
Camperdown Turf Club Grandstand

Location

185 Camperdown - Lismore Road,, CAMPERDOWN VIC 3260 - Property No B7303

Municipality

CORANGAMITE SHIRE

Level of significance

State

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2093

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 2, 2005

What is significant? The Camperdown Turf Club Grandstand was built in 1902-03 to the design of local architect Michael McCabe at a time of growing interest in the sport, and growth in the town. It replaced an earlier smaller grandstand and seated about 800 people. To cater to growing crowds, it was extended some time before 1913 by construction of two bays in matching style to the northern end, bringing the capacity to 1,000 spectators. The grandstand played an important role in the town and the region's cultural and sporting life up to the 1980s, when the course faced closure. Community protests and support ensured that the course remained open, was used at least twice a year, and prevented demolition of the stand. Following years of deferred maintenance, work began in 2004 to address its seriously dilapidated state.

The stand is a predominantly timber framed structure, with a prominent corrugated iron roof, and corrugated iron cladding to the side and rear walls. It features cast-iron columns supporting the front of the roof, which has a mansard section over what was originally the central two bays, with a virtually flat top, and a projecting pediment facing the track. The ground is built up in front of the stand to provide mound seating, connected to the stand over a walkway by five sets of stairs. The front of the stand and the stairs feature patterned cast-iron balustrades.

There are a number of facilities housed in the ground floor beneath the seating, including a dining room, betting room and two bars. Interiors are lined with Baltic pine, and the posts and bracing of the structure are exposed in the larger rooms.

How is it significant? The Camperdown Turf Club Grandstand is significant for architectural, historic and social reasons at a state level.

Why is it significant? The Camperdown Turf Club Grandstand is architecturally significant as a splendid Federation era grandstand, forming a dominant element in the flat racecourse landscape. While some others from the era are larger and more ornate, the clever integration of the spectator mound is unique. It is a substantial work of the local architect Michael McCabe, who was also involved in drafting the rules of the club and oversaw further building works.

The Grandstand has important associations with the history of horse racing in Victoria as one of the very few surviving examples of a country racecourse structure from an era when horse racing was a key part of the sporting and social life of rural Victoria. The site has a continuous association with the sport since the first race on New Year's Day 1867, and with the Turf Club since its formation in 1886. It also has one of the longest tracks in the state

Classified: 30/04/2005

Other Names Camperdown Racecourse Grandstand,

Hermes Number 71616

Property Number

Physical Description 1

The stand is a predominantly timber framed structure, with a grid of posts and beams, and Oregon trusses supporting the sloped stands and the roof. It is clad with corrugated iron on both the roof, and the side and rear walls. It features cast-iron columns supporting the front of the roof, and at the mid-point of the sides. There is a domed mansard roof section over what was originally the central two bays, with a virtually flat, low pyramidal roof, and a projecting pediment facing the track. The ground is built up in front of the stand to provide mound seating, which is connected to the stand over a walkway by five sets of stairs. The front of the stand and the stairs feature patterned cast-iron balustrades.

There are a number of facilities housed in the ground level of the stand, including two bars, a dining room and kitchen, ladies toilets, and a betting room. Interiors are lined with Baltic pine, and the posts and bracing of the structure are exposed in the larger rooms. Doors and windows are timber framed. The large grandstand dominates a virtually flat racecourse of 2,000 metres, one of the longest in the state and with a finishing straight of 385 metres.

Intactness

The structure is in dire need of repair, especially the roof, ground floor, ceiling and western wall. The retaining wall in front of the grandstand has a very noticeable bulge. The roof and gutters have not been maintained and have extensive rusting. There is a termite infestation problem. Some posts have rotted. The condition of stairways, cladding and floor coverings has been of concern. There is evidence of ground water problems. However, Heritage Victoria has awarded a grant of \$91,000 for repair and restoration work. Bracing work to stabilise the structure has started.

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/>