

Locality: STRATFORD
Place address: RAILWAY RESERVE ROAD & MCFARLANE STREET
Citation date 2016
Place type (when built): Railway Station, Goods Crane
Recommended heritage protection: Local government level
Local Planning Scheme: Yes
Vic Heritage Register: No
Heritage Inventory (Archaeological): No

Place name: Stratford Railway Station and Crane



Architectural Style: Interwar Arts and Crafts
Designer / Architect: Not known
Construction Date: 1920-21

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?

Stratford Railway Station and Crane on Railway Reserve Road and McFarlane Street, Stratford, are significant. The original form, materials and detailing of the station as constructed in 1920-21 are significant (as is any surviving fabric from the original 1888 station that was re-used). The goods crane at the southern end of the railway reserve is significant.

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

How is it significant?

Stratford Railway Station and Crane are locally significant for their historical, scientific and aesthetic values to the Shire of Wellington.

Why is it significant?

Stratford Railway Station and Crane are **historically significant at a local level** as they illustrate the importance of Stratford as an established commercial and agricultural centre, serving the surrounding farming district, as the main town in the Avon Shire and as the seat of local government (until 1994). The railway ended the region's isolation as it significantly shortened the travelling time to Melbourne and stimulated the local timber, cattle and dairy industries. Built in 1920-21, the interwar station replaced an earlier station (1888), and originally included a goods platform on the opposite side of the tracks. Stratford Railway Station is one of two remaining stations, from the original eight, on this northern line (from Traralgon) that was built in the 1880s. A large timber goods crane was erected to the south of the goods platform (goods platform since removed). The station continued to serve as a public railway station (excluding a period between c1996 and 2004 when the Stratford railway bridge was out of service), while the building is occupied by the local Lion's Club. (Criterion A)

Stratford Railway Station is **aesthetically significant at a local level** as a representative example of an Interwar Arts and Crafts style railway station in the Shire. The elements that reflect the style include the tall brick chimneys and terracotta pot, prominent eaves (timber lined), the treatment to the gabled ends (cement sheet cladding with vertical timber strapping) and the grouped timber supports to the entrance porch (the design originally included jettied timberwork to the gabled ends). The style is also reflected in the window groupings and multi-pane sashes to some windows. The cantilevered awning to the station platform is significant. (Criteria D & E)

Stratford Railway Station is **scientifically significant at a local level** for the early (possibly original) goods crane that remains at the south end of the railway reserve. (Criterion F)

