

**Locality:** MAFFRA  
**Place address:** 2 JOHNSON STREET  
**Citation date** 2016  
**Place type (when built):** Hotel  
**Recommended heritage protection:** Local government level  
Local Planning Scheme: Yes  
Vic Heritage Register: No  
Heritage Inventory (Archaeological): No

**Place name:** Macalister Hotel



**Architectural Style:** Victorian, Interwar Free Classical  
**Designer / Architect:** Not Known  
**Construction Date:** c1863, 1922

## Statement of Significance

This statement of significance is based on the history, description and comparative analysis in this citation. The Criteria A-H is the Heritage Council Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance (HERCON). Level of Significance, Local, State, National, is in accordance with the level of Government legislation.

### *What is significant?*

The Macalister Hotel at 2 Johnson Street, Maffra, is significant. The form, materials and detailing as constructed in c1863 and 1922 are significant.

Later outbuildings, and alterations and additions to the building are not significant.

### *How is it significant?*

The Macalister Hotel is locally significant for its historical, social and aesthetic values to the Shire of Wellington.

### *Why is it significant?*

The Macalister Hotel **historically and socially significant at a local level** as it represents the first settlement of Maffra upon the Macalister River, soon after Job Dan built a punt across the river in this location in 1862, which was primarily for travelers on their way to the goldfields in the north-west. In 1863, a town was surveyed at the crossing of the river, and in 1863 the township of Maffra was gazetted. The Macalister Hotel was built c1863 for James Gibney on the current site and is significant as the oldest hotel, and oldest operating business, in Maffra. Gibney himself funded the construction of the first bridge across the river in the 1860s as well as the first road in Maffra, and is known to have been a driving force behind the town, purchasing a number of lots in the area himself. Gibney also had a brick kiln 'of 30,000 bricks', which supplied the town during this period, including for the construction of the Maffra Town Hall. The Macalister Hotel served as an important multi-purpose building in the 1860s, holding the Maffra Court of Petty Sessions in the new hall which doubled as assembly rooms, holding a police station and serving as consultant rooms for visiting chemists. The hotel was run by other publicans from 1877 and Gibney retired in 1879. In the 1880s the hotel was patronised by people attending the saleyards on the property. Upon his death in 1899 (in Richmond; he left Maffra following the death of his wife), Gibney was praised as the 'King of Maffra', as the founder of the Macalister Hotel and builder of the bridge. Ernest Luke Martin (publican previously of Cowwarr and Briagolong) purchased the hotel in 1922, and carried out the Interwar additions to the hotel, comprising the rendered brick facade and parapet which was added to the existing hotel. A column in the *Gippsland Times*, titled 'Back to Maffra' dated 1925, discussed the town's earliest buildings. It stated that 'the oldest house in the town, except portion of Martin's Hotel, is that owned by Mrs W. Hunt which was built by the late John Ahston'. This suggests that in 1925, after the additions had been constructed at Martin's Macalister Hotel, original parts of the hotel that dated to the 1860s remained (an internal inspection is required to confirm). The hotel is significant for its association with James Gibney, a pioneer of Maffra. The hotel is significant for its continual use as a hotel, serving the local community for over 150 years. (Criteria A, G & H)

The Macalister Hotel **is aesthetically significant at a local level** as a Victorian building built c1863, with an intact Interwar facade in the Free Classical style with highly decorative Victorian Egyptian influences. Any fabric to the exterior or interior of the hotel dating to c1863 is significant. The significant architectural elements of the Interwar period include the rendered brick envelope and incontinuous parapet to the facade, and their details. The Free Classical style is evident in the central parapet, parapets to the corners of the building (which imitate the detail of the central parapet) and urns on the roofline. The ornate central parapet reads 'Martin's Macalister Hotel 1922' in relief and retains to 'fruit bowls' to the top. The verandah has a skillion-profile roof and is supported by stop-chamfered timber posts on large tapered piers (in the shape of a battered pylon, reflecting the

Egyptian style) with dentils to the cap and panels of rough-cast render to the sides. The facade has a rendered plinth, smooth render to the bottom quarter of the walls and rough-cast render to the top of the wall. The openings to the facade are highly ornate and vary in detail, reflecting an Egyptian stylistic influence. The numerous windows are one-over-one sash windows and have a rendered lintel, sill (supported by brackets) and vermiculation to the sides. The main entrance has a rendered lintel, a bold keystone with vermiculation and tapered sides with a vertical line of red glazed tiles. Other entrances have a surround with a rendered lintel which extends to the sides in large lobed pattern at the base. The entrances retain their timber ledged and framed doors with glazing to the top third, and highlights above. The hotel is aesthetically significant as a landmark historic building on Johnson Street at the northern entrance to Maffra. (Criterion E)

## Statutory Recommendations

This place is recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Wellington Shire Planning Scheme to the extent of the title boundary as shown on the map.

<b>External Paint Controls</b>	Yes
<b>Internal Alteration Controls</b>	Yes, to c1863 fabric
<b>Tree Controls</b>	No
<b>Outbuildings or fences which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3</b>	No
<b>Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted</b>	No
<b>Incorporated Plan</b>	No
<b>Aboriginal Heritage Place</b>	Not assessed

## Map of recommended boundary for Heritage Overlay



### KEY

- Recommended for Heritage Overlay
- Title boundary

**Macalister Hotel**  
**2 Johnson St, Maffra**

Project: Wellington Shire Stage 2 Heritage Study  
Client: Wellington Shire Council  
Author: Heritage Intelligence Pty Ltd  
Date: 12/2/16

## History

### Locality history

The first Europeans known to have reached this part of Gippsland was Angus McMillan and his party in January 1840, when they reached the Macalister River, downstream from the current town of Maffra. In 1842, New South Wales squatter Lachlan Macalister established the Boisdale Run in the region. Macalister may have named a sheep fold on the run 'Maffra' after one of Macalister's properties in New South Wales (which was named after a town in Portugal). In 1845, 640 acres of the Boisdale Run was designated as a Native Police Reserve, located in what was referred to as 'Green Hills' at the time. These 640 acres would become the site of the Maffra township (MDHS web).

