

GRIFFINS HEAD HOTEL

40 Hindmarsh Square

A hotel has existed on this site (Town Acre 99) since 1850. Two other early Hindmarsh Square hotels, the Hindmarsh of 1851 and the Black Eagle (later Aurora) of 1859, were both demolished in the 1980s. The Griffins Head remains, although the current building dates from 1886.

When first constructed and licensed the hotel on this site was known as the King William. It underwent three name changes before it was rebuilt in 1886 and renamed the General Gordon, a name the hotel kept until 1928. Since then it has been renamed on four occasions, its present name, Griffins Head was bestowed upon it in 1988.

The hotel was rebuilt in 1886 for Arthur Waterhouse, son of wealthy Adelaide businessman, Thomas Greaves Waterhouse. Thomas Waterhouse was the owner of several hotels including the Ambassadors Hotel and the Princes Berkley. T.G. Waterhouse bought the property on which the Griffins Head Hotel is located in 1866 shortly before he returned to England to live.

Thomas Waterhouse arrived in South Australia in 1840 and established a grocery business. In the 1840s he invested in the newly established South Australian Mining Association and profited greatly from the Burra Burra 'Monster' Mine. He became an important and wealthy businessman and was a Director of the South Australian Mining Association and an original Director and promoter of the Bank of Adelaide. He was also involved in the



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establishment of Prince Alfred College. His wealth enabled him to “adopt conscientiously the principal that one tenth of one’s income should be devoted to the cause of charity and religion”.

Waterhouse died in England in October 1885. Two months later his son, Arthur, together with the Honourable Alexander Hay, had plans approved for additions to the King William hotel. As the plans are dated in August of that year, two months before T.G. Waterhouse’s death, it is more than probable that the additions were proposed with his knowledge.

In 1896 the ownership of the hotel was transferred to the Ware brothers; Arthur, Charles and Thomas of the Torrensides Brewery, at Hindmarsh. The company amalgamated with E. Clark and Company of the East Adelaide Brewery in 1898 to

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become Clark, Ware and Company Torrenside Brewery. In the same year Clark, Ware and Co. sold the hotel to the Walkerville Co-operative Brewery Company Limited.

The Griffins Head Hotel is located on the corner of Hindmarsh Square and Grenfell Street. It is two storeyed with a chamfered corner and is typical of the some 120 Victorian hotels of this period in the City of Adelaide. The walls of the hotel are rendered and coursed, the surrounds to openings rendered and quoins are elaborate. The wide verandah is decorated with cast iron lacework. A stepped parapet hides the roof of the building. The architects, English and Soward were responsible for the design of the new hotel in 1886.

It appears that plans for a new verandah for the hotel were approved in May 1911. It is a particularly wide verandah that covers most of the footpath. This tends to be a feature of the Adelaide corner hotel once commonly found but now comparatively rare with the demolition and alteration of many in the “City of pubs and churches”. Shortly after the approval of the verandah for the General Gordon in 1911, the City Council adopted the policy that no verandah should exceed ten feet in width.



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In April 1928, the Ware brothers had plans approved by the City Council for extensive additions to the hotel to the northern end of the hotel. A building consisting of an extra saloon bar, dining room, lounge, entrance hall, a parlour and bedrooms on two floors was added doubling the size of the

hotel. The architect for the project was Arthur G. Sander of St Peters. To complement the additions, a verandah the size and width of the one on the southern end of the Hindmarsh Square elevations was planned. However, Council refused to permit its construction, in line with its 1911 policy to standardise verandahs throughout the city. The northern extension is evident.

During the late 1970s and onwards, the hotel has been renovated internally. It retains an exterior typical of nineteenth century Adelaide hotels.

The building constitutes a notable physical environment as it reinforces a prominent intersection in the City and ornaments the landscaped spaces of Hindmarsh Square.

Smith Survey 1880, field book number 2, p. 52; Morgan, EJR and Gilbert, SH, *Early Adelaide Architecture 1836-1886*, p. 3; Jackman Gooden Architects, plans held of General Gordon dated August 1885, record number 119 by English and Soward; Hoard, JL, *Hotels and Publicans*, 1986, part 3, pp. 619-620; *South Australian Register*, tender notice by Thomas English, additions to “King William IV”, 6 December 1878; *Town Clark’s Digest of*

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Proceedings, 16 April 1928 and 22 May 1911; Ward, Maurice H, *Some brief records of brewing in South Australia*; Department of Building Surveying records, Docket 126/28.

The text in this Information Sheet was copied from the **City of Adelaide Heritage Study**, October 1990, Volume One, part of a review of the City of Adelaide Plan 1986-1991. The photographs contained in this Information Sheet are a selection of those held by Heritage Services, in digital format.

The property described in this Information Sheet is a place of Local Heritage (City Significance). A heritage listing does not mean or imply right of access by the public to such properties.

The heritage related Principles of Development Control as well as the Precinct specific objectives and Principles of Development Control are contained in the Adelaide (City) Development Plan. These should be referred to in whole when contemplating any development.

Further information on the Heritage Incentives Scheme, an initiative of Council to sponsor timely and appropriate conservation action is available upon request of the Customer Service Centre.