

6.32 St Vincent Place East (South Melbourne) – H0441

Existing Designations:

Heritage Council Register:	nil
National Estate Register:	nil
National Trust Register:	nil

Previous Heritage Studies:

Conservation Study 1975:	Precincts 3 and 6 (part)
Conservation Study 1987:	UC1: Precinct C
Heritage Review 2000:	HO3 (part)

6.32.1 History

The residential estate known as St Vincent Place was created in 1854 as an extension to the original Emerald Hill town plan, which had been laid out two years earlier. Its striking design, attributed to Andrew Clarke (then Surveyor-General of Victoria), was based on the traditional Circus or Crescent developments of Georgian London, where housing was laid out in a curve around a central public reserve. Clarke's original scheme, as depicted on an 1855 survey map, proposed a rectangular estate with curved ends, defined by Park Street, Howe Crescent, Bridport Street and Merton Crescent. It comprised two concentric rows of residential allotments with a laneway between, enclosing an open space with two small elliptical reserves flanking a longer round-ended reserve, the latter with indications of landscaping and a network of curved pathways. This grand scheme, however, was not realised at that time, and would subsequently be revised when it was decided to run the new St Kilda railway line parallel to Ferrars Street, which effectively split the proposed St Vincent Place estate into two parts. A revised design, prepared by Clement Hodgkinson in 1857, proposed the development of each portion as a discrete subdivision. The smaller eastern portion, east of the new railway line, became a stand-alone estate with two streets that curved around a central semi-circular reserve alongside the railway cutting. This provided a total of 128 residential allotments, grouped into eight sections (numbered 38 to 46) that were bisected by laneways. The remaining portion of the St Vincent Place estate, west of the railway line, would not be subdivided until 1864.

Development of the new estate, bounded by Park, Bridport and Cecil Streets and the railway line, was slow, with an early lot plan (dated 18 July 1857) revealing that only three blocks of land had been sold by that time. These lots, all situated in Section 38 with frontage to the northern quadrant of Howe Crescent, were owned by John Ives (Lot 8) and John Watson (Lots 9 and 10). Howe Crescent, however, does not actually appear in the Sands & McDougall Directory until 1864 – and, even then, it was included only as a sub-listing off Cecil Street, rather than as a separate entry of its own. At that time, there were six residents listed in the crescent's northern quadrant, with the Victorian Artillery Regiment's orderly rooms (or drill hall) at the far end, fronting Park Street. The six houses, then designated as Nos 42, 44, 46, 48, 50 and 52, would later be renumbered as Nos 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. Their original occupants included prominent city businessmen such as Bourke Street jeweller and watchmaker Joseph Clendinnen (No 4) and Collins Street bookseller Samuel Mullen (No 5), suggesting that the estate had already begun to develop a reputation as a prestigious residential address. This was indicative of a trend across the entire St Vincent Place subdivision (ie including the portion south-west of the railway line), which, as Andrew Ward succinctly notes, developed as “a resident enclave of the highest order from an early date”.²⁶²

²⁶² Ward, Vol I, p74



Figure 6.32-1 – Detail of subdivision plan (1857), showing Hodgkinson’s revised layout of St Vincent Place

(source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.32-2 – Cox map (1865), showing the first houses, on what is now Howe Crescent

(source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

On Cox’s map of South Melbourne, prepared around 1866, four houses were indicated on the northern quadrant of Howe Crescent, laid out in a curve without the actual roadways or reserves indicated. The southern quadrant was still entirely vacant, as was the adjacent piece of land bounded by Cecil Street, Albert Road, Ferrars Place and Bridport Street. Both of these areas, however, developed soon enough. The 1866 directory noted four new residents in Howe Parade’s southern quadrant, along with Baptist and Congregational churches, and some unspecified development (listed only as “buildings”) near the railway line. The new residents included the Reverend Hugh Darling, who occupied half of a semi-detached pair at what is now 41-42 Howe Crescent, and Collins Street furniture dealer W H Rocke at No 47. In 1867, the directory recorded a total of fourteen residents in Howe Parade, in houses numbered as 4 to 9, 31, 41-42 and 46 to 50. By the following year, these had been joined by an attached pair of townhouses at No 39-40, and by a substantial 12-roomed mansion – the new residence of surgeon Dr James Barrett – at what is now No 30. This again illustrates the attraction that St Vincent Place had for South Melbourne’s wealthier and more socially aware citizens. By this time, as Allom Lovell Sanderson has observed, notable residents in the portion west of the railway line included prominent estate agents Buxton and Buckhurst, timber merchant and one-time Mayor John Stead, and architect William Elliot Wells.²⁶³

The next few years saw residential development spreading further west and south. Ferrars Place and Service Crescent (the latter referring to the curved portion of present-day Ferrars Place) both appear for the first time in the 1869 directory, with twelve and ten residents respectively. That same edition also noted new development along those previously vacant stretches of Bridport Street and Albert Road, between the railway line and Cecil Street, with eight and two residents respectively. Anderson Street is first recorded in the 1870 directory, with five residents on the east side of the street (later designated as Nos 1, 7, 9 and 11) and four more (Nos 6, 8, 16 and 18) on the west. Martin Street also appears for the first time in 1870, with six houses in its north quadrant – two on the east side of the street (Nos 7 and 9) and four on the west (Nos 8, 10, 12 and 14). The wide but short thoroughfare of St Vincent Street East (now James Service Place) is first recorded in the 1872 directory, with two new houses on each side of the street (Nos 7, 9, 12 and 14).

²⁶³ Allom Lovell Sanderson, p 3/15

Thus, by the early 1870s, all of the streets in the present-day precinct had been at least partially developed and, in several instances (such as Anderson Street, Ferrars Place and Service Crescent) there were few vacant allotments still remaining. These undeveloped sites were gradually built upon over the next two decades, with new dwellings such as the townhouses at 2-4 Anderson Street (1875-76), the large residence at 34 Ferrars Place (1877), the three-storey terraces at 43-45 Howe Crescent (1881) and the freestanding terrace at 22 Howe Crescent (1890). By the turn of the century, there were virtually no vacant lots remaining. This is clear from the MMBW map of the area, prepared around 1895, which shows densely-grained residential development throughout all streets in the precinct, and only two entirely undeveloped sites: one on the north corner of Howe Crescent and James Service Place, and another on the west corner of Cecil Street and Albert Road. These would be subsequently developed, respectively, with an Edwardian red brick villa and, several decades thence, a double-storey block of Moderne flats.

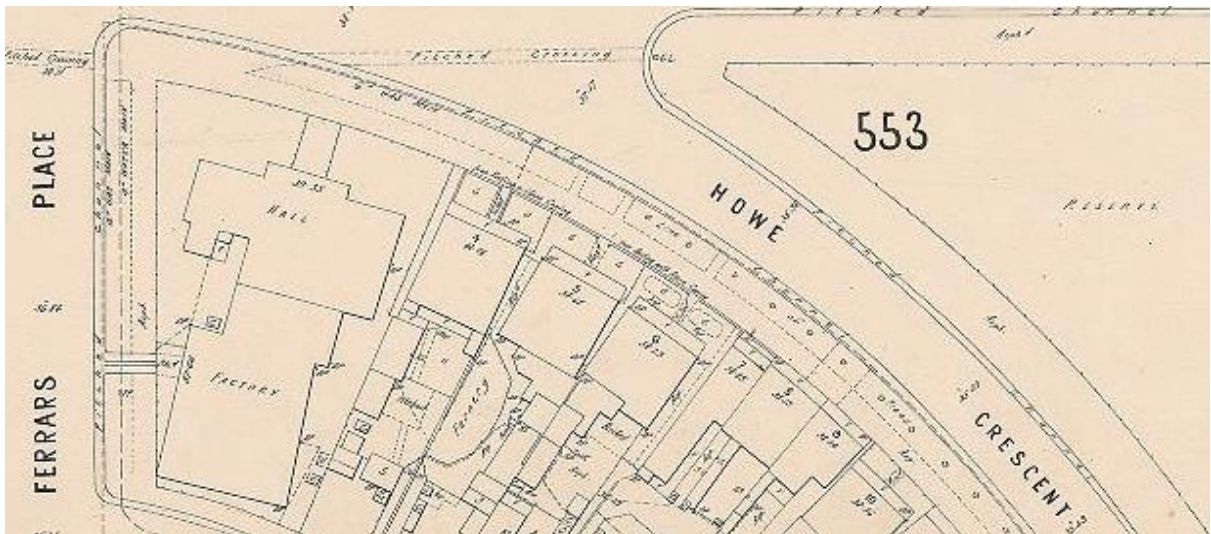


Figure 6.32-3 – Detail of MMBW Plan (c.1895), showing northern part of Howe Crescent: the drill hall at the corner (with ‘factory’ at rear), and early houses (since demolished) at Nos 4, 5 and 6 (source: Map Collection, Education Resource Centre, Melbourne University)



Figure 6.32-4 – Postcard of Howe Crescent, South Melbourne (source: Port Phillip City Collection)

By the turn of the century, virtually no vacant land remained in the precinct with the notable exception of the three public reserves. This, however, did not actually prevent further development taking place, as early dwellings began to be demolished for the construction of new and larger ones. This trend is recorded as early as 1900, when Dr Marcel Crivelli purchased and razed a row of three timber houses in Ferrars Place, erecting in their place a massive double-storey red brick townhouse that he named Arrou (now Balladonia at No 40). A few years later, a nearby timber cottage on the corner of Ferrars Place and Albert Road became the site for a small red brick shop, which for decades remained the only commercial building in the entire precinct. This trend continued into the 1920s and '30s, when several early brick villas were replaced by new bungalow-style dwellings (eg 290 Cecil Street) or flats (eg 1 Anderson Street). In certain other cases, an existing Victorian house might be retained and simply remodelled with new windows or a porch in a fashionable inter-war style (eg 282 Cecil Street). One of the more prominent additions to the precinct during this period was the new soldier's memorial hall, which was built in 1924 on the half-round reserve off Ferrars Place. This not only provided a new home for the local branch of the RSL (which had formerly occupied part of the old drill hall complex on the corner of Howe Crescent and Ferrars Place), but created a striking focal point at the apex of the estate's main avenue.

By the mid-twentieth century, the precinct had lost some of its former lustre as a prestigious residential address. Many of the larger townhouses and terraces had long ceased to be viable as single family homes, and had since been pressed into service as apartments (eg Nos 24, 37-38 and 43-55 Howe Crescent and 12, 32 and 38 Ferrars Place), guest houses (eg 4 Ferrars Place and 40-41 Howe Crescent) or, in one case, a private hospital (49 Howe Crescent). The old drill hall on the corner disappeared from directory listings in the early 1940s, and subsequently became the site of new playing fields and for the South Melbourne Trugo Club. In the early 1960s, three adjacent houses – which were amongst the oldest in the entire precinct – were razed, and a new electrical zone substation built in their place. The same period also saw the erection of small number of new houses in the area, such as the double-fronted brick villa at 9 Ferrars Place and the double-storey townhouse at 12 Howe Crescent. However, the bulk of the precinct still retained much of its late nineteenth century ambience, characterised by fine late Georgian residences. It was thus entirely appropriate when, in 1971, the large townhouse at 30 Howe Crescent (built by Dr James Barrett just over a century earlier) was acquired by the Victorian Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects as its new corporate headquarters.

6.32.2 Description

This precinct has been designated as St Vincent Place East to acknowledge the fact that it comprises the eastern portion of a much larger mid-nineteenth century estate known as St Vincent Place, originally bounded by present-day Cecil Street, Park Street, Bridport Street and Cardigan Place/Nelson Road. The larger portion of the development, extending west of the railway line and Ferrars Street, is not only already included on the heritage overlay schedule as the St Vincent Place Precinct (HO258) but also on the Victorian Heritage Register (H1291) as an area of state significance. Although the two precincts are separated both visually and historically by the railway cutting, the name St Vincent Place East has been adopted to for the eastern portion to underscore their common history and historic connection.



Figure 6.32-5 – Small single-storey timber villa at 16 Ferrars Place, and larger two-storey terraces at Nos 17-18.



Figure 6.32-6 – The row of even grander terraced houses that curves around Howe Crescent



Figure 6.32-7 – Former doctor's townhouse (later RAI A offices) at 30 Howe Crescent, with polychrome church alongside



Figure 6.32-8 – The Free Classical soldier's memorial hall (1924) in the Plantation Reserve off Ferrars Place

The St Vincent Place East precinct, which is almost entirely residential in nature, is centred around the curving thoroughfares of Howe Crescent, Martin Street and Ferrars Place. This distinctive street layout forms a pair of small triangular reserves between Howe Crescent and Cecil Street, and another half-round reserve between James Service Place and the railway line. The contiguous part of the precinct, comprising Anderson Street plus portions of Cecil Street, Bridport Street and Albert Road, is more conventional in its street layout. While this did not actually form part of the original St Vincent Place estate, it otherwise developed at the same time and today contains built fabric of a comparable type and era that characterises the adjacent crescents.

The built fabric within the precinct is overwhelmingly of nineteenth century origin, with much of it dating from the particularly early period of 1865 to 1875. Most conspicuous are the large double-storey terraces and townhouses that are concentrated along Howe Crescent particularly the uninterrupted row between the corner of Ferrars and Bridport Street and the former Congregational Church which, as Andrew Ward has put it, are “without peer” - and, to a lesser

extent, Ferrars Place, Bridport Street and Albert Road.²⁶⁴ Standout examples of Victorian townhouses include the former doctor's residence at 30 Howe Crescent (included on the Victorian Heritage Register), with its balustraded porches and tower, and the double-fronted and double-storey Italianate mansion at 34 Ferrars Place, with paired columns and ornate lacework to its full-width verandah and balcony. Terraced dwellings within the precinct are often of a similar form to the latter, albeit single-fronted. Examples are frequently found in pairs (eg 51-52 Howe Crescent, 286-288 Cecil Street, 63-65 Bridport Street, 5-7 James Service Place and 13-14 and 27-28 Ferrars Place and others), or sometimes in groups of three (15-17 Howe Crescent, 17-19 Ferrars Place and 47-51 Bridport Street and elsewhere) or even four (18-21 Howe Crescent). An interesting and entirely atypical example, of timber construction, survives at 15 Martin Street.

Some larger and grander terrace-style dwellings, distinguished by wider-than-average frontages, more ornate decorative detailing and the occasional use of canted bay windows, can also be found in the precinct. These often exist as freestanding specimens (eg 15 Ferrars Place; 23 and 24 Howe Crescent and others) although there are some attached pairs (eg 50-50a Howe Crescent). The grandest terraced housing in the precinct are Hazelwood Terrace at 46-48 Howe Crescent (included on the Victorian Heritage Register) and its neighbour, the massive three-storey terraced row at Nos 43-45. Both examples both lack balconies at their uppermost level, instead having exposed windows with heavily moulded surrounds. A number of other double-storey terraced houses have ground floors verandahs without balconies above. These – more evocative of the Georgian style of the 1860s than the ornate Boom style of the 1880s – variously exist as individual specimens (eg 53 Howe Crescent), in pairs (eg 5-7 Anderson Street, 24-25 Ferrars Place) and in rows (eg 356-360 Albert Road; 26-28 and 36-39 Ferrars Place and others). An interesting variation is the semi-detached Georgian-style houses with return verandah at ground floor but no balconies above. Two similar examples, both with brown brick walls rather than a rendered finish, survive at 39-40 Howe Crescent and 10-12 Anderson Street. The former is distinguished by unusual verandah detailing, with slender stop-chamfered columns and a lattice frieze.

The precinct also contains single-storey villas with double-fronted (and usually symmetrical) facades. Some of these, however, are still quite substantial, with wider-than-average frontages and fine detailing comparable to the larger double-storey houses. Examples include those at 41 Ferrars Place, 49 Howe Crescent, 57 Bridport Street and at 5 and 8 Ferrars Place – the last named having a distinctive and unusual off-centre front entrance. There are also smaller and more modest villas, realised in both rendered masonry and timber. These typically have hipped or gabled roofs of slate or corrugated galvanised steel, with simple timber-posted verandahs. There is a row of modest weatherboard villas, in various states of intactness, along the western side of Martin Street (Nos 2-12). Small double-fronted cottages elsewhere in the precinct tend to be also of timber construction, variously block-fronted (eg 30 and 42 Ferrars Place; 11 Howe Crescent; 374 Albert Road and elsewhere), plain weatherboard (10 and 11 Ferrars Place) or beaded weatherboard (16 Ferrars Place). There are also a few double-fronted villas of masonry construction, either in bichromatic brick (eg 9 Anderson Street) or rendered (eg 16 Anderson Street; 61 Bridport Street). Single-fronted cottages are atypical (eg 13 Martin Street).

Most of the nineteenth century houses have sympathetic (but not necessarily original) front fences; the larger townhouses and terraces typically have cast iron palisade fences with bluestone plinths, while the smaller villas and cottages have timber picket fences. A few houses have woven-wire fences that, although more associated with the inter-war period, are not intrusive. The predominant nineteenth century character of the precinct is further enhanced by the presence of original bluestone kerbing (and bluestone-pitched laneways, and by mature (and invariably deciduous) street trees.

The small amount of twentieth century housing in the precinct includes a number of Edwardian dwellings, typically realised in red brick with rendered banding, red tiled roofs, roughcast gable ends and turned timber posted verandahs. They consist of a few detached double-fronted villas (25 and 28

²⁶⁴ Ward, Vol I, p74.

Howe Crescent), a double-storeyed terraced pair (21-23 Martin Street) that harks back to nineteenth century antecedents, and, as the most notable exception, the massive Belladonia (40 Ferrars Place). The latter, one of the largest and grandest Edwardian houses in South Melbourne, is included on the Victorian Heritage Register (H0772). There are also several inter-war dwellings in the south-eastern (ie non-crescent) portion of the precinct, including an attic-storeyed bungalow (290 Cecil Street), a two-storey block of flats (1 Anderson Street), and a larger and finer blocks of flats (352 Albert Road) in the Streamlined Moderne style. Post-war houses, which are considered as non-contributory elements within the precinct, include a double-fronted brick veneer villa (9 Ferrars Place) and a two-storey house (12 Howe Crescent), both dating from the 1960s, and some more recent townhouses (eg 12 Ferrars Place, 18 & 19 Martin Street; 9 James Service Place).

The precinct contains only a very small number of non-residential buildings. Some of these, namely the two fine bichromatic brick former churches on Howe Crescent, date back to the area's earliest phase of development, and can be considered significant elements. A small painted-brick corner shop at 374 Albert Road, evidently dating from the Edwardian period, is the only commercial building in the precinct. The soldier's memorial hall, dating from 1924, is a double-storey red brick building with rendered banding and some Classical-style detailing, such as the broken pediment above the main entrance. Conspicuously sited at the junction of Ferrars Place and James Service Place, this building acts as an eye-catching focal point that is certainly not out of place in this predominantly nineteenth century precinct. Two more recent (and rather less sympathetic) incursions are the cluster of post-war buildings at the corner of Ferrars Place and Howe Crescent: the Trugo clubhouse (late 1950s), the orange brick zone substation (early 1960s) and the more recent senior citizen's centre. Another substation, of pre-war origin and rather more picturesque appearance, stands in one of the triangular reserves on the corner of Cecil and Bridport Streets.

6.32.3 References

1. Vardy Map (1855)
2. Cox map (1866)
3. MMBW Map (c.1895)
4. Sands & McDougall Directory. (various editions, 1864 onwards)

6.32.4 Thematic Context

- The late Nineteenth Century Boom
- Ways of Life: South Melbourne

6.32.5 Comparative Analysis

Needless to say, St Vincent Place East can be most pertinently compared to the remaining portion of Hodgkinson's original subdivision, which continues on the other side of the railway line. The central part of this development, where building allotments overlook a rectangular reserve with a crescent at the western end, is included on the Victorian Heritage Register. While the street layout clearly represents the completion of Hodgkinson's original scheme, the dwellings themselves were mostly built from the early 1870s onwards and thus post-date their 1860s counterparts to the east of the railway line. Notwithstanding, the housing in the both areas is otherwise very similar, consisting primarily of grand Italianate townhouses, terraces and villas, invariably erected by moneyed citizens who were attracted to what was then the district's most prestigious residential address.

In that particular regard, St Vincent Place (as a complete entity) can be compared to the four streets that surround the St Kilda Botanical Gardens. These streets (Blessington Street, Tennyson Street, Dickens Street and Herbert Street) also attracted prominent residents in the late nineteenth century, such as the noted banker Thomas Gyles Taylor, who erected a large house for himself, Bundalohn, at what is now No 6 Tennyson Street (1890). Many of these grand properties, however, were

subsequently subdivided and redeveloped during the twentieth century. Today, only a few large Victorian houses still remain along Blessington Street (eg Nos 42, 50, 62 and 74), plus Bundalohn at 6 Tennyson Street and the adjacent (but substantially altered) Himalaya at No 10, to demonstrate what was once St Kilda's most prestigious residential address in the late nineteenth century.

Another example of the residential square development is Alfred Square, also in St Kilda, which is rather less prestigious than St Vincent Place but is otherwise comparable in its early date. A rectangular site near the foreshore had been designated as a public reserve at the first land sales in 1842, and the U-shaped street that surrounded it subsequently developed with modest housing. Most of this, however, has since disappeared, with only two cottages at No 1 (1858) and No 2 (1855) now remaining. These are not unlike the smaller double-fronted cottages that can be found in St Vincent Place East.

6.32.6 Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The St Vincent Place East Precinct in South Melbourne comprises two contemporaneous residential developments of contrasting layout: one with three curved roadways (Howe Crescent, Martin Street and Ferrars Place) radiating from a half-round reserve, and another alongside with a more conventional rectilinear grid layout (Anderson Street, and parts of Albert Road, Cecil Street and Bridport Street). Both areas developed promptly from the mid-1860s to the early 1870s, and today remain largely characterised by housing from that era, principally in the form of large residences (townhouses, terraces and large villas) and some smaller dwellings.

