
VICTORIA PARK ENTRANCE GATES, TURNSTILE BUILDING AND ADELAIDE RACING CLUB OFFICE BAKKABAKKANDI / PARK 16

Place Name and Address: Victoria Park Gates, Grandstand Entrance and office,
Fullarton Road
Adelaide

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

Description:

The gated entrance, the turnstile building and the onetime offices of the Adelaide Racing Club (ARC) were built as separate structures and at different time, but are connected to one another, appear as a single place and should be considered as a single place because of their common elements, consistent use of materials and repetitive detailing.

The complex is located on the Fullarton Road alignment of the onetime Victoria Park racecourse near the intersection with Wakefield Street and Dequetteville Terrace.

All three entities have almost symmetrical elevations. They are predominantly built of red brick with light cream coloured glazed terra cotta masonry elements to window and door surrounds.

At the 1954 gates, the red brick and staff moulded terra cotta opening surrounds emphasises the one, clear span above the highly decorative wrought iron gates. Elements of this wrought iron pattern are repeated above the doors of the Adelaide Racing Club office.

The c.1926 Turnstile Building, with its trussed and ventilated gable roof, houses ten turnstiles through which the racing public were mustered. The original turnstiles that remain in the building are of cast iron construction with 'softer' timber tops. The detailing and patterns suggest earlier, Victorian origins.

Wall construction is red brick with staff moulded plaster banding above the sign panel over the doors. At the front, there are five double and one single timber doors and five evenly spaced double doors at the rear. There are two timber flag poles in the central portion of the entrance.

The 1954 ARC office the easternmost structure within this collection defined or continued the stylistic influence and detailed finishes of the entrance gates and turnstile building. The internal fixtures and finishes to ceilings, walls and floors appear original.

Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places

The blue coloured, glazed terra cotta elements are noteworthy, as well as the terrazzo floor with the embedded "RAC" motif. The main entrance door is also noteworthy. It is a fine example of detailed joinery as if well armoured, with a series of small, horseshoe decorated 'bolt heads' along the frames and two, larger 'RAC' emblazoned bronze 'shields' centered to each door leaf.

External walls are mainly red brick with coloured glazed terra cotta masonry elements as well as horizontal banding below the window sills. The facade is punctuated by a series of rectangular and square steel framed windows.

The centralised main door with its window 'wings' is emphasised by the light, cream coloured glazed terra cotta surrounds. These tiles are also used as tiered decorative layers to the right of the door, which in turn balances the prominent flag pole with raised parapet, and trilogy of square windows on the facade's left hand side.

Statement of Heritage Significance:

The entrance gates, turnstile building and Adelaide Racing Club offices form a distinctive element defining portion of the boundary of Victoria Park and complementing the State heritage listed grandstand. The group exhibits fine and unusual detailing with the cream coloured glazed terra cotta masonry elements, the wrought iron gates and detailing to the office door and entrance lobby. In general, the complex is a statement of optimism during the twenties and fifties. In the South Australian context, it is one of the best remaining examples of the modern style, with influences drawn from both, European and American designs.

The facilities are also of heritage value because of their identification with racing in Adelaide generally, and with Victoria Park and the Adelaide Racing Club, in particular. Until racing ceased on the site, this was the oldest and one of the three premier racetracks in Adelaide. Both racing and the Adelaide Racing Club were identified with this site for many years but have since ceased.

The small complex of structures serves to reinforce the impact of the listed 1882 grandstand and reflects significant physical additions of a later era.

Relevant Criteria (Under Section 16 of the *Heritage Act 1993*):

(a) It demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history, in particular the continued development of Victoria Park as a major Adelaide racetrack, with the continuing upgrading of patrons' facilities.

(b) It has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance, most notably the original cast iron turnstiles of a type becoming increasingly uncommon.

Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places

- (e) It demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics, especially the coloured glazed terra cotta masonry elements.
- (f) It has strong cultural or spiritual associations for the community or a group within it, particularly the Adelaide racing community.
- (g) It has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation, in that the turnstile building — and probably the entrance gates — is another example of the work of F Kenneth Milne associated with a major sport in Adelaide.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the group of attached structures comprising the entrance gates, turnstile building and Adelaide Racing Club office, in Bakkabakkandi, Park 16, Fullarton Road, be entered in the South Australian Heritage Register.

