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# Racecourse Road



Racecourse Road (South side)



Pin Oak Crescent



Racecourse Road (275-87)



Racecourse Road (262-72)

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## Location

262-336 RACECOURSE ROAD, and 2-72 PIN OAK CRESCENT FLEMINGTON and 275-337 RACECOURSE ROAD, KENSINGTON, MOONEE VALLEY CITY, MELBOURNE CITY

## Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO25

## Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

### What is significant?

The Racecourse Road precinct is a commercial area comprising buildings that predominantly date from c.1880 to c.1935. The following buildings and elements contribute to the significance of the precinct:

- The intactness to the key periods of development
- The former Colonial Bank of Australasia and Dousta Galla Hotel, which are landmarks within the precinct
- The historic railway bridge, which forms the western boundary to the precinct
- The integrity of the Contributory buildings, particularly above ground floor level, and the surviving early or original shopfronts to some buildings
- The consistency of scale and siting of buildings
- The contrast between the predominantly Victorian era development in Racecourse Road and the Edwardian and inter-war development in Pin Oak Crescent.

The following buildings contribute to the significance of the precinct:

- 275-295A, 301-03, 309-11 & 321-337 (odds) and 262-272, 282, 284, 294-304, 316, 318 & 324-336 (evens) Racecourse Road\*
- 2-20 & 34-70 Pin Oak Crescent.

Non original alterations and additions to Contributory buildings and the buildings at nos. 297, 305-07, 306-14, 313-17 (odds) and 274, 286-92, 306-14 & 320 (evens) Racecourse Road, and 22-32 Pin Oak Crescent are not significant.

\*Note: The former Colonial Bank of Australasia at 300-02 Racecourse Road and the Dousta Galla Hotel at 337 Racecourse Road are also of individual significance and have a separate Hermes place record with a statement of significance.

### How is it significant?

The Racecourse Road precinct of historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

### Why is it significant?

Historically, it is significant as the main commercial centre of Flemington and Kensington since the 1880s. Retail centres such as these, which initially developed around railway stations and along tramlines, were an important regional focus from the late nineteenth century until the emergence of car-oriented shopping centres in the late 1950s. In this precinct the two phases of development is clearly expressed by contrast between the predominantly late nineteenth century built fabric in Racecourse and the early twentieth century development along Pin Oak Crescent that followed the opening of the electric tramway in 1906 and the electric railway in 1919. The importance of this precinct is illustrated by the diversity of commercial premises, at least one former bank, and the former Flemington and Kensington Hall, which was the first council offices of the Borough of Flemington and Kensington from 1882 to 1901. (Criteria A & D)

Aesthetically, it is significant as a fine collection of single and double-storey shops characterised by masonry construction embellished with rendered ornamentation. The form, finish and general ornament allows each period to express its differences from within the basic form and thus illustrates a series of milestones in commercial development of the precinct through the Victorian, Edwardian and Inter-War periods. (Criteria D & E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Moonee Valley - Moonee Valley Heritage Overlay Places Review, David Helms Heritage Planning, 2012; Moonee Valley - Flemington and Kensington Conservation Study, City of Melbourne, 1985;
Construction dates	1880,

Hermes Number 30540

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

The Racecourse Road precinct is a commercial area comprising Victorian, Federation/Edwardian and Inter-war buildings. As noted in the History, there were two distinct development phases in this precinct the first during the late nineteenth century and the second during the early twentieth century extending to the Inter-war period. The first phase of development is demonstrated by the built form in Racecourse Road, which consists largely of late nineteenth century commercial premises, most typically in the form of single-fronted double-storey buildings comprising a shop on the ground floor with a residence above. Some stand as individual shops, while others are in pairs (e.g. nos. 301-03, 309-11, 294-96), or rows of four (nos. 266-72, 324-30 and 329-335).

Although similar in form and materials, the Victorian shops otherwise demonstrate diversity in finishes and detailing. All are of smooth rendered masonry construction. At their upper levels, these buildings are typically enlivened by cement-rendered ornament in the form of moulded pilasters with segmental or triangular pediments (e.g. nos.301-03, 329-335), balustraded parapets with orbs or urns (e.g., no. 295A) and window ledges with wrought iron decoration (e.g., nos.301-03). Windows are usually in pairs and with square or round-arched heads and often embellished with segmental or triangular pediments in the Classical manner. Notable exceptions are the windows to nos. 266-72 and 326-28, which feature a central round arched window flanked by two smaller windows in the Venetian style. These ubiquitous double-storey Victorian buildings are supplemented by a smaller number of single-storey Victorian shops. These are of rendered brick construction, typically with a plain parapet incorporating recessed panels or a simple moulded stringcourse. Examples survive at nos. 279-85 Racecourse Road.

