

ADELAIDE RAILWAY STATION

North Terrace

The interesting thing about the Adelaide Railway Station is that it was built with neither Parliamentary approval nor correct appropriation of the money - it also cost three times the estimates, and because all the dockets have been 'lost' no one has ever been able to find out who had authorised its construction.

So claimed Reece Jennings in his book on railway commissioner, W.A. Webb. Sir William Goodman condemned this imposing structure as an extravagance typical of expenditure on the rehabilitation of South Australia's railway network during the regime of the railways commissioner W.A. Webb from 1922 to 1930. On the contrary, that energetic and ambitious American inherited an abysmally run-down, archaic system and he embarked on a program of large-scale construction and upgrading which was the most far-reaching since the railway boom forty years earlier. The costs - while underpinning the state's economic advances during the 1920s - contributed directly to the government's near bankruptcy when markets crashed with the onset of Depression in the late 1920s.

Yet construction of Webb's centrepiece, a grand new Adelaide Railway Station, continued, indeed it was continued partly to provide work for some of the thousands of unemployed men.

The great size of the building was not purely symbolic as it was assumed that the large passenger numbers of the early 1920s would be maintained. The building typifies that era rather than the ensuing Depression and the decline in railways' use which followed patrons' move to the motor car, and it remained for many years afterwards one of the major entry points to Adelaide and indeed for visitors to South Australia.



(CD Ref 2835/34)

The station's historical role is matched by its appearance as one of the state's landmark buildings and one which makes a major contribution to the character of North Terrace and the nearby Houses of Parliament and Festival Centre. The station was built in 1926-28 to a design by Garlick and Jackman who won the architectural competition held in 1924.

The neo-classical design externally and internally harked back to nineteenth century preferences although the building material was not stone or brick but reinforced concrete.

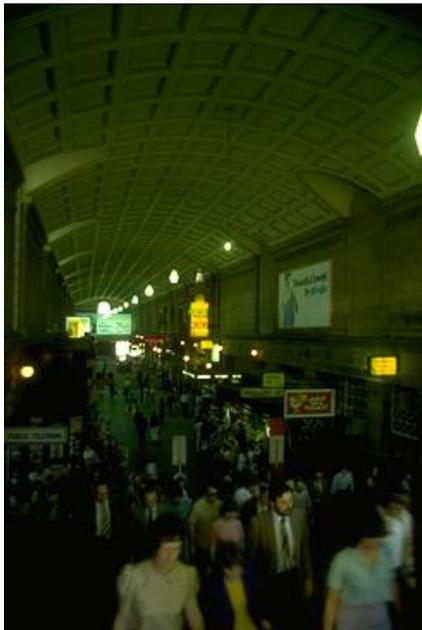
Heritage of the City of Adelaide

The design and detailing of the interior, in particular the Concourse and Marble Hall, the quality of its spaces and its pretensions are of great interest.



(CD Ref 2835/31)

During the 1980s much of the interior has been refurbished, facades cleaned and restored, and a large section approached from the original main entry hall on the east has been sympathetically converted to the Adelaide Casino. On the west, platforms have been shifted and upgraded to make way for the towering Hyatt Regency Hotel, the Adelaide Convention Centre and office development which now overshadows even the massive Adelaide Railway Station.



(CD Ref 2835/33)

Jennings, R.I., WA. *Webb: South Australian railways commissioner 1922-30*, 1973, pp. 135-7; O'Neil, E, 'The History of Adelaide Railway Station' Australian Architecture, (unpublished paper) Flinders University, October 1978. State Heritage Branch, File, Adelaide Railway Station.

