

# Argo Hotel

62-74 Argo Street, South Yarra



## Heritage Assessment

April 2010

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# Argo Hotel 62-74 Argo Street, South Yarra

Heritage Assessment  
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## 1.0 Introduction

This report was commissioned by the City of Stonnington. It provides an assessment of the cultural heritage significance of the Argo Hotel, South Yarra, and provides comment on the appropriateness of a heritage control for the place.

## 2.0 Sources of Information

The analysis below draws upon an external inspection of the building and historical research using City of Prahran rate books, MMBW property service plans, Sands and McDougall Directories, *The Argus* newspaper, and Miles Lewis' architectural index. The report also relies on secondary historical sources including *Prahran's Pub's 1852 to 1988* (Betty Malone, 1988) and the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context Pty Ltd, 2006).



Figure 1 Site map showing the location of the Argo Hotel, South Yarra. Source: Land Victoria Interactive Maps.

### 3.0 Listings and Controls

#### *City of Stonnington*

The site is not currently subject to a heritage overlay control either as an individually significant building or as part of a significant precinct.

The *Prahran Character and Conservation Study* (1992) identified the Argo Hotel as an A2 graded building. A2 buildings are *of regional or metropolitan significance, and stand as important milestones in the architectural development of the metropolis.*

The *City of Prahran Conservation Review, Volume 3* (Context, March 1993) recommended that the Argo Hotel should be included in an Urban Conservation Area as part of either the Tyrone Street precinct or the Moore and Hardy streets precinct. The Argo Hotel was not, however, included in the review of A2 graded buildings, which was also undertaken as part of the 1993 review. This study included only those A2 graded places identified as having the strongest case for heritage planning protection based on their known history and/or their architectural importance. This is not to suggest that the Argo Hotel was inconsequential in terms of its significance but that it did not fall into the group of obvious or self-evident candidates for an individual heritage control.

#### *Heritage Victoria*

The site is not included on the Victorian Heritage Register.

#### *National Trust of Australia (Victoria)*

The site is not included on the National Trust Register of classified places

#### *Australian Heritage Council*

The site is not included on the Register of the National Estate as administered by the Australian Heritage Council.

### 4.0 History

#### *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.<sup>1</sup> 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 in the low-lying areas that were isolated by swampy ground, such as Argo Street.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Context Pty Ltd, *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History*, p.114.

<sup>2</sup> Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs 1852-1998*, p.11.

The number of hotels in Prahran grew to over 50 at the height of the 1880s land boom. 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'.<sup>3</sup>

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, several of Prahran's hotels were upgraded.

The gradual relaxation of Victoria's restrictive liquor licensing laws from the late 1960s revived the local hospitality industry.<sup>4</sup> 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 Argo Hotel*

A hotel, known as Sheppard's after its first licensee Thomas Sheppard, was erected on the corner of Argo and Hyland streets c.1866.<sup>5</sup> It was one of two hotels on Argo Street owned by Gustav (or Gustaf) Wilson. The other was the Freemason's Tavern which was later renamed the Early Bird before closing down in 1883.

Gustav Wilson was associated with Sheppard's Hotel for many years and became the licensee in 1880.<sup>6</sup> The following year, architect George Wharton advertised for tenders for additions to the hotel, although the extent of the works is not described in any detail.<sup>7</sup>

The earliest known image of the hotel is an MMBW detail plan dating from c1896. It shows the hotel extending across almost two-thirds of the Argo Street frontage, making it slightly wider than the present hotel building. The MMBW plan also shows a small fenced garden at the north-west corner of the hotel and an ad-hoc arrangement of asphalt and brick paved rear yards with stables on the southern boundary accessed via Hyland Street.

<sup>3</sup> Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs 1852-1998*, p.30.

<sup>4</sup> Context Pty Ltd, *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History*, p.114.

<sup>5</sup> Betty Malone states the hotel was built in 1862 although Sand's and McDougall directories do not list a hotel on this site until 1867. The Cole/Tetlow index of hotel records gives 1866 as the earliest date for the Sheppard's hotel licence.

<sup>6</sup> Cole/Tetlow index. State Library of Victoria.

<sup>7</sup> *The Argus*, 20/9/1881, p.30.

