
UPFIELD RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE: BRUNSWICK TO COBURG

Location

HOPE STREET, BRUNSWICK, 3056; HOPE STREET ROAD RESERVE; ORIENT GROVE, BRUNSWICK, 3056; 218 ALBION STREET, BRUNSWICK 3056; ALBION STREET, BRUNSWICK 3056; ALBION STREET RESERVE; 204 MORELAND ROAD BRUNSWICK, 3056; 2A STATION STREET, COBURG 3058; MORELAND R,

Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-2386

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 24, 2020

The collective representation and significance of this infrastructure along the rail corridor should be considered. These features represent a range of activities associated with the Upfield railway line, including daily operation function to allow the transportation of goods and people, industrial usage, the operation of the rail system in an urban environment, and the permanent residential aspect associated with gatekeepers and station masters houses. The site is of historical importance for its association with the operation of the former Coburg Railway Line (H0952). This railway line was introduced in the early 1880s and the associated infrastructure, including gatekeepers houses, gatekeepers cabins, hand-gates, rail sidings and other features represent components representative of its use in the transportation of goods and people. The site is of archaeological significance for their potential to provide evidence of the operation of the railway line, including insights into the daily operations and of workers associated with its operation. The site addresses the following category in Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes: Connecting Victorians by transport and communications. ? Theme 3: Connecting Victorians by transport and communications (Sub-theme 3.3 Linking Victorians by rail -Associated Objects)

Theme

3. Connecting Victorians by transport and communications

Hermes Number 206388

Property Number

History

1880-1890s The 'North Melbourne to Coburg Line' line opened on 9 September 1884 and a number of the features included in this application are attributed to this period of construction, such as timber gatekeeper's cabins, hand-operated timber sector gates, signals and masts. The Coburg Goods Yard was in operation by the end of the 18th century and utilised as an open space to load/ unload goods. Further infrastructure to support freight and passenger services was introduced throughout the period of 1884 to the late-1890s. Brick railway station buildings, designed in the Gothic 'Maldon' style, were constructed at South Brunswick, Brunswick, Moreland and Coburg by 1887 and signal boxes were constructed between the late-1890s and the late-1920s (Bell and Moreland Level Crossing Removal Project, Heritage Assessment 2020). The signal boxes were designed to manage access to sidings to businesses at locations along the track, and were installed at Union Street in 1897, Victoria Street (1889); Moreland Road, at the south end of the downside platform (c. 1889) and at Munro Street (c. 1928). The earliest sidings were to Cornwell's Pottery on Phoenix Street and Hoffman's Brickworks on Dawson Street in 1886. By the 1890s there were a large number of sidings south of Moreland Road at Cameron Street and Colebrook Street (Bell and Moreland Level Crossing Removal Project, Heritage Assessment 2020). The late 1800s also saw the development of further infrastructure to service industrial manufacturers utilizing the rail system, such as the Colebrook Street Weighbridge. The establishment of the rail line, along with a cable tram service on Sydney Road was a key driver in the development of Brunswick and the surrounding area in the late 1800s to early-1900s. The population of Brunswick tripled between 1881 (prior to the introduction of the railway) and following its opening in 1884. The railway also assisted local industry including brickworks and potteries (Bell and Moreland Level Crossing Removal Project, Heritage Assessment 2020).

1900s-1940s By the end of the 1800s Brunswick was regarded as an industrial suburb, supporting a range of factories, brick and terracotta potteries, foundries, sawmills, horse nail factory and quarries. Rail duplication was required due to the volume of freight tonnage and the growing congestion on the rail line (Bell and Moreland Level Crossing Removal Project, Heritage Assessment 2020). The Moreland stationmasters residence was constructed by 1910, comprising a dwelling, pan closet and additional small buildings within a fenced yard at Moreland Station. The residence was described as a timber-framed house, cruciform on plan, with double gable ends to front and rear elevations. The railway was electrified in 1920, following the First World War, supporting further industrial growth and by the interwar period, hosiery and textile enterprises had begun to replace the brickworks and potteries as Brunswick's primary manufacturing industries. In addition to public and industrial transportation, the Upfield Line was used to transport coffins and funeral parties from Flinders Street to Fawkner Memorial Park, from 1905 until 1939. The 1930s saw the decline of the brick and clay industries as much of the raw material had been extracted. Quarries were filled and developed as parks reserves. Industrial usage of the Upfield railway line also declined as road transport was favoured (Bell and Moreland Level Crossing Removal Project, Heritage Assessment 2020).

1950s-1980s A series of proposals for differing rail redevelopments were considered during the mid-late 1900s due to the reduction of demand for rail usage. This resulted in a 20-year period of uncertainty for the rail line and lack of investment. Rail sidings were dismantled, either partially or wholly, between the 1950s and the 1980s and removal of railway infrastructure also occurred. An example of this is the Colebrook Street Weighbridge; the above-ground components were demolished and the remaining in-ground components infilled and covered.

1990s-Present In the early 1990s a plan to construct a light rail along the corridor was abandoned following community outcry and an upgrade to the rail line was announced. The upgrades included the closure of level crossings at Barkly St and Tinning St and the installation of automatic booms at level crossings. Components of the railway were also included on the Victorian Heritage Register in 1997 (Former Coburg Railway Line (H0952)), encompassing a number of areas and structures along the rail line. *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/>