



# Metropole Hotel

History & Cultural Heritage Significance



348-360 Ruthven Street Toowoomba

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# Metropole Hotel

History & Cultural Heritage Significance

2017

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## 1. Property Details

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Place Name: The Metropole Hotel (previously Hotel Metropole and Prince of Wales Hotel)

Address: 348-360 Ruthven Street, Toowoomba

RPD Lot 8 RP5235 Parish Drayton

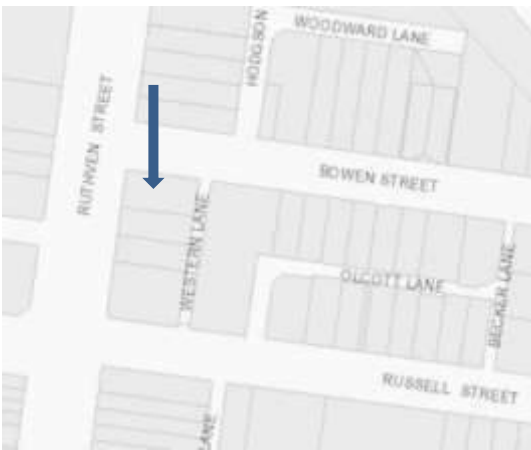
Toowoomba Regional Council Planning Scheme:

Precinct 2 – City Link Precinct

Railway Priority Development Area

Heritage Overlay

Schedule 6 Heritage Places Property ID 1/T00/0186



Locality Plan (Google Maps) 1



Aerial Image 2016 TRC Mapping 1



Streetscape view looking south east 1



## 2. Background to this Report

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This report is intended to provide a comprehensive history and statement of significance for the Metropole Hotel. Previous reports have been provided by Opus Consultants and Stephanie Keays Architects at various stages of the application process. For clarity and in response to a further request for information it was decided that the queries would be best addressed by compiling the information from previous reports into a single document. The history of the place, an assessment of its significance and its current condition are presented fully in this report in a logical progression from history to an examination of the building fabric and condition to an assessment of its cultural heritage significance.

Concern was raised by TRC that the previous “*Heritage Impact Assessment submitted on the cultural heritage significance of the local heritage place is incomplete and does not provide sufficient grounds for demolition.*” This report seeks to provide the full extent of information required to clearly demonstrate that demolition and replacement of the building for a similar use does not lead to the loss of the historic social connections the site represents.

As noted above the site is the subject of an application for demolition. Each of the reports have been produced to help understand the significance of the place and test the impacts of its removal. The key finding is that the building is important in the social context of Toowoomba’s development, but not for the building we find on the site today. The site had operated as a public hotel since the 1860’s and the proposal for an extension to the Toowoomba Sports Club on the site maintains this key element of its significance.

In examining the building itself; the changes that have occurred over time and its current condition, it became clear that the current Metropole building does not meet the threshold requirements to be of significance in itself. This is further expanded on in Sections 5 and 6, particularly Section 6.1. In Burra Charter terms *the significance is not embodied in the fabric of the place*, hence demolition does not lead to a loss of significance. Essentially as this proposal ensures the continuous use of the site as an entertainment venue the cultural values and significance of the place are retained.

The new building’s use ensures its historic context within the local area, community and streetscape are retained. As there is no loss of the cultural heritage significance, as per the assessment in this and previous reports, demolition can be supported.

It is not intended that this report will assess the design of the building proposed to be constructed on the site as this information has been addressed adequately in the previous reports. The consultant planner and design architects have also provided information as required in this regard. In following the general footprint and form of the existing building the proposed new building retains the overarching cultural heritage significance of the place and its identity within the streetscape.



### 3. The Hotel Metropole early history; 1860s-1950s

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The site on the corner of Ruthven and Bowen Street has been the home of various public houses since at least 1864. Degans Public house, named for its owner Peter Degan is noted in records held at the Toowoomba Historical Society and Local History Library. It operated until 1869-70 when Licensee T Stephens renamed it the Bowen Hotel. In 1894 Thomas Walsh became the licensee and renamed it the "Hotel Metropole." For a brief period it was renamed the Prince of Wales but quickly reverted back to the Hotel Metropole. Around 1923 it became known as the Metropole Hotel, as it is still known today.

A timeline of the hotel licensees and the various names the hotel on this site operated under is included below. Little is known of the earlier hotel and further research was outside the scope of this report. From the research undertaken it became clear that there were two key stages in the development of the current Metropole Hotel. The first stage was its construction in 1899, the second when major modernisation and extensions occurred in the early 1950s. Since that time only minor work to the interiors occurred. Hence the division of the history into two sections.

| Date and Hotel Name              | Licensee   |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1867-69 Degans Public House      | Peter Degan  |
| 1869-70 Bowen Hotel              | T Stephens   |
| 1874 Bowen Hotel                 | Thos Enwright  |
| 1874-81 Bowen Hotel              | Mary McGolldrick   |
| 1881-89 Bowen Hotel              | Thos Walsh   |
| 1889-1890 Bowen Hotel            | John O'Connor  |
| 1893 Bowen Hotel                 | Sarah O'Connor   |
| <b>1894-1908 Hotel Metropole</b> | <b>Thomas Walsh (briefly Prince of Wales Hotel c1895)</b>  |
| 1908-1911 Hotel Metropole        | Mrs MA Tyson (also recorded as seeling to Corbett) <sup>1</sup>  |
| 1911-1913 Hotel Metropole        | Mr PF Corbett  |
| 1914-1921 Metropole Hotel        | Joseph Redwood   |
| 1922-1923 Metropole Hotel        | William A Chamberlain  |
| 1923-1949 Metropole Hotel        | Alternates between Chamberlain, Redwood, Gosling, Duncan   |
| 1949 Metropole Hotel             | Passed in at auction – later reported as purchased by Mrs Angela Londy, Theodora Leondrakis, George Kentrotis, Peter Kentrosis |
| 1950s Metropole Hotel            | O'Doherty, Gosling, The Congregation of the Religious Sisters of Charity of Australia  |
| 1953 Metropole Hotel             | Angela Londy   |

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<sup>1</sup> *The Brisbane Courier, Saturday 28 October 1911, page 11*



With the coming of the railway to Toowoomba in 1867 the town became a major centre for employment and also an important stopping point for visitors. The hotels of this era provided accommodation for both visitors passing through, temporary accommodation for new settlers and rooms for boarders working in the area. As the town and demand grew so too did the facilities provided for visitors. Typically, their facilities included a public bar and restaurant, as well as parlours or sitting rooms for guests.

The two storey building we see today has developed from the one Thomas Walsh constructed on the site in 1899. Tenders were called for the building in February 1899 and accepted later that month. The notice for the closing of the tender provides us with details the architects being Marks & Sons and the builder H Andrew.

*"The tenders for the erection of a two-storey brick hotel for Mr. Thomas Walsh at the corner of Ruthven and Bowen streets, closed on Saturday, and that of Mr. H. Andrew was accepted. The contract price is \$1443, and the work is to be commissioned at once. Messrs. Marks & Son are the architects."*

By August 1899 the building had been completed and reports of the hotel's grand re-opening appeared in the *Improvements* section of the Toowoomba Chronicle and Darling Downs General Advertiser. The story features the headline "*Mr. T. Walsh's Hotel Metropole. A Splendid Structure*" and goes on to describe the building variously as "*stately, beautiful, well ventilated and excellently designed.*" A full copy of this article is included in the illustrations overleaf.

The newspaper story about the hotel opening also provide an insight into the importance of the building and its social and cultural connections within Toowoomba Society at that time.