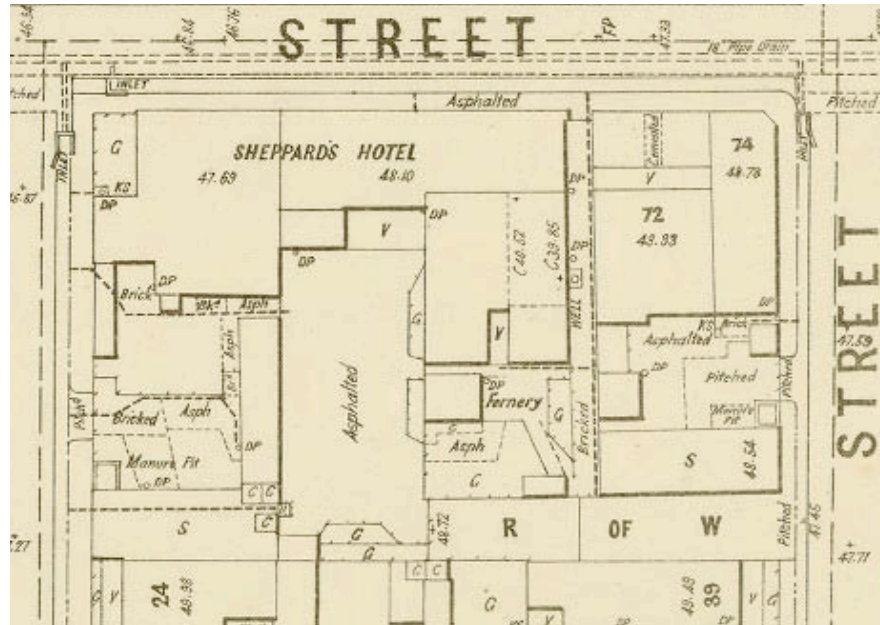


Figure 2 MMBW plan c.1896 showing Sheppard's Hotel (now the Argo Hotel).  
Source: State Library Picture Map Collection.

Gustav Wilson died at Sheppard's Hotel on the 24 August 1913 at the age of 72.<sup>8</sup> The hotel license was transferred to his wife Ellen, continuing the Wilson family's long association with the hotel.

In 1927, plans were submitted to the Licensing Court for the rebuilding of Sheppard's Hotel, as reported in the Argus of 25 January of that year:

*Licensing Inspector Bourke said that the plans appeared very satisfactory, and that Mr. G. J. Sutherland, architect, said that the work of alteration would cost £4,000.<sup>9</sup>*

Sheppard's 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.

The improvements to Sheppard's hotel are reflected in the City of Prahran Rate books for 1927, which show an increase in the net annual value from £280 to £400, although it is not clear if the works involved the total demolition of the original building. Gustav Wilson's daughters Ethel and Jessie Wilson are listed in rate books as the hotel's publicans during this period.

<sup>8</sup> *The Argus*, 24 August 1921, p.1.

<sup>9</sup> *The Argus*, 25 January 1927, p.15.

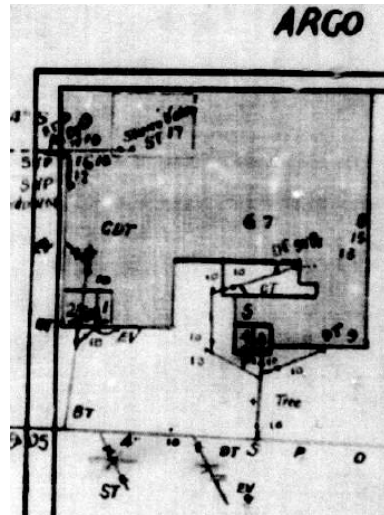


Figure 3 (left) A 1927 MMBW property service plan of the hotel. Source: South East Water.

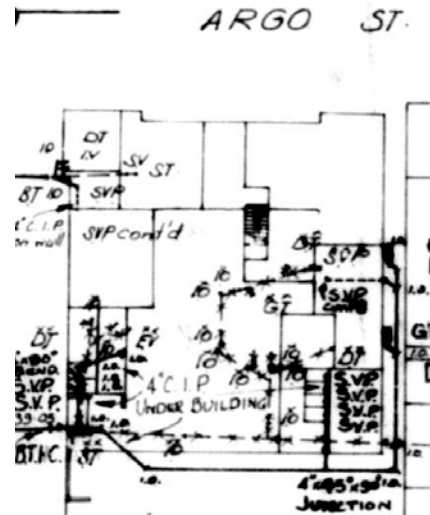


Figure 4 (right) A 1974 MMBW property service plan of the hotel showing various rear additions. Source: South East Water.

