

BROOKMAN AND MOIR STREETS PRECINCT, PERTH



PLACE INFORMATION	
Place name	Brookman & Moir Streets Precinct
Other names	Brookman Moir Streets Group
Place type	Precinct or Streetscape

HERITAGE LISTING	
inHerit ID:	3992
State Heritage Register:	8 May 2007
Other Listing:	Register of the National Estate Nominated 23 Apr 1991 Register of the National Estate Indicative Place Municipal Inventory Adopted 13 Nov 1995

SITE LOCATION	
Street address	Brookman and Moir Sts
Locality	Perth
Survey	
Vol/folio	
Reserve	

SIGNIFICANCE	
Level of significance	Exceptional Essential to the heritage of the area. Rare or outstanding example. Consider for nomination for State Register of Heritage Places if not already included.
Management category	Category 1 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.
Statement of significance	<p>The historic precinct is an almost-complete example of two late 19th century streets of modestly-scaled residential buildings in the Federation Queen Anne style of architecture, built between 1897-98 in the wake of the rapid population expansion following the Western Australian gold boom.</p> <p>The historic precinct is a substantial section of the residential estate developed by the Colonial Finance Corporation in 1897-1898. This estate, comprising the historic precinct in Brookman and Moir Streets, and Baker's Terrace in Lake Street, was the largest estate of its type developed in Western Australia.</p> <p>The one-way thoroughfares and modest lot sizes of the semi-detached dwellings contained within the precinct give it a particular character and sense of enclosure.</p> <p>The homogeneity of the modestly-scaled, semi-detached residential buildings creates a visually striking precinct in an inner city residential area.</p> <p>The buildings contained within the precinct are representative of what was considered to be 'working class' rental accommodation from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.</p> <p>The historic precinct was developed by the Colonial Finance Corporation who named Brookman and Moir Streets after two of the principal investors in the company who were prominent Western Australians.</p>

SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of significance	The historic precinct is rare in Western Australia as two streets in which a single basic design was utilised for all the residences in a large estate, with the exception of Numbers 2 and 4 Brookman Street, which are grander variations of the same pattern used throughout the precinct, that is relatively intact.
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PLACE USE

Original use	Residential: Single Storey Residence Residential: Conjoined residence
Current use	Residential: Single Storey Residence Residential: Conjoined residence
Other use	

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Construction date	1897-98
Walls	Brick
Roof	Limestone
Architectural Style	Corrugated metal sheeting
Physical description	Federation Queen Anne

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Physical description	Brookman and Moir Streets Precinct, two streets in Perth comprising 58 semi-detached residences and one detached residence in two types of the Federation Queen Anne style, constructed of limestone and brick with corrugated-iron roofs, and a shop at the corner of Moir Street and Forbes Road.
	Typically the residences consist of pairs of attached one storey houses originally built with tuck-pointed red brick and stucco banding, pairs of windows on the gable fronted projection, chimneys and decorative cornices under the eaves line, the houses have undergone degrees of modification from minor to major.
	With the exception of 2 & 4 Brookman St, which have bay windows, the houses were originally identical, with identical street setbacks. The one storey duplex pair at No. 2 & 4 Brookman Str are mirror images of each other. Each double fronted duplex has large faceted bay windows under half timbered and stuccoed gables with finials. The verandahs feature decorative timber valances. The two houses have stucco decorated brick chimneys. The front elevation was originally tuckpointed, with stucco banding. Medium density residential setting comprising small garden or paved front setbacks.
	Some houses have been rendered and/or painted, original windows and openings have been modified, and chimneys and gable treatments removed or modified.
	26 Moir St has a two storey extension to the rear.
Condition	Good
Integrity	High
Authenticity	Moderate

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Following the foundation of Perth on 12 August 1829, the townsite of Perth was laid out between Mount Eliza and Heirisson Island, facing the Swan River on the south, with a chain of swamps and lagoons to the north. In 1834, Perth Suburban Lot 28, part of which is the site of the future Brookman and Moir Streets Precinct, was assigned to Thomas W. Mews. He had arrived at the colony with his family per Rockingham in May 1830 and had acquired a substantial amount of land at York (3,000 acres), the Lakes, Perth (3,084 acres), as well as suburban lots at Perth and Guildford, by 1834.

From the 1840s, the area of land to the north of the original townsite began to be taken up for farmlets and market gardens, when drainage of the wetlands made the fertile swamp land available for agriculture. By the 1870s, the city centre of Perth was consolidated on the grid laid out by Roe's survey. There were about 800 houses accommodating about 4,600 people.

In January 1870, Thomas Mews died. On 8 December 1877, his youngest son, James Robert Mews (contractor of Perth) was registered as sole proprietor of Suburban Lot 28 and Building Lot N25, 32 acres and 31 perches in area. James Mews (b. 1833, d. 1918) a boat owner of Perth in the 1860s, operated as a carter and firewood contractor nearby in Beaufort Street.

On 15 January 1878, the transfer of Suburban Lot 28 and Building Lot N25 to Edward Albert Stone (Esquire) of Perth was registered. Stone (b. 1844, knighted in 1902, d. 1920) was called to the Bar in Western Australia in 1865. He had a very distinguished career culminating in his appointments as Chief Justice (1902-06) and Lieutenant Governor (1909). He proceeded to sub-divide the land, transferring the north-western portion of Suburban Lot 28, six acres and 28 perches in area and the future site of the Brookman and Moir Street Precinct, to William Wellman (yeoman) of Guildford, this being registered on 27 February. He purchased two further portions of Suburban Lot 28, one rood and 38 perches and one rood and 28 perches respectively, in October 1881.

