



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Assessment Documentation

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural heritage significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for individuals or groups within Western Australia.

In determining cultural heritage significance, the Heritage Council has had regard to the factors in the *Heritage Act 2018* and the indicators adopted on 14 June 2019.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction
- 4.1 Planning urban settlements
- 4.1.2 Making suburbs
- 8.10.4 Designing and buildings fine buildings
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes
- 8.13 Living in cities and suburbs
- 8.2 Going to the beach

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 104 Land allocation and subdivision
- 306 Domestic activities
- 605 Famous and infamous people

11(a) Importance in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Western Australia's history

The Beach House, Cottesloe was one of the earliest residences built in Cottesloe at the turn of the century, when the area was making the transition from being predominantly a destination for visitors and holiday-makers to becoming a suburb attracting permanent residents.

11(b) Importance in demonstrating rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Western Australia's heritage

The Beach House, Cottesloe is a grand summer residence set in large grounds, constructed for a wealthy and prominent family, the scale of which was once common in the Cottesloe area, but is becoming increasingly scarce due to the subdivision and redevelopment of land.

11(d) Its importance in demonstrating the characteristics of a broader class of places;

The Beach House, Cottesloe, both in terms of design and scale, is an example of the type of substantial and grand residence that became increasingly prevalent in Cottesloe as it was settled by some of Perth's most prominent citizens and developed a reputation as a prestigious beachside suburb.

11(e) Any strong or special meaning it may have for any group or community because of social, cultural or spiritual associations;

The Beach House, Cottesloe is a prominent and well known residence in the Town of Cottesloe, and contributes to the local and wider community's sense of place as one of the grand turn of the century residences that characterise the area.

11(f)¹ Its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by any group or community;

The Beach House, Cottesloe is an example of a grand two-storey residence in a combination of the Victorian and Federation Bungalow architectural styles that has retained many of its original features.

The Beach House, Cottesloe is a landmark building and is an important element in the Rosendo streetscape which is part of a wider historic precinct that includes similar grand residences, including *Le Fanu*, *Belvedere*, and nearby *Meath (Wearne Hostel)*.

11(g) Any special association it may have with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in Western Australia's history;

The Beach House, Cottesloe was the summer residence of Septimus Burt (1847-1919) who was the first Chief Justice of Western Australia and Attorney-General in the Forrest Ministry of 1890-1901.

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 CONDITION

The Beach House, Cottesloe is in good condition following a large program of conservation works undertaken by the current owner in 2017-2019.

¹ 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.

12.2 INTEGRITY

This section explains the extent to which the original intention is evident, and the compatibility of current use.

The Beach House, Cottesloe has a high degree of integrity. Although there have been alterations to the original house and construction of modern additions across the site, the original intention of the place as a large scale beachside residence is intact and in 2020, it continues to be used as a private residence.

12.3 AUTHENTICITY

Conservation works undertaken in 2017-19 to the exterior of *The Beach House, Cottesloe* include the repair of exterior elements such as verandahs to all elevations except the southern façade. The eastern façade verandah is single storey and was reconstructed following the removal of previous intrusive additions including an enclosed sunroom and stairwell. Other new works include external timber verandah detailing and the uncovering of a rose and pentagon shaped louvred window to the gable ends on the western façade. The roof has been replaced and hoods to the first floor windows repaired. The interior was not inspected following the 2017-19 conservation works. *The Beach House, Cottesloe* retains much of its original form and layout and therefore has a moderate degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by the Department of Planning Lands and Heritage in November 1996, and updated in January 2020, with amendments and/or additions by the Heritage Council and the Department.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Noongar *boodja* (Country) covers the entire south-western portion of Western Australia from Jurien Bay to Esperance. Noongar people lived in family groups and those living in and around the Perth area are collectively known as the Whadjuk. The Whadjuk relied on the ocean, the Swan River and the freshwater lakes that once lay between the coast and the Darling scarp for food and moved seasonally through across the country.^[1] This way of life began to be disrupted by the exploration and colonial settlement of the region after 1829.

