



**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)

- 3.4.3 Mining
- 3.18.2 Banking and lending
- 5.4 Working in offices
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 107 Settlements
- 303 Mining
- 308 Commercial services and industries

11. 1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie is a distinctive and well-designed building in the Federation Free Classical style, constructed from local materials and retaining much of its original and ornate interior detailing, such as pressed metal ceilings with richly decorated cornices. (Criterion 1.1)

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie achieves artistic excellence and demonstrates Hobbs creative achievement in adapting the Federation Free Classical style for a hot dry climate by his use of deep arcades and verandahs. (Criterion 1.2)

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie makes a significant contribution to the historic Hannan Street streetscape, which along with many other key administrative and civic buildings forms one of Western Australia's finest streetscapes. (Criterion 1.4)

* 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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.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

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie is closely associated with the development of banking facilities in the goldfields in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. (Criterion 2.1)

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie is a mark of the expansion and prosperity of Kalgoorlie at the turn of the 20th century. It is representative of the boom time in a gold mining town where the solidity of a building was held to represent confidence in the future townsite. (Criterion 2.2)

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie was constructed by the Western Australian Bank, which had been providing banking facilities in the State since 1841, and was the first bank to be established in Kalgoorlie. (Criterion 2.2)

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie has been associated with a number of State government and State commercial groups, including the Western Australian Bank, the Bank of New South Wales, Perth Mint, the State Housing Office, and the Department of Sport and Recreation. (Criterion 2.2)

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie was designed by prominent Western Australian architect Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs. (Criterion 2.3)

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie utilised a number of innovative techniques to combat the hot, dry climate of Kalgoorlie, including dust-proof ventilators, window gearing and the use of a vestibule. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4 SOCIAL VALUE

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie has been a significant and integral element on Hannan Street since 1900, and contributes to the local community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1 RARITY

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie is a rare example of a bank building retaining original interior elements of Hobbs' interior design. (Criterion 5.2)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie is representative of the once common practice of constructing banks with integrated manager's residences. (Criterion 6.2)

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie is fine representative example of the work of Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs and one in which classical design principles have been adapted to suit climatic conditions. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The place is essentially in good condition, although building maintenance and conservation measures are required.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Notwithstanding the changes that have been made to make the place suitable for alternative use, *Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie* remains legible as a bank and manager's residence. *Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie* is capable of sustaining its values with good conservation practice and sensitive adaptive re-use. The place retains a moderate to high degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The exterior of *Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie* is almost entirely authentic with adaptive changes including a ramp, modifications to finishes and some opening treatments. The interior layout has been altered slightly through the removal of partitions and fireplace mantles and surrounds have also been removed. However, the remaining fabric is largely authentic. The place retains a moderate to high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Griffiths Architects with historian Eddie Marcus in February 2013, with amendments and/or additions by State Heritage Office staff and the Register Committee.

13. 1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie is a two storey stone, brick and Marseilles pattern tile and corrugated iron roof building designed in the Federation Free Classical style, with minor rear additions. The building was the third built by the Western Australian Bank in Kalgoorlie.

In the early part of June 1893, Patrick 'Paddy' Hannan and Tom Flanagan, two of the members of a prospecting party on their way to Mount Youle, ran short of water and camped at Mount Charlotte, while the remainder of the party went on. On June 15 Hannan and Flanagan found alluvial gold. Only a few small specks were picked up at first, but in the course of a few days they secured over 100 ounces.¹

The news that Hannan had discovered a new goldfield travelled quickly and Coolgardie was almost deserted for the new find. Within days, around 1,000 men were engaged prospecting around Hannan's Find. Later that year, gold reefs were located three miles south of Hannan's Find, at what was to become Boulder.²

A camp quickly developed at Hannan's, with bough huts and hessian and canvas structures erected along the edge of the track from Coolgardie. Many of these structures housed businesses to serve the prospectors who flocked to the area. On 4 September 1894, Hannan's Find was declared the townsite of Kalgoorlie, although the original name persisted for some years afterwards. The track from Coolgardie became the main street and was named Hannan Street.³

With the establishment of the town site, the second phase of building along Hannan Street began. This was facilitated by the arrival of the Eastern Goldfields railway line in September 1896, which made the transport of more substantial building materials easier. The original structures were replaced with timber-framed buildings clad in galvanised iron, lined internally with hessian or canvas.