Sheppard's Hotel is described by Betty Malone as one of the first Prahran hotels to be 'modernised' in the post war period.<sup>10</sup> The exact nature of these works is not noted although it presumably relates to refurbishing of the interior. More substantial works took place c1974 when MMBW property service plans show additions being made to the rear of the building (see figure 4 above). Sheppard's Hotel was renamed the New Argo Inn around the same time<sup>11</sup> and operated as a live music venue, although the hotel's location in a residential street restricted bands to playing on a Saturday afternoon.<sup>12</sup> More recently, the hotel has functioned as a fine dining restaurant.



Figure 5 Sheppard's Hotel, c.1962. Source: SLV Picture Collection.

<sup>10</sup> Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs 1852-1998*, p.50.

<sup>11</sup> Sands and McDougall directories, 1970-1974.

<sup>12</sup> Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs 1852-1998*, p.57.

*Gordon J Sutherland*

Historical records indicate that the rebuilding of the Argo Hotel in 1927 was carried out to a design by architect Gordon J Sutherland. Sutherland is mostly known as a designer of residences and flats, mainly built in the 1920s and 1930s in affluent suburbs such as Armadale, Toorak and Kew.<sup>13</sup>

Sutherland was elected associate of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects in 1917 and the following year won a competition for the design of a new Architectural Atelier building at Melbourne University. He acted as an assistant lecturer in architecture at Melbourne University in 1934 and in 1938, he was appointed by the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects to the Board of Architectural Education committee of examiners.<sup>14</sup> He also contributed a number of articles to popular home and building journals and several of his designs were published in *Real Property Annual*, *The Argus* and *Australian Home Building*. From about 1937, Gordon worked in partnership with his younger brother Bruce Sutherland.

Like many architects of the interwar period, Sutherland drew on an eclectic range of stylistic sources, including the Moderne, Mediterranean, Old English and Georgian revival idioms. His residential work includes the Craftsman style bungalow at 3 Glyndebourne Avenue, Malvern (1923) and the very distinctive Mediterranean style house at 6 Redcourt Avenue, Armadale (1937) (see figure 6 below). His non-residential works include an office and warehouse for Kosky Brothers in City Road, South Melbourne (1924) and the Kaniva Shire Hall (1929). The latter makes use of a cross-braced 'X' motif which can also be found on the façade of the Argo Hotel (see figure 7 below).



Figure 6 (left) House, 6 Redcourt Avenue, Armadale. Gordon Sutherland architect (1937)  
Figure 7 (right) Kaniva Shire Hall. Gordon Sutherland architect (1929)

Works by Sutherland in partnership with his brother include: Moderne style maisonettes in Lockerbie Court, East St Kilda (1937); a Georgian style house in Torresdale Road, Toorak (1938); a house in Landen Place, Toorak (1938); maisonettes in Alexandra Parade, South Yarra (1939); flats in St Leonard's Court South Yarra (1939); and, a prize winning design for a display house at the corner of Hawthorn Road and Aileen Avenue, Caulfield (1939).

<sup>13</sup> Unless otherwise noted, information regarding Gordon Sutherland is referenced from the Miles Lewis Architectural Index. Available online at <http://mileslewis.net/australian-architectural.html>

<sup>14</sup> *The Argus*, 23 June 1938, p.6.

Gordon and Bruce Sutherland also designed a display home which was built in 1936 in the city, adjacent to the Myer emporium, to showcase the latest trends in home furnishings and technology, including an integrated heating and air conditioning system – reportedly the first of its kind to be installed in a house in Victoria.<sup>15</sup>



Figure 8 (left) *Maisonettes, Lockerbie Court, St Kilda East. G J & Bruce Sutherland architects (1937). Source: The Argus.*

Figure 9 (right) *House, Torresdale Road, Toorak. G J & Bruce Sutherland architects (1938). Source: The Argus.*

## 5.0 Description

The Argo Hotel is located on the south-east corner of Argo and Hyland streets, South Yarra. The hotel property includes two vacant lots, which are presently used as a carpark.

