

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name	Windsor Castle Hotel, 89 Albert Street, Windsor	
Address	89 Albert Street WINDSOR	Significance Level A2
Place Type	Hotel	
Citation Date	2010	



Windsor Castle Hotel

Recommended VHR No HI No PS Yes
Heritage Protection

History and Historical Context

Prahran's Pubs

Inns or hotels were usually the first commercial buildings to appear in Prahran's early settlements and were typically built on the main tracks and at cross roads to provide accommodation and refreshment for travellers. Hotels also became important meeting places and centres of social life for local communities.

By the 1850s, Prahran had over twenty hotels.[1] Many were small pubs offering refreshments to local workers at the end of a hard day's labour. Later hotel building in the 1860s and 1870s was mostly confined to the western parts of Prahran and typically occurred as infill development in spaces along main roads left by earlier hotel builders. A smaller number of hotels could be found tucked away in side streets serving local communities, especially in the low-lying areas that were isolated by swampy ground. The Windsor Castle, College Lawn, Red Lion and Emu Hotel (now the Flying Duck Hotel) were hotels of this type. Betty Malone describes how each developed a distinctive atmosphere to suit the surrounding community.[2]

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The number of hotels in Prahran grew to over fifty at the height of the 1880s land boom. Up to fifteen of these hotels were found in the densely populated Windsor area. The prosperity of the age enabled many publicans to enlarge and improve their hotels. Most of the surviving pre-boom inns and hotels were remodelled and enlarged with rear and upper storey extensions, billiard rooms, repainting and decorative embellishments.

The corner pub remained an important part of working class social life through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nonetheless, the role of the hotel as a provider of accommodation for travellers and as an entertainment venue and meeting place for local community organisations had diminished. Betty Malone describes how, between 1890 and 1940, the typical pub had become 'much less a community centre and more a male dominated drinking house'.^[3]

Falling hotel standards and pressure from the temperance movement prompted the State government to reduce the number of liquor licenses. A Licenses Reduction Board was appointed in 1906 and began a process of hotel de-licensing throughout Victoria. In order to meet the standards of the Board and maintain their licenses, many hotels were upgraded and refurbished. Along with the addition of large-scale (usually two storey) additions, one of the most typical alterations which hotelkeepers made to the buildings during this period was the remodelling of the exterior.

The gradual relaxation of Victoria's restrictive liquor licensing laws from the late 1960s revived the local hospitality industry.^[4] Many new restaurants, bars and nightclubs opened in South Yarra and Prahran, some occupying early hotels, but with a change of name, image and style of service to appeal to a new generation of residents and visitors.

The Windsor Castle Hotel

A hotel was first established on the present site of the Windsor Castle Hotel in 1854.^[5] According to an auction notice from October that year, the hotel was built of timber, as were most of Prahran's other early hotels:

The two storied house, occupied and known as the Windsor Castle Hotel, consisting of nine rooms, with bar room, kitchen, servants room, cellar and a large hall thirty feet by sixteen. This house is built of the best Baltic timber, the outside being rusticated woodwork, inside handsomely papered, painted and altogether well and substantially finished, situated on a corner allotment, having a frontage of 81 feet to St David Street and another frontage of 41 feet to Albert Street, Windsor.^[6]

The licensee for the period 1854-1856 was Michael Ryan. Edward Downs held the hotel licence from 1862 until 1870 when it was transferred to William Keogh.^[7]

The original timber Windsor Castle Hotel was rebuilt c1871.^[8] Increasing prosperity in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the availability of a wider range of building materials eventually saw all of Prahran's early timber hotels replaced with more substantial masonry structures. The rebuilt Windsor Castle had all the principal characteristics of the Victorian corner pub including rendered masonry walls built on the street boundary with a chamfered corner, a moulded cornice at parapet level and a string course delineating the first floor level.

The license for the Windsor Castle Hotel changed hands frequently in the following decade. Between 1882 and 1884, the license was held by John Walter Gillard. Louis G Tellier is listed as the licensee in 1885 followed by R F Freeman the following year. By 1888, the license had been transferred to Robert Dummett.^[9]

The earliest known image of the Windsor Castle Hotel is an MMBW detail plan dating from c1896. It shows a slightly smaller building footprint than the present hotel with a cellar under the south-east corner. The plan also shows a large rear yard with horse stables extending across the full width of the north boundary.