These early buildings presented a very real fire hazard, and there were a number of fires in Hannan Street over the ensuing years. Consequently, between 1898 and 1908, substantial brick buildings replaced the commercial

¹ 'Anniversary of Kalgoorlie', *West Australian*, 15 June 1933, p. 16

² Webb, M. & A., *Golden Destiny: The Centenary History of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the Eastern Goldfields of WA*, 2 vols., (Perth, 1995), p. 91; King, Norma, *The Voice of the Goldfields: 100 Years of the 'Kalgoorlie Miner'*, p. 15; Kalgoorlie-Boulder Tourist Centre, 'Our Golden Heritage: A Heritage Walk Along Hannan Street' (June 1995), pp. 2-4; King Norma, 'When Hannan Street was Young' (1976)

³ 'Anniversary of Kalgoorlie', *West Australian*, 15 June 1933, p. 16

timber and iron and hessian structures in the town centre, although timber and iron residences remained.⁴

Early banking in Western Australia

Following their arrival, the capital the Swan River colonists brought with them was quickly expended paying for necessities to be sent from England. Even if their farm and stock were increasing in value, it remained difficult for colonists to obtain currency, except from individual financiers at the 'colonial rate' of 20 to 25 per cent, a level which carried 'inevitable ruin'. As a consequence, promissory notes formed the general currency of the fledgling colony, with trade mostly a system of barter.⁵

In 1832 a prospectus was issued by '25 responsible persons' for the establishment of a bank, and Governor Stirling asked for an advance of £5,000 from the Treasury. In keeping with a policy of avoiding expense, Stirling suggested that the colonists should raise the money by private subscription. However, as the colonists were all borrowers, the suggestion was impractical.⁶

An effort was made by the Agricultural Society to systematise the exchange of promissory notes by the establishment of the Swan River Barter Society. In 1833 members of the Society were offered promissory notes with a face value of £1, with each member agreeing to accept these in lieu of cash. However, the system does not appear to have lasted.⁷ Even so, bartering remained the main way of exchanging goods and services until the 1890s.⁸

The first bank to operate in the colony was the Bank of Western Australia, established in 1837. The directors were all prominent businessmen and landowners and included, among others, George Leake and William Locke Brockman.⁹ However, the Bank of Western Australia lasted only four years before it was absorbed by the Bank of Australasia, which had been founded in Melbourne. The Australasia opened a branch in Pier Street, Perth in 1841.¹⁰

The Western Australian Bank

Some of the shareholders of the Bank of Western Australia were dissatisfied with the terms of the absorption and immediately established a rival institution, the Western Australian Bank, with a local directorate.¹¹ Among directors were

4 Webb, *Golden Destiny*, pp. 430-32, 540

5 Kimberly, W. B., *History of West Australia: A Narrative of Her Past Together with Biographies of Her Leading Men* (Melbourne, 1897), p. 88; Battye, J. S., 'Echoes of the Past: The Genesis of Banking', *West Australian*, 16 February 1923, p. 6

6 Kimberly, *History of West Australia*, p. 88;

7 'Foundation of Banking', *West Australian*, 5 January 1933, p. 47; Kimberly, *History of West Australia*, p. 88; Battye, 'Echoes of the Past', p. 6

8 'Foundation of Banking', *West Australian*, 5 January 1933, p. 47

9 Ball, J., D. Kelsall, & J. Pidgeon, 'Statewide Survey of Banks, 1829-1939, Southern Region, Western Australia', prepared for the National Trust of Australia (WA), November 1997, p. 3

10 *Perth Gazette*, 8 May 1841, p. 2; 'Fifty Years Ago', *Sunday Times*, 16 August 1908, p. 1

11 The Bank of Western Australia and the Western Australian Bank have been frequently (if understandably) confused, leading to the wrong establishment date of the latter. A more general

John Septimus Roe and George Frederick Stone, while R. Wells was appointed the first Manager-Cashier, who was also a sort of nightwatchman, as he was forbidden to leave the bank premises at night without the permission of the Board.¹² In 1844 the bank issued its first notes which have been described as being of 'an assuming design'.¹³

The available business was insufficient to warrant two banks and in 1845 the Bank of Australasia withdrew its representation from the colony.¹⁴ The opposition to the Australasian from prominent colonialists may also have been a factor, and it did not re-enter the Western Australia market until the gold boom of the 1890s, leaving the WA Bank with a clear field for more than two decades.¹⁵

The Western Australian Bank's first premises were situated in a former private house at the corner of St. George's Terrace and Pier Street, now the site of St. Andrews Church. When the Bank of Australasia ceased operations the Western Australian Bank moved into its rival's more spacious premises. When these became insufficient for the Bank's expanding needs, new premises were built on the south-east corner of St. George's Terrace and William Street.¹⁶

