

Heritage Citation

GASOMETER HOTEL

Address: 484 Smith Street, Collingwood

Prepared by: GJM Heritage

Date: August 2019

Place type: Hotel	Architect: Not known
Grading: Locally significant	Builder: Not known
Integrity: High	Construction Date: c1859
Recommendation: Include in the Heritage Overlay	Extent of Overlay: To property title boundaries



Figure 1. 484 Smith Street, Collingwood (GJM Heritage, October 2019)

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Gasometer Hotel, 484 Smith Street, Collingwood, built c1859.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The original external form, materials and detailing of the building
- The high level of integrity to its original design
- Façade parapet, with pitched roofs behind
- No front setbacks
- Rendered walls
- Rendered detailing and ornament including pilasters, quoining and ball finials
- Horizontal lines formed by parapet, cornice, string course and rows of windows
- Repetitive upper floor fenestration patterns
- Splayed corner with entrance, pilasters, quoining and pediment.

Later alterations and additions, including the barrel-vaulted roofed section to the east, are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Gasometer Hotel, 484 Smith Street, Collingwood is of local historical and architectural significance to the City of Yarra.

Why is it significant?

The Gasometer Hotel, 484 Smith Street, Collingwood is of significance as a suburban hotel constructed at a prominent corner location in Collingwood. The hotel has operated on this site since c1859 (Criterion A).

The Gasometer Hotel, 484 Smith Street, Collingwood is an intact and representative example of a Victorian-era hotel. It displays typical characteristics of the early Victorian period in Collingwood and across Melbourne more broadly, including a plain parapeted façade with repetitive upper floor fenestration, rendered facades and a prominent splayed corner entrance with pilasters, quoining and pediment (Criterion D).

Historical Themes

The place illustrates the following themes as outlined in the *City of Yarra Thematic History* (1998):

- 7.0 Leisure and Entertainment in the Suburbs
 - 7.1 Licensed Hotels and 'Sly Grog'

Place History

This corner building was not evident on the 1858 Clement Hodgkinson map of Collingwood; the map shows the east side of Smith Street, between what is now Keele Street and Alexandra Parade as vacant land.

The earliest found reference to the hotel was an advertisement published in March 1860 in *The Argus* (20 March 1860:1) entitled 'Gasometer Hotel, Collingwood Gas Works, to Let, on Lease', describing the property as follows:

erected as a pioneer to the settlement of a populous neighbourhood. The whole paddock adjoining is surveyed, with plans for sale in allotments at a low price, with deferred payments. The new market contiguous is fenced. The great and increasing traffic of Smith-street, with the numerous employees at the gasworks, give assurance for the establishment of a good business within a short period.

This indicates that the hotel was built c1859-60, while the parapet of the building records the date 1861. The hotel was presumably named after the three large gasometers that were located opposite at the

Fitzroy Gasworks (north-west corner of Smith Street and Alexandra Parade, gasometers dismantled 1978) (Lovell, 1998: Vol 1, 71). In 1861, tenders were requested from carpenters for the erection of a stable and verandah, with applicants to apply to the Gasometer Hotel, Smith Street, Collingwood (*Argus*, 19 Nov, 1861:1).

The 1864 rate books record that Charles A. Mater was the owner of the stone hotel on the site, letting to George Pashley, licensed victualler. The 1867 rate books described the 'Gasometer Hotel' as a brick and stone building with twelve rooms, still owned by Mater. By 1874 the hotel was owned by Richard Benham and the following year ownership passed to Johanna Benham, licensed victualler (Ward, 1995:553). Richard and Johanna Benham retained ownership of the hotel for many years, until at least 1906 (*Age*, 19 Feb 1906:9), and by 1916 their son Richard William Benham was the owner (*Argus*, 12 Feb 1916:11; 22 Feb 1916:4).

A Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plan (Figure 2) show the extent of the hotel and its outbuildings in 1896. The 1900 MMBW detail plan (Figure 3) showed the corner hotel and outbuildings annotated with their use. The rear of the property had a pitched, open space bordered along the east and south boundaries by stables, a wash house and water closets, with access provided off Alexandra Parade (then called Reilly Street).