With the discovery of gold in the hills to the north-west, travellers would cross the Macalister River in Green Hills. In 1862 Job Dan built a punt across the Macalister River at this point and the following year, in 1863, the Avon Roads Board surveyed a town at the crossing, which was named Maffra after Macalister's sheep fold. The town of Maffra was gazetted in 1864 (MDHS web). By 1866 the town had two hotels, a bakery, butchers, post office, blacksmith, two stores and a bridge (MDHS web; Fletcher & Kennett 2005:68). Avon District Roads Board was formed in 1864 and proclaimed a Shire in 1865, with Stratford serving as the administrative centre (Context 2005:38). The first selectors in the area grew wheat, oats and barley, but with the improvements in transport, selectors changed their focus to the beet growing and dairying (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:68).

The town's population grew from the late 1860s, with the establishment of churches, a school, and the national bank, with further commercial growth from the 1870s. Soon the town comprised a new hotel, more substantial churches replacing the earlier timber buildings, a newspaper, post office, two cheese factories and a flour mill (MDHS web; Fletcher & Kennett 2005:68-9). By the 1870s, Maffra and the surrounding district had prospered and councillors exerted pressure to move the seat of government to Maffra. This was achieved briefly from 1873 to 1874, before Maffra formed its own Shire in 1875. A courthouse and the railway station opened in Maffra in 1887; the latter ended the region's isolation, significantly shortening the travel time to Melbourne. It also stimulated industries, with cattle and dairy products sent to the Melbourne markets from Maffra (Context 2005:38, 29).

By 1903, Maffra had a National, Commercial and Victoria Bank, along with the Metropolitan, Maffra and Macalister hotels. The town also comprised State School No. 861, the Shire hall, a courthouse and Mechanics Institute at this date. While the four churches built by this date were the Anglican, Presbyterian, Wesleyan and Catholic. Maffra had become a 'great centre of the Gippsland cattle trade' in the northern part of the Shire, with cattleyards operated by three auction firms. In 1903, the beet sugar industry was 'being experimented with by the State Government' (*Australian handbook* 1903).

From 1897 the new venture of beet growing had begun in Maffra, which had a lasting effect on the town's economy. Standing on the outskirts of Maffra near the railway station are the remains of the Maffra sugar beet factory, the only beet sugar factory to operate in the southern hemisphere. The Maffra Sugar Company was formed by local landowners in 1896, and a factory built near the railway station, opening in 1898, the same date as the Commercial Bank was opened. It commenced manufacturing sugar from sugar beet, a root crop grown in temperate climates. However, the factory was closed in 1899 after its second season, to be reopened again by the Department of Agriculture in 1910. In the early twentieth century, the growing of beet sugar became important. To stimulate beet production, further government investment was expended on buying part of the Boisdale Estate and subdividing it into small closer settlement allotments where farmers were required to grow 10 acres of beet. However, with the rise of the local dairying industry, shortage of labour, high wage demands and increasing food prices, the beet industry declined and the factory closed in 1948. Still standing on the factory site is the large brick sugar store designed by Maffra architect Steve Ashton in 1922. The

factory's office and weigh station have been moved to Apex Park and are now the home of the Maffra Sugar Beet Museum (Context 2005:13-14).

The Maffra Sale area grew to become a major cheese-producing region in Victoria, with private operators and companies operating in the region. Subdivision of large estates in the Maffra Sale area also increased dairy production. The private subdivision of the Boisdale Estate in the 1890s inevitably created dairy farms, while the government closer settlement and soldier settlement schemes further increased the number of dairy farms. A series of milk factories were built near the railway station in Maffra, including Nestles, the Commonwealth Milk Factory and the Maffco Factory. Of particular note is the Commonwealth Milk Factory designed by Steve Ashton and completed in 1922 (Context 2005:12). After a series of takeovers, in 2015 there is now one large factory in Maffra, Murray Goulburn (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:68).

In the twentieth century, the town of Maffra was firmly established as the administrative, commercial and social centre of an agricultural and pastoral district. Dairying was widespread in the shire, facilitated by water for irrigation supplied from Glenmaggie Reservoir on the Macalister River. In 1994, Wellington Shire was created by the amalgamation of the former Shires of Alberton, Avon and Maffra, the former City of Sale, most of the former Shire of Rosedale, as well as an area near Dargo which was formerly part of Bairnsdale Shire (Context 2005:39).

## Thematic context

This place is associated with the following themes from the *Wellington Shire Thematic History* (2005):

### 9. Developing cultural Institutions and Way of Life

Hotels were often one of the first buildings erected in a new settlement, as the social centre for the growing community, as a resting place on a coaching route and in the northern part of the Shire, en route to the goldfields. They provided lodgings and stables for travellers and before the establishment of public, commercial and government buildings, the rooms could also serve as meeting rooms for local groups, public meetings and travelling doctors who periodically tended the community.

Some of the earliest remaining hotels in the study area are the Exchange Hotel, Rosedale (c1863), Macalister Hotel in Maffra (c1863, 1922 additions), Railway Hotel in Heyfield (1885, 1940 additions) and Briagolong Hotel (1874; altered). Later hotels appeared once the towns were further established and provided competition to the earlier hotels, such as the Maffra Hotel (1900). In the twentieth century, earlier buildings were replaced, or re-built due to fires, such as the Tinamba Hotel (1924), Cricket Club Hotel in Cowwarr (1929), and Commercial Hotel in Heyfield (1930). The hotels continue to serve as social and entertainment venues for the present communities.

## Place history

The Macalister Hotel was built c1863 for James Gibney on the current site and is the oldest hotel, and oldest operating business, in Maffra. While a 1925 newspaper article reported that the first hotel in Maffra was built by James Gibney in 1862 (*Gippsland Times*, 23 Nov 1925:3), other histories state that Gibney first set up a tent as a hotel in 1862, when Job Dan built and operated a punt across the Macalister River (Pearce 1991:6; MFDH website). A history dating to 1888 stated that Gibney built the Macalister Hotel in 1863 (Leavitt 1888:53) and by September 1864, a local newspaper advertised that Maffra and Tinamba election meetings were held at Gibney's Hotel (*Gippsland Times*, 23 Sep 1864:3; 30 Sep 1864:3). In 1865 and 1866, the hotel was referred to as 'Mr Gibney's Hotel', the 'Macalister Hotel' or 'Macalister Bridge Hotel' (*Gippsland Times*, 7 Jun 1866:3; 8 Nov 1865:2; 28 Oct 1865).