In July 1869, the Western Australian Bank had a staff of five but there were still no branches. The Bank opened its first branch at Geraldton in 1876 and by 1892 had seven branches, rising to twenty by 1896.¹⁷

The discovery of gold in 1893 attracted a large amount of investment in mining ventures, with most of this investment coming from outside of Western Australia. Fortune seekers flooding into the State at this time brought with them little or no capital, however, the process of deep mining required investment from highly capitalised companies, which eventually resulted in a colony rich in monetary capital. This combined with the development of the railways and the extension of the line to Kalgoorlie in 1897 saw a period of unprecedented economic growth in the Goldfields,¹⁸ necessitating the establishment and expansion of a reliable banking system.

In July 1894, it was announced that a branch of the Western Australian Bank had opened at Hannan's, as Kalgoorlie was still known.¹⁹ The opening of the first bank in town was welcomed as a 'great convenience', which was 'being

overview of early banking in Western Australia can be found at 'Foundation of Banking', *West Australian*, 5 January 1933, p. 47

12 Battye, J. S., *The Cyclopedia of Western Australia* (Adelaide, 1912), v. 1, p. 610

13 For more details on early notes, see 'The Unissued One Pound Notes of the Western Australian Bank from 1844' (November 2012), www.sterlingcurrency.com.au (accessed 2 January 2013)

14 'Foundation of Banking Western Australian Bank', *West Australian*, 5 January 1933, p. 47

15 Battye, J. S., *The Cyclopedia of Western Australia* (Adelaide, 1912), v. 1, p. 610; Suter, I. M., 'The Bank in Western Australia', *The Etruscan*, 16.1 (March 1967), pp. 8-12

16 Suter, 'The Bank in Western Australia'

17 Battye, *Cyclopedia*, p. 612

18 *An Economic History of Western Australia Since Colonial Settlement: 175th Anniversary of Colonial Settlement 1829-2004*. Research Paper, Department of Treasury & Finance, December 2004, p.9.

19 'News and Notes', *West Australian*, 5 July 1894, p. 4; 'Advertising', *Daily News*, 16 July 1894, p. 3. The branch name was altered to Kalgoorlie in early 1895 to meet with postal regulations ('Commercial News', *West Australian*, 17 January 1895, p. 4).

largely availed of'.²⁰ Although described as being housed in a 'primitive galvanised iron premises',²¹ later in 1894 the Bank was praised for setting a good example by erecting one of the first verandahs in town. It was hoped that other businesses would follow suit.²²

On 20 October 1895, the Western Australian Bank obtained title to Kalgoorlie Town Lots 44 and 45.²³

The Western Australian Bank, which had also been the first financial institution in Coolgardie, upgraded its building in that townsite in March 1895. The new premises, situated at the corner of Ford and Bayley Streets, was constructed of painted jarrah, lined with galvanised iron. It was noted, however, that despite the economic boom, the local bank was failing to construct 'palatial monuments' like its Melbourne rivals.²⁴

The success of the Western Australian Bank at Kalgoorlie was such, that by early 1896, it had relocated to new premises adjoining the 1894 building. The improved facilities, although still constructed of timber and iron, were described as 'entirely suited to the convenience of the large and increasing business of the bank'.²⁵

A destructive fire in October 1896, consumed several premises, and required a special effort to save the Western Australian Bank, which necessitated its 'ornamental but dangerous' wooden parapet to be cut away to prevent it catching fire.²⁶

In 1898, the Bank of New South Wales erected new premises on the corner of Maritana and Brookman Streets. The Bank of Australasia already occupied a stone building next door, while next door again, the Australia Hotel, on the corner of Hannan Street, was being erected. The National Bank of Australasia also intended putting up impressive banking premises on the same strip.²⁷

The risk of fire for a timber building, as well as the profitability of the branch and imposing new buildings by rivals, meant that by mid-1899, new less flammable premises were proposed for the Western Australian Bank. This was to be a 'substantial masonry structure of liberal proportions and of up to date design'. By March 1900, the wood and iron building had been relocated to the back of the Bank's land, leaving the front part clear for the erection of the new building.²⁸

20 'Mining Intelligence', *West Australian*, 1 August 1894, p. 2

21 'Items of News', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 28 May 1897, p. 2

22 *Western Argus*, 15 December 1894, p. 2

23 Certificate of Title, vol 74, fol 184

24 'General News', *Daily News*, 19 March 1895, p. 2

25 'Items of News', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 31 January 1896, p. 2

