REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

HERITAGE COUNCIL
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November, 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11. 1 AESTHETIC VALUE [*]

Hillside is a fine example of the Victorian Filigree style combining classical ornamentation and cast ironwork detailing in the front facade. The extensive landscaped grounds add to the aesthetic value of the place. (Criterion 1.1)

The prominent form and elevated location of *Hillside* allow it to be viewed from many points in Albany. This, together with the distinctive aesthetic qualities, contribute to the outstanding landmark value of the place. (Criterion 1.3)

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Hillside is a product of the success of the pastoral industry in the Albany district. (Criterion 2.2)

Hillside is valued by the community for its past role as a wedding reception and function centre. (Criterion 2.2)

Hillside has a close association with the Hassell family who were well known pastoralists and prominent in the commercial, public and social life of Albany for many years. The Hassells also operated one of the first gold mines in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

Hillside has a close association with Adelaide Architect Thomas English, of the firm English and Soward. Thomas English was Mayor of Adelaide in 1862, and designed many buildings in South Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

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[*] For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present* , Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

Hillside is a prominent landmark in the Albany township and contributes to the community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12.   DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

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12. 2   REPRESENTATIVENESS

Hillside is representative of the Victorian Filigree style of architecture applied to an imposing, pre goldrush residence in a regional centre of the State. (Criterion 6.1)

The employment of Architect Thomas English from Adelaide represents a period in Western Australia's history when the number of architects practising in the State was small and work had to be tendered interstate. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3   CONDITION

The building fell into disrepair during the war years while it was unoccupied and subject to vandalism. Subsequent owners have restored and maintained some of the former grandeur by introducing new fabric and adapting the function to sustain the place. *Hillside* is currently in good condition but requires a comprehensive management plan.

12. 4   INTEGRITY

While *Hillside* is currently located on a relatively large suburban lot, the sub-division and sale of much of the original land associated with the estate obscures the evidence of some of the early rural activities at the place. The fabric of the function centre has introduced an incompatible aesthetic to *Hillside*, but this is substantially separate from the main form of the building and could be removed. The house is currently used as a private residence and therefore has moderate integrity overall.

12. 5   AUTHENTICITY

Hillside has moderate authenticity. Some of the original fabric was lost while the building was unoccupied and subject to vandalism. A fire which partially gutted the rear of the building was responsible for the further erosion of authenticity. In recent years there have been a number of changes to the internal finishes and fittings and a substantial introduction of new material for the function centre but the principal features of high aesthetic value are still evident.

13.   SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Ham-Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Katrina Chisholm, Graduate Architect.

13. 1   DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Hillside is a two-storey residence constructed in 1886, in Victorian Filigree style.[1] The place was built for Albert Young Hassell. It was extensively refurbished and used as a reception centre between 1971 and 1988, but is currently occupied as a private residence.

In 1827, in order to lay claim to the western half of Australia for Britain and prevent French claims on the area, a penal outpost of NSW was established at King George Sound. In 1831, the convicts and troops were evacuated, and land in the area made available to free settlers. The townsite was named Albany in January 1832. Albany developed as a trading and servicing post for whaling vessels, ships travelling from England via the Cape, and other vessels. Development of the hinterland was slow but by 1850, most of the suitable pastoral land had been taken up in large holdings.[2]

One person who had taken up pastoral lands was John Hassell. Hassell was a master mariner, formerly with the Royal Navy. After trading for several years between NSW and Tasmania, he returned to England in 1837, visiting King George Sound for a few days on the way. In England, he married Ellen Boucher and formed a partnership with her brother. The following year, he brought out a ship load of goods to trade at Albany, using the money paid for the goods to buy land, and then trading more goods to get back the money he paid out. In this way he tied up all the cash in the district, putting himself in a strong negotiating position. Hassell then sailed to Sydney where he purchased livestock and equipment for his newly acquired properties. While the depression of the 1840s cost his brother-in-law his share of the partnership, John Hassell continued to expand his holdings. By 1850, he owned or leased some 63,000 acres and held about 25,000 acres freehold.[3]

