



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)

- 3.8.6 Building and maintaining railways
- 5.2 Organising workers and work places

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 202 Rail & light rail transport

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills is valued by the community of Wongan Hills for the distinctive aesthetic associated with railway architecture that informs of the town's continuing associations with the railway, and as a well-executed simple timber-framed weatherboard-clad structure, displaying a typical Western Australian vernacular design. (Criterion 1.1)

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills demonstrates a landmark quality in the scale and distinctive form of the place. It has a visual impact on vistas north and south through the main street of Wongan Hills and makes significant contribution to, and is an integral element within, the cultural environs of the railway precinct within which it is located. (Criterion 1.3)

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills, as an individual component and as an element within the railway environment, forms a significant streetscape and makes a substantial contribution to the townscape and character of Wongan Hills. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills was constructed in 1914 as a result of the construction of the Northam-Mullewa railway line, which was part of the State Government's proactive approach to open up the State to farming. (Criterion 2.1)

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills illustrates the working conditions of the railwaymen who operated the trains and the facilities that had to be provided for them on the country rail routes in order for the service to function. (Criterion 2.1)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R. and Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and terms from 1788 to the present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills is one of the structures that make up the railway reserve precinct in Wongan Hills, which together represent the ongoing history of the railway in Wongan Hills and are a reminder of the important part the railway has played in the development of the district and the town since 1911. (Criterion 2.2)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills is valued by the local community as a symbol of the ongoing railway presence in the town and district. (Criterion 4.1)

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills contributes to the local community's sense of place as one of the earliest elements of the railway precinct, which began with the opening of the railway in 1911. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills is one of less than ten remaining and intact examples of an early railway barracks in Western Australia. The place represents the presence of the railways, a philosophy of employment and accommodation undertaken by the railways department and a way of life no longer practiced. (Criterion 6.1)

12.3 CONDITION

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills is in fair condition.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills has functioned continuously as an accommodation facility until 2001, originally for railway employees, and more recently for the broader community. The place has retained a high degree of integrity.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The place shows minimal evidence of alterations and displays a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Laura Gray, Conservation Consultant.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills were built in 1914 to a standard plan of construction using railway cabins arranged under a common roof. The place

was built for the accommodation of railway trainmen at the Wongan Hills station, and was extensively enlarged in 1920, with more additions in 1921. Upgraded bathroom facilities were added in 1959, and various other minor changes have been made over the years to facilitate changing living requirements.

The town of Wongan Hills got its name from the nearby hills, which were explored by Surveyor General John Septimus Roe in 1836. The name is adapted from a traditional indigenous name for the area, Wongan Catta, which is believed to mean either 'singing' or 'talking' hills, on account of the echo experienced close to these hills¹. Early European settlement in the area consisted of pastoral leases. In the 1880s, Western Australia was not producing enough wheat for local consumption and had to import flour from the eastern states. To make the State self-sufficient, the Government began to actively encourage agriculture and closer land settlement. Two privately constructed land grant railway lines, namely the Midland Railway and the Great Southern Railway, and the government financed South West Railway were built between 1885 and 1894 to assist in opening up the country for settlement. At the same time, the Government surveyed 'agricultural areas' in at least forty localities throughout the south and central regions of the State. Assistance for settlers was provided under the *Homestead Act 1893*, which granted 160 acres with seven years to make improvements, the *Agricultural Bank Act 1894*, which provided long term loans to pay for the improvements, and the establishment of the Bureau of Agriculture (later Department of Agriculture) to provide information and advice on farming in Western Australia.²

As production on the goldfields began to fall in the early 1900s, it was noted that 'a large number of men, who were attracted to the State by reports of gold, are now turning their attention to the land'.³ A Royal Commission on Immigration and Land Settlement, which reported in 1905, looked at providing 'pioneer railways' to encourage land settlement. Its findings, that fifteen miles from the nearest railway was the limit for profitable wheat farming, provided the basis for the new railway policy that commenced in 1906.⁴

The Eastern Railway had been extended from Northam to Goomalling in 1902, to provide a rail service for settlers in that area. When the line reached Goomalling, settlers took up land to the east and north.⁵ As each section of new line opened, settlers pushed further afield in the belief that the line would eventually be extended to reach them.⁶ In 1908, a ministerial party travelled to the Wongan Hills district to investigate the possible construction of a

¹ Ackland, R.R.B. *Wongan Ballidu Pioneering Days*, 1965, p.5.