Plans of the property dating to 1956 show footprints of the hotel building and outbuildings and records the occupant and owner at this date as S. Moore (Figure 4). The plan appears to show that the accessway off Alexandra Parade and stables, set back from the front title boundary (as in figure 3), remained at this date (PSP). Later additions and structures now occupy the south-east portion of the property; a barrel-vaulted building occupies the site of the original stable, washhouse and accessway.

The building continues to serve as the Gasometer Hotel in 2019.

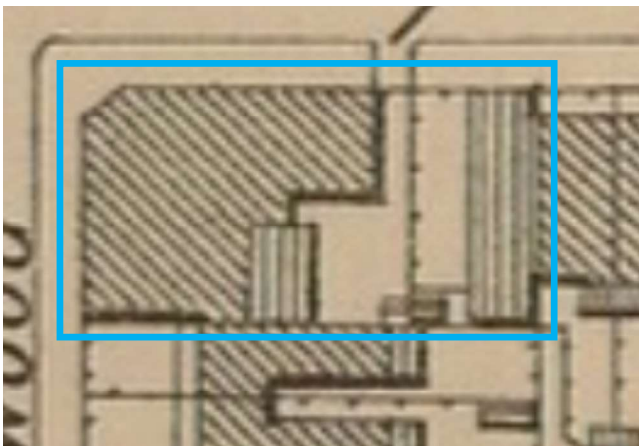


Figure 2. A footprint of the corner hotel and its outbuildings in 1896 (subject site indicated by blue polygon). The diagonal hatching indicates buildings constructed of brick or stone; vertical/horizontal hatching indicates buildings constructed of timber (MMBW 29, dated 1896).

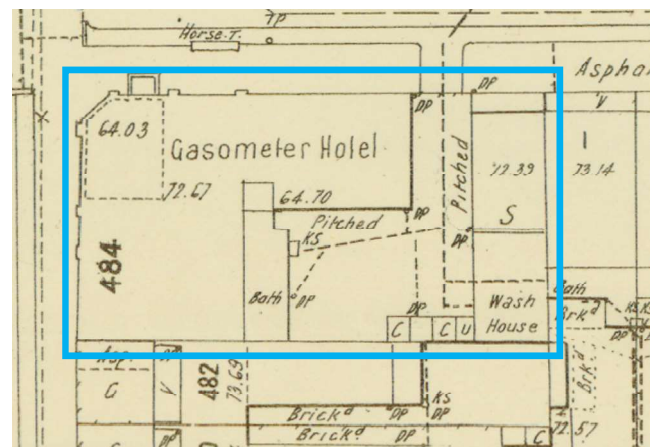


Figure 3. A footprint of the Gasometer Hotel dated 1900 (subject site indicated by blue polygon) (MMBW Detail Plan 1214, dated 1900).

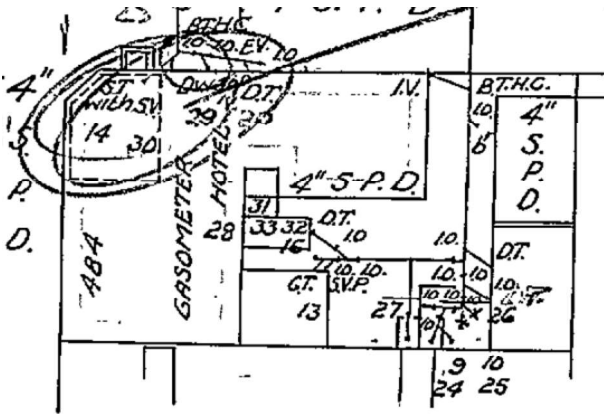


Figure 4. A plan of the site showing footprints of the buildings extant in 1956, annotated with sewerage works (PSP).

Physical Description

The Gasometer Hotel, 484 Smith Street, Collingwood is prominently located on the south-east corner of Smith Street and Alexandra Parade. Built in the early Victorian period, the building comprises a two-storey element addressing the street corner, an adjoining single-storey wing to the east and additional buildings further to the east along Alexandra Parade.