*"On Wednesday night last Mr. T. Walsh celebrated the opening of his new hotel, The Hotel Metropole, by a dance at which upwards of 300 Invited guests were present. The whole of the large balcony was curtained in and the dancing thoroughly enjoyed, Mr. Ogilvie being M.C., while excellent music was supplied by Messrs. Weidemann and Thorn. The health of the popular proprietor, Mr. T. Walsh, was proposed by Mr. O'Sullivan of Warwick, and Mr. Munro, both gentlemen paying high tributes of praise to Mr. Walsh in his enterprise in erecting such a splendid hotel, and wishing him and his family every success. Mr. Walsh suitably responded. During the evening a number of songs were rendered and at early morning one of the most successful dances ever held in this town was brought to a close."*

## Improvements.

### MR. T. WALSH'S HOTEL METROPOLE.

#### A SPLENDID STRUCTURE.

As we remarked only very recently, the old land marks of Toowoomba are fast disappearing, and new and stately buildings taking their place. At the beginning of the month we noticed the disappearance of the old Travellers' Home Hotel and the erection of the Globe Hotel, and now we have to record the removal of another old house, the Bowen Hotel, and in its place is now erected a beautiful two-story hotel, re-named the Hotel Metropole. The old Bowen Hotel was erected somewhere about 1866 by Mr. Peter Degan, who kept it for a while, and then sold out to Mr. D. Donovan. After a time it ceased to be a hotel, and Dr. Armstrong occupied the building as a private residence for a few years. Mrs. McGoldrick eventually took the place, and secured a license again as the old Bowen Hotel. During Mrs. McGoldrick's term Mr. T. Walsh purchased the property from the Messrs. Beer, the then proprietor, and later ran the business himself. He retired from the business for a short time, but again took up the license, re-naming the hotel the Prince of Wales Hotel. Mr. Walsh's business began to increase at such a rate that he soon discovered the old premises were too small, in fact that they were out of date for present requirements. To Messrs. Marks and Son, Architects, Mr. Walsh gave the order to prepare plans and specifications for what he required, with the result that he approved of them and tenders were immediately called, the successful tenderer being Mr. H. Andrews. The building is now all but completed, and, through the courtesy of Mr. T. Walsh, we had the pleasure, on Thursday, of an inspection of this new hotel, which is without doubt a credit to the town and district.

The Hotel Metropole, as it has been christened, is excellently designed, all the rooms have abundance of light, and, what is of equal importance, they are all well ventilated. The main hall leading on to Ruthven-street is 7ft. by 9ft. wide, and on the left is a door leading into the bar, which is 17ft. x 18ft., the front door of the bar facing the corner of Ruthven and Bowen Streets, and in front is a large lamp fitted with incandescent burners. The bar is fitted with all the latest requirements of an up-to-date hotel, while adjoining is a private sitting room 17ft. v. 12ft. with a door leading into the bar and one facing out on to Bowen-street. At the right of the main entrance is a private bar-parlor 10ft. x 14ft., and a little further on is a private bedroom 11ft. 6in. x 14ft. 6in. Passing from the hall, and a little beyond the staircase is the large dining room 30ft. x 30ft., in which will be arranged seven separate tables for the general public. At the eastern end is a window and table so arranged that meals will be served from a table in the kitchen through the window to the dining-room, thus saving a great deal of time and labour, which should prove very convenient when there is a rush of customers. The kitchen is 30ft. x 18ft., and contains a large cooking range while near is being erected a copper boiler. The kitchen is well designed, and situated at the eastern end are two servants' rooms. Going through the main hall is an archway just over the staircase. At the top of the stairs is a hall leading to the south where are located the three double bedrooms, one 12ft.

x. 15ft., one with fireplace 12ft. x. 17ft. and another 12ft. by 10ft. with door facing on to the top balcony. A hall leads straight on to the balcony which has a bed room on the left 12ft. x. 14ft. 6in. Another hall runs northward and has a double bed room on the right-hand side 17ft. 6in. x. 14ft. with fireplace, and on the left-hand side is a sitting-room 17ft. 6in. x. 14ft. The balcony runs almost all round the building, being 12ft. wide facing Ruthven-street, 11ft. wide facing Bowen-street, and 9ft. to 7ft. wide at the back of the hotel, the whole distance being 350ft. From the balcony can be obtained a beautiful view of the town and district as well as along the western slope of the range. Facing the balconies are two bedrooms 10ft. by 14ft., and eight bedrooms 10ft. by 8ft.; all of which are to be well furnished and made as comfortable as possible for either visitors or boarders, and this can also be said of the double bedrooms, for it is Mr. Walsh's intention to devote every attention possible to the comfort of his patrons. Situated in convenient places are also bathrooms for both ladies and gentlemen. The halls, bar, dining room, and sitting-rooms will be lit with incandescent burners, and the porch in front of the top balcony will have the name of the hotel carved out in cedar in iron work.

The hotel is beyond doubt a credit to the town, and its appearance will be an ornament to Ruthven-street, the architects, Messrs. Marks and Son, being deserving of every praise for the really handsome building they have designed for Mr. Walsh. Mr. H. Andrews, the contractor, has carried out his work in a manner that reflects every credit on him, while he has been most ably assisted in his work by Mr. D. Gilbert (foreman bricklayer) and Mr. P. Doyle (foreman carpenter). All the plumbing work has been most faithfully carried out by Mr. G. G. Partridge, while the painting, which is at present being carried out, is in the able hands of Mr. G. Westwood.

Adjoining the hotel Mr. Walsh has a store erected 15ft. by 24ft., with a separated yard enclosed by iron fence, and asphalted.

At the rear of the hotel are erected seven loose boxes, buggy shed, and outhouse, every care being given to people coming in from the country.

Mr. Walsh intends sparing no efforts to make the Hotel Metropole as attractive as possible. All his old customers will receive the same treatment as previously, and so many new ones who have a wish to receive such. We congratulate the proprietor on his enterprise, and hope his efforts to cater for them will be appreciated by the general public.



*Image of Thomas Walsh  
Source: Toowoomba Local  
History Library*

*Report from the Toowoomba  
Chronicle and Darling Downs  
General Advertiser Saturday 22  
July 1899*

This advertisement for the Hotel Metropole gives us an insight into the facilities it provided to guests. Of note is the comment "*Ladies and Gentlemen's Bathrooms.*" This was unusual for the time, when it was more common to simply wash with a basin in the room or have only limited shared bathrooms available. It gives an indication of the quality of the facilities offered to guests.

**THE HOTEL METROPOLE,**  
A Two-storey Brick Building, situated  
at the  
**CORNER OF RUTHVEN AND BOWEN  
STREETS,**  
Right in the Centre of the Town, and  
within Five Minutes' Walk of the  
Railway Station & Principal  
Public Buildings.

**T**HE Bedroom accommodation is all that  
could be desired, all the rooms being  
well lighted and ventilated, and opening out  
on to a large balcony, 12ft. wide, which ex-  
tends around the building 250ft. Single and  
double bedrooms, with well-furnished sitting  
rooms.

Ladies' and Gentlemen's Bath Rooms.  
From the Verandah an excellent view of  
the town and district can be obtained.

First-class Stabling Accommodation.  
In the Bar can be obtained the best of  
Wines, Spirits and Ales.

The Proprietor has just furnished this new  
Hotel in a manner  
**SECOND TO NONE**  
in the town, and the accommodation is all  
that can be desired.