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ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE:

Criteria

(a) It demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history, in particular the continued development of Victoria Park as a major Adelaide racetrack, with the continuing upgrading of patrons' facilities.

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The complex does not satisfy the following criteria:

(c) It may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history, including its natural history.

(d) It is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance.

However, while perhaps not 'an *outstanding* representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance', the entry complex — particularly the turnstile building — is a very good example of a significant entrance. The pair of wrought iron gates is particularly noteworthy.

Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Horse racing was a feature of the east park lands from the earliest days of the colony, with the first official race meeting being held there in 1846, within 10 years of the foundation of the colony of South Australia. Racing in the area was formalized after an Act of Parliament in 1863 permitted the Adelaide City Council to lease part of the park lands for racing. It became more firmly established in 1871 when the racecourse became known as Victoria Park.

The consolidation of racing at Victoria Park was reflected in ever more commodious buildings. The impressive grandstand was completed in 1882.

Racing at Victoria Park was especially identified with the Adelaide Racing Club which was formed in 1888 to control racing at the venue. It became responsible for the continued development of the course and supporting infrastructure.

A call for tenders for 'Erection of turnstile buildings' at Victoria, appearing in the *Register* of 12 August 1926 identifies Frank Kenneth Milne as the building's architect. Numerous newspaper entries of the period note F Kenneth Milne and his wife attending meetings at Victoria Park.

F. Kenneth Milne was one of Adelaide leading architects in the early years of the 20th century. Susan Collins has written about Milne in the Architects of South Australian digital database:

F. Kenneth Milne is one of South Australia's most well-known and prolific early to mid twentieth century architects.

Frank Kenneth Milne was born on 18 July 1885 at Tusmore House, Tusmore. He was one of eight children born to John Milne and Lucy Edith Macgeorge. His grandfather was the wine and spirit merchant Sir William Milne who was a pioneer South Australian. Milne married Hazel Muir Fotheringham on the 12 March 1913 at Chalmers Church, Adelaide. Their only son, Kenneth Lancelot (Lance) Milne, was born on the 14 August 1915 (SLSA Family History Database). He later became an accountant. Milne was a forthright character and when he died on 3 October 1980, 'at the age of 96, he was a popular doyen of South Australian architects and still a devotee of the Georgian style' (Page 1986: 129).

Milne lived a life of privilege, thanks to the generosity of his relatives who not only cared for him at various times throughout his life but also paid for his early education and his articles of apprenticeship as an architect. Milne attended Glenelg Public School for his primary education and North Adelaide Public School for his secondary schooling. He also received private finishing tuition. Milne remembered that as a primary school student, 'I always was drawing houses on my school books, even at that age, so it seemed to me that there was nothing I could possibly do in the world but architecture' (Interview with Milne 12 May 1979: 3).

Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places

Milne began his architectural career when he was articled to the well-known Adelaide architect Alfred Wells from around 1900. One of Milne's uncles paid Wells £350 for a three year apprenticeship and after 18 months Milne began to receive a wage of £1 per week (Interview with Milne undated: 11-12). Milne went on to work as a draftsman for Wells until 1906. Against the advice of Wells, Milne left Adelaide and sought architectural experience in Sydney. He worked as a draftsman for the leading firm Robertson & Marks.

In April 1909 Milne returned to Adelaide and established his own practice in Grenfell Street. It took time for him to build his practice though and he reminisced that he 'often stood at the window and 'saw friends passing and knew they were going to build, but they wouldn't come to me so that was most disappointing' (Page 1986: 130). One of Milne's earliest commissions was the Hampstead Hotel in Grote Street (1910), followed by his much revered Adelaide Oval Scoreboard (1911). In fact the South Australian Cricket Association became one of his longstanding clients. Another client was the South Australian Brewing Co. Ltd. Much of Milne's early work comprised hotels in both metropolitan and rural areas. Over time, he established a reputation for his domestic work and designed many large residences for wealthy members of Adelaide's establishment; his family's connections proving invaluable. However Milne also undertook charitable work. At the outbreak of World War One he worked as an honorary architect for the Red Cross (S.A. Division) and this role continued into the post-war years.

