

Local Heritage Register: The Australian Hotel



The Australian Hotel, 1940s

Building Name :	The Australian Hotel
Street Address	83 Victoria Street
Property Description :	Lot 7 on RP700800
Land Area:	510m ²

Description

The Australian Hotel is important for its contribution to the townscape of Mackay. Situated at the corner of Victoria and Wood Streets, the building has been designed to address the corner and ensure its landmark status. The streamlined design and Art Deco detailing enhance the aesthetic appeal of the place.

The Australian Hotel is a good, representative and intact example of an interwar functionalist-style hotel with Art Deco detailing. While the building has undergone some alterations in recent years including replacement of original windows and tiles to the ground floor, it retains key features of the streamline modern style of Art

Deco architecture including:

- asymmetrical massing;
- long, horizontal balconies,
- cantilevered balcony;
- columns that are not emphasised; and
- roof concealed by a parapet.

History

The first Australian Hotel was constructed in 1880 by Mr. Diehm of Charters Towers. That building was originally constructed by Mr. E Eshmann as two shops, it was converted to a hotel in 1881. It was damaged in the 1918 cyclone and rebuilt.

The current hotel was constructed by the Conway Family Estate in 1940. The building is significant historically for its association with the interwar redevelopment of

Mackay and provides evidence of the development of Art Deco buildings in Mackay.

The Building

The hotel was constructed by William and Frank Guthrie to the design of Sydney architect Edwin Roy Orchard, who also designed Aroney's building and The Oriental Hotel (now gone). The Guthrie's are noted as builders of some of Mackay's most prominent buildings in the 1920s to 1940s. Mr. Orchard is responsible for a number of State-listed buildings in north Queensland.

A distinctive feature is the perpendicular flag pole, mounted centrally, resting on a brick corbel and fixed by 4 steel stirrups. It is flanked symmetrically by one wide and two narrow bands which turn out horizontally at the top. Below the flag pole is a window with a horizontal awning. The parapet decorative stripes are colloquially referred to as '*ocean liner Art Deco*'.

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Statement of Historical Significance



The Australian Hotel, 2016 - Mackay Regional Council

Criteria	Significance
A: Historical significance	Originally known as Diehm's Store, the Australian Hotel was opened by Captain George Dimmock on the current site in 1882. Damaged in the 1918 cyclone, it was subsequently rebuilt, and the current hotel was constructed by the Conway Family Estate in 1940. The Australian Hotel has historical significance for its continuous use as a hotel on the site for over 135 years. The current building is significant historically for its association with the interwar redevelopment of Mackay and in providing evidence of the development and nature of Art Deco buildings in Mackay.
B: All aspects of heritage significance	Does not meet this criterion.
C: Scientific significance	Does not meet this criterion.
D: Architectural significance	The Australian Hotel is a good, representative and intact example of an inter-war functionalist style hotel with Art Deco detailing.
E: Aesthetic / architectural significance	The Australian is important for its contribution to the townscape. The building has been designed to address the corner and ensure its landmark status. The streamlined design and Art Deco detailing enhance the aesthetic appeal of the place.
F: Aesthetic or other significance	Does not meet this criterion.
G: Social significance	Does not meet this criterion.
H: Historical significance	The building has association with prominent 19th century architect, R.E. Orchard, who was responsible for a number of buildings on various State heritage registers. The hotel was constructed by the notable Guthrie brothers, builders of some of Mackay's most prominent buildings from the 1920s to 1940s.

References:

- Woods, R., 1995, 'Heritage Places Criteria (ID16)', Mackay City Council
- Butler, G., & Associates, 1994, 'Mackay Region Heritage Pilot Study', p.166 Mackay City Council,
- Dalton, R., Jacobs, A., and Wright, B., 1996, 'Heritage Context Study for Mackay City Council - A Town Planning Review', Mackay City Council
- Wright, B, 2016, pers. comm.

For more information phone strategic planning on 1300 MACKAY (1300 622 529)