26 'Destructive Fire at Kalgoorlie', *West Australian*, 23 October 1896, p. 5; 'Fire at Kalgoorlie', *Daily News*, 23 October 1896, p. 3

27 'Bank of New South Wales', *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 24 February 1898, p. 34

28 'Items of News', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 14 June 1899, p. 4; 'Items of News', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 21 March 1900, p. 4,

The new Bank building was constructed by J. D. Connolly, of Kalgoorlie, from plans drawn up by Joseph John (J. J.) Talbot Hobbs, with A. Barratt being the clerk of works.²⁹

Talbot Hobbs (b. 1864, London, arr. Perth 1887), worked as an architectural draftsman with builder, John Hurst, with whom he migrated to Western Australia in 1887, and whose daughter, Edith Ann, he later married in 1890. After initially working as a carpenter, Hobbs set up practice as an architect. In 1891, he won the design competition for the *Weld Club* in Barrack Street, Perth. Thereafter, he prospered and 'became a leader in the small band of Perth architects', serving as treasurer of the newly formed West Australian Institute of Architects (1896) and later as its president (1909-11). From 1905, he was senior partner in the firm of architects Hobbs, Smith & Forbes.³⁰

As was common at the time, the newspaper reports gave a detailed description of the new building:

The outside appearance from Hannan-street is massive and bold. From the granite base to the projecting cornice forming the eaves of the tiled roof all has a look of strength and repose. The fact of the main building being 8ft back from the street gives deep shadow, as well as the balcony, with a cemented balustrade, and on the ground floor forms a piazza, which is floored with Minton tiles, laid to a suitable pattern, and makes a tempting shelter from the sun and dust. The thing required to render the street elevation complete is the very heavy cast iron railing and gates which are being inserted. The granite is from the quarry at Bulla-Bulling, and is of first-class texture and quality. The white stone is local, and the bricks are from the well-known kilns of Messrs Dyke and Ridgway, of Coolgardie.

On entering the building one is at once struck with the handsome and elaborate character of the interior. The sliding doors being pushed back into the recess formed for their reception, during the day, we are confronted by a pair of swing doors, which give access to the vestibule, while another pair lead from the vestibule to the banking chamber. Here every convenience for the public as well as for the bank officials is provided. All the wood work is constructed of cedar, and is resplendent with French polish, which glitters like glass. A closer examination shows that while the whole of the fittings are beautiful, some of the panels are exceptionally fine in grain and figure. But as we are liable to tire of glitter, and admire variety, we instinctively turn our eyes to the ceiling, and instead of brightness we have soft colors, beautifully blended, with just sufficient gold leaf to throw the other parts into relief.

The building is fitted throughout with Boyle's patent dust-proof ventilators, patent window gearing, and many other of the latest improvements. But the charm par excellence to officials and customers is the delicious coolness which naturally appertains to a chamber 68ft. long, 40ft. wide, and 17ft. high, where every possible precaution has been taken to keep out the dust and heat, and to admit and circulate a free current of fresh air.

The strong room is large and lofty, well ventilated, and fitted with one of Chubb's doors, which is so finely adjusted that, although it weighs somewhere about half a ton, it opens and shuts as easily as an ordinary house door, always provided the key is available, for to enter that room without first obtaining the key looks to be a physical impossibility.

²⁹ 'Kalgoorlie Buildings', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 26 November 1900, p. 7

³⁰ For more details on Talbot Hobbs, see State Heritage Office Assessment for *Lt Gen Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* (2005); and, A. J. Hill, 'Hobbs, Sir Joseph John Talbot (1864–1938)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Australian National University, 1983)

The manager's room is so cool and comfortable that it must be quite a privilege to enter it to talk about an overdraft or negotiate a little bill.³¹

Considered one of the most substantial buildings yet constructed on Hannan Street, the new edifice was seen as evidence that the Bank had confidence in Kalgoorlie's future prospects.³²

Many substantial buildings in Kalgoorlie were constructed at this time using the 'local white stone' mentioned above. Within a very short space of time, the stone was everywhere showing severe signs of erosion, necessitating its removal. The Kalgoorlie stone was determined to be 95 per cent clay (while the harder Donnybrook Stone was 97 per cent silica).³³ As a result, in 1903, the Western Australian Bank in Hannan Street was obliged to remove the original stone pillars from the street frontage and replace these with brick. This was described at the time as a 'rather difficult work'.³⁴ Photographs show that the new façade was completed by June 1903.