The hotel is double-storey masonry building with an understated Mediterranean character arising from elements such as round arched windows, stylised parapets, hipped terracotta tiled roofs and textured rendered walls. The Argo Street frontage has deep projecting eaves on paired brackets (or 'beam ends'), which are also suggestive of the Mediterranean style, set between corner parapets with stepped pediments. At the centre of the facade a first floor balcony, with a rendered balustrade panel incorporating diagonal cross-braced 'X' motifs to either end, cantilevers over the street. The cross motif reoccurs as a decorative device to the parapet pediments and the upper sashes of first floor windows. The ground floor contains a series of arched window and door openings surmounted by modern canvas awnings. The exterior walls have a light roughcast finish.



Figure 10 (left) *The Argo Hotel as viewed from the corner of Argo and Hyland streets.*

Figure 11 (right) *The east elevation of the hotel as viewed from the hotel carpark.*

<sup>15</sup> *The Argus*, 1 October 1936, p.1.



The original frames to the ground floor windows have been replaced and the door at the western end has been removed to create a recessed entry porch. A tiled dado evident on a c.1962 photograph of the hotel has also been removed (see figure 5 above). Much of the hotel's rear yard has been built over with a single-storey flat roofed addition. The addition presents to Hyland Street as a very simple parapeted brick wall with a deep recessed entry. There is also a very modest first floor skillion roofed addition immediately behind the original building and various metal flues and heating and cooling plant protruding from the roof at the rear. The exterior otherwise remains largely intact to its c.1929 state.

The interior of the hotel was not inspected during the preparation of this report but it is understood to have been extensively refurbished.

## 6.0 Comparative Analysis

### *Hotels in Stonnington*

A comprehensive survey of hotels in the former City of Prahran was undertaken by Betty Malone in 1988.<sup>16</sup> Malone lists 27 trading hotels and a further 38 former hotel buildings (most of which were described as having being demolished). Of these, 29 hotels or former hotel buildings are known to be currently extant within the boundaries of the former City of Prahran (this excludes hotels erected since the post war period). Most of these hotels were built to the common late-Victorian hotel format of a double storey rendered masonry building, on a corner site with parapeted facades, Italianate detailing and a chamfered corner.

#### *Arcadia Hotel, 2-4 Toorak Road, South Yarra*

Double-storey Victorian corner hotel. The hotel is an A2 graded building in the Toorak Road heritage overlay precinct (HO150).



#### *Alexandra Hotel, 22 Powell Street, South Yarra*

Double-storey Victorian corner hotel, converted into apartments.



#### *Former Black Prince Hotel, 455 Chapel Street, South Yarra*

Double-storey Victorian corner hotel. No longer operates as a hotel. The hotel is an A2 graded building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).



<sup>16</sup> Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs, 1852-1988*. pp.68-69 and 80-83.

*Former Bowling Green Hotel, 85 Chapel Street, Windsor*  
 Double-storey Victorian corner hotel converted into shops. It is a B graded building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).



*Bush Inn Hotel, 505 Malvern Road, Toorak*  
 A hotel was first built on this site c1854. It was rebuilt in the late-nineteenth century in the Italianate style. The hotel is included in a heritage precinct (HO142).



*College Lawn, 36 Greville Street, Prahran*  
 A double-storey Victorian corner hotel. It is a B graded building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).



*Court Jester, 270 Chapel Street, Prahran*  
 Heavily altered double-storey Victorian corner hotel. It is a C graded building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).



*Duke of Windsor, cnr of High and Chapel Streets*  
 Heavily altered double-storey Victorian corner hotel. It is a B graded building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).



*Edwards Tavern, 211 High Street, Prahran*  
 Victorian corner hotel, rebuilt c1920s with stylised classical Grecian ornament common to hotels of the period.



*Former Fawkner Park Hotel, 20 Powell Street, South Yarra*  
 A simple double-storey Victorian corner hotel converted into a residence.



*Flying Duck, corner of Bendigo and Princess Streets, Prahran*

A double-storey corner hotel with a Victorian Italianate style façade. The hotel is not currently subject to a heritage overlay control.

*Her Majesty's, corner of Toorak Road and Davies Street, South Yarra.*

A large double-storey Victorian hotel with an elaborate Italianate style façade and corner tower. The hotel is an A1 graded building in the Toorak Road heritage overlay precinct (HO150).

*Imperial, 522 Chapel Street, South Yarra*  
Heavily altered Victorian corner hotel.*Market Hotel, 143 Commercial Road, Prahran*

Double-storey Victorian Italianate building. It is an A2 graded building in the Chapel Street Precinct (HO126).

