
CITY OF SOUTH PERTH LOCAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Management
Category

C

PLACE RECORD FORM

Prepared by *Heritage Today*, March 2000
Most recent update by City of South Perth, November 2015

Place No: H 1 Perth Surgicentre



View of the northern side of the *Perth Surgicentre*.
(*Heritage Today*, 1999)

LOCATION

Name of place	<i>Perth Surgicentre</i>
Other / former names	Southbank Central, Southbank Day Surgery
Address	38 Meadowvale Avenue
Suburb	South Perth
Local Government Authority	City of South Perth
Scope of listing	This heritage listing applies to the entire <i>Perth Surgicentre</i> site.

LISTINGS BY OTHER BODIES

Name of Body	Reference No.	Grade of Listing	Date
Heritage Council of Western Australia	4807	Data base only – not listed	-

LAND DESCRIPTION

Reserve No.	Lot	Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio
-	101	Swan 39	14684	V 1762 F 769

PERIOD	Late Twentieth Century
Design Style	Late Twentieth-Century Late Modern Style
Construction Date	1986
Source/Details	Heritage Assessment by David Kelsall 1999

USE(S) OF PLACE

Original	Surgical Centre/Day Hospital
Present	Surgical Centre/Day Hospital and medical consulting rooms
Other / former	

HISTORICAL NOTES

With changes in the practice of medicine in the 1980s, doctors were permitted to perform surgical procedures at day care centres. This led to the development of the *Perth Surgicentre* complex by two general practitioners. In the *Perth Surgicentre*, minor surgical procedures could be performed, with patients being able to return home the same day. The objective was to eliminate hospital stays where not required. To achieve this objective, strata-titled units were to be developed for the surgeons and anaesthetists for consulting and reception, with centralised theatre and recovery facilities for the day care patients.

A tract of land was purchased in Ranelagh Crescent with extensive views over the Swan River to the City of Perth on the skyline. The former brick and tile dwelling on the site was demolished in 1985. The land was subdivided, creating a site for grouped dwellings at the northern end facing the City, with the *Perth Surgicentre* site behind, to the south, elevated to take advantage of the views over the top of the dwellings on the residential site. At the time of subdivision, the owners placed a building height covenant on the Certificate of Title for the residential land, to ensure that the river views from the *Perth Surgicentre* would not be built out. The three-storey *Perth Surgicentre* was approved in 1985, and construction was completed in 1987.

The residential portion of the original site was subdivided into 15 strata lots, which were sold individually, with new houses required to comply with pre-determined architectural concepts of design, colours and materials. The northernmost lots were restricted to single-storey, while those behind could develop to two storeys. With one exception, all of the dwellings were built during the 1990s. The last one was built in 2014. A shared swimming pool and tennis court are two of the communal facilities within the open space of this 'gated' development.

Murray Cox, a former airline pilot who subsequently became a building designer, was engaged to design the *Perth Surgicentre*. This project was his largest undertaking at the time. His other works included the conversion of the South Perth Fire Station to a residence (for himself) [*Refer Place Record No SPCv 3*], a major house for prominent businessman, Tony Barlow, in Applecross and another in Leon Road, Dalkeith. His work is notable for its high design standards.

The *Perth Surgicentre* development was completed around 1985, and it was opened in a blaze of publicity. Unfortunately, it had taken two years to build, sufficient time for rival groups to establish successful day-care hospitals north of the river in the traditional medical specialist areas of West Perth and Leederville. The facility was, for a long time, the right facility in the wrong location and it struggled for some time to achieve a measure of financial success.

DESCRIPTION**The setting**

The relatively flat South Perth foreshore provides the southern edge of the 'bowl' formed by Perth Water. Several high rise residential developments were built in the 1960s and early 1970s and these cluster around the ferry terminus at Mends Street. To the east of this group, one of the few prominent buildings is the light coloured *Perth Surgicentre* with its prominent built form.

Construction materials and design elements

Reinforced concrete slab and frame with precast panels of concrete and compressed fibre providing the main building fabric. The glazing has reflective properties and there are some panels of glass bricks, one of Cox's favoured plays.

The ground floor of the main building contains parking and the day surgery. The foyer and reception area is located on the first floor with suites around the perimeter and more suites on the second floor. The spatial arrangement affords fine views over Perth's skyline over Perth Water.

The array of suites along the northern aspect have reinforced concrete fins splayed back into the structure, with tubular steel balustrade and posts suggesting an element of sun screening. The stairs are expressed on the external faces of the building as projecting towers with glazed curtain wall and roofed with barrel vaults.

The *Perth Surgicentre* building is painted white externally and with neat architectural detailing has a homogenous visual quality.

