

SEWERAGE VENT, STUART STREET RESERVE, PERTH



PLACE INFORMATION	
Place name	Sewerage Vent, Stuart Street Reserve
Other names	
Place type	Other Structure

HERITAGE LISTING	
inHerit ID:	23777, 23992
State Heritage Register:	11 Sept 2015
Other Listing:	Municipal Inventory Adopted 28 Jun 2016

SITE LOCATION	
Street address	1 Stuart Street
Locality	Perth
Survey	LOT: 50 D/P: 41439
Vol/folio	223/7
Reserve	—

SIGNIFICANCE	
Level of significance	<p>Exceptional</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>Category 1</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>Metropolitan Sewerage Vents is an example of decorative but functional cast iron work in public infrastructure.</p> <p>This vent is one of a small sample of surviving c.1911-1930 sewerage ventilation shafts, a once-common piece of infrastructure that appears to have largely been removed and/or forgotten across the country.</p> <p>This vent is one of the six representative examples of the standard natural ventilation shafts erected for the Perth and Fremantle sewerage systems from 1911 to 1930, when decorative but functional cast iron work was used for these items of public infrastructure.</p> <p>The Metropolitan Sewerage Vents are valued by people who live and work near them as attractive and quirky mementos of the history of Perth.</p>

PLACE USE	
Original use	Health: Other Government: Other
Current use	Historic site
Other use	
CONSTRUCTION DETAILS	
Construction date	c1912
Walls	Cast Iron
Roof	N/A
Architectural Style	N/A
Physical description	<p>The vent comprises an ornate circular cast iron base with fluting and moulding which contains the letters M S (Metropolitan Sewerage) in the lower portion.</p> <p>An access panel, measuring approximately 20cm by 10cm and secured by a bolt in each corner, provides visual access into the vent. The base has been painted bronze with scarlet lettering.</p> <p>The bases are approximately two metres high, set below a straight circular pipe braced by four metal rods that rise out of the base. The pipe comprises several segments connected together, each approximately a metre in length and between 5–10 cm in diameter. The bottom section of piping is slightly tapered to connect to the base.</p>
Condition	Good
Integrity	Moderate
Authenticity	Moderate

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

This Metropolitan Sewerage Vents, is one of a series of metal ventilation shafts with decorative cast iron bases, between c.1911 and 1928 to assist in reducing odours associated with the completion of Perth's new sewerage system.

In December 1912, Perth City Council gave permission to the MWSS&DD to use the Council Depot at the corner of Stuart and Palmerston Streets as a 'house connection depot' for six months. This is the exact location of the Stuart Street Vent. The December 1912 correspondence makes no mention of a ventilation shaft, suggesting it was erected after this time. However, it is likely it was put up within the following year as the area was house-connected.

By June 1913, residences in the vicinity of the Stuart Street Vent had been connected to the sewers. In Perth, 3498 houses were already connected to the sewers, with another 361 in Fremantle. Ventilation of the sewerage system was reported to be largely by way of the connections to private premises. All water closets were being installed without a boundary trap, therefore 'simplifying the connection' and 'improving' the ventilation system.

Current Water Corporation staff members are unclear as to when the elements of Metropolitan Sewerage Vents were disconnected from the sewer system. One opinion is that, after World War Two, changes in the operation of the sewerage system did away with the need for ventilation shafts and they were disconnected. Another is that disconnection occurred following conversion to a closed rather than open sewer system in the 1970s, although some remained connected even into the twenty-first century. A further influence may have been the shift to plastic piping, which suffers less from the corrosive effects of hydrogen sulphide.

As areas were redeveloped or the tall shafts deemed hazardous, many vents were removed. It is possible that some may have originally been of galvanised steel and these would have deteriorated quicker than the surviving cast iron vents.

In recent years these remaining elements of former public infrastructure have been photographed for social networking sites, as quirky and unusual elements in the streetscape.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION	
Historic theme	Social Services: Health Governing: Governing and Politics Peopling WA: Demographic Development
Associations	
Sources	P23992 Metropolitan Sewerage Vents, Assessment Documentation, DPLH 2015.

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS

