

**REGINES
(Former City Mission Hall)**

67-71 Light Square

This former hall harks back to a period when the Light Square district was Adelaide's most infamous residential area, populated by recent immigrants, transients and the very poor in search of cheap accommodation. The place was notorious for 'vice and depravity'. The City Mission Hall was founded by philanthropists to evangelise and minister to the people of the area.

One of the oldest charity organisations in South Australia, the City Mission held its first meeting on 25 July 1867. The mission's constitution stated that the object of its existence was the evangelisation of the neglected classes of the City of Adelaide, but its work with the west Adelaide poor, the down-and-outs, the Chinese and Syrian population, prostitutes and transients was practical as well as spiritual.

The premises of Mr Verco in Currie Street were used as a mission hall in 1870, then the old Royal Victoria Theatre was rented until it was sold in 1877. To enable the City Mission to continue its services, John Darling MP, donated £500 towards the construction of a new hall and a 'most eligible site' was found on the west side of Light Square.

The locality was 'ideal' as it was one of the red light districts of the city, '....infested with brothels and soliciting prostitutes as well as having places of music, dancing and revelry'. Such entertainment could be found in the nearby Shamrock (Colonel Light Hotel) which was used as a theatre and concert hall for musical entertainment, contributing much towards local night life. Many poor working-class families lived in cottages nearby.

Brown and Thompson constructed the hall, apparently to the design of the architect H C Richardson. Mr Darling laid the foundation stone in 1877 and the premises were officially opened in March 1878. This 'plain and neat' building was deliberately functional in appearance, although this is offset by some high-quality brickwork, including polychrome brickwork to the gable.

Once the mission had a permanent home it became the venue for many activities. It gave free breakfasts to the poor on Sunday mornings, conducted reading and writing classes for the Chinese population, and ran classes for mothers. The mission was particularly interested in suppressing the 'open manifestations of prostitution in the city' and sent a petition to the chief secretary requesting changes in the law 'to suppress the glaring exhibitions'.

Although no fundamental alterations to the structure were required to adapt it to its new use as a restaurant it was seriously damaged by fire in the last two years but has since been restored.

Heritage of the City of Adelaide

Environmentally the item provides interest and diversity on the western side of Light Square. Although it differs from neighbouring buildings which are primarily industrial, this underscores its historical significance. With Cobbs to the north, the former Sands and McDougall's warehouse to the south, the building helps enclose the western side of Light Square.

ACA, Assessments; Digest of Proceedings, 15 June 1897; Chinner, C., 'Earthly paradise – a social history of Adelaide in the early 1890s', BA Hons. Thesis, University of Adelaide 1960; Horan, S., 'More sinned against than sinning – prostitution in South Australia 1836-1914', BA Hons. Thesis Flinders University, 1978, Ingram, E., The history of the Adelaide City Mission, 1967, p. 12. P. 12.; Jensen, E & R., Colonial architecture in South Australia, 1980, p. 599; MLSA, City Mission, Annual Report 1877.

The text in this Information Sheet was copied from the **Heritage of the City of Adelaide: An Illustrated Guide**, (1996). 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 included in the Register of State Heritage places. 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.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	COBBS RESTAURANT	Building No 5/0507
Address	61-65 Light Square; 4-8 Ann Street	CT 4193/297 *

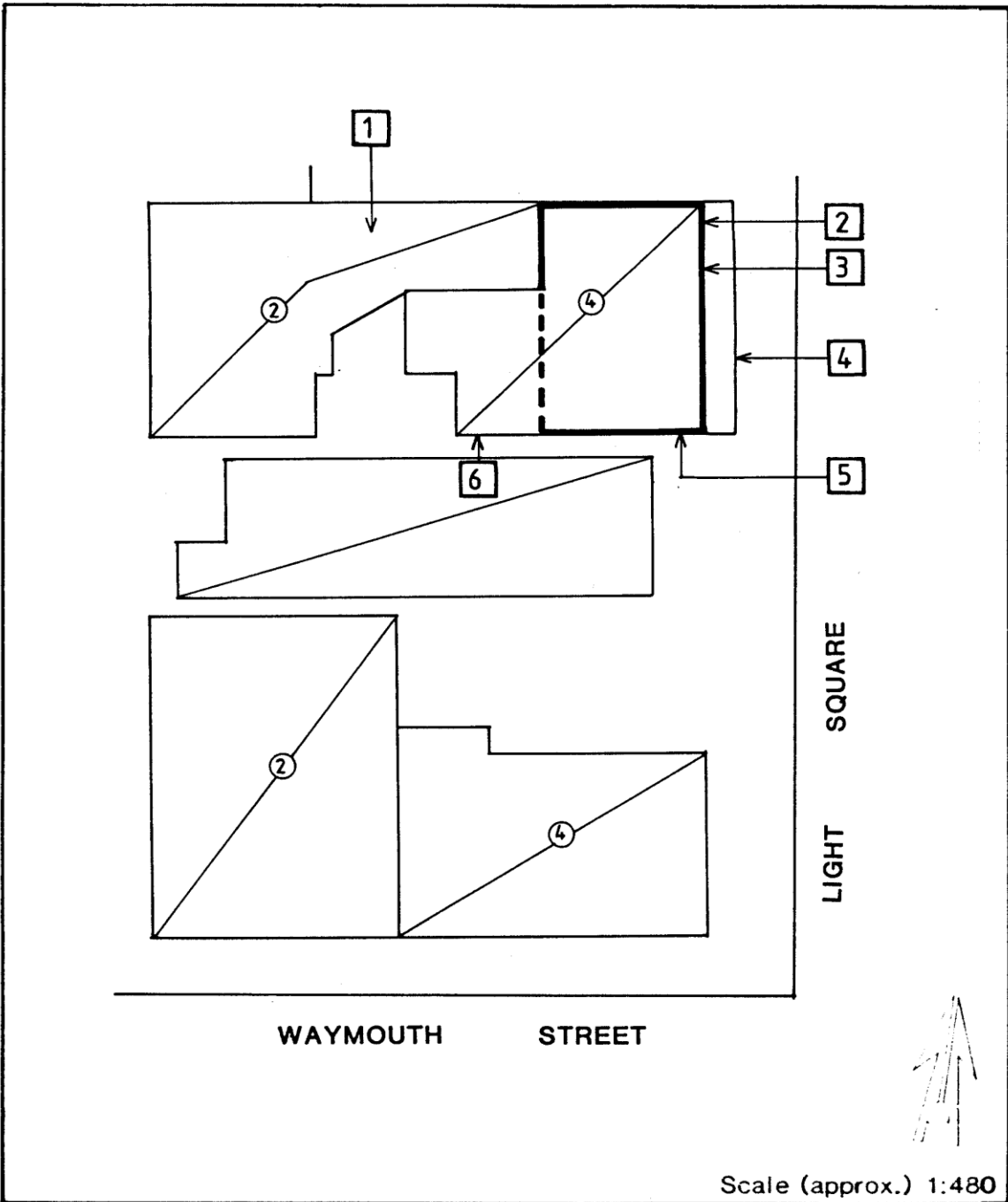


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NOTES:

1. Rear additions.
2. Rough-cast rendered masonry construction with stucco enrichment.
3. Balustraded parapet with nameplate and pediment.
4. Verandah not included in curtilage.
5. Limit curtilage to main body of building of bluestone rubble.
6. Brick additions.

* Conservation site comprises that part of the above CT to a depth of half Town Acre 180 from the Light Square alignment.