

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** RAILWAY STATION (FORMER)

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** Pilleau Street COLERAINE

**STUDY NUMBER:** 015

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**

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**OTHER NAME/S OF PLACE:** COLERAINE VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

**PRECINCT:** Coleraine

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Southern Grampians Shire

**PARISH:** PARISH OF COLERAINE

**ACCESS DESCRIPTION:**

CFA 430J H4; VicRoads 228 D10; located at the former junction of Pilleau and Young Sts, Coleraine

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** Local



Coleraine Railway Station (former), Pilleau Street, Coleraine.

**Image Date:** 31/01/02

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

To the extent of: 1. All the buildings, the Peppercorn Tree (*Schinus molle*) and the land associated with the Railway Reserve.

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## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

The former railway station is a single storey building constructed of tuckpointed red brick on concrete footings, with bluestone windowsills. The lower third of the brick walls have been cement rendered in an attempt to prevent rising damp. The hipped main roof, the segmental platform roof and the large sunshades are corrugated iron. The platform verandah and roof plumbing are cast iron. The long rectangular building is a symmetrical composition. A central elliptical arched doorway with an entry gable is flanked on each side by five windows with a continuous hood and plaster bands. A pair of chimneys are symmetrically placed. On the platform side are a series of double doors and windows and a central arched doorway. The original plan consisted of six rooms comprising a telegraph office, booking office, general waiting room, ladies waiting room, baggage room, and porters room. Near the main building there is a mature Peppercorn Tree (*Schinus molle*). The ancillary structures and the railway track have been removed or demolished.

## **HISTORY:**

The advent of railways in the Western District was much anticipated and created a strong political activism. The location of the lines, stations and sidings could make or break the viability of a community of whatever scale. Hamilton was particularly concerned that it should become a railway hub and be on the main line to South Australia and Adelaide. The main business of the railways was transportation of passengers and primary produce. The produce became increasingly diverse as the nineteenth century progressed. Importantly, key new industries such as butter factories in smaller towns such as Coleraine were located close to railway transport. But even in the 1880s, much wool, the Western District's principal product, was still transported by wagon to ports on the coast for export. "By the end of the century, wool cartage had been mainly taken over by the Railways, but the issue of freight charges and whether it was cheaper to transport via Melbourne, Geelong or Portland was constantly on the minds of people in the Hamilton district" (Garden, 136).

In 1870 Thomas Higinbotham, Engineer in Chief of Victorian Railways released details of the proposed railway line between Hamilton and Warrnambool which would pass through the township of Penshurst. The announcement was the beginning of a twenty-year long wait for construction to begin. It was a period of prolonged and vigorous campaigning because it was hoped that the line would continue on to Adelaide, confirming Hamilton as the capital of the Western District (Garden, 92-7). The first rail link was the early Melbourne-Ballarat line, soon extended to Ararat. From Ararat, the line could head north-west to Horsham and through the Wimmera to South Australia, or head south-west through Hamilton to the pastoral regions of south-eastern South Australia including Coleraine and Casterton. There was also a push for a link from Portland through Branxholme to Hamilton, which could extend further into the Wimmera-Mallee, thereby capturing the growing wheat trade.

In 1873 a Bill was passed giving the go-ahead for the construction of the line from Ararat to Hamilton, with a link from Hamilton to Portland. The Hamilton-Ballarat line was surveyed in 1875 and finally reached Hamilton, via Glenthompson on 26th October 1877 (Garden, 1984, 97). A number of trunk routes were also opened in the late 1880s, including the Hamilton to Koroit (via Penshurst) line (in August 1890) and the Penshurst to Dunkeld link although these proved to be uneconomic and so closures soon began (Garden, 137). By the 1920s and 1930s, rail services were in general decline as road traffic deprived the railways of a large part of their revenue. Each of the lines feeding Hamilton suffered (Garden, 138).

