

Place No. 02 Aboriginal Reserve (2 Mile), Roebourne



View of Aboriginal Reserve, with Geoff Togo

LOCATION	
Name of Place	Aboriginal Reserve (2 Mile), Roebourne
Other Name (1)	2 Mile, The Reserve
Other Name (2)	
Location/Address	
Street Number	
Street Name	Track to 2 Mile, Roebourne
Suburb/Town	Roebourne
Other Locational descriptor (text)	mE 516539 mN 76998955 Longitude 117.1589 Latitude -20.8011

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
Owner	Address	Phone/fax	Status	Item No.
Aboriginal Lands Trust	PO Box 7770 Cloisters Square WA 6850			
Reserve No.	Lot/Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio	Item No.
RES 35802	390	P183216	LR3071/71	

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	8660
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	A/B

DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	1930s
Construction Date (2)	
Site Type (Place Type)	Other Aboriginal Site

Use(s) of Place

<i>Original</i>	RESIDENTIAL: Other - Aboriginal Reserve
<i>Present</i>	VACANT/UNUSED: Vacant/Unused
<i>Other</i>	
Construction Materials:	
<i>Walls</i>	6. METAL 606 Corrugated iron
<i>Roof</i>	
<i>Other</i>	Floor 3. CONCRETE 302 Concrete slab
Condition	Poor
Integrity (how much of the original fabric is intact?):	Limited
Physical Description	
<p>The Aboriginal Reserve (2 Mile) is located approximately two miles away from Roebourne, on the opposite (east) side of the Harding River. It is located on the track heading southwards to 2 Mile from the North West Coastal Highway on the way to Port Hedland. The Aboriginal Cemetery is also located on this track, just to the north of the Reserve.</p> <p>There are small hills located at the northwest and southwest corners of the Reserve. There are potential engravings on an outcrop located to the immediate south of the Reserve boundary and beside the Harding River. There is also a Law Ground in this location, on the southern side of the hill from engravings.</p> <p>Little evidence remains of the infrastructure associated with the Reserve as it has been mostly demolished. However, there is evidence of a cement floor, eight posts and one thin sheet of corrugated iron, indicating the remains of a two room structure; these are the remains of one of the government built houses.</p>	
History	
<p>In the 1930s the Government moved Aboriginal people from ration camps to the coast. Tablelands people were moved either to Onslow or Roebourne Reserves. In these Reserves Aboriginal people from different tribes were grouped together and controlled by the Police and the Native Welfare Department.</p> <p>The official area of the Reserve was ten acres, though people also lived on land outside the Reserve boundaries. The number of Aboriginal people living on this Reserve grew to approximately 300 and it became the largest reserve in Western Australia. There were people from many language groups living on the Reserve, and these were split into two separate areas or camps, one for Ngarluma people and the other for Yindjibarndi people.</p> <p>The Government-built houses on the Reserve had a cement floor with corrugated iron walls and had either one or two rooms. Elders lived in the huts but many other people camped in humpys in the reserve area, as the houses provided were not adequate to house everyone. In addition, the area was prone to flooding so residents also camped on a site just off the Reserve.</p> <p>There were some basic facilities within the Reserve; showers and ablutions were located in the middle of the reserve, with the women's closer to the river and the men's on the other side. However, the ablutions were frequently blocked. Cooking was done outside on campfires.</p> <p>By 1964, some improvements were made and 14 houses had been built.¹ Rations were obtained from the 'welfare' building, near the Post Office.²</p>	

However, due to deteriorating conditions and poor sanitation, the Reserve was closed in 1975 and people were moved to the Village, a cluster of State Houses around the town cemetery. This was done with little consultation and caused great offence to the community.

The Reserve continues to be of great significance to Aboriginal people, and it is the site where Native Title was handed over in 2005, the first native title determination in the Pilbara region.

Archaeology

This is a historical site and shows little evidence of its original use. However, there is considerable potential for archaeological remains in this location relating to the use of the area as an Aboriginal Reserve, as the site was continually occupied for approximately 50 years).

There are potential engravings located at the southeast corner of the Reserve, along with Aboriginal artefacts. There is a possible burial on the site, on a hill at the northwest corner of the Reserve. There is also potential for subsurface archaeological remains at this site.

This is a Registered Aboriginal Site (DAA Site ID 6010). There is a number of other Registered Aboriginal Sites Associated with this location (DAA Site ID 6012 - Two Mile Engravings; DAA Site ID 7088 – Barrumbarra Talu; DAA Site ID 7978 – North West Coastal Highway; DAA Site ID 7860 – Burrumburra + Jigurdaar Talu).

SIGNIFICANCE

Historic theme (s)

1. DEMOGRAPHIC SETTLEMENT & MOBILITY

- 102 Aboriginal occupation
- 103 Racial contact and interaction
- 107 Settlements
- 108 Government policy

4. SOCIAL & CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- 401 Government & politics
- 403 Law & Order
- 407 Cultural activities

Statement of Significance:

The Aboriginal Reserve is linked to the historical control and treatment of Aboriginal people in the Roebourne region. The potential burial, engravings and law ground area also make this a significant location related to the history of Aboriginal people in this area. In addition, oral histories testify to the Reserve being a place where cultural knowledge and knowledge of country was passed on and shared.³

The Reserve also has historic and social significance as the location of the handing over of the Ngarluma/Yindjibarndi Native Title claim in 2005, the first native title determination in the Pilbara region.

ASSOCIATIONS

Architect/Designer (1)

Architect/Designer (2)

Other Associated Person(s)

MHI Version 1 (1996)

Assessment Undertaken, Place Record Form Created

MHI Review 2013

Entry updated

¹ Information on Aboriginal Reserves extracted from *Lost Lands Report*, Department of Indigenous Affairs, 2003, compiled by Joanne Pritchard, 6 May 2008, Shire of Roebourne, Local History Office

² Information from Ngarluma man Geoff Togo, on site visit to Roebourne Reserve on 21 August 2012.

³ For example see Oral History Interview with Allery Sandy interviewed by Kate Gregory 2 February 2010, archived at AIATSIS; Patricia Pat, Interview with Noel Olive, Quoted in Noel Olive, *Enough is Enough: A history of the Pilbara Mob*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 2007, pp 201-202