² Appleyard, R. T. 'Western Australia: Economic and demographic Growth, 1850-1914', In Stannage, C. T. (ed) *A New History of Western Australia*, UWA Press, Perth, 1981, p. 229; Gunzberg, A. & Austin, J. *Rails Through the Bush*, Light Railway Research Society of Australia, Melbourne, 1997, pp. 206-207; Statutes of Western Australia, *The Homesteads Act, 1893*, No. 18 of 1893 & *The Agricultural Bank Act, 1894*, No. 21 of 1894; *Bureau of Agriculture Journal*, 7 August 1894, p. 132.

³ Glynn, Sean, *Government Policy and Agricultural Development: A study of the role of government in the development of the Western Australian wheat belt, 1900-1930*, UWA Press, 1975, p. 39, quoting the superintendent of the Government Labour Bureau.

⁴ Glynn, Sean, op cit, p. 61.

⁵ Ackland, R. R. B., *Wongan-Ballidu Pioneering Days*, Wongan-Ballidu Shire Council, 1965, pp. 1-5.

⁶ Glynn, Sean, op cit, p. 63.

railway line through the area to Mullewa. The route chosen was east of the hills, and once the site of the terminus was known, a settlement began to develop in the vicinity. This became the town of Wongan Hills.⁷

The contract was let for construction of the Goomalling-Wongan Hills section of the line in July 1910. The contractors were Atkins & Finlayson, and the 34-mile (54.7 km) line was opened on 22 August 1911. The following year, the Public Works Department began construction on the section of line between Wongan Hills and Mullewa. Work began at the Wongan Hills end on 22 May 1912 and at the Mullewa end on 12 June 1912. The line was completed by 20 December 1913, and was handed to the Railways Commission on 1 March 1915. The official opening of the line took place on 5 March 1915.⁸ The line from Northam to Mullewa was of particular importance to the Government because as well as providing transport through the area for farmers it provided government owned rail access between Perth and the port at Geraldton, the alternate rail access being the privately owned Midland Railway.

The opening of the Goomalling-Wongan Hills section of railway line in 1911 immediately reduced grain haulage times for the local farmers. A trip to the railhead at Goomalling with a wagonload of grain had previously taken as long as three days. In 1914, 5,705 tons of wheat was hauled by rail from Wongan Hills. Wongan Hills opened as a booking station on 1 August 1913, and the buildings were added in various stages and improved as required. *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* (referred to as the enginemen's barracks on early plans, and later as trainmen's barracks) was completed in 1914, and the sidings, coal stage and stationmaster's house were added in 1915.⁹

In 1914, *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* comprised two cabins used as bedrooms and a kitchen cabin, each the standard 10ft x 12ft (3.05m x 3.66m) in size. The cabins were situated on a square platform of sleepers and covered with a corrugated iron roof. A separate bathroom was situated on one side of the structure, and there were four rainwater tanks. By 1920, the bathroom had been connected to the water supply from the 25,000-gallon railway water tank on the opposite side of the yard.¹⁰

The construction of *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* was to a standard design. The idea behind the design was developed as early as 1904 and continued to be utilised for the next seventy years.

Barracks... have been constructed of portable cabins placed on a flooring of old sleepers, and the whole establishment covered with a second roof. The circulation of air, combined with the shade, afford the maximum degree of coolness possible which is so necessary for those whose duties necessitate their sleeping during the day. At the same time the whole establishment can be readily and economically removed in the event of alteration in the time-table rendering removal desirable.¹¹

Barracks for trainmen were separate constructions to barracks for single employees. This was because of the shift-work factor in the trainmen's

⁷ Hancey, Fred, *West of Wongan Katta*, Wongan Ballidu Museum, n.d., pp. 14-16.

⁸ Gunzberg, Adrian & Austin, Jeff, op cit, p. 207; WAGR file, Wongan Hills station improvements, SROWA, WAS 1208 CONS 4792, Item R5294.

