

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name Moorabbee Hotel (former)
Address 11 Knowsley-Eppalock Road KNOWSLEY **Grading** 2008 Local
Building Type Hotel
Assessment by Context Pty Ltd



Recommended VHR No HI No PS Yes
Heritage Protection

Architectural Style Victorian Period (1851-1901)
 Vernacular

Maker / Builder Unknown

Integrity

Altered

History and Historical Context

History of the Shire of McIvor

The land around the former Shires of Strathfieldsaye and McIvor had a long history prior to the arrival of Europeans. The Jaara Jaara people are the original inhabitants of the area.

The area around Port Phillip was explored by Sir Thomas Mitchell, the Surveyor General of New South Wales, and a large party in 1836, on the homeward leg of a journey to Portland Bay. Impressed by what he perceived as the bounty of

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the land, Mitchell named the area *Australia Felix*.^[1]

The Port Phillip district was opened up for settlement soon thereafter, and much of the land in the Western districts of Victoria, including the former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye, was subsequently dominated by a series of pastoral runs. Much of the former Shire of McIvor was licensed to David Jennings as part of the Campaspe Plains run. The run covered an area of more than 144,900 acres and was populated with an estimated 12,000 sheep. Campaspe Plains was subdivided in 1852, and John Hunter Paterson established Derrinal Station on a portion of the land. His license was transferred to William Speed in 1853, and then Alfred Leonard Wilton in 1865. The license was eventually forfeited in 1880.^[2]

The discovery of gold at Bendigo and surrounding areas changed the face of the district and brought about new patterns of settlement and expansion. William John Bulling claimed to be the first man to discover gold at McIvor, and he was granted a £400 reward for the find. By 1853, over one hundred prospectors had assembled at Wild Duck Creek in the hopes of striking it rich. This number expanded the following year, and included some 2,000 Chinese immigrants.^[3]

Development of the McIvor district was led by Heathcote, where facilities emerged in conjunction with an increasing population brought on by the gold rushes. The town site of Heathcote was surveyed by Phillip Chauncey and first land sale at Heathcote held on the 24th January 1854.^[4] The Heathcote and Waranga District Road Board was formed in 1861, and became the Shire of McIvor in 1864, encompassing a number of the small towns in the district.

Religious and educational facilities were established early in the development of the Shire, initially at Heathcote, then gradually spreading to other small towns in the district. Following the cancellation of leasehold, land holdings were of a smaller scale and pastoralists were gradually overtaken by farmers. Pre-emption rights allowed squatters to purchase up to 640 acres of their pastoral leases and many took advantage of the opportunity to establish smaller holdings. Grazing, agriculture, dairying and viticulture were mainstays for the region. Alongside agriculture, the timber industry was of vital importance to the district and a number of sawmills were established. Gold and alluvial mining continued in the district for a number of years after the height of the gold rushes.

Construction of the railway from Wandong to Bendigo took place in three stages and was officially opened in October 1888. The railway encouraged further development of the region and provided an easy means of transportation of both goods and people to and from the district. The development of the Eppalock weir in the 1930s, and its incorporation into Eppalock Reservoir in 1960-65 provided local farmers with an accessible water source for their crops.^[5]

In 1994 the Shire of McIvor was amalgamated with nearby Shires to form the City of Greater Bendigo.

History of former Moorabbee Hotel, 11 Knowsley - Eppalock Road, Knowsley

The former Moorabbee Hotel was built on Allotment 10, part of a large piece of land that was bought by David Wise Kelly on the 1st of June 1877. Kelly may have held the hotel site prior to this under lease.^[6] The land was originally part of the Campaspe Plains run, which was broken up into smaller parcels of land from the early 1850s. Kelly's allotment covered an area of over 305 acres and incorporated Crown Allotments 10 and 11 in the Parish of Knowsley.^[7] Kelly mortgaged the land soon after his purchase, probably to finance payments on the property. ^[8] He was a farmer by trade, and it was this activity that undoubtedly dominated his pursuits at Knowsley.

Kelly was granted the license for the Moorabbee Hotel in December 1876. The hotel was a small establishment, and his application stated the building had five rooms available to the public. Kelly's family also lived there, and used other rooms for their accommodations.^[9] The building had presumably been built just prior to Kelly's application for a license, circa 1875.