Gibney built the bridge across the river in the 1860s (an enterprise of his own and at his own expense) as well as the first road in Maffra, and is known as a driving force behind the town (Pearce 1991:6; Context 2005; MDHS). In 1867, the bridge was referred to as 'Gibney's Bridge' (*Gippsland Times*, 10 Oct 1867:3). Gibney also had a brick kiln 'of 30,000 bricks', which supplied the town during this

period, including for the construction of the Maffra Town Hall (1873) (*Maffra Spectator*, 24 May 1920:3; MDHS). From May 1865, Gibney placed the following advertisement: 'Macalister Bridge Hotel, Maffra. J. Gibney begs to inform the public that the road from the Macalister Bridge to the Bald Hill and Donnelly's Creek, is now open for traffic. Mr Gibney's House at the bridge contains ample room for packers and others who may travel that way, and is well stocked with wines and spirits of first rate quality. Good paddocks well grassed and supplied with abundance of water' (*Gippsland Times*, 13 May 1865:1). By 1866, Maffra had two hotels (MDHS website).

It wasn't until November 1866 that James Gibney became the official owner of the three acre lot (lot 1, section 3, Township of Maffra) bound by Johnson, Gibney, Duke and River streets from the Crown (Township Plan; LV:V209/F730). Gibney also purchased a number of lots (approx. 15) east of the river in the 1860s (Township Plan). Gibney Street is named after the early land owner.

In July 1867, Gibney sold the land to Thomas Logue, a saddler, who sold it to George J. Crockett, Stratford saddler, in December 1867 (LV:V235/F842; V259/F624). However, it appears that Gibney continued to occupy the hotel.

The hotel appeared to have operated as an important multi-purpose building in the town. In 1868, Maffra Court of Petty Sessions was established in the new hall of the Macalister Hotel that was 'lately erected' and doubled as assembly rooms. A new police station also established at the hotel (MDHS). Appearing to refer to the newly constructed hall, an article on 6 June 1868 reported that 'a few days ago Mr Gibney celebrated the opening of his new hotel by a farmers' grand ball and supper, which was extensively patronised' (*Gippsland Times*, 6 Jun 1868:2). In 1869, Robert Shanklin, consulting chemist, could be consulted at Gibney's Hotel in Maffra on a weekly basis (*Gippsland Times*, 16 Nov 1869:4).

Crockett subdivided off a portion of the property (fronting Johnson Street) but sold the remainder (including the hotel) back to Margaret Gibney, 'wife of James Gibney' licensed victualler of Maffra, in November 1871. At this date the land totalled just over 2.75 acres. In the 1870s, the Gibneys subdivided and on-sold lots to the east, fronting Johnson Street (LV:V259/F624; V456/F125). From 1877, the hotel was run by John McDonald from 1877, W. A. Lee from 1879, Timothy O'Sullivan from 1880 and John McDonald again from 1882, followed by William Kiss to 1884, followed by his daughter, who also resided at the hotel (MDHS; *Maffra Spectator*, 29 Sep 1884, as cited by MDHS).

James Gibney had retired in 1879 (Leavitt 1888:53). The Gibneys leased the eastern portion of the land to Angus and Allen McLean from 1879. In 1886, the eastern portion of the land was transferred to Allen and Angus McLean, who ran cattle and horse saleyards on the property (LV:V1379/F627; V1442/F383; MDHS). People attending the sales would often be accommodated at the hotel (MDHS). In November 1886, the hotel was sold to George Millett, Maffra publican. At this date the property was just under 1.25 acres in size; the eastern boundary was just east of the hotel (LV:V1442/F383; LV:V1872/F278). The hotel continued to be run by various licensees (MDHS).

James Gibney died in December 1899 in Richmond. The *Maffra Spectator* (28 Dec 1899:3) reported that his 'pseudonym "King of Maffra" was in every way applicable ... He was the founder of the Macalister Hotel in the early days ; he built at this own expense the bridge spanning the Macalister River ; he was the mainstay of the church in connection with the Roman Catholic religion'. He had previously left Maffra after the death of his wife.

In July 1903, the hotel and property were sold to Michael Courtney, Maffra Licensed Victualler, who also ran the hotel for a short period. Benjamin Charles Martin, Maffra Licensed Victualler (late of the Orient Hotel, Warragul), leased the property from July 1905, before purchasing it in June 1909 (LV:V1872/F278; MDHS). Thomas Henry Thorne, Shepparton farmer, was the owner of the hotel from October 1918 and in 1920, 'H. Thorne's Macalister Hotel' was advertised in the *Maffra Spectator* (23 Sep 1920:2; LV:V1872/F278).

Thorne sold the hotel and land (totalling just over one acre at this date) to Ernest Luke Martin in December 1922 (LV:V4395/F929). The license for the Macalister Hotel was transferred from Eleanor Thorne to Ernest Luke Martin in the same month (*Gippsland Times*, 11 Dec 1922:3). Prior to this, E. L. Martin had owned the Briagolong Hotel (*Gippsland Times*, 8 Dec 1921:3). The parapet of the existing hotel reads ‘Martin’s Macalister Hotel 1922’, which indicates that the major Interwar re-development of the hotel was carried out by Martin at this date, soon after he purchased it.

Throughout the 1920s, Martin ‘late of Briagolong and Cowwarr’ placed many ads in local newspapers advertising that the Macalister Hotel was under new management. The hotel had the best brands of wines and spirits, the best meals in Gippsland, everything ‘up-to-date’ and ‘decent’. It also included the description ‘facade plastered’, which indicates that the new facade was complete by this date. The earliest ad of this kind found dated to 18 August 1924 (*Gippsland Times*, 18 Aug 1924:2; 13 Dec 1928:5).

A column in the *Gippsland Times*, titled ‘Back to Maffra’ dated to 1925, discussed the town’s earliest buildings. It stated that ‘the oldest house in the town, except portion of Martin’s Hotel, is that owned by Mrs W. Hunt which was built by the late John Ashton’. This suggests that in 1925, after the additions had been constructed at Martin’s Macalister Hotel, original parts of the hotel that dated to the 1860s remained (*Gippsland Times*, 23 Nov 1925:3). An internal inspection is required to determine which early sections remain, but it is likely to include the gable-roofed building visible above the parapet, and just behind the 1922 new facade.

E. L. Martin, licensee of the Macalister Hotel, Maffra, died in December 1929 (*Argus*, 2 Dec 1929:20). The hotel was transferred to his executors Alexander McAdam, timber merchant, and Alfred D. Matthew, law clerk, in November 1929. In June 1936 the hotel was sold to William T. R. Winter, Maffra hotelkeeper. However, one year later it was sold to Ann Martin, Maffra hotelkeeper in June 1937. Ann Martin remained the owner until June 1945 (LV:V4655/F840).