⁹ WAGR file R5294, op cit; EEL Plan 19668, c.1920, WAGR file, Wongan Hills trainmen's barracks, SROWA, ACC 1781 Item 19597A; WAGR, Alphabetical index to contracts, 1901-1966, SROWA, AN 260 ACC 2581.

¹⁰ EEL Plan 19668, c.1920, op cit; EEL Plan 19038, 13 May 1920, SROWA ACC 1781 Item 19071.

¹¹ WAGR Annual Report, 1904, p. 15.

employment, which necessitated sleeping during the day. Trainmen's barracks provided between-shift accommodation for train operating staff when they were away from their home station. A kitchen was provided for the men to prepare meals with food they brought with them in their 'tucker box', as distinct from a lunch box. At larger barracks, a dining room was provided, as well as a resident caretaker.¹²

In 1920, the station building from Trafalgar, on the Golden Mile Loopline, was re-erected at Wongan Hills.¹³ This provided office accommodation for the stationmaster and the traffic inspector who had previously used cabins for this function. *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* was considerably enlarged in 1920, and the former office cabins were incorporated into the extensions. The Station Master's cabin became the caretaker's room and the smaller inspector's cabin, 8ft x 12ft (2.44m x 3.66m) was used as a storeroom. The extensions involved the addition of eight new standard cabin bedrooms, a dining room, 20ft x 12ft (6.1m x 3.66m), enlargement of the kitchen to 15ft x 16ft (4.57m x 4.88m) and the provision of a new and larger bathroom. The existing bathroom was moved to Mullewa and a new latrine was provided from Buntine.¹⁴

After *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* had been extended, it was planned to move it to the opposite side of the railway line. Why this was considered is not clear. It may have been that the current position was noisy, especially as the stockyard was situated only a short distance away. Complaints were often voiced by railwaymen at various stations about the smell and the noise of the stockyards but for the most part, they simply had to live with the situation. Whatever the reason put forward for moving *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills*, the place remained where it was, as did the stockyards for many years.¹⁵

In 1921, *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* was further extended, acquiring the general shape and layout it currently exhibits. Four cabins with canopy roof were added at the northern end, re-erected from the Buntine barracks. The living section of *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills*, comprising the kitchen, dining room, caretaker's room and storeroom, was moved and re-erected a short distance to the southeast and a covered way was provided to connect the bedroom and living sections of the building. The caretaker's cabin was fitted with shelves for use as a storeroom for food boxes, and a new caretaker's cabin was attached on the west side (not extant), outside the canopy. The caretaker had complained that he could not sleep well in his old cabin as he was constantly being disturbed by men using the kitchen. The separation of the two sections of *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* no doubt provided a measure of quiet for all occupants. The four rainwater tanks were also repositioned at this time, two either side of the covered way. The work was completed on 25 June 1921.¹⁶

The 1920s were a period of considerable agricultural expansion, as Soldier Settlement and Group Settlement schemes contributed to the number of people taking up land. Prices for produce were high in the early 1920s, and government sponsored agricultural research was pushing the boundaries of acceptable farming land, with more 'light' lands being deemed suitable for

12 Various WAGR property files and plans.

13 WAGR file R5294, op cit.

14 EEL Plan 19038, 13 May 1920, op cit.

15 EEL Plan 19038, 13 May 1920, op cit; Various WAGR property files.

16 EEL Plan 19648, SROWA ACC 1781 Item 19071.

wheat cultivation. These factors all contributed to greater traffic on the railway lines servicing country areas during this period.¹⁷

By 1949, another two cabins had been added at the south end of *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills*, making a total of sixteen bedrooms, and the further addition of three cabins and a new kitchen was proposed. These additions were part of the general programme of railway housing that was being undertaken by WAGR after World War Two, to deal with the general shortage of staff accommodation. There is no indication that the extra cabins were added, and certainly the new kitchen was not provided. Other railway housing was provided at Wongan Hills at this time, which may have alleviated the need for cabins for permanent staff.¹⁸

In 1952, improvements to the Wongan Hills siding, including the erection of new stockyards, were undertaken.¹⁹ The steam locomotives on the line were completely replaced with diesel locos by 1955. The diesel locos could haul greater tonnage and travel faster.²⁰

