

# NORTH PERTH FIRE STATION (FMR), NORTH PERTH



PLACE INFORMATION	
Place name	North Perth Fire Station (fmr)
Other names	
Place type	Individual building or group

HERITAGE LISTING	
inHerit ID:	8749
State Heritage Register:	30 July 2004
Other Listing:	Municipal Inventory Adopted 13 Nov 1995 Fire & Rescue Service Heritage Inventory Adopted 30 Aug 1997

SITE LOCATION	
Street address	21 View St
Locality	North Perth
Survey	LOT: 24 D/P: 2422
Vol/folio	1573/950
Reserve	—

SIGNIFICANCE	
Level of significance	<p><b>Exceptional</b></p> <p>Essential to the heritage of the area. Rare or outstanding example. Consider for nomination for State Register of Heritage Places if not already included.</p>
Management category	<p><b>Category 1</b></p> <p>The place should be retained and conserved. Any alterations or extensions should reinforce the significance of the place and be in accordance with a Conservation Plan if one is in place.</p>
Statement of significance	<p>The place is rare as one of a small number of extant two storey fire stations built in Western Australia, and is one of only five extant fire stations built in the metropolitan area in the Inter-War period.</p> <p>The place is part of a civic precinct that includes the two buildings that make up the North Perth Town Hall to the north-west, the former North Perth Post Office to the immediate west, and St. Hilda's Anglican Church, a precinct that has high aesthetic value as a late nineteenth and early twentieth century streetscape.</p> <p>The place is a fine, restrained example a two storey brick and tile fire station, in the Inter-War Free Classical style.</p> <p>The place was designed by Architect K. C. Duncan, designer of the majority of fire stations built in Western Australia, 1930-60, who was an office bearer and life member of the Volunteer Fire Brigades Association and one of the first fire stations designed by him.</p> <p>The place is a late example of the once common practice of siting a fire station building in a precinct of public buildings.</p>

PLACE USE	
<b>Original use</b>	Governmental: Fire Station
<b>Current use</b>	Residential: Two Storey Residence
<b>Other use</b>	Commercial: Shop/Retail

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	
<b>Construction date</b>	1926
<b>Walls</b>	Limestone Rendered Brick
<b>Roof</b>	Terracotta tile
<b>Architectural Style</b>	Inter-War Free Classical
<b>Physical description</b>	<p>North Perth Fire Station (fmr) is located in a section of View Street that contains a number of civic buildings including the North Perth Town Hall to the north-west, the former North Perth Post Office to the immediate west, and St. Hilda’s Anglican Church and the North Perth School, together with plantings of Hills Figs (<i>Ficus hillii</i>) as street trees. The remainder of the street is predominantly residential, with a collection of Federation and Inter War period houses, together with a lesser number of more recent developments, and the street retains a small town appearance.</p> <p>North Perth Fire Station (fmr) is the only building on the site and is located on the front boundary. There is evidence of outbuildings in the form of floor slabs in the rear yard near the eastern boundary, together with fragments of bitumen paving along the western boundary. The documented outbuildings included a set of toilets.</p> <p>North Perth Fire Station (fmr) a two storey brick fire station, in the Inter-War Free Classical style, with a Marseilles pattern tiled roof. The street frontage is the only part of the building to which the styling is applied.</p>

## CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

### Physical description

The building is asymmetrically planned, so that unlike most classically styled buildings, the external expression comprises two unequal bays that are made visually cohesive by the application of rusticated stucco pilasters that run through the two storeys of the building, which contrasts with a stretcher bond red brick background. A deep stucco entablature and balustrade separate ground and first floors and the words “FIRE STATION” are just visible on the entablature. The first floor is completed with a stepped parapet with consoles visually buttressing the steps. The words “NORTH PERTH A. D. 1926” appear at high level on the parapet in bas relief lettering and the whole parapet assembly conceals the tiled roof from view from the street. The western side of the station, the widest bay in plan, contains the appliance room and the eastern side the former offices. The appliance bay has a folding metal door in place of the original doors, while the office bay retains a framed and boarded part glazed door, flanked by eight pane sidelights and a six pane hopper light. At first floor level, the eastern side of the building features a large fixed light window with a large centre pane surrounded by a series of small panes, while on the western side, the formerly open verandah has been filled in with sliding aluminium sashes.

The eastern elevation comprises a simple stretcher bond brick wall with a stucco string course, a number of six pane double hung sash windows, breeze block screens to the ground floor windows, and an entrance door to the accommodation part of the station, in a style to match the front door. At first floor level the verandah enclosure has been replaced with mini orb cladding and a fixed light window introduced.

