
CASTERTON TOWNSHIP



53005 Casterton Commercial
Precinct

Location

HENTY STREET, CASTERTON, GLENELG SHIRE

Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Listing

Glenelg Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

Casterton began in the 1840s with an inn located where the Melbourne, Portland and Adelaide Roads crossed the Glenelg River. The Casterton Township begins at the Glenelg River crossing and is located along Henty Street (the Glenelg Highway) and includes the cross streets: Tyers Street, Clarke Street, McPherson Street, and McKinlay Street and, at the Railway Reserve, Wathen Street. The precinct extends to include most of the places on the south side of Murray Street and then north side of Jackson Street between Tyers and McKinlay Street. It is adjacent to the Church and Residential precinct to the north-east. A wide range of commercial, civic and industrial buildings, along with some residential buildings, is represented in the precinct. There is a mixture of single-storey and double storey buildings, dating from the 1860s through to the 1960s, many of which were designed by distinguished private architects and government departments. Key buildings in Henty Street for their function and scale include: the Post Office (1908), the former Court House (1875), the former Shire of Glenelg Town Hall (1936), Electra House (1936), the three surviving hotels, and the various banks. Although smaller and in side streets, other civic buildings are important such as those associated with the Police and Ambulance Service. Key industrial buildings include the former Electrical Light Company Building (1936), a butter factory and a cordial factory, and the various components of the Casterton Railway Station complex. Several mid-twentieth century buildings mark the arrival and increasing importance of the automobile, the most notable of which is probably the Glenford Sales car showroom at the entrance to the precinct beside the river. However, shops are the predominant building type. The precinct boasts an excellent collection of substantially intact shopfronts, facades and verandahs from all periods. Particularly important are the former Williams The Shoeman shop and the row of shops called the Electra Building, both excellent examples of the Art Deco style. The earlier nineteenth century buildings mark the beginnings of the township. The later nineteenth and twentieth century buildings, which represent the various boom periods, give the precinct a sense of almost continuous prosperity, with only a brief intermission during the Great Depression. The integrity of most of the buildings within the precinct is very high and their condition is generally good if not excellent. Overall, the precinct is in very good condition and retains a very high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?

The Casterton Township is of historic, cultural, social and architectural significance to the Glenelg Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Casterton Township is of historic significance because it shows through its built form the growth and development of the town of Casterton from the mid 1860s to the mid twentieth century and beyond. Of further historical significance is the town's role as a major commercial and professional focus for the surrounding area, being the second largest township in the Shire. The precinct is of cultural significance particularly for its range of civic buildings, including the Post Office, the Town Hall, the former Court House, and the Police Station. It is of social significance as the focus for the community's civic and needs. The architectural significance of the precinct lies in range of buildings of different types and periods, many designed by important architects.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Glenelg - Glenelg Shire Heritage Study Part One, Carlotta Kellaway, David Rhodes Mandy Jean, 2002; Glenelg - Glenelg Heritage Study Stage Two (a), Heritage Matters, 2006;
Other Names	Casterton Township Precinct,
Hermes Number	53005
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Casterton is the most substantial township in the Glenelg Shire after Portland. The Casterton Township is located along Henty Street (the Glenelg Highway), from the Glenelg River through to McKinlay Street. It also encompasses the southern end of McPherson Street and all of the former Railway Reserve to the southwest of Henty Street. The precinct covers most of the commercial shopping strip, most of the civic buildings, the three surviving hotels, the former butter factory buildings, the electrical supply buildings and a former cordial factory. The natural ground level rises slightly to the north-west, up Henty Street, and falls away to the river on either side.

All of the buildings in Henty Street are built up to the street boundary, with little if any setback, but those facing the side streets do have setbacks. There is a range of single-storey and double-storey buildings along both sides of Henty Street. The buildings are commercial, civic or industrial with few residential buildings. The construction materials are mainly local red brick, either face-brick or rendered, or timber, with some buildings having later modifications using other materials and cream brick indicating post-World War One construction. One important exception is the use of pressed metal on a timber frame for the former Jeffreys' cordial factory in McKinlay Street. The surviving commercial premises date from as early as the 1860s, although there is an excellent representation of buildings through to the 1950s. Most are conventional single-storey shops. The stall boards of the shop fronts are generally stone or timber before 1900 and glazed tiles after, with some rare uses of Vitrolite glass after 1930. The streetscape boasts many significantly intact shop fronts from all periods, including several long rows of shops. The pair of shops at 73-75 Henty Street, built as 'The Enterprise Buildings' in 1898, were the first shops in Casterton to have plate glass windows. The streetscape is also united by the fine collection of surviving verandahs, mostly timber and single storey but some are two-storey and some are cantilevered. The Albion Hotel, located at 25 Henty Street, dominates the lower half of the precinct with its triple-pavilion form, contrasting red brick and cement render detailing, and cast iron decoration. It is the tallest and the longest commercial building in the streetscape. The other hotels are also important. However, the Casterton Hotel has lost its fine two-storey cast iron verandah. The Glenelg Hotel with its surviving two-storey timber verandah is particularly important for marking the entrance to the town at the bridge.

