

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

RESTRICTED

Title of Report: Proposed designation of Cape Meredith Light and various buildings on West Point Island as buildings or structures of historic or architectural interest

Paper No: 35/09

Date: 26 February 2009

Report of: Environmental Planning Officer

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To seek Executive Council's agreement to designate Cape Meredith Light and various buildings on West Point Island as buildings or structures of historic or architectural interest.

2.0 Recommendations

(a) That Cape Meredith Light and

(b) The Main House, Shearing Shed and Sealer's House on West Point Island

be designated as being of special architectural or historic interest under section 65(1) of the Planning Ordinance 1991.

3.0 Summary of Financial Implications

- 3.1 None.

4.0 Background

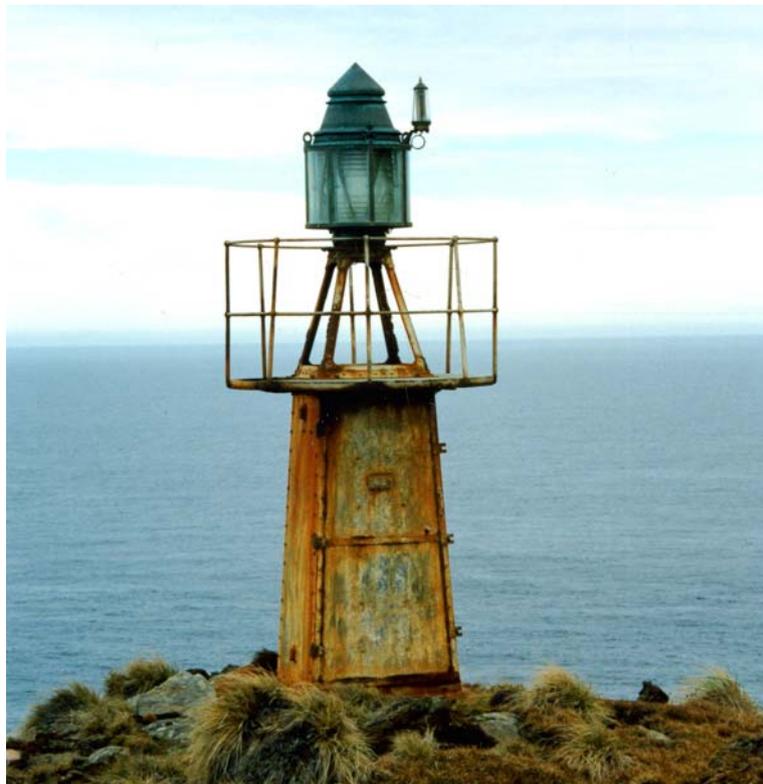
- 4.1 The Historic Buildings Section in Part V of the Planning Ordinance 1991 makes provision for the protection and preservation of those structures most important to the history and landscape of the Falkland Islands.

- 4.2 The Historic Buildings Committee was formed to assist with the identification of local buildings of special architectural or historic interest and to make recommendations to Executive Council for formal designation.

- 4.3 During 2008 the Historic Buildings Committee started to consider the possible listing of the Cape Meredith Light and also various buildings on West Point Island. In respect of the latter, a survey was undertaken to identify those buildings most worthy of designation.

- 4.4 The Committee met on 29 January 2009 and agreed to recommend that Cape Meredith Light and three buildings on West Point Island (Main House, Shearing Shed and Sealer's House) be designated as being of special architectural or historic interest. All of the structures have owners consent for designation.
- 4.5 On 5 February 2009 the Planning and Building Committee considered the recommendations from the Historic Buildings Committee and agreed to recommend to Executive Council that these buildings be designated as being of special architectural or historic interest under section 65(1) of the Planning Ordinance 1991.
- 4.6 The next section summaries the main features of interest for each building. Additional information on the buildings has been produced by the Archivist and will be included in the detailed listing description of each building.

5. Cape Meredith Light



- 5.1 Cape Meredith Light is of historic interest partly due to the design and partly because it was presented to the Falklands by John Hamilton of Weddell Island. It was erected in 1935. The beacon itself is of scientific interest as it was designed by Swedish Nobel Prize-winner Gustav Dalen, who also founded AGA.
- 5.2 The light proved problematic due to difficulties in re-supplying with gas cylinders and was eventually abandoned in the 1950s. The light housing is in

excellent condition while the remaining parts are suffering from corrosion. Advice has been taken on the most appropriate conservation measures and the owners are willing to do all they can in terms of maintenance, but they would also like the Light to have listed status to help ensure its preservation for the future.

- 5.3 Subject to agreement on listing, it is hoped that the Light will be re-painted before the onset of Winter 2009.

6. West Point Island

- 6.1 There are a number of old and interesting buildings on West Point Island. Following a survey the following are considered by the Historic Buildings Committee to be worthy of listing.

1. The Main House
2. The Shearing Shed
3. The Sealer's House

The Main House



- 6.2 The Main House is thought to be the oldest inhabited house in West Falkland, with construction commencing in 1879. The building has seen various additions and alterations over the years. The Main House is now a collection of many parts which may be identified as the Old House, New House, East Wing, West Wing, Link and Porch. They are interconnected and act as one dwelling. All are timber framed.

The Shearing Shed



- 6.3 The Shearing Shed is believed to date from the same year as the oldest part of the Main House, 1879. It is a timber-framed weatherboarded building with a corrugated iron roof and is an excellent example of a typical small shearing shed largely unchanged since it was built. It is in a poor state of repair and in particular the timber shoring along the beach is in urgent need of replacement.

The Sealer's House



- 6.4 The Sealer's House is the earliest intact building on West Point Island. The date of construction is not known but it was there before the first permanent

inhabitants arrived in 1879. Some repair work has been carried out over the years and its condition is fair.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no specific financial implications associated with designating these buildings. Owners are able to apply to the Historic Buildings Committee for a grant to assist in the repair of the building. Grant aid is often aimed at meeting the cost and delivery of materials with the condition that the owner either undertakes or funds the labour element within a specified time period.

8.1 Legal Implications - None

9.1 Human Resources Implications - None