In 1964-65, Wongan Hills station yard was upgraded with new station building, loading ramp, and a larger crane. A new CBH grain storage installation provided for the storage of 400,000 bushels, replacing the existing structures, which held half that amount. The new grain storage and railway facilities were designed to meet the increasing development of the district, and to provide safer and more efficient handling of the grain and superphosphate traffic. The new station building was sited on the town side of the line making it accessible from the main street. The building was opened on 27 November 1965.²¹

Passenger trains between Perth and Mullewa ran a six-day-a-week return service in the 1960s. The goods trains ran two return services, six days a week, and one return service on the seventh day. Grain haulage added at least one extra train a day during the harvest.²² *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* were still well utilised during this period. In 1966, \$28,000 was spent on providing septic sewerage to the departmental houses, including *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills*.²³ The situation remained much the same in the 1970s. While a number of railway branch lines were being closed, or relegated to seasonal operation, the Northam-Mullewa line continued to operate at about the same capacity. This was illustrated by the number of railway houses retained at Wongan Hills following WAGR's 1972 review of employee housing. Of the twenty-seven houses in the town, twenty-four were considered as still being required for permanent staff at this time.

By 1988, rationalisations, and changes in technology and services, had resulted in a decrease in WAGR staff by almost 50%. Fewer employees were needing accommodation at *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills*, and only one permanent staff member, the Operations Officer, was required to be stationed in the town.²⁴ *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* were occupied at times

17 Glynn, Sean, op cit.

18 Alphabetical index to contracts, op cit, Contract Nos. 520 (Feb 1952), 580 (August 1953) & 620 (September 1953); WAGR, *1972 Housing Review: Report of future housing requirements*, Appendix 5.

19 WAGR *Annual Report*, 1952, p. 23.

20 WAGR file, Wongan Hills improvements, op cit.

21 ibid.

22 ibid.

23 WAGR file, Departmental houses Wongan Hills, op cit, 27 September 1966.

24 WAGR *Annual Report*, 1988, p. 22; WAGR property file for DP 302.

by non-railway employees over the ensuing years and, in 2001, the place was declared unfit for human habitation.²⁵

In September 1998 the place was included in the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu's Municipal Inventory of Heritage Places as a Category One.

The barracks cabins currently stand on a base of railway track. There is no indication on the plans of 1920 or later as to whether the cabins were placed on a sleeper floor, and the railway track put in later, or if railway track was used as the base at the time the place was enlarged, but in 1920, it would have been more usual for second-hand sleepers to be used as a subfloor. Eventually, a sleeper floor would need replacing due to rot and termite damage, so it is more than likely the railway track is the result of later maintenance work.

In 2001, the buildings on the Wongan Hills railway reserve comprised *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* (1914; 1920-21), water tower with square tank (c.1911), goods shed (c.1911), stationmaster's house (1915), ramp and crane (1964) and station building (1965). The original station building site, railway houses site, stockyards site, railway turntable site, and displaced persons camp site are also recorded as part of the railway reserve precinct on the Wongan-Ballidu Shire Municipal Heritage Inventory indicating a high level of local interest in the history of the precinct.²⁶

In 2002, the community has expressed support for the Registration of *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* as an important and relatively intact place of historical interest in the town of Wongan Hills.²⁷

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills is no longer required for railway operations, and WAGR are undertaking a heritage assessment of the place as part of the Government Heritage Property Disposal Process.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills is located on the south west side of Fenton Street between the road and the parallel railway line, opposite the commercial centre of the town of Wongan Hills. *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills* comprises a detached kitchen/dining facility, two associated ablution buildings, and sixteen cabins, in two rows, under one roof structure that connects by means of covered walkway to the kitchen/dining facility at the southeast end. At the northwest end, there is a separate weatherboard ablution facility.

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills is an integral element within a significant railway precinct comprising the 1915 station master's house 50 metres north, the railway water tower and tank (c.1911) southwest on the opposite side of the line, the goods shed (c.1915) down the line from the water tower and tank, and the railway station (1965) on the east side of the line.