Earlier in 1912 Milne took on his first articled pupil, John Richard Schomburgk Evans. Evans completed his articles in 1915 but soon after enlisted in World War One. After the war he returned to Adelaide and became Milne's first partner in 1920 and the practice became known as F. Kenneth Milne and Evans. Charles Alexander Russell was Milne's second articled pupil and like Evans he went on to become a partner in 1925. However the partnership was terminated and from 1931 Milne operated as a sole practitioner until 1946 (Johnson, Beck and Woodburn 1984: 3). Over the following decades, other partners joined Milne including Rolfe V. Boehm (1946), Lindsay C. Dawkins (1946), briefly Russell S. Ellis (c.1947), F.P. Bulbeck (c.mid 1950s) and John Twopeny (1960). Milne's 'volatile' disposition resulted in '[j]ust about every architect in Adelaide ... [being] in partnership with old Ken at one time or another' (Page 1986: 202).

Throughout his career, Milne played an active role in the profession. He was the President of the South Australian Institute of Architects (SAIA) from August 1937 to August 1939. In 1940 he was a founding member of the Architects' Board of South Australia which administered the Architects Act - an act which governed the registration of architects (Page 1986: 191). He helped establish the Chair of Architecture at the University of Adelaide and was a member of the Faculty of Town Planning and Architecture. His association with the University of Adelaide was reinforced when he established the 'Kenneth and Hazel Milne Travelling Scholarship in Architecture' for architecture students.

Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places

Milne designed many significant Adelaide buildings including Lister House on North Terrace (1927), and the Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society building on Waymouth Street (1928). In 1933 he travelled to Britain and Europe for several months where he took a keen interest in Georgian architecture particularly the work of Robert and James Adams. This influence can be seen in his designs for Sir Alexander Downer's residence at Aldgate, known as Arbury Park (c.1930s), and his own house, Sunnyside on Stanley Street in North Adelaide (c.1936). Milne is well-known for his exceptional detailing. He laboured over the design of elements such as skirtings, architraves and windows (Interview with Milne 29 April 1979: 2).

Other important buildings include Goldsbrough House on North Terrace (1935) and the H.C. Sleigh building on Pirie Street (1950s). The Sleigh building was criticised at the time because it was designed in the Georgian style. However it illustrates a significant transition point in the state's architectural history when traditional Classical designs were still considered relevant by some architects such as Milne even in the face of modernism. Milne was reluctant to embrace modernism and gradually retired from practice during the period from 1956 to 1962.

Milne's contribution to architecture was recognised during his lifetime. In 1944 he was awarded the first SAIA Award of Merit for Domestic Architecture for his own residence Sunnyside. In 1953 he was honoured with her Majesty's Coronation Medal. In 1970 he was awarded Life Fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. Milne's passion for architecture was matched by his enthusiasm for sport. He was an avid sportsman and a life member of both the S.A. Rugby Union and the Adelaide Rowing Club.

The new additions to the venue were considered pleasing. The *Advertiser* of 15 November 1926 refers to recent additions made to infrastructure at Victoria Park. It refers specifically to 'the new turnstiles at the entrance to the grandstand'. There are ten turnstiles and they are sheltered by a brick structure 74 feet by 32 feet and give access to members and the general public. The present building is of the same size and is undoubtedly the same building as that to which the *Advertiser* article refers. The building retains the original cast iron turnstiles.

A report of the ARC chairman noted in the *Advertiser* of 2.8.1927 indicates that 'New entrances had been made and ten turnstiles erected, and the result had been to add considerably to the comfort of the grandstand patrons.'

Investment in physical infrastructure slowed as the effects of the Depression became more dire, and as the nation entered World War II. However, new additions were made soon after building restrictions were lifted.

The Adelaide Racing Club offices were built in 1954. Notice papers for the Corporation's Parks and Gardens Committee at its meeting of 2 November 1953 notes a request to demolish a timber structure on the site and to construct 'a brick office building north of the Grandstand Turnstile Building'. Plans for the offices were drawn by the architectural firm of Glover and Pointer.

Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places

Glover and Pointer also designed the entrance gates on the western side of the Turnstile Building that was built about the same time as the ARC offices. Plans for the entrance are dated 1954 and indicate that the offices were then under construction.

