
Union Road



Union Road east side



Union Road west side

Location

169-239 & 230-250 UNION ROAD, 99-121 MARIBYRNONG ROAD, and 52A & 52B ST LEONARDS ROAD,
ASCOT VALE, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO26

Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Union Road precinct in Ascot Vale is a commercial area comprising shops, commercial premises and associated residences built in the period from c.1885 to c.1930. The precinct comprises single and double storey Boom-era shops, characterised by masonry construction embellished with rendered ornamentation, interspersed with representative examples of inter-war shops including a Moderne row that curves around the Maribyrnong Road corner. Two particularly ornate buildings - the Union Hotel and the shop at No.169 - form prominent bookends at either end of the precinct. The following elements contribute to the significance of the precinct:

The Union Hotel** at 250 Union Road, the former New Ascot Cinema** at 199 Union Road, and the shops and attached residences at:

- 97-103 & 109-121 Maribyrnong Road
- 169-179, 185-187, 189**, 191-197, 205-209, 213, 213A, 215-239 and 230-240 & 244-248 Union Road

Key attributes that contribute to the significance of this precinct include:

- the consistency of scale (one or two storey), form, siting (built to the front and side setback), and original materials and detailing (face brick or render with iron or tiled hip or gable roof, concealed behind a parapet) of the contributory buildings
- the high degree of intactness to the late nineteenth century and early-mid-twentieth century development dates with contributory buildings that typically survive with their presentation to the street of the upper facade being largely intact
- road alignments and allotment patterns resulting from the nineteenth century subdivision
- the absence of vehicle accommodation including driveways and crossovers
- the original or early shopfronts at Nos. 179 and 246-48 Union Road.

Other buildings in the precinct, and non-original alterations (e.g. shopfronts, cantilevered awnings) or additions to contributory places are not significant.

***Note: These are places of local significance, which each have an individual place record and statement of significance.*

How is it significant?

The Union Road precinct in Ascot Vale is of local historic, architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

It is historically significant as a representative example of the local commercial centres that initially developed in the late nineteenth century to serve residential areas within walking distance and later grew to serve a regional catchment as public transport links were improved by the mid-twentieth century. The scale of the centre and the extent to which the key phases of development are apparent illustrates its importance as one of the key shopping centres in the municipality for most of the twentieth century. (Criteria A & D)

It is architecturally significant as a good example of a late nineteenth century commercial area, which is notable for consistency of built form and the relatively high degree of integrity to the main period of development. (Criteria D & E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Moonee Valley - Review of HO precincts, David Helms HPM, 2010; Moonee Valley - City of Moonee Valley Heritage Review 2004, Heritage Alliance, 2004;
Construction dates	1880,
Hermes Number	125136
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The buildings along the west side of Union Road consist 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. 177-79, 191-93), or rows of three (111-15 Maribyrnong) or, in one notable case, a row of four (227-233 Union).

Although similar in form and materials, the Victorian shops otherwise demonstrate diversity in finishes and detailing. All are of masonry construction, some have tuck-pointed brickwork, either unpainted (e.g., Nos. 185, 187, 189, 195 & 215 Union) or subsequently painted (213 & 217 Union), while some are smooth rendered (Nos.191-93, 205 Union). At their upper levels, these buildings are typically enlivened by cement-rendered ornament such as shaped pediments with acroteria (e.g. Nos. 207 & 217 Union), balustraded parapets with orbs or urns (187 & 189 Union) and vermiculated panels (240 Union). These ubiquitous double-storey Victorian buildings are supplemented by a smaller number of single-storey Victorian shops. Without exception, these are of rendered brick construction, typically with a plain parapet incorporating recessed panels or a simple moulded stringcourse. Examples survive at 209 Union Road and 109 & 121 Maribyrnong Road.

The inter-war period of development is represented by the Moderne shops at Nos.235-39 Union Road, with a curved and rendered facade that curls around the Maribyrnong Road corner. Alongside, at 97-103 Maribyrnong Road, is a row of four red brick inter-war shops of simple form. Further inter-war shops are located on the east side of Union Road, including No.230, the clinker brick pair at Nos.232-34, and, most notably, the substantial double-storey rendered brick building (former billiard saloon) at No.236-38, its stark facade enlivened by projecting window hoods and dogtooth mouldings at the upper level.

Typically, many of the actual shopfronts have been remodeled or entirely rebuilt with new full-height aluminium-framed windows, automatic doors and the like. Only three shops - Nos.179 and 246-48 - still retain original or early shopfronts, with ubiquitous recessed and splayed entrances and large metal-framed windows with highlights above and tiled or paneled spandrels below.

Along with the shops, there are two particularly distinctive non-retail buildings in the precinct, namely the Union Hotel on the southwest corner of Maribyrnong Road, and the New Ascot Theatre at 199-203 Union Road. The Union Hotel is a fine example of a two storeyed, stuccoed brick hotel building which has been adapted in style from the Italian Renaissance. A succession of pediments marks window bays, along the upper facades, which are in turn, underscored by Corinthian order pilasters. Colonettes placed at the impost of each window arch, add to the generally ornate facade. The profusion of upper pediments is taken more soberly, at ground level, on broader pediments, placed above the entrances. Segment-arched openings here also express a progression of mass and void up the facade and parapet urns and orbs are intact. The former theatre (now a reception centre) is typical of its era: a substantial painted brick cinema building with vaguely Classical Revival detailing including rendered pilasters, rows of large nailhead mouldings, and multi-paned windows. Both buildings are prominent landmarks within the precinct.

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/>