Of note are the two storey shops at the west corner of Rankins Road, which unlike all the other two-storey buildings does not have a parapet, and instead has a visible hip roof with bracketed eaves. The post-supported verandah has been re-built. A few doors along the shop and residence at no.287 has a recessed balcony to the upper level with a cast-iron balustrade. On the north side of the street the former Colonial Bank of Australasia is a fine example of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture. The parapetted three-bayed facade has attached Ionic columns and pilasters as the supporting members to a heavy bayed entablature at the upper level and one confined to the side bays, at the lower. Bracketed pediments crown the central windows whilst public and private entrances take their traditional place on the flanks. Balustrading is used sparingly at the parapet: being confined to between the plain gabled pediments of the piers over the side bays and that of the central pier.

In Racecourse Road the second phase of development is represented by the single storey shop at no.262 (with a simple curved parapet), the two-storey shops at nos. 289-91, the three storey building and adjacent single storey shops at nos. 282-84 (which have similar stepped parapets with simple detailing), the single storey building at 325-57, the pair of shops at nos. 316-18 (which has a notable rendered parapet), and the row of altered two storey shops of simple form and decoration at nos.332-36.

In contrast to Racecourse Road, the shops in Pin Oak Crescent mostly date from the early twentieth century or Inter-war period and are predominantly single storey with plain rendered or painted brick facades enlivened by simple decorative detail. Of note is the two-storey shop and residence with Moderne styling at the south corner of Norwood Street. Earlier shops in Pin Oak Crescent include the single storey Victorian era shop at no.34 with a raised central pediment flanked by scrolls and the double storey shop and residence at no.70 that defines the northern boundary of precinct, which has a Venetian window and cement mouldings to the parapet and pilasters.

Typically, many of the shopfronts throughout the precinct have been remodeled or entirely rebuilt with new full-height aluminium-framed windows, automatic doors and the like. However, some early shopfronts survive notably, the Victorian era shopfront to no.304 Racecourse Road, as well as a number of early twentieth century shopfronts in both Racecourse Road and Pin Oak Crescent with ubiquitous recessed and splayed entrances and large metal-framed windows with highlights above and tiled or paneled spandrels below. Of note are the shopfronts with leadlight highlights, tiled spandrels and tessellated tiled entrances at nos. 64-68 Pin Oak

Crescent, which form part of a row of shops with intact Inter-war shopfronts.

The buildings generally either have no verandahs or simply cantilevered flat awnings of relatively recent origin. None of the shops retain completely original posted verandahs, although the row of four at nos. 266-72 Racecourse Road and the building at nos. 325-7 Racecourse Road each have a reproduction cast iron verandah, and others have rebuilt timber post-supported verandahs (e.g., nos. 275 and 325-333 Racecourse Road and 36-40 Pin Oak Crescent).

Along with the shops, there are two particularly distinctive non-retail buildings in the precinct, namely the Doutta Galla Hotel on the east corner of Racecourse Road and Eastwood Street, and the former Flemington and Kensington Hall at nos. 321-3 Racecourse Road. The Doutta Galla Hotel is stuccoed three level Renaissance revival hotel which is remarkably complete. Designed in a conservative manner, the facade is divided by Corinthian, Ionic and Tuscan pilasters into asymmetrical bays over which entablatures are raised above the parapet balustrading. Two of these bays highlight entrances at ground level but another unexpectedly comes to ground over twin, arched openings. Over-generous architraves, at these entrances, disrupt the line of the string mould and collide with the sill of the second level windows. Bracketted arched pediments have been allotted to the second level windows whilst cemented foliation survives at the top level.

The western boundary of the precinct is defined by the historic railway bridge over Racecourse Road. This bridge, constructed c.1860, retains original stone abutments and piers and massive iron girders supporting the tracks. To the north of the bridge is Newmarket Railway Station, which is an Edwardian style red brick station.

*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/>*