

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

name: Horsham Railway Station
Address: 21 Railway Avenue HORSHAM
Place Type: Goods shed/crane,Railway Platform/ Station
Citation Date: 2022



Horsham Railway Station, Railway Avenue Horsham

**Recommended
Heritage Protection** **VHR -**

HI -

PS
Yes

Integrity

Somewhat modified station building. With overpainting of face brickwork and alteration of some openings, as well as a post-war extension to the east end. Signal box building to west of platform no longer extant. Good shed demolished shortly before 2022; original cast iron water tower no longer extant. Toilet block to east removed.

History and Historical Context

Following the construction of the Geelong to Ballarat railway line in 1862, the Ararat and Hamilton Railway League formed to petition for a rail extension into Western Victoria. The Wimmera Shire took advantage of the momentum of this campaign and lobbied for a further extension to Horsham in a bid to open up the Wimmera to closer settlement.

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More than a decade later, in 1875, the rail network crept westward when the Ballarat to Ararat link was opened. An extension to Stawell was completed by 1876.

Concurrently, the Horsham Rail League formed to agitate for a rail extension to Horsham that would provide a permanent and reliable passenger service, and a railhead for the dispatch wheat and other agricultural goods. At the time the Stawell railhead was the Wimmera's closest connection to coastal ports. Without rail, district farmers were forced to rely on bullock-teams to cart their produce to the Stawell railhead, however this was an arduous journey over treacherous roads, which took several days.

The league delivered a deputation to the McCulloch Government in May 1876 reporting that while the 1869 *Land Act* had resulted in profound population growth, settlers now 'found themselves at a great disadvantage, as compared with other districts of the colony, in getting their produce to market, and a railway was necessary to render stable and permanent the settlement which had already taken place'.^[1]

The Horsham Rail League was also determined to bolster Horsham's standing, as both the 'capital of the Wimmera', and gateway to South Australia. The league proposed that a railhead at Horsham 'would not only greatly develop the resources of the district, but would draw to Melbourne a considerable trade from a portion of South Australia that the line would tap'.^[2]

Both Horsham, and its southern counterpart Hamilton, sought to host the South Australia – Victoria rail link. Rail had reached Hamilton in 1877, when a south-westerly extension from Ararat via Maroona was opened. For a time it appeared that a route across the border from Hamilton to Mount Gambier would be built, however, when the Hamilton to Portland extension was approved in 1878, Hamilton's focus shifted towards the local deep-sea port at Portland.

The Horsham extension was finally authorised in the July 1877 *Railway Construction Bill* and survey work began immediately.^[3] By March 1878 tenders were called for the construction of the line from Stawell, via Murtoa, Jung and Doon.

The official opening by Governor Sir George Bowen of the Stawell to Horsham line took place on 5 February 1879. The day was declared a public holiday for Horsham and it was reported that most of the townsfolk turned out to celebrate the event and welcome guests. *Illustrated Australian News* recorded that 'the scene presented on the occasion was both picturesque and imposing, and could not fail to impress all that were present'.^[4] The newspaper described a triumphal arch decorated with Buloke and adorned with a 'Welcome to Horsham' banner, erected at the northern entrance to the township. A second arch was erected across Wilson Street opposite the Shire Hall with 'the top of the central arch being decorated with sheaves of wheat, with the following inscriptions appended on either side 'The Staple of Wimmera and Success to Railway Extension'.^[5]

The trunk line from Stawell to Horsham represented the success of a decade-long campaign to secure a rail link from Melbourne. Almost another decade passed before the line continued beyond Horsham over the South Australian border. The extension to Dimboola was completed in 1882 and by 1887 the line crossed the border at Serviceton.

The passing of the *Railway Act* 1884 (also known as the 'Octopus Act') authorized the construction two further spur lines that originated from the Horsham railhead. The 12 mile Horsham – Noradjuha branch line was constructed in 1887 and served the southern portion of the Wimmera district. It was the first piece in the northern section of a through-line that eventually connected Horsham to the Port of Portland.

The Horsham to Goroke line opened in 1894 and a further extension to Carpolac opened in 1927. This line primarily transported wheat trucks to the Horsham railhead, but from the 1940s a passenger motor-rail service

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ran from Carpolac to Horsham.