In June 1935, plans for remodelling of the Windsor Castle Hotel were described in detail in the Argus:

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The work being carried out is transforming it into a modern suburban residential hotel. Additions are being made to the existing building on both frontages. To comply with the requirements of the Licensing Court that the entrance to the residential portion of the hotel shall be free from contact with the bar a separate residential entrance is being formed in the new section. A large dining room with kitchen and service departments will be provide in the new portion. On the first floor in the new section there will be four double bedrooms, bathrooms toilet and linen-presses, also an additional double bedroom at the north-west corner above the new storeroom on the ground floor.

Very little structural alteration has been found necessary in the existing building but the bar portion will be completely remodelled .the fittings will be designed on modern lines and ill include a continuous bottle rack, stainless sinks and refrigeration. A new block of outbuildings will include garages, fuel store and laundry.

The exterior treatment of the redesigned building follows simple dignified modern lines, emphasis being given to the residential entrance by means of protruding canopy and a tall window lighting the stair hall.

A 4ft 6 inch dado of black tiles relieved with green contrasting tile bands will run along he base of the building, above which the walls will have a fine sandstone finish. A unique effect will be gained by finishing the whole of the external woodwork in a rich cherry colour.

Sand-blasted glazing of an unusual design will be used for the ground-floor windows and special treatment will be given to the stair hall windows.[10]

The Windsor Castle was one of many Victorian era hotels to undergo extensive alterations and additions in the 1920 and 1930s. These improvements were usually made because publicans were anxious to retain their licences by meeting the requirements of the Liquor Licenses Reduction Board.

In 1939, after 35 years of occupancy as owner and licensee of the Windsor Castle Hotel, Mrs J Rankin sold the building to Mr H Hale.[11]

In December 1970, an application was made to the Liquor Control Commission for alterations and additions to the Windsor Castle Hotel.[12] The works included: remodelling and extending the public bar room, providing a bottle shop and liquor cool-room on the Albert Street frontage and converting a boiler room and existing external female toilets for use as male and female toilets.

The relaxation of Victoria's restrictive liquor licensing laws from the late 1960screated new opportunities for entertainment in Prahran's pubs. The abolition of six o'clock closing and extended trading hours allowed many hotels to reinvent themselves as live music venues. The Windsor Castle Hotel followed this trend in the 1980s by featuring rock bands till midnight on weekends.[13]

The Hotel Architect

The c.1935 remodelling of the Windsor Castle Hotel was carried out to a design by architect Richard Le-Poer Terry. Like a number of architects of the period, Le-Poer Terry was commissioned to alter or rebuild several Victorian era hotels. His hotel work included: remodelling of the Swanston Family Hotel, Swanston Street (1934); alterations to the Continental Hotel, Sorrento (1935); rebuilding of the Traveller's Rest Hotel, Thorpdale (1937); and, alterations and additions to the Royal Mail Hotel, Port Melbourne (1937). Le-Poer Terry also specialised in cinema design and was responsible for the Plaza Theatre Sorrento (1935) and the Theatre Royal, Castlemaine (1937).[14] For his commercial work Le-Poer Terry appears to have almost exclusively favoured a Moderne architectural style which drew on Art Deco or Jazz sources. Outside of his professional activities, Le-Perry was known as a motoring enthusiast who participated in gruelling interstate car rallies including a 10,000 mile round Australia contest.[15]

[1] Context Pty Ltd, *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History*, p.114.

- [2] Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs 1852-1998*, p.11.
- [3] Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs 1852-1998*, p.30.
- [4] Context Pty Ltd, *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History*, p.114.
- [5] Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs 1852-1998*, p.21.
- [6] *Argus*, 21 October 1854, p.3.
- [7] R K Cole collection of hotel records online. State Library of Victoria.
- [8] *Argus*, 6 June, 1935, p.12.
- [9] R K Cole collection of hotel records online. State Library of Victoria.
- [10] *Argus*, 6 June, 1935, p.12.
- [11] *Argus*, 4 May 1939, p.19.
- [12] License Case File, No 191621. Series 78VPRS 7882, Unit 234. Public Records Office of Victoria.
- [13] Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs, 1852-1988*. p.57.
- [14] Miles Lewis Architectural index online: <http://mileslewis.net/australian-architectural.html>
- [15] *Argus*, 12 January 1937.