A photo dating to c1930s (Figure H1) showed the facade and west elevation of the hotel (MDHS). The facade comprised the parapet with the central pediment. Behind the pediment, the gabled-end of the eastern portion of the building was evident; this gable and hipped roofed building (made of early brick?) behind the 1922 plastered facade is likely to be part of the 1863 building. The skillion-roofed verandah was supported by timber posts and piers (as remain in 2015); the verandah was only supported by ten posts at this date (7 to the right of the central entrance and 3 to the left); a weatherboard room projected from the facade at the west end. In 2015, this far west end of the facade does not have any openings. The rendered facade and parapet continued behind this timber room and onto the west elevation (one-room deep). Linear mouldings and details could be seen on the render below the parapet, above the square-headed window. The west elevation comprised a weatherboard building towards the rear (north; since replaced with a brick building). It appears that further outbuildings were located to the north.

A sewerage map dating to 1938-9 (Figure H2) showed the footprint of the hotel and outbuildings at this date (MDHS). The hotel had a u-shaped plan at the west end (opening to the north, since removed), with two small verandahs on the north elevation. A cellar was located under the centre of the building near the front. The verandah to the facade met the weatherboard building at the west end. To the rear of the hotel were two small weatherboard outbuildings (probably water closets) and two long weatherboard buildings along the north and west boundaries, possibly stables.

The McCrae’s owned the hotel from 1945. In 1948 the McCrae’s, hotelkeepers, purchased and consolidated the lot to the east (fronting Johnson Street). 1962, they purchased (and consolidated) the lot to the north on the corner of Duke and River streets (since subdivided again) (LV:V4655/F840).

A photo dating pre-1965 (exact date not known, taken before the 1965 aerial) showed the facade of the hotel, with the small weatherboard room at the west end of the facade (Figure H3). A sign erected on the verandah read ‘Macrae’s Macalister Hotel’ and a tall ‘Hotel’ sign was stood behind the parapet. The openings underneath the verandah were clearly evident (as appear in 2015; three windows were

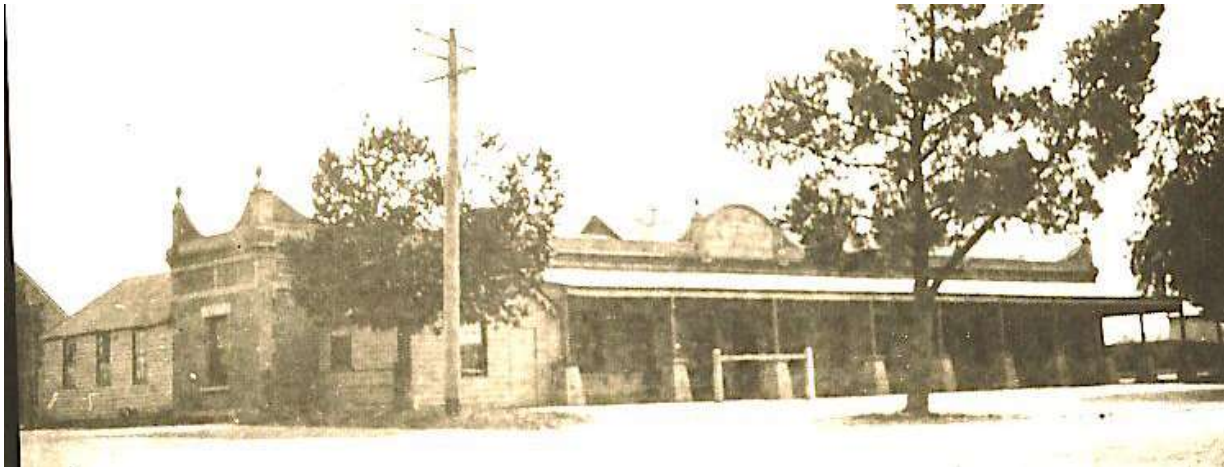
located to the left of the main central entrance, however, the two additional openings may have been out of view, behind the weatherboard room). The pre-1965 photo showed rendered quoining on the facade directly below the gabled-end behind the parapet, marking the end of the eastern section of the building. The eastern section of the hotel may be part of the early section of the building (however this would need to be confirmed with an internal inspection). Similar quoining also appeared to the right of the entrance at the east end (for aesthetic balance or to cover another join in the building) and at the corners of the facade (these rendered quoins remain in 2015) (MDHS).

An aerial photo dating to 1965 (Figure H4) showed the extent of the hotel at this date (MDHS). The long narrow section that forms the east end of the hotel remained. The u-shaped portion of the hotel at the west end had been replaced by a large hipped-roof section that extended to the north (as remains in 2015). The small timber building at the west end of the facade had been removed by 1965.

A photo dating to 1979 (Figure H5) showed that the facade without the weatherboard room at the west end of the facade and the verandah that now continued the full length, supported by similar posts and piers (SLV).

After 1965, additions have been built onto the rear (north) of the hotel. In 2015, outbuildings are located to the north of the hotel on the east boundary. A modern flat-roofed residence of located immediately east of the hotel.

In 2015, the building serves as the Macalister Hotel. The parapet bears the words 'Martin's Macalister Hotel 1922'.



**Figure H1. A photo dating to c1930s that showed the facade and west elevation of the hotel (MDHS, ID. P03709VMFF). The facade comprised the parapet with the central pediment. Behind the pediment, the gabled-end of the eastern portion of the building was evident; this gable and hipped roofed building (made of early brick?) behind the 1922 plastered façade is likely to be part of the 1863 building.**

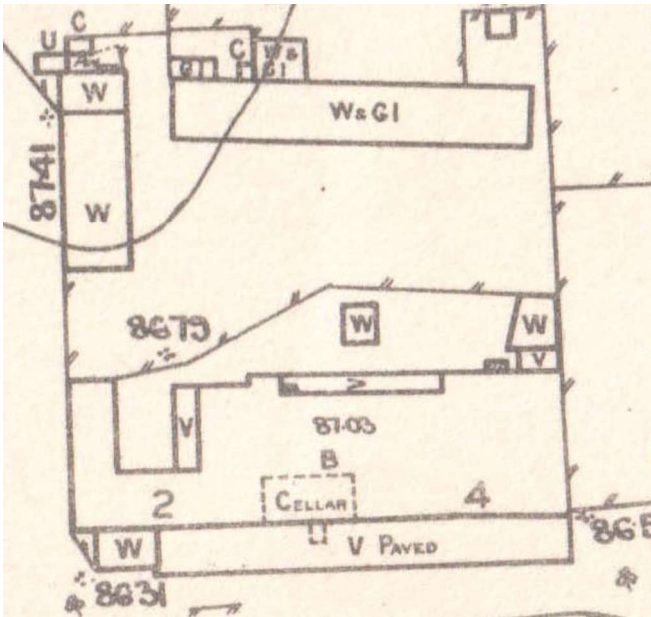


Figure H2. The sewerage map dating to 1938-39 shows the footprint of the hotel and outbuildings at this date. The hotel had a u-shaped plan at the west end (opening to the north), with two small verandahs on the north elevation, a cellar and front paved verandah (MDHS).



