

YARRAVILLE RAILWAY STATION COMPLEX



View north from the Anderson Street Railway Crossing shows main structures of the complex



Upside Station Building



Upside Station Building



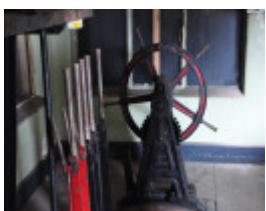
Downshide Shelter



Interlocking Railway Crossing Gate (2023)



The southern elevation of the signal box (2023)



The former levers (left) and capstan (centre-right) remain inside the Signal Box



Shopfronts



The Bus Interchange Building, viewed from the south



Rear kitchen of the Stationmaster's Residence



The living area within the later rear extension of the Stationmaster's Residence



Image shows the former signal for the goods siding

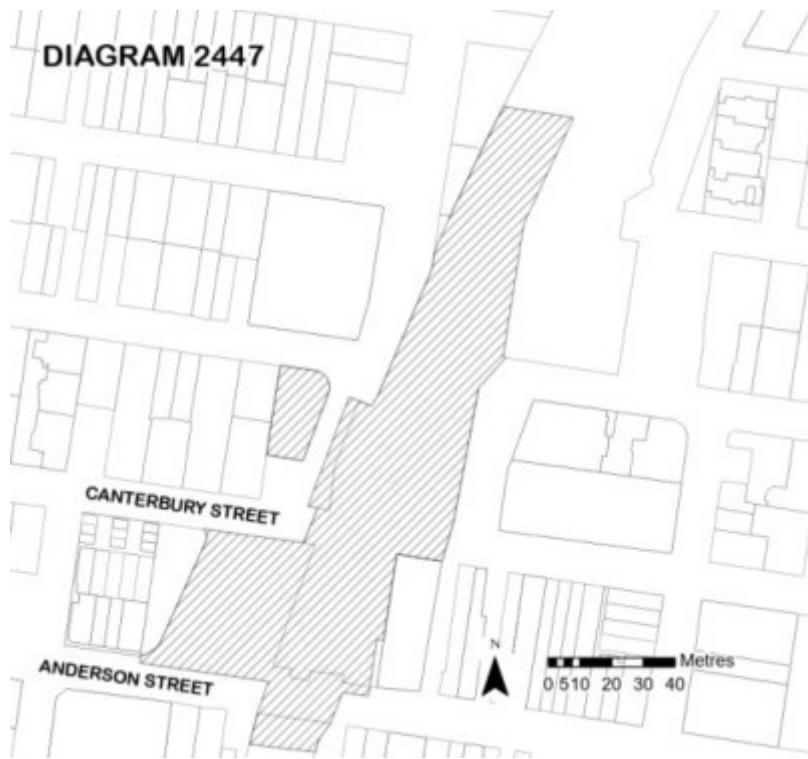


Diagram 2447

Location

15 GOULBURN STREET AND 13 MURRAY STREET YARRAVILLE, MARIBYRNONG CITY

Municipality

MARIBYRNONG CITY

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2447

VHR Registration

December 19, 2024

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The place known as the Yarraville Station Railway Complex, which includes the Interlocking Railway Crossing Gates, Signal Box, Male Toilet Block, Upside Station Building and Booking Hall, Downside Shelter, former Goods Siding, Anderson Street Bus Interchange, Shops and former Railway Signal, and former Stationmaster's Residence.

How is it significant?

The Yarraville Railway Station Complex is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion B

Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

Why is it significant?

The Yarraville Railway Station Complex is historically significant for being a surviving example of a railway station that functioned as a major freight hub within the metropolitan area. As a complex, including the former stationmaster's residence, the place demonstrates the development of the metropolitan railway network that has expanded over an extended period to serve a range of functions, turning the place into a major passenger hub and freight centre. The Bus Interchange is closely associated with the development of Victoria's transportation infrastructure in response to post-war suburban growth. It is an early example of a clearly defined interchange between rail and bus transport modes.