How is It Significant?

The precinct is of historical, architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is It Significant?

Historically, the precinct is significant as a cohesive and self-contained development of housing from the late 1860s and early 1870s. It demonstrates the initial residential expansion beyond the original Emerald Hill township, which, over the next few decades, would spread further south and east. The precinct is also historically significant as South Melbourne's first prestigious residential estate, where many prominent Melbourne men (such as surgeon Dr James Barrett, and Collins Street retailers Samuel Mullen and W H Rocke) erected fine dwellings for themselves. The grand residences along Howe Crescent and Ferrars Place represent an interesting contrast to the smaller and humbler cottages that can be found in the alley-like Martin Street.

Historically, the northern portion of the precinct is significant as part of the broader St Vincent Place estate, which represents the finest example in Victoria of a nineteenth-century residential square on the English model. Although long separated from the larger part of the original estate (which is included on the Victorian Heritage Register) by the railway line, the present precinct represents the completion of the original crescent scheme. As such, it is also significant for associations with both its original surveyor Andrew Clarke, and with Clemet Hodgkinson, who subsequently revised the layout.

Aesthetically, the northern portion of the precinct is significant for its highly distinctive urban planning, namely the curving crescents, the notably wide central avenue (James Service Place), the associated reserves and avenues of mature street trees. This is enhanced by the built form itself, with rows of terraced houses and villas that follow the curve to create a truly unique streetscape, and elements such as the soldier's memorial hall, which serves as a focal point at the vista of the central avenue.

Architecturally, the entire precinct is significant for the consistent quality of its nineteenth century built form, with many fine and typically large residences that represent several types (eg detached townhouses, large villas, terraced dwellings in rows or as individual specimens) as well as smaller and more modest dwellings and cottages. Collectively and individually, these houses are of architectural significance as fine examples of late Georgian residential architecture, characterised by simple form and an understated Classical influence, complemented by some more ornate manifestations of the Boom-style of the late 1880s.

6.32.6.1 Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay Table in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

The preservation of original bluestone elements (including kerbing, guttering, spoon drains and pitching to laneways and crossovers) should also be encouraged.

6.32.7 Assessment

Simon Reeves, Heritage Alliance. Revised September 2008 and February 2009 and June 2010.

6.33 Albert Park Residential Precinct – Ho442

Existing Designations:

Heritage Council Register:	nil
National Estate Register:	nil
National Trust Register:	nil

Previous Heritage Studies:

Conservation Study 1975:	Precincts 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 26 (part), 27, 28 and 29
Conservation Study 1987:	UC1: Precinct D
Heritage Review 2000:	Heritage Overlay 3 (part)

6.33.1 History

Kearney’s 1855 map of Melbourne, which depicts existing and proposed development in the city and inner suburbs at that time, indicates that the land between the Emerald Hill settlement and the foreshore was not only virtually undeveloped at that time, but that further development was evidently not being considered. Nothing was shown between the southern boundary of the settlement – a sinuous roadway then known as Nelson Place (now Nelson Road) - and the elongated salt-water lagoon just across the municipal boundary in Sandridge. Although the principal thoroughfares of Bridport Street and Albert Road (then known as Beach Road) both extended all the way to the beach at that time, the land between them was vacant save for the dotted outline of a subdivision along the ocean frontage. The only structures depicted on Kearney’s map were a gun emplacement at the end of Beach Road (then recently constructed to defend the bay, and thus the entire colony, from perceived naval attack) and a post at the end of Bridport Street, which marked the municipal boundary.²⁶⁵

There was evidently little further development over the next decade, as Hodgkinson’s 1864 map of Albert Park depicts a virtually identical scenario. The original foreshore battery, erected in 1855, had been supplemented by two more gun emplacements, completed in 1860.²⁶⁶ Cox’s map of South Melbourne, prepared in 1866, shows a few small buildings in fenced enclosures along the foreshore (also associated with military occupation) but no sign of the seaside subdivision shown on the 1855 map, nor indeed of the Bridport Street and Beach Road extensions. This low-lying land remained isolated for some time, separated from Sandridge by the salt-water lagoon, and from Emerald Hill by the new St Kilda railway line, which had opened in 1857. The future settlement of this area was initially facilitated by the withdrawal of military forces from the foreshore barracks in 1870, and by the demolition of the gun emplacements over the next few years.²⁶⁷ The first development in the area took place in 1872, when, as noted by Allom Lovell Sanderson, “the South Melbourne Gas Company secured a six acre site for its works in the swampland adjoining the municipality boundary between South and Port Melbourne.”²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ S Priestley, *South Melbourne*, p 90.

²⁶⁶ S Priestley, *South Melbourne*, p 90.

²⁶⁷ S Priestley, *South Melbourne*, p 90. The foreshore battery at South Melbourne were superseded by a new gun emplacements erected at the heads, and also by the arrival of the ironclad warship *Cerberus* in 1871.

²⁶⁸ Allom Lovell Sanderson, 3/16.

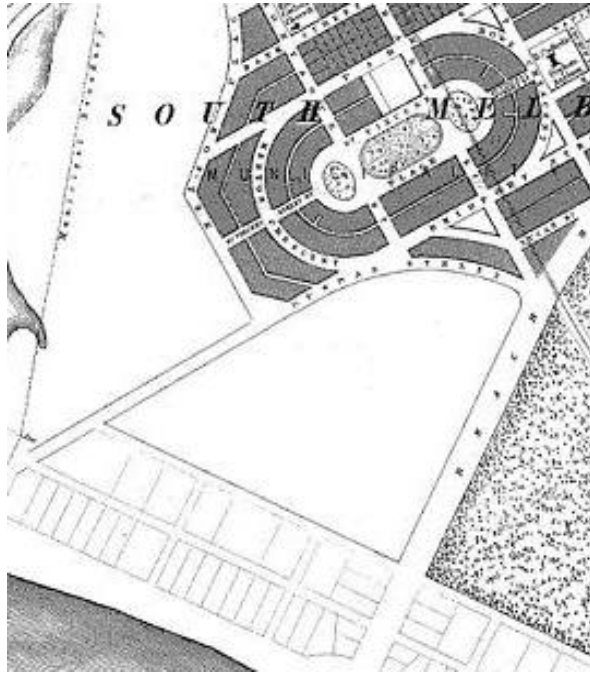


Figure 6.33-1 – Detail of Kearney Map (1855) showing the limited development of this area, south of Emerald Hill

(source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

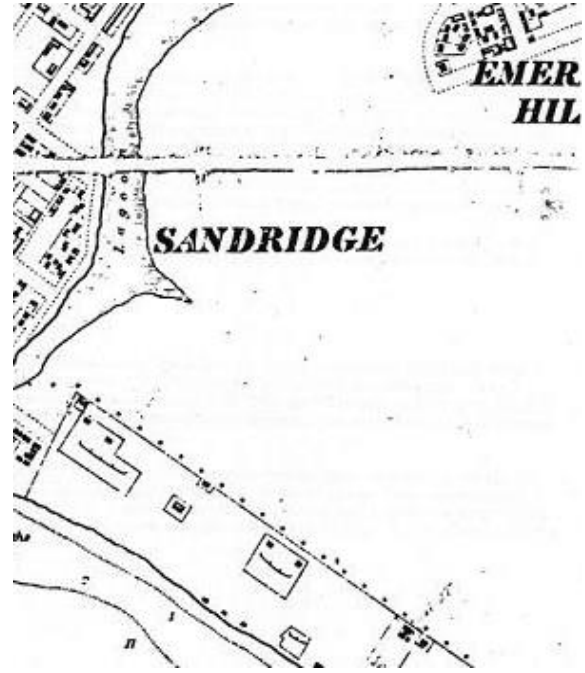


Figure 6.33-2 – Detail of Cox Map (1866), showing that little had changed by that time; note military barracks near beach

(source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

Residential settlement began slowly and gradually, initially spurred by the belated development of St Vincent Place. This distinctive subdivision, with its curved crescents and central public reserve, had been proposed in 1854 as an extension to the Emerald Hill town plan but was not formally subdivided until the 1860s. As the first houses finally appeared there from the late 1860s, residential development inevitably began to spread further south and east into the hitherto undeveloped parts of what is now Albert Park. Dundas Place, and the adjacent portion of Bridport Street (west of Ferrars Street) both appear for the first time in the Sands & McDougall Directory in 1870, followed, one year later, by Cardigan Place. The east side of Nelson Road, which marked the edge of the Emerald Hill township, had developed steadily from the mid-1850s, but the west side is not recorded in the directories until 1874. There were only three residents there at that time, but this number had increased to twelve by 1875. Two years later, the new Star & Garter Hotel opened at the end of the block, on the Dorcas Street corner. Development soon spread even further west, with Mountain Street and Pickles Street making their initial appearances in directories in 1878, followed by Greig Street in 1880.

Further to the south, the low-lying land was being gradually reclaimed, prompting a boom of residential settlement from the early 1880s. The Sands & McDougall Directory for 1884 recorded many new streets for the first time, including Barrett Street, Danks Street, Foote Street, Glover Street, Graham Street, Iffla Street, Page Street, Richardson Street and Withers Street. These were followed by Lyell Street, Tribe Street and St Vincent Street West in 1885, by Reed Street in 1887 and by Henderson Street in 1888. Nearer to the beach, a large tract of land bounded by Danks Street, Kerferd Road, Ashworth Street and Bleak House was subject to speculative development in two stages. The first stage (1890) carved up the land east of Phillipson Street into 26 new residential allotments, followed a year later by a further eighteen lots to the west.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹ Lodged Plans No 3406 (declared 18 December 1891) and 4194 (declared 30 October 1890).



Figure 6.33–3 – Detail of MMBW Map (1895), showing Victoria Avenue in centre; note relatively dense residential development, gasworks at extreme left, and vacant land (including Dinsdale Street) along Kerferd Road side.

(source: Map Collection, Education Resource Centre, University of Melbourne)

Typically, this residential boom was accompanied by an expansion of associated community facilities. More hotels appeared, most notably the three-storeyed Hotel Victoria on the prominent corner of Beaconsfield Parade and Kerferd Road (1887). One year earlier, a Carmelite priory – the first in Melbourne – had been established on Beaconsfield Parade (now the Kilbride Centre at No 52).



Figure 6.33–4 – 1940's Postcard showing west side of Kerferd Road/Terrace House, Victoria Avenue, Albert Park, 1889

(source; Port Phillip City Collection)

A few more Protestant churches appeared during this period, including the Presbyterian Church near the corner of Merton and O'Grady Streets (c.1885) and the Wesleyan Methodist Church at the junction of Bridport Street and Cardigan Place (1890). As noted by Allom Lovell Sanderson, further

residential expansion during this period was prompted by the opening of the Victoria Avenue tramline in 1890.²⁷⁰

The MMBW map of the area, prepared in 1895, indicates dense development throughout much of the precinct, with rows of small cottages and villas. There were relatively few vacant allotments still remaining in the precinct's north portion, but some occasionally large areas of undeveloped land south of Graham Street, and, more noticeably, between Phillipson Street and Kerferd Road. These, however, gradually filled out during the early twentieth century. According to the Sands & McDougall Directory, the first houses in the hitherto undeveloped block of Dinsdale Street (between Phillipson and Kerferd) were noted on the south side of the street in 1902. Five years later, there were three houses on the south side (Nos 32, 34 and 36) and another "four vacant houses" on the north side. By 1908, the block had fully developed, with twelve occupied houses on each side (designated as Nos 31 to 53 and 32 to 54). Similar development spread along the north side of Page Street, the west side of Kerferd Road, the south side of Ashworth Street and elsewhere. It has been suggested that the same developer or builder was responsible for all of these.

According to the MMBW map, there was also a few pockets of undeveloped land north of Moubray Street in the 1890s, including a large block on the corner of O'Grady and Merton streets (opposite the Presbyterian Church) and another along the south side of Little O'Grady Street. The latter was subsequently developed with a row of single-fronted brick cottages that were first recorded in the Sands & McDougall Directory in 1908. It has been said that these were built to accommodate workers at the nearby Morris Brothers Dairy, although electoral rolls reveal that the original residents comprised labourers, butchers, carters, carpenter and others – but not dairy employees. The dairy itself, which stood nearby at 370 Montague Street, was an existing facility that had been taken over by James Morris and his brothers around the turn of the century, complementing another depot that they had operated for some years at Bay Street, Port Melbourne.²⁷¹

By the early 1910s, the precinct had almost entirely filled out, and there was consequently little new residential development in the area during the inter-war years. A small number of bungalow-style dwellings were built on the few undeveloped allotments that remained. In one instance, a new house was erected at the rear of an existing Victorian villa on the corner of Moubray and Finlay streets. Curiously, while the inter-war period saw the nearby seaside suburbs of St Kilda and Elwood transformed by a boom of apartment development, very few examples of that type appeared in this part of Albert Park. One notable exception – perhaps not surprisingly erected on the site of an earlier Victorian dwelling – was Avenue Court at 64 Victoria Avenue, designed in 1934 by leading modern architect I G Anderson.²⁷² Two decades later, an entire row of nineteenth century dwellings in Victoria Avenue would be cleared for the construction of a much larger apartment development – the 17-storey Layfield Court, which formed part of the ambitious slum reclamation program carried out by the Housing Commission of Victoria during the 1960s.

6.33.2 Description

The Albert Park Residential Precinct, nominally bounded by Beaconsfield Parade, Pickles Street and Kerferd Road, comprises all the land between the original Emerald Hill township and the foreshore, which developed from the early 1870s. The central part of the St Vincent Place estate is not included, as this area is not only already covered by an existing heritage overlay (HO258) but is also on the Victorian Heritage Register. Neither of those existing listings, however, include the outer perimeter of the original St Vincent Place estate – that is, the contiguous portions of Park Street, Nelson Road and Cardigan Place – and these portions consequently been incorporated into the present Albert Park Residential Precinct.

²⁷⁰ Allom Lovell Sanderson 3/16.

²⁷¹ S Priestley, *South Melbourne*, p 106. See also *Sands & McDougall Directory*, 1900, 1901.

²⁷² National Trust of Australia (Victoria). Citation for *Avenue Court*, 64 Victoria Avenue, Albert Park.



Figure 6.33-5 – Typical row of single-fronted block-fronted Victorian cottages in St Vincent Street



Figure 6.33-6 – Double-fronted timber villas along Pickles Street. The low brick fence is not considered sympathetic.

The street layout within the precinct is irregular due to the merging of several discrete subdivision patterns. The southern end of the precinct, for example, has a conventional grid-like layout of streets running parallel and perpendicular to the foreshore, while the western part has streets in similar alignment to Pickles Street. The remaining part of the precinct has streets that follow the alignment of the adjacent St Vincent Place estate, which was laid out in 1855 (although not developed until the early 1870s). The three discrete geometries overlap between Moubray Street, Richardson Street and St Vincent Street, resulting in a number of triangular street blocks and others with acute corner sites. The streets themselves vary from major thoroughfares of generous width (eg Bridport Street, Victoria Street, Nelson Street and Beaconsfield Parade), to smaller cross streets (eg Barrett Street, Withers Street, Finlay Street) and the even narrower one-way streets (eg Little Vincent Street, Little Page Street and Dorcas Lane). Many streets retain original bluestone kerbs or gutters, and a number of laneways (and even some minor streets such as Little Page Street) retain bluestone pitching. The unusually wide bluestone spoon gutter along Kerferd Road, which was provided to assist in the drainage of swampy land in the area, is also a particularly notable feature.

The precinct, which was largely settled between the early 1870s and the late 1880s, is still dominated by nineteenth century housing, with some associated retail strip development along Bridport Street, the south side of Dundas Place, and the east side of Victoria Avenue (qv separate commercial precinct).

Much of the precinct remains strongly characterised by single-storey Victorian dwellings in the form of single-fronted cottages and double-fronted villas, variously of timber or brick construction. Single-fronted timber cottages proliferate throughout much of the precinct, defining the area's character as a nineteenth century working class suburb. The short streets to the western part of the precinct (eg Lyell, Iffla, Mountain and Tribe Streets, et al) consist almost entirely of such dwellings, with block-fronted facades and simple verandahs with cast iron columns and wrought iron lace friezes. They also proliferate in those streets closer to the beach (where land would have been cheaper), with some notable clusters in Ashworth Street, Danks Street, Graham Street and Reed Street. Little Page Street contains two interesting pairs of semi-detached single-fronted cottages with gable ends to the street, set back only by the width of their narrow verandahs.

The beachside streets also contain large numbers of single-fronted brick cottages, sometime in long rows of identical dwellings (eg 169-187 Danks Street). Single-fronted brick cottages tend to be less common in the precinct's north-west, although a few comparable rows exist such as Harlem Terrace, a row of nine rendered cottages at 21-37 Iffla Street, and Sandgate Terrace, a row of five in bichromatic brick at 54-62 Mountain Street. While the eastern part of the precinct (between

Bridport Street and Kerferd Road) is generally characterised by larger and grander Victorian residences, these are still interspersed with clusters of single-fronted brick cottages (eg 390-398 Montague Street). They are also found in larger numbers in the smaller north-south streets (eg Faussett Street) and, more prominently, in the east-west streets (eg Finlay Street, O'Grady Street and Little O'Grady Street). The last named street – another of those very narrow lane-like streets that permeate certain parts of the precinct – contains a fine row of gable-roofed cottages at Nos 3-19 that, notwithstanding their Victorian form, were actually erected as late as c.1908.

Larger double-fronted villas exist in generally smaller numbers throughout the precinct. Scattered example in timber construction can be found in the precinct's northeast, including some in Bridport Street West, Pickles Street, Dorcas Street (eg Nos 411 and 431 and elsewhere), Iffla Street (No 22), Mountain Street (eg Nos 21 and 35) and elsewhere. One extremely unusual double-fronted timber villa at 55 Greig Street had its block-fronted façade built right to the property line. Closer to the beach, a distinctive row of five double-fronted timber villas survives at 42-50 Little Page Street, set back from this narrow bluestone-pitched roadway only by the width of their narrow verandahs. In this part of the precinct, there are also some examples with asymmetrical frontages and canted bay windows in Withers Street (Nos 62-68) and Foote Street (eg Nos 55, 57). Double-fronted brick villas become more common as one heads further east. St Vincent Street, for example, contains a mix of single-fronted cottages in both timber and brick, plus some larger double-fronted brick villas.

The even larger and grander Victorian residences within the precinct tend to be concentrated on those streets that extend out from the St Vincent Place estate. Rows of double-storey terraced houses proliferate along Madden Street, Dundas Place, Montague Street and Merton Street. The last named street also has a pair of three-storeyed terraces (eg No 79-81), and an impressive row of thirteen double-storeyed terraces (on the north side, between Dundas Place and O'Grady Street) that is said to be the longest row of identical houses in South Melbourne – and perhaps even in the entire metropolitan area. By contrast, the smaller connecting streets, such as Finlay and O'Grady streets, are characterised by smaller single-storey villas and cottages – mostly of brick construction, but occasionally of timber.

Double-storey terraced houses can also be found in numbers along the major thoroughfares of Beaconsfield Parade, the west side of Nelson Road, and the west side of Victoria Avenue. These are less common elsewhere, particularly in the northeast of the precinct (eg double-storey terraces at 7 & 18 Lyell Street, and 433-437 Dorcas Street). Some of the larger double-storeyed Victorian residence near the beach incorporate rooftop towers, clearly intended to exploit ocean views. Examples include the terrace dwellings at 43 Withers Street and 73 Reed Street, and a larger double-fronted townhouse at 92 Danks Street.

As the precinct had virtually filled out before the turn of the century, there are relatively few examples of early twentieth century housing therein. A notable exception is the development of Dinsdale Street, which comprises rows of double-fronted Edwardian villas with asymmetrical facades. Similar but not entirely identical, these houses are expressed in the typical Queen Anne vocabulary of face red brick with hipped or gambrel roofs clad in slate or terracotta tile (some with ridge cresting), and porches with turned posts and timber slat friezes. Comparable but smaller pocket of Edwardian housing exists on the south side of nearby Ashworth Street, and along the prominent thoroughfares of Kerferd Road and Nelson Road. Otherwise, dwellings from that era tend to be represented by only a few isolated examples (eg villa at 64 Merton Street).

Inter-war houses are also uncommon, represented by such examples as the attic-storeyed bungalows at 60 Finlay Street and 18 Ashworth Street. A fine three-storeyed block of flats in the Moderne style, known as Avenue Court, stands at 64 Victoria Avenue, although atypical in the context of the precinct, is nevertheless of architectural and aesthetic interest in its own right as a fine example of the work of its architect, I G Anderson.



Figure 6.33–7 – A particularly fine row of double-storey rendered terrace houses in Montague Street



Figure 6.33–8 – Double-storey rendered townhouse in Danks Street, with Housing Commission flats looming behind

While retail development was concentrated on parts of Bridport Street, Cardigan Place, Dundas Place and Victoria Avenue, a number of other commercial buildings can be found throughout the precinct. These take the form of modest single-storey Victorian or Edwardian shopfronts (such as 13 Lyell Street) or larger double-storeyed residential shops (with a dwelling above), invariably in the ubiquitous form of corner stores with splayed entries (eg at 41 Lyell Street, and several others along Nelson Road). The precinct contains a number of grander non-residential buildings that provide evidence of the expansion of community facilities in the late nineteenth century, and remain today as prominent landmarks in the area. Ecclesiastical presence is dominated by two striking red brick churches, conspicuously sited on oddly-shaped acute-angled sites at either end of Bridport Street – the former Wesleyan Methodist Church at Cardigan Place, and the somewhat later Anglican Church at Madden Street. The former Presbyterian Church at 47 O’Grady Street, although smaller in scale, otherwise forms a distinctive element in the predominantly residential streetscape, as does the former Carmelite Priory (now Kilbride Centre) at 52 Beaconsfield Parade.