Figure H3. A pre-1965 photo. The facade of the hotel, with the small weatherboard room at the west end of the facade is visible. A sign erected on the verandah read 'Macrae's Macalister Hotel' and a tall 'Hotel' sign was stood behind the parapet. The gable and hipped roofed building behind the 1922 new plaster on the façade is likely to be part of the 1863 building (MDHS, ID. P03710VMFF).



**Figure H4.** A 1965 aerial that shows the extent of the hotel at this date. The u-shaped portion of the hotel at the west end had been replaced by a large hipped-roof section that extended to the north (as remains in 2015). The small timber building at the west end of the facade had been removed by 1965 (MDHS).



**Figure H5.** This 1979 photo showed the facade without the weatherboard room at the west end and the verandah that now continued, supported by similar posts and piers (SLV).

### Sources

*Australian handbook* (1903), as cited in Victorian Places 'Maffra', <<http://www.victorianplaces.com.au/maffra>>, accessed Feb 2016.

Context Pty Ltd (2005), *Wellington Shire Heritage Study & Thematic Environmental History*, prepared for Wellington Shire Council.

Fletcher, Meredith & Linda Kennett (2005), *Wellington Landscapes, History and Heritage in a Gippsland Shire*, Maffra.

*Gippsland Times*

Land Victoria (LV), Certificates of Title, as cited above.

Leavitt, T. W. H (Editor) (1888), *The Jubilee history of Victoria and Melbourne, illustrated*, Melbourne. As cited by the Maffra & District Historical Society.

Maffra & District Historical Society (MDHS) collection: historical information and photos generously provided by Linda Barraclough, Pauline Hitchins & Carol Kitchenn, provided Nov 2015. Including the website, 'Maffra Township History' <<http://www.maffra.net.au/heritage/histown.htm>>, accessed 11 Jan 2016.

*Maffra Spectator*

*The Argus*

Township of Maffra Plan

## Description

This section describes the place in 2016. Refer to the Place History for additional important details describing historical changes in the physical fabric.

The first part of the Macalister Hotel was built c1863, with large additions built at later stages. The new render to the brick facade and parapet was added to the Victorian building in 1922 during the Interwar period. Overall, the Interwar facade is Free Classical in style, but has details reflecting an Egyptian influence, which was more typical of the earlier Victorian period. The hotel is sited on the north side of Johnson Street on the corner of Johnson and River streets, adjacent to the hotel's namesake, the Macalister River. It is located on the northern extent of the town, where the township was first established. The 1922 facade is in good condition and retains a very high level of integrity.

**Aerial.** The single-storey hotel has a wide symmetrical facade, fronting Johnson Street. The building comprises a long narrow gable and hipped roof section at the south-east end which appears to be the earliest surviving section of the hotel and is likely to be part of the c1863 building (an internal inspection is required to confirm this). At the west end is a large L-shaped section with a hipped roof (built between 1939 and 1965). To the rear of the hotel are a number of more recent additions and outbuildings (dates not confirmed). A modern house is located on the property east of the hotel.

**Figure D1.** The hotel has a long rendered (overpainted) facade (1922), with a parapet that is accentuated at the centre of the facade and at the corners only. A single ornate urn is located on each side of the central parapet, towards the corners. A skillion-profile verandah, with timber cladding to the top of the ends, is supported by timber posts and squat piers. A modern sign is erected on the gabled roof.

**Figure D1 & D2.** The ornate central parapet reads 'Martin's Macalister Hotel 1922' in relief. The parapet retains two 'bowls of fruit' to the ends. The corner parapets imitate this central section in design and detail. Behind the parapet, the gabled-roof of the building behind is evident. Beneath the verandah, this join in the building is marked by a vertical band of smooth rendered quoining. This eastern section of the building is probably the earliest surviving section of the building and may date to c1863 (an internal inspection is required to confirm this). This vertical band of smooth rendered quoining is repeated to the east and on the corners of the facade.

**Figure D3.** The facade has a rendered plinth at the base. The bottom quarter of the wall has smooth render, while the top section of the wall has rough-cast render. Underneath the verandah are horizontal bands or smooth render (the entire facade is overpainted). The openings to the facade are highly ornate and vary in detail, reflecting the Egyptian stylistic influence. The windows have a rendered lintel, sill (supported by brackets) and vermiculation to the sides. The numerous windows to the facade are one-over one sash windows.

The verandah is supported by stop-chamfered timber posts on large tapered piers (in the shape of a battered pylon, reflecting the Egyptian style) with dentils to the cap and panels of rough-cast render to the sides. The verandah floor is modern concrete. Modern signs hang from beneath the verandah.

**Figure D4.** The surrounds to the doors of the facade are varied and elaborate. The main entrance has an Egyptian styled entrance comprising a rendered lintel, a bold keystone with vermiculation and tapered sides with a vertical line of red glazed tiles. Other entrances have a surround with a rendered lintel which extends to the sides in large lobed pattern at the base.

The doors are timber ledged and framed doors with glazing to the top third, with highlights above.

**Figure D5.** The 1922 facade continues on the west elevation to the width of one bay, where the parapet is again accentuated above. This side elevation has a single one-over one sash window. The post-1939 brick addition extends to the north.



**Figure D1.** The hotel has a long rendered (overpainted) facade (1922), with a parapet that is accentuated at the centre of the facade and at the corners only. A single ornate urn is located on each side of the central parapet, towards the corners. A skillion-profile verandah, with timber cladding to the top of the ends, is supported by timber posts and squat piers.



Figure D2. The ornate central parapet read's 'Martin's Macalister Hotel 1922' in relief. Behind the parapet, the gabled-roof of the (possibly c1863) building behind is evident. Beneath the verandah, this join in the building is marked by a vertical band of smooth rendered quoining.