(Criterion A)

The Interlocking Railway Crossing Gates are a rare remaining example in Victoria of railway gates designed to protect road users and pedestrians. Protective gates at level crossings were once very common across the whole of the Victorian Railways network. Railway crossing gates have become increasingly rare with the closure of railway lines and road crossings; with the introduction of grade separation; and with the widespread installation of boom barriers in the post-war era. The Interlocking Railway Crossing Gates at Yarraville are also rare for protecting both main running lines and sidings.

(Criterion B)

The Yarraville Railway Station Complex is architecturally significant as a fine representative example of a railway station complex. The Upside Station Building is a fine example of a high-quality late Victorian station building typical of the Victorian Railways during its era of expansion in the 1880s and early 1890s. The place also demonstrates the principal characteristics of the class through its high degree of integrity, including various railway structures, station buildings, Signal Box, wheel-operated Interlocking Railway Crossing Gates, Shops, stationmaster's residence, Bus Interchange and the remnant of the public goods siding.

(Criterion D)

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must notify the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Theme

3. Connecting Victorians by transport and communications

Construction dates

1871,

Architect/Designer

Richard L Gray, P J Corbel,

Heritage Act Categories

Registered place,

Hermes Number

209971

Property Number

History

Establishment of the Williamstown Railway Line

The Melbourne Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway Company (MMA&MRR Co) was formed in 1853 to construct a rail link to port facilities at Williamstown as well as the railway line north to Echuca, within seven years. Infrastructure projects of such scale soon proved to be financially unsustainable for private companies such as MMA& MRR Co. In May 1856, the Government established the Victorian Railways (VR) Department to take over the operation of the company and the faltering railway project. [1]

The Williamstown Railway Line and the Footscray to Sunbury Line were officially opened as the first Victorian Government railway lines on 13 January 1859. Stations on the Williamstown Line at that time included Spencer Street, North Melbourne, Footscray, Newport, Williamstown Beach, North Williamstown and Williamstown.

The Yarraville Railway Station was officially opened on the 20 November 1871. [2] Its development is summarised below.

Development of the Yarraville Railway Station Complex

1871

The official opening of the station. It was small in scale and comprised mainly temporary platforms and simple timber shelters for passengers. [3]

1871-early 1880s

The station was soon proved inadequate for the growing population, industries, and businesses in Yarraville. Throughout the 1870s and 80s, the local community demanded better services and station facilities to accommodate the increasing numbers of passengers. The platforms had become too narrow, and the ticket office was too close to the Anderson Street Level Crossing, creating a hazardous environment for rushing commuters, which resulted in several fatal accidents.

1883-87

In 1883-87, major upgrade works at the station finally took place, significantly expanding the complex. These works consisted of the opening of a new goods siding to the east, the widening of the platforms and construction of the first permanent station buildings (see below).

Early 1880s

Opening of Goods Siding. This short section of track departed the main line on the south of Anderson Street. It ran alongside the downside platform and re-joined the railway track near Castlemaine Street on the north.

1884

A set of hand-operated crossing gates were installed on the Anderson Street level crossing by 1884.

1885

- The upside and downside platforms were widened, with pedestrian ramps created on the southern end of both platforms to provide better access.
- A footbridge was constructed over the railway line to connect both sides of the station and provide safer access for passengers.
- New buildings, including a waiting room and booking office, were proposed for the upside. The contract was granted to WE White, who completed these timber buildings by February 1886 in accordance with plans designed by the Victorian Railways. The designer remains unclear. [4] The works include 1) an L-shaped waiting room building, which contained men's and women's waiting areas. It had a northern extension projecting onto Birmingham Street (then Sydney Street), and 2) a freestanding booking office located further southwest, with its front facade (with verandah) facing north.
- On the downside, a galvanised-iron shelter shed was already in place, as depicted in the 1885 plan.

1887-88

In January 1887, the Victorian Railways awarded the tender to construct a **Stationmaster's Residence** in Yarraville to PJ Corbel. [5] The weatherboard residence, as depicted in the 1885 plan, was to be located on the Victorian Railways land (now 13 Murray Street) to the immediate west of the Yarraville Railway Station. Evidence suggests the residence was completed by late 1887. The first resident Stationmaster was William Arthur Gregory, who moved there by January 1888 and remained until c.1892. [6] The house continued to function as a Stationmaster's Residence until at least the 1940s, providing accommodation for Frank Hattam (1892), John Dewsnap (1896), Charles Owen (1900-1910s), William Deacon (1920), Timothy Gleason (1925) and Marcus O'Donnell (1930-45). [7] The residence remained a Victorian Railways property until 1996. [8]

In the early 1890s the Stationmaster's Residence was separated from the Yarraville Railway Station Complex through the creation of an easement (Birmingham Street). It became part of the residential streetscape of Murray Street following the subsequent housing development of that street.