6.33.3 References

1. Kearney Map (1855)
2. Cox Map (1866)
3. MMBW Map (1895)
4. Sands & McDougall Directory (various)

6.33.4 Thematic Context

- Settlement, Growth & Change
 - The late Nineteenth Century Boom
- Ways of Life
 - South Melbourne

6.33.5 Comparative Analysis

The Albert Park Residential precinct represents a fine and notably particular extensive collection of late Victorian housing, mostly dating from the Boom period of the 1880s. Although there are many pockets of contemporaneous residential development throughout the municipality, these tend to vary considerably in both extent and variety.

The fine rows of double-storey terrace houses that dominate the edges of the precinct (ie Dundas Place to the east, Nelson Road to the north and Beaconsfield Parade to the south) have numerous counterparts elsewhere in the municipality. The most exceptional examples are those in the St Vincent Place development, including the smaller portion to the east of the railway line (ie Howe Crescent and Ferrars Place) as well as the larger one to the west (ie St Vincent Place proper). Other fine rows can be found elsewhere, such as Raglan Street (west of Clarendon Street) in South Melbourne, Inkerman Street (between Camden and Nelson streets) in Balaclava, and along Canterbury Road (west of Armstrong Street) and Kerferd Road in Middle Park. The rows of smaller single- and double-fronted villas that characterise the bulk of the Albert Park Precinct can also be compared to similar developments elsewhere. Notable streetscapes of modest single-fronted brick cottages include Thomson Street (west of Clarendon Street) in South Melbourne, and Richardson Street in Middle Park. Counterparts in timber abound in certain parts of Middle Park (eg Neville Street) and elsewhere, such as the particularly cohesive streetscape in Chusan Street, St Kilda East. All of these examples, however, tend to be relatively small-scaled areas in contrast to the more extensive development evident in the Albert Park precinct.

As an example of a cohesive development of late Victorian housing of various types, the Albert Park Precinct is most comparable to the nineteenth-century portions of Middle Park, and St Vincent Place (western portion) in Albert Park. The former, which also largely dates back to the early 1880s, has a similar mix of modest cottages, larger villas, double-storey terraces and freestanding townhouses. The same can also be said of St Vincent Place East in South Melbourne, albeit on a smaller and more concentrated scale. While certain parts of St Kilda (eg St Kilda Hill) also contain a range of late Victorian housing, this is invariably supplemented by a pervasive overlay of inter-war development, which imparts an entirely different character to the area.

6.33.6 Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The Albert Park Residential Precinct, nominally bounded by Kerferd Road, Beaconsfield Parade, Pickles Street, Nelson Road and Bridport Street, covers the most intact portion of an area that largely developed from the mid 1870s to the early 1890s. Formerly occupied by low-lying land that was flood prone in parts and elsewhere occupied by a military battery, the area underwent little residential development until military presence with withdrawn and land reclamation commenced in the early 1880s. Today, it remains strongly characterised by late Victorian housing, which demonstrate a broad range of typologies: from the humblest single-fronted timber cottages through to larger villas in brick and timber, to grander double-storey brick terraces and townhouses.

How is It Significant?

The precinct is of historical, aesthetic and architectural significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is It Significant?

Historically, the precinct is significant as an early, ambitious and notable attempt to encourage residential development beyond the boundaries of the Emerald Hill township of 1852. The gradual expansion to the south, southeast and southwest of the original settlement, over several successive phases, is significantly demonstrated by the building stock itself. The prominent streets closest to Emerald Hill and St Vincent Place (such as Nelson Road, Cardigan Place, Dundas Place and Park Street) remain strongly characterised by 1870s development, while the more intensive development of the 1880s Boom period is more evident in the smaller streets to the south and south-west. The subsequent infill of Edwardian housing, most notably apparent in the precinct's south-eastern corner (between Phillipson Street and Kerferd Road), demonstrates the last significant phase of residential settlement in the precinct, concentrated in its outermost edges.

The predominantly residential character is enhanced by a number of contemporaneous non-residential buildings, such as churches, schools and shops, which provide evidence of the expansion of community facilities during the precinct's key phase period of development over the last three decades of the nineteenth century.

Aesthetically and architecturally, the precinct is significant for its fine collection of late Victorian dwellings. These demonstrate a range of typical housing types of the 1870s and '80s: modest single-storeyed cottages in both timber and brick (mostly concentrated in the south-east and south of the precinct) as well as grander villas, double-storeyed terraces and townhouses (mostly concentrated in the east of the precinct). Although these exist both as cohesive strips (eg single rows of terraces or cottages) and as more heterogenous streetscapes (with a mixture of dwelling types), they are nevertheless unified by their closely comparable dates and by their frequently consistent scale, form, materials and detailing. Considered collectively, the late nineteenth century housing in the Albert Park Residential Precinct represents one of the finest, more extensive and most varied collections of 1870s and 1880s dwellings in the City of Port Phillip.

6.33.7 Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay Table in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

The preservation of original bluestone elements (including kerbing, guttering, spoon drains and pitching to laneways and crossovers) should also be encouraged.

6.33.8 Assessment

Simon Reeves, Heritage Alliance. Revised September 2008 and February 2009.

Sub-precinct – Montague Commercial Precinct

6.33.9 Location and extent



6.33.10 Thematic context

Victoria's framework of historical themes

5. Building Victoria's industries and workforce: 5.2 Developing a manufacturing capacity, 5.3 Marketing and retailing, 5.6 Entertaining and socialising, 5.8 Working

Port Phillip thematic environmental history

4. Industry: 4.2 South Melbourne, 4.5 Growth and prosperity

5. Settlement: growth and change: 5.1 Three settlements: Sandridge, St Kilda and Emerald Hill, 5.3 The late nineteenth century boom, 5.4 Depression and recovery: the inter-war years

6.33.11 History

Montague

The Montague area, bounded by City Road, Boundary Road, and the Port Melbourne and St Kilda Railway lines, was established in the 1880s as land was subdivided and sold.

The 1880s were a period of rapid growth in Emerald Hill with a population of 25,000 by 1880, rising to 43,000 at the end of the decade. Port Melbourne saw a similar growth, but from a smaller starting point. A number of the municipal councillors were prominent real estate developers and financiers including Matthias Larkin, James Page, J.R. Buxton and W. Thistlethwaite, or were land speculators such as William Buckhurst. As a result subdivision and street construction (although rudimentary) went ahead rapidly.

The Montague area was promoted as an area for 'persons of the artisan class', and this was reflected in the advertisements for houses for sale such as "neat two roomed cottage and land, plastered £110, Stoke Street, off Gladstone Place". By 1875, there were 560 households and by 1900, there were 1,000 in the district, with 200 in the lanes and little streets. Many of the people attracted to the low cost housing were labourers, fisherman, boilermakers, mariners and shipwrights, probably drawn to the area because of its proximity to the docks and metal works along the river, and the noxious trades on the Sandridge flats. Owner occupation was approximately 33 per cent. Most of the houses in the smaller streets were made of timber and had two or three bedrooms. Almost no houses had a bathroom or washroom.

A contributor to the *Argus* in 1881 described the Montague area, known colloquially as "Salt Lake City", as a poorly drained sector with a terrible stench in which typhoid was rife.

[It is] "wonderful how people can live there; yet new houses are going up there daily in thick clusters, evidently intended for persons of the artisan class. Children are being reared...in great numbers. Their chief amusement here is to play in the horrible liquid surrounding their homes." (*Argus*, 16 August 1884)

Floods exacerbated the problems with one description of the 1880 flood noting:

*Pedestrians could proceed along the footpath in Flinders-street to a point a short distance beyond William-street, where the flood barred all further progress. The houses from this point to the corner of Spencer-street were flooded on the ground floors and cellars. The water could be seen stretching from a short distance below the Falls Bridge to Sandridge Bend on the one hand, and from Emerald Hill to Footscray on the other. ('The floods in Victoria', *South Australian Register*, 18 September 1880, p.6)*

MMBW plans show the Montague area was almost fully developed by the end of the nineteenth century with rows of narrow terraced houses lining the streets and laneways. Non-residential uses included several hotels, some of which still exist today, the St Barnabas Church complex in Montague

Street, but almost no factories – a ‘wire mattress factory’ at the rear of some houses in Thistlethwaite Street being one exception.

In the early twentieth century, however, industrial premises began to replace residential properties within the Montague area. These early industries were associated with the significant growth of manufacturing in Victoria after Federation in 1901 when free trade laws between the states led to the removal of all internal import duties and the Victorian manufacturing industry, particularly the clothing, boot & shoe and engineering sectors, expanded rapidly to supply Australia-wide markets. These industries were also encouraged by trade protection through tariffs and import duties on imported goods, which was a major component of Commonwealth Government policy in the first half of the twentieth century and played a 'decisive role' in developing manufacturing enterprises in the northern suburbs of Melbourne during the interwar period (Vines & Churchward, 1992:18, 20). By the late 1930s the impact of industry prompted the Montague branch of the A.L.P. to write to Council to prevent the further intrusion of factories into residential areas (*Record*, 27 April 1940, p.7).

By the 1920s, much of the housing stock was falling into disrepair due to regular flooding, inundation and little maintenance, particularly among the rental properties. However, Montague was renowned for its close knit community. The self-contained suburb had its own, school, church, police station, kindergarten, football team, hotels, post office, bank and shops.

It was areas like Montague that led to the first inquiry into the condition of housing in Victoria, which was conducted in 1913 by a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly. This first slum commission paid special note to the Montague district, noting the area between Ferrars Street and Boundary Street, and from City Road to the Port Melbourne railway, "...was very flat and the drainage bad, ... with very few exceptions the houses are all built of wood and iron..." where most did not have baths, and were small and in poor repair ('Suburban slums, evidence of Police, hovels and shelter sheds', *The Age*, 20 November 1916, p.6).



MMBW Detail Plan nos. 493 & 497 (1894) (Detail) showing part of the Montague area north of Sandridge (City) Road including the precinct at the intersection of Montague Street. Source: State Library of Victoria

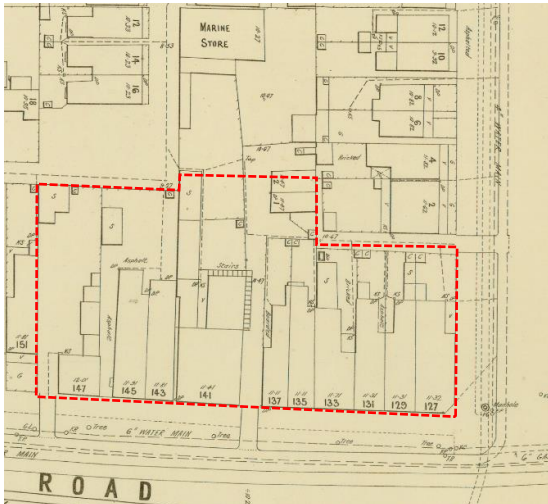
The Montague area was subsequently earmarked in the 1930s for demolition by the Slum Abolition Board. In 1936 the establishment of a Housing Investigation Board considered housing conditions in Victoria. The Board's found numerous slum pockets and narrow residential streets with poor houses, at times subject to flooding in South Melbourne. The resulting *Slum Reclamation and Housing Act* of 1938 facilitated the clearance of the majority of the houses and the relocation of the residents, many of whom eventually moved to new housing at Garden City (Allom Lovell 1995:4-20).

By the 1960s most of the small houses were gone and the area taken over by small factories, warehouses and show rooms. A few of the 19th century commercial premises on the periphery, particularly in City Road, Montague Street and Boundary Road, remained, as these were better quality buildings with viable businesses.

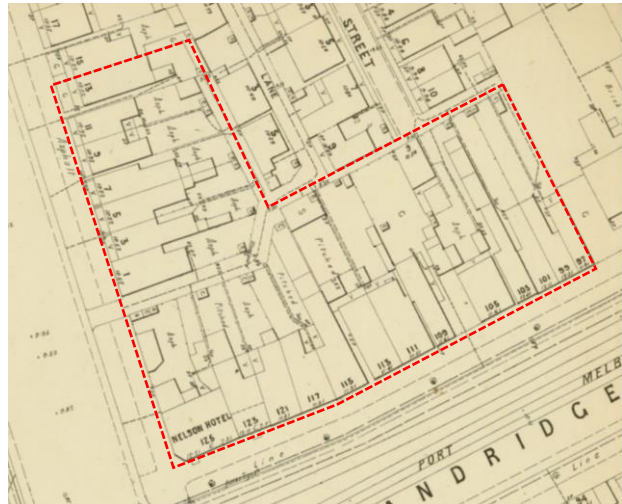
Precinct history

The opening in June 1890 of the cable tram to Port Melbourne, which crossed the Yarra at Queens Bridge then travelled down Sandridge (now City) Road to Bay Street, stimulated development along the route and by the end of the nineteenth century a small commercial centre had formed around the intersection of Sandridge Road and Montague Street on the edge of the Montague district.

Typically, the centre surrounded one of the early corner hotels that lined the route to Port Melbourne, the Hotel Nelson, which was built 1867/68 for Patrick Woulfe, a dairy farmer. The hotel was extended and upgraded in 1927 for then owner A. Carroll to plans prepared by the St Kilda architect, Harry R. Johnson (*Record* 4.12.1926, p7). The license lapsed in December 1970, and since then it has been used as a restaurant (Aizen 2004).



MMBW Detail Plan no. 493, dated 1894, showing the precinct west of Montague Street (approx. boundaries indicated). Source: SLV



MMBW Detail Plan no. 492, dated 1894, showing the precinct east of Montague Street (approx. boundaries indicated). Source: SLV

The MMBW detail plan of 1894 indicates the precinct had been fully developed by this time, including several of the extant two storey shops and residences. East of Montague Street adjacent to the Hotel Nelson, and also built for Patrick Woulfe, these included nos. 512 & 514 (built 1890-91, initially occupied by a baker and tailor), 516 & 518 and 163 Montague Street (built 1890-91). Nos 516 & 518 City Road may have been built as early as 1880 when tenders were called for 'brick story next Nelson Hotel, Sandridge-road' by John Box, architect, 156 Clarendon-street, Emerald-hill (*Argus* 14.01.1880, p3); otherwise they were built by 1893 at which time they were occupied by a pawnbroker and a butcher (RB). West of Montague Street, the group of three shops and residences at 524-28 City Road were built 1887-88, and were initially occupied by a draper, hairdresser and grocer.

The brick house at 506 Montague Street, meanwhile, was constructed 1914, as a replacement for a 4 roomed weatherboard house shown on the 1895 MMBW plan (RB). The house was built for Mrs Mary Cogan, feather dresser, and it was owned and occupied by members of the Cogan family until the mid-1960s (RB; SM). Although now an isolated residence, until at least the 1960s there had been several houses interspersed amongst the commercial buildings on City Road.

Also during the early twentieth century, the pair of shops and residences at nos 496-498 (occupied in 1905 by a fishmonger and bootmaker) and the group of shops and residences at 532-538 (occupied in 1910 by a chemist, grocer, pawnbroker and stationer) replaced earlier buildings shown on the MMBW plan.

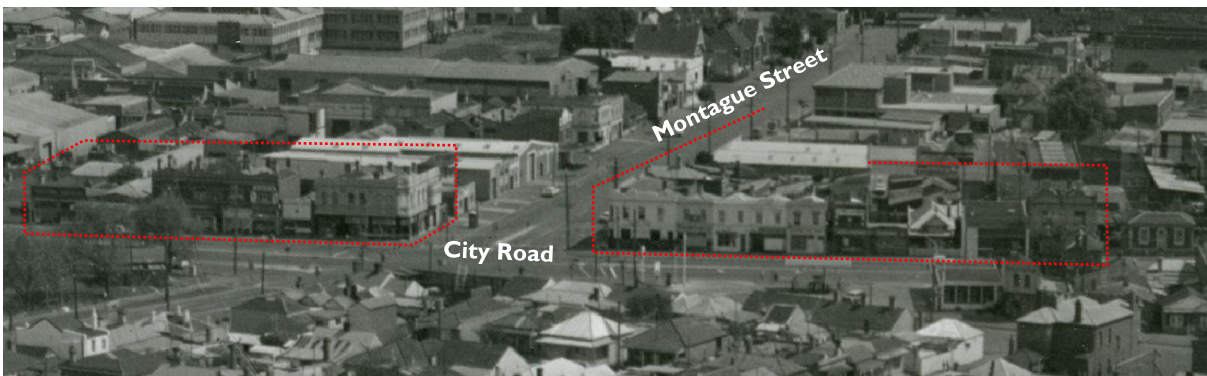
During the Interwar period, several single storey shops replaced earlier buildings, including residences, within the precinct demonstrating the transition from residential to commercial and industrial that was occurring throughout Montague at that time. In Montague Street, no. 151, the pair at 153 & 155 and the group of three at 157-161 replaced earlier residences, while on City Road, the pairs at 540-42 and 544-46 replaced earlier shop buildings.

In 1921, nos 157-163 were occupied by Zmood & Co. (General, Drapers, Manufacturers & Importers), which were advertised as 'The Montague Stores' and promoted as 'The house of quality and cheapness'. In 1935, no.163 was in use by the Paramount Pram Factory with the other buildings being used for various purposes (Trethowan 2016:8).

The precinct is captured in a 1945 aerial photograph and 1969 photograph (refer below).



Aerial photograph, Dec. 1945. Source: Landata, Melbourne and Metropolitan Area Project, Proj. No. 5, Run 21, Frame 58553



View from Park Towers, 1969, showing buildings in the precinct fronting City Road. Earlier buildings at 500-502 and 508-510 City Road are evident. Source: Port Phillip City Collection, sm2819

6.33.12 References

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6.33.13 Description

This precinct comprises a group of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century buildings, mostly commercial, situated around the intersection of City Road and Montague Street in South Melbourne.

Victorian

The Victorian era buildings in the precinct include the two storey shops, with upper level residences, at nos. 512 & 514, 516 & 518, 524-28 City Road and 163 Montague Street, and the former Nelson Hotel at 520-522 City Road.

The buildings from this period are similar in form materials, finishes and detailing - all are of masonry construction and are smooth rendered with upper levels that are often enlivened by cement-rendered ornament such as stringcourses, scrolls, corbels, moulded architraves, bracketed cornices, and solid parapets with pediments. Windows are universally double-hung sashes. Some also retain brick and rendered chimneys. No original Victorian shopfronts survive, but some retain early twentieth century shopfronts.

Description	Image
<p>512 & 514 City Road</p> <p>Built 1890-91 (RB). Pair of two storey shops with rendered facades and decorative elements (above windows, parapets). The upper façades are divided into narrow bays by pilasters and the windows have flat entablatures resting on scrolls.</p> <p>The shopfront to 512 has been altered, while 514 retains an elaborate early 20th century shopfront with recessed entry, tiling to stall-boards, decorative glass to highlight, and window framing manufactured by 'Duff'.</p>	 <p>No. 512</p>  <p>No. 514, shopfront</p>


Description	Image
<p>516 & 518 City Road</p> <p>Built by 1895, possibly as early as 1880</p> <p>Pair of two storey shops with relatively plain first floor façades except for cornice.</p> <p>The shopfront to 516 is altered, while 518 retains an early 20th century shopfront with recessed entry and tiling (some painted over).</p>	
<p>520-522 City Road, former Nelson Hotel.</p> <p>Built 1867-68 (RB), altered and expanded in 1927. Two storey Victorian period hotel with a splayed corner, but featuring prominent Interwar alterations with restrained classical detailing. The walls are rendered with tiling to the lower part. The 1927 makeover has resulted in a Stripped Classical appearance to the parapet, which features stepped pediments with recessed panels and discs above what may be the nineteenth century cornice. The corner pediment has the renovation date in raised numbers. Windows are timber with some on the first floor retaining the original six-pane upper sash, with larger almost square windows to the ground floor bar. There are Interwar label moulds over all the openings. Other details include the rendered band at mid-wall height with 'Hotel Nelson' in raised letters on both facades, and the tiled dado across the City Road elevation that returns partly along Montague Street.</p>	

Description	Image
<p>524-528 City Road</p> <p>Built 1887-1888 (RB) with some later Interwar alterations. Group of 3 two storey shops with chamfered corner. The rendered façade is divided by pilasters with Corinthian-like capitals. There are arched windows to the upper floor. Later Interwar details include Art Deco/Moderne style elements, including the parapet which is stepped at the corner and features diagonal metal numbering ('524'), and on the Montague Street side, the first floor projecting bay with curved corners and the horizontal mouldings between the floors. At ground floor, the Interwar period shopfronts have 'Duff' branded frames and feature stepped motifs at the corner of the doors and windows. There are decorative metal vent covers at the base of the walls. Original rear parts of the buildings survive and are visible from the rear lane. The brick chimneys are now rendered and feature three bands towards the top. Also at the rear, on the Montague Street boundary, is an unusual clinker brick wall (probably Interwar) with a dog-tooth band and projecting diaper pattern.</p>	
<p>163 Montague Street</p> <p>Built 1890-91 (RB)</p> <p>Two storey Victorian period building, rendered with decorative elements. The façade features hood mouldings, frieze, brackets, and panelled parapet, and was possibly partly remodelled circa 1920 (parapet) to integrate with the adjacent shops at nos 157-161. Probably urn and scroll ornaments have been removed. The roof is hipped and there is a chimney. At ground floor the arched residential entry survives and the original timber panelled door. There is a modern plate glass shop front.</p>	

Federation

The Federation era buildings in the precinct include the shops (with upper level residences) at 496 & 498, 532, 534, 536 & 538 City Road, and the house at 506 City Road.

These buildings have a similar form and detailing as those of the preceding Victorian period. Window types to the upper floors of the shops are tripartite casements with highlights, resulting in a larger opening.