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills are located close to the main road. The street view is dominated by two sugar gums within the barracks boundary along the roadside, and more sugar gums on the opposite side of the road. The view looking west from the main commercial centre is partially obscured by trees and shrubs around the southeast end of the dining facility. The southwest side of the place faces the railway lines with a broad flat gravelled area in between. There is a low galvanised pipe and chain link fence along

²⁵ Physical evidence.

²⁶ Wongan Hills Railway Precinct, HCWA Place No. 12594.

²⁷ Letters of 15 & 18 July 2002, HCWA file P.12414

most of the main road frontage, with supersix fencing each end that continues for the remainder of the site boundary. The site is mostly flat with a bitumen path between the two rows of cabins. Concrete paths and a raised area of concrete and blue metal edged with face brick, are in place between the cabins and dining facility.

There are three pedestrian entries into the complex, the main one off Fenton Street, between the dining facility and the cabins, one central along the cabins off Fenton Street and the third entry behind the kitchen/dining facility opening onto the railway yard. There is no vehicular access.

On the door of the kitchen/dining facility and every cabin (16) there is a notice posted by the Shire of Wongan Ballidu on 19 October 2001 that declares the place unfit for human habitation.

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills displays no particular style characteristics. It is typically Western Australian railway vernacular designed for the particular function of providing temporary accommodation for railway operating staff.

Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills is a single storey complex of timber framed and weatherboard-clad structures. The corrugated iron roof over the dining facility is low pitched and gabled, forming a rectangular pavilion parallel with the railway line. Similarly, the corrugated iron roof over the 16 cabins is the same form and pitch, extending parallel with Wongan Road and the railway line at the same height as the kitchen/dining facility, forming a visual continuum. The roof over the cabins is supported by a timber frame that comprises equally spaced posts along both outside edges of the rows of cabins and along the south west side of the central corridor space between the cabins, with simple timber angle bracing. The posts are 100mm square milled timber, painted and mostly set into exposed concrete pads. Some are set in steel stirrups (some of which are rusted). The roofs over both the dining facility and the cabins feature a deep skirt, separate around the perimeter, extending from eaves down to below window head height, incorporating the gable infills on the end walls. The skirts are lined with vertical sheets of corrugated iron. The original profile gutters and downpipes do not provide adequate discharge from the roof, and there is no ground level drainage.

The kitchen/dining facility is a rectangular form timber structure clad with painted weatherboards and lattice infill. The place comprises two main rooms (kitchen and dining), an extensive outdoor room enclosed by lattice above a weatherboard dado, and a separate cabin under the main roof. Entry is via double security mesh doors on the northwest front (off the covered path). The doors open into the large lattice enclosed space, which has a concrete floor and suspended polystyrene ceiling panels. Immediately on the right is the cabin. It is entirely lined with timber, weatherboard on the exterior and horizontal tongue and groove boards on the interior walls and ceiling, all painted. There are some shelves and cupboards in place. From the large space, there are doors into the kitchen and dining rooms. The dining room has 135mm tongue and groove timber floors, walls and ceiling. The kitchen has the same tongue and groove timber floors and ceiling, but the walls are clad with masonite and there are vinyl floor coverings over the floorboards. The windows are double hung in various configurations, and there is a fireplace in each room. The dining room has a fireplace and simple painted timber mantle with a brick chimneybreast flush with the wall, and the kitchen, connected by a door and a servery hatch to the dining room, has a large flat arched recess along the southeast wall, and a c.1985 kitchen fitout. On the exterior southeast end wall are two brick chimneys and, in close

proximity, there are two corrugated iron water tanks on timber stands situated outside the fence on the southeast side of the kitchen.

At the rear of the kitchen/dining facility there are two outbuildings consisting of a cabin and a corrugated iron clad shed. The cabin is the 'ladies' bathroom facility. It has a lean-to containing a wood-fired hot water system and wood supply. The cabin is weatherboard with a gable roof. It is lined with painted asbestos on the interior and fitted out with two showers, a toilet and two vanity basins. Opposite is a timber framed corrugated iron clad shed with a skillion roof. It has crude remains of a shower recess and evidence of troughs and a wood fired water heater.