1890

The **Interlocking Railway Crossing Gates** (deregistered, formerly VHR H1028) on Anderson Street were installed. [9]

1892-93

The upside waiting room building burnt down on the 22 July 1892. [10] In December, Victorian Railways granted a contract for new station buildings to Richard L Gray. In 1893, Gray completed the brick **Upside Station**

Building based on the Victorian Railway design. The identity of the designer remains unknown. [11] The contract specification mentions both 'ladies toilets' and 'lavatory', implying that the **Male Toilet Blocks** were constructed at the same time.

Andrew Ward observes that the **Upside Station Building** was consistent with the design principle favoured by Charles Speight (1838-1901), Victorian Railway Commissioner from 1883-92. [12] Speight preferred grand, solid and well-planned station buildings. He applied this design approach to many of the station buildings constructed during his tenure. Other comparable examples in the late 1880s include Brighton Beach (1889, VHR H1077) and Ringwood (1889, VHR H1587). [13] Altogether with the Yarraville **Upside Station Building**, these station buildings are assessed by Ward as being the standard designs that 'marked the close of the Speight era.' [14]

1893-94

Further **Goods Siding** work took place, as depicted in the 1891 plan (revised in 1893-94, see below). Another set of tracks was constructed to the east of the sidings as to provide standing rooms for trucks. The standing room was later extended further northward and re-emerged with the railway line at the Somerville Road Level Crossing.

1900-10s

By the early 1900s, the Yarraville Railway Station had become a major passenger hub and freight centre on the Williamstown Line.

In the 1910s, a more substantial timber **Downside Shelter** with gabled roof was constructed on the south end of the downside platform. The cast-iron shelter and booking office were subsequently removed. The **Downside Shelter** is captured by the 1910s photo taken from the Anderson Street Level Crossing.

1916

A pedestrian subway was constructed in 1916 to replace the footbridge. [15] It is speculated that the footbridge was removed to accommodate the overhead infrastructure required for the electrification of the metropolitan network.

1920

Electrification of the Williamstown Railway Line.

1922

- Further works took place at the brick **Upside Station Building**, including internal reconfiguration, alteration to the front (Birmingham Street) entrance and relocation of a chimney. The original southern chimney was removed and relocated to its eastern elevation.
- A brick **Booking Hall** was constructed on the south elevation of the **Upside Station Building**.
- In October, at the suggestion of the Railway Commissioners, Footscray City Council and the Commonwealth Motor Bus Company Ltd initiated a discussion regarding a bus service between Yarraville and Melbourne. It was anticipated that the bus service would provide a cheaper and more comfortable alternative to the overcrowded trains during rush hours. The proposed bus route was to begin at the corner of Anderson and Fehon Streets and terminate in the Melbourne CBD, going through Footscray. [16]

1927

A double-storey, brick **Signal Box** was constructed on the south of the upside platform. [17]

1935

Two brick shops were constructed c.1935-6 on the western side of the station and were subsequently assigned nos. 27-29 Birmingham Street. The shops were used as hairdressing salon and confectionary store until 1974. [18]

1946-50

The Yarraville Station **Bus Interchange** (referred to as Bus Terminal in Council records) was constructed between 1946 and 1949. [19] In August 1949, Footscray City Council discussed the installation of an electric clock at the interchange building. [20]

1969-2000s

- Use of the **Goods Sidings** ceased in 1969. The yard was converted into a carpark around the late 1990s and early 2000s.
- In 1994, the **Interlocking Railway Crossing Gates** (deregistered, formerly VHR H1028) were included in the VHR.
- The **Signal Box** was decommissioned in c.1995.
- The **Stationmaster's Residence** was sold by the Victorian Railways and subsequently became a private residence. The southern section of the property was excised in 1998 and became the site of a separate housing development. [21]
- The pedestrian underpass was infilled in c 1990s to early 2000s.