*Hotel Max, 32 Commercial Road, Prahran*

Double-storey corner hotel with a substantially intact interwar Streamlined Moderne style façade. The hotel is graded A2 but is not currently subject to a heritage overlay control.

*Mount Erica Hotel, 420 High Street, Prahran*

Double-storey Victorian corner hotel with a single-storey addition to High Street. The hotel is an A2 graded building in the Williams Road heritage overlay precinct (HO155).

*Pint on Punt Hotel (former Hydehurst Hotel), 42 Punt Road, Windsor*

A large three-storey corner hotel with a very simple façade, possibly dating from the 1940s.



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

A Victorian corner hotel, remodelled in 1940. The façade remains highly intact and is composed as a series of broad streamlined render bands, typical of the Moderne style. The building is covered by an individual heritage overlay (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 façade appears to remain substantially intact externally although the rendered wall finish may not be original.



*Railway Hotel, 29 Chapel Street, Windsor.*

A double-storey Victorian corner hotel, altered and extended in 1927. The façade has restrained Grecian revival detailing typical of hotels of the period. The hotel 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 Rainbow Hotel, 427 Chapel Street, South Yarra*

A double-storey Victorian corner building with interwar Spanish mission style detailing to the parapet. It is not clear if these parapet details were added after the building ceased trading as a hotel in the 1920s. The ground floor shopfront has been modernised and the building is no longer readily identifiable as a former hotel.



*Former Red Lion Hotel, 39 Duke Street, Windsor*

A Victorian double-storey building with a highly unusual polychrome brick façade. It has been converted into residences. The hotel is an A1 graded building in the Duke and Hornby Street precinct.



*Former Royal George Hotel, 257 Chapel Street, Prahran*

A double-storey corner building with an austere interwar Moderne style façade. The hotel ceased trading c1970 and has been converted into shops. It is a C graded building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).



*Station Hotel, 96 Greville Street, Prahran.*

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

*Swan Hotel, 152 Chapel Street, Windsor.*

Double-storey Victorian corner hotel with elaborate Italianate style façade. The building is included in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).

*Temperance Hotel, 426 Chapel Street, South Yarra*

Double-storey Victorian corner hotel. The building is included in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).

*Union Hotel, 90 Chapel Street, South Yarra*

Double-storey Victorian corner hotel. The building is included in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).

*The Xchange, 119 Commercial Road, South Yarra.*

Altered double-storey Victorian corner hotel.

*Windsor Castle, 89 Albert Street, Windsor*

Double-storey Victorian corner hotel rebuilt with an interwar Moderne style façade with Art Deco/Jazz ornament. It appears to remain largely intact externally to its interwar state.



Far fewer hotels were built in the former City of Malvern, presumably because there was little demand or desire for such establishments in an area largely populated by a conservative middle class. Only six extant pre-world War II hotels were identified within the boundaries of the former City of Malvern as part of this assessment.

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

A mid-nineteenth century hotel with extensive alterations dating from c1925. The façade has a restrained neo-classical character typical of the period and appears to remain broadly intact.



*Armadale Hotel, 1068 High Street Armadale*

A hotel was first built on this site in 1865. Alterations took place in the 1880s and again 1921 when the hotel façade took on a late Edwardian character (shown in the adjacent c1970 image). The building was entirely rebuilt (or at the very least substantially modified) and is no longer operates as a hotel.



*Former Malvern Hill Hotel, 1117 Malvern Road, Toorak*

A double-storey brick corner hotel dating from 1861 but extensively altered. The building has an individual heritage overlay control (HO274) to the extent of its 1860s fabric.



*Malvern Vale Hotel, 1321 Malvern Road, Malvern*

The hotel has a fairly plain façade (possibly dating from the interwar period) with modern alterations and additions.



*Racecourse Hotel, 895 Dandenong Road, Malvern East*

A nineteenth century hotel with an elaborate Spanish Mission style façade 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.



*Former Wattletree Hotel, 196 Wattletree Road, Malvern*

A modest single-storey weatherboard building constructed in the mid-nineteenth century in a vernacular style. The building has an individual heritage overlay control (HO116).



*Interwar Mediterranean style*

The Mediterranean form of architectural expression including the Spanish Mission styles were popular for Melbourne's houses and flats from about 1925. The style was less commonly used for commercial buildings such as theatres garages and hotels.



