

Irwin Shire Council

Municipal Inventory Place Record

Place Details **Place Number:** 012 **Category:** 1A **HCWA No:** 1210
TPS No: 59 **Assessment Date:** 16/10/1996 **Last Revision Date:** 09/02/2004

Name: Dongara Flour Mill
Former Name: Royal Steam Roller Flour Mill
Type of Place: Mill
Address: Waldeck Street, cnr. Brand Highway
Map Reference: HUNT 1:2000 BE42/35.03
Locality Name: Dongara **Area of Site:**
GPS Northing: 6762830 **GPS Easting:** 288923

Photograph

Date of Photograph: 12/07/2004

Source: G.W.Grundy



West façade from Waldeck Street

Ownership

Owner: National Trust of Australia (WA) **Owner Phone/Fax:** 08 9324 1571
Address: 4 Havelock St, West Perth

Site Details

Lot/Locn: Lot11/58 Pt Loc 5 **Diagram/Plan:** **Vol/Folio:** 1525/36
Reserve: **Purpose:**
Assess No: **Vesting:**
Occupied: No **Occupier:**
PubAccess: Restricted **Lease:**

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Uses of the Place

Original Use: Flour Mill

Current Use: Not in Use

Description

Walls: Limestone

Roof: Corrugated Iron

Condition: Fair

Integrity: Medium

Orig'l Fabric:

Modifications

1997

This imposing four storey rectangular building is constructed from locally quarried limestone with red brick quoining to window openings and corners. The simple corrugated iron gable roof has a small separate gable to the west side. There are finials to the gable apices and a flagpole to the apex of the small gable. The original surrounding and attached timber frame and corrugated iron clad structures have been demolished as has the brick chimney. Remains of concrete footings which supported the engines which provided power to the mill are evident to the north side of the building.

2004

The building is in a stable condition, windows and doors have been reinstated.

History

Const'n Date: 1894

Source: Conservation Plan

Architect: Henry Simon

Builder: Unknown

The Dongara Flour Mill was built in 1894 by local merchant and grazier Francis Pearse to plans supplied by Henry Simon of Manchester, England. Machinery installed at the time was a 16HP engine manufactured by Ransome, Sims and Jefferies Ltd of Ipswich, England which was the most modern technology in WA at that time. The mill was capable of producing 6 tons of flour per working day, about 7 to 8 sacks per hour. The first manager was Mr. Hare, from England, the miller was Alexander Forrest. The mill was directly connected to the Midland Railway Company line by its own siding, with much of the product being shipped to Perth and Geraldton using the line while some flour was shipped from Port Denison via the Adelaide Steam Ship Company. By 1901, the manager, Thomas Skeggs complained that there was only enough grain to keep the mill operational for six months of the year. In 1923, the mill was sold to the Victoria District Flour Milling Co. for £1325 and renamed the Dongara Mill. In 1935, economic circumstances forced the closure of the mill. During World War II, the mill was used as an army camp, much of the timber was also removed to be used for gun emplacements in the coastal dunes. With a shortage of materials, much of the internal timbers of the mill were removed following World War II.

In 1949, the mill was sold to local interests, and it was again sold in 1958 and 1960. Owners V. & W. Herriman planted the olive trees on the block in about 1970. In 1975, Sir David Brand requested that the owners consider making the building available to the National Trust of WA for preservation. The building was entered into the permanent list of the Register of the National Estate in 1978 and was classified by the National Trust of WA in 1983. In 1988-89, major reconstruction of the stone fabric and reroofing was undertaken as part of Bicentennial project, with major contributions from the private sector. In 1995, the National Trust of WA commissioned a conservation plan.

(Source: Pallassis Architects, "Dongara Old Mill Conservation Plan", 1996)

2004

The owners have had the property on the market for about 2 years.

Chronology Entries

1894 Francis Pearse built a four storey flour mill in Dongara. It was steam powered and equipped with the latest milling equipment.

Bunney, R & Ellery, K, Dongara 1839 - 198-, Geraldton Newspapers Print, 1975
Irwin District Historical Society Records

1935 The Royal Steam Roller Flour Mill closed. Much of the equipment was taken to Geraldton for use in the Victoria District Flour Mill.

Bunney, R & Ellery, K, Dongara 1839 - 198-, Geraldton Newspapers Print, 1975

Historic Theme(s)

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HCWA	AHC
310 Manufacturing and processing	3.13 Developing an Australian manufacturing capacity
112 Technology and technological change	3.15 Developing economic links outside Australia
504 Depression and boom	3.12.4 Preserving food and beverages

Statement of Significance

The Dongara Flour Mill has high historic significance given its important association with the economic and agricultural development of the Irwin District as well as its association with prominent merchant and grazier Francis Pearse. The place has high aesthetic significance, given its use of local materials, dominant scale, and siting at the main northerly entrance to the town. The Dongara Mill and surroundings have scientific significance for their potential to contribute to the better understanding of the history of the state and the district through the analysis of archaeological material from the place. The place has high social significance given the local community's commitment to its conservation.

Management Category: 1A

PERMANENT ENTRY ON THE STATE REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES.
Highest level of protection appropriate. Provide maximum incentives under the Town Planning Scheme with encouragement to the owner to conserve the significance of the place. Prepare a floor plan and photographically record the place prior to any redevelopment.

Other Listings

NTWA - Classified; 05/09/1983
AHC - Register of the National Estate 9641 (5/03/139/0002 03-60); 02/03/1978
HCWA - State Heritage Register (Permanent); 17/07/1992
Shire of Irwin - Town Planning Scheme (59); 10/03/1998

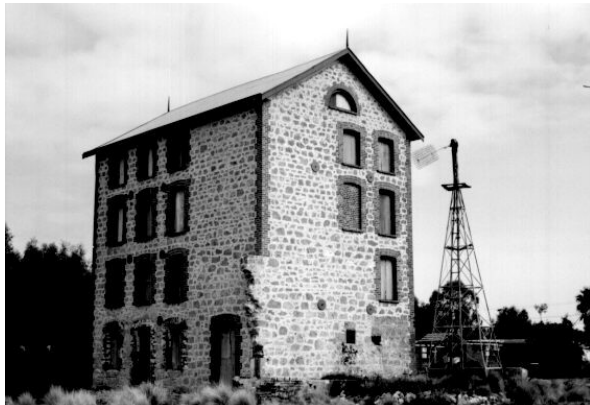
Supporting Information

IDHS Records
HCWA Database No. 1210
Australian Heritage Commission 009641
Bain M.A., "Ancient Landmarks", UWA Press, 1975.
Pallassis Architects, "Dongara Old Mill Conservation Plan", 1996.

Additional Photographs

Date of Photograph 16/10/1996 IR012-1

Source: *Suba & Grundy*



View of the north and east facades