Endnote

1. GJM heritage (2020). State-level Heritage Assessment: Williamstown Railway Line, p. 8.
2. "Opening of Yarraville", The Argus, 18 November 1871, p1.
3. "Yarraville – To the editor of the Age". The Age, 19 September 1873, p 3.
4. PROV, VPRS 17077/P1, Contract No 2309/1403 and 2158.
5. "Railway Tenders", The Herald (Melbourne), 4 Jan 1887, p 3.
6. City of Footscray Rate Book
7. Sands and McDougall Directories
8. Certificate of Title Volume 10269 Folio 488
9. Heritage Victoria. Statement of Significance for Interlocking Railway Crossing Gates (H1028).
10. "Fire at the Yarraville Railway Station" in Melbourne Weekly Times, 23 July 1892, p 15.
11. PROV, VPRS 17077/P1, Contract No 4956/2411
12. Ward (2019) Story of stations, p 256
13. Ibid, pp 253-256.
14. Ibid, p 253.
15. PROV, VPRS 8600/P1, Unit 135
16. "Motor buses for Footscray and Yarraville" in Independent (Footscray), 21 October 1922, p 4.
17. Heritage Victoria. Statement of Significance for Interlocking Railway Crossing Gates (H1028).
18. Sands and McDougall Directories
19. The building is not captured by the 1945 aerial photo, indicating it was built after this date.
20. PROV, VPRS 5338/P0, Unit 36, City of Footscray Council Minute Book 1949, p 317.
21. Landata, Plan of subdivision PS 417430A

Selected bibliography

Australian Railway Historical Society Victorian Division. *Divisional Diary*, January 1972.

Barnard, J, Butler, G, Gilfedder, F & Vine G. (2001). *Maribyrnong Heritage Review*.

Newspaper articles, as cited.

PROV, VA 1007 Melbourne Water Corporation, VPRS 8600/P1 Survey Field Books, Book Nos 82, 161, 1797 and 2245

PROV, VA 4616 Victorian Rail Track (Vic Track), VPRS 17077/P1 Contract Files, Contract No 4956/2411 – Yarraville Railway Line

PROV, VA 4616 Victorian Rail Track (Vic Track), VPRS 17077/P1 Contract Files, Contract Nos 2309/1403 and 2158 – Yarraville Railway Line contract for station.

PROV, VA 4616 Victorian Rail Track (Vic Track), VPRS 17400/P0001 Aerial photographs of Victorian Railway Line Sections, North Melbourne-Williamstown 1962, Newport-Altona 1962, 1969, Footscray-St Albans 1969, 1970, 1962, 1964

PROV, VA 640 Footscray City, VPRS 5338/P0 Council minutes books, 1945-1949 Sands and McDougall Directories

Ward, A. (2019). *A story of stations: the architecture of Victoria's railways in the Nineteenth Century*. Williamstown, Victoria: Australian Railway Historical Society Victorian Division Inc

Extent of Registration

Heritage Act 2017

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 2017**, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including a place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H2447

Category: Registered Place

Place: Yarraville Railway Station Complex

Location: 15 Goulburn Street, Yarraville and 13 Murray Street, Yarraville

Municipality: Maribyrnong

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2447 encompassing all of Lot 1 on Title Plan 957172, Lot 1 on Title Plan 957180, Lot 1 on Title Plan 957175, Lot 1 on Title Plan 957193, Lot 1 on Title Plan 939529, Lot 1 on Title Plan 939529, Lot 1 on Title Plan 410742, Lot 1 on Title Plan 957186, Lot 1 on Title Plan 604797, Lot 1 on Title Plan 605469, Lot 1 on Title Plan 381146; Lot 1 on Plan of Subdivision 417430 and part of Lot 1 on Title Plan 957178, part of Lot 1 on Title Plan 607916, part of Lot 1 on Title Plan 957507 extending from the building facade for the width of the footpath, part of Lot 1 on Title Plan 957194; and part of the Birmingham Street road reserve, and part of the Anderson Street road reserve being the width of the footpath.

19 December 2024

STEVEN AVERY

Executive Director

[General Gazette G51 19 December 2024]

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/>