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	
Physical description	The southern or rear elevation has panoramic views of Perth from the first floor level. Treatments are simple and utilitarian. The eastern side of the building remains largely intact, with its brick walls and original timber windows and one original timber door at ground floor. Two aluminium windows have been installed for the current laundry and bathroom and a door to the former verandah at first floor level has been relocated from the main building line to the verandah. A timber staircase has been removed and replaced with a steel staircase of a plain design. On the western side of the building, a steel construction frame and brick boundary wall have been erected to form additional undercover parking at ground floor level and an extensive deck at first floor level.
	The western elevation is set on the site boundary and has a small number of openings that were part of the verandah in the original design and have now been filled in with aluminium framed sliding sashes. Off the terrace, a recycled timber door and casement window assembly has been inserted. The roof is framed in timber and covered in its original Marseilles pattern terracotta tiles, with rectangular section gutters, a replacement for an earlier gutter type.
Condition	Good
Integrity	Moderate
Authenticity	Moderate

HISTORICAL INFORMATION
<p>The North Perth Fire Station on View Street was opened in 1926, and was the second fire station constructed in the suburb. The first station (built between 1905 and 1909) was situated on the corner of Fitzgerald and Forrest streets and was originally the home of the North Perth Municipal Brigade. The service was taken over by the Fire Brigades Board in 1910. In 1912, a block of land adjoining the fire station was purchased with the intention of enlarging the building when funds were available. In 1925, it was reported that a 'more centrally situated site has been secured, this being necessitated by the rapid building growth of that area. Building operations will start in the immediate future'.</p> <p>On 11 October 1926, the North Perth Fire Station was completed by builder C. Grayson and the fire brigade transferred to the new station, which was officially opened on 16 November that year. The Fitzgerald Street fire station reverted to the Perth City Council and was later demolished and the site redeveloped. The architect for the new building, K.C. Duncan, was responsible for almost all the fire stations constructed throughout the State in the 1930s and 1940s, resulting in a certain amount of standardization. However, the subject place was one of his earlier ones and one of the few built between 1920 and 1929 which were two storey. Duncan was himself a volunteer fire-fighter who held various offices in the volunteer Fire Brigade Association, including a member of the executive committee from 1924 to 1942 and secretary from 1937 to 1941. He became a Life Member in 1937.</p> <p>According to Wise's Post Office Directories the person in charge in 1927 was John Steenson. In 1937 it was Peter Cox and in 1949, the last year of the Directories Archibald Blunt was in charge. The North Perth Fire Station closed on 28 November 1956, and the staff were transferred to Osborne Park. The closure was part of the Board's development plan for the Metropolitan Area. The station building was used as an initial training school and accommodated the Board's electrical workshops from 1957-62. Until then training had consisted mainly of on-the-job instruction but, after the introduction of half-day training sessions, 31 trainees were accepted from the North Perth facility.</p> <p>The North Perth Fire Station and site were sold in April 1963 when a new complex with training facilities was constructed at Belmont. The purchaser in 1963 was Macedonian migrant Jury Tolcon, a baker of Alma Road. The balcony was later enclosed and the second floor leased for residential accommodation.</p>

**HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

The ground floor was occupied by a manufacturer's agent and the 'Fire Station' sign on a panel at the front was removed. On Tolcon's death in 1980 the building passed to his son Nick and it was sold again in September 1980.

Between 1980 and 1996 when a heritage inventory of WA fire stations was conducted, it was used as a retail store. During this time some modifications had been made to accommodate different uses. It was sold again in about 2001/2002 and further changes were made between 2002 and 2003 which included a walk-in robe, bathroom and meals area and, by 2003 it was in use as a residence. At this time it was owned by Andrew Whiteside of Sydney who used it to house his collection of cars before renting it out as a private residence. It was put up for auction again on 1st November 2008.

This fire station is one of only five remaining constructed in the metropolitan area prior to 1930. The others are Perth (1901), Fremantle (1910), Claremont (1914) and Leederville (West) (1926). As of 2024 the subject building houses the WA office of the United Professional Fire-fighters Union (UPFU).

Aerial photographs from the mid 20th century onwards show the additions made to the Fire Station building, beginning in the late 1980s with a small extension. In 2011 the back area was tarmacked, but this was then completely covered by the large extension that began in 2013 and finished in 2014. This extension filled the majority of the block behind the original building. There have been no visible changes to the subject place since then.

**HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

<b>Historic theme</b>	Infrastructure: Development of Settlements and Services Peopling WA: Demographic Development Economy: Commerce	
<b>Associations</b>	C. Grayson John Steenson Peter Cox Archibald Blunt Jury Tolcon Andrew Whiteside United Professional Firefighters Union	Builder Person in charge Person in charge Person in charge Owner Owner Occupant
<b>Sources</b>	Municipal Heritage Inventory 2006 Landgate Aerial photographs 1953-2024. P8749 North Perth Fire Station (fmr), Assessment Documentation 2004, DPLH.	

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



ARCHIVAL IMAGES



North Perth Fire Station 19\*26. Courtesy SLWA image b2130876\_2.



North Perth Fire Station, 1950s. City of Vincent Local History Collection image PH00588.