Figure D3. The facade has a rendered plinth at the base. The bottom quarter of the wall has smooth render, while the top section of the wall has rough-cast render. The verandah is supported by stop-chamfered timber posts on large tapered piers (in the shape of a battered pylon, reflecting

the Egyptian style).



Figure D4. The surrounds to the doors of the facade are varied and elaborate. The main entrance has an Egyptian styled entrance comprising a rendered lintel, a bold keystone with vermiculation and tapered sides with a vertical line of red glazed tiles. Other entrances have a surround with a rendered lintel which extends to the sides in large lobed pattern at the base.



Figure D5. The 1922 facade continues on the west elevation to the width of one bay, where the parapet is again accentuated above. The post-1939 brick addition extends to the north.

## Sources

All photos taken in 2015 by Heritage Intelligence Pty Ltd as part of Wellington Shire Stage 2 Heritage Study.

## Comparative Analysis

Macalister Hotel, 2 Johnson Street, Maffra – c1863 Victorian single-storey building with a new rendered façade built in 1922 in the Free Classical style with Egyptian Revival influences in the decoration to the openings. A highly intact Interwar façade that probably retains remnants of the original c1863 building (at least the roof form) which was the first hotel in Maffra. It is a landmark building at the northern entrance to Maffra. Recommended for the Heritage Overlay as part of this Study.

Comparable places:

Railway Hotel, Heyfield – c1885 single-storey timber Victorian hotel with a new rendered brick facade built in 1940 in the Free Classical style. The Interwar facade is highly intact with the original roof forms and earlier timber elevations evident at the rear of the building. It is a dominant single-storey building on a corner lot addressing two streets. Recommended for the Heritage Overlay as part of this Study.

Rosedale Hotel, 29-31 Lyons St, Rosedale – built as a single-storey building in 1858 with additions dating to 1927. It is a two-storey brick construction with a facade, roof form and parapet that dates to the Interwar period. It is significant as an important early hotel complex in Gippsland, for its association with builder William Allen (and others), for the plan of the complex, and for its contribution to the townscape. Retains the 1858 stables and a two-storey kitchen and staff quarters built 1863. (VHR H645)

Ship Inn Hotel (former) & Cordyline tree, 73 Tarraville Rd, Port Albert – c1856 intact single-storey weatherboard hotel with timber shingle roof below the later corrugated iron roof. It is significant as the oldest hotel building in Port Albert and among the early hotels in Gippsland, and for its historical associations. (HO135)

Latrobe Hotel (former), 511 Raymond St, Sale – a small Victorian single-storey brick building (1900). Every window and door opening has been filled in, thus presenting a blank rendered and painted wall to the street which has compromised the integrity of the front elevation of the building. The existing citation for this building states that it is significant as a rare example of an early hotel unusually located in a residential area of Sale, as a hostel later run by the Church of England and as an important landmark building. (HO185)

Commercial Hotel (former), 20 Reeve St, Tarraville – c1854 double-fronted timber building of a residential scale with a high-hipped roof. It is significant as one of the oldest hotels in Gippsland, for its integrity, and as a remnant of the commercial strip on Reeve Street. The verandah has been largely in-filled on at least two elevations, including the façade but this is easily reversible. (HO40).

## Management Guidelines

Whilst landowners are not obliged to undertake restoration works, these guidelines provide recommendations to facilitate the retention and enhancement of the culturally significant place, its fabric and its setting, when restoration works or alterations to the building are proposed. They also identify issues particular to the place and provide further detailed advice where relevant. The guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive and a pragmatic approach will be taken when considering development proposals. Alternative approaches to those specified in the guidelines will be considered where it can be demonstrated that a desirable development outcome can be achieved

that does not impact on a place's heritage integrity.

This building is in good condition and well maintained, however, there are some recommendations below especially relating to damp, sub floor ventilation, down pipe outlets into drainage pits, and the concrete verandah floor and some guidelines for future development and heritage enhancement.

## 1. **Setting** (views, fencing, landscaping, paths, trees, streetscape)

- 1.1. Retain clear views of the front section and side elevations from Johnson Street and from the bridge crossing the Macalister River.
- 1.2. Ensure signs and services such as power poles, bus shelters, signs, etc are located so that they do not impact on the important views.
- 1.3. New interpretation storyboards should be placed to the side of the building not directly in front of it.
- 1.4. Paving
  - 1.4.1. For Victorian and Interwar era historic buildings, appropriate paving could be pressed granitic sand, or asphalt. If concrete is selected, a surface with sand-coloured-size exposed aggregate would be better with the historic building.
  - 1.4.2. Ensure the asphalt or concrete does not adhere to the building itself. Insert 10mm x 10mm grey polyurethane seal over a zipped Ableflex joint filler around the plinth, to ensure concrete does not adhere to it, and to allow expansion and joint movement and prevent water from seeping below the building.

## 2. **Additions and New Structures**

- 2.1. New structures should be restricted to the rear of the property as shown in the blue polygon on the aerial map below.
- 2.2. Sympathetic extensions are preferred. E.g. New parts that are in the same view lines as the historic building as seen from Johnson Street, should be parallel and perpendicular to the existing building, no higher than the existing building, with similar proportions, height, wall colours, steep gable or hip roofs, and with rectangular timber framed windows with a vertical axis. But the parts that are not visible in those views could be of any design, colours and materials.
- 2.3. Where possible, make changes that are easily reversible. E.g. The current needs might mean that a doorway in a brick wall is not used, or located where an extension is desired. Rather than bricking up the doorway, frame it up with timber and sheet it over with plaster, weatherboards, etc.
- 2.4. To avoid damage to the brick walls, signs should be attached in such a way that they do not damage the brickwork. Preferably fix them into the mortar rather than the bricks.
- 2.5. If an extension is to have a concrete slab floor, ensure it will not reduce the air flow under the historic brick building.
- 2.6. Avoid hard paths against the walls. Install them 500mm away from the walls and 250mm lower than the ground level inside the building under the floor. Fill the gap between the path and wall with very coarse gravel to allow moisture to evaporate from the base of the wall. See section 7.
- 2.7. New garden beds
  - 2.7.1. These should be a minimum of 500mm from the walls, preferably further, and the ground lowered so that the finished ground level of the garden bed is a minimum of 250mm lower than the ground level which is under the floor, inside the building. Slope the soil and garden bed away from the building, and fill the area between the garden bed and walls with very coarse gravel up to the finished level of the garden bed. The

coarse gravel will have air gaps between the stones which serves the function of allowing moisture at the base of the wall to evaporate, and it visually alerts gardeners and maintenance staff that the graveled space has a purpose. The reason that garden beds are detrimental to the building, is by a combination of: watering around the base of the wall and the ground level naturally building up. The ground level rises, due to mulching and leaf litter and root swelling, above a safe level such that it blocks sub floor ventilation, and the wall is difficult to visually monitor on a day to day basis, due to foliage in the way.