Description	Image
<p>496 & 498 City Road</p> <p>Built c.1900-05.</p> <p>A pair of largely intact, two storey shops typical of the Federation period. The upper facades are rendered and retain the original triple casement windows with coloured toplights, which are framed by label moulds. The parapets are embellished with square pediments that contain a circular motif above a line and are flanked by scrolls, and at the base there are cornices set between vermiculated consoles. No. 496 has the name 'Nightingale' in raised lettering on the parapet. The end walls are expressed as pilasters that extend above the parapet and have pyramidal tops. The return walls are face brick (overpainted).</p> <p>The ground floor shopfronts appear to be original with some modifications. Original elements include recessed entrances, bullnose brickwork, shop window frames (the frame to no. 496 has a copper finish), remnant tuckpointing, pressed metal panels above doors, and battered stallboards. Sections of brick wall have been overpainted.</p>	

Description	Image
<p>506 City Road</p> <p>Built 1914.</p> <p>Single storey brick residence with Arts and Crafts influences, featuring a prominent gable end with rising sun motif and console brackets. The hip roof is clad in corrugated sheet metal and there are two red brick chimneys with rendered tops and caps and terracotta pots. The likely red brick walls have been overpainted and retain remnant tuckpointing. The verandah has original tiling to the deck, cast iron post and frieze, and exposed rafter ends. The balustrade is mid-twentieth century. There is a bay window with likely timber windows. The entrance is recessed and has a timber door (two panelled with upper glass panel) and decorative sidelight and toplight.</p>	
<p>532, 534, 536 & 538 City Road</p> <p>Built by 1910 (SM)</p> <p>Row of 4 two storey shops. The upper level is largely intact and features original elements characteristic of the Federation period - face brick (probably red, now painted, rendered to no. 532) with rendered elements (band, frieze, parapet, Queen Anne sills), casement windows (largely retained). There is some Victorian detailing also such as the brackets with vermiculated panels, urns, and the scroll brackets to the parapet. Altered ground floor shopfronts. A central door provides access to upper level residences.</p>	

Interwar

The Interwar era buildings in the precinct include the single storey shops at 540-542 and 544-546 City Road, 151, 153 & 155 and 157-161 Montague Street. All of the Interwar examples in the precinct are single storey and most have relatively plain parapets.

Also during the Interwar period, the two Victorian era corner buildings (the former Nelson Hotel and the shops at 524-528 City Road) were partly remodelled.

Description	Image
<p>540-542 City Road</p> <p>Probably Interwar (or mid-20th century)</p> <p>Single storey shop with stepped parapet (partly obscured) characteristic of the Interwar period. Ground floor shopfront has been altered. Rendered though possibly face brick originally.</p>	
<p>544-546 City Road</p> <p>Single storey paired shops with wide brick parapet with rendered panels. A pier divides the façade into two parts. The shopfront is largely intact with timber window frames and doors, and rendered stallboard with vents.</p>	
<p>151 Montague Street</p> <p>1920s</p> <p>Single storey shop.</p> <p>Wide decorative parapet with central pediment, large keystones, central panel, roughcast render and dentillation.</p> <p>The shopfront is recent.</p>	

Description	Image
<p>153 & 155 Montague Street</p> <p>1930s</p> <p>Single storey paired shops. Brick parapet (now painted) with plain divisions typical of period.</p> <p>The ground floor shopfront partly intact with stallboard but with later aluminium-framed openings.</p>	
<p>157-161 Montague Street</p> <p>Built c.1920.</p> <p>Group of 3 single storey shops with curved rendered parapet and pilasters with brackets. The roof is clad in corrugated sheet metal and is comprised of a transverse gable (visible) at the front with sawtooth sections at the rear. The two northern shops have modern plate glass shopfront windows and the southern shop facade has a full width roller door.</p>	

Streets and Lanes

The streets have basalt kerbs and channels and there are nineteenth century pitched basalt lanes with central one-pitcher drain between the Hotel Nelson and 163 Montague Street (that returns along the rear of the Montague street shops) and at the rear of 524-28 City Road.

6.33.14 Comparative Analysis

This group of buildings comprises the largest relatively intact group of surviving commercial and residential buildings dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the former Montague area, which was a distinctive neighbourhood within the former City of South Melbourne. The buildings are notable surviving elements of the commercial periphery of the former Montague neighbourhood, the fabric of which has been almost entirely eradicated through slum clearance and industrial and commercial redevelopment from the early 20th century onwards.

6.33.15 Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Montague Commercial Precinct, comprising 496-546 City Road and 151-163 Montague Street, South Melbourne is significant. This small precinct comprises a group of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century buildings (encompassing the Victorian, Federation and Interwar periods) situated around the intersection of City Road and Montague Street in South Melbourne. The

buildings mostly comprise two storey buildings originally constructed as shops and residences, and single storey shops. There is also a former hotel and a house.

The two storey Victorian and Federation era former shops and residences are similar in form materials, finishes and detailing. All are of masonry construction and are smooth rendered with upper levels that are often enlivened by cement-rendered ornament. Some retain early or original shopfronts (Nos. 496, 498, 514, 518, 524-28, 544-546 City Road). The Interwar period shops are all single storey and masonry. The former Hotel Nelson is a typical corner hotel with a splayed corner entrance and later Interwar alterations with restrained classical detailing. The only house in the precinct at 506 City Road is a single fronted terrace with a hip roof and a projecting gabled bay in the Queen Anne style with some Victorian detailing.

The streets have basalt kerbs and channels and there are nineteenth century pitched basalt lanes with central one-pitcher drain between the Hotel Nelson and 163 Montague Street and at the rear of 153-161 Montague Street and 524-28 City Road.

The buildings at 496 & 498 (shops & residences), 506 (house), 512 & 514 (shops & residences), 516 & 518 (shops & residences), 520-522 (former Hotel Nelson), 524-528 (shops & residences), 532 & 534 & 536 & 538 (shops & residences), 544-546 (shops) City Road and 151 (shop), 163 (shop & residence) Montague Street, and the basalt kerb and channel and laneways are Significant to the precinct.

The buildings at 540-542 (shop) City Road and 153 & 155 (shops), 157-161 (shops) Montague Street are Contributory to the precinct.

The buildings at 500-502, 508-510 and 530 City Road are Non-Contributory.

How is it significant?

The Montague Commercial Precinct of local historical, aesthetic, representative and social significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

The Montague Commercial Precinct is historically significant as a remnant of the former Montague neighbourhood, home to a tight knit working class community since the 1860s/70s, which was designated a slum by authorities and otherwise almost entirely demolished and replaced with industrial and commercial buildings from the early 20th century onwards. It is reflective of the earlier finer subdivision pattern in Montague, which has changed due to the redevelopment of land for industry during the mid-20th century. The precinct also includes a house dating to 1914, one of few surviving in the Montague area. As such, the precinct is associated with a now disappeared aspect of South Melbourne's history. (Criteria A & B)

The precinct is significant as a representative and largely intact example of a typical small local commercial centre surrounding an intersection and on a former tram route. The precinct is defined by two prominent corner buildings, the former Hotel Nelson at 520-522 City Road and the shops and residences at 524-528 City Road. It is also distinctive within the Montague area as a remnant group of late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, encompassing the late Victorian, Federation and Interwar periods, in an area that has otherwise been redeveloped. In addition, several early 20th century shopfronts survive. (Criteria D & E)

6.33.16 Recommendations

Include the Montague Commercial Precinct within the heritage overlay.

6.33.17 Assessment

RBA Architects & Conservation Consultants, *Fishermans Bend Heritage Review: Montague Commercial Precinct*, 2019

David Helms, *Montague Heritage Precinct Citation* 2016

Biosis Pty Ltd, *Fishermans Bend additional heritage place assessments*, 2015.

Biosis Pty Ltd, *Fishermans Bend Heritage Study*, 2013

6.34 Bridport Street/Victoria Avenue Commercial Precinct (Albert Park) – Ho443

Existing Designations:

Heritage Council Register:	nil
National Estate Register:	nil
National Trust Register:	nil

Previous Heritage Studies:

Conservation Study 1975:	Precincts 19 (part), 26 (part) and 29
Conservation Study 1987:	UC1: Precincts D (part) and N (part)
Heritage Review 2000:	Heritage Overlay 3 (part)

6.34.1 History

One of the original streets of the Emerald Hill town plan (1855), Bridport Street effectively marked its southern boundary. Although the eastern half of Bridport Street, extending from Cecil Street to Eastern Road, developed steadily in the later 1850s and '60s, the remainder did not. West of Cecil Street, Bridport Street had been physically separated by the construction of the new railway cutting in 1857, and subsequently remained undeveloped for more than a decade. Cox's map of South Melbourne (1866) shows no houses on Bridport Street between the railway line and Cecil Street, while the outline of the street itself is not even indicated west of the railway. This is reflected in the Sands & McDougall Directory, which listed Bridport Street only as far as the railway line until 1870. That year, there were six residents in total listed on the north side, between Merton and Ferrars streets, and this had increased to seven by 1871, and to fourteen by 1872. Several rows of dwellings appeared over the next few years, including Tideswell Terrace (1873) and St George's Terrace (1874).

The corresponding south side of the street was first recorded in the 1871 directory, with only two residents. The following year, a third entry appeared for one Bernard Koehler, a grocer, whose shop represented the first commercial development along what had hitherto been an entirely residential strip. A second grocery shop, operated by Charles Machin, had opened at the other end of the same block, on the Montague Street corner, by 1873. Both shops changed hands several times over the next few years; the corner premises remained as a grocery store, while the earlier one later became a fruiterer (by 1878) and a butcher (by 1881). At that time, these two shops represented the only commercial development in the western stretch of Bridport Street, with the north side still entirely residential.

By this time, development had begun to spread further south-west, along a contiguous but angled thoroughfare that formed an extension from Bridport Street to the beach. Originally known as Gatehouse Street, this was first recorded in the Sands & McDougall Directory in 1878 with a single listing that did not distinguish between the two sides of the street. The seven original residents included one shopkeeper – fruiterer Alfred Stodgell on the east side of the street at what is now No 123. The next few years saw the total number of residents increasing to ten by 1880, and to sixteen by 1881. However, as was the case with nearby Bridport Street, this development was entirely residential, with Alfred Stodgell's fruit shop remaining as the only retail outlet in Gatehouse Street.

From the early 1880s, the residential strips of Bridport Street and Gatehouse Street were gradually transformed into a commercial precinct. In 1883, the Sands & McDougall Directory recorded the first three shops on the north side of Bridport Street: a baker and fancy goods dealer on the Ferrars Street corner (now Nos 68 and 70) and another grocer's shop on the corner of Merton Street (now No 198; since demolished). The same edition noted four new shops on the eastern side of

Gatehouse Street, occupied by two more grocers, a greengrocer and a bootmaker. Further south, Alfred Stodgell's shop now had competition from a second fruiterer, John Smith, which had opened near the corner of Beaconsfield Road. Development had also begun to spread along the two blocks of Dundas Place that linked Bridport and Gatehouse streets. First listed in 1882, the new residents of these blocks included a draper at what became No 87 and a chemist at present-day No 109.



Figure 6.34-1 – Looking north along Victoria Avenue, c.1890s

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.34-2 – Looking west along Dundas Place, c.1890s

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.34-3 – Looking west along Bridport Street, c.1890s

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.34-4 – Looking west along Bridport Street, c.1908

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

As noted by Allom Lovell Sanderson, further commercial expansion during the 1890s was spurred by the opening of the new cable tram route in June 1890, which traversed Montague Street and then extended down Bridport Street and Victoria Avenue to the terminus on Beaconsfield Parade (where the now-demolished tram sheds stood opposite the Bleak House Hotel).²⁷³ The next few years, however, saw a sudden burst of commercial development in both cases. The number of shops along Bridport Street had increased to eleven by 1885, to sixteen by 1887, and thence to 26 by 1889. Gatehouse Street – which had been renamed Victoria Avenue by 1885 – expanded at a similar rate, with twelve shops by 1887, twenty by 1889 and forty by 1891. Amongst the additions were two new hotels: the Bleak House Hotel (now Beach House Hotel) on the corner of Beaconsfield Parade (c.1885) and the three-storeyed Windsor Hotel (now Nest Hotel) on the corner of Page Street

²⁷³ Allom Lovell Sanderson, p 3/16.

(c.1889). Around the same time, a third hotel – simply named the Albert Park Hotel – had been erected on the corner Dundas Place and Montague Street. By that time, both blocks of Dundas Place had also entirely filled out, with new businesses including an estate agent, a hairdresser, a fishmonger, a bootmaker and a branch of the National Bank of Australasia (later taken over by the ANZ).

The popularity of this area as a shopping strip was no doubt spurred by the opening of the new cable tram route in June 1890, which traversed Montague Street and then extended down Bridport Street and Victoria Avenue to the terminus on Beaconsfield Parade (where the now-demolished tram sheds stood opposite the Bleak House Hotel). The MMBW map of the area, prepared in the late 1890s, reveals that virtually every vacant allotment in the entire precinct had been built upon by that time. Although commercial development continued into the twentieth century, new buildings could now only be erected on the sites of older ones. A group of detached dwellings on the north side of Bridport Street, set back from the street and, in some cases dating back to the 1870s, were amongst the first casualties. Most of these sites were redeveloped in the early 1900s with new residential shops, including the Victorian-style row of three at Nos 146-40, a more typically Edwardian row of four at Nos 160-166, and the striking Queen Anne-style premises of estate agent William Machin at No 178. Another significant addition in the early twentieth century was the new post office at 87 Dundas Place, which was designed in a restrained Classical Revival style typical of government architecture of the period.

A significant change in the local area during the inter-war period – and one that would have far-reaching impact on the commercial strip of Bridport Street and Victoria Avenue – was the upgrading of the tram system. In 1919, the cable network was taken over by the Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramway Board, which thence embarked upon a programme to convert the system to electrical traction. The newly-electrified South Melbourne route opened in October 1926. While the Great Depression caused certain other local tram routes (eg Port Melbourne) to be discontinued, the electrification of the tramway down Bridport Street and Victoria Avenue ensured the ongoing viability of this important commercial strip well for years to come.

Otherwise, the strip itself underwent relatively little development during the inter-war period. A few hitherto unrepresented building types appeared. A row of five shops at what is now Nos 168-176 was razed for the construction of the Hoyt's Picture Theatre (c.1920) while, at the beach end, the Tropman Brothers' motor garage (c.1925) was erected at 189 Victoria Avenue, alongside the Bleak House Hotel. An oddly-shaped corner block at 1 Victoria Avenue, occupied by an attached pair of dwellings, became the site for a new medical clinic with residential flats attached (c.1935). The late 1930s saw the erection of a new branch of the Commonwealth Bank at 97 Dundas Place in a fashionable modern style, and the substantial remodelling, in a similar stylistic vein, of two of the strip's hotels – the Albert Park Hotel in Dundas Place and the Bleak House Hotel on Beaconsfield Parade. Not long after its upgrade, the latter premises achieved notoriety when the mutilated body of a woman was found in a nearby shop doorway in May 1942. She was the first victim of the so-called Brownout Strangler, a serial killer who briefly terrorised wartime Melbourne before being caught and revealed as Private Eddie Leonski, an American soldier. He was subsequently sentenced to death by a US court martial and hanged at Pentridge.²⁷⁴

6.34.2 Description

This precinct is an elongated and linear one, chiefly comprising the spine formed by both sides of Bridport Street, the two contiguous blocks of Dundas Place, and the eastern side of Victoria Avenue. Notwithstanding its twentieth century accretions, the precinct remains largely dominated by ubiquitous double-storey Victorian residential shops, with a shopfront below and dwelling above – a characteristic that was noted in the 1975 heritage study and still remains strongly evident today. While some exist as individual specimens (eg 121 Bridport Street), they are more commonly found in groups: in pairs (eg 185-187 Victoria Avenue; 119-121 and 194-196 Bridport Street; 91-93 and 127-

²⁷⁴James Cockington, *History happened here*, pp 145-147.

129 Dundas Place) or rows of three (114-118 and 146-150 Bridport Street), four (101-107 Bridport Street) or even five (109-117 and 124-132 Bridport Street; 115-123 Victoria Avenue). The longest row, with eight identical shops, stands at 133-147 Victoria Avenue.

Victorian shops are of brick construction, mostly with rendered façades although some in bichromatic brick (eg 101-107 Bridport Street; 115-123 Victoria Avenue), occasionally overpainted. Typical of the ornate Boom style of the 1880s, facades have moulded pilasters, cornices and stringcourses, and parapets with shaped pediments (half-round, segmental, rectangular or triangular) embellished with decorative motifs such as balustrades, brackets, consoles, urns and orbs. Some of the more unusual and striking details include vermiculated quoining (133-147 Victoria Avenue), rendered lettering (eg the exchange buildings at 91-93 Dundas Place, and a t craven chemist at 134 Bridport Street) or wrought iron balconettes to upstairs windows (93-95 Victoria Avenue). Windows at the upper levels are variously rectangular, round-arched or segmental-arched, with a broad range of Italianate-style decorative treatments including pediments, colonettes, pilasters, balustraded sills and moulded architraves with keystones. In a few cases, the upper level has been set back to create a balcony with a wrought iron balustrade (eg 133-147 Victoria Avenue) or an arcaded loggia (eg 163 and 183-187 Victoria Avenue). Some of these balconies have been infilled. At ground floor, these Victorian shops generally retain their original shopfront fittings, such as splayed entrances with tiled thresholds, huge metal-framed windows with multi-paned or leadlight highlights, and spandrels with glazed green or brown ceramic tiles.



Figure 6.34-5 – Continuous row of Victorian residential shops along the south side of Bridport Street



Figure 6.34-6 – Group of three residential shops in Bridport Street, showing original shopfronts at ground floor



Figure 6.34-7 – The Biltmore (ex coffee palace) on Bridport Street, with late Victorian shops (1900) alongside



Figure 6.34-8 – Row of Victorian residential shops along east side of Victoria Avenue, with Windsor Hotel at far end

Some street corners are marked by more substantial Victorian residential shops, with slightly broader frontages and by the ubiquitous splayed corner entrance (eg 51, 95 and 113 Victoria Avenue, 67 Cardigan Place) or, in one unusual case (134 Bridport Street), a curved corner. These shops generally echo the ornate form and detailing of their single-fronted counterparts. A notable exception is the relatively unadorned corner shop at 123 Bridport Street. Dating back to c.1872, this is the oldest surviving shop in the entire precinct, and its plain rendered walls, flat parapet and simple moulded cornice and window sills are testament to its early date. The corner of Victoria Avenue and Page Street is marked by the grand three-storeyed Windsor Hotel – the only one of the precinct’s three hotels that retains its original Boom-style appearance. Its two street facades are delineated by plain pilasters and heavily moulded cornices, with banded rustication to the ground floor and rows of round-arched and rectangular windows, respectively to the first and second floors.

The early twentieth century shops in the precinct tend to follow the same Victorian form – that is, a double-storey residential shop – albeit generally realised in red brick, with simple shaped parapets and rendered trim. Typical examples include the row at 160-166 Bridport Street. A single Edwardian shop of more striking appearance is the former Machin & Shepherd estate agency at No 178, with its steep tiled roof, twin chimneys arched parapet and projecting ground floor pediment. Far more conservative is the nearby row at Nos 146-50, which bears the date 1901 on its parapet but its otherwise essentially a late Boom-style building, with the balustraded parapet, arched windows and rusticated piers of the previous generation.

Only a small proportion of the Victorian and Edwardian shops have verandahs – not necessarily original – in the typical nineteenth century form, with cast iron posts supporting a curved roof of corrugated galvanised steel. Most shops tend to have cantilevered canopies dating from the later twentieth century, or no footpath covering at all. A few shops are distinguished by the survival of painted signage that hints at former occupants, long since departed. These include the Machin & Shepherd building at 178 Bridport Street, and the former tailor’s shop at 63 Cardigan Place, the latter retaining particularly eye-catching signage (c.1950) that advertises “invisible mending” at the “The Suit Hospital Pty Ltd”, with two pairs of robot-like figures carrying damaged clothing on hospital stretchers.

One notable element amongst the precinct’s early twentieth century fabric is the rendered brick post office at 87 Dundas Place. With its rusticated piers, in antis columns and moulded cornices, the building sympathetically echoes the Classical-style detailing of the earlier Victorian shops around it. This building also stands out as the only government building in the commercial strip. The precinct’s inter-war buildings may be stylistically different to their Victorian and Edwardian counterparts, but

nevertheless tend to be sympathetic in scale and form, and are often of architectural interest in their own right. These include the former motor garage (now supermarket) at 189 Victoria Avenue, with its stepped parapet and vehicle entry, and the former doctor's clinic and flats (now office/studio space and residences) at 1 Victoria Avenue, with its rendered walls, curved corner and projecting window hoods.



Figure 6.34–9 – Painted signage (early 1950s) at upper level of former tailor's shop at 63 Cardigan Place

The former cinema at 170 Bridport Street still stands, and while its façade has been much altered, the vast gable-roofed auditorium can still be seen at the rear. The former Bleak House Hotel (now Beach House Hotel) is a basic example of the Moderne idiom, with simple stepped parapet and fluted frieze, while the larger Albert Park Hotel stands out as a more sophisticated manifestation of the Functionalist style, with stark walls, capped parapet, porthole windows and steel-framed French doors. The nearby Commonwealth Bank at No 95 is a fine example of the stripped modern style that characterised new branch banks at that time. With its stark rendered walls, symmetrical façade and stripped piers, the building sits well within (and, perhaps, pays some deliberate homage to) the largely Victorian character of the streetscape.

