

HERITAGE CITATION REPORT

name: Horsham City Oval Grandstand
Address: 20 OCALLAGHANS PARADE HORSHAM
Place Type: Other - Community Facilities
Citation Date: 2022

Significance Level: Local



City Oval Grandstand

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

 HI -

 PS
 Yes

Integrity

The Grandstand retains a moderate degree of integrity, retaining its overall form, open tiered seating configuration, timber post and rail handrail and stair balustrades, and undercroft area.

Its function continues as a grandstand associated with the oval, and its physical relationship with the oval is retained.

Major changes that have reduced the integrity of the structure include the over-cladding with an aluminium profiled product; replacement of the timber seating with aluminium bench seats; and the covering of the timber floor with painted hardboard panels. Despite these works, the original weatherboard cladding, external windows and louvred vents all survive beneath the metal cladding, so contrary to appearances it has a relatively high intactness.

History and Historical Context

Contextual history

The 2012 Thematic Environmental History, prepared as part of the Horsham Heritage Study (Stage 1) identified

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themes of importance to the region, which assisted in identifying places of heritage value. The Victorian historical themes of 'Making regional centres' and 'Living in country towns' are relevant to the Horsham City Oval and Grandstand.

"Organised sport had long been a central focus of town life in Horsham and surrounding district, both for those participating and spectating, and included a range of additional activities surrounding the sporting calendar, such as fund-raising events. Horsham and district have been the springboard for many local people to be launched into successful sporting careers, both amateur and professional." (Thematic Environmental History, Dr. Helen Doyle)

The exact date of the establishment of the Horsham City Oval is not known, although is believed to be around 1901. The site was in use prior to this, as gazetted grounds to host the fourth show of the Horsham and Wimmera District Agricultural and Pastoral Society in 1879. Annual shows were held from this time until 1902, when the present site of the Horsham Showgrounds was used for the event.

Place history

The current grandstand at the Horsham City Oval was constructed in 1924. A new dressing room was constructed in 1926.

Council considered re-orientating the oval from east – west to north – south in 1949, but this was not pursued at the time. Various works to the grounds occurred in the early 1950s following a state government subsidy, to seal the spectator's ramp and provide seating around the oval, as well as installing wire mesh fencing to the northern boundary. The oval was reconstructed including reseeding in 1952, and irrigation provided as well as an improved drainage system.

The Horsham Football Club has been in existence for over 100 years, and maintains a long association with the oval. The current Football and Netball clubrooms are housed in buildings that appear to date from around the 1980s.

A record crowd of 10,151 attended the match between Minyip and Warracknabeal in September 1952, with the Horsham Times reporting that the ground accommodated the large crowd with ease.

The oval has been used for many other purposes through its life, including tennis tournaments, band recitals, and school events. Associated facilities including the brick gate entries, shelters and amenities blocks have been constructed over the years to support the continued use of the place by a variety of groups.

The Horsham City Pipe Band was formed in 1923, and the Pipe Band Hall would appear to date from the 1930s – 1940s. The Horsham Rural City Brass Band Hall appears to have been constructed in the 1970s.

Description

Physical Description

The Grandstand is a simple timber framed structure located on the north side of the City Oval. It is clad in non-original metal standing seam cladding to the north, east and west elevations, with high level glazing to the east and west. The southern side, facing the oval, is open, with a timber balustrade with wire mesh fixed between timber posts. Three open timber stairs provide access from the ground to the grandstand seating, which consists of aluminium benches tiered to follow the rake of the grandstand floor. A series of timber and steel portal frames support the timber framed skillion roof, which falls towards the oval.

Physical Condition

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The Grandstand is in a fair condition, with relatively recent repair works having been undertaken by Council. Termite and wood rot damage to the timber wall framing was repaired in 2002-2003, and the timber seating replaced.

Comparative Analysis

The following list presents other grandstand structures in Victoria that have heritage listings at various levels, to provide some context around the assessment of the Horsham City Oval and Grandstand:

- Hamilton Racecourse Grandstand, c1873, high architectural merit and high integrity, VHR – architectural and historical significance
- City Oval Grandstand, Ballarat, 1898, Architect designed, National Trust - Is significant as a large and intact grandstand dating from the late nineteenth century. The design, especially of the roof, is unique in Victoria
- Benalla Showgrounds Grandstand, 1913, 'rare example of timber framed grandstand, barrel roof, ornate balustrade, VHR – architectural significance
- Leongatha Showgrounds Grandstand, 1922, South Gippsland Shire (local) – historic and aesthetic significance; technically of interest for local brick construction
- Maribyrnong Reserve Grandstand, Maribyrnong City Demonstrates: the course and pattern of history; important historic events; rarity; social importance to the community; association with important person or group
- Kingston Grandstand, Hepburn Shire, 1902 timber framed grandstand; has been relocated (1922), VHR historical, architectural and social significance
- Camperdown Turf Club Grandstand, 1902-03, architect designed, extended c1913, Timber framed, VHR – architectural, historical and social significance
- Melville Oval Old Grandstand, Hamilton, Southern Grampians Shire, Heritage Overlay (local), The Melville Oval grandstand is of local significance for its historical associations with various sports and recreational pursuits and for the elegance of its Edwardian architecture. The building is substantially intact and in good condition. The Melville Oval has local significance because of its historical associations as Hamilton's chief recreational reserve. The Oval illustrates the importance of sport and recreation in this typical Victorian country town.
- Queen Elizabeth Oval Grandstand, Bendigo, VHR, The grandstand at the Queen Elizabeth Oval, Bendigo is important for the following reasons: as a large, well- conceived and executed late nineteenth century period grandstand, one of the most notable in the state. This excellent example of a comparatively rare building type is in excellent condition. as an excellent example of the 'boom style' architecture of the Victorian central goldfields. as a notable design of JR Richardson. for the quality of its workmanship and local materials. as a structure symbolic of regional community aspirations in late nineteenth century Bendigo. as a structure symbolizing the importance of sport to a late nineteenth century regional Victorian community
- Penshurst Racecourse, 1896, small conventional timber and bluestone grandstand, It has been much altered and extended. Southern Grampians Shire (local) – historical significance
- Navarre Oval Grandstand, 1924, architect designed, Northern Grampians Shire (local), predominantly intact example of an interwar grandstand structure. The Navarre oval, is aesthetically significant at a LOCAL level. It demonstrates important visual qualities that include the open grassed sports ground and perimeter eucalypts which establish an important rural setting for the grandstand. The Navarre grandstand, is architecturally significant at a LOCAL level. It demonstrates original design qualities for a grandstand structure built during the interwar period. These qualities include the shallow gabled roof form supported by elongated timber columns with large timber brackets.

In comparison to these other grandstands, the Horsham example is one of the smallest and most modest. In its size, it is similar to the Maribyrnong Reserve Grandstand and Navarre Oval Grandstand. Its modest design is most similar to the Maribyrnong example. While the integrity of the Horsham Oval Grandstand is currently low, it appears that its actual intactness is higher than that of the Penshurst Racecourse Grandstand.

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Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Horsham City Oval, established in 1901, and the 1924 Grandstand, including its remaining original fabric currently concealed beneath metal cladding, and their ongoing use as a sporting facility, are significant.

How is it significant?

The Horsham City Oval and Grandstand are of historical, representative and social significance to the Rural City of Horsham.

Why is it significant?

The Horsham City Oval and Grandstand are of historical significance for their enduring association with the development of sporting codes, particularly Australian Rules football and cricket, and other popular recreational pastimes from around the turn of the century through to the present day. The ongoing use of the place and associations with local sporting clubs is of historic importance to the City of Horsham. (Criterion A)

The Grandstand is of representative significance as a good representation of this place typology, being a public facility supporting sport and other recreational and social activities. While very simple in form, the Grandstand is still largely intact beneath the current metal cladding. (Criterion D)

The Horsham City Oval and Grandstand are of social significance to the Horsham community, having provided a venue for countless sporting and recreational events since the turn of the century. It has hosted many significant events for the district, including football grand finals, and regional sporting competitions. (Criterion G)

Assessment Against Criteria

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history – historical importance

The Horsham City Oval and Grandstand are of historical significance for their enduring association with the development of sporting codes, particularly Australian Rules football and cricket, and other popular recreational pastimes from around the turn of the century, in a large rural centre. The ongoing use of the place and associations with local sporting clubs is of historic importance to the City of Horsham. Criterion A is met.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history – rarity

The Oval and Grandstand are not especially rare as a place typology, with similar venues located in most country towns of a certain size. Criterion B is not met.

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history – research potential

The Grandstand is a relatively simple structure, unlikely to yield information not already known. Criterion C is not met.

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments – representativeness

The Oval and Grandstand are a good representation of this place typology, being a public facility supporting sport and other recreational and social activities. While very simple in form, the Grandstand is still largely intact beneath the current metal cladding. The co-located sporting facilities, City Pipe Band Hall, City Brass Band Hall, and public facilities collectively form a cohesive example of a City Oval. Criterion D is met.

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Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics – aesthetic significance

The Horsham City Oval and Grandstand generally retain their original configuration. The Grandstand has undergone extensive repairs which have diminished its architectural integrity, although the primary structure, overall form and some original elements remain, albeit not in a visually prominent manner. In its current physical state, the Grandstand is not considered to be of aesthetic significance. Criterion E is not met.

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period – technical significance

The City Oval and Grandstand and associated facilities are not of particular technical or a high degree of creative merit. Criterion F is not met.

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions – social significance

The Horsham City Oval and, Grandstand and associated facilities are of social significance to the Horsham community, having provided a venue for countless sporting and recreational events since the turn of the century. The place is an important gathering place for a variety of community groups and has hosted many significant events for the district, including football grand finals, and regional sporting competitions, and musical events. Criterion G is met.

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history – associative significance

Several prominent AFL footballers have played at the City Oval, however these associations have been fleeting. The City Oval and Grandstand are not associated with any particular known person or group of persons of historical importance. Criterion H is not met.

Recommendations 2022

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Fences & Outbuildings	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No
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.