ASSOCIATIONS**ASSOCIATION TYPE**

Murray Cox	Designer

HISTORIC THEME / Sub-theme**CATEGORIES OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Community Efforts/ <i>Community Services and Utilities</i>	Aesthetic
	Social
	Representative
	Rarity

RATING AND ASSESSMENT**High****Low**

Aesthetic value (streetscape, setting)	1 ✓	2	3	4	5
Architectural merit (design features)	1 ✓	2	3	4	5
Rarity value	1	2 ✓	3	4	5
Value as part of a group/precinct	1	2	3	4 ✓	5
Condition	1	2 ✓	3	4	5
Integrity	1	2 ✓	3	4	5

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The *Perth Surgicentre* has aesthetic and social cultural heritage significance. It is an imposing modern building. The concept of this structure is a marker of the advent of major change away from hospitalisation in the concept of the treatment of minor surgical procedures. The building is an important service facility within the local community.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Management Category C : Moderate significance

Conservation desirable. Any alterations or additions should be sympathetic to the heritage values of the place and original fabric should be retained where feasible. Photographically record the place prior to any significant alteration or demolition.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION / BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Architectural Assessment by D Kelsall, Heritage Architect, September 1999.
- Reviews of Municipal Heritage Inventory by *Heritage Today* in 2000 and 2006.

HISTORY OF HERITAGE LISTING BY CITY OF SOUTH PERTH

	Date Adopted by Council
Initial listing in MHI	December 1994
Update of MHI	February 1996
Update of MHI	December 1996
Update of MHI	December 1997
Review of MHI by <i>Heritage Today</i>	June 2000
Update of MHI	June 2002
Update of MHI	March 2003
Review of MHI by <i>Heritage Today</i>	February 2006
Interim Heritage List – Policy P313 ‘Local Heritage Listing’	April 2013
Updated in renamed LHI	November 2015



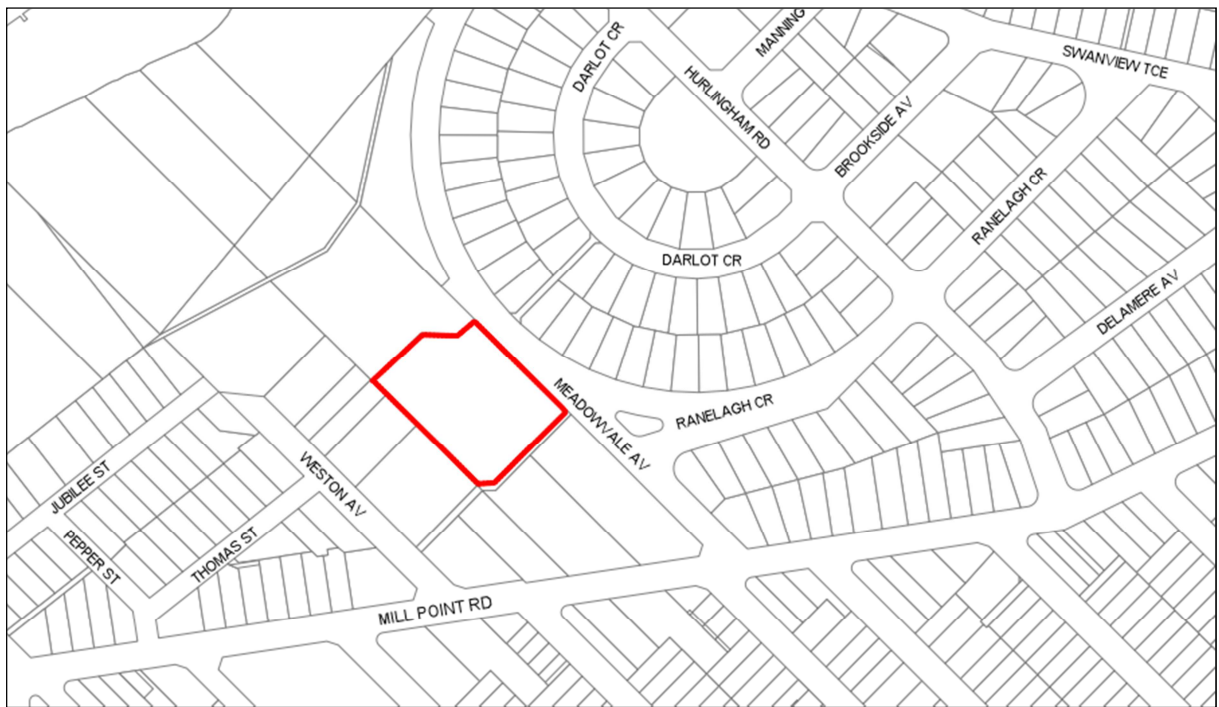
View of the north-eastern (Meadowvale Avenue) side of the *Perth Surgicentre*.
(Jenny Dans, City of South Perth, 1994)



Two aerial views of the *Perth Surgicentre* site and its surrounding locality, providing a comparison of the area shortly before the development of the *Perth Surgicentre* in 1985 (above), and as the area had been developed by 2014 (below).
(City records)



LOCATION MAP



(Digital Cadastral Data supplied by Landgate, WA. P295)