**VISIT THE HOTEL METROPOLE,  
AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A  
HEARTY WELCOME  
FROM**

**THOMAS WALSH,**  
1911 PROPRIETOR.



The descriptions of the opening provide a detailed description of the building and its interiors, the individual rooms and relationships and even includes the room sizes in feet and inches. Combined with the remaining physical evidence and early photos it has been possible to approximately reconstruct the floor plan as it would have been in 1899.

Examining available historic images, including the aerial photos from 1946 onwards, has helped confirm the extent of the original building footprint on the site.

From these sources and overlaying the information over the current floor plan the layout of the original building has been recreated and included in the diagram below. There have been a number of internal walls removed, but, as can be seen in the images of the interiors, the outline of these remain visible as bulkheads in the ceilings. This remaining physical evidence has helped in this recreation.

The c1899 plan has been shown in red over the current floor plan.







In 1949 the building went up for sale. The advertisement for the sale of the building, included below, provides an important snapshot of the condition of the building at that time. It appears very much as it was described in the original newspaper story of its opening, with its verandahs and chimneys still in tact.

**CON COPAS & KING**  
Valuable Hotel Freehold.

**METROPOLE HOTEL**  
Corner Bullyvoe and Bowen Streets. Toowoomba, Qld.



WE HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO OFFER THE ABOVE HOTEL BY PUBLIC AUCTION

**WEDNESDAY—NOV. 16, AT 12 NOON—WEDNESDAY**  
In Our Rooms.

THIS BEAUTIFUL HOTEL is a well-built two-storey brick building and has a very attractive appearance. It has recently been painted inside and out, and portion of the front is tiled.

THE HOTEL has a 48ft. frontage to Bullyvoe Street (includes Barber's Shop), it has 90ft. frontage to Bowen Street, and a further 60ft. frontage to Bowen Street at rear of Hotel, on which there is a small cottage.

THE HOTEL, has 13 Bedrooms, Lounge, Large Dining-room, Modern Bar, Office, etc.

The Sale of the Freehold is subject to two years' lease from 1st December, 1945.

Due to its situation, this Hotel commands business from the shopping centre, as well as the industrial area, which is in close proximity on the northern side.

TOOWOOMBA has a Trading Population of well over 45,000.

There is no City in Australia with greater possibilities than Toowoomba.

**CON COPAS & KING**  
AUCTIONEERS, 136 Margaret Street, TOOWOOMBA, Qld. Phone 2158.



The hotel also appears with its verandahs intact, and being well used to view the 1951 Carnival of Flowers Parade.



*Source Robinson Collection Toowoomba Local History Library*

By 1955 the aerial images of the site indicate that the building had begun to undergo substantial change and renovation, including the removal of the key architectural features of the building, its decorative verandahs and posts. The Pearce heritage assessment assumes major renovation took place in the 1930s. This is a reasonable assumption as it is an era of substantial modernisation of hotels throughout Queensland and Australia. However the documentary evidence indicates this is not the case.

A change in valuation in the rate books often signifies upgrades to a building including extensions or renovations and they were examined as part of the research for this report. The building rates change in value from the 1948/49 Toowoomba City Council rate book entry of £1524 to £14900 in 1949/50 when it was registered in the name of the Sisters of Charity of Australia. The next rise in the valuation occurs between 1953/54 when it was under the name of Angela Londy and 1954/5 when the ratepayer's name was listed as Theodora Leondrakis.



#### 4. How the place has changed; 1950s-2017

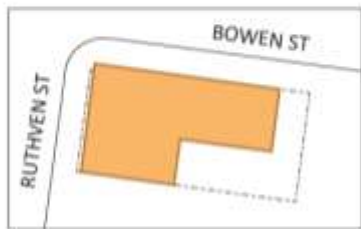
This next Section of this report examines and documents the change to the building since the major modernisation of the 1950s. The aerial images of the site indicate that it underwent several stages of extensions between 1955 and 1963. After that time the building footprint remains static. Change continued to occur to the building with successive minor internal refurbishments. The 1940s aerial image show a footprint similar to the 1899 re-created version of the hotel floor plan.



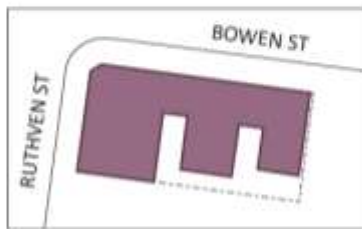
1948 Aerial Photograph



1955 Aerial Photograph



1948 Building Footprint



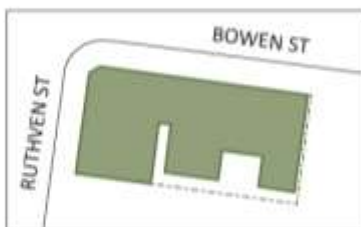
1955 Building Footprint



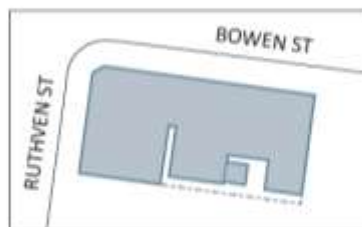
1963 Aerial Photograph



2017 Aerial Photograph



1963 Building Footprint



2017 Building Footprint

#### LEGEND



1899-1948



1963



1955





2017

----- Site Boundary



It is clear the internal layout on both the ground and first floors has been substantially altered since Marks first designed the building for Walsh. On the ground floor it appears the central stairwell has been relocated and many of the internal walls separating the entry hallway, bar, parlour and bedrooms have been removed. The first floor has had less change but large rooms have been divided into smaller rooms, unsympathetic fibrous sheet ceiling and wall linings added, in part over original tongue and groove walling, new bathrooms added, the stairwell altered and the verandahs removed.



-  Existing building floor plan
-  C1899 plan (re-created)



In terms of its built form and architectural detailing neither the exterior nor the interiors are of the period it was originally constructed. The original hotel, built in 1899 and designed by James Marks & Sons was a two-storey building, truncated at the corner or Bowen and Ruthven Street. Its overall built form incorporated a decorated, timber and cast iron wrap-around verandah with a substantial hipped roof.



*Top image c1952*

*Lower image c1985*

*Source: Toowoomba local History Library*



These images from the 1950s and 1980s show the contrasts between the building today and as it was prior to the removal of the verandahs. With the replacement of the decorative verandah with a streamlined cantilever awning, the roof and chimneys lose their prominence in the building façade and streetscape. The high parapet changes the proportions of the building and conceals not only the hipped corrugated iron roof and the details of its fascia, overhang and gutter. The aerial images show the brick chimneys were also removed.

Note too there are other subtle changes, such change as to the windows. In the early image, rather than being a single width opening as it has currently the windows are all higher than they are wide (vertically proportioned). There are groups of openings to the corner bar area, featuring a large central opening with a narrow window either side, which have been altered to create a larger, almost square single window in the modernisation of the building.

None of the decorative façade elements, such as lacework, brackets and decorative posts and the playful form that are typical characteristics of a Marks designed building of this era remain intact.

Detailed images of the interiors have also been included in the appendices to show that, similarly, little of the original internal detailing remains intact. Both levels have been substantially altered over time with the built fabric incorporating typical materials and details from almost each decade post WW2.

A timeline with indicative periods of change is included below. This has been developed based on the style and detailing of the materials combined with anecdotal evidence from former patrons as to the type of change that occurred.

## 1950s

- Extensions and removal of verandahs, parapet, removal of chimneys, new balcony on Ruthven Street



- Wall connection near the current first floor bathrooms showing a change in pattern in the brickwork where the re-created plan shows the original building and mid-century additions join.



- The windows are now generally steel framed hopper style windows typical of the 1950s-1970s throughout the building.
- The opening sizes along the front façade have also been changed, as noted elsewhere in this report. There is only one double hung timber framed window, which would have been typical in a turn of the century building, 1899 remaining, in the southern billiard room.