John Hassell's main properties were 'Kendenup', 'Jerramungup' and 'Warriup'. He worked these pastoral properties with his sons. His second son, Albert Young Hassell, was born in 1841, and educated at Albany until the age of eleven when he was put to work at 'Kendenup' as a jackeroo. In 1860, at the age of nineteen, he took over the management of 'Jerramungup'.[4] John Hassell moved into Albany township in the mid 1860s and his eldest son John Francis Hassell managed 'Kendenup'. In the late 1870s, John Francis Hassell also moved to Albany and Albert took over 'Kendenup'. As well as running

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[1]   Apperly, R., Irving, R. & Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and terms from 1788 to the present* Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1994, pp. 60-63.
[2]   Garden, Donald S. *Albany: A Panorama of the Sound from 1827* Thomas Nelson, Melbourne, 1977, pp. 36-70.
[3]   Garden, D. S. op cit, p. 71.
[4]   Spriggs, A. 'The Hassell Family of Jerramongup,' bound typescript, p. 10.

sheep, Albert bred and trained racehorses. In 1878, he married Ethel Clifton, daughter of William Carmalt Clifton, Albany's P. & O. agent.[5]

The following year, Albert purchased Albany Suburban Lot 120 in partnership with his brother Arthur.[6] In January 1886, the title for the land was transferred solely to Albert.[7] In August that year, Adelaide architect Thomas English, of English and Soward, prepared the plans for *Hillside* at a cost of £43. Thomas English was Mayor of Adelaide in 1862, and designed many buildings in South Australia. *Hillside* was constructed by Albany builder John Green, for £1,720.[8] John Green was an expiree who had arrived in Western Australia in 1855, on the *Adelaide*.[9]

The Star of David design on the front gable and on the original front door of *Hillside* was in deference to the Jewish origins of Ethel Hassell's mother, Sophia Harriet Adcock.[10] When the Hassell family moved into *Hillside* they had five children, and another five, two of whom died young, were born at the place. *Hillside* was situated on four acres of land, and there were various outbuildings. One of these was a small cottage occupied by Ah Kit, a Chinese shepherd originally employed at 'Kendenup'. In his later years, Ah Kit did all the outside jobs at *Hillside*.[11] Four years after occupying the place Albert Hassell purchased adjoining Lot 121 for £500.[12]

In Albany, John Francis, Albert and Arthur Hassell also looked after the family's extensive business and commercial interests. Albert Hassell involved himself in public affairs, and was a member of the Plantagenet and Albany Roads Boards, a Town Councillor, JP, MLC for Albany 1871-1874, MLA for Plantagenet 1890-1904, and a representative for Western Australia at the Federal Convention 1897/8.[13] He was also Vice Consul for Norway and a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the Weld Club and the Albany Club.[14]

Albert Hassell died in 1918, and *Hillside* was owned by Ethel Hassell until her death in 1933. The place then passed to their second son Edmund and in 1934, he had that part of Lot 120 which fronted Parade Street subdivided into ten building lots.[15] Over the next ten years, land was resumed for Cliff Way, linking Robinson and Parade Streets and further dividing Lot 120. *Hillside* had been divided into four flats, probably at some point after Ethel Hassell's death.[16] The place was unoccupied for several years during World War Two and fell into disrepair, a fire gutting part of the rear of the place.[17] The house

5	*Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians,* UWA Press, Perth, 1988.
6	Lands & Survey Description Book, 608A, 12 November 1879, p. 249; DOLA Certificate of Title Vol 7, Fol. 60. (See supporting material in HCWA File 3572)
7	DOLA Certificate of Title Vol. 7 Fol. 60, op cit.
8	Jones, Peter. 'Hillside Lodge, Albany: Conservation Plan, 1994,' Section 2.2.
9	*Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians,* op cit.
10	Jones, P. op cit; *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians,* op cit.
11	Hassell, Cleve W. 'The Hassells of Albany', bound typescript, pp. 49-50 & 75.
12	Deeds of Memorial Book 21, No. 62, 3 October 1890.
13	*Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians,* op cit.
14	Hassell, C. W. op cit, p. 67.
15	DOLA Diagram 9686, 24 October 1934. (See supporting material in HCWA File 3572)
16	'Living on the Job', *Elders Weekly*, 8 July 1982, pp. 52-53. (See supporting material in HCWA File 3572)
17	Jones, P. op cit.