Figure 7 Typical Mediterranean bungalow design



Figure 8 Flats, 11 Eildon Road, St Kilda

In the broader inner eastern areas of Melbourne, few intact examples of interwar hotels in Mediterranean or Spanish Mission idioms survive. The former Racecourse Hotel, Dandenong Road, East Malvern, has round arched openings and Cordoba tiled parapets derived from broadly Mediterranean sources (albeit via Southern California). Similarly, Zagames Hotel at the intersection of Princes Highway and Derby Street in Caulfield North with its distinctive corner tower draws much of its inspiration from Mediterranean sources. It is protected under HO71 within the City of Glen Eira Planning Scheme. The Argo Hotel more closely resembles Curry's Family Hotel in Wellington Street, Collingwood, which was described in the *City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas* as a 'Mediterranean Provincial Revival' style hotel. It was also identified as an individually significant building.<sup>17</sup>



Figure 7 (left) The Racecourse Hotel, Malvern East.



Figure 8 (right) Curry's Family Hotel, Collingwood.

<sup>17</sup> Graeme Butler & Associates, *City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas* (2007), Appendix 7, p. 508.

### *Conclusion*

Of the surviving hotels in the City of Stonnington which were rebuilt or remodelled in the interwar period, the Hotel Max, Prahran Hotel, Windsor Castle and Orrong Hotel remain substantially intact to their c.1930s states but adopt a Moderne expression which is entirely distinct from the understated Mediterranean presentation of the Argo Hotel. The Railway Hotel and Edwards Tavern were also remodelled in the interwar period but differ from the Argo Hotel through their stylised Grecian revival detailing, commonly used for 1920s hotels. The Racecourse Hotel draws on Mediterranean influences but has a more theatrical and heavily ornamented Spanish Mission style façade, principally derived from Southern Californian sources. The Racecourse hotel is also less intact than the Argo Hotel. In the broader Metropolitan context, there are very few known examples of hotels built in a restrained interwar Mediterranean style similar to the Argo Hotel.

The Argo is also unusual for its location in a narrow residential backstreet. Most other hotels in the municipality were built on prominent corner locations on main thoroughfares to attract a passing trade. The Windsor Castle, Red Lion Hotel and former Alexandra Tavern are among the few examples of hotels in Prahran to have been built to serve a local neighbourhood, away from busy shopping strips and major roads.

In comparison to the hotels in the City of Stonnington which are protected by individual heritage overlay controls, the Argo is most directly comparable to the Prahran Hotel (HO268) in terms of its architectural quality, historical interest and level of intactness.

## 7.0 Thematic Environmental History

The Argo 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

## 8.0 Statement of Significance

### *What is Significant?*

The Argo Hotel, formerly known as Sheppard's Hotel, at 64 Argo Street, South Yarra.

### *How is it Significant?*

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



*Why is it Significant?*

The Argo Hotel is of historical significance for the enduring use of the site as licensed premises for almost one and a half centuries. The hotel also demonstrates the major interwar trend of rebuilding nineteenth century hotels to meet stringent State liquor licensing laws. The Argo Hotel is of additional significance for its location in a residential neighbourhood, catering for a local clientele away from major thoroughfares.

The Argo Hotel is architecturally significant as a rare and largely intact example of an interwar hotel executed in an accomplished low-key Mediterranean mode. This style is commonly associated with domestic rather than commercial buildings and the Argo Hotel's architectural expression is unique among hotel buildings in the City of Stonnington and rare in hotels in the broader Metropolitan area. The significance of the Argo Hotel is further enhanced by its association with interwar architect Gordon J Sutherland.

## 9.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Argo Hotel at 64 Argo Street, South Yarra, be added to the schedule of the Heritage Overlay under the City of Stonnington Planning Scheme. While the 1993 *Prahran Conservation Review* recommended that the hotel be included in either the Tyrone Street precinct (HO151) or Moore Street precinct (HO144), the building seems better suited to an individual heritage overlay control. The Argo's interwar architectural character and period of construction differ from the mostly late-Victorian housing stock in HO144 and HO151 and the hotel is separated from these areas by non-contributory building stock.

The Heritage Overlay should apply to all of the present Argo Hotel building. This would appear to correspond in extent to the two lots that encompass the western half of the site. Prior to any formal mapping process, it should be confirmed that the hotel building – including any overhanging eaves - sits fully within these lot boundaries. It is further recommended that the carpark to the east of the hotel building be excluded from the heritage overlay. This part of the site was occupied by dwellings until at least the mid-twentieth century and does not contribute to the significance of place. The hotel should also be exempt from internal alteration controls under the heritage overlay.