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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	ADELAIDE RAILWAY STATION	Building No	272501
Address	North Terrace		

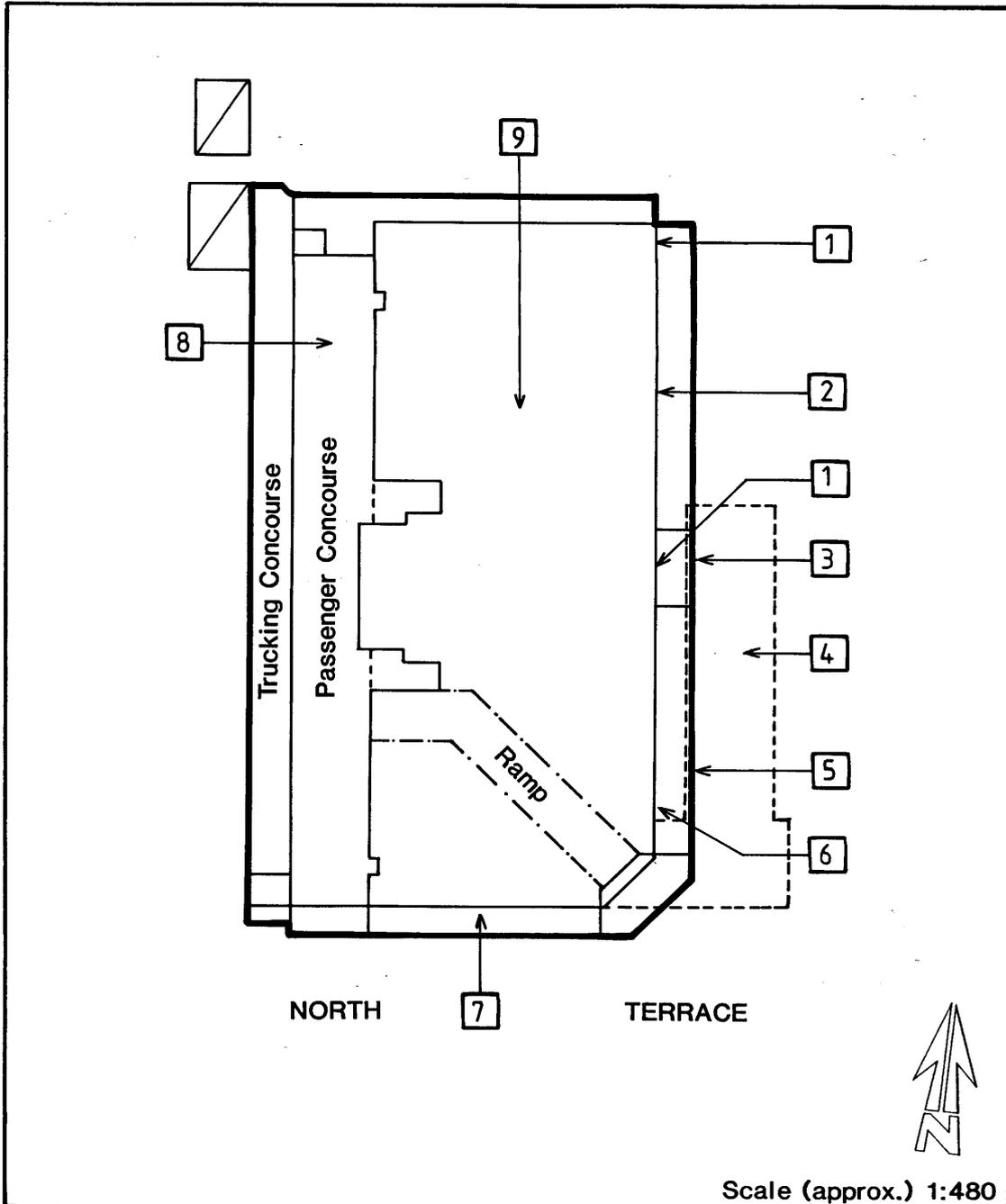


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Address	North Terrace	272501

NOTES:

1. Note: Engaged Ionic columns.
2. Rendered masonry construction with strong horizontal rustication and polished granite plinth.
3. Note: Arched entrance portico with balustraded balcony.
4. Workshops below ground level.
5. Note: Copper verandah with pressed metal ceilings.
6. Fenestration altered at ground floor level.
7. Note: Entablature detail.
8. Note: Vaulted ceiling to passenger concourse.
9. Restored Marble Hall.

