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# PRINCE OF WALES HOTEL



Prince of Wales Hotel

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## Location

506 Mt Alexander Road ASCOT VALE, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

## Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO364

## Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

*What is significant?*

The Prince of Wales Hotel at 502-510 Mt Alexander Road, Ascot Vale, established on this site by 1854. It was owned and run for many years, from 1893 to 1920, by members of the prominent McCracken family, owners of McCracken's City Brewery (which formed part of Carlton & United Breweries from 1907). It was rebuilt in 1924 for owner and publican Cordelia Sommerville. It ceased to function as a hotel after a fire in 2009.

The present hotel is a two-storey red-brick building, with cement render dressings, with a single-storey shop at either end. The facade is articulated by a parapeted 'tower' breakfront at either end adorned with the Prince of Wales' feathers, between which is a line of two-over-one sash windows. The building is embellished both by the stylish raised name on the parapets, and the exaggerated arched window in each end tower.

The ground floor retains one original pair of doors, and the shopfront at No. 502 is largely intact (shop window, recessed entry, tiled stallboard).

*How is it significant?*

The Prince of Wales Hotel is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Moonee Valley and the site has research potential.

*Why is it significant?*

Historically, the Prince of Wales is significant as the site of one of the earliest hotels along the major route to the central Victorian goldfields in the early 1850s. Its early history is closely entwined with that of the former Flemington and Essendon Borough Hall of 1863-4 next door. The hotel's important social standing in the community continued long after the municipal offices moved north to the Moonee Ponds Junction, as indicated by a horse-drawn cab service that started up in May 1893, taking passengers from the cable tram terminus at Flemington Bridge to the Prince of Wales Hotel. (Criterion A)

Aesthetically, as a good example of the Free Classical style, embellished with stylish lettering across the parapet. The building is distinguished by the tower-like breakfronts at either end, which sportsimplified rustication, a broad archivolt to the central window with an exaggerated keystone reaching up to the top of the parapet and the Prince of Wales' feathers in cast-concrete. (Criterion D).

The site has research potential as remains of the 1850s hotel and outbuildings may remain as subsurface deposits. (Criterion C).

## Theme

3. Connecting Victorians by transport and communications 5. Building Victoria's industries and workforce

Heritage Study/Consultant Moonee Valley - Moonee Valley Heritage Overlay Places Review, David Helms Heritage Planning, 2012;

Other Names Jimmy Rowes Hotel,

Hermes Number 192102

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

The Prince of Wales Hotel of 1924 comprises a two-storey red-brick building with render dressings in the Free Classical style. It has a single-storey shop at either end (Nos. 502 and 510) which share a cantilevered verandah with the hotel. The hotel and shops are built to the boundary along Mt Alexander Road, while there is a range of single-storey wings in the large rear yard. The sections fronting the road (the two-storey wing and flanking shops) have flat roofs behind parapets, while the collection of rear wings have hipped and gabled-hipped roofs.

The hotel facade has a slightly taller breakfront at either end, expressed as towers with side returns, bracketing a long central bay. The 'towers' are rendered, with simplified rustication to the lower half and smooth render above.

Each has a pair of narrow two-over-one windows at the centre with a blind arch above it with raised date '1924'. The raised word 'HOTEL' is displayed on the exposed side elevation of each 'tower'. The window arch has a wide archivolt with a simple label mould and wildly exaggerated keystone which stretched to the top of the parapet. Above the moulded cornice of the parapet, just above the keystone, are cast-cement feathers, signifying the Prince of Wales. The central bay of the first floor has six two-over-one sash windows in a brick band, with a broad rendered parapet above featuring the stylish raised words 'Prince of Wales Hotel'. The first floor is set off from the ground floor by a narrow moulded stringcourse, which continues along the top of the two shop parapets.

At the ground floor level, the bluestone and brick piers survive between the windows, as does a pair of doors with a leadlight highlight, near the south end. The shop at No. 502 is quite intact, retaining its recessed entry with tiled floor, marble threshold and highlight to the doorway, partial metal-framed shop windows, and tiled stallboard (overpainted).

Alterations to the facade include the reconfiguration of all ground floor windows and their replacement with folding doors, the replacement of the shopfront to No. 510, and the overpainting of the red brick at the first-floor level. The flat roofs of the front section may also be an alteration, replacing hipped roofs. The rear wings appear to be largely intact, with the original exposed red brick and concrete lintels, though some openings are boarded up.

No evidence of pre-1924 construction could be identified. Comparing MMBW Plans of Drainage (No. 52022) from 1906 and 1924, it is clear that the 1850s hotel building was much smaller and set back from the footpath. The location of the rear wings also did not correspond pre- and post-1924, and the site visit confirmed that the present rear wings are all of 1920s construction. While the 1924 Plan of Drainage shows that the old stable block had been retained, this has since been demolished.

*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/>*