fell into disrepair during these years and subsequent owners were able to finance some reconstruction through sale of part of the property.[18]

In 1948, *Hillside* and the balance of the land, was purchased by Alfred Collins, an electrician.[19] Collins subdivided his holding into three, creating Lots 14 and 16, which he sold, and Lot 15 on which *Hillside* was sited.[20] He used the proceeds from the sale of the land to finance the restoration of the place.[21]

In 1965, *Hillside* was purchased by Rowland and Dorothea Evans.[22] They renovated and extended *Hillside* for use as a reception centre. The place opened for business on 2 January 1971. A nine by fifteen metre 'banquet hall' filled the area originally occupied by the courtyard and surrounding utility rooms at the back of the place.[23] The floor of this hall was parquetry 'inlaid with the Shield of David.' The original living areas of *Hillside* were redecorated, and facilities such as a powder room and bride's room were incorporated. Flood-lit water features were added to the private and public areas of the gardens.[24] In 1977, Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh lunched at *Hillside*.[25] The following year, the place was purchased by Roger and Karen Tysoe. While operating the ground floor as a reception centre, the Tysoes and their two daughters lived upstairs.[26]

In 1988, notorious businessman Francesco La Rosa, one of Western Australia's high fliers during the 1980s, paid over one million dollars for *Hillside*, the house next door and some furniture and fittings, including two restored carriages. However, La Rosa's ownership was shortlived. He was declared bankrupt later that same year, and the Rural and Industries Bank claimed *Hillside* to cover their losses.[27]

Hillside was briefly owned by La Rosa's sister, Lucia Wills, until 1989, when it was purchased by Douglas Johnston.[28] In May 1994, Johnston commissioned Perth architect Peter Jones to prepare a conservation plan for *Hillside* as well as drawings for additions and alterations. These drawings were submitted to the Heritage Council for comment and changes were suggested to the proposed additions in order to retain the integrity and heritage value of the place.[29] No renovation work has been carried out to date.

13. 2   PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

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[18]   Jones, Peter. 'Hillside Lodge, Albany, Conservation Plan' 1994. Section 2.5.
[19]   DOLA Certificate of Title Vol. 1100 Fol. 180. (See supporting material in HCWA File 3572)
[20]   DOLA Diagram 14843 & Certificate of Title Vol. 1128, Fol. 823. (See supporting material in HCWA File 3572)
[21]   Jones, P. op cit.
[22]   DOLA Certificate of Title Vol. 1128 Fol. 823, op cit.
[23]   Plans for additions and alterations, Peter Jones, architect, May 1994, HCWA File 3572.
[24]   'Historic home transformed into lodge for receptions', *Albany Advertiser*, 8 February 1971, p. 9. (See supporting material in HCWA File 3572)
[25]   Australian Council of National Trusts, *Historic Places,* Canberra, Adrian Savvas, 1982, p. 435.
[26]   'Living on the Job', op cit.
[27]   DOLA Certificate of Title Vol. 1128 Fol. 823, op cit; 'Frank Sounds a warning', *Albany Advertiser*, 6 September, 1988, p.3.
[28]   DOLA Certificate of Title Vol. 1808 Fol. 152, HCWA File 3572.
[29]   Letter, 22 September 1994, HCWA file, 3572.

Hillside is a two-storey residence located at the corner of Cliff Way and Robinson Street in Albany. The elevated, residential setting has extensive views over the harbour and town and can be viewed from many aspects. The house is located within an expansive landscaped garden which is partially enclosed by fences and walls of different materials and construction. The front garden contains some mature planting with a well established conifer and gum tree on either side of the curved entrance driveway. Elsewhere, trees and shrubs are less dominant but still restrict views of the house from the immediate vicinity. A stone wall with an arched opening and timber gate divides the front and rear gardens to the east of the house. The garden features also include a fish pond and wishing well. However, somes of these landscape features detract from, rather than enhance, the aesthetic qualities of the place.