By 1896, five additional major banks had established and consolidated their positions in the State. The National Bank of Australasia, the Union Bank of Australia, the Bank of New South Wales, the Commercial Bank of Australia, and the Agricultural Bank, all had Head Offices on St George's Terrace, with branches in major towns.³⁵

The turn of the century saw a period of consolidation for the State and between 1902 and 1912 the Western Australian Bank opened 23 branches mainly in agricultural areas. However, the success that made the Bank prosperous eventually overwhelmed it. To meet the ever increasing demand, the Bank made successive increases of capital but with financial interests in only one State its resources were limited.³⁶

Negotiations for amalgamation with the Commonwealth Bank were commenced but were broken off in 1920. In 1925, Alfred Davidson was sent from New Zealand to manage the Perth branch of the Bank of New South Wales. In October 1926 he resigned to take over the position of General Manager of the Western Australian Bank and on 29 March 1927 he organised the amalgamation of the two banks.³⁷ At the time of amalgamation, the Western Australian Bank had 82 branches and sub-branches against a Bank of New South Wales representation of eighteen.³⁸

On 25 June 1927, Kalgoorlie Town Lots 44 and 45 were transferred to the Bank of New South Wales.³⁹

An undated plan, but probably 1960s, shows proposed brick toilets to be added to the exterior of the Bank. These were designed by local architect, Bruce Williams, and appear to have been constructed as designed.⁴⁰

31 'Kalgoorlie Buildings', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 26 November 1900, p. 7

32 'Kalgoorlie Buildings', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 26 November 1900, p. 7

33 'Donnybrook Stone', *West Australian*, 15 May 1902, p. 7

34 'Items of News', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 19 January 1903, p. 4

35 Ball *et al*, 'Survey of Banks', pp. 11-14; *Wise's Post Office Directory* (1896)

36 Suter, I. M., 'The Bank in Western Australia', *The Etruscan*, 16.1 (March 1967), pp. 8-12

37 Richmond, Barbara, 'The Western Australian Bank', *The Etruscan*, 6.3 (December 1956), p. 6

38 Suter, I. M., 'The Bank in Western Australia', *The Etruscan*, 16.1 (March 1967), pp. 8-12

39 Certificate of Title, vol 1020, fol 695

In 1980, a carport was proposed for erection behind the Bank premises.⁴¹ Aerial photographs suggest that this was constructed.

A plan prepared by G. J. Looten, Consulting Chartered Engineers dated March 1987 shows the carport in place and extensive internal alterations including the removal of fireplaces, changes to the front doors, a new counter and all of the partition works at ground and first floor, the removal of two French doors onto the balcony and their replacement with windows, insertion of air conditioning units in fanlights, additional bars to windows, new kitchens, and refurbishment of the first floor verandah boards.⁴²

Lot 45 (by now renumbered to Lot 904) was transferred to the Western Australian Mint on 20 January 1988. The Mint had opened a small refinery, subsequently closed in 1995, in Kalgoorlie.⁴³

In March 1995 Lot 904 was obtained by the State Housing Commission, who utilised the place as a regional office until 2003.

Undated, but probably mid-1990s, plans for the universal access ramp located at the front of the building, show that a window opening was to be extended to floor level to create a new entrance.⁴⁴

In 2003, the State Housing Commission leased the former bank building to the Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR). They continue to occupy the place in 2013.

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie is a two storey stone and brick building with a Marseilles pattern tile and corrugated iron roof, designed in the Federation Free Classical style, with minor rear additions.⁴⁵

Hannan Street contains Kalgoorlie's main commercial and civic buildings, most of which date between the late 1890s and before 1910. The collection of buildings in the wide street setting make up an important historic Western Australian streetscape, built over a relatively short period of time. Notwithstanding alterations and the occasional replacement buildings, this historic streetscape remains very strong and visually cohesive.

Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie is located in Hannan Street, between Maritana and Porter streets, on the north side of the street, and is one of this street-block's more imposing and substantial buildings. It is also conspicuous as an institutional building set amongst commercial neighbours, with its arcaded front, rather than having an attached awning or verandah.

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- 40 DWG No 69-12-W1, copy held by City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- 41 Plan, Application No. 1084, 17 June 1980, for Bank of NSW, copy held by City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- 42 Drawing courtesy of City Kalgoorlie Boulder and is one of five sheets prepared by G. J. Looten in March 1987. The city would only release one sheet of the five.
- 43 'The Perth Mint', Supplement 2012, goldbarsworldwide.com (accessed 3 January 2012)
- 44 Undated plans (reference numbers missing) held by City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. However, see plan drawn up by Design Works Kalgoorlie, 10 July 2003, copy held by Department of Housing which does not show the universal access ramp.
- 45 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. pp104-107

Other important landmark buildings in the street include the *Kalgoorlie Town Hall*, the *City Markets*, *Government Buildings*, *Kalgoorlie Miner Building*, *McKenzie Building*, *Palace* and *Exchange Hotels*.

