, aspired to in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Criterion 6.1)

Prior to the subdivision of the original land in 1975, the generous setting, tennis courts and grounds of *St Davitt's* were representative of a gracious style of living in Busselton, and the remaining house in its garden setting is a reminder of this former state. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

The place has been reasonably well maintained and reflects its values. Cumulative works have resulted in the loss of external detail, some inappropriate masonry repairs and the removal of fireplace surrounds. Verandah floors have already been replaced once, and are in very poor condition again. Overall, the place is in fair to good condition.

12.4 INTEGRITY

The original intent is readily legible and the place has continued in use as a residence since its completion in 1896. Each of the major stages of development is distinguishable, so that the evolution of the residence is readily apparent. Overall, the place retains a high degree of integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Much of the original fabric remains in place and intact. Some detail has been lost and some rooms have been altered for alternative uses. Most of this change has occurred in the late twentieth century. Fabric losses include decorative treatments to the roof, verandah detailing, the foundation stone, stone-construction fireplaces, as well as the loss of elements such as the tennis courts, windmill, water tank and flagpole. The fabric that remains in the original 1896 section of the residence is substantially authentic. Although there has been some loss of detail, the underlying aesthetic and spatial qualities of the original design intent remain intact. Overall, the place retains a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The wording of this document has been adapted from 'St Davitt's Residence, Busselton, Conservation Plan', prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd for Philip and Susan Smith, owners, and the Heritage Council of Western Australia, in February 2005, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

Key sections used: Documentary Evidence pp. 1-30; Physical Evidence pp. 31-60; Comparative Analysis pp. 65-68.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to 'St Davitt's Residence, Busselton, Conservation Plan' prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd for Philip and Susan Smith, owners and the Heritage Council of Western Australia, in February 2005.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence, refer to 'St Davitt's Residence, Busselton, Conservation Plan' prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd for Philip and Susan Smith, owners and the Heritage Council of Western Australia, in February 2005.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the comparative information, refer to 'St Davitt's Residence, Busselton, Conservation Plan' prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd for Philip and Susan Smith, owners and the Heritage Council of Western Australia, in February 2005.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

'St Davitt's Residence, Busselton, Conservation Plan' prepared by Considine and Griffiths Architects Pty Ltd for Philip and Susan Smith, owners and the Heritage Council of Western Australia, in February 2005.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