The Beach House, Cottesloe is a substantial double storey residence, constructed in 1896, as a summer residence for the Hon. Septimus Burt, K.C and his family. The place was also known as the 'Beach Cottage' and the 'Summer Place' according to members of the Burt family.²

Cottesloe was named by Governor Broome, in 1886. Although the Perth to Fremantle railway was opened in 1881, and provided an opportunity for the more permanent settlement of the area, the beach remained relatively unsettled with only six permanent residents living there in 1893.³ In 1895, the Government granted £110 for improvements to the Perth to Fremantle Road which passed through South Cottesloe, and a further £100 towards its maintenance, which made the beach area more accessible. At this time, sea breezes were considered good for one's personal constitution, and as a result, Cottesloe began to attract more residents and day visitors. It soon became the gathering point for the wealthy of Perth during the summer months, as the beach was sheltered from the south-west winds and was protected by the various reefs and islands off the coast.⁴

Septimus Burt, son of the first Chief Justice of the Colony, Archibald Burt, was a prominent public figure in Western Australia in the late 19th century. A barrister in the law firm of Stone and Burt and the first silk awarded in the Colony, he was also active in public life. Appointed Chairman of the Central Board of Education in 1874, he was a Member of the Legislative Council from 1874 until 1890, when he became the MLA for Ashburton. In 1890, Burt accepted a portfolio in the Forrest Ministry and became Attorney General in the first responsible government in Western Australia, a position he held from 1890 to 1897. He retired from politics in 1900.⁵

Burt's main residence was *Strawberry Hill*, a substantial house in Adelaide Terrace, which had originally been owned by the Stone family but was purchased by Archibald Burt and extended by the prominent architect J. Talbot Hobbs to accommodate Burt's large family of ten children ranging in ages from four to twenty-

1 Kaartdijin Noongar – Noongar Knowledge, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, <https://www.noongarculture.org.au/noongar/> accessed 17 October 2019

2 Personal communications with Ronald Bodycoat Architect with Simon Burt in 1994 and Sir Francis Burt in 1997.

3 Moseley, F. A. quoted in Marchant James, R. *Heritage of Pines: A History of Cottesloe* (Town of Cottesloe, Cottesloe, 1977) p. 15.

4 Marchant James, p. 23.

5 Erickson, R. (ed) *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians* Vol. 1, (UWA Press, Nedlands, 1988)

three years. A number of children of Septimus and Louisa Burt were born in the house including Sir Francis Burt (born 1918) who went on to become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (1977-1988) and Governor of WA (1990-1993).⁶ Burt also owned a riverside holiday home in what is now called Peppermint Grove, but which was then part of Cottesloe, from which the family cruised the Swan River in their own steam boat "Titu", one of only two in the colony.⁷ In 1896, Burt commissioned a second holiday home from architect, R. T. McMasters, to be built in the newly fashionable beach area of Cottesloe.⁸

By the time Burt commissioned *The Beach House* the population of the Cottesloe area was approaching 1500 permanent residents,⁹ with an increasing number of prominent Perth people building substantial summer homes near the ocean. By the turn of the century, residents in South Cottesloe included: the prominent architect, Mr. J. Talbot Hobbs; Mr. J. C. G. Foulkes, MLA (*The Summit*, cnr. Avonmore Terrace and Salvado Street); the General Manager of the Bank of Western Australia, Mr. H. D. Holmes (*Le Fanu*, 2 Salvado Street); the father of Mr. J. Campbell, the mining investor (*Belvedere*, 12 Rosendo Street); and the General Manager of the Perth Gas Company, Mr. F. Crowder, (*Abbeyfeale View*, cnr. Broome and Junction Streets).¹⁰

The contractors for *The Beach House, Cottesloe* were Bunning Brothers and the house was completed by December 1896, although Bunning Brothers incurred a penalty of £35, presumably for finishing late.¹¹ In March 1897, further works to the building were undertaken by the prominent Perth architect J. Talbot Hobbs, who was commissioned to arrange and supervise the installation of plumbing work and a new bathroom. In May 1901, Hobbs was again commissioned by Burt, this time to prepare plans and specifications for the erection of an additional storey to the house, for a cost of £340. In 1904, Hobbs was also responsible for supervising repairs and painting of the house.¹²

Meanwhile, Cottesloe continued to grow in popularity. Beach swimming became a popular recreational activity, along with other sport and leisure activities. In 1908, the Cottesloe Golf Club was established,¹³ followed by the Cottesloe Life Saving and Athletic Club in 1909.¹⁴ It was also during this period that Cottesloe's renowned Norfolk Island pines were first planted in John Street. Despite competition from other beachside areas, Cottesloe beach continued to draw crowds of people on the weekends, and new guest houses and tea-rooms were built to accommodate visitors. The *Cottesloe Beach Hotel* opened in 1905 (P597 RHP), followed by the Ocean Beach Hotel in 1907 (P14894).