**1960s**

Building additions change from rendered finish to earlier buildings and face brickwork with deep mortar joints typical of 1960's era brickwork. Refer also to aerial images with building footprints to show the changes.



New stairs to former dining room – these have been relocated from their original position. The detail of the handrails suggests this was part of the mid-century changes to the place.



Further internal change and new rooms. The hopper windows and fibrous sheeting to the wall and ceiling are typical mid-century details.



These new stairs are part of the later 1960's building additions at the rear/eastern part of the site.



**1980s**

Removal of internal walls. The bulkheads in the ceiling indicate the location of original walls, which concurs with the layout described at the opening as in the re-created floor plan. Some removal of walls or widening of openings may have been previous to the 1980s but discussion with former patrons indicate this major internal change was part of a major refurbishment at this time.





## 1990s

- The corner public bar and services behind were updated and reconfigured as part of ongoing changes from the 1970s - 1990s.



- New shopfront to room on the south facing Ruthven Street Little structural change appears to have occurred after the 1990s, rather change has been minor such as this shopfront or cosmetic, including paint/colour schemes, window furnishings and carpet.. It is likely the current internal colour scheme dates from this period of refurbishment.



- The bar area in former dining room was reconfigured and updated to incorporate a gaming room for poker machines.



The modern changes in themselves are not of outstanding architectural character and do not contribute to the significance of the place. The change to a cantilever awning is part of the typical modernisation that occurred throughout Australia in response to the 1940s council ordinance for removal of verandah posts as, with the introduction of cars, they were no longer considered safe. It does not contribute to our knowledge of this particular class of place or the development of the city.

The reconstructed floor plans, included in the previous section are an indication of the extent of change, not just in the façade but to the footprint of the building, its extent within the site and therefore the proportions of the building within the Bowen Street streetscape. Many of the interior walls have been removed, so that the original floor layout is barely legible within the space.

The images included in the following section document the state of the interior as it is currently. It appears that during the modernisation of the building c1950 much of the original fabric was removed, altered or covered. The renovations themselves are not a particularly rare or high quality example of unique architecture of that time. Rather they reflect a fairly utilitarian response, often typical of the immediate post war era when material and labour shortages were common.



## 5. Current building condition

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The Burra Charter recommends to *gather and record information about the place sufficient to understand significance*. The first sections of this report have outlined the history and of the place and the changes that have occurred over time. This section documents the current condition of the building through floor plans and images. The site investigation, when the photographs were taken has informed the assessment of the level of change to the place. They are included here as an aide in understanding the assessment of the cultural heritage significance of the place as it relates to the remaining building fabric.

Council also requested further information about the building's current condition, hence the inclusion of this photographic survey of the building in this report in this format. Note that it is not intended as a full archival record, although it follows a similar format. Rather it provides an insight into the current state of the building and each of its individual rooms.

The photos have been grouped into three categories, based on the areas in which they were taken.

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Metropole Hotel Exterior including the site setting | MHE (1) – MHE (29)    |
| 2. Interior Metropole Hotel Ground Floor               | MHGF (1) – MH (43)    |
| 3. Interior Metropole Hotel First Floor                | MHFF (1) – MHFF ( 36) |

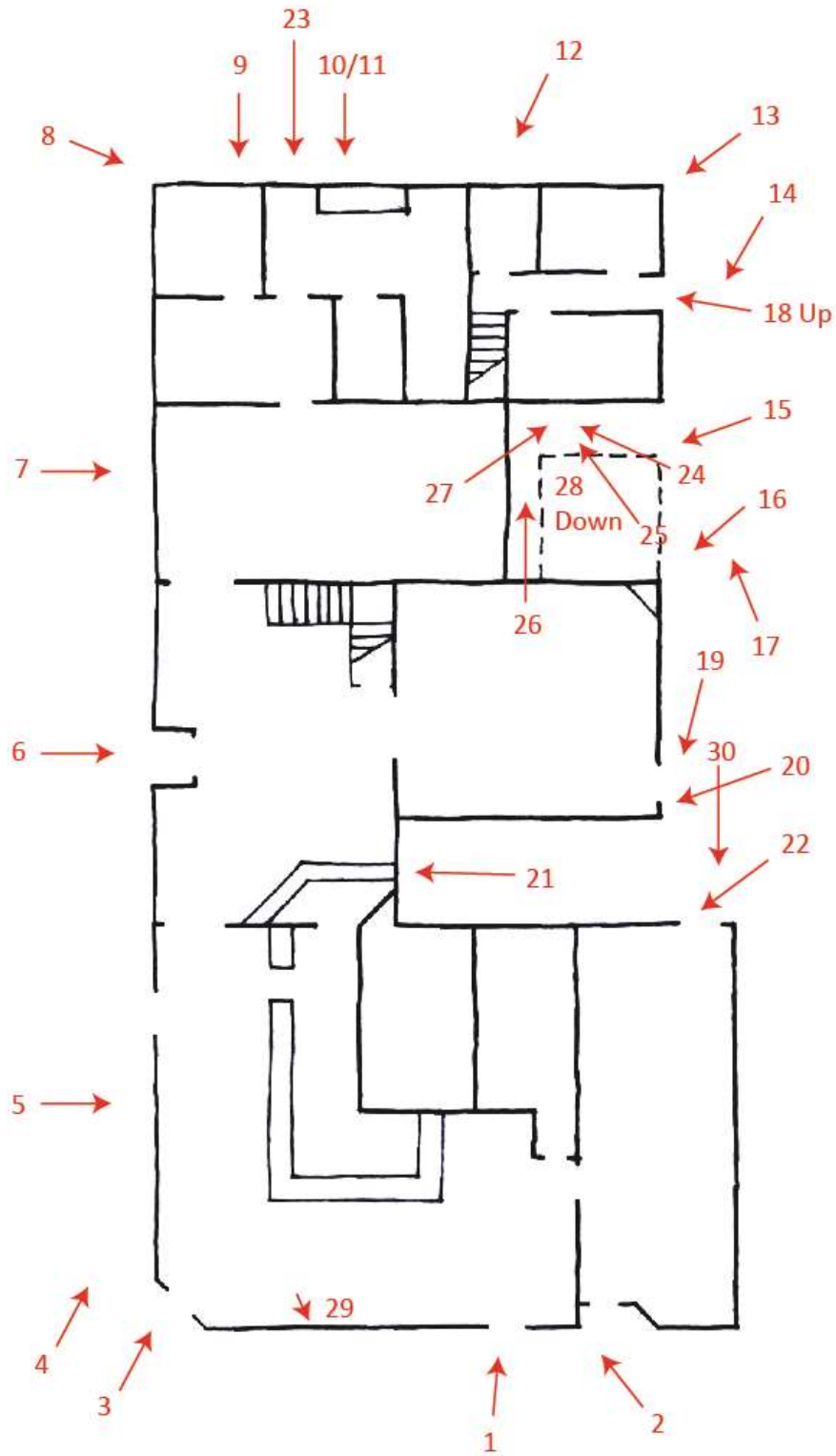
Key plans are included as indicative current floor plans/layouts and to identify where the photographs were taken. An index of photographs with their descriptions follows, then the images themselves, with the same numbering system.

The images were taken in June 2017 using an Olympus OM-D, SLR Camera and August using a Samsung phone camera. The number relates to the order in which they were taken and numbering of the images. They are included in this report in this simple format as an indication of the general detail, style and condition of each room within the building.



