

GEELONG CITY 'C' CITATIONS

Site Name: Wool Exchange Hotel

Project File No: 1050

Address: 59 Moorabool Street Geelong 3220

Approx. Date: 1927

Integrity: Moderate

Significance Level: C (Local)

Photograph No: 09.17

Survey Date: March 2002



History

This site at the north-east corner of Moorabool Street and Corio Street, is located on Allotment 9, Section 9, of the Geelong Town Plan of 1858.

The original two-storeyed building on this site was the Bank of New South Wales erected in 1854. Requiring larger premises by 1862, the Bank vacated the site, and was acquired initially by John Williams as a boarding house. In 1865 the building was first used as a hotel, and shortly after, it was taken over by Mr. James Cowie, who appears to have named it the "Phoenix" Hotel. A succession of owners after 1872 modified the building extensively before its demolition in 1927. It was at this time when the new owner, Mr. Thomas J Fitzmaurice (who had also purchased the adjoining property in Moorabool Street), commissioned the architects, Buchan Laird and Buchan to prepare drawings for a larger hotel, occupying 53-59 Moorabool Street. The new bar and "parlours", constructed for the Volum Brewing Company, were completed in 1929. Apart from the name change to "Wool Exchange Hotel" in the 1960s, the hotel remained essentially the same in appearance until the recent owners commissioned architects Graeme Williams and Associates Pty. Ltd., to carry out extensive renovations, completed in 1990.

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Description

The site at 59 Moorabool Street, Geelong, is dominated by the two storey Wool Exchange Hotel, which makes an important architectural and visual contribution to the amenity of the area.

The two storey, unpainted dichromatic brick, interwar Stripped Classical Wool Exchange Hotel building is characterised by a symmetrical-like composition, having a recessed chamfered corner with flanking regularly arranged bays and a rendered parapet.

The parapet has a projecting band with stylised roundel motifs, below which are the titles: "Wool Exchange Hotel" and "Tabaret" on the side and corner parapets respectively.

A feature of the first floor is the blind window arcades on the side elevations. These arcades are emphasised by the red brick voussoirs and quoinwork, against the darker brick wall. Further decorative brickwork is evident in the soldier course window heads and in the incised rectangular panels below the first floor windows. Accentuating the streamlined Classicism of the design are the large rendered roundels in the blind arcades. These arcades also interrupt a moulded and projecting stringcourse at window head height. The corner and end bays flanking the arcades have early incised rectangular panels.

Separating the first floor from the ground floor is a plain rendered stringcourse. Further red brick quoinwork accentuates the corners and edges of the ground floor, above the projecting darker brick plinth.

The windows on both the ground and first floor appear to have timber frames, although most have replaced earlier windows. The timber framed double hung windows on the south elevation of the first floor are early. Another alteration is the aluminium framed and glazed double doors and transom at the corner. This corner is further highlighted by the introduced, arched tubular steel porch. Similar arched roofs are situated on the west and south facades, between which are introduced skillion verandahs having corrugated colorbond roofs and supported by hollow steel columns on concrete pedestals.

Apart from the early parapet signage on the side facades, there is introduced inappropriate signage on the first and second floors which project from the building.

Statement of Cultural Significance

The Wool Exchange Hotel, 59 Moorabool Street, Geelong, has significance as a reasonably externally intact example of the interwar Stripped Classical style. Built in 1927 as a replacement for the earlier Phoenix Hotel, this hotel was designed by the prolific Geelong architects, Laird and Buchan.

The Wool Exchange Hotel, 59 Moorabool Street, is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level. It demonstrates original design qualities of an interwar Stripped Classical style. These qualities include the symmetrical-like composition, having a recessed chamfered corner with flanking regularly arranged bays and a rendered parapet. Other intact or appropriate qualities include the two storey height, brick wall construction, projecting parapet band with stylised roundel motifs and below which are title panels with the names "Wool Exchange Hotel" on the side facades, blind window arcades emphasised by red brick voussoirs and quoinwork, soldier course first floor window heads, incised rectangular panels below the first floor windows and on the bays flanking the arcades, large rendered roundels in the blind arcades, moulded and projecting stringcourse at window head height, plain rendered stringcourse, red brick quoinwork accentuating the corners and edges of the ground and first floor, projecting brick plinth, and the timber framed windows -

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particularly the timber framed double hung windows.

The Wool Exchange Hotel building, 59 Moorabool Street, is historically significant at a LOCAL level. It is associated with the development of the hotel industry in Geelong from 1927. This building, originally known as the Phoenix Hotel until the 1960s, also has associations with the prolific Geelong architects, Laird and Buchan. The site has associations with some of Geelong's earliest commercial developments. In 1854, the Bank of New South Wales building was erected, and from 1865 this early building became a hotel, soon after named the Phoenix Hotel.

The Wool Exchange Hotel building, 59 Moorabool Street, is socially significant at a LOCAL level. It is recognised and valued by sections of the Geelong community as an important recreational meeting place.

Overall, the Wool Exchange Hotel building, 59 Moorabool Street, is of LOCAL significance.

References

A. Iser, 'The Phoenix Hotel/Wool Exchange Hotel', Conservation Report, School of Architecture & Building, Deakin University, 1990.

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W.J. Morrow, 'Geelong Advertiser Index', Geelong Historical Records Centre.

Sands & McDougall Directories of Victoria (various).

Geelong City Rate Books, Bellarine Ward, Geelong Historical Records Centre.

Buchan Laird and Buchan, Drawings of the Phoenix Hotel, 1930, Geelong Historical Records Centre.