6 Pers. Comms. with Sir Francis Burt, Oct 1997, cited in Bodycoat, R. (1997) Tukurua Conservation Plan, p. 6; Eulogy – Sir Francis Burt AC KCMG AO: https://www.supremecourt.wa.gov.au/_files/Eulogy-FrancisBurt.pdf

7 The other was the Governor's. Conversation with Simon Burt, 12 April 1994.

8 The Summer Residence was referred to as the Beach Cottage by members of the family. Source: Conversation with Simon Burt, 12 April 1994.

9 Clarke, M., *A History of Cottesloe* pp.7.

10 Marchant James, pp. 21-22.

11 State Archives of W.A., 2854A/3, Letterbooks of Septimus Burt, letter dated 23 December 1896 to R. F. McMaster.

12 State Archives of W.A., 2708A, Ledgers of J. Talbot Hobbs, Vol. 3, pp. 144, 192, 280.

13 Register of Heritage Places – Heritage Assessment P15822 *Sea View Golf Course*, 2003, pp.5.

14 Marchant James, pp. 76-77.

In 1919, Septimus Burt died and bequeathed *The Beach House* to his wife Louisa.¹⁵ In the 1920's it was leased and operated as a boarding house and by 1923, it was being advertised under the name of Tukurua.¹⁶ However, the meaning or origin of 'Tukurua' is unknown.

In 1929 Louisa Burt died and the place passed to their eldest son Archibald Burt. In 1933, Archibald leased the house to a Mr and Mrs Cass of Katanning, who continued to use the residence as a boarding house, which was advertised as 'the finest and most spacious in Cottesloe, with wonderful balconies overlooking the sea'.¹⁷ The place was listed in the Post Office Directory as 'Tukurua Flats' from 1934 to 1945.¹⁸ The boarding house proved a profitable venture and in 1939, Cass purchased the property. Shortly afterward, during the WWII, the house was used to house refugees from Singapore as part of the war effort. To accommodate the additional people, the house was divided into private apartments with framed walls and bathrooms and kitchens were installed.¹⁹

After the war, the partitioning was not removed, but Mrs Cass did not take in further boarders. Upon her death, *Tukurua*, as it was then known, passed to her daughter, Miss Dorothea Maude Cass, a journalist and radio programmer and the first woman to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts from UWA²⁰. A condition of inheritance was that Miss Cass did not marry and that the house was not altered in any way. This ensured the retention of all the original features of the house, albeit in some disrepair. Miss Cass lived in the front part of the house until 1993 when she moved to a nursing home. Upon her death in 1994, Cass left *The Beach House, Cottesloe* to her friend Ted Smith, who lived in the rear of the house (styled "no. 9" Rosendo Street)²¹ until 2014, when he decided to sell the place. At the time, there was speculation that the sale of *The Beach House, Cottesloe* would fetch up to \$50 million.

In 2015, *The Beach House, Cottesloe* was purchased by mining magnate, businessman and philanthropist Andrew Forrest and his wife for a sum of approximately \$16 million. In 2016, Mr Forrest, inspired by his daughter Grace, announced he would use the 21 room property to temporarily house some of the 12,000 Syrian refugees coming to Australia as part of a special humanitarian intake.²² On arriving in Australia, refugee families placed in *The Beach House*,

15 Pers. Comms. with Ted Smith, Nov 1997, cited in Bodycoat, R. (1997) Tukurua Conservation Plan, p. 6.

16 <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/31191957/2769317>

17 *Southern Districts Advocate* (Katanning, WA) Monday 6 January 1936, p.5

18 The Western Australian Directory (Wise's) 1934-1935 Available at:

<https://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/pdf/battye/pods/1934/0084.pdf>

19 Pers. Comms with Ted Smith, 18 March 1994, 23 March 1994. Cited in Register of Heritage Places Assessment Documentation for *Tukurua* 5/11/1996, p5.

