

Area: Geraldton	Place Number: 73	Category: 1
Assessment Date: 29/10/1996	Last Revision Date: 20/10/2009	
HCWA Number: 1074	Asset ID: MCH126840	

PLACE DETAILS

Name:	Geraldton Lighthouse Tower and Quarters
Other Names:	Bluff Point Lighthouse Keeper's Quarters
Type of Place:	Museum
Address:	353-355 Chapman Road
Suburb:	Bluff Point

LOCATION

Map Reference: 15.19	GPS Northing: 6818091.00	GPS Easting: 267721.000
		000



Photo Description:

30/07/2007

Rod Milne

View of the north east corner of the building.

SITE DETAILS

Lot No.:	Lot 1760	Assess No.:	11868
Reserv No.:	27234	Vol/Fol:	
Dia/Plan:			

USE OF PLACE

Original Use:	Light Tower/Residence		
Current Use:	Historical Society Quarters		
Ownership:	City of Geraldton-Greenough		
Public Access:	Restricted	Occupied:	Occupied

DESCRIPTION

Walls:	Stone	Roof:	Corrugated Iron
Condition:	Good	Integrity:	
Original fabric:			
Modifications:	Verandah additions and infills		

The Geraldton Lighthouse Tower and Quarters comprised a tower and four rooms to which verandah additions and infills have occurred over the years. The light tower provided an alignment with a 'leading' lighthouse tower on the beach which no longer exists. Construction of the cottage is of whitewashed, random, limestone rubble walls under a 'Colorbond' corrugated iron roof which originally was shingled. The latter additions are timber framed and weatherboard clad on the north, with some more recent fibro cladding to the west, and lattice infill on the south. Original windows are timber framed, four paned, double hung with aluminium having been used for some of the additions. The doors are timber four panel internally and ledge and brace boarded doors externally. Outbuildings comprise a toilet thought to have been built in the 1920'3 - 1930's. The steel framed rotunda with decorative aluminium lace, to the north, built in 1988 to "add civic focus to the site", is actually located on an adjacent block as is the metal shed.

For a detailed description of the building refer to the Conservation Plan prepared in 1994 by Considine and Griffiths Pty Ltd, which provides a more complete description of the surviving fabric, authenticity and condition of the building.

HISTORY

Construction Date: 1876 **Source:** P. Griffiths
Architect: Unknown
Builder: Jesse Hammond

By the 1870s Geraldton was an established port serving the needs of a prosperous hinterland and the mining concerns of the Northampton Mineral Field. There was a need to improve the navigation facilities. In September 1874 tenders were called for the:

1. Erection of Lighthouse Tower and Quarters at Point Moore.
2. Erection of Lighthouse Tower and Quarters at Two-mile Well from Champion Bay (Bluff Point).

(Considine & Griffiths Architects, "Bluff Point Lighthouse Keeper's Quarters - Conservation Plan", June 1994, p1) In 1875 a contract was eventually let to Jesse Hammond for the sum of £4,000 for the Bluff Point contract alone. The contract was for the erection of:

1. An octagonal light tower on the beach at the high water mark one mile south of the Chapman River, and
2. A Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage with a square light tower attached 302 plus yards north of the lower tower: Tower lights to be in line. (Ibid., p2)

All buildings were to be built in random limestone which was plentiful on the adjacent coastal ridge, and be painted white. The height of the beach tower was to be 41 feet above the high water mark to the centre of the lantern housing. The cottage tower was 25 feet high from the base to the vane and 56 feet to the centre of the lantern above the high water mark. (Trautman, J., "Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage, Bluff Point", n.d., p1.)

On 1 May, 1876, John Kelly, an Enrolled Pensioner Guard, was appointed as the first lighthouse keeper. (Op Cit., Considine & Griffiths, p2) The original Bluff Point lights were in use for 70 years, but in 1943 automatic electric leading lights were installed and the lighthouse no longer required a resident keeper. The quarters therefore became redundant. (Ibid., p4) Unattended for many years the beach tower was gutted by fire on 24 April, 1952 and later demolished. (Op Cit., Trautman, J., p7) The lead lamp was removed from the quarters, which were left vacant for a number of years. Then the property passed from Harbours and Lights to the Public Works Department, who made use of the building as staff accommodation. (Ibid.)

In 1971 the PWD vacated the cottage and in October of that year the Geraldton Historical Society was permitted to occupy the quarters. (Op Cit., Considine & Griffiths, p5) On 3 March, 1972 the land was vested in the Town of Geraldton as Reserve No. 27234 for Historical Purposes. The Geraldton Historical Society has since leased the building which is used as their headquarters. For some years the building also accommodated a resident caretaker however at present the Historical Society utilise the whole building for their purposes. Repairs and maintenance works were carried out in 1974, while in 1985-6 restoration works were undertaken. The

rotunda was built in 1987-8 and opened on Australia Day 1988 as a Bicentennial Project. As part of the same project on the site of the old light tower a commemorative seat was made using limestone from the original structure. It was built on the base of the old tower. (Ibid., p7)

HISTORIC THEMES

HCWA: 201 River and sea transport
407 Cultural activities

AHC: 3.8.1 Shipping to and from Australian ports
3.8.3 Developing harbour facilities
8.5.1 Preserving traditions and group memories

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Geraldton Lighthouse Tower and Quarters is of very high cultural heritage significance to the Geraldton community and the State for its rarity, aesthetic, historic, scientific and social significance. Its aesthetic significance derives from the design, construction and composition of the building, its setting and landmark qualities. The place has historic importance for its role in the development of the harbour at Champion Bay and is rare as the only known surviving example of a combined light tower and quarters in Western Australia. The site has scientific significance in its capacity to contribute to a wider understanding of the place, whilst significance.

The above Statement of Significance is based on those in the Conservation Plan prepared by Considine and Griffiths Pty Ltd.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Bluff Point Lighthouse Keeper’s Cottage should be maintained in accordance the recommendations of current and future conservation plans for the site.

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

Management Category: 1

Level of Significance: EXCEPTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE: Essential to the heritage of the locality.

Management Recommendation: Conservation of the place is considered essential. Any proposed change should not unduly impact on the significance of the place

and be in accordance with either a Conservation Plan or Heritage Impact Statement.

OTHER LISTINGS

Heritage Council of WA - Register, 03/07/1992
National Trust of WA - Classified, 01/01/1970
Australian Heritage Commission - Register, 01/01/1970

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Feilman & Associates, "Survey of Places of Historic and Landscape Significance in Geraldton", 1977.
GLLSPC - Buildings (Miscellaneous).
Considine & Griffiths Architects, "Bluff Point Lighthouse Keeper's Quarters - Conservation Plan", June 1994.
Trautman, J., "Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage, Bluff Point".

OTHER PHOTOS



Photo Description:

29/10/1996

Suba, Callow & Grundy

View of the Lighthouse Tower and Quarters from Chapman Road.