# Metropole Hotel Exterior photographs

## Key Plan





## Metropole Hotel Exterior photographs

### Index of Photographs

| File Name/Number | Date photographed | Description  |
|------------------|-------------------|--|
| MHE (1)          | 10/8/2017         | Western Elevation Ruthven Street                             |
| MHE (2)          | 10/8/2017         | Western elevation with adjacent Sports Club building visible |
| MHE (3)          | 10/8/2017         | North west corner  |
| MHE (4)          | 10/8/2017         | Northern elevation looking east                              |
| MHE (5)          | 10/8/2017         | Northern elevation – western end                             |
| MHE (6)          | 10/8/2017         | Northern elevation – eastern end                             |
| MHE (7)          | 10/8/2017         | Northern elevation –eastern corner                           |
| MHE (8)          | 10/8/2017         | North east corner  |
| MHE (9)          | 10/8/2017         | Eastern elevation – north end                                |
| MHE (10)         | 10/8/2017         | Eastern elevation – central section                          |
| MHE (11)         | 10/8/2017         | Eastern elevation – central section                          |
| MHE (12)         | 10/8/2017         | Eastern elevation – looking north                            |
| MHE (13)         | 10/8/2017         | South east corner  |
| MHE (14)         | 10/8/2017         | Southern elevation looking west                              |
| MHE (15)         | 10/8/2017         | Southern elevation 1 <sup>st</sup> floor central light well  |
| MHE (16)         | 10/8/2017         | Eastern light well looking west                              |
| MHE (17)         | 10/8/2017         | Southern elevation of ground floor looking east              |
| MHE (18)         | 10/8/2017         | Southern elevation of 1 <sup>st</sup> floor looking east     |
| MHE (19)         | 10/8/2017         | Southern rear view of ground floor, looking east             |
| MHE (20)         | 10/8/2017         | Eastern light well looking west                              |
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| MHE (28)         | 10/8/2017         | View from 1 <sup>st</sup> floor balcony towards ground       |
| MHE (29)         | 10/8/2017         | Typical window hardware detail 1 <sup>st</sup> floor         |
| MHE (30)         | 10/8/2017         | Looking west along southern wall (on right)                  |



Metropole Hotel Exterior photographs

Photographs



*MHE (1)*



*MHE (2)*



*MHE (3)*



*MHE (4)*



*MHE (5)*



*MHE (6)*



*MHE (7)*



*MHE (8)*



*MHE (9)*



*MHE (10)*



*MHE (11)*



*MHE (12)*



*MHE (13)*



*MHE (14)*



*MHE (15)*



*MHE (16)*



*MHE (17)*



*MHE (18)*



*MHE (19)*



*MHE (20)*



*MHE (21)*



*MHE (22)*



*MHE (23)*



*MHE (24)*



*MHE (25)*



*MHE (26)*



*MHE (27)*



*MHE (28)*



*MHE (29)*

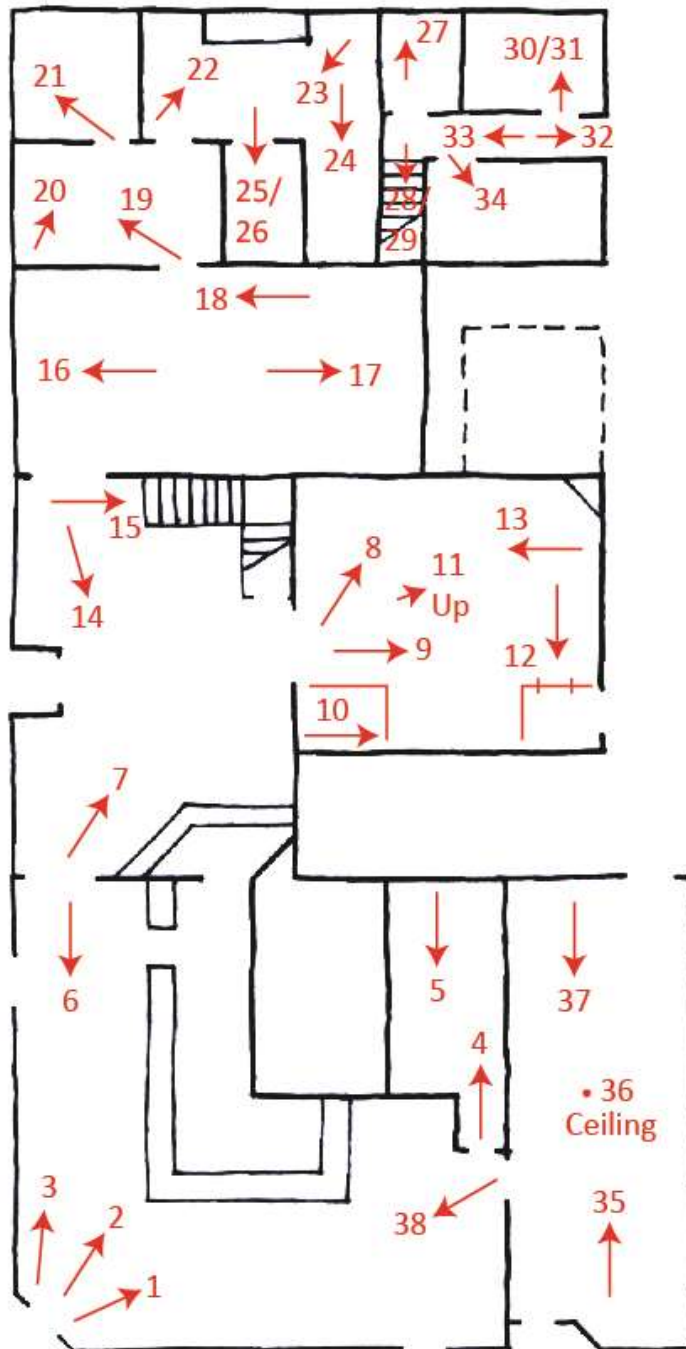


*MHE (30)*



Metropole Hotel Ground Floor photographs

Key plan





## Metropole Hotel Ground Floor photographs

### Index of photographs

| File Name/Number                                 | Date photographed | Description  |
|--|-------------------|--|
| <b>Rooms within the c1899 building footprint</b> |                   |  |
| MHGF (1)   | 07/06/2017        | View south inside main bar from north west corner entrance looking south (former c1899 hallway, bar and parlour areas)   |
| MHGF (2)   | 07/06/2017        | View inside main bar from north west corner entrance looking south east (former c1899 bar, sitting room area to the left and former hallway and parour areas to the right) |
| MHGF (3)   | 07/06/2017        | View east inside main bar from north west corner entrance looking south (c1899 sitting room and part of bar)   |
| MHGF (4)   | 07/06/2017        | Mens toilet view from western door looking east  |
| MHGF (5)   | 07/06/2017        | Mens toilet looking toward western door  |
| MHGF (6)   | 07/06/2017        | View west inside main bar towards north west corner entrance (former c1899 bar area)   |
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| MHGF (8)   | 07/06/2017        | View inside gaming room from north entry door  |
| MHGF (9)   | 07/06/2017        | Gaming room looking south east   |
| MHGF (10)  | 07/06/2017        | Female toilet accessed from gaming room  |
| MHGF (11)  | 07/06/2017        | Ceiling of gaming room   |
| MHGF (12)  | 07/06/2017        | Inside gaming room towards north entry door  |
| MHGF (13)  | 07/06/2017        | Inside gaming room towards rear exit   |
| MHGF (14)  | 07/06/2017        | Lounge Bar looking west toward bar area  |
| MHGF (15)  | 07/06/2017        | Staircase from Lounge Bar to 1 <sup>st</sup> floor   |
| MHGF (16)  | 07/06/2017        | Current dining room looking south (former c1899 kitchen area)  |
| MHGF (17)  | 07/06/2017        | Current dining room looking north  |
| MHGF (18)  | 07/06/2017        | Eastern wall of dining room towards prep room entry  |
| MHGF (19)  | 07/06/2017        | Prep room off dining room towards north  |
| MHGF (20)  | 07/06/2017        | Prep room towards kitchen entry  |
| MHGF (21)  | 07/06/2017        | Store room   |
| MHGF (22)  | 07/06/2017        | Kitchen towards southern wall  |
| MHGF (23)  | 07/06/2017        | Kitchen towards entry door   |
| MHGF (24)  | 07/06/2017        | Kitchen area   |
| MHGF (25)  | 07/06/2017        | Pantry room towards west   |
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| MHGF (28)  | 07/06/2017        | Stairs towards west  |