The continued existence of three racing clubs based on Victoria Park, Morphettville, and Cheltenham became increasingly cumbersome with continued social change after World War II and competition for patrons from a proliferation of other sports. The three clubs amalgamated in 1976 to become the South Australian Jockey Club (SAJC), with the administration based at Morphettville.

Continued social change and the need for ever more modern facilities also made it difficult for the SAJC to maintain three principal venues. This led to the rationalization of course in the early 21st century. The last race meeting was held at Victoria Park in December 2007: the last race was run at the Cheltenham course in February 2009. Thereafter, racing, and investment in infrastructure, has been concentrated at Morphettville.

REFERENCES:

David Jones, *Adelaide Park Lands & Squares Cultural Landscape Assessment Study*, Corporation of the City of Adelaide, October 2007, pp. 737–739.

Danvers Architects, 'Victoria Park Racecourse Demolition Works: Overview Heritage Assessment', July 2002.

Adelaide City Council Archives, Notice Papers 1953–54;
Plans of Turnstile Building, BAP 00909
Plans of Office Building, BAP 09783
Plans of Entrance Gates, BAP 09952.

Architects of South Australia, www.architectsdatabase.unisa.edu.au

Advertiser, 15.11.1926; 2.8.1927.

Register, 12.8.1926; 19.8.1926.

Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places

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SITE RECORD:

FORMER NAME:	Victoria Park Racecourse
DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:	Entrance, turnstile building and office
DATE OF COMPLETION:	1954 / 1926 / 1954
REGISTER STATUS:	Description: n/a
CURRENT USE:	Description: Sports Building Commercial Dates: 08-Apr-2005
PREVIOUS USE(S):	Description: Public entrance/offices Dates: 1926/1954 to 2008
ARCHITECTS:	Name: F Kenneth Milne Glover & Pointer Dates: 1926 / 1954
BUILDER:	Name: n/a Dates: n/a
SUBJECT INDEXING:	Group: Category:
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:	Description: Adelaide City Council
LOCATION:	Unit No.: - Street No.: n/a Street Name: East Terrace Town/Suburb: Adelaide Post Code: 5000 Region No.: Region: Adelaide
LAND DESCRIPTION:	Title Type: CROWN Volume: 5999 Folio: 492 Lot No.: n/a Section: 6016 Hundred: Adelaide

Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places

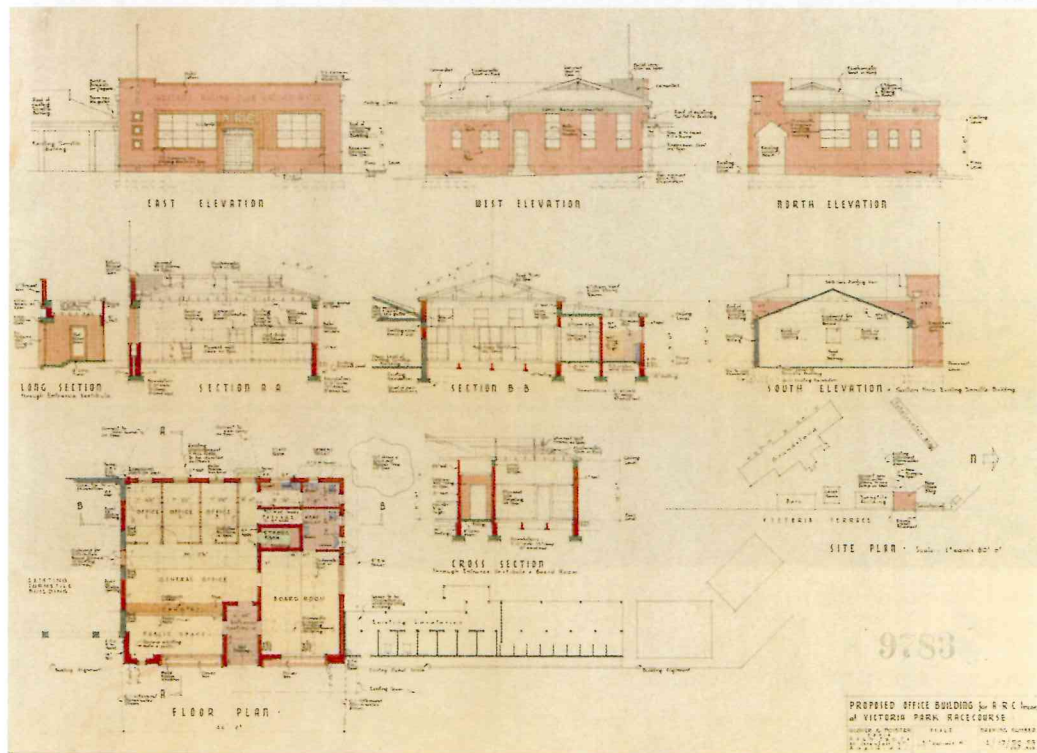
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Site Plan