In addition to the above, it is recommended that further heritage assessments be prepared for several interwar hotels in the municipality that are not currently protected by a heritage overlay control, namely the Hotel Max, Orrong Hotel, Windsor Castle Hotel, Edwards Tavern and Angel Tavern. The comparative analysis undertaken as part of this assessment suggests that these interwar hotels are comparable to the Argo Hotel in terms of their architectural and historic interest. Further to this, a heritage assessment should be prepared in relation to the Victorian era Flying Duck Hotel in Prahran. This hotel is not currently subject to a heritage overlay control but compares favourably with a number of other hotels of the period in Stonnington that are covered by existing heritage overlays.

## 10.0 References

*The Argus*

Context Pty Ltd, *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History*, Melbourne, 2006.

Graeme Butler & Associates, *City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas, Appendix 7*, 2007.

Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs 1852-1988*. Prahran, 1988.

City of Prahran Rate Books.

Miles Lewis Architectural Index. <http://mileslewis.net/australian-architectural.html>

MMBW Plan of Drainage No 6864. Held by South East Water.

*Sands and McDougall Melbourne and Suburban Directory*

*Sands and McDougall's Directory of Victoria*

State Library of Victoria Map Collection.

State Library of Victoria Picture Collection.

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**BRYCE RAWORTH**  
**M. ARCH., B. A. (HONS), ICCROM (ARCH)**

Bryce Raworth has worked with issues relating to heritage and conservation since the mid-1980s, and has specialised in this area since establishing his own consultant practice in 1991. **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, Conservation•Urban Design**, provides a range of heritage services, including the assessment of the significance of particular sites, preparation of conservation analyses and management plans, design and/or restoration advice for interventions into significant buildings, and detailed advice regarding the resolution of technical problems relating to deteriorating or damaged building fabric.

Since 2004 Raworth has been a member of the Official Establishments Trust, which advises on the conservation and improvement of Admiralty House and Kirribilli House in Sydney and Government House and The Lodge in Canberra. As a member of the former Historic Buildings Council in Victoria, sitting on the Council's permit, planning and community relations committees, Raworth has been involved with the registration and permit processes for many registered historic buildings. In 1996 he was appointed an alternate member of the new Heritage Council, the successor the Historic Buildings Council, and in 1998 was made a full member. At present he provides regular advice to architects and private owners on technical, architectural and planning issues relative to the conservation and adaptation of historic buildings, and is occasionally called upon to provide expert advice before the VCAT. He is currently the conservation consultant for the cities of Melbourne and Stonnington and conservation consultant to the Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund.

**Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd** is an office comprising four experienced staff plus support that has prepared conservation plans for a number of registered historic buildings, including Walter Burley Griffin's Essendon Incinerator. The company's experience with institutional buildings has led to preparation of conservation plans for the Mac.Robertson Girls' High School, Castlemaine Gaol, J Ward, Ararat, the former Russell Road Police Headquarters, Ballarat State Offices, Camberwell Court House, Shepparton Court House and the Mont Park asylum precinct.

With respect to historic precincts, the company has provided detailed advice towards the resolution of heritage issues along the Upfield railway line. The company is currently contributing to redevelopment plans for the former Coburg Prisons Complex (comprising Pentridge Prison and the Metropolitan Prison) and the former Albion Explosives Factory, Maribyrnong. In 1993 Bryce Raworth led a consultant team which reviewed the City of Melbourne's conservation data and controls for the CBD, and in 1997 **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd** revised the former City of South Melbourne Conservation Study with respect to the area within the present City of Melbourne. The firm is currently undertaking heritage studies on behalf of the cities of Melbourne and Kingston and is completing documentation for significant heritage places and areas in the City of Stonnington

In recent years **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd** has also provided documentation and advice during construction on the restoration of a number of key registered and heritage overlay buildings, including the Ebenezer Mission church and outbuildings, Antwerp, the former MMTB Building, Bourke Road West, Melbourne, the former Martin & Pleasance Building, 178 Collins Road, Melbourne, and the former Uniting Church, Howe Crescent, South Melbourne. At present the office is documenting substantial restoration works to the MOMA at Heide, Templestowe Road, Bulleen, to the Church of the Sacred Heart, Grey Road, St Kilda, and to the Coburg Prisons Complex (including the Pentridge Prison entry buildings and walls to Champ Road).