Kelly died in 1878, and thereafter the hotel was offered by his wife, Mary Kelly, for lease together with 306 acres upon

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which the hotel was located. The offer was not taken up, and Mary Kelly continued to run the place herself. In April of 1882, Mary Kelly employed Henry Thomas to sell off the farm stock she had retained after the death of her husband.[10]

While Mary Kelly's offer of a lease of the place remained unsuccessful, it appears that she allowed a man named Clune to take charge of the hotel. This was ultimately the reason cited for the refusal of her licence in December 1882.[11] The hotel had apparently gained a poor reputation during the period of Mary Kelly's ownership. Her application for the renewal of her licence was accompanied by a statement from Mounted Constable Patrick Feeley of Axedale, who reported that Kelly had claimed she was married to Clune, while at a later date denied it. Feeley also reported that a serious assault on a bank manager had taken place at the hotel.[12]

Mary Kelly had at some point mortgaged the property to the Widow's Fund Life Assurance Society, and presumably defaulted, as the licence was transferred by them to Michael Tierney on the 4th January 1883. Tierney ran the place until his death in December of 1885, and the licence was transferred to his widow, Bridget Tierney.[13] At that stage the owner of the freehold over the place was J. D. Bywater who, in 1886, had secured an eviction order against Bridget Tierney. Tierney was also in competition with Patrick Burke for the licence over the place. In December 1886, it was briefly granted to Tierney, before being almost immediately transferred to Burke.[14]

By 1889 the hotel had been extended. J. D. Bywater called for tenders for a three or five year lease of the hotel which, by that stage, had 11 rooms and a 20 stall stable. The lease was again taken up by Patrick Burke.[15] Burke built the 'New Assembly Room' across the road from the hotel around this time, which was later known as the Knowsley Hall. It was presumably constructed on land owned by Bywater, and was included as part of the property of the hotel in future sales and leases. [16]

Burke transferred the licence to Michael O'Brien in September 1892, and he renewed it in December of that year. R. P. O'Dwyer took over the licence in 1894, after running a nearby saloon for a time. He transferred the licence to Michael Long in 1898.[17]

The Long family was associated with the hotel for a number of years. The licence was taken over by James Long in 1904, and then Timothy Long in 1906. They ceased their association with the place when it was transferred to Alice Hunter in May of 1908.[18] Title over the property was transferred to the Cohn Bros. Victoria Brewery of Bendigo on the 25th May 1909.[19]

Alice Hunter had previously been associated with the Black Swan Hotel prior to her acquisition of the licence of the Moorabbee. She bought the hotel in 1928[20] and continued to run it for a number of years before the licence was transferred to her daughter, Irene Hamilton, in the early 1930s. Alice Hunter died at the hotel in 1944. Irene Hamilton surrendered the licence after the Licensing Court imposed orders for renovations and improvements on the building in 1958.[21]

Irene Hamilton continued to live at the Moorabbee Hotel until her death in 1963. Some time later the building was converted to a private residence.[22]

[1] Randell, J. O. (1985). *McIvor: A History of the Shire and the Township of Heathcote*, Shire of McIvor, p. 1.

[2] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 31.

[3] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 31.

[4] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 21.

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[5]Heritage Victoria, (n.d), *Eppalock Weir*, Hermes entry 6482

[6] The Parish Plan of Knowlsey, 1878, indicates that Kelly held Allotment 11 under the Land Act of 1869; this same application may have also been for Allotment 10.

[7] Certificate of Title, Vol. 981, Fol. 155.

[8] Certificate of Title, Vol. 981, Fol. 155.

[9] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 271.

[10] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 271.

[11] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 271.

[12] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 271.

[13] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 271.

[14] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 271.

[15] Randell, J. O. (1985), p. 271.

[16] Randell, J.O. (1985), p. 271.

[17] Randell, J.O. (1985), p. 272.

[18] Randell, J.O. (1985), p. 272.

[19] Certificate of Title, Vol. 3343, Fol. 534.

[20] Certificate of Title, Vol. 3343, Fol. 534.