| File Name/Number                                 | Date photographed | Description   |
|--|-------------------|---|
| MHGF (29)  | 07/06/2017        | Stairs towards west   |
| MHGF (30)  | 07/06/2017        | Bedroom in SE corner  |
| MHGF (31)  | 07/06/2017        | Bedroom in SE corner  |
| MHGF (32)  | 07/06/2017        | View south down eastern hallway   |
| MHGF (33)  | 07/06/2017        | View north down eastern hallway   |
| MHGF (34)  | 07/06/2017        | Bedroom in SE corner  |
| <b>Rooms within the c1899 building footprint</b> |                   |   |
| MHGF (35)  | 07/06/2017        | View east in billiards room (former parlour, bedroom and stairwell areas) |
| MHGF (36)  | 07/06/2017        | Ceiling in billiards room (former parlour, bedroom and stairwell areas)   |
| MHGF (37)  | 07/06/2017        | View west in billiards room (former parlour, bedroom and stairwell areas) |
| MHGF (38)  | 07/06/2017        | View north west in main bar from former parlour area                      |

## Metropole Hotel Ground Floor photographs

### Photographs



*MHGF (1)*



*MHGF (2)*



*MHGF (3)*



*MHGF (4)*



*MHGF (5)*



*MHGF (6)*



*MHGF (7)*



*MHGF (8)*



*MHGF (9)*



*MHGF (10)*



*MHGF (11)*



*MHGF (12)*



*MHGF (13)*



*MHGF (14)*



*MHGF (15)*



*MHGF (16)*



*MHGF (17)*



*MHGF (18)*



*MHGF (19)*



*MHGF (20)*



*MHGF (21)*



*MHGF (22)*



*MHGF (23)*



*MHGF (24)*



*MHGF (25)*



*MHGF (26)*



*MHGF (27)*



*MHGF (28)*



*MHGF (29)*



*MHGF (30)*



*MHGF (31)*



*MHGF (32)*



*MHGF (33)*



*MHGF (34)*



*MHGF (35)*



*MHGF (36)*



*MHGF (37)*

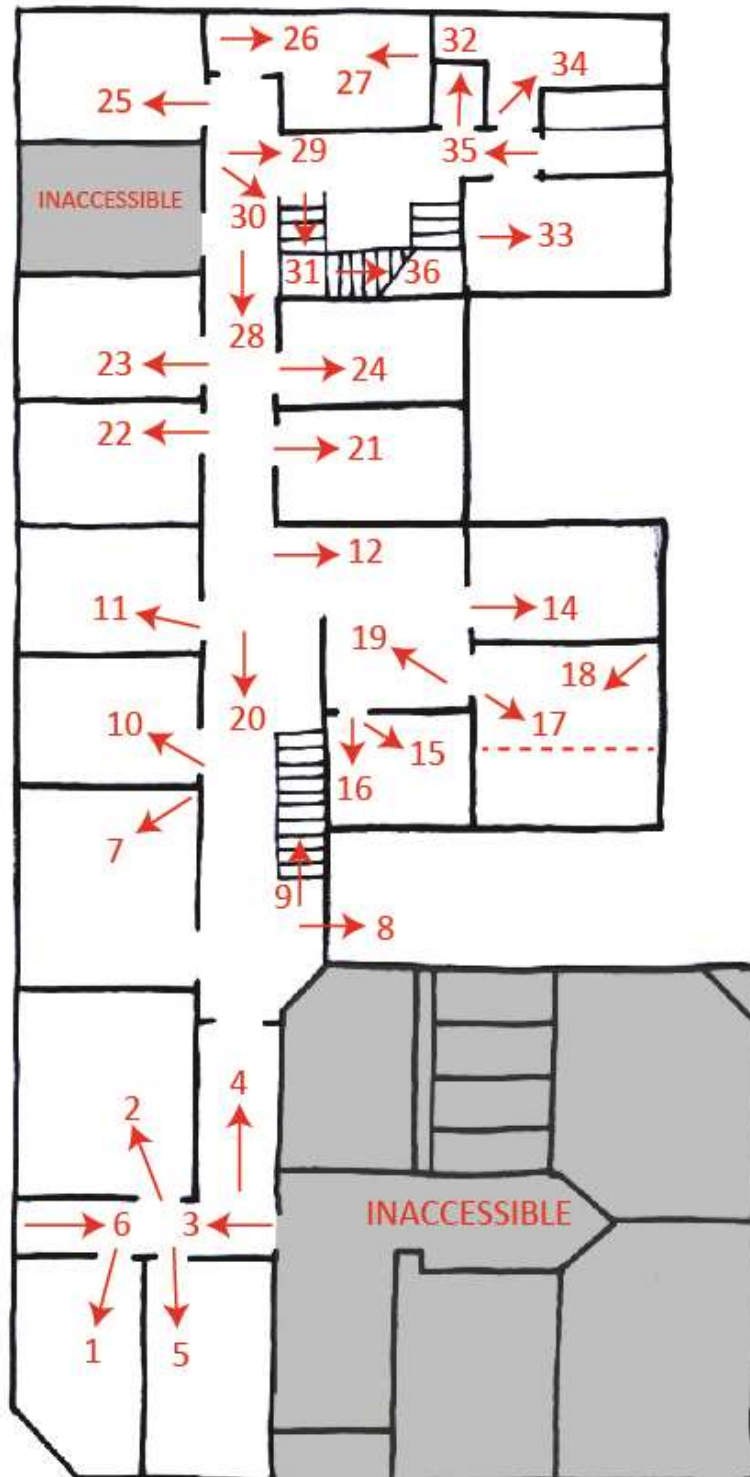


*MHGF (38)*



Metropole Hotel First Floor photographs

Key Plan First Floor Photographs





## Metropole Hotel First Floor photographs

### Index of First Floor photographs

| File Name/Number  | Date photographed | Description   |
|---|-------------------|---|
| <b>Rooms within the c1899 building footprint</b>            |                   |   |
| MHFF (1)  | 07/06/2017        | View north west of bedroom in north west corner (former sitting room with dividing wall)                                  |
| MHFF (2)  | 07/06/2017        | View NE of bedroom in north west corner (former sitting room with dividing wall)  |
| MHFF (3)  | 07/06/2017        | View north down western hallway   |
| MHFF (4)  | 07/06/2017        | View east down main hallway   |
| MHFF (5)  | 07/06/2017        | View west of bedroom in north west corner   |
| MHFF (6)  | 07/06/2017        | View south down western hallway (former guest rooms, now managers quarters which are inaccessible as no key is available) |
| MHFF (7)  | 07/06/2017        | View NE of upper corner of bedroom  |
| MHFF (8)  | 07/06/2017        | View south into light well  |
| MHFF (9)  | 07/06/2017        | View east down stairs   |
| MHFF (10)   | 07/06/2017        | View north of bedroom   |
| MHFF (11)   | 07/06/2017        | View north of bedroom   |
| <b>Rooms within the c1950s and 1960s building footprint</b> |                   |   |
| MHFF (12)   | 07/06/2017        | Hallway cupboards looking south to bedroom  |
| MHFF (13)   | 07/06/2017        | Wall feature in hall  |
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| MHFF (15)   | 07/06/2017        | View SW of bathroom   |
| MHFF (16)   | 07/06/2017        | View west of bathroom   |
| MHFF (17)   | 07/06/2017        | View SW of bathroom stalls  |
| MHFF (18)   | 07/06/2017        | View north west of bathroom stalls  |
| MHFF (19)   | 07/06/2017        | Hall cupboards facing NE  |
| MHFF (20)   | 07/06/2017        | View west down main hall  |
| MHFF (21)   | 07/06/2017        | View south of bedroom   |
| MHFF (22)   | 07/06/2017        | View north of bedroom   |
| MHFF (23)   | 07/06/2017        | View north of bedroom   |
| MHFF (24)   | 07/06/2017        | View south of bedroom   |
| MHFF (25)   | 07/06/2017        | View north of bedroom in NE corner  |
| MHFF (26)   | 07/06/2017        | View south of bedroom in south end  |
| MHFF (27)   | 07/06/2017        | View north of bedroom in south end  |
| MHFF (28)   | 07/06/2017        | View west down main hallway   |



| File Name/Number | Date photographed | Description                     |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| MHFF (29)        | 07/06/2017        | View south down eastern hallway |
| MHFF (30)        | 07/06/2017        | Hallway cupboards and stairwell |
| MHFF (31)        | 07/06/2017        | View down stairs facing west    |
| MHFF (32)        | 07/06/2017        | Cleaner's Store                 |
| MHFF (33)        | 07/06/2017        | Kitchenette                     |
| MHFF (34)        | 07/06/2017        | View SE of laundry              |
| MHFF (35)        | 07/06/2017        | View north down eastern hallway |
| MHFF (36)        | 07/06/2017        | View down stairs facing south   |

### Metropole Hotel First Floor photographs

#### Photographs



*MHFF (1)*



*MHFF.(2)*



*MHFF.(3)*



*MHFF (4)*



*MHFF (5)*



*MHFF (6)*



*MHFF (7)*



*MHFF (8)*



*MHFF (9)*



*MHFF (10)*



*MHFF (11)*



*MHFF (12)*



*MHFF (13)*



*MHFF (14)*



*MHFF (15)*



*MHFF (16)*



*MHFF (17)*



*MHFF (18)*



*MHFF (19)*



*MHFF (20)*



*MHFF (21)*



*MHFF (22)*



*MHFF (23)*



*MHFF (24)*



*MHFF (25)*



*MHFF (26)*



*MHFF (27)*



*MHFF (28)*



*MHFF (29)*



*MHFF (30)*



*MHFF (31)*



*MHFF (32)*



*MHFF (33)*



*MHFF (34)*



*MHFF (35)*



*MHFF (36)*



## 6. Assessment of significance

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### Statement of Significance

*(a) the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Toowoomba's history;*