The two-storey corner hotel is a rendered stone (overpainted) building with two corrugated steel-clad, hipped roofs which run in a north-south direction, and two large rendered chimneys at the southern end. A third broad chimney is situated at the east wall of the two-storey building, behind the Alexandra Parade façade. The building has a splayed corner with ground floor entrance door, window at first floor level and pediment above which contains the description 'Gasometer Hotel' and the date '1861'. The ground floor façades contain a variety of window and door openings and are articulated with plain pilasters, while the corners of the upper façades are quoined. The upper-level fenestration comprises regularly spaced rectangular windows – six in the longer Smith Street façade and two facing Alexandra Parade. Openings are frameless and window sills are supported on plain corbels. A simple cornice forms the parapet of the building and a string course between the ground and upper floor relieves the plain façades.

An adjacent single-storey wing, facing Alexandra Parade, has a simple gable-roof which runs parallel to the front façade and is parapeted at the eastern end. The detailing of the corner building is repeated in this wing, with simple pilasters and frameless rectangular windows. The string course of the adjacent two-storey building continues to form the base of the single storey parapet which contains a row of recessed panels.

A barrel-vaulted roofed section, located further to the east in Alexandra Parade, is set behind a single-storey, parapeted façade. Constructed across an original accessway from Alexandra Parade to an internal courtyard at some stage after 1956, the façade of this later addition appears to repeat some of the earlier detailing of the original building.

Integrity

The Gasometer Hotel, 484 Smith Street, Collingwood retains a high degree of integrity to the early Victorian period in fabric, form and detail. While the building has undergone some additions to the east, these do not diminish the ability to understand and appreciate the place as a fine example of an early Victorian hotel.

Comparative Analysis

The Gasometer Hotel, 484 Smith Street, Collingwood is an intact and representative example of an early Victorian corner hotel. There are a substantial number of hotels included in the Heritage Overlay of the

Yarra Planning Scheme as individually significant buildings, including some built in the 1850 to 1870 period. Direct comparison can be made with the following examples:

- Birmingham Hotel, 333 Smith Street, Fitzroy (1853-), 'individually significant' in HO333, Smith Street Precinct
- Former Liverpool Arms Hotel, 299 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy (1860-70), 'individually significant' in HO311, Brunswick Street Precinct.



Figure 5. Birmingham Hotel, 333 Smith Street, Fitzroy (VHD)



Figure 6. Former Liverpool Arms Hotel, 299 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy (VHD, photo dated 2009)

These comparators are representative of hotel buildings constructed in the early Victorian period and are architecturally significant as intact examples of hotels from this period. Like the places above, the Gasometer Hotel displays a range of early Victorian characteristics including:

- Façade parapet, with pitched roof behind
- No front setbacks
- Rendered walls and detailing
- Horizontal lines formed by parapet, cornice, string course and rows of windows
- Repetitive upper floor fenestration patterns
- Splayed corner with entrance.

The Gasometer Hotel remains highly intact to demonstrate the key characteristics of this early type of hotel development in the City of Yarra.

Assessment Against Criteria

Following is an assessment of the place against the recognised heritage criteria set out in *Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay* (August 2018).

Criterion A: *Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).*

The Gasometer Hotel, 484 Smith Street, Collingwood is of significance as a suburban hotel constructed at a highly prominent corner location in Collingwood. The hotel has operated on this site since c1859.

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

The Gasometer Hotel, 484 Smith Street, Collingwood is an intact and representative example of a Victorian-era Hotel. It displays typical characteristics of the early Victorian period in Collingwood and across Melbourne more broadly, including a plain parapeted façade with repetitive upper floor fenestration, rendered facades and a prominent splayed corner entrance with pilasters, quoining and pediment.