### 3. Accessibility

#### 3.1. Ramps

##### 3.1.1. Removable ramp construction

3.1.1.1. A metal framed ramp which allows air to flow under it, to ensure the subfloor vents of the building are not obstructing good airflow under the floor, which will allow the wall structure to evaporate moisture, reduce termite and rot attack to the subfloor structure and reduce rising damp in brick/stone walls.

3.1.1.2. If it is constructed of concrete next to brick walls this may cause damp problems in the future.

3.1.1.3. Ensure water drains away from the subfloor vents, and walls and any gap between the wall and the ramp remains clear of debris. Insert additional sub floor vents if the ramp has blocked any of them.

3.1.1.4. The hand rails on the ramp should not be a feature, which would detract from the architecture. Plain thin railings painted in the same colour as the walls, so that they blend in, would be appropriate.

3.2. Metal banisters may be installed at the front steps. They are functional and minimalist and they have a minor visual impact on the architecture and therefore they are a suitable design for an accessible addition.

### 4. Reconstruction and Restoration

4.1. If an opportunity arises, consider restoring and reconstructing the following.

#### 4.2. Roofing, spouting and down pipes

4.2.1. Use galvanised corrugated iron roofing, spouting, down pipes and rain heads.

4.2.2. Don't use Zinalume or Colorbond.

4.2.3. Use Ogee profile spouting, and round diameter down pipes.

#### 4.3. Verandah

4.3.1. Demolish the concrete verandah floor, lower the ground level and reconstruct a new timber one on concrete stumps and steel or timber sub floor structure (see section 7 below for more details).

### 5. Brick and Render Walls

5.1. Mortar: Match the lime mortar, do not use cement mortar. Traditional mortar mixes were commonly 1:3 lime:sand.

#### 5.2. Paint and Colours (also see Paint Colours and Paint Removal)

5.2.1. It is recommended to paint the exterior of the building joinery using original colours (paint scrapes may reveal the colours) to enhance the historic architecture and character.

5.2.2. Note, even though some paints claim to 'breathe', there are no paints available, that adequately allow the walls to 'breathe'.

5.2.3. Paint removal: It is recommended that the paint be removed chemically (never sand,

water or soda blast the building as this will permanently damage the bricks, mortar and render. Never seal the bricks or render as that will create perpetual damp problems). Removal of the paint will not only restore the elegance of the architecture, but it will remove the ongoing costs of repainting it every 10 or so years.

- 5.2.4. However, if it is decided to repaint the render, it should closely resemble the light grey colour of 'new render'.
- 5.3. Remove any dark grey patches to the mortar joints - this is cement mortar which will damage the bricks, as noted above, and reduce the longevity of the walls. Repoint those joints with lime mortar. The mortar is not the problem it is the messenger, alerting you to a damp problem (also see Water Damage and Damp)
- 5.4. Modern products: Do not use modern products on these historic brick and render as they will cause expensive damage. Use lime mortar to match existing.
- 5.5. **Do not seal** the brick and render with modern sealants or with paint. Solid masonry buildings **must be able to evaporate water** when water enters from leaking roofs, pipes, pooling of water, storms, etc. The biggest risk to solid masonry buildings is permanent damage by the use of cleaning materials, painting, and sealing agents and methods. None of the modern products that claim to 'breathe' do this adequately for historic solid masonry buildings.

## 6. Care and Maintenance

- 6.1. Retaining and restoring the heritage fabric is always a preferable heritage outcome than replacing original fabric with new.
- 6.2. Key References
- 6.2.1. Obtain a copy of "Salt Attack and Rising Damp" by David Young (2008), which is a free booklet available for download from Heritage Victoria website. It is in plain English, well illustrated and has very important instructions and should be used by tradesmen, Council maintenance staff and designers.
- 6.2.2. Further assistance is available from the Shire's heritage advisor.
- 6.3. Roofing, spouting and down pipes
- 6.3.1. Use galvanised corrugated iron roofing, spouting, down pipes and rain heads. It is preferable to use short sheet corrugated iron and lap them, rather than single long sheets, but it is not essential.
- 6.3.2. Do not use Zinalume or Colorbond.
- 6.3.3. Use Ogee profile spouting, and round diameter down pipes.
- 6.4. Joinery
- 6.4.1. It is important to repair rather than replace where possible, as this retains the historic fabric. This may involve cutting out rotten timber and splicing in new timber, which is a better heritage outcome than complete replacement.
- 6.4.2. The original external timber doors and windows require careful repair and painting.

## 7. Water Damage and Damp

- 7.1. There are signs of damp in the walls under the verandah, and above plinth level just above the concrete floor.
- 7.2. Signs of damp include: paint bubbling and peeling off, render falling off, moss growing in the mortar, white (salt) powder or crystals on the brickwork, existing patches with grey cement mortar, the timber floor failing, and lime mortar falling out of the joints. These causes of damp are, in most cases, due to simple drainage problems, lack of correct maintenance, inserting the concrete verandah floor next to the solid masonry walls, ( the original floor would have been timber boards on a timber sub floor frame with air circulating underneath,

to allow the brick walls and footing to evaporate moisture from them. With the concrete floor, the water is sucked up the walls above the floor and starts to evaporate at that point. Other causes including sealing the walls with paint, sub floor ventilation blocked, or the ground level too high on the outside. The concrete floor has blocked most sub floor vents completely, although some have about 20% above the concrete.

