
Commercial Banking Company of Sydney - Castlemaine Historic Area



B1957 Commercial Bank



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Location

157 Barker Street,, CASTLEMAINE VIC 3450 - Property No B1957

Municipality

MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0712

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 7, 2008

The former CBC Bank was built for the Bank of Victoria in 1856 at a cost of 3,600 pounds. The architect was Alfred Price and the builder, Mr A Duncan. It is a two storey Georgian building symmetrically composed on all sides with a side wing at the rear. The construction is of face brickwork with stone dressings and a bracketed slate hip-and -valley roof. The lower order has a central portico on tuscan columns and heavily quoined surrounds to the segmental arched windows while the upper windows are rectangular with the central one picked

out by a segmental pediment. The stringcourses and quoins are picked out on the facade in stone. The ground floor windows were originally covered by grilles, and on the upper windows cement balconettes have been replaced by wrought iron.

The building is unusual in Victoria both for its age and its place in the early classical period of Victorian bank architecture. It is perhaps closer in inspiration to English Queen Anne through its picturesque use of classical elements and as such, is unique.

Castlemaine grew as a result of the discovery of gold along Forest Creek in July, 1851. By December of that year the population on the field was greater than that of Melbourne. In 1852 Mr Templeton surveyed the township of Castlemaine and in 1853 the first auction of the town site was held.

The Castlemaine goldfield was allegedly the richest alluvial goldfield in the world. Such was the prosperity of the diggers that the townsfolk were optimistically expectant of Castlemaine becoming Victoria's second city. The prosperity and optimism is reflected in the high number of imposing buildings erected in the first few years of the town's life. However, the rich alluvial diggings were worked out within 15-20 years. From the 1870's the town's population began to drift away, but they left behind a rich legacy of the town's former prosperity in the form of its buildings.

Within the Castlemaine Historic Area may be found many items of significance. These range from intact nineteenth century streetscapes composed of imposing public buildings to simple miners' cottages. Within the historic area there are a number of identifiable component areas, each telling an important part of the history of Castlemaine. In addition, there are many other sites of significance outside of these areas, but still within the Historic Area. These include the former steam flourmill, the Church of England, the Congregational Church and Forest and Barkers Creeks.

Despite the town's topographical confinements to the valley of the two creeks, the wide streets and large buildings convey an atmosphere of grand spaciousness in this central Victorian goldfields town.

Classified: 'Regional' 17/11/1983

Revised: 'State' 03/08/1998

Hermes Number 69130

Property Number

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/>