**There has been a hotel on this site since the 1860s, and the use of place as a hotel is significant historically for its association with the growth of Toowoomba as a regional centre since that time.**

The building represents the importance of early hotels located within close proximity to the Railway Station and a general pattern of settlement of Toowoomba outward from the water supply and transport infrastructure, in the nineteenth century (whether bullocks or train).

A hotel has existed on the Metropole Hotel site since the 1860's. Built in 1899 the current building was once a fine example of a nineteenth century corner hotel. The original design, by architectural firm Marks and Sons featured a double storey verandah wrapping around the corner and fronting both Ruthven and Bowen Streets. Supported on decorative posts over the footpath the verandah incorporated cast iron lacework into the column capitols/brackets and balustrading and decorative gables. It was the dominant architectural design element that defined the building within the streetscape, featuring in early images and descriptions of the building.

The original interiors were typical of turn of the century incorporating high ceilings, rendered internal brick walls and pressed tin or plaster ceilings. The original floor layout and facilities provided were also generally typical of other hotels constructed at that time.

The building has been substantially altered since that time. The main architectural feature of the building, the verandahs were removed in the 1950's and replaced with a cantilevered awning. Other modernisation have changed the form of the building so that it now appears in the streetscape as a mid-century building with a parapeted façade, tiled and rendered front walls, large window openings and cantilevered awning with a small projecting balcony with wrought iron onto Ruthven Street. The features of the 1950s modernisation are not of a high quality, or unique design.

In assessing the significance of the Metropole Hotel the criteria in 3.1 Significance Criteria Part 4 of the Queensland Heritage Act 1992 have been adapted to local significance and used. These are:

*(a) the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Toowoomba's history;*

*(b) the place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Toowoomba's cultural heritage;*

*(c) the place has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Toowoomba's history;*

*(d) the place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places;*

*(e) the place is important because of its aesthetic significance;*

*(f) the place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;*

*(g) the place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;*

*(h) the place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in Toowoomba's history.*



## 6.1 Explanation of assessment

The TRC citation<sup>3</sup>, reproduced below, provides some guidance in understanding the cultural heritage significance of the place and notes “*historic research required.*”

### HISTORIC INFORMATION

Theme: Toowoomba's Recreation and Entertainment. Historic research required.

### SIGNIFICANCE

The Place is of local significance in Toowoomba as it meets with one or more of the assessment criteria:

- (a) the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of **Toowoomba's** history;
- (d) the place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places in **Toowoomba**;

The surviving original fabric of the 1880s hotel with c1930s renovations, combined with the historic background of occupation is of significance. The building is significant socially, as an example of public house building typology and for its contribution to the streetscape in Bowen St and Ruthven St.

As a result of the further research undertaken, as well as the detailed assessment of the current building fabric both externally and internally, the significance of the place has been re-assessed and re-written to be more site specific as noted previously..

In assessing the applicability of Criterion D guidance was sought from information provided by the DEHP<sup>4</sup> in understanding the criteria. This is reproduced below. The key text relating to the importance of the original fabric has been highlighted, as this is critical to the determination that Criteria D is not applicable in this case.

*Criterion (d) draws from various aspects of cultural heritage significance, including aesthetic, architectural and other significance such as technological. Refer to Part B<sup>5</sup> of this guide. To fulfil criterion (d) a place must **demonstrate its significance in the fabric**. This is a criterion that is concerned with the evidence that is to be found at the place and **if the evidence does not survive then this criterion cannot be applied**. To assist in determining whether a place satisfies criterion (d), it is important to adopt a common understanding of:*

- *class of cultural places*
- *principal characteristics.*

Generally it was found that due to the extensive change the building has undergone Criterion D is not applicable as it relates to the 1899 Hotel Metropole. The original architectural features, characteristics and layout of the place have been altered or removed to such an extent that the place does not meet the threshold indicators for this criteria to be applicable. The fabric of the place cannot be considered representative of the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places in Toowoomba; in this case a nineteenth century hotel.

Further consideration was given to the significance of the 1950s modernisation. In applying the criteria above *that cultural heritage significance lies in aesthetic, architectural and other significance such as technological* criterion, and that it must be embodied within *the fabric of the place* it was found that the current, Metropole Hotel does not meet the threshold indicators to be of cultural heritage significance. Hence its demolition would not impact on the cultural heritage significance of the place, given the new use retains the original use of the site.

No additional criteria were found to be applicable.

