
Waverley Road Gateway Precinct



Bookaburra Building, 45-47 Waverley Road.



45-57 Waverley Road



Racecourse Hotel



Edwardian shops, 49-51 and 53-57 Waverley Road.

Location

45-57 Waverley Road and 895 Dandenong Road MALVERN EAST, STONNINGTON CITY

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO398

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Waverley Road Gateway precinct is located at the western entry to Waverley Road in Malvern East and comprises the Racecourse Hotel and a group of late-Victorian and Edwardian retail buildings. Commercial development in the precinct began as early as 1858 when the first Racecourse Hotel was built on what was then the main Melbourne to Dandenong stock route. The hotel took on its present form in 1926 when the building was extended and given a new Spanish Mission style facade. Retail development in the precinct commenced in 1901 when a double storey brick shop with an unusual mansard roofed tower (now known as the Bookaburra Building) was built on land adjacent to the vast Gascoigne housing estate. This coincided with a revival of development in the estate as the economy began to recover from the effects of the 1890s depression. Construction of a second group of retail buildings at 49-57 Waverley Road around 1912 occurred alongside a major phase of residential development in Gascoigne Estate, which was stimulated in part by the extension of the electric tram line along Waverley Road in 1913.

Elements which contribute to the significance of the precinct include:

- The external form and fabric of the Racecourse Hotel dating from 1926.
- The sequence of late Victorian and Edwardian retail buildings at 45-57 Waverley Road.
- Unobstructed views to Racecourse Hotel and retail buildings from the western approach to Waverley Road.
- The cohesive appearance of the retail buildings resulting from their attached form, uniform double-storey height and front setbacks, consistent face brick and render materiality and facade modules of a similar width.
- The generally high integrity of the first floor facade of the retail buildings (and west elevation of the Bookaburra Building).
- The form and fabric of extant early shopfronts (including the recessed entry to the first floor living accommodation), typically built with large timber or metal framed display windows above stall boards, smaller highlight windows (including figured glazing), glazed ceramic tile surfaces, and recessed doorways (some retaining tessellated tile floors and pressed metal soffits).
- Retail buildings with roofs concealed by parapets (the mansard roofed tower to the Bookaburra Building being a highly valued exception).
- Original brick chimneys protruding above the parapets.
- External signage on retail buildings generally restricted to the verandah fascia or suspended from the underside of verandahs.
- The limited number of modern internally illuminated signs of the retail buildings.
- The absence of on-site vehicle accommodation in the front setbacks of retail buildings and along the west elevation of the Racecourse Hotel.

How is it significant?

The Waverley Road Gateway Precinct is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

The Waverley Road Gateway Precinct is historically significant as an example of a small local shopping centre which is closely associated with residential development in the highly valued Gascoigne Estate located to its immediate north (*Historic Theme: 7.1 Serving Local communities*). It also demonstrates how many of the municipality's earliest hotels were established along main tracks and at crossroads and became the focal point for later commercial development as communities became more established (*Historic Theme: 7.4.1 Early Hotels*).

The Racecourse Hotel is historically significant for its capacity to illustrate the major interwar trend of refurbishing and rebuilding hotels which followed the introduction of stringent liquor licensing laws (*Historic Theme: 7.4.2 Developing a modern hospitality industry*). The hotel is of added significance for the enduring use of the site as a licensed premises for over 150.

The Waverley Road Gateway Precinct is aesthetically significant as a well preserved example of an early twentieth century commercial precinct which is of particular note for landmark architectural qualities of the Bookaburra Building and the Racecourse Hotel. These two buildings define the western entry to Waverley Road and have unique or distinctive design elements in the context of the Municipality.

While the double-storey Edwardian shop pairs at 49-51 and 53-57 Waverley Road are less architecturally distinguished than the adjacent Bookaburra Building they nonetheless make an important contribution to precinct

through their sympathetic form, massing, and architectural character and their generally high level of intactness.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - City of Stonnington Heritage Overlay Gap Study - Heritage Overlay Precincts Final Report, Bryce Raworth P/L, 2009;
Hermes Number	119451
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Although roadworks in recent decades have altered the form of the intersection, the western gateway to Waverley Road is still flanked by two landmark buildings, namely William Howarth's Bookaburra building and Rody Heffernan's Racecourse Hotel, and forms an intact early twentieth century precinct.

The Racecourse Hotel at 895 Dandenong Road survives as a double-storey rendered masonry building drawing its inspiration from Spanish Mission sources. Its single-storey front wing has a parapet with Cordova tile coping and an entrance portico decorated with elaborate Churrigueresque mouldings. The principle double-storey volume has a hipped roof with Cordova terracotta tiles and bracketed eaves. The hotel remains largely intact apart from large signs mounted above the front entry and over a number of window openings.

On the opposite side of the intersection, the Bookaburra Building comprises a pair of double-storey, red brick late-Victorian shops with a distinctive corner tower incorporating a steeply pitched Mansard roof with a dormer window, surmounted by a cast iron 'widows walk'. Windows to the upper storey are simple timber-framed double-hung sashes set within rendered architraves. Cantilevering verandahs to the street appear to date from the interwar period but the building remains substantially intact above these elements. The shopfronts below have been modernised and, in the case of the more easterly of the shops, completely rebuilt.

The retail pairs to the east of the Bookaburra Building are more modest in terms of their expression - consistent with their c.1912 construction date. Nos 49-51 adopt a plain rendered expression with understated ornamental details such as the semicircular devices at parapet level. Unlike the Bookaburra Building, this pair remains substantially intact at ground and first floor levels. The pair immediately to the east at 53-7 Waverley Road is more austere in terms of its facade with large panels of face brick relieved by simple rendered panels. At ground floor level, these premises retain individual shopfronts to either side of an open entry hall leading to the doorway to the Howarth family apartment at first floor level. Both buildings have, to varying degrees, been overpainted.

The Bookaburra building is an accomplished design of note for its mansard roof and tower. While the two-storey retail pairs at 49-51 and 53-57 are less architecturally distinguished. They are more intact than their neighbour and reflect the later development of the Howarth property and contribute through their form, massing and character to the landmark Bookaburra building. The group at 49-57 in association with 45-7 Waverley Road forms a small but very legible Edwardian retail group. The two single storey shops at 59 and 61 Waverley Road were constructed c.1935 and c.1940 respectively at the eastern end of the group. These are of a different scale and materiality than the Howarth family developments and date from a substantially later period.

Local Historical Themes

7.4.2 Developing a modern hospitality industry 7.1 Serving local communities 7.4.1 Early hotels

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