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# RIVERSDALE RAILWAY STATION AND SIGNAL BOX



Wandin Road, 2R Riversdale  
Railway Station and Signal  
Box



Wandin Road, 2R Riversdale  
Railway Station and Signal  
Box rear.jpg

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## Location

2R Wandin Road CAMBERWELL, BOROONDARA CITY

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO729

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - November 22, 2018

What is Significant?

The Down side station building (1915), the Signal Box (1916), and Switch House (1924) at Riversdale Railway Station, Riversdale Road, Camberwell, are significant.

How is it significant?

They are of local historical, architectural and technological significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

The Signal Box at Riversdale Railway Station is historically significant as an evidence of the impact of the extension of the electric tram network through the municipality in the 1910s. The Switch House is historically significant for its association with the electrification of the suburban rail network in the 1920s. The Down side station building at Riversdale Station is of historical significance as one of the earliest station buildings associated with the short-lived Outer Circle Railway Line and its subsequent incarnation as the Alamein branch line. (Criterion A)

The Signal Box, the adjacent Switch House and the Down-side station building provide rare evidence of the early character of the Outer Circle railway line. Along with the switch house, the Signal Box is the only surviving example of its kind in the City of Boroondara, and one of only two original signal boxes still serving its function at a level crossing in the Melbourne metropolitan area. (Criterion B)

Architecturally, the Signal Box is a substantially intact example of an early 20th century Victorian railway building. The Down side station building is also architecturally important as an increasingly rare surviving example of a standard nineteenth century railway portable building, once widespread throughout the suburban and rural rail systems established during the railway boom period. (Criterion D)

Technologically, the Signal Box is important for its ability to demonstrate the safe working practices at tramway squares. The Signal Box and Switch House are of technological significance with its association with the control of one of only three tramway squares - at level crossings of tram and train lines - remaining in metropolitan Melbourne, and one of only two to retain its original building. (Criterion F)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study: Vol. 2 Camberwell, Context, 2018;
Construction dates	1915, 1924, 1916,
Hermes Number	202122
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

Riversdale Railway Station is located on the north side of Riversdale Road, near the intersection of railway and tramway lines. It is accessed from Wandin Road on the west side. As the land around the Riversdale Station is higher on the west side, it has a good view of a low-rise neighbourhood to the east.

The Signal Box (formerly known as Riversdale Signal Box B) is located at the north-east corner of the railway and tram intersection in Riversdale Road. The two-storey signal box follows a standard Victorian Railway design, characterised by a gabled roof, decorative king-post trusswork and bargeboards to the gables, and weatherboard walls framed by stop-chamfered timber posts. Windows are provided on all four elevations, forming a horizontal band along south, west and half the north elevations to provide clear view of the railway and tramway square. On the east side is a smaller timber framed window which appears to be original. The entrances to each level and a staircase to the upper storey are on the north side. The roof is red corrugated iron (or Colorbond) cladding.

The Signal Box is in a fairly original condition, apart from changes to the windows. A view of the Riversdale tramway square from 1974 shows part of the west elevation with a 6-pane lower-level window (most likely one of a pair), which has been removed (Langford 1974). The timber sash windows with two small panes at the top have also been removed at the upper level, and replaced with sliding aluminium units. According to a later view taken in 2009, the timber finials (currently one missing) on the north and south elevations are recent replacements

(Culverston 2009). The metal stairs on the north side appears to be a modern replacement.

The Switch House, which is another remnant of interwar suburban rail & tramway expansion in metropolitan Melbourne, is located to the north of the Signal Box. It is a small corrugated iron-clad building with a simple utilitarian structure and form. It sits on a mass concrete foundation and has a red corrugated iron (or Colorbond) gable roof with wide eaves. It has one four-pane timber-framed window on the east elevation and two on the west. A timber-framed doorway (with a modern flush-panelled door) and concrete steps are on the north side. There is no sign of any alterations or additions to the exterior of the Switch House.

The Down (east) side station building from c.1915 is also of interest. As noted in the History, it follows the typology of Victorian Railway's portable buildings that were prefabricated in standard sections and joined at the site. The Riversdale Down platform building has the typical elements of the portable station building. These include walls clad in vertical lining boards; a verandah with timber posts on the station side of the building; a gable roof with corrugated iron cladding; and a simple brick chimney with an external chimney breast adjoining the office space. It contains two offices on the north side and a waiting room on the south, with a separating under-roof lobby in between them. On the north elevation is a former ticket window, a wall vent above it and external ventilation posts that appears to be original.

Although the original view of the Down side building is not known, there are a number of obvious modern alterations observed. The walls on the north and east sides of the waiting room have been replaced with fibro-cement sheet. The brick of the chimney breast has been overpainted in cream. The bottom of five grey-painted verandah posts have been elevated from the ground level and fixed to the asphalted platform ground with steel stirrups. The doors to the two offices are modern flush-panel doors.

*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/>*