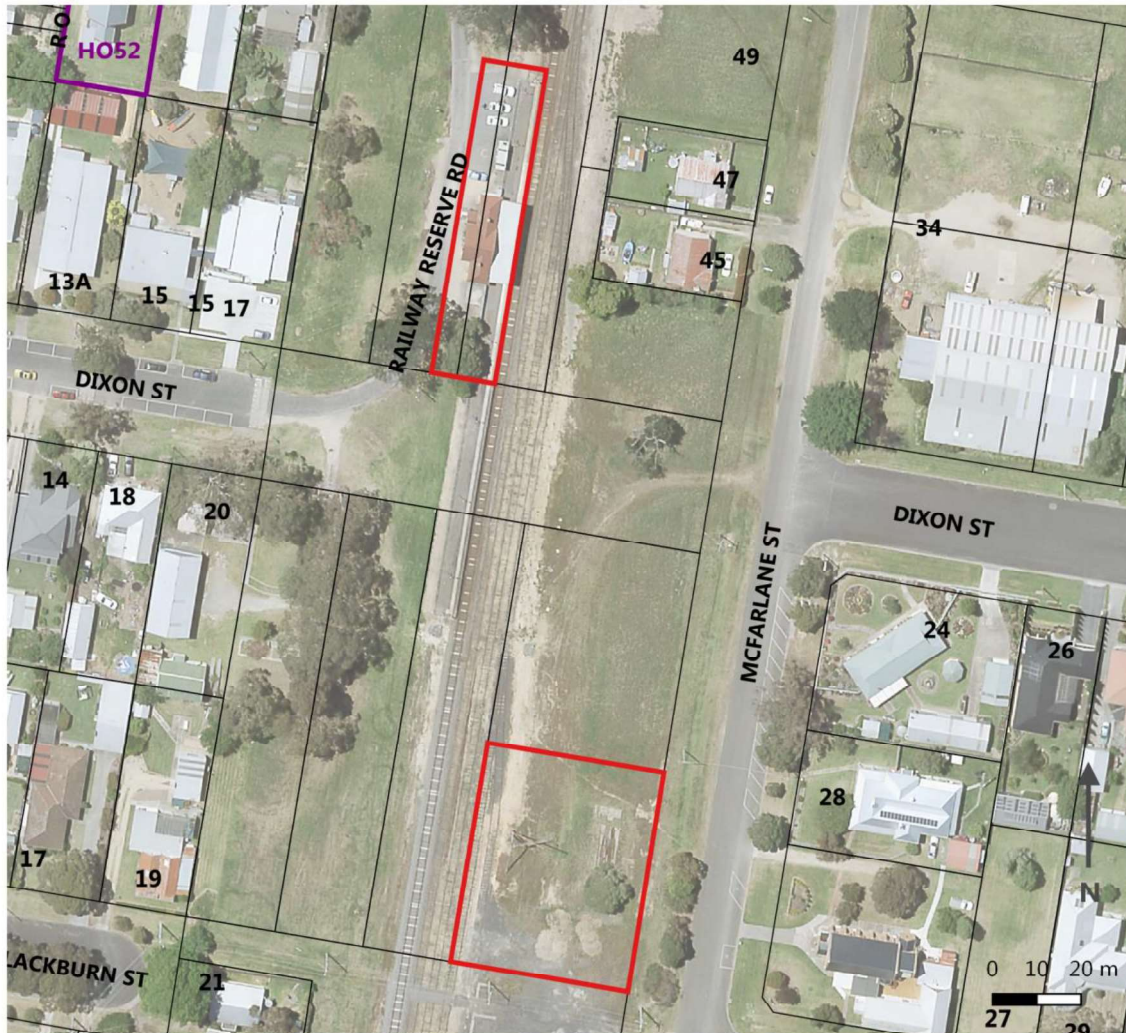
Statutory Recommendations

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




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

Map of recommended boundary for Heritage Overlay

Note: Both polygons are recommended as the boundary for the Heritage Overlay for the Railway Station.



KEY

-  Recommended for Heritage Overlay
-  Existing Heritage Overlay
-  Title boundary

Stratford Railway Station and Crane Railway Reserve Rd & McFarlane St, Stratford

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

History

Locality history

Stratford is located on the east bank of the Avon River. The earliest known Europeans in the area included Angus McMillan and his party, who crossed the Avon River in 1840 and named it after a Scottish River. Following McMillan was Polish explorer Paul Strzelecki and his party, who followed a similar route but headed for Western Port. Strzelecki wrote a very positive report of the Stratford region. Squatters soon settled in the area, the lands serving as pasture for sheep and cattle. In 1842, William O. Raymond established the Stratford Pastoral Run, as well as a run at Strathfieldsaye (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:75). While it is suggested that the run was named after Shakespeare's Stratford-on-Avon (Victorian Places), it is more probable that it was named after the 'Straight Ford' across the Avon River at that point (as opposed to the Long Ford across the river at Weirs Crossing, that was used for a time when the Straight Ford was impassable) (SDHS). By 1844 there were 15,000 cattle in the region, and by 1845 there were 78,399 sheep (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:75; Context 2005:11).

A small settlement developed at the place where the stock route forded the Avon River, which would become Stratford. Raymond opened the Shakespeare Hotel c1847 and other businesses opened, including a blacksmiths, before the town was surveyed in 1854. The first bridge over the Avon River was built, a general store opened, and a tannery and flourmill were established (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:76). During this period, Gippsland cattle were driven south through Stratford to Port Albert for transport to Melbourne and Tasmania (Victorian Places). A Presbyterian church was built in 1857 which also served as the government school. A Catholic school opened with the construction of the first Catholic Church in 1864, before an Anglican Church was built in 1868. In the 1860s the pastoral runs were opened for selection and Stratford became the centre of the farming district. The town further grew with the discovery of gold in the Great Dividing Range, particularly at Crooked River in Grant, when supplies for the goldfields were brought through the town (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:76). In 1864, the Avon District Road Board was formed, and proclaimed a Shire in 1865, with Stratford as the administrative centre (Context 2005:38-9).

By the 1870s, Maffra and district had prospered and councilors exerted pressure to move the seat of government to Maffra. This was achieved briefly from 1873 to 1874, but in 1875 Maffra formed its own shire. Stratford became the main town in the Avon Shire and remained the centre of local government (Context 2005:38-9, 41). In 1884-85 a post office, courthouse and shire offices complex was built. The 1880s also saw the construction of a mechanics' institute and library (1890), and the first timber churches were replaced with brick buildings. The railway line from Melbourne reached Stratford in 1888 (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:76). By 1903, Stratford also had the Swan and Stratford Hotels and the Shakespeare Temperance Hotel, State School No. 596 and four churches (*Australian handbook* 1903). The town saw steady population growth until the beginning of World War I, maintaining a population in the 800s between 1911 and the 1960s (Victorian Places).