[21] Randell, J.O. (1985), p. 272.

[22] Randell, J.O. (1985), p. 272.

Primary sources

Targeted community consultation.

Certificate of Title, Vol. 981, Fol. 155.

Plan of the Parish of Knowsley, undated.

Secondary sources

Randell, J. O. (1985), *McIvor, A History of the Shire and the Township of Heathcote*, Shire of McIvor, Heathcote, Victoria.

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Relevant Historical Australian Themes

6.0 Building towns, cities and the garden state

6.5 Living in country towns

Description

Physical Description

11 Knowsley Eppalock Road occupies a prominent corner at the entrance to Knowsley, and was built in several stages. The original five roomed section was built in the early 1870s and the building almost doubled in size to 11 rooms by 1889. There are two gable roof forms set perpendicular to each other, and an outbuilding that appears to have been incorporated into the main part of the house. The original cladding material appears to be weatherboard, although later alterations have replaced this with fibre cement sheet cladding, especially to the gable ends. There are some original twelve pane sash windows, although some windows have been replaced with plain sashes. A straight profile verandah links the two parts of the building and ties them together. A number of doors open directly onto the verandah which is characteristic of hotels. One gable end is still clad in weatherboards and has a small bargeboard of looped profile. Some of the timber verandah posts have been replaced with iron pipes. Overall the building shares many of the characteristics of early hotels, but is less intact than others in the study area.

Physical Condition

Fair

Conservation Policy

The following specific conservation actions are recommended, should the opportunity arise:

Revealing the form of the building by the removal of twentieth century additions, and the replacement of windows with timber framed windows would enhance this building.

Comparative Analysis

The former Moorabbee Hotel is less intact than other hotels in the study area.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The former Moorabbee Hotel, including all the fabric of the 1870s timber building and the later additions added prior to 1889, is significant.

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How is it significant?

The former Moorabee Hotel is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Greater Bendigo.

Why is it significant?

The former Moorabee Hotel is aesthetically significant as a key building defining the township of Knowsley. Other buildings that reinforce the town are the store and residence at 4 Knowsley Eppalock Road. *Criterion E*

The former Moorabee Hotel contains elements characteristic of hotels in the region, such as a gabled roof, with a number of doors opening directly onto the verandah linking extensions to the original building. Although less intact than other hotels in the region, the former Moorabee Hotel is in fair condition. It is historically significant for its association with the subdivision of early pastoral properties following the 1860s Land Acts. Built by David Wise Kelly about 1875, on land that was originally part of the Campaspe Plains Run, the former Moorabee Hotel also has historical significance as an example of hotel ownership by a major brewery, Cohn Bros. in the early part of the twentieth century, and later as a reminder of the influence of hotel licensing requirements for alterations and improvements. *Criterion D*

The former Moorabee Hotel has historical significance for its association with the members of the Long family who were associated with the Hotel from 1898. Prior to this time, frequent changes of ownership and publicans may reflect changes in social circumstances or financial inability to improve their facilities. Although owned by Cohn Bros. Victoria Brewery of Bendigo from 1909, the Hotel has historic significance for its association with Alice Hunter from 1908. Her daughter Irene Hamilton ran it from the early 1930s until she surrendered the licence in 1958 after the Licensing Court imposed orders for renovations and improvements on the building. *Criterion A*

Assessment Against Criteria

HERCON CRITERIA

Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion A*

Possession of uncommon rare or endangers aspects of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion B*

Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history. *Criterion C*

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments. *Criterion D*

Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics. *Criterion E*

Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period. *Criterion F*

Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of the continuing and developing cultural traditions. *Criterion G*

Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history. *Criterion H*

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Recommendations 2008

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Fences & Outbuildings	No
Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted	Yes
Incorporated Plan	Yes
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No

Other Recommendations

It is recommended that 11 Knowsley Eppalock Road, Knowsley be added as an individual place to the Heritage Overlay of the Greater Bendigo City Planning Scheme with the schedule entry as shown above. The extent of registration is defined by a map. The recommended Incorporated Plan is the 'Permit Exemption Incorporated Plan - Former Shires of McIvor and Strathfieldsaye.'