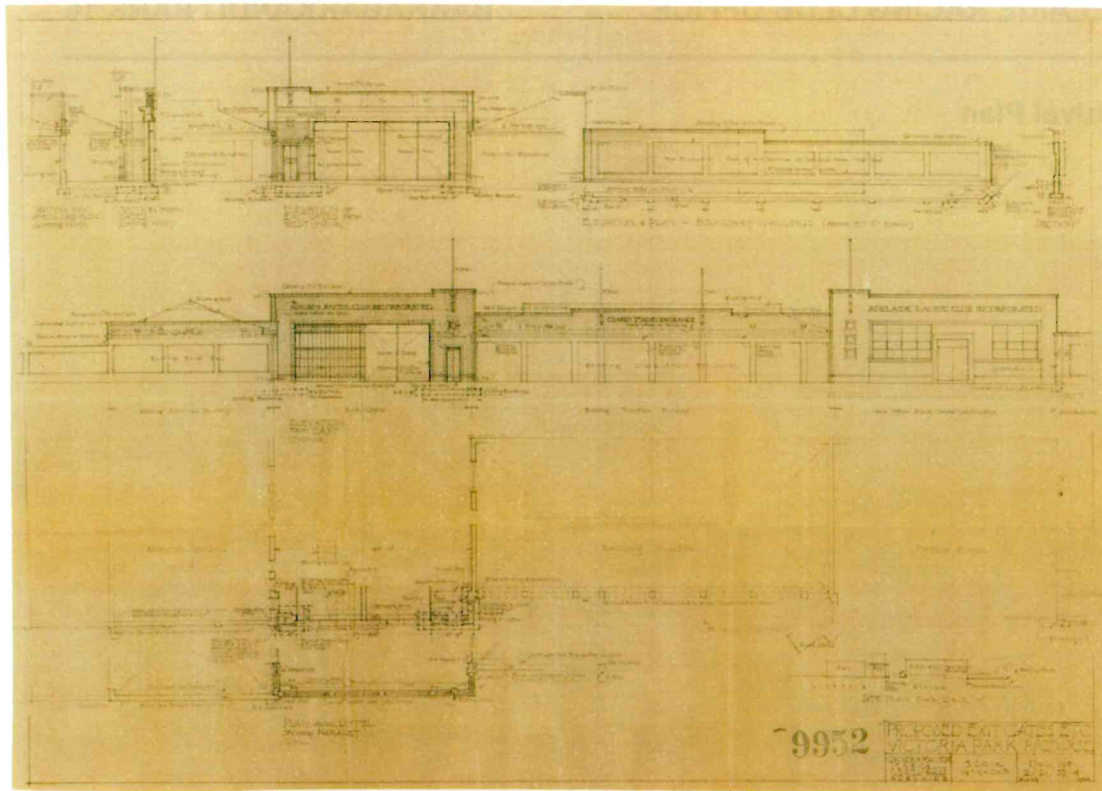
**VICTORIA PARK ENTRANCE GATES, TURNSTILE BUILDING AND
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Archival Plan



Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places

Archival Plan



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Vehicular entrance: view to west



**Vehicular entrance: view to the east and showing western elevation of the
turnstile building on the left**

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Turnstile building: view to west

