Place No. 51 Roebourne Racetrack

Commentators box at Roebourne Racetrack, 2012

LOCATION	
Name of Place	Roebourne Race Track
Other Name (1)	Nor West Jockey Club
Other Name (2)	
Location/Address	
Street Number	
Street Name	North West Coastal Highway
Suburb/Town	Roebourne
Other Locational descriptor (text)	Port Hedland side of Roebourne mE 516500 mN 7701315 Longitude: 117.1585 Latitude: -20.7879

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
Owner	*Address*	*Phone/fax*	*Status*	*Item No.*
Nor West Jockey Club				
Reserve No.	*Lot/Location No.*	*Plan/Diagram*	*Vol/Folio*	*Item No.*
715	94 & 107	180845 / 182175	LR3144 / 693 & 694	

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	8684
State Register of Heritage Places:(Y/N)	Yes
Classified by the National Trust (Y/N)	Yes
Register of the National Estate (Y/N)	No
Local Town Planning Scheme (Y/N)	No
Management Category	**B**

DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	1890
Construction Date (2)	
Site Type (Place Type)	Other Built Type

Use(s) of Place	
Original	SOCIAL\RECREATIONAL : Other - Racetrack
Present	SOCIAL\RECREATIONAL : Other - Racetrack
Other	
Construction Materials:	
Walls	6. METAL 699 Other Metal
Roof	6. METAL 699 Other Metal
Condition	Good
Integrity (how much of the original fabric is intact?):	Continues to operate

Physical Description

Occupying a large open area fronting onto the Harding River, the track is of red earth with a railing of old railway line. The open 'bleacher' stands are made of steel with a metal roof, adjacent to a large metal building with open bar at trackside. Around the site are corrals and grassed areas for horses, as well as demountables for larger race days.

History

Horse racing has been an annual event in Roebourne since 1867; the first race meeting was held in mid-September of that year. The races were originally held on the left hand side of the Roebourne-Cossack Road, before moving to the present site 1890.

The race meetings became important social events, with people travelling in from the outlying stations. Most of the accommodation in the town was booked out during the racing period and additional camps were set up between the racetrack and the river. The horses were ridden long distances from the outlying stations, sometimes taking 3-4 days to arrive. It was therefore important to arrive a suitable time before the races began, to allow the horses to be fully rested for the racing events; people often arrived in town up to two weeks before the actual day of the races. Other social events also occurred around race time, including balls, picnics, concerts and religious services. These festivities extended over a week and over the years became known as Roebourne Race Week.[1]

Cyclones have damaged the buildings at the racetrack on many occasions, the latest being cyclone Orson in April 1989. A five-year development program was put in place which was completed in approximately 1995.

Archaeology

There is some archaeological potential for subsurface archaeological remains relating to the early race meetings. Camps were established near the racetrack to accommodate all the visitors to the town during the racing season and it is likely that evidence of these camps is still present; however the ground surface would be impacted considerably during larger race days.

SIGNIFICANCE	
Historic theme (s)	4. SOCIAL & CIVIC ACTIVITIES 405 Sport, recreation & entertainment
Statement of Significance:	

The Nor West Jockey Club is the oldest continuously run racing club in Western Australia. The races run by the club were an important social event for the early settlers in the area. Today race events are a significant part of social life of the Pilbara, and bring together people in highly anticipated social events.

ASSOCIATIONS	
Architect/Designer (1)	
Other Associated Person(s)	

OTHER	
References	
Shire of Roebourne Local History Office Roebourne Old Gaol Museum	

MHI 1996	Site assessed, Place Name Record created
MHI Review 2012	Entry updated

Gates at Roebourne Racetrack, 2012

Roebourne Racetrack, 2012

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[1] Nor West Jockey Club History