20 Daily Mail UK: Wealthy spinster leaves \$50 million waterfront mansion to her gardener, 2 September 2014 Available at: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2740463/Renter-did-gardening-sprawling-beachfront-Perth-estate-Tukurua-inherited-owner-hes-set-sell-50-MILLION.html> [Accessed on 21/07/2020]

21 Pers. Comms with Ted Smith, 18 March 1994, 23 March 1994. Cited in Register of Heritage Places Assessment Documentation for *Tukurua* 5/11/1996, p5.

22 Andrew Forrest buys historic Cottesloe Mansion 'Tukurua, Cottesloe' as dispute resolved. Available at : <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-12-18/historic-mansion-sale-to-andrew-forrest-proceeds/7042144>

Cottesloe, stayed for about a month before moving on to more permanent housing.²³

A large program of conservation works and the redevelopment of the site was undertaken by the Forrests from 2017- 2019. Works include the repair of verandahs to the north and west elevations and the reconstruction of the eastern verandah following the removal of intrusive additions. New contemporary inter linked residences have been constructed on the site, separated by a swimming pool and surrounded by landscaped courtyards which seek to create one large residential complex.

The Beach House, Cottesloe was classified by the National Trust of Australia (WA) in March 1979 and entered into the Register of the National Estate by the Australian Heritage Commission in September 1982. The place is listed under Schedule 1 of the Town of Cottesloe Town Planning Scheme No. 2, and is afforded protection under the scheme.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The Beach House, Cottesloe is a large double storey residence sited at the eastern end of a gently sloping block on the corner of Rosendo Street and Marine Terrace, Cottesloe. It comprises two adjoining buildings built over two stages. The first stage was constructed in 1896 and consists of a two storey main house above a basement with an attached single storey guest wing to the south. In 1901 a second storey extension was added to the guest wing. The house was originally built as a summer beach residence for Septimus and Louisa Burt and their family.

The site experienced major redevelopment from 2017-19 with conservation works and alterations to the original house and construction of modern additions across the site. These additions form landscaped courtyards around the house to create one large exclusive residential complex. Much of this modern development is to the west and outside of the registered curtilage of the place.

Siting

The site of *The Beach House, Cottesloe* is bound by Rosendo Street to the north, Marine Parade to the west and residential development to the east and south. The residence fronts Rosendo Street but has a primary aspect towards the Indian Ocean from its western side elevation. The site is located in close proximity to the Cottesloe Foreshore and also two extant residences of a similar period: P3306 *Le Fanu* RHP (c.1895) to the south and P3452 *Belvedere* RHP (1897) to the north, which are both on the State Register of Heritage Places. Up until the 2017-19 development, no previous structures had been built on the land between the house and the coast.

The recent 2017-19 development is of contemporary design and consists of contemporary inter linked residences with a basement. There is a connection through to the house at basement level, but above ground they are presented as two independent structures that are joined by landscaping to read as one whole development.

²³ Twigg Forreests mansion is a seaside sanctuary. Available at: <https://thewest.com.au/business/finance/twigg-forreests-mansion-is-a-seaside-sanctuary-ng-ya-121684>

External Form and Style

The Beach House, Cottesloe presents as an impressive landmark residence in a combination of Victorian and Federation Bungalow architectural styles. There is a basement housed in the cavity created by the slope of the block with two floor levels above plus an attic floor within the roof space added during the 2017-19 works. Both the main house and guest wing are of limestone construction, have pitched roofs and are constructed on limestone foundations on the sand base of the original coastal dunes. The guest wing is set back from the western facade of the main house by approximately six metres.

The two structures of the main house and guest wing are visually unified by a double-storey timber verandah which extends across the western facade. Across the northern facade, the verandah extends in a single storey and projects in a shallow porch over the main entrance. There is no verandah to the southern facade. The verandah to the eastern facade was reconstructed following the removal of previous intrusive additions including an enclosed sunroom and stairwell undertaken as part of the 2017-19 works.

