Former Storage Room, 10 Regent Street, Prahran

Heritage Place: Former Storage Room
Address: 10 Regent Street, Prahran

HO Reference: HO776
Citation status: Final
Date Updated: 5 April 2024

Designer: Unknown
Builder: Unknown

Year of Construction: c.1900s



Photograph of the Former Storage Room at 10 Regent Street, Prahran (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Location map and extent of the Former Storage Room at 10 Regent Street, Prahran.

Heritage Group: Commercial
Heritage Type: Warehouse/storage area

Key Theme: Retailing and hospitality
Key Sub-theme: Serving local communities

Significance Level: Local

Controls:	☐	External paint controls	☐	Internal alteration controls	☐	Tree controls
	☐	Include on Victorian Heritage Register	☐	Incorporated Plans	☐	Outbuildings and fences not exempt
	☐	Prohibited uses may be permitted	☐	Aboriginal Heritage Place	■	Solar energy system controls

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The property at 10 Regent Street, Prahran (otherwise known as Former Storage Room), is significant. Specifically, the form, detailing, materials and fenestration of the Federation era storage room is of local heritage significance. Later alterations and additions to the property are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Former Storage Room is of local historical significance to the City of Stonnington. It is also of local significance as a rare example of a storage room in the municipality.

Why is it significant?

The Former Storage Room is of historical significance as a former furniture storage room constructed in the Federation era to service Prahran's thriving commercial sector in the early twentieth century. Erected adjacent to High Street during a period of revived industry in the aftermath of the 1890s Depression, the building was used to store furniture goods ferried from regional Victoria, a practical function that is exemplified in its modest and utilitarian appearance. It not only forms a tangible link to the municipality's resumed commercial development in the early 1900s but also speaks to the key role retailing and carrier businesses played in the area's economic history. (Criterion A)

The Former Storage Room is significant as a rare surviving example of a substantially intact early twentieth century storage room that was once widespread in areas adjacent to the municipality's main commercial strips. While various Federation era commercial and industrial buildings have survived into Federation, they typically comprise dairies or factory buildings as opposed to modestly scaled storage rooms, the latter of which has been subject to demolition in more recent times. As such, the Former Storage Room forms a rare example of a typology associated with the municipality's commercial and industrial history. (Criterion B)

HERCON Criteria Assessment

A	*Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history*	The Former Storage Room is of historical significance as a former furniture storage room constructed in the Federation era to service Prahran's thriving commercial sector in the early twentieth century. Erected adjacent to High Street during a period of revived industry in the aftermath of the 1890s Depression, the building was used to store furniture goods ferried from regional Victoria, a practical function that is exemplified in its modest and utilitarian appearance. It not only forms a tangible link to the municipality's resumed commercial development in the early 1900s but also speaks to the key role retailing and carrier businesses played in the area's economic history.

B	*Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history*	The Former Storage Room is significant as a rare surviving example of a substantially intact early twentieth century storage room that was once widespread in areas adjacent to the municipality's main commercial strips. While various Federation era commercial and industrial buildings have survived into Federation, they typically comprise dairies or factory buildings as opposed to modestly scaled storage rooms, the latter of which has been subject to demolition in more recent times. As such, the Former Storage Room forms a rare example of a typology associated with the municipality's commercial and industrial history.
C	*Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history*	This place does not meet this criterion.
D	*Important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments*	This place does not meet this criterion.
E	*Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics*	This place does not meet this criterion.
F	*Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period*	This place does not meet this criterion.
G	*Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of the continuing and developing cultural traditions*	This place does not meet this criterion.
H	*Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.*	This place does not meet this criterion.

Description

- ### Physical Analysis

10 Regent Street, Prahran consists of a two-storey Federation era former storage room. The building is located on a narrow allotment, directly fronting Regent Street to the west and Bangs Street to the east, and is attached to other commercial buildings to its north and south. The structure presents no setback to the footpath along its front west façade and rear eastern

elevation. The building consists of face red brick construction laid with a stretcher bond with a gable roof clad with red corrugated galvanised iron sheeting. The gutter level along the northern roof face is obscured behind a raised flat parapet with stepped corbel ends.

The front façade presents a single fronted open gable form. The central main entrance consists of a wide, arched double door with a concrete step threshold to the footpath. The entrance is flanked by single sash windows with a fixed top pane. Wrought iron security bars with an alternating barley twist form and overlaid diamond shape motif protect the ground level windows.

The window form and placement are mirrored on the upper level. A smaller window sits under the apex of the gable, slightly off centred to the ridgeline. The front façade fenestration is detailed with a header laid brick arched lintel emphasised with a row of expressed cut header bullnosed brick with a moulded circular pattern.

