

Heritage Item #

MI Reference: 62 HCWA No: 1858	Place Name: National Bank (fmr)	Other Name/s:
		Date of Review: September 2021



Address: 55 Fitzgerald Street East, Northam	Lot No: 53 Property Key: Plan Diagram: (P)300856 Vol Folio: 904/80 Assess No: A13318
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Locality: Northam	GPS:
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Current Use: Offices	Original Use(s): Bank
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HERITAGE LISTINGS

Listings: Statewide Bank Survey

CONSTRUCTION

Date of Construction: Residence:1888, Early Addition:1895, Front Building:1908

Architect / Builder:

Architectural Style: Federation Free Classical

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Description:

National Bank (fmr), located at 55 Fitzgerald Street East, is a two-storey rendered and face brick building with a concealed corrugated steel hip and gable roof displaying characteristics of the Federation Free Classical style of architecture.

The building has a symmetrical form with a zero-setback addressing the street. The roof has two tall face brick and corbelled chimneys with timber battening to the eave lining. The building has a rendered parapet with a central pediment and decorative motifs. The front façade is rendered with string coursing to the ground and first floors. The entrance is recessed with a contemporary glazed door in the centre and evidence of sliding timber doors still present. There is a rendered arch above the main entrance with keystones and decorative motifs.

The windows are timber double hung with highlights to the first floor and fixed glazing with highlights to the ground floor. The windows have labels, rendered surrounds and decorative rendered sills painted to contrast the wall render colour. The building is raised on a rendered plinth. The sides and rear of the building are face brick with a rendered band at the first-floor level. A variety of styles of timber double hung windows extend along the north and south façade with rendered lintels and sills.

<p>A secondary entrance is positioned at the end of the northern façade through a rendered archway. Attached to the rear of the building is an older face brick structure with a rendered parapet still visible. There is evidence of former lettering inscribed along the parapet.</p> <p>An additional rendered masonry hip and gable structure adjoins to the rear accessible via the northern entrance. There is a fenced car parking area and courtyard space to the north of the building.</p>
Condition: Good
HISTORICAL
<p>Notes:</p> <p><i>The following information has been sourced from the heritage assessment of 23-325 & 16-334 Fitzgerald Street and 1-15 & 12-18 Peel Terrace, Northam, prepared by Greenward Consulting, June 2015.</i></p> <p>The building was built in three distinct stages between 1888 to 1908. The oldest building at the rear, evident at the east end of the site, is the remaining section of a residence most likely constructed prior to the bank leasing the building in 1888.</p> <p>An 1892 article in the <i>Inquirer and Commercial News</i> states: <i>Owing to the large increase in the population of this town and confidence in the future of the district the National Bank of Australasia have decided to erect large and handsome new banking premises here.</i></p> <p>An addition to the former residence was added in 1895 however there are no direct newspaper references for its construction. The 1895 addition is still evident however is currently sandwiched between the former residence and the two storey building extending to Fitzgerald Street.</p> <p>In 1908, another new building was positioned immediately in front of the old building. The building's construction was referred to in <i>The West Australian (January 1908)</i>: <i>TENDERS Are invited until 4 p.m. on Monday, January 27 for the CONSTRUCTION of Banking and Residential Premises at Northam for the National Bank of Australasia, Ltd. R. H. B. DOWNES, Architect.</i></p> <p>and;</p> <p><i>Amongst other buildings erected or in course of erection is the handsome structure of the National Bank, far and away the handsomest building of its kind in the town. (August 1908)</i></p> <p>The National Bank occupied the front building until 1938. In May 1939, the Bank acquired a new site on the corner of Fitzgerald and Grey Streets. When the bank moved to new, more modern premises in 1940, the Fitzgerald Street building stood vacant for some time. The building was sold to Mrs V Chidlow in 1941 for £1,630. The building was later taken over by the Shire of Northam and has housed the Shire Council Offices from c.1978 until c.2000.</p> <p>As of September 2021, the building is occupied by Focused Tax Solutions.</p>
Theme: Commercial & Service Industries
Associations:
Heritage Assessment or Conservation Plan: Heritage Assessment of 23-325 & 16-334 Fitzgerald Street and 1-15 & 12-18 Peel Terrace, Northam. Prepared by Greenward Consulting, June 2015.
Public Access: Yes (limited)
SIGNIFICANCE
Level of Integrity: Medium
Level of Authenticity: High

Statement of Significance:
National Bank (fmr) is of cultural heritage significance for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The place has considerable historical significance due to its association with the original National Bank which was the first bank in Northam, built in 1888. • The place has social significance as the Shire Offices for the Northam district. • The place is aesthetically pleasing, demonstrating elements of the Federation Free Classical style, and contributes to the streetscape of the main commercial street of Northam.
Level of Significance: Considerable
Heritage Category: 2

Additional Photographs

	
North Corner Source: Municipal Heritage Inventory, 2012	North Corner Source: Stephen Carrick Architects September 2021
	
Front Facade Source: Stephen Carrick Architects September 2021	Central Pediment Source: Stephen Carrick Architects September 2021
	
Detailing motifs above entrance Source: Stephen Carrick Architects September 2021	North elevation Source: Stephen Carrick Architects September 2021



1895 structure attached to the rear
Source: Stephen Carrick Architects
September 2021



Parapet to rear building
Source: Stephen Carrick Architects
September 2021