Walls are limestone and expressed externally as square-cut blocks that are tuck-pointed. A characteristic feature is the red brick quoining to the corners and around windows and door reveals, which are also tuck-pointed. Windows are timber sash throughout. The original roof covering was short sheet galvanised iron which was replaced in the 2003-09 campaign with coloured red galvanised steel, and finally with pre-painted corrugated powdercoated aluminium as part of the 2017-19 works. The profile of the original roof configuration was unaltered other than the creation of a viewing platform in the centre of the main roof, and the addition of a skylight. A series of photovoltaic solar panels have been installed to the south eastern portion of the roof which are hidden from the street to minimise their impact.

The verandahs are made up of timber posts and decorative struts to support the roof overhang which is covered with pre-painted corrugated galvanized steel sheeting to match the main roof of the house. Slim painted timber baluster posts and handrail provide the infill between the verandah posts. Presumably to provide a degree of sun shading to the western facade, there are also fixed timber louvres between the posts at high level to the ground floor verandah. All joinery is painted in a cream colour.

There are two gables of different sizes to the main roof of the western facade and one to the northern facade. All are characterised with projecting painted barge boards, decorated gable end truss and decorative timber finials. These timber components are reconstructions undertaken during the 2017-2019 works that replicate the originals using archival records and photographs. There is a small louvre vent window to the gable end of the northern facade which is pentagon shaped to align with the roof pitch. As part of the 2017-19 works, a rose window and louvre window have been uncovered to the gables of the western facade.

There are hoods to the first floor windows to the northern and eastern facades that are made from painted timber. The hoods were re-sheeted with cladding to match main roof and repainted to match new colour scheme. Roof and verandah fascia boards and bird battens to the eave soffits are painted timber. Rainwater goods

have all been replaced as part of the 2017-19 works. There are two masonry chimney stacks to the roof of the main house and one to the guest wing.

As part of the landscaping works undertaken in 2017-19, a natural untreated hardwood timber fence marks the perimeter of the site that is aligned to the original boundary treatment of a timber picket fence.

Interior

The interior was not inspected for the purpose of this assessment.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The following 6 registered places comprise similar substantial historic residences located in the beachside suburb of Cottesloe:

- P3306 *Le Fanu* (1895) - large single-storey, Federation Queen Anne style residence of architectural distinction, set within a garden enclosed by a limestone wall.
- P3452 *Belvedere* (1897) - a single-storey residence, constructed of limestone with brick quoins to the openings in the Federation Queen Anne style. The dominant feature of the house is a prominent, eleven metre high three-storey square tower with mullioned windows on all sides.
- P3677 *Kulahea* (1922) - a well designed example of a substantial, rough cast render and tile house in the Inter-War Old English style.
- P3680 *Macaulay House, Cottesloe* (1898) - substantial two storey tuck-pointed brick and iron house built in the Federation Filigree style that has a dominant two-storey wraparound verandah.
- P3632 *Pine Lodge* (1909) - a finely designed and executed substantial single storey residence in the Federation Queen Anne style, set in expansive grounds.
- P7468 *Trafalger House* (1914) - a substantial, single storey, brick and tile bungalow with verandahs that is embellished with elements of the Federation Queen Anne style.

The following 3 registered places comprise substantial institutional residential buildings, constructed in the same period as *The Beach House, Cottesloe* that are also located in the vicinity of the Cottesloe foreshore:

- P00603 *Wearne Hostel* - a group of buildings in a large relatively open landscape comprising the original Ministering Children's League Convalescent Home completed in 1897 in the Federation Queen Anne style, and the Meath wing (1909). The place has landmark quality on Marine Parade in Cottesloe.
- P00596 *Lady Lawley Cottage* (1903) - a single-storey limestone house with a distinctive tower, constructed in the Federation Bungalow style. The place has landmark value and was constructed for use as a convalescent home in close proximity to the ocean.
- P0594 *WA School for Deaf Children* (1900) - a large institutional building in the Federation Queen Anne style, located in an open landscaped setting with landmark value.

The Beach House, Cottesloe is one of a number of grand beachside residences constructed in Cottesloe at the turn of the century that form a wider historic precinct that includes similar substantial residential buildings on large lots, the type of which are becoming increasingly scarce due to the subdivision of land.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
