



## Heritage Citation



### Spring Hill Hotel

#### Key details

<b>Also known as</b>	Cairns Arms Hotel
<b>Addresses</b>	At 100 Leichhardt Street, Spring Hill, Queensland 4000
<b>Type of place</b>	Hotel (pub)
<b>Period</b>	Victorian 1860-1890
<b>Style</b>	Queenslander
<b>Lot plan</b>	L3_RP194731
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — June 2003
<b>Construction</b>	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Masonry - Render

This masonry hotel was constructed in 1875 and has been in continuous use ever since. It has been altered and adapted over the years to meet the changing needs and wants of the Spring Hill community, but remains as an illustration of the development of Spring Hill during the 1870s.

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## History

In 1861, John McGrath purchased nearly 2 acres of land in Spring Hill for the huge sum of £226, 8 shillings. Land in what was considered an outer suburb, such as Woolloowin, was selling for £1 per acre.

By 1875, Charles O'Brien was running the Cairns Arms Hotel on part of this land on the corner of Leichhardt and Little Edward Streets. O'Brien had previously been publican of the Tattersall's Hotel in Adelaide Street, Brisbane and at a Hotel in the Condamine. In 1887, James Gralton took over as publican from William Albrecht. The following year, he changed the name of the hotel to the 'Federal'. Gralton remained the licensee until 1900.

Post Office Directories, printed annually, show that there has been a hotel on this site from 1876 – 1949. This research suggests that the hotel was built in 1875, and although it has been extended and altered over the last 128 years, it was built in the 1870s. Photographs of the Federal Hotel from 1976 show the hotel with the same architectural features that it retains today.

The architect of the hotel is unknown. However, Francis Holmes, an architect who worked with Richard Gailey, designed additions to the Cairns Arms Hotel in 1886. Eight years later in 1894, Frank Longland, a Brisbane born architect who started in private practice in 1893, designed a handball court for the Federal Hotel. Frank Longland was the younger brother of George Longland, an investor and property speculator who purchased the Federal Hotel with his older sister Charlotte and George Marshall in 1898.

In the 1870s and 1880s, Leichhardt Street was a bustling commercial precinct, with bootmakers, drapers, butchers, grocers, tobacconists and general stores in the street. It was also in the heart of Spring Hill, a residential area, where pubs were a place for locals to find convivial company and entertainment. Drinking increased in popularity as a leisure activity in the 1880s when beer replaced spirits as Australia's national drink. Beer, served cold, was much more suited to Brisbane's sub-tropical climate than warming spirits. Pubs in Australia functioned primarily as "workingmen's clubs". The middle and upper classes supported the temperance movement or preferred to drink in their own clubs or at home. With beer selling for the equivalent of 5 cents a bottle or 3 cents a pint, it was possible to get drunk on 20 cents. Drinking, public drunkenness and Sunday trading became contentious issues in the 1880s.

John M. Freeland, an architect writing about Australian pubs, quoted by Ronald Lawson said: "The pub is one of the most socially significant, historically valuable, architecturally interesting, and colourful features of Australian society...[It] has never been a mere transplant and adaptation of an English progenitor". In 1892, Gilbert Parker, a traveller from London to Australia declared that Brisbane hotels led the colony with their fine and attractive buildings. The Spring Hill Hotel retains many of the original features that caused these writers to praise Brisbane pubs in the nineteenth century.

The Spring Hill Hotel also continues to be a local "watering hole". It provides refreshment to groups of office workers and is a meeting place for residents who are moving back to the inner city. The Spring Hill Hotel continues the long tradition of Australian pubs as places of entertainment and sociability.

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## Description

This two-storey, Victorian, masonry hotel occupies an irregularly shaped corner site with a large truncation forming three distinct facades to the street frontages. The basic masonry form of the building remains, but it is likely that it was originally encircled by a post-supported awning and cantilevered first floor balcony. These have been replaced by a stepped, suspended awning and a small "Juliet" balcony. Other changes include large openings to the ground floor façade and hoods to individual upper windows.

The original characteristics that remain are the urns, scrollwork decoration and mouldings to the pediment, door openings to the original balcony, and decorative surrounds to the window openings in the Little Edward Street façade.

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## Statement of significance

### Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

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### Historical

#### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as it is a surviving masonry hotel building constructed in 1875 illustrative of the steady development of Spring Hill in the last years of settlement prior to the boom of the 1880s.

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## Rarity

### CRITERION B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the city's or local area's cultural heritage as it is an uncommon, surviving 1870's masonry hotel in Spring Hill retaining some original architectural features.

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## Representative

### CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as it is an uncommon example of a nineteenth century Brisbane hotel exhibiting some key features such as a main door opening on a street corner, bars on the ground floor and accommodation above.

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## Aesthetic

### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

as it is a distinctive local landmark prominently located at the intersection of Leichhardt and Little Edward Streets.

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## Social

### CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

as it is a hotel that has operated continuously in this location since 1875 and which has been a socially significant part of the local community.

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## References

1. Brisbane City Council, *Properties on the Web*, website
2. Brisbane City Council, 1946 aerial photographs.
3. Brisbane City Council Water Supply and Sewerage Maps
4. Brisbane History Group, *Brisbane Hotels and Publicans Index 1842-1900*, (Brisbane: Brisbane History Group, 1993)
5. Department of Natural Resources, Queensland Certificates of title and other records.
6. Donnelly, John J., *Hotels of Brisbane*, (thesis, 1963)
7. Lawson, Ronald 1973, *Brisbane in the 1890s: A Study of an Australian Urban Society*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia
8. John Oxley Library, Historic Photographs Collection
9. *Queensland Post Office Directories*, 1868-1949
10. Watson, Donald & Judith McKay 1994, *Queensland Architects of the 19th Century*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia

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**Note:** This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

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