

## Rechabite Hall (Former)



Oblique view of the Rechabite Hall facade and north eastern side.



Photograph of the facade of the Rechabite Hall from High Street. The image shows the original Victorian parapet details as well as the later extensions to the front and side of the property. Source: Bunjil Place Connected Libraries. 1994. Rechabite Hall,



Extract from 1975 map of the City of Berwick, showing the Princes Highway (also known as High Street) and the site of the Rechabite Hall (former), outlined in red. Source: Berwick Council. 1975- 1976. City of Berwick. Digitised map. State Library of Victo



Excerpt of photograph of High Street (Princes Highway) in 1887. The image shows the Rechabite Hall (former) located between the Christians Meeting House and the Post Office, Postmaster's Residence and Court House, indicated with red arrow. Source: State L

### Location

106 High Street,BERWICK, Casey City

### Municipality

CASEY CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO87

Heritage Listing

Casey City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 15, 2024

What is significant?

The Berwick Rechabite Hall (former), constructed in 1886, at 106 High Street, Berwick is significant, specifically the Victorian facade detailing and parapet, eastern fenestration, brick materiality and scale. External paintwork and later additions to the front facade and western side of the hall do not contribute to the building's significance.

How is it significant?

The Rechabite Hall (former) is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Casey.

Why is it significant?

The former Rechabite Hall is of local historical significance as a temperance and community hall which forms part of a group of important 1880s public buildings on High Street, Berwick, with the Christians Meeting House (former) and Post Office, Postmaster's Residence & Court House. The Temperance Society's Rechabite Hall was important in providing a place for people from isolated areas to meet and socialise, playing an instrumental role in the development of the Berwick community. Built in 1886, the hall has had significant connections to notable Berwick residents and community associations including the original Temperance Hall Trustees and the Life Governors of the hall following the building's acquirement by the Berwick branch of the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League of Australia in 1920. (Criterion A)

The Rechabite Hall is of local significance as a representative example of a Victorian era community hall. The original Victorian frontage includes a classical parapet wall featuring relief pilasters, balustrade and a pediment with the date 1886 inscribed. Vermiculated corbel stones and scroll work are elaborate embellishments which contribute to the significance of the place. (Criterion D)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Casey - Casey Heritage Study, Context Pty Ltd, 2004; Casey - Heritage of the City of Berwick, Context Pty Ltd, 1993;
Construction dates	1886,
Other Names	Berwick And District Fallen Soldiers Memorial Hall,
Hermes Number	62915
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The Rechabite Hall is a large double height Victorian hall. The external wall surfaces are smooth rendered on the facade and painted on the side walls, obscuring the polychrome brickwork. The original Victorian is rectilinear in

form with a pitched roof which has three pointed roof vents on each side. Set slightly into the hillside, the northeastern facade details six openings which have undergone some alterations, including the infill of a window and the alteration of a window into a doorway. The frontage includes a classical parapet wall featuring relief pilasters, balustrade and a pediment with the date 1886 inscribed. Vermiculated corbel stones and scroll work are elaborate embellishments.

A latter addition to the front facade projects from the original frontage and is comparatively restrained in detail. Likely constructed c.1930, the extension is symmetrical with a central rose window flanked by a relief on either side. The entryway located to the eastern side of the later addition no longer functions as an entrance, this being relocated to the side of the building in a former window opening which was modified. A later wing addition to the west of the original building has a similar facade to the entry lobby, with a stepped entry and hardiplank side wall.

### **Alterations and Additions**

- The building has a newer addition to the front facade, likely built c.1930, extending to the rear of the building. The front addition, which was added to accommodate a new entrance lobby and projector room, reflects the original details of the Hall but overall detracts from the original building.
- A later addition to the west of the original building has a similar facade to the entry lobby, with a stepped painted brick entry from High Street and hardiplank side wall. The extension encompasses the entire western wall, connecting to a further rear extension.
- Relocation of entryway to the side of the building in a former window opening which was modified to create a doorway.
- The original polychrome brickwork has been painted over.
- Raised air-conditioning units on the eastern side of the building, with piping and electrical conduit secured to the eastern facade.
- New lighting to the eastern side of the building
- Concrete hardscaping and metal fencing to the front of the hall and alongside the eastern side of the building.

The Rechabite Hall (former) is overall in good condition however the building has had extensive alterations and additions to the original fabric which has notably diminished the building's integrity.

Please note: assessment has not been undertaken when preparing this citation to ascertain the lawfulness of any alterations or additions listed above.

### **Limitations**

1. Access to all heritage places was limited to visual inspection from the public domain. The interiors of buildings and inaccessible areas such as rear gardens were not accessed as part of this heritage study.
2. Condition and site modification assessment was limited to a visual inspection undertaken from the public domain.
3. The historical notes provided for this citation are not considered to be an exhaustive history of the site.

## **Historical Australian Themes**

### **Community & Culture**

*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/>*