The rear eastern elevation presents a similar fenestration form and placement with a single secondary door entrance. The rear elevation fenestration lacks the moulded bullnosed brick detailing. Internally, the building includes a mezzanine loft under the roof space. The loft space extends into an open external deck cut into the southern roof face.

10 Regent Street is presently used as a commercial office building. It is considered in good condition. The building has been extensively internally refurbished to suit different historical uses and the present commercial office space. Its original form, fenestration, materiality, and simple detailing appear intact when viewed from the public domain and is accordingly of high integrity.

• Alterations and Additions

- Historical internal refurbishment (c.1980).
- Extensive internal refurbishment and refit to accommodate commercial office use. Works include refurbished roof structure, new stairs, mezzanine level and external deck (2006-2007).
- New front and rear doors and replaced ground level windows with new steel frame and reinforced glass to the window left of the main entrance.
- Section of brickwork cut into the front façade to accommodate a Corten steel plate used for commercial branding. The cut section is presently covered by a second plate.
- Minor accretions include new rainwater goods, wall mounted security camera, roof mounted HVAC units and aerials.

History

• Historical Context

The area presently known as Stonnington is the traditional home of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nation. Formerly characterised by pre-contact plains, grassy woodland, and floodplains on the banks of the Yarra River (Birrarung), Gardiners Creek (Kooyong Koot) and Hawksburn Creek (now channelised), this once thriving habitat provided Traditional Owners access to a range of water, plant and animal resources integral to their way of life. The onset of colonialism not only saw the transformation of these landscapes, but also Woi wurrung and Bunurong displacement through violence and land dispossession, as is evident in the establishment of George Langhorne's Aboriginal Mission Station Reserve along

the southern banks of the Yarra River in present day Prahran and Toorak. Operating under the guise of 'protection', this reserve ultimately became a focal point for segregation, dislocation, and colonial control of Aboriginal people's lives (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 31).

Despite decades of ongoing dispossession, the rich cultural heritage of Traditional Owners in Stonnington has an enduring presence to this day. Through continued resistance and the passing down of Indigenous knowledge, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong people maintain an ongoing connection to, and care for Country.

European settlement in what would become the suburb of Prahran grew gradually following the 1849-1850 Crown Land Sales, which saw the subdivision of land bounded by present day Toorak Road, Orrong Road, Dandenong Road and Punt Road into fifty-one allotments (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 39). George Langhorne, the Commissioner of an 1837 Aboriginal mission in the area south of the Yarra River around Punt Hill, called this area 'Pura-ra-ran', a compound of two Bunurong words believed to mean land partially surrounded by water (O'Callaghan 1922, 54). In 1840 the name was changed to Prahran for official use.

While higher ground overlooking the Yarra to the north of Prahran was quickly acquired and settled by the colonial elite following the 1840 Crown Land Sales, the majority of present-day Prahran, being of poorly drained low-lying land characterised by wetlands, was primarily purchased by land speculators. These areas were subsequently and re-sold for farming, industry and housing the working classes. The high level of natural deposits of alluvial clay in the area meant that pockets of low-lying land were used as brickyards (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 17). By 1856, the land encompassing Prahran was primarily characterised by a scattered series of timber and brick workers cottages set on narrow allotments to the west of Williams Road, while land to the east and south remained undeveloped or in use as paddocks (Surveyor-General's Department 1856). The area was also distinguished by its strong market garden character during this period, with much of the land awaiting development being used for cultivation during the 1850s and 1860s (Malone 1983, 12).

The area underwent a period of rapid change following the 1880s land boom, which spurred the replacement of many small, mid-nineteenth century cottages with more ornate, single-fronted Victorian and Edwardian style terraces that could house the influx of factory workers as part of the area's growing brick manufacturing, food processing and textiles industries around Chapel Street and Commercial Road. Additionally, upper-middle class enclaves and mansion estates in the formerly undeveloped area of eastern Prahran were also developed to house the wealthy settling adjacent to the suburb of Armadale (Malone 2000, 20). Comprising higher ground with no major drainage problems, this area attracted comparably wealthier residents (Malone 2003, 1).

