

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

Name	Former Railway Hotel, 641-651 Dandenong Road, Malvern	
Address	641-651 Dandenong Road MALVERN	Significance Level A2
Place Type	Hotel	
Citation Date	2010	



Former Railway Hotel

Recommended Heritage Protection **VHR** No **HI** No **PS** Yes

History and Historical Context

Hotels in Stonnington

Inns or hotels were usually the first commercial buildings to appear in the earliest settlements of Prahran and Malvern 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). This number grew to over fifty at the height of the 1880s land boom. Far fewer hotels were built in the City of Malvern, presumably because there was little demand or desire for such establishments. As Graeme Davison explains, 'middle class suburbs, with their sprinkling of teetotallers, clubmen and fireside imbibers, had only a sprinkling of hostelries' (2).

In the predominately working class suburbs of Melbourne, the corner pub remained an important part of the community's 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

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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, 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 (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 Railway Hotel

A hotel of 9 rooms and stables, first known as the Gardiner Hotel, was built prior to 1856 on the east corner of Glenferrie and Dandenong Roads (5). At this time Dandenong Road was the main stock route to Gippsland and the hotel became a favourite stopping place for travellers. Early licensee William Greaves was a noted Melbourne cricketer and he provided facilities for cricket and pigeon shooting. In 1862, Greaves established what is believed to be Victorian's first bowling club and green on land adjoining the hotel (6).

Aside from a few stores near the Gardiner Hotel, the area attracted little urban development through the 1860s and early 1870s. Agriculture remained the principal land use with small farms, orchards and market gardens flanking Glenferrie Road. This rural atmosphere changed in 1879, when the first train ran through Malvern Station en route to Oakleigh and Gippsland. The new method of transport to the previously isolated district coincided with the boom years of the 1880s, resulting in a surge of development in Malvern's commercial centre. Land values rose, and a building boom occurred in the immediate vicinity of Malvern Station (7).

The Gardiner Hotel, renamed the Railway Hotel in 1881, was well placed to take advantage of the daily passage of commuters moving to and from the Malvern Railway Station. Increased patronage may explain the tender for additions to the hotel which was advertised by architect William George Wolf in September 1889 (8). The additions may also have been made because of the introduction of the Liquor Licensing Act of 1885. The Act was intended to close down the smaller less reputable drinking establishments by requiring all hotels in the metropolitan area to provide, amongst other things, six room for public accommodation, a well appointed eating house to serve daily meals to guests and stabling for at least three horses (9).

A 1902 MMBW plan shows the hotel built hard up against both street frontages with shops attached to its east side. The plan also show a long rectangular plan stable in the hotel's rear yard. An auction notice of May 1915 highlighted the hotel's proximity to public transport, and the small number of competing hotels in Malvern:

This first class hotel does an enormous business being situated within a stone's throw of the railway station, and on the electric tram route, and in a rapidly improving position and in a large district where there are only three or four hotels. (10)

In 1926, the Railway Hotel's licence was transferred to Edwin Rankin. In his application to the Licensing Court, Rankin stated his intention to 'transform the business' (11). Drawings were prepared the same year for alterations and additions to the hotel by engineers and architects Joy and McIntyre (12). The drawings show a double-storey addition to the north side of the Glenferrie Road facade, an enlarged ground floor public bar and first floor accommodation. The ground floor plan shows a saloon bar and bottle shop on the Dandenong Road side with a new dividing wall and an entrance hall to the first floor accommodation. The drawings also indicate that only minor modifications were made to most of the original facade openings.

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In August 1961, an application was made to the Licensing Court for alterations to the Railway Hotel by architects Robert H McIntyre and Associates (13). The works appear to have been mainly confined to the hotel interior and included provision of a liquor store and bottle department, modernisation of the male toilets, extension of the saloon bar and gutting of the dining room, lounge and store areas to form a dining room and larger drinking lounge. An application was made in 1972 for further alterations including an attached drive-in bottle shop to the east of the hotel and remodelling and redecorating of the saloon bar and public bar (14).

The Hotel Architects

The c1927 remodelling of the Railway Hotel was carried out to a design by architects and consulting engineers Joy and McIntyre. The firm was associated with specialist hotel designer Robert H McIntyre, father of renowned architect Peter McIntyre. Later practising as Robert H McIntyre and Associates, he was responsible for numerous hotel designs in the 1930s, including: the reconstruction of Royal Mail Hotel, corner Swanston and Burke streets (1934); rebuilding of the Prince of Wales Hotel, St. Kilda (1936); the Prospect Hill Hotel, Kew (1936); the Hotel Max, Prahran (c.1937); alterations and additions to the Alpine Hotel, Brighton (1938); alterations and additions to the Cumberland Hotel, Castlemaine (1938); the Railway Hotel, Yarraville (1938); complete reconstruction of the City Club Hotel, Collins Street (1938); extensive alterations to the Toorak Hotel, Toorak Village (1938); and, additions and modernisation of the Palace Hotel, Racecourse Road, Newmarket (1939).

- (1) Context Pty Ltd, *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History*, p.114.
- (2) Graeme Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*, p.201.
- (3) Betty Malone, *Prahran's Pubs 1852-1998*, p.30.
- (4) Context Pty Ltd, *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History*, p.114.
- (5) Stonnington Local History Catalogue, Registration no. 9240.
- (6) Bryce Raworth, Di Foster, Glenferrie Road/High Street Proposed Conservation Area, p.3.
- (7) Bryce Raworth, Di Foster, Glenferrie Road/High Street Proposed Conservation Area, p.4.
- (8) *Building Engineering and Mining Journal*, 28/9/1889, supplement 3.
- (9) Bryce Raworth & Allom Lovell and Associates, *Inner Metropolitan Hotels*, p17.
- (10) Stonnington Local History Catalogue, Registration no. 11031 (Malvern: MP).
- (11) *Argus*, 17/8/1926, p.5.
- (12) Stonnington Local History Catalogue, Registration no. 3416 (Malvern: MP).
- (13) License Case Filer no.191141. Public Records Office VPRS 7712, Unit 188.
- (14) License Case Filer no.191141. Public Records Office VPRS 7712, Unit 188.