Railway Station and Goods Shed

The *Wimmera Star* reported in January 1879 that Jonathan Newton submitted the lowest tender to build the passenger station, noting that 'when completed [the station] will be one of the most perfect buildings of the kind outside of the metropolis'. In fact, Ballarat contractor Morris and Begg was eventually awarded the tender, submitting a winning bid of £3,468 and constructing the brick building to the standard design of Victorian Railways.

The goods shed was constructed by H. Bell Junior for £1,170 on the northern side of the railway line, while a water tower was erected on the southern side, with water pumped from the Wimmera River.[6] A turntable was constructed near the intersection of McPherson Street.

A number of important additions to the railway complex were completed in 1888, including a lamp room, 3-ton crane and a cold store for dairy produce. In July 1890 the goods shed was destroyed by fire and rebuilt at its present site.

In 1934, the six-roomed station master's residence (c1887) was sold and relocated to Wawunna Road to make way for improvements to Railway Avenue. A new residence was built by the Railway Department on the corner of Park and McPherson Streets.[7]

In 1939 the Horsham Station was selected as the catering headquarters for the buffet car servicing the Melbourne to Adelaide express train. Ten staff members were appointed and a worker's residence was constructed at the rear of the signal box on the platform.[8]

Major structural works to the railway station were completed in June 1940. These included: 125 reinforced piles sunk 29 feet to stabilize the building; reconfiguration of the interior to accommodate a separate women's and general waiting room; refurbishment of the refreshment room; booking office and station-masters office and construction of a ramp for the parcels office; a new cantilevered verandah replacing the cast iron verandah columns; asphalt works to seal the platform.[9]

The timber signal box, situated on the platform west of the station building, was demolished in March 1976 following the installation of an electronic signal system located in the station building.

The intrastate passenger service operated by V/Line stopped in 1993 and the station building closed. The Overland train service, which runs between Melbourne and Adelaide, continues to stop in Horsham twice weekly (each way).

The freight terminal at the Horsham Station was replaced by an intermodal freight terminal at Doon in August 2012.

[1] *The Australasian*, Saturday 13 May 1876, pg. 20

[2] *The Australasian*, Saturday 13 May 1876, pg. 20

[3] *The Australasian*, Saturday 14 July 1877, pg. 2

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[4] *Illustrated Australian News*, Friday 21 February 1879, pg. 23, 28

[5] *Ibid*, *The Horsham Express: supplement to the Wimmera Mail Times*, Saturday 3 February 1979.

[6] *Wimmera Star*, 31 January 1879;

[7] *Horsham Times*, Friday 30 November 1934, p 4.

[8] Friday 12 August 1938, pg. 1

[9] *Horsham Times*, Friday 14 June 1940, page 2

Description

Physical Description

Railway station – single storey 1879 building with ‘Italianate’ proportions and features, including hipped roof, a projecting bay waiting room, CGI roof, and cantilevered platform verandah of 1940. Some double hung windows remain. Face brickwork has all been painted at some time. Signal box has been removed. Toilets adjacent the station building have been removed. Later additions have been undertaken on the east side of the building – c1980s. Most chimneys have been removed, but most pairs of platform doors remain. Just to the east of the building is a mature Norfolk Island Pine, reportedly one of the finest specimens of the species in Horsham, and planted c1940s.

Goods Shed – Demolished prior to 2022. It was an 1890 goods shed on the opposite side of the rails to the passenger station. Goods shed was an ‘N20’ Victorian Railways type in design/ construction, with overhanging awning verandahs to track and opposite side. Raised timber/ bitumen platforms extend along both sides of the shed. Shed was clad in corrugated iron sheeting and later different profile sheet metal cladding. Shed had been enclosed in part for offices etc at east end c 1970s.

Physical Condition

Average condition – station building is in reasonable repair, but requires painting and other maintenance. In 2014 the goods shed was in poor condition, with weathered timber framing/ platforms evident, access doors altered, gable end windows removed and corrosion evident.

The Norfolk Island Pine has a good form and condition in 2022.

Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

Relevant HERCON Criteria

Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of our cultural or natural history. (reinforced late 19thC Horsham’s reputation as the ‘capital of the Wimmera’ as a centre of grain distribution and trade, providing for the economic transport of people and goods to other markets. Further, the railway supported increased agricultural production in the Shire, facilitating the economic, easy and reliable transport of grain and wool from farms to market, port and interstate).

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history. (rare locally, as only railway station/ goods shed extant in Horsham Shire today and of historic/ social value to local residents.

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Low integrity vs Western line railway stations in locale)

–*Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments. (as a class of railway stations and goods sheds – due to lower intactness than other stations and goods sheds on the line this does not apply)*

Comparative Analysis

Horsham Railway station is a simple structure of less architectural embellishment than nearby railway stations along the Western Line. It is of the size of several of these stations, but is not the earliest and has been altered over the years, with loss of significant fabric. All other examples are outside of the Rural City of Horsham:

Railway Station, Kaniva (H07), Hermes no. 2388: Early station (smaller scale than Horsham) but architecturally finer in style and detail. Known as ‘Kaniva Style’ – picturesque Gothic style station, posted verandah facing platform. Younger, but higher intactness/ integrity than Horsham.

Railway Station, Serviceton, (H1592), Hermes no. 70060: 1887-8 break-of-gauge station at the SA/VIC border. Substantial scale late-Victorian Italianate style building of high design merit. Younger, grander scale and more intact than Horsham.

Railway Station, Dimboola, Hermes no. 84227: Similar scale to Horsham, but features decorative face brick walling and is in good condition. Architecturally more significant than Horsham.

Railway Station, Nhill, Hermes no. 840095: Simple station building – similar scale and detailing as Horsham. Poor condition. Goods shed similar to Horsham and still extant.

Railway Station, Murtoa, Hermes no. 162902: Small weatherboard station – poor condition.

Railway Station, Ararat, Hermes no. 67266: Similar scale to Horsham, but of higher architectural merit – face polychrome brickwork, decorative eaves and chimneys.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The elements of heritage value of the 1879 Horsham Railway Station, 21 Railway Avenue, include:

- . 1879 station building, including face brickwork, remnant chimney, early double doors and double hung windows, steel framing of platform canopy (of 1940).
- . The mature Norfolk Island Pine tree, planted c1940s.

Exclusions: later, post 1940 additions, rail track and ballast.

How is it significant?

The 1879 Horsham Railway Station building is of historic significance and rarity value to Horsham Rural City.

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Why is it significant?

The 1879 Horsham Railway Station is:

. of local historic significance, displaying Horsham's 19thC reputation as the 'capital of the Wimmera' in the era of trains, creating a centre of grain distribution and trade and providing for the economic transport of people and goods to other markets. Further, the railway supported increased agricultural production in the Shire, facilitating the economic, easy and reliable transport of grain and wool from farms to market, port and interstate. It is the only nineteenth-century railway station building to survive in the Rural City of Horsham. The Norfolk Island Pine provides an appropriate setting for the station building. (Criteria A & B)

Recommendations 2022

External Paint Controls	Yes
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	Yes Norfolk Island Pine
Fences & Outbuildings	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No
Incorporated Plan	-
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No

References

Literature title: Australasian Newspaper

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author:

Literature publisher:

Literature year:

Literature title: A story of Horsham : a municipal century

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author: Brooke, Brian. & Finch, Alan

Literature publisher: City of Horsham

Literature year: 1982

Literature title: Horsham Express: supplement to the Wimmera Mail Times Newspaper

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author:

Literature publisher:

Literature year:

Literature title: Horsham Times Newspaper

Literature type: General Reference

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Literature author:

Literature publisher:

Literature year:

Literature title: Illustrated Australian News Newspaper

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author:

Literature publisher:

Literature year:

Literature title: Victorian Railways Report: of the board of land and works for the year ending 31st December 1879.

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author: Victorian Railways

Literature publisher:

Literature year: 1879

Literature title: Victorian Government Gazette

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author:

Literature publisher: Victorian Government Printer

Literature year:

Literature title: Wimmera Mail Times Newspaper

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author:

Literature publisher:

Literature year:

Literature title: Wimmera Star Newspaper

Literature type: General Reference

Literature author:

Literature publisher:

Literature year:

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.