The Coleraine Railway League was formed in 1879 along with other railway leagues to establish rail services in the district. In December 1884 a railway extension from Hamilton to Coleraine was announced, with work commencing in 1887. Work then began on the station building, commencing in January 1889. The contractor for construction of the railway station was Mr. N Irving, with a contract sum of 1960 pounds. The building was completed in July 1889. Local tradesmen, Messrs. Tippett and Campbell installed fittings and fixtures manufactured in Melbourne, while Messrs. Greed and Son did the painting and plumbing. Seventy thousand of the bricks used were manufactured locally by Mr. G Thompson at the east end of Queens Park. The remaining

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bricks came from Ararat.

The line was opened on 20 November 1888. In 1895, the export of rabbits in ice packed railway trucks from the Coleraine railway station commenced, giving a boost to the local economy, which had been affected by the depression. But it was a mixed blessing for pastoralists whose land could catch fire in the summer from sparks from the engines.

The line was closed on 9th September 1977, and the railway station building and its surrounding land became neglected. The building was restored under a job skills program in 1993, and the grounds landscaped. The former railway station is now the home of the Coleraine Visitor Information Centre.

## **THEMATIC CONTEXT:**

3 Developing local, regional and national economies

3.8.6 Building and maintaining railways

4 Building settlements, towns and cities

4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia

## **CONDITION:**

The former Coleraine Railway Station has remained largely intact and is in very good condition.

## **INTEGRITY:**

High

## **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

What is significant?

The former Coleraine Railway Station is located on former railway land which is now a public park at the eastern end of Pilleau Street, two blocks south of Whyte Street (Glenelg Highway), and approximately 300 metres east of the central activities area of Coleraine. It was constructed in 1889 after the completion of the Hamilton-Coleraine railway extension in the previous year. The principle building is single-storey and is constructed of tuckpointed red brickwork on concrete footings with bluestone windowsills. The hipped main roof, segmental platform roof and large sunshades are corrugated iron. The platform verandah and roof plumbing are cast iron. The long rectangular building is a symmetrical composition. A central elliptical arched doorway with entry gable is flanked on each side by five windows with a continuous hood and plaster bands. On the platform side a series of double doors and windows, and a central arched doorway give access to the platform under the continuous verandah. The building is in very good condition and retains a good degree of integrity although the track and subsidiary structures have all gone. Near the station there is a mature Peppercorn Tree (*Schinus molle*), a traditional shade tree planted at stations.

How is it significant?

The former Coleraine Railway Station is of architectural and historical significance to the township of Coleraine and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The former Coleraine Railway Station is of historical significance because the arrival of the railway and its infrastructure represented an important stage in the development of the town and its hinterland which had hitherto relied on horse or bullock drawn transport. The arrival of the railway also brought about the demise of the Cobb and Co depot in Whyte Street. The station was used extensively to convey freight into and out of the district, and to carry passengers for business and pleasure.

The former Coleraine Railway Station is of architectural significance as a modified version of a standard design and as a substantial landmark building, being the largest surviving station in the Shire. Its conventional setting

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is complemented by the Peppercorn Tree in the grounds.

## COMPARISON:

302 Railway Station Complex, Station St, Glenhomspon  
429 Railway Station Buildings, Railway St, Dunkeld

**ASSESSED BY:** mgt

**ASSESSMENT DATE:**

31-Oct-01

## EXISTING LISTINGS:

## HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR  Include in RNE  Include in Local Planning Scheme

No Recommendations for Inclusions

## REFERENCES:

Author	Title	Year	Page
Andrew Ward	Railway Study	1980	
Coleraine Visitor Information Centre	Coleraine Railway Station & Grounds Background Information	n.d	
Department of Lands and Survey	Township of Coleraine (Parishes of Coleraine and Konong Wootong County of Dundas)	1873	
Department of Lands and Survey	Township of Coleraine (Parishes of Coleraine and Konong Wootong County of Dundas)	1955	
Don Garden	Hamilton, A Western District History	1984	var.
G. McGaffin	History of the Shire of Wannon, 1872-1972	1972	40-1
Malcolm J Troeth	The Cultural Landscape of Coleraine	1988	160