Relevant Historical Australian Themes

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

- 7.4.1 Early Hotels
- 7.4.2 Developing a Modern Hospitality Industry

Description

Physical Description

The former Railway Hotel occupies a prominent site on the north-east corner of Dandenong and Glenferrie roads. The hotel complex includes the main hotel building, an adjoining double-storey Victorian shop with a modern drive-in bottle shop addition and an asphalt paved carpark to its east.

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The hotel is a double-storey building designed in a restrained interwar Free Classical style. It has a rendered masonry facade, built directly on the street boundaries with a chamfered corner. Both street frontages have a broadly symmetrical composition, each containing two sets of doors on the ground floor flanked by fluted pilasters and surmounted by narrow corbelled canopies. Another door is located on the hotel's chamfered corner. Ground floor windows typically adopt a tripartite arrangement with narrow slit windows flanking either side of a wider central opening. First floor windows are timber-framed double-hung sashes spaced at regular intervals. The whole of the facade is surmounted by a strongly moulded cornice and a rendered parapet with a pattern of closely spaced vertical incisions. Above each of the ground floor doors, the parapet has triangular pediments with circular rendered panels. A hipped corrugated iron clad roof sits behind the parapet and is largely concealed from view.

The hotel's facade remains substantially intact to its c1926 state but with the addition of modern signage and some modifications to the ground floor openings on the Dandenong Road frontage. The tiled ground floor dado shown on the 1926 drawings has been removed or rendered over. The Victorian shop building abutting the east side of the hotel appears to survive only to the extent of the front facade with a short return to the side walls. The shop's first floor windows have been infilled and there is a modern drive-in bottle shop canopy attached to its east side. There is also a modest single-storey addition on the north side of the hotel with a small setback from Glenferrie Road. The hotel interior was not inspected in detail as part of this assessment but nonetheless appears to retain little fabric of heritage value.

Comparative Analysis

Interwar Hotels in Stonnington

The former Railway 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.

Edwards Tavern, 213-215 High Street, Prahran

A Victorian corner hotel, rebuilt in the 1920s with stylised classical Grecian ornament common to hotels of the period.

Hotel Max, 30 Commercial Road, Prahran

A double-storey corner hotel with a substantially intact interwar Streamlined Moderne style facade. The hotel is graded A2 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 (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.

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A double-storey Victorian corner hotel, altered and extended in 1927. The facade 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 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. It is a C graded building in the Chapel Street heritage overlay precinct (HO126).

Station Hotel, 96 Greville Street, Prahran.

A Victorian double-storey corner hotel, rebuilt or remodelled in the interwar period with stylised classical detailing. The facade 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).

Windsor Castle, 89 Albert Street, Windsor

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

Malvern Hotels

There have historically been few hotels built in the former City of Malvern. Aside from the former Railway Hotel, only five extant pre-world War II hotels were identified in this part of Stonnington, as follows.

Armada Hotel, 1068 High Street Armadale

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

Former Malvern Hill Hotel, 1117 Malvern Road, Toorak

Malvern's first hotel was built on this site in 1853. The present double-storey hotel building dates from 1861 but has later additions to the front and has lost original detailing. The building has an individual heritage overlay control (HO274) to the extent of its 1860s fabric.

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 1927. 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 prior to 1855 in a domestic vernacular style. It ceased trading as a hotel in 1866. The hotel has an individual heritage overlay control (HO116).

Conclusion

Of the very few hotel buildings surviving in the former City of Malvern, the former Railway and Racecourse hotels are the most intact to an interwar state. The former Wattletree Hotel has an earlier construction date but operated as a licensed premises for a relatively short period and has a domestic character which makes it difficult to interpret its

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original use. The Malvern Hill Hotel also predates the former Railway Hotel but has lower level of integrity to its early state. In the broader Municipal context, the former Railway Hotel compares favourably to other interwar hotels with heritage overlay controls in terms of its integrity, architectural quality and historic interest.

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The former Railway Hotel at 641-651 Dandenong Road, Malvern, is a double-storey hotel located on a prominent corner site at the southern end of the Glenferrie Road shopping strip. A hotel was first constructed on this site sometime before 1856. This building was altered in the 1880s and then extensively remodelled c1925 to create the hotel's present interwar Free Classical style facade.

The hotel carpark, attached Victorian shop facade, drive-in bottle shop, and modern additions to the north side of the hotel do not contribute to the significance of the place.

How is it Significant?

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

Why is it Significant?

The former Railway Hotel demonstrates the major interwar trend of rebuilding and remodelling nineteenth century hotels which followed the establishment of the Licenses Reduction Board. It is also significant for the enduring use of the site as a licensed premises for over 150 years, and as evidence of how many early hotels were sited along main transport routes and became the focal point for commercial development.

The former Railway Hotel is architecturally significant a fine and largely intact example of a hotel with a restrained interwar Free Classical style facade. The hotel's prominent corner location and dignified architectural character make it a local landmark. The hotel is of additional significance for its association with prolific interwar hotel architect Robert H McIntyre and because it is one of very few pre-World War II hotel buildings to survive in the former City of Malvern.

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.