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

The Windsor Castle Hotel illustrates the following themes as identified in the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context Pty Ltd, 2006):

7.1 Serving Local Communities

7.4.1 Early Hotels

7.4.2 Developing a Modern Hospitality Industry

Description

Physical Description

The Windsor Castle Hotel occupies a corner site in a predominately residential neighbourhood. It is a double-storey interwar Moderne style building constructed of rendered masonry with a parapet concealing a hipped corrugated iron roof. Both street facades are built directly on the property boundary with a chamfer at the corner entry. The facade is embellished with characteristic Art Deco ornament including a zig-zag patterned string course above the ground floor openings and horizontal banding at parapet level. The first floor facade has horizontal incisions in its render and regularly spaced timber-framed double-hung windows with horizontal glazing bars and curved reveals, creating a streamlined effect.

The strong horizontal emphasis of the facade is offset by the vertical form of the stair window on the Albert Street facade. The window has a rendered surround matching the zig zag pattern string course and sits above ground floor entry doors with presumably original port hole windows. A parapet above the stair window has a stepped profile and Art Deco style finial with a similar stepped design. Raised wrought iron letters on the parapet bear the name of the hotel and what appears to be the year '1935' (part of the last number has broken off). Similar wrought iron letters on the corner parapet read 'Est 1871'. These signs relate to the hotel's c1871 construction date and the year in which the present facade was created. Evidence of the hotel's original c1871 fabric is visible on the north elevation where there is exposed face brickwork and a typical Victorian era timber-framed double-hung sash window at first floor level.

The exterior of the hotel appears to remain substantially intact to its c1935 state aside from the relatively recent green and pink paint scheme, modifications to some ground floor openings and the removal of the black tiled dado described in the building history above. Alterations to the Albert Street facade include the bricking up of a window opening and the conversion of an adjacent window opening into a door. The original timber frames have also been removed from a pair of

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window openings at the eastern end of this frontage. On the Upton Road frontage, a window opening has been enlarged to fit a modern timber-famed door. The trio of pink elephants statuettes on the Albert Street parapet are also relatively recent fixtures. The hotel interior was not subject to a detailed inspection although it appears to retain little fabric of heritage interest.

Comparative Analysis

Interwar Hotels in Stonnington

The Windsor Castle Hotel was one of many Victorian era hotels to undergo extensive alterations and additions in the 1920s and 1930s. These improvements were usually made because publicans were anxious to retain their licences by meeting the requirements of the Liquor Licenses Reduction Board. Hotels in the Municipality which are known to have been rebuilt or remodelled in the interwar period are described below.

Argo Hotel, 62-74 Argo Street, South Yarra.

A hotel was built on this site c1866 and was rebuilt or at the very least substantially remodelled c1927. It has an understated Mediterranean style facade which remains largely intact to its interwar state. A current planning scheme amendment seeks to include the hotel on the heritage overlay schedule.

Former Duke of York Hotel, 213-215 High Street, Prahran

A Victorian corner hotel, rebuilt in the 1920 with stylised classical Grecian ornament common to hotels of the period. It remains substantially intact to its interwar state aside from some modifications to ground floor openings. The building is currently recommended for a heritage overlay control.

Hotel Max, 30 Commerical Road, Prahran

Double-storey corner hotel with a substantially intact interwar Streamlined Moderne style facade. The hotel is an A2 graded building and is currently recommended for a heritage overlay control.

Prahran Hotel (former Highbridge Hotel), High Street, Prahran

A Victorian corner hotel, remodelled in 1940. The facade remains highly intact and is dominated by two broad streamlined render bands, typical of the Moderne style. The building is covered by an individual heritage overlay control (HO268).

Orrong Hotel, 709 High Street, Armadale

A Victorian hotel rebuilt in an interwar Moderne style with a stepped corner tower. The hotel's interwar facade appears to remain broadly intact to its overall form but all ground floor openings have been altered and original Moderne style detailing has been removed or obscured by a modern render finish.

Railway Hotel, 29 Chapel Street, Windsor.

A double-storey Victorian corner hotel, altered and extended in 1927. The facade has restrained Grecian revival detailing typical of hotels of the period. It remains substantially intact externally notwithstanding the enlargement of some ground floor openings and the construction of a rear addition. The hotel is an A2 graded building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).

Former Royal George Hotel, 257 Chapel Street, Prahran

A double-storey corner building with an austere interwar Moderne style facade. The hotel ceased trading c1970 and has been converted into shops so that its original purpose is no longer evident. It is a C graded building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).

Station Hotel, 96 Greville Street, Prahran.

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Victorian double-storey corner hotel, rebuilt or remodelled in the interwar period with stylised classical detailing. The facade remains largely intact notwithstanding minor modifications to some ground floor openings. The hotel is a B grade building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).

Angel Tavern (fmr Railway Hotel) 641 Dandenong Road, Malvern

A mid-nineteenth century hotel with extensive alterations dating from c1925. The facade has a restrained neo-classical character typical of the period and remains substantially intact. The building has been recommended for a heritage overlay control.