From the entry door of the kitchen/dining facility a covered way, comprising a concrete path with a curved iron roof, connects to a central bitumen path between the sixteen cabins. The cabins are in two ordered rows with each row staggered so that the door openings into the corridor are offset. There is only approximately 200mm space between cabins in each row, although some are spaced more widely apart to allow pedestrian access between them from Fenton Street.

Each of the cabins is a separate self-contained single room unit that is a timber-framed box lined with weatherboards on the exterior. Each cabin is numbered, with cabins 1, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 & 18 on the southwest side running from the kitchen/dining facility to the north. Opposite those, running in the same direction, is cabin 4(1), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Each cabin is mounted on railway track and there is a concrete block step at each door. The interiors are lined with tongue and groove painted boards on the walls (horizontal) and ceiling. The floor is 135mm wide tongue and groove jarrah boards, with c.1930 vinyl coverings to most floors. There is a double hung timber framed sash window central on the exterior wall of each cabin and a timber ledge and braced door with fanlight (most of which have been painted) on the opposite wall in the left corner (from the window). Most cabins still have the bedside lamps in place each side of the window, comprising a square timber base in a diamond shape on the wall, with the original Bakelite switch and lamp socket. Each cabin has a flywire door on the exterior. Various adhoc flywiring is in place on the windows.

A number of the cabins were inaccessible (cabins 2, 7, 8, 10 & 18) but could be viewed through the windows. Most cabins had no fitouts other than the lamp fittings and a timber ledge under the windowsill. Cabins 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 12, 14 & 16 were in good condition with minimal interventions, except a sink installed in 12, a couple of floor boards subsided in 4, 100mm replacement floor boards in 8, some blistered paint on a wall in 3, and three hooks on the wall behind the door in 6. Cabin 4(1) has a burnt interior window frame and ceiling damage in that vicinity, and no door hardware. Cabin 18 showed clear evidence of having been burnt, with a totally blackened interior, shattered window and burnt door and fanlight. The cabins numbered 10 and 12 are one complete unit: 12 is a typical cabin interior per the other cabins, but 10 is wider and although not accessible, was clearly an ablution facility, with a wood fired hot water service in place on the exterior.

The cabins are for the most part in fair condition and evidence minimal intervention to the original fabric. The exterior of the cabins, particularly on the railway side, are in poor condition with weathered timbers, drainage erosion and generally neglected fabric.

Overall, the place is in fair condition. The gutters are rusted and full of debris rendering them relatively ineffective, as is the site drainage. The exterior of

the place is in fair condition. The paint is flaking and weathered on the weatherboards and other timber elements. The corrugated iron skirts have flaking paint. There is evidence of termite activity, and some degree of settlement. Internally, the place is in fair condition.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

There is one railway barracks entered on the State Register of Heritage Places. It is part of the Pinjarra Railway Yards, comprising barracks (1912), goods shed, carriage shed and engine shed. The Pinjarra barracks are of similar design to *Railway Barracks, Wongan Hills*. Wyalkatchem also has an intact trainmen's barracks (c.1911; 1957), with a similar configuration, as part of a railway precinct. The precinct includes goods shed and crane (1923, 1950), timber station building (1937), and stationmaster's house (1916).

Kalannie, in the Dalwallinu Shire, has similar early barracks, as well as a more recent barracks building. In the Mount Marshall Shire, there is a smaller barracks at Beacon in a less significant railway precinct, and the barracks at Bencubbin are of a different design, featuring separate cabins not under a main roof. None of these is listed on the relevant Municipal Heritage Inventories.

Of those listed in the Heritage Council database, Hyden's barracks (1930) comprise only two cabins, and the railway barracks at Cue are of a different design and have been moved to another site. The Albany barracks (dated 1870 but clearly not that early as the line wasn't begun until 1883), are occupied by the Albany Historical Society, and have previously been used as a guesthouse. The situation regarding the barracks at Boyup Brook (1909) and Bridgetown (1940) is not known.

At Mukinbudin, a number of the barrack cabins have been relocated to the local caravan park for use as overnight accommodation, following the example set by Bruce Rock several years ago. The remainder of the cabins at Mukinbudin have been demolished.

13.4 REFERENCES

WAGR plan file 19071, Wongan Hills Trainmen's Barracks.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research may reveal whether the railway sleeper base for the building is original or part of later maintenance works.