The only early civic buildings which survive are the former Court House on the corner of Clarke and Henty Streets, dating from 1875 and the Police buildings nearby in Clarke Street. The present Post Office, located adjacent to the Court House replaced the portion burnt down in 1906. Architecturally, it is an important foil for the Albion Hotel. The current Town Hall, built in 1936, replaced an earlier two storey Mechanic's Institute and, like the Albion Hotel, dominates the upper half of the precinct. Other civic buildings include the various buildings associated with the police, ambulance and fire stations. The Casterton primary school, State School No. 2058 has been completely remodelled and is not considered to be part of the significance of the precinct.

The industrial buildings are located away from the main street. A factory for the freezing of lamb and rabbit meat was constructed at the southeast end of McPherson Street. In 1907, Council approved a proposal by the Casterton Freezing Works to provide electric supply for Casterton and within a year the company was supplying street lighting. Briefly this was by arc lights but these were soon replaced by incandescent lights which, in turn, were replaced by fluorescent lights after connection to the State Electricity Commission grid in 1962. The present street lights are sodium vapour lights. The Freezing Works were used as a Butter Factory, and later demolished for the construction of a new building to house the Electric Light Company, in 1936.

The railway complex dates from 1886 and comprises the station, goods shed, stores, some tracks and associated structures including important underground works. The original turntable has been removed. A former woolshed has been moved in to the site. It appears that around the turn of the century a series of large storage sheds was also constructed. The goods sheds at the Railway Station and those behind the IGA supermarket appear to be the last surviving examples, constructed of corrugated iron, with rough timber posts used as uprights.

Many fine buildings were constructed in the Interwar period in particular. The advent of the motor car brought increased trade to the town and several automobile related buildings were constructed, including the building at 23 Henty Street, built in 1926 as a mechanic's store and 59-61 Henty Street, now Herbert's Bakery, originally built in 1926 for AOB Motors. A very fine car showroom was built in 1950 at 1 Henty Street, possibly designed by the Melbourne architects Seabrook and Fildes, known as Glenford Sales and operated by Messrs Cleary and Touhey. Murrell's Shoe Store, designed by the architect Rhys Hopkins, and the Electra Building are distinctively Art Deco in style. Two smaller but equally distinctive Interwar buildings are the Art Deco oculist's shop in McKinlay Street and the Stripped Classical offices of the Casterton Albion newspaper in Henty Street.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, a program of beautification of the main commercial area of Henty Street commenced. New paving and islands were incorporated into the standard street design, as were new seats, plantings and other elements. Importantly, a bronze statue of 'Kelpie', the famous cattle dog and the original of the breed, stands outside the Town Hall. But these elements, although worthwhile, are not considered to contribute to the heritage of the precinct. At the same time there was a strong and successful push to revitalise the streetscape but refurbishing various buildings, especially by using appropriate paint colours, such as those on Murrell's Shoe Store and the Electra Building.

Topographically, much of this area is on the river flat, and has been prone to flooding in the past. Nonetheless, the integrity of most of the surviving buildings within the precinct is very high and their condition is good. Overall, the precinct retains a very high degree of integrity and is in very good condition.

Contributory places

All buildings (other than those listed as significant) and land are considered to be contributory except for the following:

- . Units 1 & 2 - 162 Henty St, Casterton
- . Foodworks 46-52 Henty St, Casterton

Significant places.

Car Show Room (former) 1-5 Henty Street, Casterton

- . Masonic Lodge, 160 Henty St, Casterton
- . Glenelg Inn, 2-10 Henty Street, Casterton
- . Shop & Residence, 21 - 23 Henty St Casterton
- . Albion Hotel, 25-27 Henty Street, Casterton
- . AOB Motors (former), 59 - 61a Henty Street, Casterton
- . ANZ Bank & Residence, 53-53a Henty Street, Casterton
- . Shop, 54-56 Henty Street, Casterton
- . Commonwealth Bank, 55 Henty Street, Casterton
- . Cameron House, 57 Henty Street, Casterton
- . Office 74-76 Henty Street, Casterton
- . Murrell's Shoe Shop 84 Henty Street, Casterton
- . Electra House, 89-95 Henty Street, Casterton
- . Casterton Hotel, 101 Henty Street, Casterton
- . Goods Shed, rear of 97-99 Henty Street, Casterton
- . Red Brick Residence, 6 Clarke Street Casterton
- . Red Brick Residence, 3 Clarke Street Casterton
- . Railway Station Complex, 13 McPherson Street, Casterton
- . Butter Factory (former), 2 - 10 McPherson Street, Casterton

. Jeffries Cordial Factory, 36 McPherson Street, Casterton

. NAB & Residence, 126 - 126A Henty St, Casterton

Glenelg Lodge, 154 Henty Street, Casterton

Historical Australian Themes

4.1: Planning urban settlements

4.1.1: Selecting township sites

4.5: Making settlements to serve rural Australia

4.6: Remembering significant phases in the development of settlements, towns and cities

6.1: Forming associations, libraries and institutes for self-education

6.2: Establishing schools

6.5: Educating people in remote places

8.6: Worshipping

8.6.1: Worshipping together

8.6.2: Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies

8.6.4: Making places for worship

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/>