Malvern Vale Hotel, 1321 Malvern Road, Malvern

A hotel was first established on this site in 1865. Originally known as the Butcher's Arms, it was renamed the Malvern Vale Hotel in 1889. The building was extensively altered c1925 to a design by Joy and McIntyre architects. It has a fairly plain facade with modern alterations and additions.

Racecourse Hotel, 895 Dandenong Road, Malvern East

A nineteenth century hotel with an elaborate Spanish Mission style facade dating from 1926. The hotel remains largely intact to its interwar state apart from large signs mounted above the front entry and over a number of window openings. It has been recommended for a heritage overlay control as part of the proposed Waverley Road Gateway precinct.

Interwar Moderne

First popular in the 1930s, the Moderne style was typified by streamlined wall surfaces and a horizontal emphasis. Its aesthetic was related to that of contemporary ocean liners, automobiles and aeroplanes and it attempted to capture the sleek lines and sharp or rounded corners associated with the fast and the modern. Jazz (or Art Deco) ornament was sometimes used around openings or on parapets and is generally seen as the decorative overlay to the streamlined Moderne style. It often took the form of zigzag or chevron patterns on rendered walls or streamlined vertical fins which rounded off just above the parapet.

Art Deco the decorative style which developed from the 1925 Exposition of Decorative Arts in Paris, is usually associated with furniture jewellery and other crafted arts. Also related in terms of style and motif however was the Zig Zag or Jazz Moderne of American skyscraper architecture of the late 1920s and early 1930s, which soon became popular in Australia

Many nineteenth century hotels were refaced in the 1930s in the contemporary Moderne or Jazz style. The style lent itself to the remodelling of nineteenth century hotels as its characteristic horizontal streamlines could easily follow existing render string courses and cornices, and ziz-zag ornament could replace Italianate mouldings. The style's association with progress and hygiene made it especially popular with hotel keepers who needed to demonstrate to the Licenses Reduction Board that they operated a clean and up-to date establishment.

The former United Kingdom Hotel, Clifton Hill, is recognised as one of the finest examples of the Jazz Moderne style in the State and is included on the Victorian Heritage Register. Examples of identified local significance with heritage overlay controls include the Court House Hotel, North Melbourne, the Royal Hotel, Richmond, and the Terminus Hotel, Abbotsford.

Conclusion

Of the surviving hotels in the City of Stonnington which were rebuilt or remodelled in the interwar period, the Windsor Castle Hotel most directly compares with the Prahran hotel in terms of its architectural expression and historical interest. Both have similar interwar Moderne style facade of arguably comparable design quality. The Prahran Hotel exterior is also only marginally more intact than the Windsor Castle, having retained its ground floor tiled dado. With regards to historical significance, both sites have been continuously occupied by hotels since the mid-1850s and both demonstrate

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the impact of changing liquor license laws on hotel design.

The location of the Windsor Castle Hotel in a residential backstreet creates a notable point of difference from the Prahran Hotel. Most hotels in the municipality, including the Prahran Hotel, were built on prominent corner locations on main thoroughfares to attract a passing trade. The Red Lion Hotel, Flying Duck Hotel and Argo Hotel are among the few other examples of hotels in Prahran to have been built to serve a local neighbourhood, away from busy shopping strips and major roads.

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The Windsor Castle Hotel, 89 Albert Street, Windsor, is a double-storey corner hotel with an interwar Moderne style facade. The hotel was erected c1871 replacing a c1854 timber hotel, and was substantially remodelled in the mid 1930s.

How is it Significant?

The Windsor Castle Hotel is of local architectural and historical significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it Significant?

The Windsor Castle Hotel is of historical significance for its ability to demonstrate the major interwar trend of remodelling or rebuilding nineteenth century hotels that followed the introduction of the Licences Reduction Board. It is also significant for the enduring use of the site as a licensed premises for over 150 years, and as an example of a hotel which was built away from main roads to serve a local residential neighbourhood.

The Windsor Castle Hotel is architecturally significant as a representative and substantially externally intact example of a Victorian corner hotel with an interwar Moderne style facade.

Assessment Against Criteria

Assessment of the precinct was undertaken in accordance with the processes and criteria outlined in the Australian ICOMOS (Burra) Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Significance.

Recommendations 2010

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

This information is provided for guidance only and does not supersede official documents, particularly the planning scheme. Planning controls should be verified by checking the relevant municipal planning scheme.