Exterior

Western Australian Bank (fmr), *Kalgoorlie* comprises a former bank on the ground floor and manager's accommodation on the second floor. The front elevation of the building is symmetrically composed in the Federation Free Classical style, with the key features being a generous arcade at ground floor carried on rusticated piers and a deep verandah at first floor. The front walls of the bank chamber and manager's accommodation are set behind these elements and fall in deep shadow. Additions to the rear include a toilet block (1960s), carport (1980s) and sheds (n.d.).

The front façade is set on a painted weathered granite base and Donnybrook sandstone and granite steps with rusticated black tuck pointed English bond brick piers carrying impostes that are decoratively treated with acanthus leaves, above which are three rendered arches with archivaults. The panels between arches are infilled with brick and the ground floor wall completed with an entablature that is now partly covered with a metal sign that reads 'Department of Sport and Recreation'. Between the arches, cast iron palisades and gates secure the arcade. A concrete disabled access ramp has been fitted to the front of the building and is a visually intrusive element. At first floor level, there is a rendered balustrade, with decorative square balusters and handrail between piers. The piers extend up to capitals in English bond brick. The capitals comprise two parts starting with a fluted shaft and completed with a stylised ionic top. The columns are topped with a deep rendered entablature with the words 'Western Australian Bank' in bas-relief. The latter is now painted in with the entablature, rather than contrasting as it did historically. Deep rendered corbels capture the entablature and the roof eaves are bracketed over the entablature with timber consoles. The Marseilles pattern tiled roof is contained by rendered and weathered parapets, from which extend brick chimneys with rendered chimney caps. The roof is distinguished by crested ridge tiles, a deep timber fascia bracketed off the walls with consoles, and ogee gutter.

The wall plane and the ground floor reflect the front arcade with arched window and door openings set off a stringcourse set higher than the impostes. Within the archivault to openings, triple-header brick arches are formed with rubbed brick voussoirs and sills are of granite. Windows are double hung sashes with hopper lights and the front door has a comparatively recent automatic bi-parting aluminium framed door. The upper floor is more plainly treated with French doors and windows with hopper lights set into English bond brick walls, over-coated with an 'oxblood' stain. Two of the French doors have been converted to windows. There are grilles set over all openings other than the front door.

The arcade floor has a reproduction federation-style tiled floor replacing the original 'Minton' tiles with a ramp up to the entrance doors, while the soffit is an intact pressed metal ceiling with deep pressed metal cornice. The bricks are Dyke and Ridgeway, manufactured in Coolgardie and have a surface treatment that involved colour-washing to achieve a desired effect. This effect

was usually achieved by using a technique that involved mixing glue size and mordants, and the treatment can still be seen in sheltered areas of the arcade.⁴⁶

The verandah floor is timber construction and the soffit treated to match the ground floor.

In terms of its composition and construction, this building has retained its distinctive and well resolved features that were lauded at the time of its completion. It is a finely designed and executed bank building.

The flanking walls are plain English bond brickwork, with only the rendered parapet caps and chimneys providing articulation. The rear portion of the building is single storey and comprises an original gabled roof section and a flat roofed toilet addition, with lean to carports and sheds running back to the rear boundary and the whole of the rear yard is bituminised.

The original section comprises a plain gabled stretcher bond brick wall with a rendered parapet cap and a set of four windows with hopper lights under a timber framed iron-roofed awning. An arch headed door has been adapted to make a connection to the toilets. The building extends from laneway to boundary and box gutters carry rainwater to the rear elevations rainwater hoppers.

It would appear that a lean-to structure was removed to create space for the flat roofed toilet. These are strictly utilitarian, with stretcher bond brick walls, aluminium windows and a fascia gutter.

There is some cracking, a number of metal wall vents are damaged and more importantly, there is evidence of the impact of brick erosion and salts suggesting rising damp in a number of locations.

Interior

There is a part basement, ground floor banking hall and strongroom, and manager's space at the first floor level. The additional toilets at the rear are accessible from the banking hall through an original door opening with a slate threshold.

