

## Place No. 48 Roebourne Police Station, Gaol & Court Precinct



Roebourne Gaol, 2009, courtesy the National Trust of Australia (WA)

<b>LOCATION</b>	
Name of Place	Roebourne Police Station, Gaol & Court Precinct (fmr)
Other Name (1)	Roebourne Police Station, Gaol & Court House Precinct
Other Name (2)	Roebourne Police Station and Gaol Precinct
<b>Location/Address</b>	
Street Number	
Street Name	Between Hampton St & Carnarvon Tce, entry via Queen St. Official address 18 Carnarvon Tce.
Suburb/Town	Roebourne
Other Locational descriptor (text)	515023 mE, 7702347 mN (MGA94 Zone 50) Longitude: 117.1443 Latitude: -20.7786

<b>OWNERSHIP &amp; LAND DESCRIPTION</b>				
<i>Owner</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Phone/fax</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Item No.</i>
State of Western Australia				
<b>Land Description</b>				
<i>Reserve No.</i>	<i>Lot/Location No.</i>	<i>Plan/Diagram</i>	<i>Vol/Folio</i>	<i>Item No.</i>
RES 44655	786	P192906	LR3107/ 969	

<b>LISTING AND ASSESSMENT</b>	
HCWA Reference Number	2319
State Register of Heritage Places:(Y/N)	Yes
Classified by the National Trust (Y/N)	Yes
Register of the National Estate (Y/N)	Yes
Local Town Planning Scheme (Y/N)	Yes
<b>Management Category</b>	<b>A</b>

<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	
Construction Date (1)	1886
Construction Date (2)	1900
Site Type (Place Type)	Precinct or Streetscape
<b>Use(s) of Place</b>	

<i>Original</i>	GOVERNMENTAL: Gaol Police Station or Quarters Courthouse
<i>Present</i>	EDUCATIONAL: Museum GOVERNMENTAL: Police Station or Quarters
<i>Other</i>	GOVERNMENTAL: Office or Administration Building
<b>Construction Materials:</b>	
<i>Walls</i>	9. STONE 904 Local Stone 1. ASBESTOS 102 Fibrous Cement, flat
<i>Roof</i>	6. METAL 606 Corrugated Iron
<i>Other</i>	
Condition	Sound
Integrity (how much original fabric intact?):	The place retains a high degree of integrity.
<b>Physical Description</b>	
<p>The precinct is a rare example of the combined functions of Police Station, Courthouse and Gaol. The complex includes: Roebourne Police, Court House and Goal Precinct comprises the Court House (1886), 1887 Cell Block, Kitchen Day Room (1887), 1887 Quarters, Smaller 1896 Cell Block, Larger 1896 Cell Block, Police Station (1896), 1896 Lockup, Warder's Quarters, Gaoler's Quarters (1896), House of Police Officer in Charge (1960s), Police Recreation Block (1980s), 1981 Lockup, Garage and Charge Room (1981), Sobering Up Centre (1960s) and the Dry Stone Retaining Walls (1890s) which separate the differing levels of the Precinct.</p> <p>The precinct comprises three main terraced levels. The majority of the buildings are of fair faced stone, ranging through reds and oranges to blue. The transformation of various amenities in the precinct over time, from timber to stone building, later modified, is an essential physical reminder of the Northwest and the town of Roebourne.</p> <p>Today, as in the past, the complex provides a striking aesthetic presence, especially when arriving in Roebourne from the north, when the precinct is clearly visible against the backdrop of Mount Welcome and the town beyond.</p>	
<b>History</b>	
<p>The precinct is an essential component of the colonial and twentieth century history of the Northwest. In its early phase the precinct acted as the centre for law and custody for the whole of the Northwest of the colony of West Australia. As such it had an impact on many individuals from the Pilbara and beyond. For Aboriginal people of the Northwest it was a key element in the administration of colonial authority and dispossession. It heralded the arrival of British law and authority, as administered through the Government Residents. Gangs of prisoners were used to develop regional infrastructure, particularly roads.</p> <p>Accordingly the Precinct is associated with prominent historical individuals:</p> <p>"Early Government Residents: Robert Sholl and Lt. Col. E. Angelo; the first Chairman of the North Districts Road Board: Frederick Pearse; Architects: R. R. Jewell and G. T. Poole; Builders: S. M. Stansmore and the Bunning Brothers; and, pioneers: John and Emma Withnell and W. S. Hall."<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Over time the regional prison provides evidence for the changing policies in the administration of the law and the treatment of prisoners. The Gaol was modified in 1976, and continued to be used. The gaol became infamous for the death of John Pat in the Juvenile Lockup, in 1983, an event that helped trigger the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.</p>	
<b>Archaeology</b>	
<p>The precinct has physical evidence with the potential to contribute information on the various residents, prisoners, and workers at the site. There are strong traditions of comparative studies of</p>	