Although the remaining built fabric is predominantly commercial in nature, evidence remains of the earlier (and in some cases, contemporaneous) layer of residential development. This is most evident at the eastern end of Bridport Street, where a number of double-storey terraced dwellings remain on the north side of the street. Some of these, such as St George Terrace at Nos 102-106, date back to the street's initial settlement in the 1870s. These early terraces, which can also be seen elsewhere (eg Roxburgh Terrace at 11-19 Victoria Avenue) tend to be plainer than their Boom-style counterparts of the late 1880s. Examples such as Alfred Terrace and Madam's Terrace, respectively at 74-76 and 90-94 Bridport Street, display the typically ornate parapets and balconies with wrought iron friezes and balustrades. Similar Boom-style terraced houses can also be found in the contiguous side streets, such as 311-315 Montague Street. A recurring and interesting sub-theme that is still evident in the precinct is the partial conversion of residences into shops. In these cases, an Edwardian or inter-war shopfront has simply been added to what was previously a Victorian

residence, as evidenced for example at 17-19 and 69 Victoria Avenue, 108 Bridport Street and 326 Montague Street.

6.34.3 References

1. Cox Map (1866)
2. MMBW Map (c.1895)
3. Sands & McDougall Directory (various, 1888 onwards)

6.34.4 Thematic Context

- The First Railways
- Tramway and Railway Improvements
- The late Nineteenth Century Boom
- Ways of Life: South Melbourne

6.34.5 Comparative Analysis

The linear shopping strip that extends along Bridport Street, Dundas Place and Victoria Avenue can be compared with several others in the City of Port Phillip that similarly developed along major local thoroughfares. It has much in common with its counterparts in the other suburbs within the municipality: Bay Street in Port Melbourne, Fitzroy Street in St Kilda, Carlisle Street in Balaclava, and Clarendon Street in South Melbourne. All of these developed along major roads, invariably with a tramway line down the middle and a railway station nearby. These shopping strips tended to develop gradually over more than a century. Today, they are characterised by a broad mix of commercial buildings from a succession of eras: shops, hotels and banks from the 1860s and '70s, Boom-era expansion of the 1880s, and subsequent layers of Edwardian, inter-war and post-war development.

This type of commercial expansion contrasts with those shopping strips that developed over a short period of time, generally spurred by new residential subdivisions or by expanding public transport routes. This more concentrated development can be seen along that portion of Clarendon Street that formed part of the Orphanage Estate (released for commercial development in the 1880s), and by the similarly cohesive shopping strips at Armstrong Street in Middle Park (mostly Victorian), Ormond Road in Elwood (mostly Edwardian), and Glen Eira Road in Elsternwick (mostly inter-war). Of these, the Bridport Street/Victoria Avenue precinct is most comparable to Armstrong Street in nearby Middle Park. Both are made up primarily of late Victorian residential shops; although Armstrong Street is the more intact of the two commercial streetscapes (with very few post-war buildings), Bridport Street/Victoria Street is substantially larger.

6.34.6 Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The Bridport Street/Victoria Avenue Commercial Precinct in Albert Park largely developed between 1883 and 1900 when a boom of commercial expansion transformed what had previously been a residential strip from the early 1870s. Today, the built fabric is largely characterised by rows of double-storey Victorian residential shops, a smaller number of single-storey Victorian shops, terraced dwellings, and Edwardian and inter-war shops. Amongst the more notable elements in the streetscape are the four-storey Biltmore (former coffee palace) at 152 Bridport Street, the three storey Windsor Hotel at 107 Victoria Avenue, the Albert Park Hotel at 85 Dundas Place (remodelled in a striking Functionalist style), and the similarly modern Commonwealth Bank at No 95.

How is It Significant?

The precinct is of historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is It Significant?

Historically, the precinct is significant for associations with an early and significant phase of settlement in Albert Park. The precinct provides evidence both of the initial development of Bridport Street as a residential strip from the early 1870s, and its subsequent transformation into an important local commercial hub during the 1880s and 90s. The subsequent (if less extensive) layer of Edwardian and inter-war shops – a few of which were simply added to the front of existing Victorian houses – demonstrates the precinct’s ongoing commercial development well into the twentieth century.

Aesthetically, the precinct is significant as a substantially intact streetscape of late Victorian commercial buildings. They demonstrate cohesion through their common scale (primarily double storeyed), materials (primarily rendered brick) and detailing (Italianate façades with ornamented parapets and so on). Street intersections are punctuated by corner shops with the ubiquitous splayed entrance. Prominent landmarks include the three-storeyed Windsor Hotel at 107 Victoria Avenue (corner Page Street) and the even grander four-storeyed former Biltmore coffee palace at 152 Bridport Street. The Victorian built fabric is complemented by a number of Edwardian residential shops of sympathetic form and scale, and by some later inter-war buildings (including two hotels and a bank in the Moderne style) that are of aesthetic interest in their own right.

6.34.7 Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay Table in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

The preservation of original/early painted signage, shopfronts and verandahs should be encouraged.

The preservation of original bluestone elements (including kerbing, guttering, pitching and spoon drains) should also be encouraged.

6.34.8 Assessment

Simon Reeves, Heritage Alliance. Revised September 2008 and February 2009.

6.35 Middle Park & St Kilda West Precinct – Ho444

Existing Designations:

Heritage Council Register: nil

National Estate Register: nil

National Trust Register: nil

Previous Heritage Studies:

Conservation Study 1975: Zones 12, 20 & 23 (all); 24, 25 & 28 (part)

Conservation Study 1987: UCI: Precincts E (part) and F

Heritage Review 2000: Heritage Overlay 3 (part)

6.35.1 History

The post-contact development of the study area can be traced back to the 1850s with the establishment of a military reserve, which, as Andrew Ward has noted, covered 77 acres of foreshore land and included the rifle butts at MiddlePark.²⁷⁵ Access to the reserve was facilitated by the creation of a wide thoroughfare – later to become Albert Road and Kerferd Road – that extended from St Kilda Road all the way to the beach. As recorded in the 1987 heritage study,

Kerferd Road and Albert Roads, shown on an 1855 map of Emerald Hill as the 'Beach Road', were set immediately south of the township of Emerald Hill and north of the swamplands around the Albert Park lagoon. In a similar manner to Sandridge Road (now City Road), Kerferd/Albert Road was set down as an access route that existed in advance of any built development along it as, initially, its main purpose was to give access between St Kilda Road and the military reserve along the foreshore. While portions of Albert Road, close to the areas that had already developed, were soon subdivided, the development of Kerferd Road was far slower.²⁷⁶

On that same survey map, dated June 1855, a small rectilinear building – labelled as a battery – is shown at the seaside end of the Beach Road. The vast expanse of land to the south-east, extending from the Beach Road to Fitzroy Street in what was then the Borough of St Kilda, was indicated as the South Melbourne Park Reserve and comprised two elongated expanses of marshland. Along the foreshore was a “proposed marine parade” with two parallel roadways (corresponding, respectively, to present-day Beaconsfield Parade, Danks Street and Page Street), which indicated the extent of a planned residential estate. On the contemporaneous and partly speculative Kearney Map (1855), the same subdivision is shown in even greater detail, with the proposed street blocks optimistically divided into smaller individual allotments. However, it failed to develop at that time.

In 1857, the new St Kilda railway line passed through the area, bisecting the two elongated swamps in the park reserve. The land to the north-east of the railway was transformed thence into a public park – with the former swamp becoming an ornamental lake – while the rest, to the south-east, remained as an undeveloped enclave between the booming settlements at South Melbourne and St Kilda. As Andrew Ward observed in the 2000 heritage review,

²⁷⁵ Andrew Ward & Associates, Port Phillip Heritage Review, Version 2 (2000), Volume 1, p 75.

²⁷⁶ Allom Lovell Sanderson, “South Melbourne Urban Conservation Study” (1987), p 3/17.

Whereas the higher land later known as Emerald Hill and the St Kilda Hill was not surprisingly the first to attract urban development, it was surrounded by less attractive lower lying ground; MiddlePark was occupied by swamp, sand dunes and ti-tree.²⁷⁷

The situation was no better at the south-eastern end, in the portion within the Borough of St Kilda. Writing in the 1930s, municipal historian J B Cooper – who well remembered the swamp as a boy – provided this first-hand recollection:

The WesternSwamp was a continuation of marshy land from the south end of the Albert Park lake. The surface of the marshland, in a south-westerly direction, sometimes in very wet seasons reached as far as the north end of Beaconsfield Parade. Ordinarily the swamp, following the falling levels, extended to the other side of the St Kilda railway embankment. Settlement was sufficient, in and about Fitzroy street, to make it desirable that the swamp should be drained. We recall memories of the time, some 55 years ago, when we, with other schoolboys, thought it fun to step over a portion of the swamp by means of railway sleepers that were nailed to a small wooden viaduct.²⁷⁸

There was virtually no development of this swampy seaside land for another decade. In another reminiscence, J B Cooper wrote of the foreshore at West Beach being occupied by Chinese fisherman during this period; their makeshift dwellings were recorded in a pencil sketch by artist Louis Buvelot before “the St Kilda council eventually ejected the three or four old Chinese from the collection of old iron, bags, wood, and mud bricks, which the fishermen called their homes”.²⁷⁹

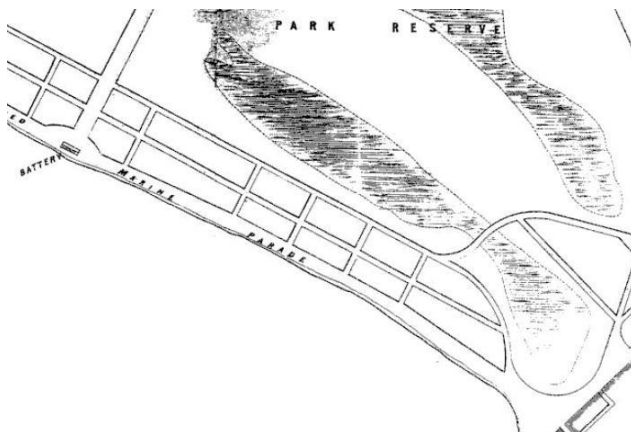


Figure 6.35–1 – Detail of 1855 survey map, showing land between Kerferd Road (top left) and Fitzroy Street (lower right)

(source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.35–2 – A rare photograph of the WesternSwamp, c.1855, looking south-east towards Fitzroy Street, St Kilda

(source: J B Cooper. A History of St Kilda, p 200)

The Hodgkinson Map (1864) shows the St Kilda railway line, the purported seaside subdivision and a large expanse of swampland between them, while the more detailed Cox Map (1866) depicts only a few scattered buildings along the foreshore, with a fenced enclosure between the swamp and the railway.

In 1870, the Borough of St Kilda took the first decisive steps to reclaim this land when the WesternSwamp was partially drained “at the at the insistence of the Central Board of Health”.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷ Ward, op cit, p 24.

²⁷⁸ J B Cooper, The History of St Kilda from its First Settlement to a City and After, 1840 to 1930. Vol 1, p 199.

²⁷⁹ Ibid, p 163.

²⁸⁰ Ibid, p 200, quoting the first annual statement of the Borough of St Kilda, dated 30 September 1870.

This was achieved by the construction of an 18-inch (45cm) bluestone drain that ran from the Albert Park lake, along Cowderoy Street, to an outfall on the bay. A map of the area, prepared by Clement Hodgkinson in 1871, not only shows the alignment of this new drain, but also that a portion of the proposed seaside subdivision had already been formalised – namely, those four blocks defined by Fraser Street, York Street, Cowderoy Street, Park Road and what was then known as Marine Parade (now Beaconsfield Parade). The two smaller blocks east of Cowderoy Street (designated as Sections 1 and 4) were divided respectively into fourteen and twelve smaller allotments, while the two larger blocks to the west (designated as Sections 3 and 4) were each carved up into eight larger allotments. The Vardy Map of St Kilda (1873) shows that no fewer than twenty houses has been built on these four sections by that time; these were mostly in the form of detached villas, with a notable exception being a large mansion, Maritimo, which occupied a two-acre site near the east corner of Marine Parade and Cowderoy Street.

Further north, the contiguous municipality of Emerald Hill was not far behind in its efforts to reclaim and develop the swampland. As the 1987 heritage study succinctly noted:

In 1875, the Emerald Hill Council move to survey, resume and sell lands west of the railway line in the MiddlePark area, as far as the foreshore. Large sums were spent on reconstruction and in 1876, Ferrars Street was extended to St Kilda Road and named Canterbury Road along its new southerly extension. Although reclamation of the ti-tree swamp followed immediately, the district remained remote and unappealing.²⁸¹

The extent of development at that time is evident on a survey map that Sir John Coode prepared for the Melbourne Harbour Trust in 1879, which shows that a few blocks had then been formalised at the northwestern fringe of the precinct. These extended the full length of Kerferd Road (back to Mills Street) and partly along Canterbury Road (as far as Harold Street), thus forming a roughly L-shaped area. Further south-east, a few more sections were nominally outlined, flanking the town boundary; otherwise, subdivision patterns within the Borough of St Kilda were the same as shown on Vardy's 1873 plan, with a small area of swampland remaining between Park Street and the railway line.

It was around the same time that another notable improvement was made: the realisation of the foreshore boulevard, which – first mooted over two decades earlier – was finally constructed in 1878-79 as an unemployment relief project. In January 1879, the following was reported in the *Argus*:

The Emerald Town Council have resolved to honour the British Premier. At the last meeting, the Mayor (Councillor Boyd) after speaking in eulogistic terms of the Earl of Beaconsfield, tabled a resolution to the effect that the new military road about to be formed between Sandridge and St Kilda should receive the title of Beaconsfield Parade.²⁸²

²⁸¹ Allom Lovell Sanderson, op cit. p 3/18.

²⁸² *Argus*, 18 January 1879, p 6.

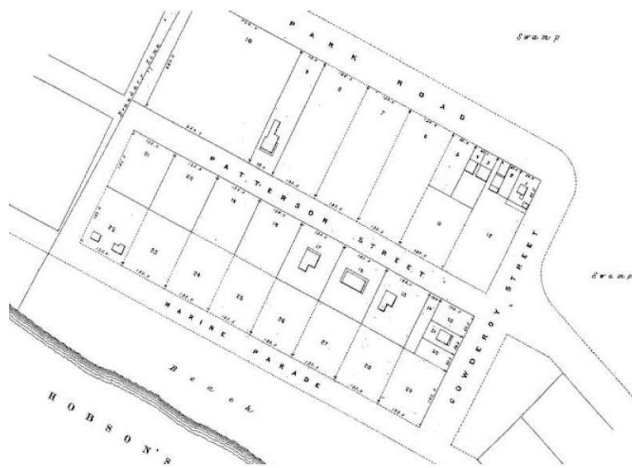


Figure 6.35-3 – Detail of the Vardy Map (1873) showing the sparsely developed allotments in St Kilda West

(source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.35-4 – 1889 photograph by David Wood, showing then recently-completed terrace houses at 62-65 Canterbury Road

(source: Port Phillip City Collection)

In January 1880, soon after the completion of the new seaside thoroughfare, architect William Pitt called tenders for a grand seaside hotel on the corner of Beaconsfield Parade and Cowderoy Street – the first of several public facilities to appear along the promenade. By decade's end, it had been joined by the Kerferd Road pier (1887-89) and public baths at Armstrong Street (1890). At the other end of Armstrong Street, residential expansion was spurred by the construction of the Middle Park Railway Station (1882). A contemporaneous subdivision plan, published in Jill Barnard's history of Albert Park, shows the extent of surveying carried out since John Coode completed his map only a few years before.²⁸³

The later map shows that the area bounded by Canterbury Road, Kerferd Road, Fraser Street and Beaconsfield Parade had been formalised into over forty sections, which, except for those bounded by present-day Mills, Neville and McGregor streets, were all carved up into smaller residential lots. Only a small strip of land at the south-eastern end, indicated on Coode's 1879 plan as a swamp, remained entirely unsubdivided at that time. This – the final remnant of the notorious West Swamp – was finally reclaimed a few years later, following an 1883 deputation to the Commissioners for Public Works.²⁸⁴ This project, completed in March 1884 at a cost of £5,260, involved the replacement of the original 18-inch channel with a covered stone culvert of 4½ feet (1.37 metre) diameter, which extended for a distance of 41 chains (825 metres) from the railway line. As J B Cooper later noted, “the adequate drainage of the land had the effect of greatly increasing the value of the west beach lands”.²⁸⁵

The subsequent development of these subdivided sections was swift. Canterbury Road and Kerferd Road, for example, were both listed for the first time in the Sands & McDougall Directory in 1882. Amongst the early occupants of the latter roadway was an omnibus stable, which occupied the entire block between Herbert and Carter Streets. Otherwise, both strips tended to be characterised by higher-status residential development, attracting wealthier residents who lived in suitably grand

²⁸³ Jill Barnard, *People's Playground: A History of the Albert Park*, p 49.

²⁸⁴ Letter, Secretary to Commissioner of Public Works to Town Clerk, Borough of St Kilda, 20 July 1883. Item 252, St Kilda Historical Correspondence, Port Phillip City Collection.

²⁸⁵ J B Cooper, *op cit*, p 214.

houses, often designed by prominent architects – a trend that would continue well into the early twentieth century. Canterbury Road, for example, would eventually include houses designed by such architects as George Wharton (1883), Frederick de Garis (1884), Wilson & Beswicke (1884), Arthur Lewis (1886), Watts, Tomb & Furrar (1895), Sydney Smith & Ogg (1898) and Thomas Ashworth (1913).²⁸⁶ The last named was in fact a local resident who had set up his office in the Canterbury Buildings, a block of residential shops built opposite the Middle Park Railway Station in 1888. He not only went on to design the aforementioned public sea-baths on Beaconsfield Parade, but also private residences in Hambleton Street, Harold Street, Longmore Street, Nimmo Street and Park Place.

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, settlement of the study area remained concentrated on the northwestern fringe – that is, the L-shaped area nominally defined by Kerferd Road, Mills Street, Canterbury Road, Neville Street and McGregor Street. Towards the end of the 1880s, a few of the sections outlined on the c.1882 plan but not yet subdivided further were carved up; these included the block bounded by Page, Little Page, Mills and Boyd Streets, which was divided into 28 new allotments in 1889, and that bounded by Armstrong, Richardson, McGregor and Neville streets, which was carved into 26 allotments the following year. Residential development continued in the northern fringe well into the 1890s, with the collapse of the Land Boom in 1892 providing only a temporary lull. The opening of a State School No 2814 on Richardson Street (1887) established it as the de facto main road through the burgeoning suburb; several other community facilities were subsequently attracted to the strip, including a temporary police station (c.1889), new churches for the respective Baptist (1890), Roman Catholic (1891) and Wesleyan (1892) congregations, and a number of corner shops. Otherwise, commercial development was concentrated on the intersecting thoroughfare of Armstrong Street (see separate citation), opposite the new Middle Park Railway Station, where a retail strip flourished from the late 1880s. Elsewhere in the study area, non-residential development was more isolated, with scattered residential shops and a single church – St Anselm's Church of England at the corner of Langridge and Neville streets (1891) – outside the established ecclesiastical zone of Richardson Street.

The first MMBW plan of the area, published in January 1895, provides a useful overview of residential settlement up to that point. This shows intensive development of closely-spaced cottages, villas and terrace houses along the northern fringe, becoming gradually sparser as one moves inward from the boundary thoroughfares of Kerferd Road and Canterbury Road. South-east of Fraser Street, in the City of St Kilda, settlement tended to be characterised by larger detached villas (and the occasional mansion) on more generous allotments. Further south, in the area bounded by Mills Street, Page Street, Fraser Street and Beaconsfield Parade, residential settlement was far less intensive. The MMBW map shows only a few isolated rows of cottages in that area, along with a couple of scattered villas. Beaconsfield Parade remained similarly underdeveloped, although the few houses erected thereon – like those on the comparable perimeter boulevards of Kerferd Road and Canterbury Road – were larger and grander than their inner counterparts. At that time, the foreshore streetscape was largely dominated by J R Buxton's Italianate mansion, Hughendon, at No 177 (1890), and the nearby Convent of the Good Shepherd (1892) at what is now No 180.

By this time, the former omnibus stable on Kerferd Road (latterly occupied by the Melbourne Tram & Bus Company) had been taken over as the South Melbourne Co-operative Steam Laundry – a rare manifestation of industrial activity within the precinct. Two others – Phillip Mardell's straw hat factory at 62 Harold Street (1895) and Henry Pask's asbestos works at 36 Patterson Street (c.1901) – were located, not surprisingly, within the large expanse of mostly unsubdivided blocks between Mills and Fraser Street.

²⁸⁶ Miles Lewis (ed), *Australian Architectural Index*, s v Middle Park.

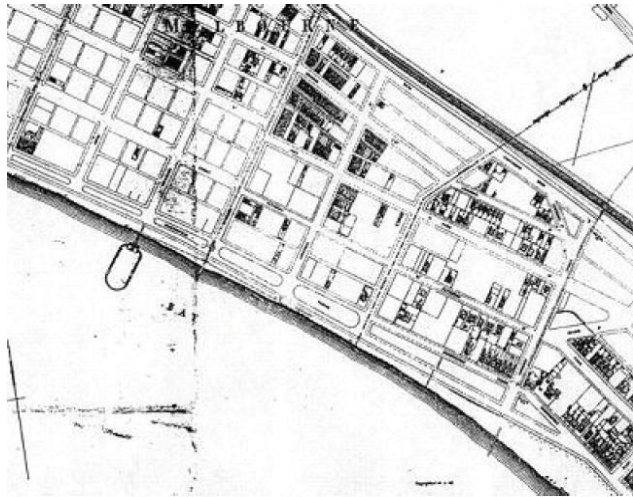


Figure 6.35-5 – Detail of the MMBW Map (1895) showing the extent of residential development by the Boom period

(source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.35-6 – Early twentieth century postcard showing residential development along Beaconsfield Parade

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

These underdeveloped areas finally filled out during the first two decades of the twentieth century. As Susan Priestley has noted, land sales in that area had “cautiously resumed” in 1900 after eight-year hiatus; in 1901, all but four of the suburb's eighteen houses under construction, and its 42 unoccupied houses, were all located in the Canterbury Ward – that is, Middle Park.²⁸⁷ Further land sales took place in 1907 and 1908, with the last allotments offered in January 1910. By that time, Middle Park represented the most significant growth area in the entire City of South Melbourne, accounting for more than half of the 225 new dwellings erected during the period 1908-09.²⁸⁸ As noted in the 1987 conservation study, “the fast development that took place resulted in a consistent Edwardian building stock, particularly towards its southern end, and this gives the Middle Park area its distinctive red-brick terracotta-tiled character.”²⁸⁹

Not surprisingly, this renewed phase of settlement was accompanied by an expansion of existing community facilities. In 1905, a Roman Catholic school was erected beside the Convent of the Good Shepherd on Beaconsfield Parade, and, three years later, the existing state school in Richardson Street was enlarged. Churches also expanded: the local Baptist and Anglican congregations, for example, replaced their original timber buildings with grander brick counterparts, in 1904 and 1919 respectively. The Roman Catholics expanded their own facilities in 1912 and again in 1927 – including the extension and refacing of the existing church and the construction of a new Carmelite Hall (fronting Richardson Street) and Presbytery (fronting Wright Street).²⁹⁰ In addition, several hitherto unrepresented denominations erected new churches along Richardson Street – the Church of Christ at No 135 (1909), the Presbyterians at No 149-51 (1912; demolished) and, finally, the Methodists at No 288-90 (1922). By the time that the latter had opened, the residential boom in Middle Park had

²⁸⁷ Susan Priestley, *South Melbourne: A History*, pp 240, 241.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ Allom Lovell Sanderson, *op cit*, p 3/18.

