



## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

### 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

The wording of this document has been adapted from The Lodge Conservation Plan with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.4.5 Mining
- 3.13 Developing an Australian manufacturing capacity
- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities
- 5.1.2 Coping with dangerous jobs and workplaces
- 5.8 Working on the land

#### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 106 Workers
- 107 Settlements
- 110 Resource exploitation and depletion
- 111 Depression and boom
- 303 Mining

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* is a fine large-scale example of an inter-war bungalow that makes use of many of the aesthetic devices of the Federation Bungalow style in terms of its plan, roof form and general styling. It differs from the style in its full flowering with its simplified lines and low-key decorative treatment internally. Internally there are several rooms in the mud block section of the house that employ the decorative devices and themes of the Inter-War Old English style. The lounge, dining room and study are fine examples of this style. (Criterion 1.1)

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* was built to a high standard of design in its time for a residence of its size. It was well-constructed and used good trade practices. Elements such as the carpentry, joinery, and cabinetwork are very good examples of their type and period. (Criterion 1.2)

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* is the most conspicuous remaining evidence of the Redhill residential area and the senior staff quarters at Lake Violet at the Wiluna Mine and is a prominent local landmark. (Criterion 1.3.)

## **11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE**

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* is significant for its construction in 1929, as the residence for the General Manager of Wiluna Gold Mines, Mr. C. E. Prior, at the period in which the mine and plant was being developed; and its use through the 1930s, when Wiluna Gold Mines Ltd was making a significant contribution to the Western Australian and national economy; and during the 1940s when Wiluna was a major producer of arsenic. Wiluna Gold Mine was the most well known mine development in Australia during the inter-war period, and was the only supplier of arsenic to the Commonwealth during World War Two. It is one of the few substantial tangible reminders of this period of Wiluna's history. (Criterion 2.1)

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna*, as the residence of the General Manager of Wiluna Gold Mines Mr C. E. Prior, who designed the building, and of his successor, H. H. Carroll, was the most important individual residence in Wiluna, and possibly in the Eastern Goldfields, in the period 1929-45. During the Great Depression years, distinguished guests who visited the celebrated Wiluna Gold Mine were entertained at the place, including the Governor General and Lieutenant Governors. (Criterion 2.2)

Wiluna Goldmines was significant as a substantial part of the interests of Claude de Bernales, who had a significant impact on economic development in Western Australia, due to his ownership of several important mining leases. (Criterion 2.3)

Mr C. E. Prior, General Manager of Wiluna Gold Mines, was important in the development of the town of Wiluna, being responsible for the extension of electricity to the town, assisting in pioneering the water scheme servicing the town and the mine and its associated buildings, and assisting in the development of sports facilities within the town. (Criterion 2.3)

## **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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## **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* is valued for social and cultural reasons as the most significant surviving building from the period of economic development of Wiluna, in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The place is valued by the community of Wiluna as evidenced by its inclusion in the Municipal Inventory. (Criterion 4.1)

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* contributes to the community's sense of place as the former Mine Manager's Residence for Wiluna Gold Mines and the only surviving building of a group that housed the company's senior staff. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. 1. RARITY**

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* has rarity value as the only known surviving Inter-War period mine manager's residence located close to its associated mine site in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.1)

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* is one of only two mine manager's residences of the same or earlier eras still extant in Australia. (Criterion 5.1)

## **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* is representative of the position of the mine manager at an important goldmine and of the level of accommodation accorded to a person in this position. It is unusual in that although it was common practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to select a site in close proximity to the office and mine, by this time, the late 1920s, mine managers in general were accommodated in the supporting town rather than at the mine. (Criterion 6.2)

## **12.3 CONDITION**

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* has been maintained to reasonable standards throughout its life. Without the constant care required for a garden of the type that flourished in the 1930s, the lush gardens have been completely lost. Ground levels immediately around the house have accreted, resulting in some loss of underfloor venting. Further, reactive ground conditions have caused much cracking in the surrounding verandah floor slab. A local structural problem has developed, probably as a result of over watering of adjacent lawns and damp travelling under the north-east verandah slab and up into the mud block walls. The mud blocks in this area have decayed and plasters have lost adhesion. Several cracks have developed as a result. The roof is fixed with springhead nails, and it is likely that the old timber purlins have dried out, so that nails no longer have a proper purchase, resulting in some loose sheeting. Some of the carpentry in the roof framing is beginning to part company as a result of shrinkage of members. However, the place is in quite good condition, these defects aside.

## **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* remains in use as a residence. It is used for single staff members rather than a family home, but the original functions of the house remain quite clear. The current use is compatible with the original intent of the house and is a benign use with respect to integrity. Overall the place retains a moderate degree of integrity.

*Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* was once part of a settlement precinct. The remaining evidence of the precinct comprises ruins and archaeological sites. There is no visual cohesion that would suggest that the place could be considered a precinct in an aesthetic sense.

## **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

The present form of *Mine Manager's House, Wiluna* is principally the result of the two major phases of construction. The grounds in their present state have little in common with the documentary evidence of the 1930s when the tennis court and gardens were in peak condition. The outbuildings comprising garage, maid's quarters, tank stands, and laundry have long been removed, leaving no surface traces of their locations. Various upgrades, minor room re-arrangements, and upgrades to finishes have altered the two phases of house construction in a variety of minor ways. The mud brick section has experienced very few changes internally and the framed section has been changed to a slightly greater extent. The changes to the exterior have been quite minor and include the partial enclosure of the northern

verandah to form a laundry. Overall the place retains a high degree of authenticity.

### **13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

Supporting evidence has been taken from 'The Lodge Conservation Plan', prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects with Robin Chinnery, historian, for Normandy Mining Limited, in November 2001.

Key sections used for the supporting evidence are: 1.0 Documentary Evidence (p1-59), 2.0 Physical Evidence (p 60-96), 3.0 Analysis of Documentary and Physical Evidence (p97-101).

#### **13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

For an analysis of the Documentary Evidence, refer to 'The Lodge Conservation Plan', prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects with Robin Chinnery, historian, for Normandy Mining Limited, in November 2001.

#### **13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

For an analysis of the Physical Evidence, refer to 'The Lodge Conservation Plan', prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects with Robin Chinnery, historian, for Normandy Mining Limited, in November 2001.

#### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

For a Comparative Analysis, refer to 'The Lodge Conservation Plan', prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects with Robin Chinnery, historian, for Normandy Mining Limited, in November 2001.

#### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

'The Lodge Conservation Plan', prepared by Considine & Griffiths Architects with Robin Chinnery, historian, for Normandy Mining Limited, in November 2001.

#### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

The precise nature and timing of all changes are not known. The development of the place is poorly documented and it is open to question whether or not further research would reveal further information. It is unlikely that further research would contribute greatly to the understanding of the place or its conservation, though it would be beneficial for interpretation. The lack of accurate and detailed information on development and change is not an impediment to assessing significance. There have been no invasive investigations, so colour schemes through time have not been ascertained in detail at this stage. Although some areas, such as the internal joinery, appear to have retained their original finishes.