Industrial activity often went hand in hand with commercial development, and the areas in and around Chapel Street became a centre for both shops and light industry (Malone 2001, 1). Impressively detailed shops were also constructed along Chapel Street, solidifying the strip as a popular retail and commercial centre by the late nineteenth century (Allom Lovell 2000, 45). Pockets of the suburb continued to be used as a centre for small-scale manufacturing into the early and mid-twentieth centuries, and associated buildings were largely concentrated on smaller streets running off the main commercial areas of High Street and Chapel Street. Such buildings not only comprised factories and manufacturing plants, but also warehouses that facilitated the storage and redistribution of commercial goods. Although business restructuring

and trade liberalisation in the late twentieth century ultimately resulted in the closure and demolition of many of these buildings, built remnants of this era can be seen at the c.1910 Former Kia-ora Cordial factory chimney at 181-187 High Street, Prahran and at the former milliner factory at Grattan Street, Prahran (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 95). There are also a few modestly scaled warehouse buildings scattered in and around Chapel Street and High Street, including the narrower streets of Regent Street and Cecil Place, which reflect the close-knit relationship between the industrial and commercial sectors.

Today, Prahran's working-class history is best represented through the relatively modest late nineteenth and early twentieth century single fronted cottages and dwellings that dominate the suburb's building stock. Meanwhile, traces of late nineteenth century middle-class residential development are best seen in the grand Victorian dwellings adjacent to Armadale along Grandview Grove.

- ## Place History

The land on which 10 Regent Street, Prahran presently sits formed part of the boundary between Lot 42 and 43 during the 1849-50 Crown Land Sales (Surveyor-General's Department 1849). Purchased by land speculators G. A. Robinson and W. J Payne respectively, both these allotments comprised rough, unmade bush tracks, with poorly drained patches of land concentrated further east of the subject site at York/Bendigo Street, along with a lagoon further the west along Chapel Street (Malone 2001, 1-2). Meanwhile, well-drained and comparatively level areas along the south-western quarter of Lot 42, inclusive of the subject site, were subdivided by 1856 (Malone 2001, 4). As depicted in Kearney's 1856 map, Regent Street comprised a streetscape of modestly scaled dwellings (Surveyor-General's Department 1856). The subject site however, remained vacant (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. 1856 map showing the approximate location of present day 10 Regent Street, Prahran (then vacant) in red, and a scattering of buildings along Regent Street and adjacent streets. *Source:* Public Record Office Victoria.

The subject site was developed by at least 1879, and an 1896 MMBW map depicts a double fronted structure on the site (The Argus 1879, 8; MMBW 1896) (see Figure 2). Records list Mary Ann Bettridge as the owner by 1895, however, ownership was transferred to Sarah Ann Williams by 1900 (Office of Titles 1900). Sarah Ann Williams and her husband James Henry Williams were also the owners of the buildings at 2, 4, 6 and 8 Regent Street (Sands & McDougall 1900). By 1900, the Williams' had consolidated their ownership of the properties at 2-10 Regent Street as one holding. From this period, these properties operated as one holding in directories under the address 2 Regent Street, Prahran and was used as a woodyard (Office of Titles 1900; Sands and McDougall 1895-1940) (see Figure 2).