- 7.3. Always **remove the source** of the water damage **first** (see more details below). It is recommended to remove of all the concrete floor, lowering the ground level, building a new sub floor structure using concrete stumps and timber or steel sub floor to support timber boards. However, it is also possible to cut back a strip along the length of the building, adjacent to the wall. (See D. Young, "Salt Attack and Rising Damp" for more details.)
- 7.4. Water falling, splashing or seeping from damaged spouting and down pipes causes severe and expensive damage to the brick walls.
- 7.5. Repairing damage from damp may involve lowering of the ground outside so that it is lower than the ground level inside under the floor, installation of agricultural drains, running the downpipes into drainage inspection pits instead of straight into the ground. The reason for the pits is that a blocked drain will not be noticed until so much water has seeped in and around the base of the building and damage commenced (which may take weeks or months to be visible), whereas, the pit will immediately fill with water and the problem can be fixed before the floor rots or the building smells musty.
- 7.6. Damp would be exacerbated by watering plants near the walls. Garden beds and bushes should be at least half a metre away from walls.
- 7.7. Cracking: Water will be getting into the structure through the cracks (even hairline cracks in paint) and the source of the problem needs to be remedied before the crack is filled with matching mortar, or in the case of paint on brick, stone or render, the paint should be chemically removed, to allow the wall to breathe properly and not retain the moisture.
- 7.8. Subfloor ventilation is critical. Check that sub floor vents are not blocked and introduce additional ones if necessary. Ensure the exterior ground level is 250mm or more, lower than the ground level inside the building. Good subfloor ventilation works for free, and is therefore very cost effective. Do not rely on fans being inserted under the floor as these are difficult to monitor, they can breakdown as they get clogged with dust, etc, and there are ongoing costs for servicing and electricity.
- 7.9. Engineering: If a structural engineer is required, it is recommended that one experienced with historic buildings and the Burra Charter principle of doing 'as little as possible but as much as necessary', be engaged. Some of them are listed on Heritage Victoria's Directory of Consultants and Contractors.
- 7.10. Never install a concrete floor inside a solid masonry building, as it will, after a year or so, cause long term chronic damp problems in the walls.
- 7.11. Never use cement mortar, always match the original lime mortar. Cement is stronger than the bricks and therefore the bricks will eventually crumble, leaving the cement mortar intact! Lime mortar lasts for hundreds of years. When it starts to powder, it is the 'canary in the mine', alerting you to a damp problem – fix the source of the damp problem and then repoint with lime mortar.
- 7.12. Do not install a new damp proof course (DPC) until the drainage has been fixed, even an expensive DPC may not work unless the ground has been lowered appropriately.

## 8. Paint Colours and Paint Removal

- 8.1. A permit is required if you wish to paint a previously unpainted exterior, and if you wish to change the colours from the existing colours.
- 8.2. Even if the existing colour scheme is not original, or appropriate for that style of architecture, repainting using the existing colours is considered maintenance and no planning permit is

required.

- 8.3. If it is proposed to change the existing colour scheme, a planning permit is required and it would be important to use colours that enhance the architectural style and age of the building.
- 8.4. Rather than repainting, it would be preferred if earlier paint was chemically removed from brick, stone and rendered surfaces, revealing the original finish.
- 8.5. Chemical removal of paint will not damage the surface of the stone, bricks or render or even the delicate vermiculation, hidden under many painted surfaces. Removal of the paint will not only restore the elegance of the architecture, but it will remove the ongoing costs of repainting it every 10 or so years.
- 8.6. Sand, soda or water blasting removes the skilled decorative works of craftsmen as well as the fired surface on bricks and the lime mortar from between the bricks. It is irreversible and reduces the life of the building due to the severe damp that the damage encourages. Never seal the bricks or render as that will create perpetual damp problems.

## 9. Services

- 9.1. Ensure new services and conduits, down pipes etc, are not conspicuous. Locate them at the rear of the building whenever possible, and when that is not practical, paint them the same colour as the building or fabric behind them, or enclose them behind a screen the same colour as the building fabric that also provides adequate ventilation around the device. Therefore, if a conduit goes up a red brick wall, it should be painted red, and when it passes over say, a cream coloured detail, it should be painted cream.

## 10. Signage (including new signage and locations and scale of adjacent advertising signage)

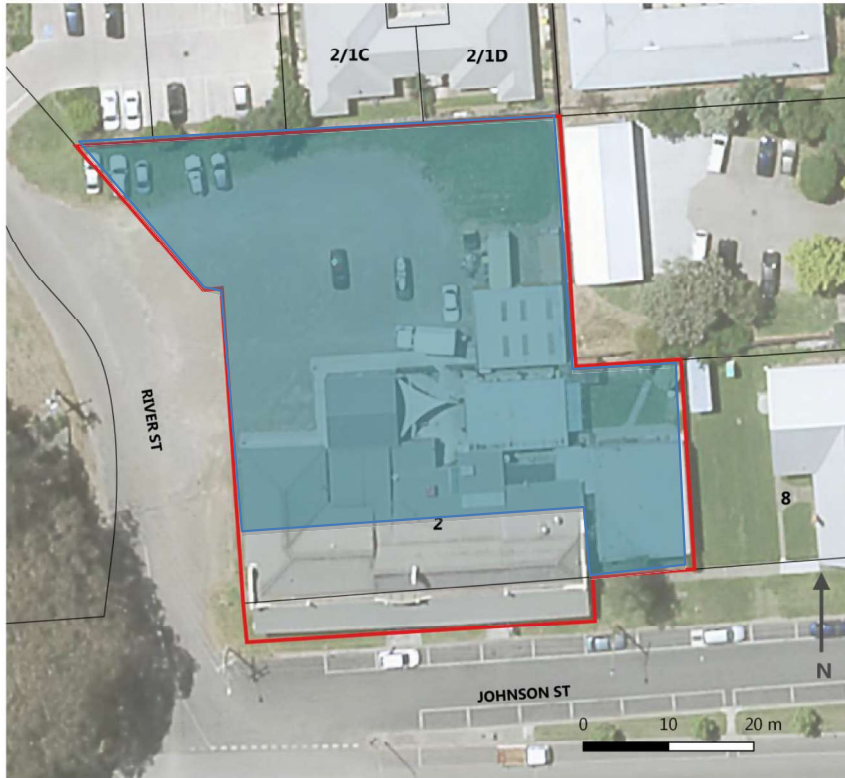
- 10.1. Ensure all signage is designed to fit around the significant architectural design features, not over them.

## Resources

Wellington Shire Heritage Advisor

Young, David (2008), "Salt Attack and Rising Damp, a guide to salt damp in historic and older buildings" Technical Guide, prepared for Heritage Victoria.

NOTE: The blue shaded area is the preferred location for additions and new development.



**KEY**

- Recommended for Heritage Overlay
- Title boundary

**Macalister Hotel**  
**2 Johnson St, Maffra**

Project: Wellington Shire Stage 2 Heritage Study  
Client: Wellington Shire Council  
Author: Heritage Intelligence Pty Ltd  
Date: 12/2/16