



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## 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.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 3.12.5 Retailing food and beverages
- 3.22 Lodging people
- 4.6 Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities
- 8.1 Organising recreation
- 8.4 Eating and drinking
- 8.5.1 Preserving traditions and group memories
- 8.8 Remembering the fallen

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

- 110 Resource exploitation and depletion
- 111 Depression and boom
- 311 Hospitality industry and tourism

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* is an excellent example of a two-storey hotel designed in the Federation Free Classical style, which retains much of the original stucco detailing in its facade. (Criterion 1.1)

Together with Cremorne Hotel (fmr) and Moran's Store (fmr), *Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* forms an eastern entry to Coolgardie as the first substantial buildings as Great Eastern Highway enters the town and becomes Bayley Street, with its ornamental stuccoed front elevation contributing to its landmark value. (Criterion 1.3)

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* contributes to the historic streetscape of Bayley Street, Coolgardie, the main street of a National Trust-recognised 'historic town', as one of a number of substantial, finely designed Federation-era buildings in central Coolgardie. (Criterion 1.4)

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

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

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

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* provides evidence of the importance of Coolgardie in the region during the 1890s gold boom on the eastern goldfields, as one of the remaining substantial buildings in what was a thriving main street of the region's social, administrative and business centre prior to the establishment of Kalgoorlie. (Criterion 2.1)

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* is indicative of the speed with which Coolgardie developed following the discovery of gold in the area in 1893, having been built in 1897 to replace a hotel dating from the town's earliest days (c.1892). (Criterion 2.1)

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* provides evidence of the boom and bust nature of Coolgardie's development and the impact of the emergence of Kalgoorlie from 1896 as the major centre for the region, as one of four former hotels in a town which at its gold-boom peak in the 1890s boasted 26 hotels and now has only one continuing to trade as a hotel. (Criterion 2.2)

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* appears to have been constructed in response to tightening building regulations following concerns about intemperance and immorality in Coolgardie, amid protest from the general public at the large number of licensed premises in the town, and was delicensed and closed in 1927 as a result of a statewide campaign to reduce the number of publican's licenses, demonstrating the contested role of public bars in the social fabric of the community. (Criterion 2.2)

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

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* has potential to yield information, through archaeological investigation of former outbuildings, remains of the earlier hotel on the site, and sub-surface/floor deposits, contributing to an understanding of the history of Coolgardie, life on the eastern goldfields, and the material culture of the late nineteenth- early twentieth-century. (Criterion 3.2)

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

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* is valued by the Returned Services League as their headquarters in Coolgardie since the 1960s, and has been an annual venue for ANZAC and Remembrance Day services since this time. (Criterion 4.1)

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* is valued by the local and wider community as evidenced by its inclusion the Shire of Coolgardie's Municipal Inventory and for its role as a social venue for community functions, and contributes to the community's sense of place. (Criteria 4.1 & 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* is rare as a Federation-era hotel designed to make the most of the State liquor laws at the time by offering the minimum level of accommodation legally required, which was unusual and probably contributed to its closure in 1927. (Criteria 5.1 & 5.2)

## **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* is a good representative example of the Federation Free Classical style applied to a hotel building. (Criterion 6.1)

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* is representative of the rapid expansion of hotel numbers in Coolgardie in response to the gold boom of the 1890s. (Criterion 6.2)

## **12.3 CONDITION**

Overall the place is in poor condition. Exterior treatments are in some places in very poor condition and inappropriate cement-rich and concrete repairs are likely to be damaging the stone and brickwork. Interior features such as fireplaces, balusters and glazing are missing elements in several areas.

## **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* has moderate integrity. Half of the ground floor remains occupied for a community purpose, but the remainder of the building is vacant. The place's previous use as a hotel is not easily readable as fittings relating to this function have largely been lost.