The original section of the ground floor comprises a large banking hall, manager's office and vault all contained in masonry construction and a timber construction stair against the south wall, and two masonry construction fireplaces. The remainder of the walls comprise low height lightweight partitions of comparatively recent origin, with some sections of dropped ceiling. The wind lobby described in the documentary evidence has been removed, along with the solid timber entrance doors. Though originally described as being polychromatic with 'soft colours and gold leaf', the ceilings are now painted a uniform colour

The main feature of the banking hall is its coffered and pressed metal ceilings, with richly decorated heavy cornices, all of which use a range of classical decorative devices. Joinery that was described as cedar in the documentary evidence has since been painted over.

⁴⁶ *Journal of Architectural Conservation*: Vol 18 Number 2, July 2012

Walls are plain plaster finish, with patent wall ventilators, and all openings have decorative architraves. The doors into the manager's office are a pair of impressive 3 panel doors with an impressive and richly decorative architrave and entablature. Except for the strong room, the floors are jarrah boards with original 400mm high compound moulded skirtings. Presently carpets and vinyl flooring are fitted over the boards. The two fireplaces have been blocked in, but the breasts remain intact.

The strong room is brick construction on a concrete floor, with a rolled steel joist and concrete vaulted roof, and its door remains in place. The strong room walls have been extended up to the ceiling, impacting on its presentation to a minor degree. The change appears reversible.

Interiors are lit with contemporary fittings.

Notwithstanding the removal of detailing, temporary partitions, and over-painting of its features, the interiors retain their strong aesthetic value.

A narrow and crude stair accesses the basement which is located under the single storey section of the building to the rear of the strong room. It would appear that the walls were extended down at a later date and a concrete floor installed. The walls are concrete at the bottom and English bond brick above, with an exposed timber soffit. A damp proof course is located 7 courses up from the concrete and the brickwork below the damp proof course has suffered salt attack. There are jarrah construction shelves around the walls and many of these are labelled with the names of towns in the region. The basement does not extend the full length of the building, and natural ground levels are apparent towards the front of the building.

The first floor is accessed via a long timber stair from alongside the strong room. The stair has winders at the bottom, turned newel, timber handrail and timber balusters. It is most likely constructed in cedar. The stair is enclosed partly in brick and partly framed walls, with a pressed metal soffit. The top section of the stair has been modified.

The manager's residence is very modest in scale and extends over only a single room depth. The original plan of the manager's residence is no longer discernible, as all the original partitions have been removed and new plasterboard partitions inserted to suit the present arrangements. A mineral fibre tiled ceiling has been laid under the original ceiling, while walls are plaster, fireplaces blocked in and the French doors modified to become windows in two cases.

The rear toilets have vinyl-tiled floors, timber skirtings, plastered walls, lightweight partitions and plasterboard ceilings and the detailing is typical of the kind of work executed in the 1960s and 1970s.

The carport is simply framed in steel with a metal deck roof and the sheds are prefabricated metal.

13. 3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Banks constructed in the Federation Free Classical Style

There are 42 Banks on the State Heritage Office database that are designed in the Federation Free Classical style. Of these places, 11 are on the State

Register, and include places designed wholly or in part by Talbot Hobbs. The following places are most comparable to P1284 *Western Australian Bank, Kalgoorlie*;

- 00371 *WA Bank (fmr), Bunbury* (1896-1915): a two storey rendered brick building constructed in the Federation Free Classical style to a design by Talbot Hobbs.
- 00465 *ANZ Bank Building, Carnarvon* (1905); an elegant two storey brick building designed in the Federation Free Classical style, with metal clad awnings extending along the length of the building, either side of the portico, designed by Hobbs, Smith, and Forbes.
- 01352 *ANZ Building, Katanning* (1911): a two-storey brick bank building in the Federation Free Classical style with a single-storey section at the rear of brick, timber and asbestos construction, with a Marseilles tile roof, designed by Hobbs, Smith, and Forbes.
- 01817 *National Bank, Narrogin* (1906): single-storey brick, rendered and corrugated iron building, constructed in Federation Free Classical style to a design by architects Hobbs, Smith & Forbes.
- 01861 *ANZ Bank, Northam* (1905): two-storey rendered brick and tile building constructed in Federation Free Classical style for the Union Bank of Australia, to a plan by Hobbs, Smith & Forbes.
- 02368 *National Bank, Wagin* (1904); a two storey rendered brick and iron building designed in the federation Classical style, dominated by tall rectangular corbel chimneys by architects Hobbs, Smith & Forbes.
- 01872 *Bank of New South Wales (fmr), Northam* (1915) – a single storey rendered brick and iron building designed in the Federation Free Classical style.
- 02529 *Western Australian Bank (fmr), Midland* (1904) – a two storey red brick building with a tiled roof. The original front verandah has been replaced with a modern canopy.