Grading and Recommendations

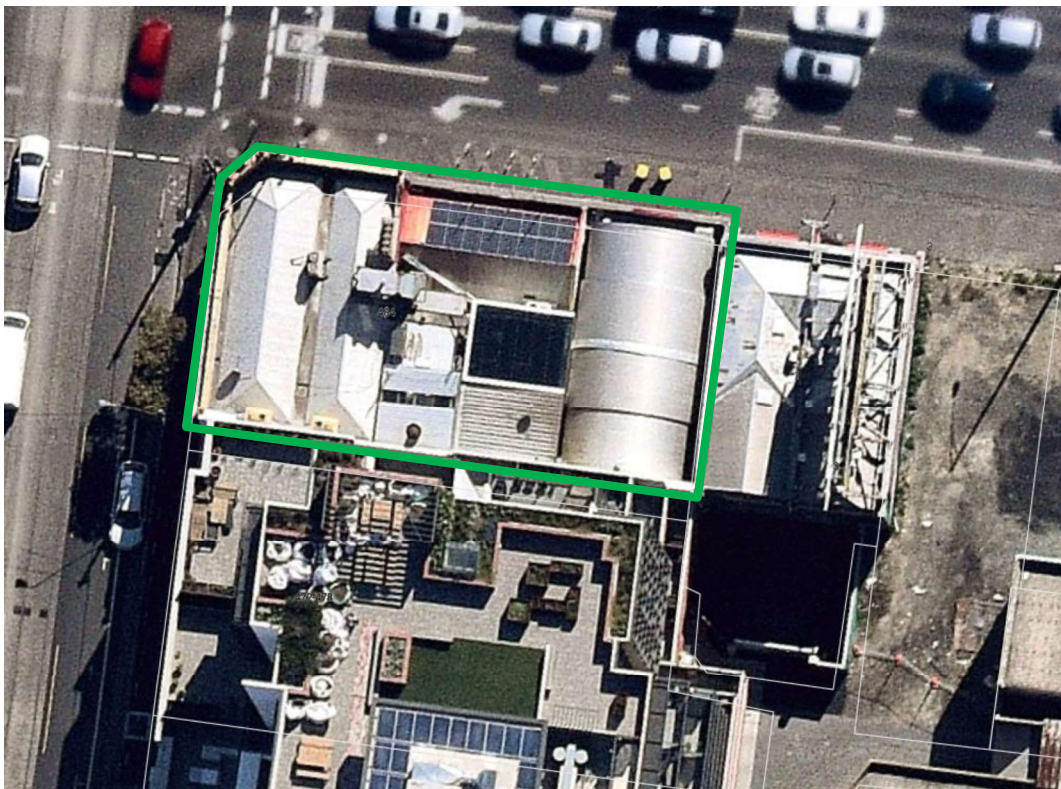
It is recommended that the place be included in a site-specific Heritage Overlay in the Yarra Planning Scheme as an individually significant heritage place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Yarra Planning Scheme:

External Paint Controls?	No
Internal Alteration Controls?	No
Tree Controls?	No
Outbuildings or Fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-3?	No
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	No
Incorporated Plan?	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	No

Extent of the recommended Heritage Overlay

To the property title boundary, as indicated by the green polygon on the aerial below.

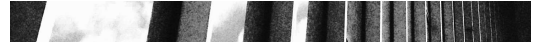


(Source: Nearmap, aerial dated Aug 2019)

Identified by:

Andrew C Ward & Associates (1989), *Collingwood Conservation Study* & (1995) *Collingwood Conservation Study Review* :

Recommended for Planning Scheme protection.



Significance: The "Gasometer" hotel is important as a prominent and early hotel which recalls the existence of the former Metropolitan Gas Co. premises opposite.

GJM Heritage (2019), *Brunswick Street and Smith Street Built Form Review, Heritage Assessments.*

References:

Allom Lovell & Associates (1998), *City of Yarra Heritage Review.*

Andrew Ward & Associate (1995), *Collingwood Conservation Study Review.*

Clement Hodgkinson, 'Plan shewing the streets and buildings in existence in East Collingwood on January 1st 1858' compiled from surveys executed under the direction of Clement Hodgkinson.

Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works: Plan 29 (scale 160ft to 1 inch), Fitzroy & Collingwood, dated 1896; Detail Plan 1214, dated 1900.

Property Sewerage Plan (PSP), No. 53022.

The Age.

The Argus.

Victorian Heritage Database (VHD), place records.