The form of the building is comprised of a two-storey, L-shaped plan originating from the earliest period of construction, abutted by single-storey extensions at the rear of the building. The later stone extensions are in stark contrast to the original rendered brick construction with decorative cast iron verandah, which is representative of the Victorian Filigree style.[30]

The front facade is highly decorative with a richly modelled gable end and a verandah with cast iron balcony supports, balustrade and fringe. The sides of the front gable end are emphasised with classical pilasters expressing trabeated construction and frame the central windows of both ground and first floor levels which employ the same classical motifs as the pilasters.[31] The triangular pediment of the gable features an apex finial and a decoratively detailed bargeboard supported on brackets. A louvred roof ventilator surrounded by a semi-circular stucco moulding is contained within the pediment. Both hip and gable forms are employed in the roof construction which is finished with Colorbond sheeting. Three prominent chimneys rise through the roof, close to the junctions with the external walls. Supporting eaves brackets around the roof line produce a further decorative element, particularly across the front facade where the brackets are located at close centres producing an interesting shadow line.

The single-storey extensions to the place have been constructed in hand cut Mount Barker stone laid in regular courses. Semi-elliptical arched openings have been used as a design feature in both the internal and external stone work. The scale and texture of the face stone is in stark contrast to the smooth rendered finish and delicate ironwork of the original structure.

A curved driveway leads to the front verandah and main access to the house. The front door has a glazed Star of David design and glass side and fanlights. A central hall runs through the middle of the house, dividing the front reception rooms and leading directly to the former ballroom at the rear of the building. A stairwell to the upper floor is located with the hall. Although this is not the original staircase, it is likely to be in a similar location. Niches around the perimeter of the ballroom, entered through semi-elliptical stone arches, are currently utilised for storage and laundry facilities although the

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[30]   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. 60-63.

[31]   ibid, pp.274-285, for a glossary of architectural terminology.

bar facilities and raised platform for the band are still evident. A kitchen is located to the east of the ballroom and a sunroom is situated at the rear. The upper floor comprises five bedrooms - two with ensuite bathrooms. The balcony is accessible through french doors from both the hall and a front bedroom.

Whilst there have been substantial changes to internal surface finishes, the impression of generous room volume is still apparent and a distinctive feature of the place portraying some of the grandeur associated with the status of the original owners. Notable internal features include the joinery of door and window architraves and skirtings and the sheoak, blackbutt and jarrah parquetry floor in the ballroom with the inlaid Shield of David.

Numerous alterations to the fabric have occurred at *Hillside* with each change of ownership. The most significant changes occurred in the period after 1965 when the reception centre function was established at the place and the floor area was greatly enlarged. Alterations included the installation of a spiral staircase on the east facade to provide a private entrance to the upper floor. A new side entrance portico at ground floor, which gives access to the garden is located directly behind the spiral stair. Openings to rooms have been enlarged and, in some locations, columns with Corinthian capitals have been inserted. Additional bathroom facilities have been provided at both levels. The location of an earlier servant staircase to the upper floor is evident in the ceiling and first floor framing of the present kitchen and a masonry chimney on the west side of the ballroom is indicative of the previous location of a kitchen. Early photographs also show what appears to be glazing across the central bay of the first floor balcony and a balcony at the rear of the house of which there is no longer any physical evidence.

Hillside is generally in good condition although there is no regular programme of maintenance. The owner is currently refurbishing the front room. Wall paper has been removed from the walls and the ceiling has been partially demolished, revealing the herringbone strutting of the floor framing above.

13. 3   REFERENCES

Peter Jones Architect. 'Hillside Lodge. Albany. Conservation Plan'. (1994)

13. 4   FURTHER RESEARCH