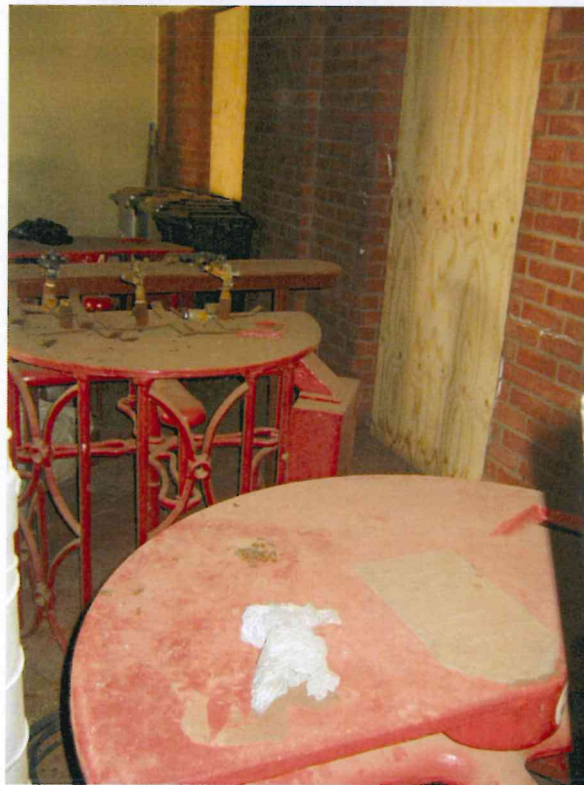


Western elevation of the turnstile building

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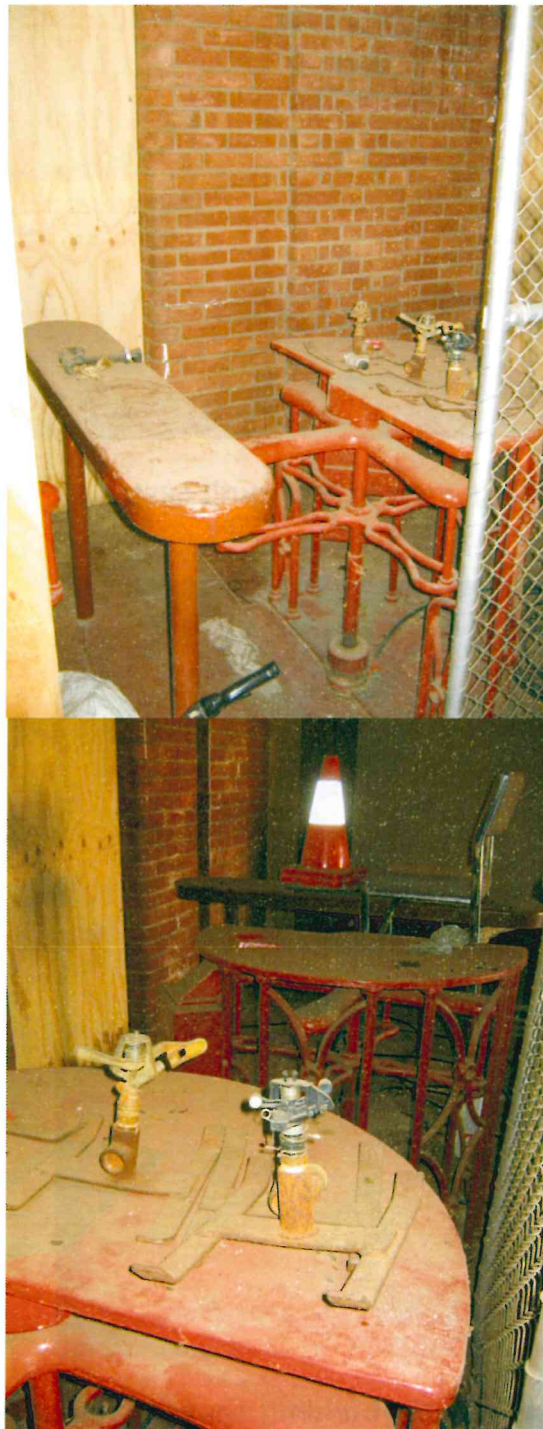


Rear of the turnstile building: view to the south east



Interior of the turnstile building showing turnstiles

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Interior of the turnstile building showing turnstiles

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Views of the Adelaide Racing Club offices