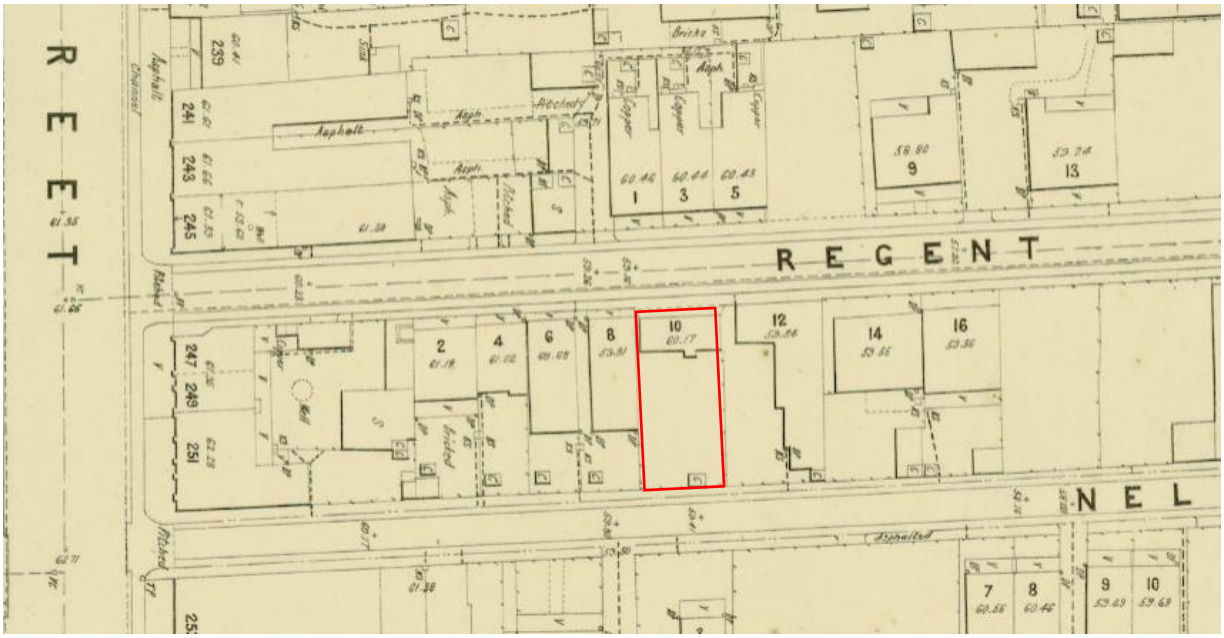


Figure 2. 1896 MMBW map showing the site of the Former Storage Room (then occupied by another building) in red. *Source*: State Library of Victoria.

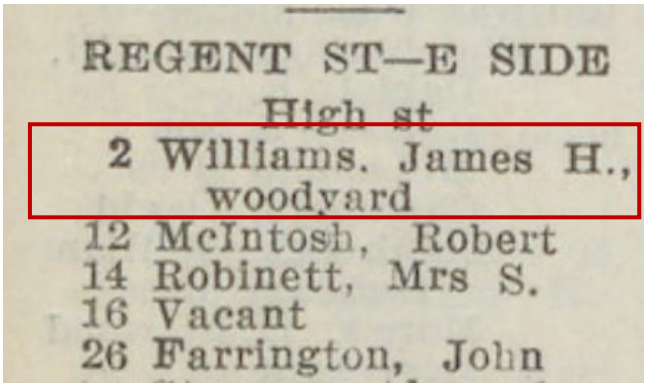

REGENT ST—E SIDE
High st
2 Williams, James H., woodyard
12 McIntosh, Robert
14 Robinett, Mrs S.
16 Vacant
26 Farrington, John

Figure 3. Extract from 1900 Sands & McDougall directories showing 2-10 Regent Street as a consolidated property under '2 Regent Street'. *Source*: State Library of Victoria.

James Henry Williams was granted a carriers license in 1903, and the double fronted structure depicted in 1896 appears to have been dwelling that was ultimately demolished and replaced with storage rooms for his business, Williams & Parkers Carriers, by at least 1910 (Sands & McDougall 1910) (see Figure 4). According to newspaper records, Williams & Parkers Carriers was a carrier business specialising in furniture transportation between Ballarat and Prahran (The Argus 1913, 12). The building was subsequently described as 'first class brick storage rooms' in 1913 (The Argus 1913, 12). It remained in use as a storage room for transported furniture under James Henry Williams until his death in 1939 (Sands and McDougall 1915-1935; The Argus 1939, 10). Following this period, it was used as a storage room by Currie's and Parcels Express (Sands and McDougall 1940).



Figure 4. c.1925-1940 photograph showing the Former Storage Room. *Source:* State Library of Victoria.

The subject site returned to its former numbering, 10 Regent Street, in 1940 following the building's transfer of ownership to proprietor A. Scott (Sands & McDougall 1940). Remarkably, it maintained its use as a storage facility until the late 1970s (Sands & McDougall 1955-1974). Known owners during this period include Martin Parkes in 1951 and Michael Dortheimer in 1962 (Office of Titles 1951-1979). Internal alterations to the building were subsequently undertaken by builder C. Stephens in 1979 when it was converted into use as a ballet studio (City of Stonington Building File 1979). Further internal alterations were carried out in 2006-07 following its conversion from a ballet studio into an office space.

Comparative Analysis

Constructed c.1903-1910 as a brick storage room, the building at 10 Regent Street, Prahran comprises a rare and substantially intact example of a storage room/warehouse associated with Prahran's thriving industrial and commercial sector in the early twentieth century. Pared back in ornamentation and unassuming in terms of its simple, gable form and use of face red brick, the structure readily reflects its Federation provenance and practical function as a storage room during a period of revived economic activity in the aftermath of the 1890s Depression. Within the City of Stonnington, there are several other structures of this scale associated with the area's commercial and industrial sectors that the Former Storage Room at 10 Regent Street, Prahran can be compared to. These include:

- **House (former diary depot), 41 Perth Street, Prahran (HO625).** Constructed between 1905 and 1907, 41 Perth Street, Prahran compares as an early twentieth century former dairy storage facility characterised by Federation style elements, including face red brick, a prominent gable form, and decorative brickwork lintels. Of the two, 41 Perth Street is more ornamented owing to its incorporation of terracotta tiling and finials, and picturesque roughcast gable with half-timbering. It is also of note due to its connecting residential terrace.
- **Former Comer Dairy, 5 High Street, Prahran (HO422).** Established in 1926 at the rear of a handsome c.1872 Victorian villa, the Former Comer Dairy compares to 10 Regent Street, Prahran as a modest building used for the purposes of processing and storing milk products. Although substantially smaller in scale than 10 Regent Street, it nevertheless compares as a simple, utilitarian gabled structure characterised by red face brick and minimal ornamentation. It is otherwise distinguished by its parapet containing a signage panel with the words 'Comer Dairy' in raised lettering. As with 10 Regent Street, Prahran, it no longer retains its original interior.
- **44-46 Charles Street, Prahran (Contributory in HO456 Greville Street Precinct).** While an early twentieth century factory as opposed to a warehouse/store, 44-46 Charles Street, Prahran nevertheless shares with 10 Regent Street similarities in terms of its prominent scale, masonry construction, symmetrical composition and utilitarian appearance stemming from an absence of ornamentation. Although more articulated overall due to its bold parapet and use of roughcast and expressed, overlaying brickwork, it is ultimately less intact than 10 Regent Street, Prahran due to overpainting and alterations to its main entrance door and windows.

As the above comparative example has demonstrated, although there are other structures in the municipality associated with the area's commercial and industrial sectors, some of which are more architecturally expressive, the majority of these comprise dairies or factories as opposed to modestly scaled warehouses or storage facilities that were established in the Federation era. . Indeed, while modestly scaled warehouses and storage facilities were formerly concentrated in and around the commercial areas of Chapel Street and High Street, including Regent Street, Cecil Place and Anchor Place, a large portion of these are associated with the later interwar years or have been demolished and/or substantially altered. Consequently, despite its alterations, which are not unlike those demonstrated in the above examples, 10 Regent Street, Prahran comprises a rare and substantially intact example of a Federation era storge room within the municipality.

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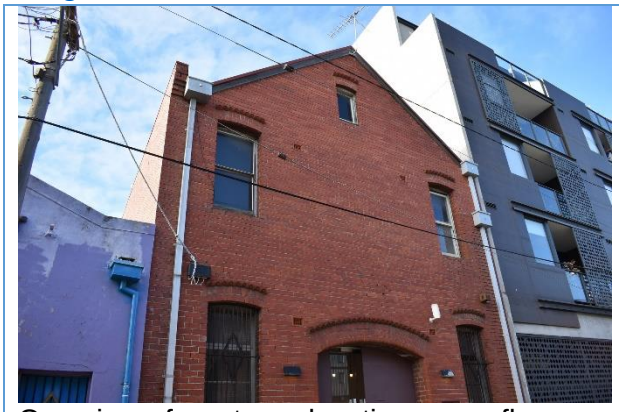
The Argus. 1913. 'Advertising.' 4 July 1913, 12.

The Argus. 1939. 'Family Notices.' 31 May 1939, 10.

Limitations

1. Access to all heritage places was limited to a 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 as well as desktop resources.
3. The historical notes provided for this citation are not considered to be an exhaustive history of the site.

Images



Overview of western elevation upper floor from Regent Street (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Overview of western elevation ground floor from Regetn Street (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Overview of western elevation upper floor fenestration (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of western elevation upper floor window (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



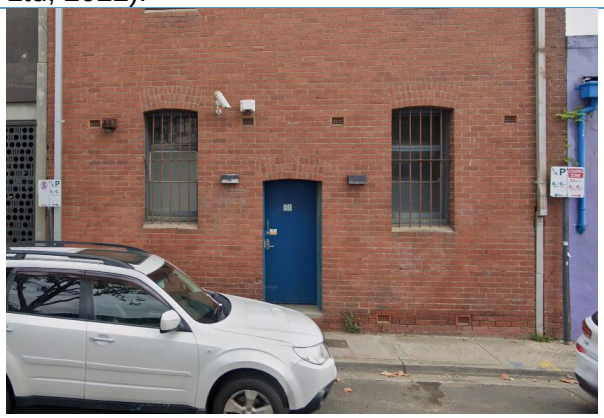
Detail view of western elevation ground floor fenestration (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of western elevation upper window lintel (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Overview of eastern elevation from Bangs Street (source: Google Streetview, 2022).



Overview of eastern elevation from Bangs Street (source: Google Streetview, 2022).

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