
FORMER UNDERWOOD HOTEL SITE

Location

179 HIGH STREET VIOLET TOWN, STRATHBOGIE SHIRE

Municipality

STRATHBOGIE SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8024-0015

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Historical Significance

With the advent of gold mining, there was increased traffic through Violet Town and Underwood constructed a bush timber bridge across Honeysuckle Creek. This bridge became the town's main creek crossing and when construction of the overland telegraph determined the most direct route for the first cleared roadway, it became the Sydney Road and passed directly by Underwood's property. Underwood jumped at this opportunity and constructed a hotel on his property to compete with Thomas Clark's Royal Mail Hotel on the other side of town. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Underwood hotel was constructed between sometime between 1852 and 1857 (Chambers, 1985); in 1859 Underwood was described as a publican in the Ovens and Murray Advertiser (Benalla Police Court, 1859). By the 1860s, the Underwood hotel was the Violet Town stop for the gold escort and home to the post office. However with the decline of gold mining, the hotel lost its chief patronage and the Benalla rate books note the change from 'hotel and 170 acres' to 'house and 170 acres' in 1877 (Chambers, 1985). At the same time Underwood had purchased land on the corner of Cowslip Street and Railway Crescent, adjacent to the new railway station. Here the Railway Hotel was constructed and Underwood was once again described as a publican until his death in 1879 (Burden, 2012). After the demise of the original Underwood hotel, the land reverted to pastoral use. An undated Parish Plan found in land selection and correspondence files from 1908 with a building occupying Lot 2 in High Street. It is unclear when the building was demolished but the current Mr Underwood, grandson of Joseph Underwood and who still resides on the family property, has no recollection of any structure but was told as a boy that the ground well on the property serviced the hotel (Underwood pers comm, January 2013). The well is covered today but was utilised until very recently.

Other Names

Remains of the Former Underwood Hotel,

Hermes Number

196131

Property Number

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>