²⁹⁰ Priestley, *op cit*, p 298. Priestly, however, is mistaken in her assumption that the local Baptist congregation did not have a building in Albert Park prior to 1904, as their original church in Richardson Street is clearly shown on the 1895 MMBW plan.

already somewhat abated; indeed, as Andrew Ward has succinctly put it, “by the outbreak of the Great War, the rush to populate the municipality was all but over”.²⁹¹

Since the end of the First World War, residential development in the precinct has largely been characterised by apartments. This trend was initially more widespread in the area south-east of Fraser Street – that is, the City of St Kilda, where apartment development has been a significant and recurring theme throughout the twentieth century.²⁹² Indeed, the first modern apartment block in the former municipality – and, indeed, one of the first in suburban Melbourne – was erected in 1914 on the portion on Canterbury Road formerly occupied by swampland. The opening of the new electric tram route through the area in 1926 – with a route that extended along Danks Street, Patterson Street and Park Street to Fitzroy Street – prompted the construction of many apartment blocks, both along those streets and others within reasonable walking distance.²⁹³ It is significant that new apartments blocks in the study area were rarely built on previously undeveloped allotments; rather, they were erected on the sites of older mansions and villas (especially, south-east of Fraser Street, those early houses that had been shown on the 1873 Vardy Map). In the former City of South Melbourne, one Tudor Revival style apartment block was erected on the former site of Mardell's hat factory.

While this flat-building trend continued into the post-war period, the typology itself transformed into multi-storey blocks, and the epicentres for development moved to the major thoroughfares of Canterbury Road and Beaconsfield Parade, respectively overlooking the Albert Park Lake and the sea. This trend was especially noticeable in that stretch of beachfront boulevard within the City of St Kilda, where the first apartment tower, Edgewater Towers had been built (just outside the present study area) in 1960. By the end of the decade, local property developer Nathan Beller described this portion of Beaconsfield Parade – extending from Fraser Street to Alfred Square – as Melbourne's coming residential area and further predicted that the real estate represented by these new high-rise apartment blocks (and typified by his own twelve-storey Sunset Towers at No 350) would soon be at a premium.²⁹⁴ As had been the case in the 1920s and 30s, the construction of new apartment blocks in the 1960s and '70s necessitated the demolition of existing buildings, including several mansions as well as the former Convent of the Good Shepherd on Beaconsfield Parade.

6.35.2 Description

Nominally bounded by Canterbury Road, Kerferd Road, Beaconsfield Parade and Fitzroy Street, the precinct occupies a vast wedge-shaped area between the Albert Park reserve and the beach. Its relative flatness betrays its origins as reclaimed swamp, with only a gentle downward slope from north-west to south-east. It is subdivided into a grid-like pattern of blocks, defined by streets running parallel and perpendicular to Beaconsfield Parade (slightly angled, east of Cowderoy Street, to follow the kinked coastline). Canterbury Road, which follows the railway line, curves at a steeper angle and thus creates irregular wedge-shaped and triangular blocks along the north fringe of the precinct. A hierarchy of roads is evident: the major thoroughfares of Canterbury Road, Kerferd Road and Beaconsfield Parade, with their broad grassed median strips; the wide and often tree-lined local streets running north-west/south-east (eg Richardson Street & Danks Street, et al) with much narrower secondary streets bisecting the blocks between them (eg Canterbury Place, Neville Street, Little Page Street, Ashworth Street, et al) and the wide south-west/north-east streets providing vistas, respectively, to the ocean and the Albert Park reserve. Building stock is dominated by residential development, representing phases of settlement from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Notwithstanding an inevitable (if scattered) overlay of higher density housing from the 1920s to the 1970s, the precinct retains a strong Victorian and Edwardian character through

²⁹¹ Ward, op cit, p 76.

²⁹² Anne Longmire. St Kilda: The Show Goes On, p 61.

²⁹³ Ward, op cit, p 76.

²⁹⁴ Longmire, op cit, p 199.

cohesive and closely-grained streetscapes of individual dwellings on relatively narrow allotments: predominantly single or double storey in scale, and variously freestanding, paired or in rows.

The largest and grandest residences proliferate along Kerferd Road and Canterbury Road – two major thoroughfares that mark the precinct's north-west and north-east boundaries and represent epicentres for evidence of its early development. This is most evident at what might be termed the northern fringe – that is, the north-west end of Canterbury Road and the north-east end of Kerferd Road. Here, streetscapes are dominated by rows of double-storey Victorian Boom-style terraces (eg 1-5, 7-11, 25-36, 42-47, 62-65, 92-98 and 112-16 Canterbury Road; 3, 19-35, 49-53 and 57-61 Kerferd Road) interspersed with single-storey Victorian villas (eg 6, 12, 19, 21, 7-72, 88, 90 Canterbury Road; 55, 79-83 Kerferd Road) and the occasional grand Edwardian or inter-war residence (eg 20, 67, 73, 79, 118 Canterbury Road). At the opposite ends of these two major thoroughfares – that is, the south-eastern end of Canterbury Road and the south-western end of Kerferd Road – this situation is reversed, with Edwardian and inter-war dwellings dominating over their Victorian counterparts. The latter, however, remain prominently represented by double-storey terrace houses (eg 149-63, 165-73 Kerferd Road; 219-21, 229-30 Canterbury Road), large detached villas (eg 175 Kerferd Road; 157, 216 Canterbury Road) and smaller cottages (eg 179-83 Kerferd Road; 187 Canterbury Road).



Figure 6.35-7 – Double-storey Boom-style Victorian terrace houses, Kerferd Road



Figure 6.35-8 – Row of single-fronted Victorian timber cottages, Erskine Street



Figure 6.35-9 – Double-fronted Victorian brick villas, 76-78 Park Street, St Kilda West

While this type of high-class pre-Second World War residential development is most evident along the wide perimeter thoroughfares of Kerferd Road and Canterbury Road (and, to a lesser extent, Beaconsfield Parade), it also spills into the contiguous side-streets. This is particularly evident in those streets south-east of Fraser Street – the former City of St Kilda – where residential development began prior to the 1870s. Although research indicates that (with the exception of the much-altered mansion at 177 Beaconsfield Parade), none of the early houses shown on the 1873 Vardy Plan remain standing in this area, it nevertheless strongly remain characterised by high-status Victorian and Edwardian dwellings. Mary Street, for example, is distinguished by a fine streetscape of double-storey terrace houses from both periods (eg Nos 7-15, 12-16, 21-31, 28), with other notable specimens in the contiguous blocks of Park Street (eg Nos 35-39, 36-40) and Loch Street (eg No 27). There are also some fine freestanding single-storey villas from both the Victorian (eg 34 Mary Street, 64 Park Street; 6 York Street, 1, 2 and 23 Loch Street) and the Edwardian eras (eg 34, 40 Mary Street; 3 York Street). Surviving Victorian-era housing becomes sparser between Fraser and Cowderoy streets; in addition to a few relatively isolated villas in these areas (eg 24, 26 and 36 York Street; 126 Park Street), a notable cluster of Victorian timber villas, with asymmetrical frontages incorporating canted bay windows, still remains at the far south-eastern end of Longmore Street (Nos 7-15, 31, 33, 37).

Elsewhere in the precinct, the tendency for grander pre-war dwellings is also notably evident along the northern fringe, where more double-storey Victorian terrace houses can be found at the top

ends of Mills Street (Nos 9-23), Nimmo Street (Nos 3, 8-14) and in nearby Herbert Street (Nos 31-39, 86), as well as the furthestmost blocks of Page Street (eg Nos 94-102) and Danks Street (eg Nos 182-184, 191-195, 225-227). This part of Danks Street also contains a large freestanding double-storey Italianate residence at No 197, which, along with the comparable and nearby Hughenden in Beaconsfield Parade, represent rare survivors of several such mansions in the precinct, many of which (eg 50-51 Canterbury Road; 315-17 Beaconsfield Parade) were demolished for post-war apartment development.

The comparably grand thoroughfare of Beaconsfield Parade, which marks the south-western boundary of the precinct, was once characterised by a similar mix of high-status Victorian dwellings – mostly concentrated at the extreme north-east and south-west ends of the boulevard – with a later infill of grand Edwardian and inter-war housing. Characteristically, development along this prominent promenade was always (and continues to be) driven by an acute awareness of its prime beachfront position, befitting its long-established reputation as one of Melbourne’s most iconic bayside boulevards. From the 1860s onward, architecture along Beaconsfield Parade became increasingly typified by stylistic grandeur and a tendency for bay windows, balconies, towers, rooftop eyries and other features to exploit the bay views. This trend continued into the twentieth century (demonstrated by such surviving examples as No 324, 243-45, 367-68) and, after the Second World War, began to re-assert itself even more strongly in the form of high-rise apartment buildings – sometimes of quite bold and striking design (eg Nos 313, 333) – and, more recently, in smart re-interpretations of the seaside terrace type (eg No 183, 249). Today, amidst this subsequent overlay of twentieth century redevelopment, evidence of the earlier Victorian phase remains in the form of numerous double-storey terrace houses (eg Nos 178-82, 184-86, 210-13, 246-47 335), a few grand villas (Nos 147, 361) and a large intact Italianate mansion (the exceptional Hughenden, at No 177). At the St Kilda end of the strip, a smaller mansion survives in a somewhat altered state at No 312, standing behind (and integrated into) a multi-storey post-war apartment block built along the property's street frontage.



Figure 6.35-10 – Double-storey Victorian terrace house, Mary Street



Figure 6.35-11 – Set of Double-store terrace houses, Mary Street



Figure 6.35-12 – Row of Double -storey terrace houses, Beaconsfield Parade

In contrast to the higher-status residential development that is evident along the three major perimeter thoroughfares, in the contiguous blocks of some of their side streets, and in the local streets south-east of Cowderoy Street, the precinct is otherwise characterised by streetscapes of more modest single-storey Victorian and Edwardian housing. Again, a clear distinction is evident: in the northern fringe of the precinct – that is, the vaguely L-shaped area defined to the north-east of Page Street and Park Road and the north-west of Fraser and Mills streets – Victorian dwellings are far more predominant than Edwardian, while in the remaining central area – bounded by Mills Street, Page Street, Fraser Street and Beaconsfield Parade – the reverse is true. The northern fringe is dominated by closely-grained late nineteenth century housing, most commonly manifest as small single-storey single-fronted cottages in brick (plain, bichromatic or rendered) or timber (invariably

block-fronted), with corrugated steel-clad hipped or gabled roofs and simple posted verandahs. These modest dwellings proliferate along the principal north-west/south-east streets (eg Herbert, Hambleton and Richardson streets) as well as the top ends of the intersecting north-east/south-west streets (Mills, Wright, Harold, Nimmo and McGregor streets); they also form some particularly striking streetscapes in those narrow streets that run between the blocks (eg Herbert Place, Carter Street, Erskine Street, Neville Street and the far end of Little Page Street), where they occupy even narrow allotments and are built even closer to the property line.

More elaborate Boom-style single-storey terrace houses, with ornate moulded parapets, can be found scattered throughout this area; these also exist in rows, most notably in the north-east/south-west streets (eg Nos 28-32 Harold Street; 18-28, 39-45, 66-76 Nimmo Street and 150-68 Mills Street). In this part of the precinct, streetscapes of modest single-fronted Victorian cottages are occasionally interspersed with contemporaneous single-storey double-fronted villa (or, less commonly, by a similarly-scaled Edwardian or inter-war dwelling). These larger Victorian villas, variously in brick or timber, with symmetrical or asymmetrical facades, can also be found in more extensive groups, most notably at the south-eastern ends of Herbert Street (eg Nos 66-82) and Hambleton Street (eg Nos 94-138) and the north-western end of Page Street (Nos 108-124).

In this part of the precinct, Armstrong Street (running north-south) and Richardson Street (running east-west) form two particularly significant internal thoroughfares. The former is characterised by some fine Victorian and Edwardian strip shops (see separate precinct citation); the latter also attracted a degree of commercial development, with numerous corner shops still standing (albeit invariably no longer in use as such). These include modest single-storey examples (eg 364 Richardson Street, 92 Mills Street and 37 Nimmo Street) and grander double-storey ones, with residences above (Nos 193, 256 and 310 Richardson, and 31 McGregor Street).



Figure 6.35-13 – Victorian and Edwardian two-storey terraces, Mary Street



Figure 6.35-14 – Edwardian red brick villas, Richardson Street (note street trees)



Figure 6.35-15 – Mixed streetscape, St Kilda West, with inter-war and post-war flats

Richardson Street, distinguished by its fine avenue of mature street trees, still provides evidence of contemporaneous community facilities such as the Middle Park Primary School at Mills Street, several corner shops and no fewer than five churches – of which only two remain in use as such. All five are of red brick construction, and, except for the grand and Baroque-style Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, are of relatively modest scale, and in the Gothic idiom. Elsewhere in the precinct, on-residential buildings from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century are considerably sparser: demonstrated, for example, by the occasional Victorian residential shop (eg 32, 170 Mills Street, 41 Canterbury Road) or inter-war dairy (24 Herbert Street; 14, 20 Cowderoy Street) on or near a major thoroughfare. The former St Anselm's Anglican Church (also in red brick) still stands at 41 Park Road – albeit since converted into apartments – while another notable survivor is the former asbestos factory, an eye-catching Edwardian red brick building at 36 Patterson Street.

In the centre of the precinct – that part bounded by Mills Street, Page Street, Cowderoy Street and Beaconsfield Parade – evidence of nineteenth century development is sparse. Aside from the aforementioned high-status residences on Beaconsfield Parade, there is a small cluster of modest single- and double-fronted Victorian dwellings straddling the corner of Park Road (Nos 42-58) and Langridge Street (Nos 33-45) and, otherwise, only a handful of scattered specimens, including a few more single-fronted cottages (eg 2 Patterson Street) and some double-fronted villas (eg 89 McGregor Street, 101 Harold Street, 126 Park Street and 379 Danks Street). These isolated buildings stand out amongst the subsequent layer of Edwardian residential development that otherwise dominates this part of the precinct: typically, single-storey red brick dwellings with hipped and/or gabled roof of red terracotta tile (or, sometimes, in slate or corrugated galvanised steel), half-timbered and/or rough-cast gable ends, and porches with turned posts and timber slat friezes). These exist both as single-fronted dwellings in pairs or rows, or as larger double-fronted asymmetrical villas.

As a whole, the precinct thus remains strongly characterised by pre-First World War development, with identifiable zones where Victorian built fabric dominates over Edwardian, or vice versa. By contrast, later twentieth century development has occurred in a more piecemeal fashion, with scattered manifestations throughout the core of the precinct, and slightly more extensive redevelopment in the streets east of Fraser Street, and along the perimeter thoroughfares of Canterbury Road and Beaconsfield Parade. Those two perimeter thoroughfares otherwise stand out for their high concentration of buildings – across all eras – that have been designed to exploit views, respectively, of the Albert Park Reserve and Port Phillip Bay.

East of Fraser Street, inter-war apartment blocks – a significant sub-theme in the history of the former City of St Kilda – tend to proliferate. These are typically two- or three-storey walk-up flats in a range of fashionable styles of the 1920s and '30s including Moderne (eg 200 Beaconsfield Parade, 6 Loch Street; 41 Longmore Street), Tudor Revival (eg 98 Park Street), Spanish Mission (eg 251 Beaconsfield Parade) and Georgian Revival (eg 16 York Street). Counterparts in the former City of South Melbourne, west of Fraser Street, are less common, with most examples situated – not all all surprisingly – in the blocks closer to the beach, or along the tram line (eg 223 Page Street, 109 Nimmo Street). With the exception of a few aforementioned grand attic-storey residences along Canterbury and Kerferd Roads, single dwellings from the inter-war period are rare. Apartment development from the post-Second World War era is similarly concentrated along the major thoroughfares of Beaconsfield Parade and Canterbury Road and, again, in the former City of St Kilda area, south-east of Fraser Street. In the latter area, such development is characterised by low-rise (three or four storey) modernist buildings in face brick and concrete; some are of architectural interest in their own right. High-rise apartment development proliferates along Beaconsfield Parade and, to a lesser extent, Canterbury Road; most of these are of somewhat unremarkable design, although a few are of architectural interest for their bold forms (eg 1 Cowderoy Place), interesting detailing (eg 313 and 333 Beaconsfield Parade) or unusual finishes (eg 350 Beaconsfield Road).

6.35.3 Comparative Analysis

While largely characterised by cohesive streetscapes of late Victorian and Edwardian housing, the Middle Park/St Kilda West Precinct is also distinguished by certain areas where, consequent to the vagaries of history, a particular type of era or development is more evident than elsewhere. Considered individually, these sub-precincts do have counterparts elsewhere in the municipality. The most obvious would be the major thoroughfares of Beaconsfield Parade, Kerferd Road and Canterbury Road, which define the south-west, north-west and north-east boundaries of the precinct respectively. It is perhaps tempting to draw comparisons between that portion of Beaconsfield Parade within the precinct (ie from Kerferd Road to Fitzroy Street) with that extending north-west (ie between Kerferd Road and Bay Street) into Albert Park. While these two strips of seaside promenade have much in common historically, there are noticeable differences between their built fabric. In Albert Park, Beaconsfield Parade tends to be characterised by long and intact rows Victorian terraces, with fewer inter-war or post-war apartment blocks. Despite a few instances of heightened architectural exuberance, the streetscape is more cohesive in scale. The reverse is true in

Middle Park and St Kilda West, where Victorian dwellings along Beaconsfield Road are largely overwhelmed by the subsequent overlay of twentieth century (and especially post-War) development. In this respect, this part of Beaconsfield Parade has much more in common with the seaside thoroughfares further south— The Esplanade and Marine Parade in St Kilda, and Ormond Esplanade in Elwood – where inter-war and post-war flats similarly dominate.

From a historical viewpoint, parallels can be drawn between Canterbury Road and the other grand boulevards that overlook the Albert Park Lake reserve – that is, Albert Road to the north-east, Queens Road to the north-west, and Fitzroy Street to the south-east. By the late nineteenth century, all three of these roads were characterised by high- status private residences: principally grand terraces and villas along Fitzroy Street and Albert Road, and larger mansions along Queens Road. These streetscapes, however, were fundamentally transformed in the post-war period by the construction of multi-storey office blocks and other large non-residential buildings. Today, very little evidence remains of pre-war residential development along Queens Road, Fitzroy Street and Albert Road, save for a few notable blocks of terrace houses and mansions along the south end of Albert Road (between Moray Street and Ferrars Street). However, the development of this corner of the Albert Park Lake reserve means that these grand residences no longer enjoy entirely unimpeded vistas across the parkland.

In a nutshell, the Middle Park/St Kilda West Precinct is a former swampland and military area that, within the space of only a few short decades (from the 1880s to the 1910s), established itself as a thriving seaside suburb. Consequent to this unusual set of circumstances, the precinct, when considered as a single entity rather than a collection of discrete sub-precincts, has virtually no direct comparators elsewhere in the municipality. In particular, it represents a stark contrast to the contiguous townships of South Melbourne, Port Melbourne and St Kilda, which were initially settled in the late 1840s and developed steadily from that time. As an example of an area that underwent little development before the Land Boom period, but which filled out during the later nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Middle Park/St Kilda West Precinct has some aspects in common with St Kilda East and Elwood. The former has a similarly heterogeneous mix of Victorian and Edwardian housing stock: small pockets of cottage and villa development from the 1880s Boom era (eg Chusan Street), a few mansions (eg 63 Alexandra Street), and rows of lookalike Queen Anne red brick houses from the 1910s (eg Kalymna Street and the contiguous portion of Inkerman Street). These, however, tend to be isolated, scattered amidst an infill of later twentieth century redevelopment, including numerous inter-war subdivisions (eg Hughenden Street, Murchison Street, Mooltan Avenue) and major thoroughfares (eg Hotham Street, Alma Road, Lansdowne Road) dominated by post-war apartment development. Consequently, East St Kilda lacks the historic and architectural cohesion that is evident at Middle Park/St Kilda West.



Figure 6.35-16 – Edwardian red brick villas, McGreggor Street



Figure 6.35-17 – Edwardian red brick villas, Nimmo Street



Figure 6.35-18 – Row of Victorian timber cottages, Middle Park

Elwood, by contrast, represents a somewhat more pertinent comparator due to the fact that, like Middle Park, residential settlement was hampered by the fact that much of its northern fringe

(bounded by Glenhuntly Road, Dickens Street and Mitford Street) was occupied by a huge expanse of swampland. Although a few houses were built along the streets adjoining the swampland, further development did not take place until reclamation was completed in 1889. As was the case in Middle Park, subsequent development during the 1890s was localised, with a significant boom taking place during the early twentieth century. Consequently, housing stock in this part of Elwood is very similar to that seen in Middle Park/St Kilda West: some scattered high-status Victorian residences (eg Southey Street), larger pockets of 1890s villas and cottages (eg Moore and Cyril Streets) and rows of typical Queen Anne red brick dwellings (eg Addison, Ruskin and Meredith streets) where the swamps used to be.