There are four further banks in this style in the assessment program;

- 0064 *National Bank (fmr), Albany* (1881)
- 0899 *Union Bank (fmr) Fremantle* (1899)
- 00902 *Bank of New South Wales (fmr), Fremantle* (1892)
- 03573 *Bank of New South Wales (fmr) (1905), Boulder*

Sir Joseph John Talbot Hobbs

Following Federation, Hobbs' architectural work showed a wider recognition of broader Australian ideas and construction, yet he maintained a local distinctiveness in his designs, exemplified in efforts to utilise local building stones. Some of his better-known works that remain extant include the *Windsor Hotel, South Perth; Swan Brewery Complex; St Brigid's Group, Perth; St Alban's Church, Highgate; Dilhorn, Perth; The Weld Club; Newspaper House; The State War Memorial; Christ Church; Wilhelmsen House, Fremantle; Scots Presbyterian Church, Fremantle; Samson House,*

Fremantle, *Victoria Hall*, Fremantle, and St George's College, Crawley together with numerous banks.⁴⁷

Other Bank Buildings by Hobbs

The following places are taken from the State Heritage Office database and are representative of banks associated with architect Joseph John Talbot Hobbs:

- 00468 *Bank of New South Wales (fmr)*, Carnarvon (1929): a single-storey brick and iron building designed by Hobbs, Smith & Forbes.
- 00631 *Bank of New South Wales (fmr)*, Cue (1900): single-storey stone building built in 1900 as offices for the Western Australian Bank, to a design by Talbot Hobbs.
- 00909 Ouston's Buildings, Fremantle (1892): two-storey building designed by Talbot Hobbs as a branch of the Western Australian Bank.
- 01439 Bank of NSW (fmr), Lake Grace (1929)
- 02308 Western Australian Bank (fmr), Ravensthorpe (1908)
- 03638 Union Bank (fmr), Cue (1895): single-storey random rubble weathered granite building currently in use as a residence.
- 03738 Union Bank (fmr), Ravensthorpe (1906)
- 05572 Union Bank (fmr), Beverley (1907): two-storey well-appointed building with ornate, arched entrance.
- 15902 Western Australian Bank (fmr), Boulder (1897); part of P0172 Burt Street Precinct.
- 20899 Union Bank (fmr), Fremantle (1930): substantially intact commercial building.

Exteriors

Typically once the first ephemeral banks were replaced with permanent buildings, the new buildings expressed respectability, permanence and relative grandeur in their context. *Western Australian Bank (fmr), Kalgoorlie* is no exception to this principle.

Talbot Hobbs' style was broadly classical, employing forms and motifs that sought to express a strength and formality without directly mimicking the established classic architectural orders. P5572 Union Bank in Beverley typifies a Federation Free Classical style, which was carried on with P20899 Union Bank in Fremantle as well as the Bank of New South Wales branches in Carnarvon, Cue and Lake Grace, all designed in the Interwar Free Classical style. This approach was taken further in P2308 Western Australian Bank in Ravensthorpe, designed in a Federation Free style.

The exterior of these buildings represent well-designed and distinctive classically derived architecture and each is an important part of its town's or

⁴⁷ Taylor, J.J., *Joseph John Talbot Hobbs (1864-1938) and his Australian-English Architecture*, draft PhD thesis, Faculty of Architecture Landscape and Visual Arts, University of Western Australia, 2009. <http://www.architecture.com.au/i-cms?page=13453>

city's streetscape and gives us a sense of Hobbs significance as a Western Australian Architect.

Interiors

Of the banks and former banks listed above, information on interior development is only available for P468 *Bank of New South Wales (fmr)*, Carnarvon; P631 *Fmr Bank of New South Wales*, Cue; and P2308 *WA Bank & Quarters (fmr)*, Ravensthorpe.

The interior of these buildings have largely been modified by renovation or change in use, with only P631 *Fmr Bank of New South Wales*, Cue, containing some original material from the internal design. The retention of interior elements in *Western Australian Bank (fmr)*, *Kalgoorlie* is therefore considered to be a rare example of Hobbs' interior design.

13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

More research may be carried out on the character of Hobbs' interior design and the extent to which the interior elements in *Western Australian Bank (fmr)*, *Kalgoorlie* are typical of Hobbs' interior design approach.

More research may be carried out as to whether the original branch of the Western Australian Bank in Kalgoorlie was situated on the same lot as the *Western Australian Bank (fmr)* or was situated on an adjoining block.