(a) View to the west

(b) View to the north-east

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Entrance to Adelaide Racing Club office



Window feature, one of three



Detail of door surrounds



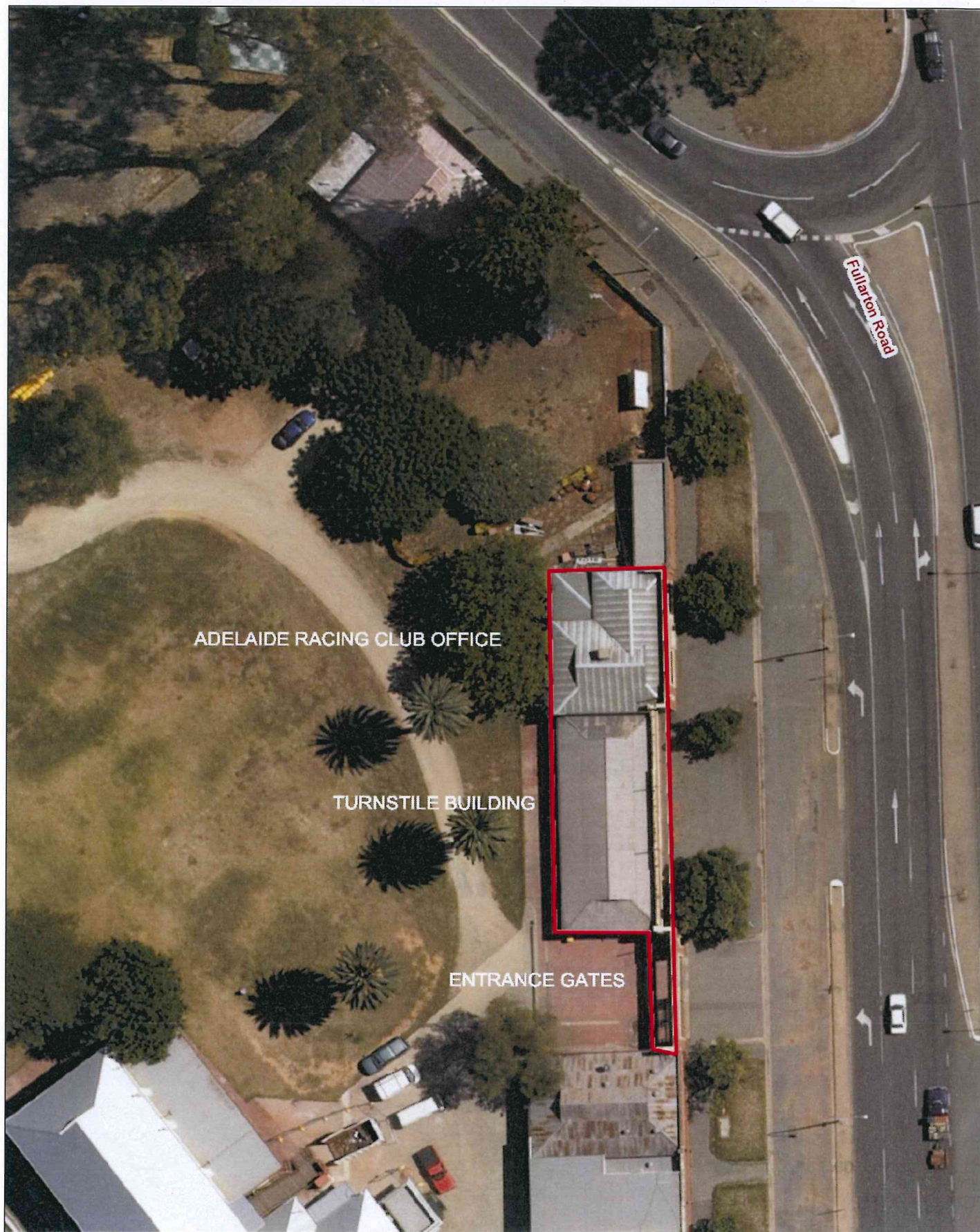
Detail of door features

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Entry to Adelaide Racing Club offices

Victoria Park Entrance Gates et al - Site Plan



Map data is compiled from a variety of sources and hence its accuracy is variable.

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Government of South Australia
Department of Environment
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