Figure 6.35-19 – Victorian timber cottages in Chusan Street, St Kilda East



Figure 6.35-20 – Edwardian red brick villas in Inkerman Street, St Kilda East



Figure 6.35-21 – Row of Edwardian red brick villas in Ruskin Street, Elwood

(Sources: Heritage Alliance. East St Kilda Heritage Review [June 2004] and Elwood Heritage Review [June 2005])

6.35.4 Comparison With Earlier Heritage Studies

The bulk of the present study area coincides with what was identified in the 1975 conservation study as Potential Conservation Zone (hereafter PCZ) No 12, and in the 1987 study as Urban Conservation Area UCI(F). In the earliest study, the area was described as a secondary residential precinct with high potential as a conservation zone, being characterised by “primarily single-storey Victorian, Edwardian and Queen Anne housing on wide well-planted streets”. In the 1987 study, the same area was lauded for its “outstanding residential building stock, uniform in both form and date of construction and occasionally counterpointed with mixed businesses or small warehouses.” It was further concluded that “the late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings form the backbone of the area's significance”. In the first heritage review undertaken by the City of Port Phillip, Andrew Ward clarified the distinctively hybrid character of Middle Park by noting: “the architectural character being primarily mid to late Victorian to the north of Mills Street and south of Mary Street and of the Federation period in between”.

In addition, the 1975 study drew particularly attention to two smaller sub-precincts within: the top end of Armstrong Street (PCZ No 20) and the full length of Richardson Street (PCZ No 28). The former was described as a “predominantly Victorian double-storey brick shopping group”, being identified both as a significant non-residential precinct and a community focal group in the Middle Park area. Richardson Street, which crosses Armstrong Street, was noted for its “predominantly Victorian and Queen Anne, single with some double storey brick housing groups”. Specific attention was drawn to its “high incidence of schools and corner shops” as well as its “strong landscape qualities with extensive tree planting”. Both Armstrong Street and Richardson Street were deemed to be of medium potential as conservation areas; in the present review, Armstrong Street was considered to be of sufficient import for assessment and documentation as a separate HO precinct (see citation), while the predominantly residential Richardson Street was considered to be an integral part of the broader Middle Park area, and thus not be considered separately from it.

In the 1975 conservation study, the three boundary thoroughfares of Kerferd Road, Canterbury Road and Beaconsfield Parade were identified both as major traffic routes and primary identity streets within what was then the City of South Melbourne. Beaconsfield Parade (PCZ No 25) was described as having “Victorian and Queen Anne, single and double storey housing, occurring adjacent to low and high rise flat development”. Presumably because the latter was not deemed to be especially important in its own right, the strip was considered to have only low potential as a conservation zone. By contrast, Canterbury Road (PCZ No 23) – characterised by “Victorian and Queen Anne building groups; small and medium sized allotments; strong streetscape” – was deemed to have medium potential, while Kerferd Road (PCZ No 24) – characterised by “Victorian and Queen Anne Housing groups; strong identity with excellent streetscape” – was deemed to have high potential. The latter conclusion was echoed in the 1987 conservation study, which earmarked both sides of Kerferd Road as a discrete conservation area, designated as UCI(E). This significance was acknowledged again in 2000 by Andrew Ward, who described Kerferd Road as one of several “civic spaces of great distinction” within the City of Port Phillips.²⁹⁵

6.35.5 Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The Middle Park/St Kilda West Precinct comprises a large wedged-shaped area bounded by the major thoroughfares of Canterbury Road, Fitzroy Street, Beaconsfield Parade (one of Melbourne’s premier beachside boulevards) and Kerferd Road. Owing to the swampy land, residential development was delayed – commencing at the south-eastern (St Kilda West end) in the early 1870s, spreading along the north-western fringe (Kerferd Road, Canterbury Road and the top ends of intersecting side streets) from the late 1870s to the 1890s and then finally infilling during the early 1900s and 1910s. Today, the precinct remains strongly characterised by a broad range of late Victorian and Edwardian housing stock, with contemporaneous commercial and community-oriented buildings (corner shops, churches, schools and hotels).

How is It Significant?

The precinct is of historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is It Significant?

Historically, the precinct is significant as a notable and highly atypical expanse of late nineteenth and early twentieth century inner-suburban residential development, conspicuously sandwiched between the much older settlements of Port Melbourne (Sandridge), South Melbourne (Emerald Hill) and St Kilda. With the contemporaneous development of Middle Park and St Kilda West hampered by a notorious expanse of swampland and a foreshore military reserve, it was not until the late 1870s and early 1880s – when the swamp was reclaimed, military presence was withdrawn and the new Middle Park Railway Station was opened (1882) – that residential expansion could begin in earnest.

The major boundary thoroughfares of Kerferd Road and Canterbury Road were amongst the first to develop, attracting the attention of wealthier citizens who built large and grand residences – a trend that continued into the early twentieth century and established these roadways as prestigious residential addresses. Elsewhere in the precinct, specific areas ably illustrate the two closely-spaced phases of intense settlement: housing from the 1880s and '90s along the northwestern fringe, and to the south-east of Fraser Street, and counterparts from the 1900s and 1910s in the blocks closer to the beach. Contemporaneous non-residential buildings provide evidence of the expansion of community services during this key period: most notably the five churches, one school and numerous corner shops established along Richardson Street.

²⁹⁵ Ward, op cit, p 73.

A scattered but noteworthy overlay of later twentieth century development is represented by large inter-war dwellings along Canterbury Road, inter-war shops (including three dairies), low-rise inter-war apartment blocks (which significantly follow the alignment of the 1926 electric tramway route), and larger post-war counterparts in the former City of St Kilda and, most notably, as high-rise towers along Beaconsfield Parade. These apartments ably illustrate a tendency towards higher density living that has been a significant theme in the former City of St Kilda from the 1920s to the 1980s.

Aesthetically, the precinct is significant for its fine and largely intact streetscapes of Victorian and Edwardian housing. The former, concentrated along the north-western fringe and in the former City of St Kilda south-east of Fraser Street, represent most of the ubiquitous dwelling types associated with the era: small single-fronted cottages in brick and timber, more ornate Boom-style terraces, larger double-fronted villas, two-storey terrace houses and a few mansions. Edwardian housing, concentrated in the beachside blocks between Mills and Fraser Street, is dominated by modest single-storey red brick dwellings in the Queen Anne style, in attached rows, semi-detached pairs or freestanding. The boundary streets of Kerferd Road and Canterbury Road are especially notable for larger and grander residences from the period 1890-1930, including fine rows of double-storey Victorian terrace houses, large Victorian and Edwardian villas and inter-war attic-storey bungalows. Today, the high-status Victorian, Edwardian and Inter-War dwellings along Canterbury Road constitute the most intact remaining streetscape of the four prestigious residential boulevards (cf Albert Road, Queens Road and Fitzroy Street) that originally overlooked the Albert Park Lake reserve.

Aesthetically and architecturally, Beaconsfield Parade stands out for its high concentration of residential buildings (from all eras) that – befitting its status as one of Melbourne’s most iconic beachfront promenades – not only generally display a higher level of architectural expression but were also explicitly designed to exploit views across the bay. Thus it is of especial significance within the precinct as a specific and consistent architectural pattern, rather than a reflection of any single era.

Irrespective of their style and era, the pre-war buildings within the precinct exhibit notable cohesion through their broadly consistent scale (mostly one and two storey) and materials, their closely-grained siting and relatively narrow setbacks. Many of the streetscapes are enhanced by their settings, which includes original bluestone kerbs, gutters and pitching to laneways and crossovers (particularly along Kerferd Road), landscaped median strips (again in Kerferd Road, and the far end of Danks Street) as well as some outstanding rows of mature deciduous street trees (most notably on Mary Street and Richardson Street, as well as Park Street, Page Street, York Street)

6.35.6 Thematic Context

- Transport
 - Tramway and Railway Improvements
- Settlement: Growth and Change
 - The Late Nineteenth Century Boom
 - Depression and Recovery: the Inter-War Years
- Ways of Life
 - South Melbourne
 - St Kilda

6.35.7 Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay Table in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

Retain original bluestone elements (ie kerbing, guttering, spoon drains and pitching to laneways and crossovers)

Retain significant deciduous street trees, especially notable avenues in Richardson and Mary Streets.

Along Beaconsfield Parade, ensure any new development responds to the strip's special edge condition as one of Melbourne's iconic seaside boulevards, which sets it aside from the streets that run through the remainder of the precinct.

6.35.8 References

1. Books

- a. J B Cooper, *The History of St Kilda from its First Settlement to a City and After, 1840 to 1930*. 2 vols (1931).
- b. Susan Priestley, *South Melbourne: A History* (1995).
- c. Jill Barnard & Jenny Keating, *People's Playground: A History of the Albert Park* (1996)

2. Heritage Studies

- a. Yuncken Freeman Ashton Wilson, "South Melbourne Conservation Study"(June 1975).
- b. Yuncken Freeman Architects Pty Ltd. "South Melbourne Conservation (Social Impact) Study" (1976).
- c. Allom Lovell Sanderson Pty Ltd, "South Melbourne Urban Conservation Study" (May 1987).
- d. Andrew Ward & Associates, "Port Phillip Heritage Review", Version 2 (August 2000).

3. Historic Maps

- a. Surveyor General's Office (James Kearney, compiler), "Map of Melbourne and its Suburbs"(1855).
- b. Henry L Cox, RN, "Map of Hobson's Bay and River Yarra" (1866).
- c. Department of Land & Survey (John Lardner, surveyor), "Map of the Lagoon in Albert Park" (1871).
- d. St Kilda Borough Council (John E S Vardy, surveyor), "Plan of the Borough of St Kilda" (1873).
- e. Melbourne Harbour Trust (Sir John Coode, engineer), "General Plan shewing Harbour Improvements" (1879)
- f. Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works, 160 feet to 1 inch sewerage plans (1895).

6.35.9 Assessment

Simon Reeves, Built Heritage Pty Ltd, June 2010 (revised 14 July 2011).

6.36 Armstrong Street Commercial Precinct (Middle Park) – Ho445

Existing Designations:

Heritage Council Register:	nil
National Estate Register:	nil
National Trust Register:	nil

Previous Heritage Studies:

Conservation Study 1975:	Precinct 20
Conservation Study 1987:	UCI: Precinct F (part)
Heritage Review 2000:	Heritage Overlay 3 (part)

6.36.1 History

Armstrong Street, which extends from the Middle Park railway station to the beach, bisects what had been, in the mid-nineteenth century, a swampy wasteland partly occupied by military rifle butts. Neither the opening of the railway line in 1857, nor the establishment of the railway station in 1860 prompted any residential development in the area. It was the creation of Canterbury Road in 1876, the rebuilding of the railway station in 1880 and the gradual reclamation of the swamp over the next few years that finally encouraged closer settlement towards the end of the 1880s. Initially, such development was concentrated along Canterbury Road, and the contiguous streets to the immediate south. As the number of new houses increased, so to did the demand for community facilities such as churches, schools and shops.

While Armstrong Street appears in the Sands & McDougall Directory as early as 1888, it was initially listed only as a cross street off Canterbury Road, with no actual occupants identified therein. Predictably enough, the first commercial development in Armstrong Street occurred on the prominent corner sites flanking the Canterbury Road intersection, opposite the new railway station. The 1889 directory first recorded three ‘vacant’ buildings on these sites. These were subsequently revealed as the Middle Park Hotel (now the Gunn Island Hotel) on the south corner, and a pair of residential shops on the north corner. The latter, still identified on their parapet as the Canterbury Buildings, were then occupied by hairdresser Robert Patterson and estate agents Grey & Ashworth.

The 1890 directory reveals that commercial development had begun to spread along Armstrong Street, with seven new listings on the north side of the street. These comprised a baker, an estate agent, two fruiterers, a butcher, a bootmaker and a dairy produce merchant. By 1895, the number of business premises in the block had expanded to nine, designated as Nos 1 to 15 plus the unnumbered baker’s shop (with bakehouse at the rear), between Erskine Street and a right-of-way. Tenants changed over the next few years, which variously included a fishmonger, a dressmaker, a plumber, a confectioner and a haberdasher. By 1898, estate agent T R Ashworth had taken over the shop at No 1 and, a year later, opened the Middle Park Telegraph Office. By 1900, a chemist’s shop had opened alongside Ashworth’s premises, with one F P Chegwiddden as its proprietor. By contrast, there was little commercial development on the southern side of Armstrong Street during that time. Mrs Emily Love, a grocer, is first listed between Richardson Street and Canterbury Road in 1891. Her shop, later designated as No 5, remained the only occupant of the entire block for more than a decade.

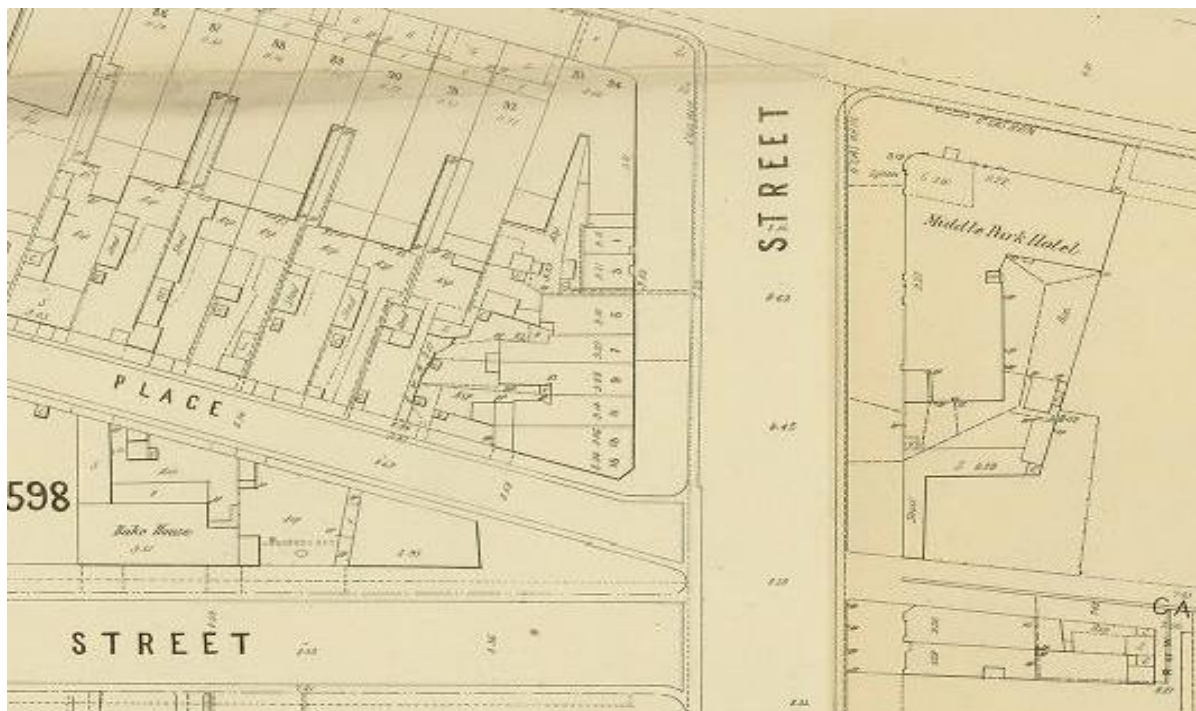


Figure 6.36–I – Part of MMBW Detail Plan (c.1895), showing commercial development along Armstrong Street; note Middle Park Hotel (now Gunn Island Hotel), and bakery on corner of Erskine Street, with bakehouse indicated at rear

(source: Map Collection, Education Resource Centre, Melbourne University)

When the street addressees of properties across South Melbourne were renumbered in 1900, the shops in Armstrong Street at Nos 1 to 15 were re-designated as Nos 4 to 16, while the formerly unnumbered baker's shop (then occupied by P J Esmond) became No 18. The chemist shop at the other end of the strip (then occupied by Alex Murie) became No 2. Development continued, with the 1905 directory noting five new shops in the block between Richardson and Erskine streets. These, initially occupied by a grocer, a newsagent, a draper, a watchmaker and a dairy produce merchant, were later designated as Nos 20, 22, 24, 26 and 34. The gap between was soon filled by the completion of three more shops (Nos 28, 30 and 32), which first appeared in the 1906 directory as 'vacant', but were later occupied by a house agent, butcher and piano tuner. There was no further development along this side of the street until 1911, when the directory recorded four new shops at Nos 36-42, initially occupied by a draper, a pastrycook, a cycle works and a costumier.

Meanwhile, the other side of Armstrong Street remained largely undeveloped. Mrs Love's grocery shop at No 5 was still the only shop, although the 1905 directory noted 'four vacant houses' alongside. It was not until 1911 that the directory noted further commercial expansion, with a new pharmacy opening at No 7 and, on the opposite corner of Canterbury Place, three unnumbered listings for the State Savings Bank, the Middle Park Post Office, and estate agents Watt & Haig. As the postmaster was identified as E H Watt, it is possible that the both the post office and the bank were simply agencies within Watt's real estate office. This was soon followed by a row of four residential shops at Nos 9, 11, 11a and 13 (now Nos 9, 11, 13 and 15). These, first listed in 1912-13, were originally occupied by a bootmaker, a tailor, a dressmaker and an ironmonger. Also in 1913, a new listing appeared for the Middle Park Hall at No 1 – formerly the premises of Watt & Haig estate agents and later (c.1916) to become the Middle Park Theatre.

By 1910, there were no fewer than twenty places of business on the north side of Armstrong Street (designated as Nos 2 to 42), and another ten on the south (Nos 1 to 11b). The next few years saw commercial expansion spread further east along Canterbury Road. The first of these was a motor garage and livery stables operated by one W Robertson (No 106), first recorded in the 1911 directory. By 1914, this had been joined by the new Middle Park Post Office (No 109) and a branch

of the ES&A Bank (No 108), while another branch bank, for the State Savings Bank (No 104), appeared nearby in 1916. Three years later, the directory noted “two shops being built” to the west of Robertson’s garage (Nos 110-111), one of which was subsequently occupied by the grocery chain of Moran & Cato.

By 1920, the businesses in Armstrong Street included three confectioners, two milliners, two chemists, a costumier, a watchmaker, a butcher, a bootmaker, a newsagent and an ironmonger. At that time, the two most enduring vendors were baker P J Esmond, who had been at No 18 since 1900, and Mrs Love, whose grocery at No 5 had been one of the strip’s original retailers back in 1890. She evidently retired or died in the early 1920s, although her former premises continued to operate as a grocer’s shop for another decade thence.



Figure 6.36–2 – Looking east along Armstrong Street, circa 1910s; note cast iron street lamp in centre of road

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.36–3 – South side of Armstrong Street, circa 1950s; note row of four inter-war shops at right side

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

Subsequent changes to the built fabric within the precinct include the replacement of the four houses at Nos 13 to 19 (later renumbered Nos 17 to 23) with a row of single-fronted shops, which took place during the 1920s. Around 1936, a two-storey block of flats and shops, in the fashionable Streamlined Moderne style, was erected at the rear of 34 Armstrong Street, fronting Richardson

Street. The immediate post-war period saw the refacing or rebuilding of the two shops at Nos 19-21. In more recent years, the former post office and ES&A branch bank on Canterbury Road (both rendered defunct during the twentieth century) have been demolished and replaced by new buildings. In 2001, the Middle Park Hotel was refurbished and renamed the Gunn Island Hotel, after the small ornamental island in the centre of nearby Albert Park Lake.

6.36.2 Description

The Armstrong Street Commercial Precinct chiefly comprises those buildings along both sides of the street, between Richardson Street and Canterbury Road, plus some associated development that spreads south along Canterbury Road and north along Richardson Street. All of these buildings are (or were) overtly commercial in origin, with the most common manifestation being the traditional double-storey residential shop – a pattern that was noted in the 1975 heritage study, and remains strongly evident today. There are, however, a few single-storeyed shops, and, as the exception, the massive three-storeyed Gunn Island Hotel at the corner of Canterbury Road and Armstrong Street. The latter, which dominates both streetscapes, is a large Italianate building with a rendered façade delineated by heavily moulded cornices at each floor level, a pierced parapet and a shaped pediment above the curving corner. Its two uppermost levels have rows of rectangular windows with moulded surrounds and wrought iron balconettes.

The Victorian-style shops in the precinct, dating from the period c.1888 to 1903, are broadly similar in their form and detailing. They are typically arranged in pairs (Nos 5-7, 10-12 and 14-16), although there are also rows of four (Nos 20-26) and five (Nos 2-8), plus the atypical freestanding shop (No 18) at the intersection of Erskine Street and Canterbury Place. With the exception of the two fully rendered shops at Nos 16 and 18, these early buildings have face brick facades at their upper levels – some enlivened by polychromy (Nos 2-12) and others since compromised by overpainting (eg Nos 5, 15 and 20-22). The former bakery at No 18 – the only freestanding shop in the precinct – is further distinguished by the survival of its original double-storey bakehouse at the rear (now addressed separately at 123-129 Erskine Street).

One shop (No 7) retains evidence of original painted signage along its parapet – the word chemist, which refers to an early (from c.1909) and long-time former occupant. Facades are further embellished with typical boom-style rendered detailing such as moulded cornices, stringcourses (No 34), plain or rusticated piers, dentils (eg No 2-12, 34), orbs (Nos 5, 20-26) and swags (Nos 2-12). In a few notable cases, the cement render retains its original unpainted finish (eg Nos 10-12, 34). Those shops at street intersections (ie Nos 2, 5, 16, 20 and 34) have the traditional splayed corners, marked by pediments of half-round (No 16), triangular (No 34) or segmental (No 5) form. Windows at first floor level are also variously round-arched, rectangular or segmental-arched, typically with timber-framed double-hung sashes, projecting sills and keystones.

