

# Former Malvern & District United Friendly Societies Dispensary – Statement of Significance, 14 Valetta Street, Malvern, June 2021

**Heritage place:** Former Malvern & District United Friendly Societies Dispensary, 14 Valetta Street, Malvern (1-6/14 Valetta Street)

**PS ref no.:** HO686



*Figure 1. UFS Dispensary, 14 Valetta Street, Malvern (November 2020)*

## ***What is significant?***

The Former Malvern & District United Friendly Societies Dispensary at 14 Valetta Street, Malvern, constructed in its current form in 1924.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The original external form, materials and detailing of the building
- The building's high level of integrity to its original design
- Imposing two-storey form
- Rigid symmetry across principal (north) elevation
- Restrained ornamentation with some Egyptian Revival motifs to principal elevation, including parapet, mouldings and pilasters

- Masonry form with rendered finish and timber-framed sash windows (multi-pane top sashes to upper-level windows on principal elevation)
- Hipped roof to northern two-storey form and gable roof to rear former hall
- Legibility of the long gable-roofed form to the rear as a former hall
- Setback from front (north) boundary.

Later alterations and additions, including the front fence and landscaping, are not significant.

***How is it significant?***

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The Former Malvern & District United Friendly Societies Dispensary is of local historical, rarity and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

***Why is it significant?***

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The Former Malvern & District United Friendly Societies Dispensary has a clear association with the movement to provide sickness benefits, medical care and general support for the working and middle classes throughout Victoria from the 1830s. Friendly societies played an important role in the development of healthcare and social welfare in Victoria from the nineteenth century, leading to the establishment of dispensaries to provide low-cost medical treatments and medicines to its members. The Former Malvern & District United Friendly Societies Dispensary, opened in 1918 and expanded in 1925 to meet growing demand, clearly illustrates this important phase in the development of social welfare and medical care in Malvern and the City of Stonnington more broadly (Criterion A).

The Former Malvern & District United Friendly Societies Dispensary is uncommon as a purpose-built dispensary constructed by the United Friendly Societies in the City of Stonnington and remains as tangible evidence of the United Friendly Societies’ program of establishing dispensaries to provide medical care and social welfare to the working and middle classes throughout the twentieth century (Criterion B).

The Former Malvern & District United Friendly Societies Dispensary is a distinctive example of a purpose-built dispensary in the City of Stonnington. Designed by prominent architects, Hudson & Wardrop, the building was noted at the time of its opening as ‘a great acquisition’ to Malvern. It features a range of characteristics that draw on the Egyptian Revival style, including a strong symmetrical composition, low parapet concealing the roof form behind, prominent cornice, and simple entrance detail with pilasters and a pediment. The prominent siting and large-scale nature of the Former Malvern & District United Friendly Societies Dispensary are distinctive qualities of the building (Criterion E).

**Primary sources:**

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Malvern Heritage Review, GJM Heritage (June 2021)