## **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

*Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* has high authenticity as it retains most of its original built fabric, albeit in poor condition. Exterior detailing in particular has been largely retained. Interior changes such as the creation of a kitchen, laundry and bathroom on the first floor, and partitioning of the stairwell, are easily identifiable and reversible.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

This document has been based on 'Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie: Conservation Plan', prepared for the Returned Services League of Australia (WA Branch) Inc by Philip Griffiths and Emma Hewitt in December 2009, with amendments and/or additions by Office of Heritage staff and the Register Committee.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to 'Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie: Conservation Plan', prepared for the Returned Services League of Australia (WA Branch) Inc by Philip Griffiths and Emma Hewitt in December 2009.

Additional documentary evidence has been compiled by State Heritage Office staff:

From the beginning of European settlement in Western Australia, legislation governing licensed premises dictated that places registered to provide liquor must also provide accommodation. In 1832, legislation ruled that at least one sitting room and one bedroom must be provided by a publican, as well as stabling for travellers' horses. In 1856, this was extended to a requirement for two sitting and two sleeping rooms, and provision for at least six horses and twelve bullocks. The 1911 *Licensing Act*, introduced in an attempt to stem the proliferation of licensed premises especially on the goldfields, maintained these requirements, although the provision for bullocks was removed.<sup>1</sup>

As *Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie* was granted a publican's license in 1898, it can be surmised that the two bedrooms on the first floor were available to lodgers, and the licensee was accommodated within the large single-room apartment west of the first floor hallway. However, no provision for separate sitting rooms appears to have been made, unless the ground floor shop was used for this purpose. Changes to the *Licensing Act* in 1922, following a Royal Commission into licensing, stipulated that no publican's license would be renewed after 1927 if premises did not provide at least six bedrooms for accommodation, or twelve bedrooms for places within the City of Perth or the Town of Fremantle.<sup>2</sup> As the layout of the building provides for only two bedrooms, it seems likely that the reason the place ceased trading in 1927 was its inability to meet the new provisions.

#### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence, refer to 'Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie: Conservation Plan', prepared for the Returned Services League of Australia (WA Branch) Inc by Philip Griffiths and Emma Hewitt in December 2009.

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<sup>1</sup> Julia Ball, David Kelsall & John Pidgeon, 'Statewide Survey of Hotels 1829-1939 Southern Region , Western Australia', prepared for the National Trust in November 1997, Vol.1. pp.2-3, 14-15, 25.

<sup>2</sup> Julia Ball, David Kelsall & John Pidgeon, 'Statewide Survey of Hotels 1829-1939 Southern Region , Western Australia', prepared for the National Trust in November 1997, Vol.1. p.38.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the comparative information, refer to 'Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie: Conservation Plan', prepared for the Returned Services League of Australia (WA Branch) Inc by Philip Griffiths and Emma Hewitt in December 2009.

Additional comparative information has been compiled by State Heritage Office staff:

Of the 49 registered places constructed between 1890 and 1914 that include a hotel function, almost all are larger than *Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie*. While it is not possible to determine from the database whether these all provided substantial accommodation in their original design, their scale makes it very likely that they did. Of the five places that appear to be similar in size or smaller than *Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie*, only two may have provided little accommodation in their original designs: P01321 *British Arms Hotel (fmr), Kalgoorlie*, (1899) which was delicensed in 1924, where original large rooms were divided to allow the place to function as a boarding house from the 1920s; and, P03954 *Ironclad Hotel, Marble Bar* (1892), where the original building does not appear to have had provision for lodgers. However, its continued trading after tighter regulations about the provision of accommodation from 1927 indicates accommodation was provided, and may have been in a separate building, later replaced by the transportable accommodation units now on site.

The Statewide Survey of Hotels notes the location of 18 former hotels in Coolgardie, only four of which are extant, and states that 'at least 23 hotels were thought to have operated in Coolgardie'.<sup>3</sup>

### 13.4 KEY REFERENCES

For a discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to 'Marvel Bar Hotel (fmr), Coolgardie: Conservation Plan', prepared for the Returned Services League of Australia (WA Branch) Inc by Philip Griffiths and Emma Hewitt in December 2009.

### 13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

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<sup>3</sup> Julia Ball, David Kelsall & John Pidgeon, 'Statewide Survey of Hotels 1829-1939 Southern Region, Western Australia', prepared for the National Trust in November 1997, Vol.2. (entry re Coolgardie, no page numbers)