

Area: Geraldton	Place Number: 55	Category: 1
Assessment Date: 29/10/1996	Last Revision Date: 06/10/2009	
HCWA Number: 13240	Asset ID: MCH126767	

PLACE DETAILS

Name:	Old Geraldton Gaol & Warder's Cottages
Other Names:	90 Chapman Road, cnr Lewis Street
Type of Place:	Gaol/House
Address:	90 Chapman Road, cnr Lewis Street
Suburb:	Geraldton

LOCATION

Map Reference: 15.16	GPS Northing: 6815235.00	GPS Easting: 267124.000
	GPS Northing: 0000	GPS Easting: 000



Photo Description:

13/11/2007

Rod Milne

West elevation of the Old Geraldton Gaol.

SITE DETAILS

Lot No.:	Lot 3185	Assess No.:	11700
Reserv No.:	3524	Vol/Fol:	3039/312
Dia/Plan:			

USE OF PLACE

Original Use:	Gaol		
Current Use:	Museum/Craft Shop		
Ownership:	Western Australian Government		
Public Access:	Restricted	Occupied:	Occupied

DESCRIPTION

Walls:	Stone	Roof:	Corrugated Iron
Condition:	Good	Integrity:	
Original fabric:			
Modifications:	Brick upper floor a later addition (c1909)		

GAOL

The Old Geraldton Gaol sits hard on the southern boundary of the Bill Sewell Complex on the corner of Chapman Road and Lewis Street, though this was not always so as originally convict establishment buildings were scattered around the whole Bill Sewell Complex site in an irregular pattern. Post convict period development extended the buildings south to the site boundary. Originally surrounded by stone walls, but later replaced by corrugated iron fencing and cyclone fencing in several locations, the gaol buildings, excluding the women's gaol were, for most of the time, under the shadows of the walls. Ample physical evidence of the gaol and warder's quarter's remains; the sergeant's quarters and the women's cells were removed in 1988, and there is no evidence of them above ground. Similarly, stables, the original kitchen and the first colonial hospital have been removed in campaigns ranging from 1886 to 1897, and there is no remaining evidence of them above ground. The gaol is built of random rubble and brick, and warder's quarters are built of ashlar sandstone, with areas of the gaol limewashed or rendered, with timber joinery and corrugated iron roofs. Evidence of shingles is discernible. The sheeting.

WARDERS COTTAGES

Adjacent to the Old Geraldton Gaol and fronting Lewis Street, are a pair of single storey semi-detached (or duplex) warder's cottages built in 1896, and constructed of limestone rubble. These add to the significance,

integrity and streetscape of the 'Old' Gaol.

The above extract has been taken from the HCWA "Documentation of Places for Entry onto the Register of Heritage Places" and a full description of the surviving fabric, authenticity and condition of each building can be found in the Conservation Plan for the "Bill Sewell Complex", prepared by Considine and Griffiths Pty Ltd.

See also Bill Sewell Complex.

HISTORY

Construction Date:	1859	Source:	Register Documentation
Architect:	Unknown		
Builder:	J. Wilson & W. Stokes		

The Bill Sewell Complex has historically hosted the major functions as summarised below:

1850 - 1864	Convict Depot
1864 - 1868	Colonial Hospital and Convict Depot
1868 - 1886	Hospital and Gaol
1886 - 1898	Hospital and Gaol, with a major hospital construction campaign
1898 - 1924	Isolation Hospital, Old Men's Home and Gaol
1924 - 1966	Geraldton Public Hospital
1967 - 1984	Geraldton Regional Prison
1984 - 1988	Partial occupation for minor uses
1988 - present	The Bill Sewell Community Recreation Complex (Heritage Council of WA, Register Documentation, p5)

In the 1850s sub-lot 10 was set aside for use as a convict hiring depot and in 1858 a contract for the construction of police barracks, lockup and stables was let to John Wilson and William Stokes for £325. Records indicate that prior to 1862 a number of buildings were located on the depot site, including the surgery and ward, kitchen, first gaol and gaoler's office. (Ibid., p5-6) In 1864 an extension to the convict establishment's surgery was designed by the Superintendent of Towns, Richard R. Jewell. These works transformed the surgery into a small hospital, but were demolished in 1897 to make way for other developments. In 1865 the Geraldton Convict Depot was proclaimed a Public Prison of the Colony. (Ibid., p6)

In 1886 the first purpose built hospital was commenced, with new additions to the Geraldton Hospital officially opened in June, 1887. In 1897 substantial works commenced and the new Victoria Hospital buildings, designed by George T. Poole, were opened in 1898. (Ibid.) Meanwhile the gaol continued to expand, though slowly. In 1896 a duplex pair of

houses were built within the gaol complex as accommodation for the gaol warders. By 1903 the gaol had almost completed the development of its cell range and included three separate female cells as well as the introduction of daylight and exercise yards. The female cells were relocated in 1910 to the old gaoler's officer, which were subsequently demolished in 1988, and a charge room and sergeant's room replaced them on the south west corner of the site. The last major works effecting the overall development of the old gaol was the construction of the large association cell to the north end in 1913. (Ibid., p7)

From 1967 to 1984 the entire complex was controlled by the Prisons Department as a minimum security prison. A new maximum security block was constructed in 1979 immediately to the north of the old gaol. The Greenough Regional Prison was completed in 1984 and the Prison Department subsequently vacated the site. (Ibid., p7-8) Between 1984 and 1989 the Old Gaol stood empty and due to its poor state was at one stage under threat of demolition. However in 1989 local craftspeople opened a craft centre in the building having fundraised to restore the place.

(Sources: Considine & Griffiths Architects, "The Bill Sewell Complex Conservation Plan", for the Building Management Authority, 1993.)

HISTORIC THEMES

HCWA:	403 Law and order 408 Institutions
AHC:	2.3 Coming to Australia as a punishment 7.6.5 Incarcerating people 8 Developing Australia's cultural life

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Geraldton Gaol and Warder's Cottages have high cultural heritage significance as part of the complex "Bill Sewell Complex", the site and buildings of which were prominent in Western Australia's history. In particular, in relation to the regional development of the Victoria District (early convict hiring depot) and as evidenced by the relatively intact building and for a relatively moderate to high degree of authenticity.

There are sufficiently cohesive elements in the gaol to evoke its former use. The gaol is an important historic and social landmark and possesses strong aesthetic value that contributes to the townscape.

Scientifically the site may reveal information about convict existence in a regional depot in a regional centre. The place may have social and

historic significance to aboriginal people, given European treatment of aboriginal people in the penal system.

RECOMMENDATION:

Care must be taken to ensure the integrity of the place is maintained in accordance with current and future conservation plans. The Geraldton Town Planning Scheme also needs to ensure that the building and the environs of the site are protected so that future subdivision and development will never encroach on the open and park like nature of 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, 30/08/1994
National Trust of WA - Classified, 06/10/1993

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Considine & Griffiths Architects, "The Bill Sewell Complex Conservation Plan", for the Building Management Authority, 1993.
Feilman & Associates, "Survey of Places of Historic and Landscape Significance in Geraldton", 1977.
GLLSPC - Geraldton (General).

OTHER PHOTOS



Photo Description:

6/08/2008

T. Henkel

Warder's Quarters.



Photo Description:

29/10/1996

Suba, Callow & Grundy

Old Geraldton Gaol on corner of Chapman Road and Lewis Street.



Photo Description:

16/10/2001

Suba, Callow & Grundy

Stone Warder's Quarters addressing Lewis Street.



Photo Description:

6/08/2008

T. Henkel

Modifications include tiled roof and metal verandah poles.