



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.

The wording of this document has been adapted from Vancouver Arts Centre Conservation Plan with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction
- 3.26.2 Providing hospital services
- 6.1 Forming associations, libraries and institutes for self-education
- 8.5.4 Pursuing common leisure interests

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 307 Intellectual activities, arts and crafts
- 404 Community services and utilities
- 408 Institutions

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The limestone and shingle Cottage Hospital Building is an aesthetically exceptional example of the work of architect George Temple Poole. Designed by Poole in 1886, although the first stage was not completed until 1897, the building was designed in the Federation Arts and Crafts style, with the additional distinguishing feature of two short "towers" with steeply pitching roofs influenced by the style of the French chateaux. (Criterion 1.2)

The Nurses' Quarters (fmr) has aesthetic value as a single storey building constructed in the Australian timber cottage style, and the Morgue as a well proportioned timber clad building with a pyramid roof. (Criterion 1.2)

Vancouver Arts Centre Group has landmark quality, with scenic vistas overlooking Princess Royal Harbour. (Criterion 1.3)

The built elements comprising *Vancouver Arts Centre Group* form a significant aesthetic precinct. (Criterion 1.4)

* 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.

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

The buildings on site demonstrate the way hospitals operated from the late nineteenth century to the early 1960s, and the development of medical services in regional areas. (Criterion 2.1)

Vancouver Arts Centre Group is significant for its role as Albany Cottage/Regional Hospital for the period 1897-1962, Albany's only functioning hospital during this period. The main building, the original cottage hospital, was built in 1887 and although no longer operational as such, is one of the oldest remaining hospitals in Western Australia, and the oldest existing hospital building in Albany. The complex was subsequently developed by the addition of several areas until it was abandoned for the new Albany Regional Hospital at Spencer Park in 1962. *Vancouver Arts Centre Group* has been a notable part of the Albany townscape since the 1890s. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

The design of the Cottage hospital reflects nineteenth century medical practices, including isolation to prevent against contagion, although it was built at a time when hospitals were beginning to be designed with open-plan wards to allow for ventilation. (Criterion 2.2)

The Cottage hospital building is a notable example of the work of George Temple Poole. Poole was Western Australia's Government Architect from 1887-1897 and designed hundreds of fine buildings for the state. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Vancouver Arts Centre Group is valued by the community for its former role as the Albany Cottage Hospital, between 1887 and 1962, where many former or current Albany residents worked at, or were patients, and for its current role as a community arts centre, since 1980. (Criterion 4.1)

Vancouver Arts Centre Group's value to the community is demonstrated by the efforts of the community to save the building from demolition and dilapidation and the continued efforts to preserve, restore and maintain the building as a community arts centre, where many residents gather to work, learn or exhibit, and residents and tourists alike go to visit. (Criterion 4.1)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Vancouver Arts Centre Group complex is the oldest, largest and most intact example of a historic hospital complex in the Great Southern Region. (Criterion 5.1)

The limestone blocks used in the construction of the original cottage hospital building are unusual in the construction of buildings in Albany, although they were quarried locally at Big Grove on Princess Royal Harbour. (Criterion 5.1)

Vancouver Arts Centre Group is a rare and relatively intact example of a hospital complex representing medical services to a regional centre during the late nineteenth and early to mid twentieth century. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Vancouver Arts Centre Group is representative of a regional country hospital that operated from the late nineteenth century to the early 1960s. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

The condition of the main building and Nurses' quarters is generally good, both internally and externally, major restoration work having been executed in 1987, and further work since. Some areas of the grounds are not receiving any attention and are unkempt, especially the part adjoining Festing Street.

Hospital additions to the East Wing (including Weaver's room and verandah) are fair, although it has not received the same degree of attention as the main building and nurses quarters.

The internal and external condition of the Potter's Building, Carpenter's shed and Morgue is generally poor with the exception of the west section of the Carpenter's shed roof and the internal condition of the Morgue, which is reasonable.

Works are currently proposed to refurbish the exterior of the Potter's Shed, and to undertake further work to deal with the storm-water on the site and the rising damp on the main limestone building.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The integrity of *Vancouver Arts Centre Group* remains in much of the exterior fabric of the building and the basic layout of the rooms. The integrity of the place is compromised because it no longer operates as a hospital, parts of the original fabric have been lost, including most of the original fixtures and fittings, and the further alterations to the fabric of the place have been made to suit its ongoing use as an Arts Centre.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The site retains its authenticity in the layout and form of the buildings, and the bush area to the west of the site. Much of the authentic exterior fabric of the buildings remains or has been appropriately renovated. The form and fabric of the paving and the landscaping has been altered, as has the primary visitor entrance. Some of the fencing has been altered. The carpark has been added.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Supporting evidence has been taken from 'Vancouver Arts Centre (Albany Cottage Hospital) Conservation Plan', prepared by David Heaver in association with Lynne Farrow for Albany Arts Council in March 2000.

13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Documentary Evidence refer to 'Vancouver Arts Centre (Albany Cottage Hospital) Conservation Plan', prepared by David Heaver in association with Lynne Farrow for Albany Arts Council in March 2000.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the Physical Evidence refer to 'Vancouver Arts Centre (Albany Cottage Hospital) Conservation Plan', prepared by David Heaver in association with Lynne Farrow for Albany Arts Council in March 2000.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a Comparative Analysis refer to 'Vancouver Arts Centre (Albany Cottage Hospital) Conservation Plan', prepared by David Heaver in association with Lynne Farrow for Albany Arts Council in March 2000.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

'Vancouver Arts Centre (Albany Cottage Hospital) Conservation Plan', prepared by David Heaver in association with Lynne Farrow for Albany Arts Council in March 2000.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research is required to determine: the origin of the 1920s style chimneys on the limestone Poole building, the original paving treatment, the exact date of the morgue and of the carpenter's shed, and the origin and development of some of the landscape treatment.

Determining the rarity of the morgue also requires further research.