After World War I a soldiers' settlement was established on estates in the Avon Shire, however, many of the farms proved unviable and the settlement scheme was not a success. During World War II the district benefited from good wool prices, and a flax mill was opened west of Stratford. The district prospered in the 1950s with a reduced rabbit population and increased primary produce prices (Victorian Places). The Avon River was a narrow river with a wide flood plain and the river flooded rapidly and frequently, with severe floods in the 1930s, 1971 and 1990, which caused extensive damage. Measures to combat erosion were undertaken in the 1940s and the River Improvement Trust was formed in 1951 (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:76). A bridge that could withstand the floods was opened in 1965 (Victorian Places).

Stratford experienced a building boom from the 1970s, following land subdivision which resulted in residential development and an increase in population (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:76). 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). Stratford was no longer an administrative seat, but retained its importance as a central town for the surrounding farm district (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:76). The town has seen a steady population increase in the 2000s (Victorian Places).

Thematic context

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

5. Transport and Communications

- 5.4 Railways

Railway in Gippsland

Construction of the Gippsland railway line to Sale was completed in 1878, and later extended to Bairnsdale. A connecting line (that looped north), from Traralgon to Stratford was built in the 1880s. The railway ended the region's isolation as it significantly shortened the travelling time to Melbourne and stimulated the local timber, cattle and dairy industries. The only stations to remain on this northern line, from the original eight stations, are the Maffra and Stratford stations (Context 2005:29-30).

Place history

The Stratford railway station is located on lot 7 (section 8, Township of Stratford), that was purchased from the Crown in October 1865 by S. Swan. At this date, the lot extended from Hobson to Dixon Street at the south (Township Plan).

The Gippsland railway reached Stratford in 1888 (Victorian Places). The large railway reserve originally allowed for a number of 'sleepers cars' for transient railway workers, with housing for permanent staff built on McFarlane Street (SDHS). The first station building burnt down in January 1920. The fire brigade were able to save 'some buildings not under the same roof' (these do not appear to remain in 2015). The whole of the station, except for the verandah reportedly, was demolished as a result (*Gippsland Times*, 12 Jan 1920:3). This may suggest that the existing awning formed part of the 1888 station building; this has not been confirmed.

A local newspaper article reported in September 1920 that the Chairman of the Railway Commission had informed Mr McLachlan M.L.A. that materials for the new Stratford railway station had been ordered and the work was to commence upon their delivery. At this date, there was a problem obtaining the materials due to a shortage (*Gippsland Times*, 27 Sep 1920:1).

The existing railway station building was built in 1920-21. In February 1921, the *Gippsland Times* (24 Feb 1921:3) reported that the new Stratford railway station was nearing completion. The existing rear window was originally part of the Heyfield Station (Barraclough 2001).

An early photo (date not known; may date to c1930s-50s) showed the existing weatherboard railway station building from the north-east, with its brick chimney and jettied timbers to the gable (since removed) facing the platform (east) (Figures H1A & H1B). The cantilevered awning sits above a wall with five glass windows (now 10 narrower panes in 2015). A doorway was located at the north end (as in 2015). To the north of the building, along the back of the platform, was a tall fence and outbuildings with entrances off the platform (since removed), which continued a distance to the south. Opposite was a goods platform with the gabled-roof goods shed and what appears to be crates on the platform. The large goods crane was located far to the south of this platform (probably its location in 2015).

The railway closed in c1996 and reopened in 2004 (SDHS; Victorian Places). The Sale to Bairnsdale line was closed in a political decision by the Kennett government, and re-opened as part of an

agreement with independent Member for East Gippsland Craig Ingram for his support of the Bracks government. It took some time to happen, as the bridge required repairs (SDHS).

In 2015, the railway building is occupied by the local Lion's Club. A sign 'Lions Den' is located in the gable of the facade, facing Dixon Street. The platform continues to operate as part of VLine railway.

A large timber crane remains at a distance to the south of the station building, within the railway reserve. It is not known if this is an early or original element (probably evident in the c1930s-50s photograph) of the station. A small modern shed is located to the north of the station building.



Figure H1A. An early photo (may date to c1930s-50s) of the station from the north, with the passenger platform on the right with a number of outbuildings lining the platform. On the left is a goods platform and corrugated iron goods shed, and the crane and water tower at a southern location (SDHS).



