

Place No. 71 Whim Creek



The Whim Creek Pub, 2012

LOCATION	
Name of Place	Whim Creek
Other Name (1)	Whim Creek Mine Site (13076)
Other Name (2)	Whim Creek Hotel
Location/Address	
Street Number	Lot 58
Street Name	Campbell Road, off North West Coastal Highway
Suburb/Town	West Pilbara
Other Locational descriptor (text)	586973 mE, 7695279 mN (MGA94 Zone 50) Longitude: 117.8359 Latitude: -20.8405

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
Owner	Address	Phone/fax	Status	Item No.
Venturex Pilbara Ltd	PO Box 585 West Perth 6005	6389 7400		
Reserve No.	Lot/Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio	Item No.
	58	189 890	1972/692	

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	13076
State Register of Heritage Places:(Y/N)	No
Classified by the National Trust (Y/N)	No
Register of the National Estate (Y/N)	No
Local Town Planning Scheme (Y/N)	Yes
Management Category	B

DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	1890s
Construction Date (2)	
Site Type (Place Type)	Historic Town or District
Use(s) of Place	

<i>Original</i>	COMMERCIAL: Hotel MINING: Mining Battery
<i>Present</i>	COMMERCIAL: Hotel VACANT/UNUSED: Vacant/Unused
<i>Other</i>	
Construction Materials:	
<i>Walls</i>	9. STONE
<i>Roof</i>	6. METAL 606 Corrugated iron
<i>Other</i>	6. METAL 606 Corrugated iron
Condition	Good
Integrity (how much of the original fabric is intact?):	Little
Physical Description	
<p>Whim Creek comprises the former Whim Creek Mine Site, the Whim Creek Hotel and Whim Creek Cemetery. The Cemetery is located on the northern side of highway on the track into Balla Balla landing. The Whim Creek Hotel is located on the southern side of the highway and is now closed and used as a largely unoccupied mining camp. The hotel access road has been blocked and the hotel is not open to visitors. The upper levels of the hotel are being impacted upon by termites. The hotel is accessed on the ground floor through a modern kitchen built for the mining camp, and the hotel is used for storage and social activities.</p> <p>The site of Whim Creek mining activities comprises a variety of structures and artefacts, ranging from highly degraded concrete foundations to a nearly intact pumping machine. A large open cut pit dominates the site.</p>	
History	
<p>Copper was discovered at Whim Creek in 1887 and gold nearby a little earlier. A small township sprang up to service the mines in the area. In the 1890s in its heyday it had a population of 400, 130 of whom worked in the town's copper mine which was once the biggest in the north west. The mine was worked on and off until the 1960s.</p> <p>The town originally supported two hotels (Whim Creek Hotel, originally Delaney's Public House and Dunn's Public House, renamed the Federal Hotel), a blacksmith, a shop, stables and a race track. The last major mining activity took place in 1896 followed by the dismantling of most of the mine buildings, although the mine was re-opened a number of times.</p> <p>The hotel was apparently made in the UK and shipped to the Pilbara to be constructed.</p> <p>The Whim Creek Hotel is now closed and this once popular stop for travellers between Port Hedland and Karratha is largely as it was when the closure occurred. The nearby Whim Creek Copper Mine is a copper oxide mine operated by Straits Resources Limited.</p> <p>Ore from the Whim Creek mine site was exported via the jetty at Balla Balla. A single track narrow gauge railway ran for 20 km from Whim Creek mines to the port. In the early days sails were attached to the loaded rail wagons to aid the journey to the port.</p>	
Archaeology	
<p>There is considerable potential for archaeological remains to exist within the Whim Creek townsite associated with the former Whim Creek copper mine. Several relics remain within the area, and it is highly likely that subsurface remains associated with the both the occupation of the town and the operations of the mine exist within the area.</p>	

SIGNIFICANCE

Historic theme (s)	3. OCCUPATIONS 303 Mining {incl. mineral processing} 311 Hospitality Industries & Tourism
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Statement of Significance:	
<p>The Whim Creek townsite comprises a range of built elements, mining relics and potential archaeological (subsurface) remains associated with its historic past. The site is strongly associated with the development of the Roebourne and more widely Pilbara region as a result of the mining industry. The social significance of the Whim Creek Hotel in the history of the region is considerable, as a meeting place and material relic of the earlier phase of the 'modern' Pilbara.</p>	

ASSOCIATIONS	
Architect/Designer (1)	
Architect/Designer (2)	
Other Associated Person(s)	

OTHER	
References	
<p>Photographs from Heritage Council Shire of Roebourne Local History Office Photographs Hardie, J. 1981, Nor'Westers of the Pilbara Breed, Plate 44: Whim Creek township in the early 1900s; Plate 45: The Police Station at Whim Creek in c1900; Plate 47: Whim Creek copper mine in c1900,</p>	

MHI 1996	Site assessed and Place Name Record created
MHI Review 2012	Entry updated



Open cut pit at Whim Creek Mine, 2012



Whim Creek Mine, 2012



Example of rail wagon used for transporting the ore from the mine to the jetty at Balla Balla, 2012



Memorial at Whim Creek Cemetery, 2012



Aerial view of the copper mine mining processing plant at Whim Creek, c1930
Courtesy Shire of Roebourne Local History Office, 2005.1727



Whim Creek copper mine, c1914
Courtesy Shire of Roebourne Local History Office, 2005.1664



Whim Creek hotel, 1937
Courtesy Shire of Roebourne Local History Office, 2005.1667