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# MARYBOROUGH RAILWAY STATION

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## Location

38 VICTORIA STREET MARYBOROUGH, CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE

## Municipality

CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7623-0352

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 10, 2023

### What is significant?

Features likely to be present at the Maryborough Railway Station site comprise the remains of earlier railway structures, including Signal Boxes A and B, the former weighbridge shed, and features associated with the former goods and sidings areas, and the original 1874 railway building, were removed as described in the Maryborough background history.

### How is it significant?

The Maryborough Railway Station site is of local archaeological significance.

### Why is it significant?

There is moderate potential for archaeological sites to be present Maryborough Railway Station grounds. This is based on an aerial imagery review, which indicate the former location of structures. Such former structures may still be extant in a subsurface context. While archaeological remains are not part of the State significance of the VHR-listed Maryborough Railway Station, there may be archaeological sites which meet the thresholds for protection under the Heritage Act 2017.

## Theme

3. Connecting Victorians by transport and communications

The Maryborough Railway Station meets the definition of an archaeological site under the Heritage Act, as a site that is likely to contain artefacts, deposits or features 75 or more years old, that would provide information relating to the former use of the site, that requires archaeological methods to reveal such information. There are a number of surface features related to former structures at the site:

- Signal Box A o Signalling arrangements, and parish mapping show that this was originally at the south end of the station grounds, situated adjacent to the Inkerman Street level crossing
- Signal Box B o Historical photographs, signalling arrangements, and parish mapping show that this was originally at the north end of the station grounds, situated adjacent to the Tuaggra Street level crossing
- Drainage pits o Situated within the station grounds on the east side of the railway line, south of the extant railway platform within the Gazetted Victorian Heritage Register Extent L1
- Goods platform o Situated within the station grounds on the east side of the railway line, south of the extant railway platform within the Gazetted Victorian Heritage Register Extent L1
- Buried timber artefact o Situated within the station grounds on the east side of the railway line, south of the extant railway platform within the Gazetted Victorian Heritage Register Extent L1
- Weighbridge shed and adjacent sidings o The VHR listing and the site inspection show that this was situated at the south end of the proposed VHI boundary, on the east side of the railway line.

There is limited historical documentation about the railway operations of the site and although site layout plans in the form of signal diagrams exist, written accounts and historical photographs and images are limited. However, the historical photographs that are available do give some indication of the general historic layout of the place which accords with the timber sleeper and drains found on the site. The limited amount of ground disturbance across the former goods and sidings areas suggests there is potential for archaeological features and potential artefacts to be present that would confirm the former arrangement of the site. Although there is no above ground evidence to show the locations of either of the former signal boxes, below ground structural evidence may exist. This is likely to contribute to an understanding of the operations of large regional railway centres, particularly to the operation and expansion of railway goods transportation. As such the Maryborough Railway Station meets Threshold A (archaeology). As there is limited historical information about the goods operations of the Maryborough Railway Station, archaeological investigation and detailed recording could provide information not available elsewhere, particularly in relation to the layout and usage of the site. The available historical information, size of the place and the extravagance of the architectural styling of the station building confirms that Maryborough was an important railway centre in the early twentieth century. Archaeological investigation could provide information to assist in the understanding of the goods operations of other large railway centres in the state, such as Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong, all of which have been more significantly altered than Maryborough, prior to the advent of diesel motive power which forced the decline and eventual cessation of steam power on the States rail network. The site is significant in a local context under the 'linking Victorians by rail' (Theme 3.3) in Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes (Heritage Council of Victoria 2010). As such, the Maryborough Railway Station site meets Threshold B (place history). Consideration should also be given to the protection of the remnant parts of the former weighbridge. Although in poor condition and regardless of it being included in the VHR, it was nonetheless an important component of the goods operations at the place. The land immediately surrounding the weighbridge shed may also comprise remnants of the sidings and related infrastructure that were once found south of Inkerman Street. The majority of features identified during the site inspection were covered over, instead of having previously been removed from the station grounds. As such, this is suggestive that there is likely to be further archaeological features identified within the station grounds.

Interpretation of Site

Heritage Act Categories

Registered archaeological place,

Other Names

Maryborough Station, Maryborough Train Station,

Hermes Number

209358

## History

The original railway station at Maryborough was opened in 1874 (Culture Victoria 2016a). The present building, and Maryborough's second railway station (VHR H1577/Central Goldfields HO134/NT B1799/RNE 15488), is an especially large and well-appointed station that was built between 1890-1891. This grand station was intended to be the centre of the rail industry, due to the boom created by the gold rush (Culture Victoria 2016b). Maryborough Railway Station once comprised two signal boxes (A and B boxes), a weighbridge, numerous sidings, a goods yard, goods shed and platform, and stockyards (Victorian Railways 1989). As the gold mines closed during the early to mid-1900s, populations in the smaller townships began to decline. However, population growth stabilised as Maryborough itself has diversified its industries after the gold industry collapsed, turning to the dairy, wool, and tourism industries throughout the 1900s (Victorian Places 2015b). Outside Maryborough, the shire typically comprises farmland for livestock and cereals, which are transported by rail from Maryborough across Victoria (Victorian Places 2015a). The down end (north) level crossing was replaced with an underpass in 1967, and A and B signal boxes were demolished in 1969 (Victorian Railways 1989). The railway station itself was closed in 1993. Maryborough Railway Station was restored by RBA Heritage Architects and Period Restoration services in 2007 and reopened on 25 July 2010 (Department of Transport 2009; RBA Architects and Conservation Consultants 2018). Maryborough Railway Station is currently an active station with one platform, serviced by V/Line (Public Transport Victoria). Historical aerial imagery (Aerial Survey of Victoria 1946b; 1946c; 1946d) dating to 1946 shows that the large station building within the proposed VHI boundary was then present within the Maryborough station grounds. There are extant buildings present within the Maryborough Railway Station grounds, including the aforementioned historic railway station itself (VHR H1577/Central Goldfields HO134/NT B1799), along with several sheds and other large structures to the north of the junction of the Yelta and Castlemaine-Maryborough lines. Tracks and sidings, along with several other structures, were also visible within the station grounds. The railway station grounds used to comprise land to the northwest of the extant grounds, to the intersection of Victoria Street and Cambridge Street. This section of land has been excised from the railway station grounds, and is currently housing VicRoads' Maryborough Customer Service Centre on what appears now to be Council grounds (Central Goldfields Shire Council 2022). The Maryborough station building is extant adjacent the railway line, as part of an active railway station. Infrastructure at Maryborough, such as the weighbridge, a number of roads and sidings, and signal boxes, are no longer extant.

*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/>*