Figure H1B. A detail of the public platform and station in Figure H1A.

Sources

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

Barraclough, Linda (local historian), personal communication (2001) as cited in Context 2005.

Context Pty Ltd (2005), *Wellington Shire Heritage Study*, and vol 2: '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

Stratford & District Historical Society (SDHS) collection: historical information and photos generously provided by Judy Richards and Linda Barraclough, provided Nov 2015 & May 2016.

Stratford Township Plan

Victorian Places, 'Stratford', <<http://www.victorianplaces.com.au/stratford>>, accessed 23 Dec 2015.

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 Stratford Railway Station was built in 1920-21 during the interwar period and shows Arts and Crafts stylistic influences. The station is located on the east side of Railway Reserve Road, east of the township of Stratford. The 1920-21 station, and the goods crane to the south, are in good condition and retain a medium to high level of integrity.

Figure D1. The weatherboard building has a hipped roof section and large gabled-bays projecting to the east and west. The roof is clad with painted red corrugated metal or Colorbond, and two tall red-brick chimneys remain, with rendered caps; one retains a terracotta pot. The wide eaves are timber-lined and just below eaves level are projecting metal vents. The weatherboard building sits on a rendered plinth (overpainted). The gable to the street (west elevation) has cement sheet cladding with vertical timber strapping and a large rectangular timber slat vent at the peak, typical of the interwar period. A sign 'Lions Den' notes that the building is now occupied by the local Lion's Club. Below the gabled end is a group of three one-over-one double-hung sash windows. To the right of the bay is a small timber-framed window. To the left of the bay is the entrance porch. At the far left of west elevation is a four-over-one double-hung sash window.

Modern VLine signage and lights are attached to the building. Modern balustrades lead to the entrance.

Figure D2. The gabled-roof porch on the west elevation is supported by groups of two or three square posts, with timber brackets and arch typical of the interwar period. Doors within the entrance and walkway are high-waisted timber doors with glazing to the top third.

Figure D3. The platform side of the station (the east elevation) comprises a second gabled end with cement sheeting and vertical timber strapping (an earlier photo showed that this gabled-end originally had a jettied timber valence, see Figure H1B) and vent like the east elevation. A large cantilevered awning with fluted and scalloped metal valances is supported by two large metal trusses and runs the full length of the east elevation; this may have survived from the 1888 train station, but this has not been confirmed. Underneath the awning is a bay of ten windows (originally comprised 5 windows, as evident in the earlier photo, see Figure H1B). The east elevation comprises high-waisted timber doors with glazing to the top third, and timber doors with multi-panes to the top half.

Modern chainwire fences line the platform. A modern building is located to the north of the station, along the platform. Some mature Monterey Pines remain in the larger railway reserve area, but are not good examples of the specimen.

Figure D4. To the south of the railway station on the eastern side of the tracks, within the railway reserve, is a large timber goods crane. It appears to be early in date (confirmation required if this is original to the 1888 or 1920-21 railway station).



Figure D1. The west elevation with the large projecting gabled-bay and entrance porch to the left.



Figure D2. The gabled-roof entrance porch supported by pairs and triples of timber posts, with timber brackets and arch.



Figure D3. The platform (east elevation) of the station with its large metal trusses supporting the cantilevered awning with fluted and scalloped metal valances.



Figure D4. The early goods crane, located to the south of the station in the railway reserve.

Sources

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

Comparative analysis

Stratford Railway Station is one of two remaining stations from the original eight that were constructed on this northern line (from Traralgon), built in the 1880s. However, most of Stratford station building was damaged in a fire in 1920, and so the existing building dates to 1921 and is Arts and Crafts in style. Stratford station is a good and intact representative example of a standard design used for railway stations in the Interwar period, however, it is notable as it retains its cantilevered verandah to the platform and subtle Interwar decorative details.

Comparable railway stations on the Gippsland line include Yarragon (HO17) and Trafalgar (HO38) in Baw Baw Shire, both of which were built in 1911-12. The station is very similar in design to the Maffra Railway Station, which is in private use.

A comparative timber goods crane remains at Glengarry Railway station, which retains its Victorian era station building but no longer serves as a railway station.

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.

1. Setting

1.1. Retain important views to the station building by siting new structures away from the line of sight from the Railway Reserve Road and maintain a clear line of sight between the station and the crane. (Refer to the aerial below which shows 2 blue polygons for preferred location of new structures and the arrow illustrates the important view line between the station platform and the crane below.)

