GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Western Australian Planning Commission

HERITAGE COUNCIL

FAST FACTS

NORTH WEST STOCK ROUTE

The Heritage Council of Western Australia is considering whether to recommend the Minister for Heritage include *North West Stock Route* in the State Register of Heritage Places. The Department has developed this information sheet to answer some commonly asked questions.

What is the role of the Heritage Council of WA?

The Heritage Council of Western Australia is the State Government's advisory body on heritage matters. It is vested with functions and powers under the *Heritage Act 2018*. The Heritage Council is charged with the compilation of the State's Register of Heritage Places.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage supports the Heritage Council and the Minister for Heritage.

What is the State Register?

The State Register of Heritage Places is a statutory list of places that represent the story of Western Australia's history and development. Entry in the Register is reserved for places that the Heritage Council has assessed as being of State cultural heritage significance. The Register's primary focus is on places dating from and after European contact and Colonial settlement and includes places to which both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians retain a connection. The Register acknowledges the value and importance of a place and helps promote its conservation into the future. At present, there are 1,376 places in the State Register.

COVER: Stockyard Gully, Warradarge

ABOVE: Woodada Well, Eneabba

Who decides what should be entered in the State Register?

The role of the Heritage Council is to determine the State significance of a place and make a recommendation to the Minister for Heritage, who makes the final decision on whether a place is entered in the State Register.

What is the heritage significance of *North West Stock Route*?

The *North West Stock Route* follows much of the original 1850s Old North Road from Perth to Geraldton. Defined by survey in 1889, it extends from Star Swamp in North Beach to Allanooka Swamp, 54km south east of Geraldton.

Several features along the former stock route, such as wells, homesteads, natural water bodies, resting points, bridges and crossing points are also included in the proposed State heritage listing.

The route of the Old North Road was based on water sources used by Aboriginal people. Opening it as a stock route impacted sites of cultural significance for Aboriginal people and disrupted their traditional way of life.

Being one of the oldest stock routes in the State and the starting point of many stock routes leading northwards, the *North West Stock Route* was instrumental in opening up and sustaining the development of the nearer northern districts for pastoralism in the 1850s. It later formed part of the main route for travellers, mail carriers and drovers before the Midland Railway was completed in 1894.

The *North West Stock Route* traverses a changing landscape of vast sandplains, deep limestone gullies and unexpected swamps and waterholes, demonstrating the difficulties of droving stock through uncleared land over long distances in the nineteenth century.

Although there is no track visible in many sections, the place has archaeological potential to shed light on the lives and

BELOW: Cockleshell Gully, Jurien Bay

activities of early drovers, travellers and those who settled along the route. Notable figures associated with the route include Walter Padbury and Edward Hamersley, who were both successful merchants and philanthropists and had substantial land holdings and developed industry along the route. It is also associated with Assistant Surveyor Augustus Gregory, who surveyed the initial road north on which the later stock route was based.

What does entry in the State Register mean for *North West Stock Route*?

Entry in the Register will recognise and celebrate the distinctive heritage values of the stock route and the features along it. It will also offer protection under the *Heritage Act 2018*, ensuring any major changes proposed are in keeping with its cultural heritage significance.

Can I still make changes to my property if *North West Stock Route* is entered in the State Register?

Yes. Inclusion on the State Register of Heritage Places does not prevent an owner from making changes to their property. Owners should discuss any potential development ideas with the relevant local government authority (LGA), and apply to that same LGA for development approval under the relevant Local Planning Scheme. The LGA will refer proposals that might impact the stock route to the Heritage Council for advice as part of its standard assessment process. The Heritage Council will advise the LGA on the heritage aspects of the proposal in light of the cultural heritage values of the *North West Stock Route*.

The Heritage Council responds to referrals like this within the timeframe set out by the LGA, so referrals do not delay the development application decision-making process. Owners can also discuss their projects with the Department's Heritage Development team while preparing their plans.

ABOVE: Nine Mile Swamp, Beermullah

Why does the Heritage Council want to register this place given the stock route is no longer in use or very visible in some areas?

While the stock route is no longer in use, it still tells an important story about the State and its development. It continues to be recognised in the form of reserves that were set aside in the 1889 survey, and is visible in the landscape through the many features associated with its historic use including homesteads, wells, bridges and natural water sources. In some sections, the track is also still visible.

BELOW: Old Junction Bridge - Neergabby

How was the area for the proposed registration decided?

The area proposed for registration is based on the land that was reserved for the stock route in the 1889 gazette notice, as shown on historical maps. This route followed much of the original 1850s Old North Road to Geraldton. However, in some areas, the original route now passes through residential areas, and these sections have not been included in the area proposed for registration.

The 1889 gazetted stock route extended to Dongara and then headed east to Mingenew, connecting with the De Grey – Mullewa Stock Route. Part of the proposed curtilage of *North West Stock Route* runs through to Mingenew to represent this connection.

Four features associated with the stock route that were not included in the 1889 gazettal are also proposed to be included in the registration: Allanooka Swamp, the former Allanooka Inn, Yardarino Crossing and Irwin House. They are included because they were important stopping points along the *North West Stock Route* before it veered east, and were also the connecting point with the Old North Road to Geraldton. The proposed area for registration does not extend further north than Allanooka because development in the Geraldton area means there is little evidence left of The Old North Road.

What are the benefits of registration?

Registration recognises the place and its significance to the story of Western Australia and will ensure the story will continue to be recognised into the future. Registration also provides the opportunity for those eligible to apply to the Heritage Grants Program for funding for physical conservation works or the preparation of conservation management planning documents.

Does registration affect ownership/public access?

No. Registration does not affect ownership or require owners to give public access to their property.

How can I comment on the proposed registration of North West Stock Route?

Comments on the proposed registration can be made online through the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage's **Consultation Hub** or by email to HCWAregistration@dplh.wa.gov.au.

The comment period closes **Monday 28 February 2022**.

What happens next?

Once the period for comments has closed the Heritage Council will consider whether to recommend the registration to the Minister for Heritage, who will make the final decision on whether a place is entered in the State Register.

BELOW: Cowalla Homestead, Cowalla