

CHAPEL STREET (WINDSOR) AREA

History and Significance Chapel Street was effectively created at the first land sale in Prahran on 6 June 1840. It ran between allotments 6 and 7 and by the land sale of 15 May 1850 in the Windsor area, ran at least as far as Dandenong Road. The Independent Chapel from which Chapel Street took its name was erected in 1853 on the north east corner of Chapel Street and Commercial Road. In this section of Windsor however very little building activity had occurred by this date. Premises clustered along Chapel Street and residences were located in Peel Street, Albert Street and around Hanover Street (now McIlwrick Street). The wide thoroughfare of Dandenong Road at the south of this area had been an old stock route and where it intersected with Chapel Street it abruptly narrowed and continued along Wellington Street.

Railway communication with Windsor was effected in 1859 when the municipality of Prahran was connected via a loopline from the St Kilda railway station. Later in 1859, the line was continued on to North Brighton and a year later direct communication with Melbourne occurred when the bridge was constructed across the Yarra and the railway stations Gardiner's Creek Road (now South Yarra), Greville Street (now Prahran), and Chapel Street (now Windsor) were officially opened.

The bowling club was an early outlet for recreation amongst residents of Prahran and it opened on 22 October 1864. It catered for the rapidly growing residential area of Windsor and likewise many commercial premises were erected in Chapel Street to serve the population. The present Windsor railway station was erected in 1885 and it is a highly significant complex of railway structures and buildings. The massing of the buildings, which originally incorporated a post office in Peel Street, combined with the overhead bridges, ramps and stairways to form an unusual and wonderful spacial experience for the traveller. In this area other public buildings such as the post office and fire station combined with later buildings such as a large Art Deco cinema on the corner of Peel Street to form a coherent public precinct which is seen at its best from the vicinity of the early bowling club. Cable trams to Prahran and St Kilda followed soon after the new railway station meant that the area was a central location and easily accessible for the surrounding residential population.

Today this Windsor area in Chapel Street is characterized by the remarkably intact facades of the many two storey commercial premises which form an almost continuous streetscape along the length of Chapel Street from Dandenong Road to High Street. These Victorian facades are complimented by numerous intact buildings from the Edwardian era and the special character of the railway station complex makes this an area of high architectural significance. Smaller physical features of the area such as the intact shop front in Rosenberg's shop, and the vistas down narrow streets to the surrounding residential area, combine with the historical significance of this early residential area to make Chapel Street (Windsor) area one of special significance.