

To: South Australian Heritage Committee

From: Senior Historic Architect

Subject: REGISTER NOMINATION: -
BRITANNIA HOTEL - 1 KENSINGTON ROAD, NORWOOD

Date: 5 February, 1982

SUMMARY

The Britannia Hotel and the two adjacent houses located at Nos. 134 and 135 Fullarton Road were included on the Ninth Interim List of the Register on 8/10/81. The Minister has since given notice that the two houses would be taken off the Interim List as demolition approval had previously been granted. The significance of these three buildings was considered primarily to be their streetscape and landscape value. As the two houses are now being removed, the question arises of the individual significance of the Britannia Hotel. In addition, the hotel has also been the subject of a long running controversy concerning the proposed erection of a large advertising sign on the roof. The Supreme Court has ruled that the now previous owners could erect such a sign. The new owners are now being pressured to erect such a sign. A new report has therefore been prepared to assess the hotel in its own right. This nomination recognises the Supreme Court ruling.

Historically, the Britannia Hotel is significant because it is representative of the major period of expansion that occurred in West Norwood last century, when it had the densest population concentration in the City of Kensington and Norwood during the 1870s and 1880s. The original hotel was rebuilt to meet the needs of the rapidly growing population in the area in 1882.

Architecturally, the Britannia Hotel is a very good example of hotel architecture of the period with notable detailing still intact.

Environmentally, the Britannia Hotel supports the local character in scale, age and the dominance of corner sites by major buildings. It also forms a significant visual element at the entrance to Kensington Road. The visual importance has been heightened by the new traffic round-about.

The Integrity of the Britannia Hotel has somewhat been jeopardised by upgradings but the two main facades along Fullarton and Kensington Roads are basically intact. The additions are not visually imposing.

The Britannia Hotel is on the National Trust Register as a Recorded Listing.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Britannia Hotel at 1 Kensington Road, Norwood, be placed on the State Register of heritage items and be categorised A2, H3. Features of particular importance in the nomination are the west and south facades of the two storey building, including the verandahs.


Barry G. Rowney
SENIOR HISTORIC ARCHITECT

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures Item BRITANNIA HOTEL, 1 KENSINGTON ROAD, NORWOOD					
Age BUILT 1882	Theme	Office 15/11/02				
Period 1852 - 1883	Subject TRADE AND COMMERCE - RETAIL, ACCOMMODATION	Region ADELAIDE METRO.				
Building Type HOTEL	Style LATE VICTORIAN - COMMERCIAL	Status NAT. TRUST RECORDED LISTING				
<u>Qualitative Data</u>		<u>Grading</u>				
Component	Comment	E	VG	AG	FP	NA
<u>HISTORY</u>						
1. Context	The second Britannia Hotel is associated with a major growth period in the Kensington and Norwood Council area during the 1870s and 1880s. During this time of rapid growth eight hotels were rebuilt as two-storey structures and two new hotels were also established to service the greatly increased population. The new Britannia was constructed on the site of the original hotel which had been licenced since 1850, this being the third hotel established in the village of Norwood.	*				
2. Person/Group	Built for Messrs. Beaglehole and Johnstone		*			
3. Event	No event of importance known				*	
<u>ARCHITECTURE</u>						
4. Architect/Builder	Not readily available				*	
5. Design	Late Victorian hotel style, corner oriented, parapet and verandah on corner elevations, stepped verandah with cast iron columns, railing and frieze, corner entrance, pressed metal ceiling to underside of verandah.	*				
6. Construction	Rubble stone walls with brick quoins at corners and openings, stone is coursed and pointed on corner elevations, projecting water table, double hip corrugated iron roof behind parapets, cast iron and timber verandah.	*				
7. Interior	Altered and modernised extensively, only minor joinery items on first floor remain.		*			
8. Representation	A good example of a Victorian corner hotel.		*			
<u>ENVIRONMENT</u>						
9. Continuity	Similar to the immediate area in two storey scale at corner location, verandah, type of construction, age.	*				
10. Local Character	Large buildings feature along Dequetteville Tce and Fullarton Road opposite Parklands, maintains corner site dominance of the Norwood area.	*				

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Component		Comment		Grading E VG AG FP NA	
11. Landmark		Position on the new traffic round-about puts the building in a visually sensitive position from numerous angles, important focal point along parklands, forms a gateway to Kensington Road, Silhouette against the skyline is important.		*	
<u>INTEGRITY</u>					
12. Alterations		Single storey skillion service room and drive in bottle shop added to north side, single storey bistro added to east side, roof shapes and set backs lessen intrusion, two doors fixed shut, one window opening enlarged, interior modernised beyond recognition.		*	
13. Condition		No obvious defects		*	
14. Compatability		Original use still intact and sympathetic		*	
<u>Supplementary Information</u>					
15. Adaptation		In the course of previous upgrading the interior of the hotel has been totally destroyed. Further internal adaption could do no harm. External work however, should be restricted so as not to disrupt the buildings visual and townscape qualities.			
16. Interpretation		The hotels interpretive role is now limited to a passive townscape function. Its association, although not strong, with the race course adjacent should be appreciated.			
17. Current Situation		The hotel is to have a large advertising sign erected on its roof. The local councils fight to ban the sign won't as far as the Supreme Court where it was defeated. The sign has not yet been completed, as the owners have changed. The agreement to place the sign on the roof runs for only a limited time, after which it must be removed.			
Evaluated By		Ivar Nelsen Register Architect	Annely Aeuckens Register Historian	Date 5/11/82	
Reviewed By		Mark A. Butcher Acting Register Supervisor		Date 5/11/82	
South Australian Heritage Committee Categorization				Date	

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HISTORICAL RESEARCH: THE BRITANNIA HOTEL

The present Britannia Hotel, built in 1882, was preceded by one built in 1850 by S. Clarke, who purchased six adjoining blocks of land when Norwood was first subdivided in 1847. Originally, the area was called the East Torrens District but became the Town of Kensington and Norwood in 1853 when it was proclaimed the first town council in South Australia. The hotel, first licensed in 1850, was the third inn or hotel built in the area and is believed to have been named after the sailing ship, "Britannia" which made several voyages between England and South Australia. The nearby Victoria Park racecourse came into being about the same time, with the first race meeting held in the late 1840's. The area underwent a period of rapid growth during the 1870's. By 1880, the population had increased by 96% over the previous 10 years, totalling 10,000 inhabitants. By this time, reticulated gas and water services were laid, and a telegraph and public telephone made communications easier for residents.

Built by Beaglehole and Johnstone in 1882, the present hotel preceded by a year, the opening of a tramline to the Britannia Corner by the Adelaide and Suburban Tramway Company. About the same time, another eight hotels in Norwood/Kensington were rebuilt and an additional two hotels established. The Britannia Hotel is of bluestone and brick quoin construction and displays a wide return verandah supported by cast iron columns. The balcony roof is set back by about one third of the span of the balcony and offers welcome shade on an exposed western and southern outlook.

The Britannia Hotel is of local significance in its representation of a period of unprecedented growth in the area. It was a landmark during the time when the population increased east and south of the hotel and still is an imposing and now somewhat isolated landmark dating from the period near the Victoria Park racecourse.

SOURCES:

Daniel Manning: The Britannia Hotel - Notes, Feb. 1977

McLellan: Index to Hotels SLSA Archives

Iris Iwanicki

REGISTER HISTORIAN

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