<sup>3</sup> *Toowoomba City Centre Heritage Review Local Heritage Places, Jackie Pearce, 2013*

<sup>4</sup> *Assessing cultural heritage significance, using the heritage criteria, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, 2013*

<sup>5</sup> *Refer to Appendices for a copy of Part B*



## 6.2 Schedule of remaining original elements

As the Statement of Significance outlines, the significance of the place is not embodied in its fabric, but rather in the site's ongoing use as a hotel. In this instance the existing building features do not have significance to include in a schedule of significant features. However as a guide and to clarify the extent of the surviving original materials the table below illustrates the elements, apart from some of the external brick walls that appear to remain from the original 1899 period of construction, when the building best represented a particular class of place (hotel).



*A single window located in the southern billiard room facing Ruthven Street, an area in the re-created plan contained the parlour, bedroom and stairwell.*



*Some columns possibly relating to original openings in the ground floor bar areas*



*Some doors to the first floor and VJ ceilings, concealed with new sheeting to some of the front first floor bedrooms*



*Bulkheads in three of the ground floor rooms which are indicative of the location of walls that have been removed.*



## 7. Summary

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*The Metropole Hotel has some local importance to the Toowoomba community in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Toowoomba's history from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century. There has been a hotel on this site since the 1860s, and the use of place as a hotel is significant historically for its association with the growth of Toowoomba as a regional centre since that time.*

As stated above the key period of significance for the Metropole Hotel relates to its association with the growth of Toowoomba as a regional rural centre in the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A detailed examination shows that the fabric of the place dating from this period has either been removed, or substantially altered to the extent that the building can no longer be said to represent the cultural values of the place at that time. The Hotel building that remains today is no longer of cultural heritage significance in itself.

In summary the key finding of this report is that the building is important in the social context of Toowoomba's development, but not for the building we find on the site today. Hence demolition of the building can be supported in this case, particularly as it forms part of a proposal to continue the historical use of the site for entertainment.

The proposed new building acknowledges the buildings heritage not only through its use but in a design respectful of the original truncated form of the building in addressing this prominent corner. The ongoing use, from the 1860s to today ensures the social and historic context and connections of the place within the local area and community are retained.

## 8. Appendices

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DEHP guidelines for addressing the Criterion for Historical Significance

Toowoomba City Centre Heritage Review: 348-350 Ruthven Street Toowoomba City

## Historical significance

No definition of historical significance is made in the provisions of the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*, nor in the Schedule or Regulation accompanying the Act.

The *Macquarie Dictionary* 2003 (online edition) defines historical as:

**historical** *adjective* 1. relating to or concerned with the study of history or past events: *historical methodology*. 2. dealing with history or past events: *historical documents*. 3. based on fact as opposed to legend or fiction... 4. narrated or mentioned in history; belonging to the past: a *historical event*. 5. historic.

Some interchange of use in the terms 'historical' and 'historic' is identified, but the term 'historic' is narrower in focus:

**historic** *adjective* 1. well-known or important in history: *historic scenes*. 2. likely to be recorded in history: a *historic event*. Also, historical.

Similarly, the *Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary* 2004 (4th edition) also identifies the narrow focus of the word 'historic':

**historic** *adjective* 1. famous or important in history or potentially so (a *historic moment*)...

Usage. Note the relatively limited scope of usage of *historic* as compared with *historical*. Apart from the specialist use in grammatical terminology, *historic* is confined to meaning 'famous or important with regard to history', as in a *historic event*.

**historical** *adjective* 1. of or concerning history (*historical evidence*). 2. belonging to history, not to prehistory or legend. 3. (of study of a subject) based on an analysis of its development over a period. 4. belonging to the past, not of the present. 5. (of a novel, a film, etc) dealing or professing to deal with historical events. 6. in connection with history, from the historian's point of view (*of purely historical interest*). *historically adverb*.

Working within the context of the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*, the definitions of 'historical' above and the Australia ICOMOS definition of 'historic value',<sup>9</sup> the following interpretation of historical significance has been developed:

*A place may have historical significance if it is the product of, or is an example of, or was influenced by, or has influenced, or is associated with, or has a symbolic association with, or is the site of, an event, phase, movement, process, activity, way of life (including values, aspirations, tastes and fashions), person, group of persons, or organisation, who or which has made a strong, noticeable or influential contribution to the evolution or development of our society or our environment.*

Historical significance provides the context for most other types of heritage significance. It is difficult to imagine a place being of aesthetic, architectural, scientific, social or other significance without also being of historical significance.

Historical significance is not limited to places that are historically 'exceptional' or 'elite'.



Consider **Newstead House in Brisbane**, erected in 1846 and one of the earliest surviving houses in Queensland. It is of exceptional significance for its earliness and for its status as Moreton Bay's unofficial government house before the proclamation of the colony of Queensland in 1859.



The **Cactoblastis Memorial Hall (1935-1936)** at **Boonarga** is a simple rural hall of timber construction that is neither 'exceptional' nor 'elite' yet is significant historically. The place memorialises a particular scientific and economic event in Queensland's history: the successful control of the prickly pear cactus through the introduction of the Cactoblastis moth in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Boonarga, in the Chinchilla district, was one of many areas that experienced renewed prosperity as land cleared of prickly pear was utilised for agriculture and dairying.

The sense of history embodied in the fabric of a place or object can be an important component of historical significance. If the fabric offers a tangible understanding of historical activity, events or processes, then the place or object may be important in demonstrating an aspect of the past and consequently be of historical significance.



Consider the historical significance of **Bullamon Homestead, near Thallon**. This modest timber residence was built c1860s using bush construction techniques – dropped-logs, treenails, adzed timber uprights, bedlogs and shingle roofing – and is of historical significance for its close association with the establishment of pastoral activity in the Moonie River district in the mid-19th century. It demonstrates in its fabric tangible evidence of the nature of frontier living in Queensland at this period.

<sup>9</sup> *A place may have historic value because it has influenced, or has been influenced by, an historic figure, event, phase or has been influenced by, an historic figure, event, phase or activity. It may also have historic value as the site of an important event. For any given place the significance will be greater where evidence of the association or event survives in situ, or where the settings are substantially intact, than where it has been changed or evidence does not survive. However, some events or associations may be so important that the place retains significance regardless of subsequent treatment.*

Australia ICOMOS 1988 Guidelines to the Burra Charter





1/TOO/0186

348-350 Ruthven Street

TOOWOOMBA CITY

RP5232/8

**MAP LOCATION**



**PHOTOGRAPH**



**PLACE DATA**

|                   |                           |                          |   |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Name              | Metropole Hotel           | Built To Street Boundary | Yes                                       |
| Construction Date | 1880/1915                 | Built To Side Boundary   | Yes                                       |
| Current Use       | Hotel                     | Storey's                 | 2   |
| Type              | Commercial                | General Condition        |   |
| Former Use        | Hotel                     | Integrity                | Interwar façade to possible old building. |
| Wall Material     | Face Brick/Rendered brick | Description              | Upper floor balcony                       |
| Roof Material     | Corrugated Iron           |                          |   |
| Street Awning     | Suspended                 |                          |   |

**HISTORIC INFORMATION**

Theme: Toowoomba's Recreation and Entertainment. Historic research required.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Place is of local significance in Toowoomba as it meets with one or more of the assessment criteria:

- (a) the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of **Toowoomba's** history;
- (d) the place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places in **Toowoomba**;

The surviving original fabric of the 1880s hotel with c1930s renovations, combined with the historic background of occupation is of significance. The building is significant socially, as an example of public house building typology and for its contribution to the streetscape in Bowen St and Ruthven St.