On 13 January 1893, William Wellman died, and his sons, Charles and William, were appointed as Executors of his will on 10 February. While the 1880s, particularly after the construction of Perth Railway Station, saw expansion of the city in general — with rapid expansion of residential accommodation northwards — the Western Australian Gold Boom, from the mid 1890s, heralded the arrival of large urban land companies, notably absent from the State in the previous decades. T

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

There was considerable expansion of residential and commercial building in the areas to the north, east and west of the city. Many of the large Perth Town Lots were subdivided during this period.

In May 1895, the Colonial Finance Corporation, a property investment company incorporated in England, eager to take advantage of the opportunities in Western Australia, acquired parts of Perth Suburban Lot 28, this being vacant ground and seven acres, one rood and one perch in area. It was bounded by Lake Street to the west, Cicely Street (Robinson Avenue) to the north and Water Lane (now Forbes Road) to the south. In late 1895, a Surveyor's field book drawing shows most of the area to the east of Lake Street as vacant land, crossed by a drain.

Subsequently, as part of the development of the residential estate in the late 1890s, Water Lane and the western part of Little Parry Street were renamed after the previous owners, becoming Forbes Road and Wellman Avenue (now Street). Also named were Brookman and Moir Streets, after two of the principal investors in the company who had made fortunes in the gold boom; William Brookman and Herbert Moir of London.

The estate developed as a portion of Suburban Lot 28 by the Colonial Finance Corporation, comprised of 75 rental properties. On 19 January 1897 application was made, and approval granted, to build 60 single-storey, semi-detached villa residences, each with a bathroom and privy, at Brookman Street and Forbes Road, which comprise Brookman and Moir Streets Precinct. On 3 May, a building application was approved for the 15 residences comprising Baker's Terrace, a row of two-storey brick and iron terraced houses in the Federation Filigree style, fronting the east side of Lake Street. The builder was Hill and Moss.

City of Perth building applications show this development to be the largest residential estate developed by any company in Perth in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In Sydney and Melbourne, from the 1840s, extensive terrace development had been commonplace, but in Western Australia similar developments had not been encouraged by the early land legislation. Colonial Finance Corporation's development of a large estate of rental properties although not uncommon in the Eastern Colonies, was innovative in Western Australia, and the only such estate built in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In 1897, building commenced. Each of the pairs of five-roomed villas were a mirror image, with entry from the front verandah to a central passage leading through to the kitchen where the back door opened to the rear verandah. The living room and two bedrooms opened from the passage, while another room opened from the kitchen. There were corner fireplaces in two of the main rooms and the kitchen.

By 1900, the Rate Book recorded that all 58 residences fronting Brookman and Moir Streets were occupied with few, if any, of the occupants’ names indicating European origin. Diverse occupations of the tenants included: a builder, a stonemason, a plasterer, carpenters, a plumber, a painter, a cabinet maker, labourers, an iron monger, a compositor, a cycle maker, an engineer, a cabman, miners, a grocer, a guard, a draftsman, tram and railway employees, an engine driver, a driver, a lamp lighter, a caretaker, a warehouseman, a barman, a Government House orderly, a baker, butchers, a draper, a hairdresser, a photographer, a machinist, travellers, an inspection agent, an inspector, a collector, a secretary, a civil servant, a manager, a clerk and an accountant. This socio-economic pattern of occupation continued through the pre-WWI period, and examination of Rate Books and Electoral Rolls indicates that most tenants named were of British origin.

In 1921, the villas were sold off as individual residences. By mid July, most of the residences had been sold. Party wall easements were reserved and granted where required. Whilst the majority of purchasers took up residence, other buyers purchased one or more as investment properties that were rented to tenants.

From the mid to late 1920s, there was a change in the demographic composition of the areas in proximity to the city, as the ‘middle classes’ began moving out to the new suburbs. Terrace and row houses were perceived as unfashionable, a view that persisted through to the 1970s.

In the post-WWII period, following the lifting of restrictions on building and building materials, there was a resurgence of building in Perth. Through the 1950s and 1960s, alterations and/or additions and renovations were made to a number of the residences in the precinct, some of which involved re-construction of the kitchen and/or bathroom and laundry.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The influence of European immigrants was evident in some of the changes to the residences. Some were painted in colourful hues, while others had alterations to verandahs, some of which have been reversed in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. A strong sense of community developed. From the late 1950s, a small but growing number of Australians also began to recognise the attractions of living in proximity to the city and cast aside the prejudices against terrace and row housing, with an appreciation of the aesthetic appeal of Federation period design. In the 1960s and 1970s, terrace and row housing returned to fashion, leading to a resurgence in the area, and with it, demographic change as many of those who were attracted to the area were ‘middle class’, often young professionals.

Further alterations and/or additions were made to some of the residences in the latter decades of the 20th century. Through the late 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, a number of places had the addition of a carport, with one or two being located within the front setback. From the 1980s and through to 2002, renovations and restoration works were implemented at a number of residences.

The majority of the residences have continued to be occupied as single residences through the late 20th century and into the 21st century, with applications for commercial use being refused, other than the shop in Moir Street.

In October 2021, an application for a two storey addition to 26 Moir St was approved. This has been followed by another two storey addition at 12 Brookman St in November 2023 and additions with a roof terrace at 8 Moir St in December 2024.

Historic theme	Cultural Life: Domestic Life Peopling WA: Demographic Development	
Associations		
Sources	P3992 Brookman & Moir Streets Precinct, Assessment Documentation. DPLH, May 2007.	

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS



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Sewerage Plan 1954. Courtesy SROWA Cons series 634 cons 4156 item 0066.