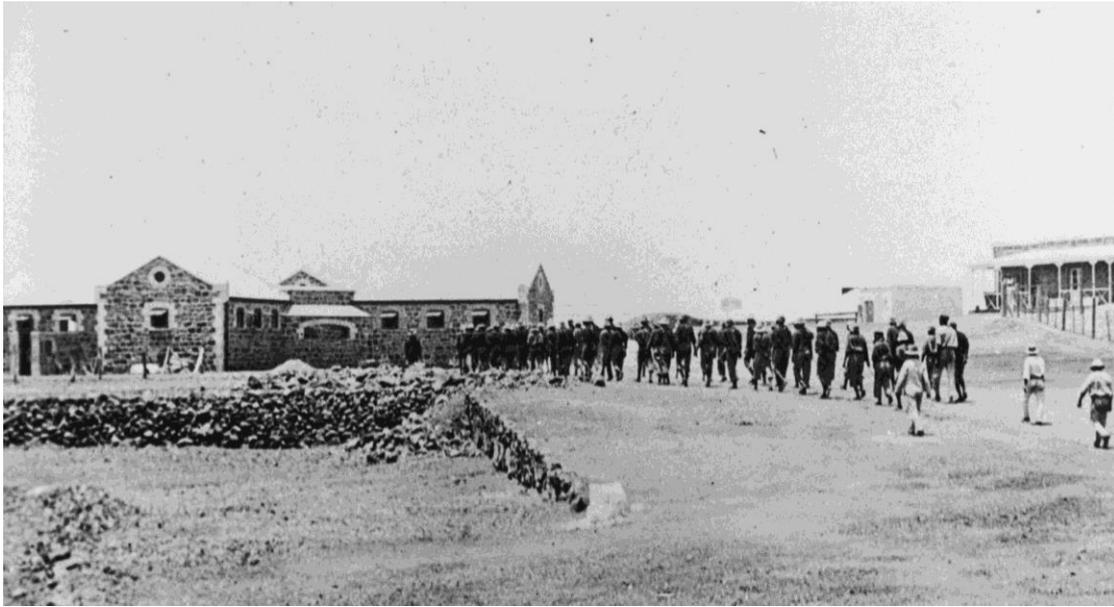
prison and legal institutions in the fields of archaeology, history and architecture to which this precinct could contribute. Additionally the nineteenth century buildings reveal "adaptations to the harsh climate in the use of wide verandas, and cross ventilation in some of the plans, as proof against the heat, and the use of shutters on the windows and storm battens on the roof as proof against cyclones."<sup>2</sup>

<b>SIGNIFICANCE</b>	
<b>Historic theme (s)</b>	1.DEMOGRAPHIC SETTLEMENT & MOBILITY 107 Settlements 4. SOCIAL & CIVIC ACTIVITES 403 Law & Order 407 Cultural Activities
<b>Statement of Significance:</b>	From HCWA
<p>This precinct has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the place is of cultural significance as a modified landform and built environment comprising: buildings, walls plantings and open space reflecting its period of development as a Government Reserve associated with the administration of the law;</li> <li>• the place is closely associated with the construction of public works in the North West Region of Western Australia;</li> <li>• the place is also associated with the diverse activities of the town during the time of the closure of the Gaol: the town Power House; the motor repair shop; the town freezer; the oil company; and, Country Water Supply depots;</li> <li>• the fabric of the place demonstrates a sense of aesthetic harmony achieved through the use of local stone in the walls and corrugated iron roofs;</li> <li>• the buildings have technical interest in the adaptations to the climate of their designs;</li> <li>• the place has aesthetic qualities through the use of stone work and corrugated iron composed into satisfying architectural forms;</li> <li>• the place is a landmark when viewed from the southern approach to the town;</li> <li>• the place is held in high esteem by local groups within the town and by people in the state at large and is used as a learning centre by local groups;</li> <li>• the place is a rare example of a complex embracing the functions of Police Station, Court House, and formerly those of the Gaol, which is divided into discrete zones by the dry stone retaining walls.</li> </ul>	

<b>ASSOCIATIONS</b>	
Architect/Designer (1)	R Jewell
Architect/Designer (2)	George Temple Poole
Other Associated Person(s)	Public Works Department SM Stanhope Minister for Construction Lt Col E Angelo WS Hall Robert Sholl John and Emma Withnell

<b>OTHER</b>	
<b>References</b>	
<p>'Register of Heritage Places – Assessment Documentation Roebourne Police Station, Gaol &amp; Court House Precinct', Permanent Entry on the State Register of Heritage Places, Heritage Council of Western Australia, 20 October 1995.</p> <p>Pidgeon, J, 'Conservation Plan for the Police Courthouse and Gaol Precinct, Roebourne, Western Australia' (Members of the Cultural Environment Committee of The National Trust of Australia for the Building Management Authority, (W. A.), 1994).</p>	

MHI 1996	Site assessed and Place Name Record created
MHI 2012	Entry updated



**Prisoners in chains returning to the Gaol, 1902**  
 Courtesy Shire of Roebourne Local History Office, 2005.323



**Court House Roebourne, 2009, courtesy the National Trust of Australia (WA)**

<sup>1</sup> 'Register of Heritage Places – Assessment Documentation Roebourne Police Station, Gaol & Court House Precinct.

<sup>2</sup> ibid