1.2. Paving

1.2.1. The most appropriate paving is pressed granitic sand or asphalt.

2. Additions And New Structures

2.1. New structures could be located at each end of the existing station building (as shown on the aerial map below), if set in from each façade with a narrow link, so that the original building is distinct, but not contrasting. Build to a similar or lower height with the same roof pitch and form, with similar but not identical window fenestration.

2.2. Another location for additional structures could be on the other side of Railway Reserve Road subject to a design that is sympathetic in style, materials and colours (but not identical), and the location allows good views of the historic station from approaches along Railway Reserve Road.

2.3. If an extension is to have a concrete slab floor, ensure it will not reduce the air flow under the historic building.

3. Reconstruction and Restoration

If an opportunity arises, consider restoring and reconstructing

3.1. Clad the roof in the original product, unpainted galvanised corrugated iron (which, unlike

Colorbond, does not grow lichen, and unlike Zinalume, does not remain highly reflective for years).

3.2. Roofing, spouting and down pipes

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

3.2.2. Do not use Zinalume or Colorbond.

3.2.3. Use ogee profile spouting, and round diameter down pipes.

4. Fences

4.1. The most appropriate fencing is pointed timber pickets (use the original railways picket fence drawings, which still exist).

5. Colours

5.1. Use the original colour scheme. The following recommendations are based on Ward (1984):

5.1.1. Roof: Unpainted galvanised iron.

5.1.2. Red brick chimney, rendered cap and terracotta pot: Do not paint or seal.

5.1.3. Body, down pipes and vent pipes: Stone (10 YR7/6)

5.1.4. Trim: Dark Leather (7.5 YR 2/2) including architraves, corner stops, plinths, door frames and door rails, verandah posts to top of caps, barge cappings, spoutings, gates, gate posts and corner posts, gable end strapping and brackets, verandah brackets and arch.

5.1.5. Window frames and sashes, eaves soffits: white (5 YR 9/1)

5.1.6. Barges and fascia boards, door panels and moulds, verandah ripple iron valances, cement sheet and timber vents in the gable ends: Light Leather (5 YR4/6)

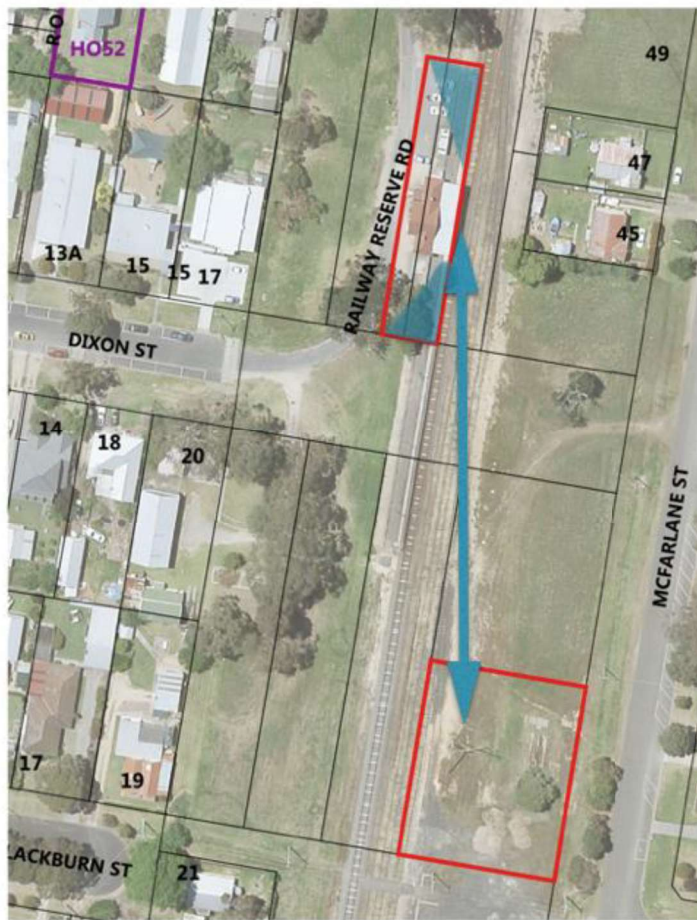
5.1.7. Verandah soffits: Light Battleship Grey.

Resources




Wellington Shire Heritage Advisor

A. Ward (1984), 'Paint Colour Schemes: A research study into colour schemes used on Victoria's railway station buildings prior to the middle 1960s'.

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



KEY

-  Recommended for Heritage Overlay
-  Existing Heritage Overlay
-  Title boundary

**Stratford Railw
Railway Reserv**

Project: Wellir