Place No. 62 Tramway Site

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A section of raised track foundation at Point Samson, 2012

LOCATION	
Name of Place	Tramway Site
Other Name (1)	Roebourne-Cossack Tramway
Other Name (2)	Roebourne-Point Samson Tramway
Location/Address	
Street Number	
Street Name	
Suburb/Town	Roebourne, Cossack, Point Samson
Other Locational descriptor (text)	Start of tramway Roebourne (War memorial) 515260 mE, 7702774 mN (MGA94 Zone 50) Longitude: 117.1926 Latitude: -20.6287

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
Owner	_Address_	_Phone/fax_	_Status_	_Item No._
Reserve No.	_Lot/Location No._	_Plan/Diagram_	_Vol/Folio_	_Item No._

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	8687
State Register of Heritage Places:(Y/N)	No
Classified by the National Trust (Y/N)	No
Register of the National Estate (Y/N)	No
Local Town Planning Scheme (Y/N)	Yes
Management Category	**B**

DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	Started 1885, opened June 1887
Construction Date (2)	
Site Type (Place Type)	Historic Site
Use(s) of Place	

Original	TRANSPORT\COMMUNICATION: Other (Rail) - Tramway site
Present	VACANT/UNUSED – Vacant/Unused
Other	
Construction Materials:	
Walls	
Roof	
Other	
Condition	
Integrity (how much original fabric intact?)	

Physical Description

The tramway site covers two separate tramways to Roebourne, the first from Cossack, the second and later from Point Sampson. Now disassembled, the remains of the lines are still evident (see Archaeology section).

The tramway followed the line of the current highways through Roebourne, ending at the War Memorial.

History

The first tramway linked the coastal settlement and port of Cossack with the interior town of Roebourne. Built in two-foot gauge, the light rail tramway from Cossack to Roebourne was eight miles 38 chains in length. The line opened on 21 June 1887. Later, five miles of line joining Cossack to Point Samson were added and opened in June 1909.

The PWD took control in July 1909 and the car barn was moved from Cossack to Point Samson. That year the first steam locomotive and two water carriages arrived [Orenstein and Kopel (No 2271)]. Around 1910-1911 the crane and goods shed were moved from Cossack to Point Samson. In about 1910 a 3.6 gauge line was built from Roebourne to Point Samson.

At first the service was provided by horse drawn carriages, with a changing point for horses located on the flat area before the flat topped hill on the edge of the marsh. Steam locomotives took over in 1909. The service was largely maintained by prison labour.

A banquet was held in Roebourne to celebrate the construction of the tramline between Cossack and Point Samson as soon as the jetty was completed.

'The jetty now in course of construction was for stock shipment purposes, but facilities for cargo should, he said, also be afforded. A railway system should be provided, designed to connect eventually with the capital of the State. Land settlement would speedily follow, as well as mining development.' A Mr Albert Ball said the railway 'was needed to enable the transit of goods and machinery at a reasonable rate, and thus assist the industry.' [1]

Archaeology

The archaeological remains of the tramway include the rail route, culverts and bridges. The archaeology reveals something of the technology of the tramway and its organisation.

SIGNIFICANCE	
Historic theme (s)	2. TRANSPORT & COMMUNICATIONS 202. Rail & light rail transport
Statement of Significance:	

The tramway was an important transport link, providing a service both for freight and passengers. It is a physical reminder of the earliest era of European colonisation and the vital links between the coastal ports and landings and the hinterland. The physical remains could provide novel experiences for locals and visitors.
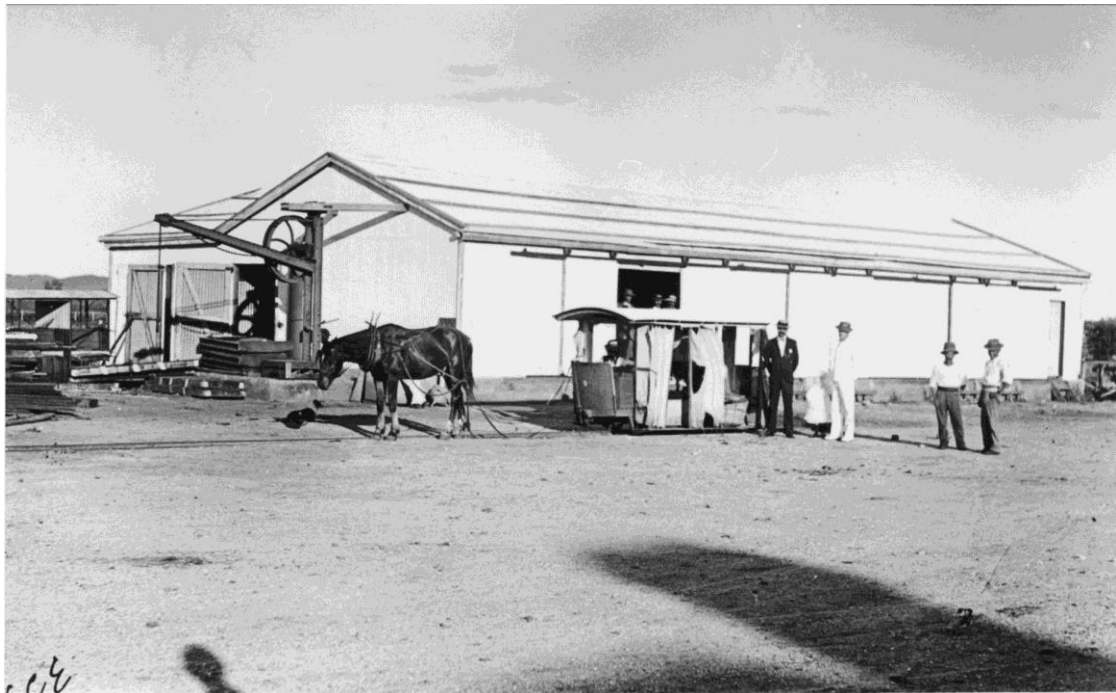
ASSOCIATIONS

Architect/Designer (1)	
Architect/Designer (2)	
Other Associated Person(s)	

OTHER	
References	
Karratha Local History Office	

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

Unrelated rolling stock on reconstructed rails at Cossack, 2012

Horse-drawn tram, Roebourne
Courtesy Shire of Roebourne Local History Office, 2005.818

Passengers aboard locomotive at Point Samson jetty
Courtesy Shire of Roebourne Local History Office, 2005.2015

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[1] 'The Colonial Secretary in the Nor'-West: Roebourne and Cossack', *West Australian*, 11 June 1903, p 4