The later Edwardian shops, dating from the period 1905 to 1910, are similarly arranged in rows of two (Nos 1-3), three (eg Nos 28-32) or four (Nos 36-42). The double-storey residential shops broadly echo the form and materials of their Victorian counterparts, but are otherwise different in detailing. They are of red brick construction, with facades delineated by rendered banding, canted piers surmounted by rendered orbs, and curved parapets with rendered coping. Windows have timber-framed sashes, either double-hung (Nos 9, 15) or casement (Nos 11, 13), and openings are variously enlivened by bold rendered archivolt (No 28-32), drip moulds (No 1-3) or hoods (No 11, 13). The block of single-storey shops at No 36-42 (erected c.1909) has a simple rendered parapet that incorporates a pattern of recessed panels.

A considerable number of the pre-war shops retain their original shopfront detailing to the street. Some, such as Nos 2-8, 24-26, 28-32, 34 and 36-42, are particularly intact, retaining metal-framed shop windows with highlights (in some cases, with leadlight glazing), splayed entrances with tiled thresholds, and spandrels clad with bold glazed tiling in typical browns and greens. The unusual freestanding shop at No 18 has been altered by the replacement of its original ground floor shopfront (and its upper floor windows) with fixed black-tinted glazing. Several other shops have

modern aluminium-framed shopfronts of similarly recent origin. A number of shops (eg Nos 10-12, 9-15 and 20-22) have Victorian-style verandahs, with curving corrugated galvanised steel roofs supported on fluted cast iron columns with wrought iron lace friezes. Although some of these may be reproductions, they are sympathetic to the era of the precinct. Other shops have modern cantilevered awnings (eg Nos 2-8, 17-23), while some have no verandahs at all (eg Nos 5, 7, 24 and 26).

Along with the Gunn Island Hotel, there are two former business premises on Canterbury Road that stand out as particularly striking elements within the precinct. The former State Bank at No 104 is a double-storey rendered building in the Edwardian Free Classical style. Its asymmetrical façade is articulated by rusticated pilasters with Ionic capitals, with an entrance bay to the left side incorporating a doorway with moulded hood, a canted bay window and a triangular pediment. Alongside, the former motor garage at No 104 is a double-storey painted brick building with a prominent moulded cornice, bays of rectangular windows and, most notably, the original vehicle entrance to the left side, with an arched window at the upper level above. At the rear of the property, fronting the laneway, an early metal BP sign remains to further demonstrate the former use of the building.

More recent buildings in the precinct include shops at No 17-23. These originally comprised a row of four identical inter-war shops with raked parapets, of which only two (Nos 17 and 23) remain. These now flank a later double-fronted shop (No 19-21) with a wide rendered parapet edged with manganese bricks. One of the smaller shopfronts (No 17) has been altered by a discreet second storey addition. Another inter-war building stands at the rear of the corner shop at 34 Armstrong Street. Designated as 253a, b, c and d Richardson Street, this double-storey block comprises three shopfronts with flats above. Dating from c.1936, it has a rendered façade in the Streamlined Moderne style, with curving walls, glass blocks and steel-framed windows. The shopfronts themselves, however, have been altered. The nineteenth century character of the precinct is enhanced by a pair of cast iron street lamps at the Canterbury Road end. These are evidently not original, but are similar to some that are known to have formerly stood in the centre of the street (as seen in early photographs)



Figure 6.36-4 – The Canterbury Buildings (1888) on the corner of Armstrong Street; note cast iron street lamp.



Figure 6.36-5 – The mixture of Victorian, Edwardian and Inter-war Shops along the south of Armstrong Street



Figure 6.36-6 – The mixture of Victorian and Edwardian shops along the north side of Armstrong Street



Figure 6.36-7 – The former motor garage (1911), State Savings Bank (1914) and hotel (1889) on Canterbury Road

6.36.3 References

1. Vardy Map (1855)
2. Cox Map (1866)
3. MMBW Map (1895)
4. Sands & McDougall Directory (various, 1888 onwards)

6.36.4 Thematic Context

- The First Railways
- Tramway and Railway Improvements
- The late Nineteenth Century Boom
- Ways of Life: South Melbourne

6.36.5 Comparative Analysis

There are numerous commercial strips in the City of Port Phillip. Some of the more prominent, such as Bay Street in Port Melbourne, Fitzroy Street in St Kilda, Carlisle Street in Balaclava and Clarendon Street in South Melbourne, have developed (and been redeveloped) over the course of more than a century. Today, these key shopping precincts (all located on major municipal thoroughfares) tend to be characterised by a broad mix of commercial buildings, including shops, hotels and banks from the 1860s and '70s, Boom-era expansion of the 1880s, and layers of Edwardian, inter-war and post-war development.

By contrast, there are relatively few instances where commercial development has developed suddenly and rapidly over a short period of time. Invariably, this was spurred by the creation of new subdivisions and/or the opening of new railway station or tramway routes. When the former orphanage site on Emerald Hill was sold in 1875, the Clarendon Street frontage became available for commercial development. Today, this entire block (between Dorcas and Park streets) still remains characterised by a cohesive strip of fine Boom-era residential shops. In Elwood, it was the opening of the electric tramway in 1912 that initially spurred commercial development along Ormond Road. The first double-storey residential shop appeared there in 1913, followed by many others over the next decade, plus associated businesses such as a picture theatre, bank and motor garage (as was also

the case in Armstrong Street, Middle Park, during the 1910s). Today, the Ormond Road commercial strip still retains much of this late Edwardian/early inter-war character.

However, as a commercial strip that developed rapidly over a short period, Armstrong Street is perhaps most comparable to Glen Eira Road in Elsternwick. As was the case in Middle Park, this was spurred by the opening of the railway station – in this case, in 1912. The contiguous stretch of Glen Eira Road remains strongly characterised by 1910s buildings, with rows of red brick residential shops (eg Nos 31-37, 45-55, and 57-67) forming a fine and cohesive streetscape. A few individual buildings, notably Brimsmead's Pharmacy at No 73, retain original shopfronts. There is also a fine group of three inter-war branch banks at Nos 74-78. The first of these, erected for the State Savings Bank in 1922, is a Free Classical building in a similar vein to its counterpart in Canterbury Road (and was probably designed by the same architects, Sydney Smith & Ogg).

6.36.6 Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The Armstrong Street Commercial Precinct in Middle Park largely developed between 1888 and 1910 to provide community services for the burgeoning residential settlement in the hitherto undeveloped Middle Park area. The built fabric is largely characterised by rows of double-storey residential shops, complemented by a few single-storey shops, a three-storey Boom-style hotel (1888), a former bank and a former motor garage (both dating from the 1910s) and a double-storey block of shops and flats (c.1936).

How is It Significant?

The precinct is of historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is It Significant?

Historically, the precinct is significant for associations with an early and significant phase of settlement of Middle Park from the late 1880s, which followed the r of the railway station (1880), and the reclamation of the swampland that had hitherto discouraged any residential development. The shops, mostly erected between 1888 and 1910, were a direct result of the large-scale housing boom that took place in the area during that relatively short period.

Aesthetically, the precinct is significant as a particularly intact streetscape of late Victorian and Edwardian commercial buildings. They demonstrate cohesion through their common scale (primarily double storeyed), materials (primarily face brick) and detailing (rendered banding, arched windows, ornamented parapets). The rows of residential shops, many still retaining cast iron verandahs and original shopfront detailing (eg tiled spandrels and metal-framed windows) are enhanced by a number of more prepossessing commercial buildings, including a three-storey Boom-style hotel, a former bank, and a former motor garage.

6.36.7 Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay Table in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

The preservation of original/early painted signage, shopfronts and verandahs should be encouraged.

The preservation of original bluestone elements (including kerbing, guttering, spoon drains and pitching to laneways and crossovers) should also be encouraged.

6.36.8 **Assessment**

Simon Reeves, Heritage Alliance. Revised September 2008 and February 2009.

6.37 Albert Park Lake Precinct – H0446

Existing Designations:

Heritage Council Register:	nil
National Estate Register:	nil
National Trust Register:	nil

Previous Heritage Studies:

Conservation Study 1975:	N/A
Conservation Study 1987:	UC1: Precinct J
Heritage Review 2000:	H03 (part)

6.37.1 History

On an 1855 survey map, the land bounded by present-day Albert Road, St Kilda Road and Fitzroy Street was identified as ‘South Melbourne Park Reserve’. It was then dominated by two long expanses of marshland, the larger of which incorporated several small lakes. Fencing began in early 1857, and gateways to the north (opposite Cecil Street) and south (opposite Princes Street) were soon completed. Although the park was initially used for cattle grazing, its first official tenants were the St Kilda and South Melbourne cricket clubs, which established ovals at the south and north ends, respectively, in 1856 and 1862. The interim saw the completion of the St Kilda railway line in 1857, which ran between the two swamps to the terminus on Fitzroy Street. Two years later, a branch line was laid to Brighton (via Windsor) that curved through the southern part of the park, elevated on embankments and viaducts. This route, however, was not a success, and it closed in 1862. The line was dismantled in 1864, although the embankments remained until the late 1870s.

In early 1862, the reserve was named after Prince Albert, who died a few months before. In July, the 951-acre site was temporarily reserved from sale, which became permanent in 1864. That year, surveyor Clement Hodgkinson prepared a plan that showed the vaguely Y-shaped swamp edged by three tree-lined carriageways that connected entrances to the north, south and north-east (each with a gate lodge). Several enclosed reserves included one in the northwest corner with an iron hurdle fence and a wicket gate and, further south, two smaller circular ones. In the southwestern corner, Hodgkinson proposed a garden with an ornate network of curving paths. His map also reveals that the St Kilda Cricket Club had built a pavilion by that time, and also that a third oval – the Warehouseman’s Cricket Ground – existed on the park’s east side, opposite Commercial Road. The next few years saw the establishment of more sporting facilities, including bowling greens at the St Kilda (1865) and South Melbourne (1869) ends of the park, and a new pavilion at the latter cricket ground (1871).

By this time, encroaching residential development had caused the lagoon to become polluted. This, plus a burgeoning interest in recreational boating, led to a proposal to convert the swamp into a formal lake. A plan by Hodgkinson (1871) depicted a Y-shaped lake with a sinuous outline and ornamental islands. The project, however, was fraught with problems, and was not completed for almost two decades. Andrew Ward writes that the boathouses near the lake first made their appearance in 1864; other were subsequently established by James Edwards (1871), the Albert Park Yacht Club (1874), the Albert Park Rowing Club (1875), South Melbourne Rowing Club (1876) and the Lake Rowing Club (1879).²⁹⁶

A more fundamental change during this period was the excision of 200 acres on the east boundary, which were sold for private residential development in 1875. This created Queens Road and the

²⁹⁶ Ward, Vol I, p47.

numerous side-streets that connect it to St Kilda Road. The subdivision incorporated the Warehouseman's Cricket Ground, which was retained on an eight-acre block renamed Albert Reserve. The estate filled out rapidly, which can be seen on the MMBW map (1895). This also reveals that, by that time, the lake was fully formed, with two ornamental islands (the larger known as Gunn Island), a timber promenade (completed 1880), and a row of five boat-sheds at the northern end. The nearby cricket Ground had several buildings around its perimeter, including a new grandstand (1886), while, further west, the Army had erected a timber Orderly Room (1885). At the other end of the park, a conspicuous addition was the St Kilda Park State School (1882) which, despite opposition, was built behind the railway station. This set a precedent for further school sites to be excised in the early twentieth century: firstly the South Melbourne Technical College in the north-west corner (1918) and then the MacRobertson Girls' High School in the north-east corner (1935).



Figure 6.37-1 – General view of the ‘Albert Park Lagoon’ in 1876, showing recreational boating and early boatsheds

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.37-2 – Aerial photograph of Albert Park, 1900

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

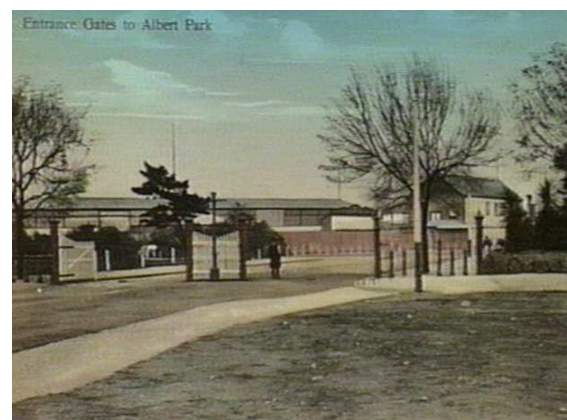


Figure 6.37-3 – Main entry gates to the Albert Park reserve on the north side (at Cecil Street), circa 1908

A municipal map of South Melbourne from 1921 shows that Albert Park retained much of its nineteenth century form and character at that time. The carriageways around the lake were still tree-lined, and otherwise corresponded to their 1860s layout, although the eastern one had been somewhat truncated by the creation of Queens Road. Part of the enclosed arboretum remained in the northeastern corner, as did the distinctive circular reserve between the lake and the old Workingmen's Cricket Ground. The cluster of boathouses remained east of the oval, while another had appeared on the other side of the lake, opposite Lorne Street. The small canted building on the northwest bank had disappeared, although a new kiosk was shown on the east carriageway. Erected in 1911, this was a double-storey building of alpine character, prompting its nickname: The Chalet.

In the inter-war period, the park was a popular venue for carnivals, processions, church picnics, army reviews and other crowd-drawing events. At the same time, sporting facilities continued to expand. The South Melbourne Cricket Club built a new grandstand in 1926 (after its original one was destroyed by fire), while its counterpart at the St Kilda end built three new grandstands in 1924, 1934 and 1936. The timber promenade around the lake was replaced by concrete edging in 1925, and several new boathouses were built for the Lord Somer's Camp Rowing Club (1932), the YWCA (1933) and others. The Albert Park Golf Club, which had played there since 1917, expanded its course to 18 holes in 1932. Two new cricket grounds were also laid out in the late 1930s, named in honour of local players Harry Trott and Ross Gregory. The latter was provided with a concrete pavilion in the then-fashionable Moderne style.

In 1933, the timber Orderley Room in the northwest corner of the park was also destroyed by fire, and a new brick building, for the Signals Training Depot, was erected in 1935. Military presence in Albert Park increased a few years later, when the Defence Department began annexing adjacent land, taking over both cricket grounds, a bowling green and even the girls' high school (where three large cargo sheds were erected at the rear). In 1943, land in the park's southwestern corner was annexed for a full-scale military barracks, which developed with rows of prefabricated huts. Although intended to be a temporary presence, it would remain in Albert Park for over thirty years. By the time that Albert Park re-opened to the public after the War, its use for passive recreation had declined considerably. An MMBW map from the 1940s shows that little evidence remained of the park's Victorian and Edwardian splendour. A gate lodge still stood at Fitzroy Street, as did the Chalet on the western carriageway. It was around this time that the latter thoroughfare – which still more or less followed its 1860s alignment – was renamed in honour of the late City Engineer A E Aughtie, who had died in 1944 after more than forty years of involvement with Albert Park.

Sporting facilities, which had expanded during the 1920s and '30s, increased on a grander scale in the post-war era. In 1947, the golf club terminated its occupancy, and the course re-opened to the public with premises in an ex-army hut. New playing fields were provided for cycling, soccer, baseball and hockey clubs, while the three cargo sheds behind the girls' school were adapted for table tennis, basketball and badminton. The Australian Grand Prix was first held at the park in 1953, and again in 1958, prompting further changes to its layout.

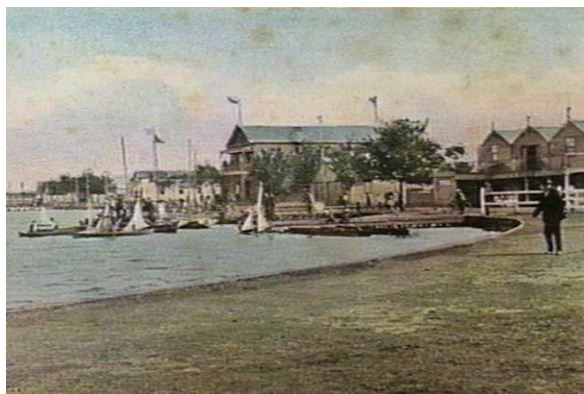


Figure 6.37-4 – Boathouses on the lake, circa 1912

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6.37-5 – Football match at South Melbourne Oval, 1920s

(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

The post-war period saw the demolition of several existing structures (some dating back to the nineteenth century) and the construction of many new ones. While four early boathouses still remained at the north end of the lake in 1950, these were gradually replaced over the next two decades by modern counterparts for the First Victorian Sea Scouts (1950), the Victorian Speedboat Club (1952), the South Melbourne Citizens & Police Boys' Club (1957) and others. Elsewhere, new additions included the Beaurepaire Pavilion (1955), a new golf clubhouse (1960) and a building for the

Amateur Walkers' Club (1965). Two restaurants also appeared during this period: the popular Rob's Drive-in Restaurant (incorporated into the golf club premises) and the Carousel (1963), so named for its revolving dining area.

During the 1990s, Albert Park underwent a wave of redevelopment comparable to the one that reshaped the park thirty years earlier. The announcement in 1993 that the park would again play host to the Grand Prix met with community opposition and prompted the formation of an action group, Save Albert Park, which stated its objectives as follows:

- to stop motor racing in Albert Park;
- to reclaim and restore Albert Park as public open space and parkland;
- to work to protect Albert Park from the impact of the Grand Prix and other inappropriate development;

Notwithstanding this groundswell of resistance –which included a vigil that commenced at the site on 5 November 1994 – plans for the Grand Prix proceeded and the inaugural race was held in 1996. The adaptation necessitated the removal of numerous trees and buildings, and the partial re-orientation of Aughtie Drive. This key period also saw the extension of the golf course further north, which necessitated the relocation of the Harry Trott Oval (to the opposite corner, formerly occupied by the army barracks) and the demolition of the old indoors sport venues, squash courts, and Amateur Walking Club building. In 1995, the old South Melbourne Cricket Ground (which had been vacated by the local football team when it moved to Sydney in 1982) was converted into a new soccer stadium, although the 1920s grandstand was retained. That same year saw the construction of Albert Park's third restaurant, on a prominent site at the south end of the boathouses, overlooking Gunn Island. In 1997, the massive Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre was established in the park's north-western corner, necessitating further alterations to the original alignment of Aughtie Drive. This recent phase of redevelopment has also seen most of the remaining pavilions and boat sheds (dating back to the 1940s, '50s and '60s) demolished and replaced by modern counterparts.

6.37.2 Description

As it exists today, the Albert Park reserve still largely corresponds to its late nineteenth century (post-1875) extent, being bordered by Canterbury Road, Albert Road, Queens Road and Fitzroy Street, with the former railway line (now light rail) still forming a prominent boundary along the park's south-western frontage. The distinctive Y-shaped lake remains its most dominant feature, with its concrete edging (dating back to 1925) and densely-landscaped ornamental island to the north.



Figure 6.37-6 – Row of mature cypress trees along southwestern boundary of Albert Park reserve



Figure 6.37-7 – The St Kilda Bowling Club pavilion on Fitzroy Street, part of which dates back to 1876

Otherwise, very little evidence remains of the park's Victorian character. The three carriageways that once encircled the lake are now asphalted roadways with concrete kerbing and chain-link barriers. Aughtie Drive and Lakeside Drive have both been re-oriented, so their current layout only partly correspond to their original 1860s alignments. Rows of mature deciduous trees along present-day Village Green Drive and Albert Road Drive, and mature cypress trees in the golf course area, provide evidence of the original alignments of the western, northern and eastern carriageways. The golf course, between Lakeside Drive and Queens Road, is now the only part of the reserve that, to a limited extent, retains something of the character of a nineteenth century landscaped park.

Only four nineteenth century buildings survive within the boundaries of the park. Three of these – the railway stations at St Kilda (1857) and Middle Park (1887) and the St Kilda Park State School (1882) – do not relate to the park's ongoing use for recreation. The railway stations are simple gable-roofed buildings: the St Kilda terminus has a rendered façade in a restrained Italianate style, while its Middle Park counterpart (now a café) is a more modest weatherboard structure with brick chimney and cantilevered awning to the railway line. The line itself retains remnant Victorian infrastructure in the form of culverts and underpasses, in red brick with bluestone capping and, in one case (opposite Armstrong Street), a cast iron palisade barrier. The oldest surviving recreational building in the park is the original pavilion at the St Kilda bowling club, dating from 1876. This simple weatherboard building, with a jerkinhead roof and front verandah, has been incorporated into the later (1926) clubrooms. By contrast, the two early cricket grounds in the park retain no nineteenth century fabric. However, it must be noted that the playing fields themselves – the two ovals at St Kilda and South Melbourne ends, and indeed the bowling green at St Kilda – can be considered as important historical markers in their own right, as they date back, respectively, to 1856, 1862 and 1865. As such, they represent the oldest recreational sites in the park reserve.

The oldest surviving twentieth century building in the park is the former South Melbourne Technical School on Albert Road, just east of the railway overpass. Although not directly connected to the history of Albert Park as a recreational reserve, it is nonetheless significant in its own right as an early example of a purpose-built technical school. A prominent double-storey hip-roofed brick building with rendered banding, canted corner and two rendered bays flanking a central round-arched entrance, it remains a key element in the Albert Road streetscape. Surviving inter-war buildings in the park include the aforementioned bowling club pavilion at St Kilda (1926), its much-altered but still recognisable counterpart at Middle Park, and the grandstands associated with the two former cricket grounds. These are large red brick structures, with roofs clad in corrugated galvanised steel and half-timbered gable ends. The example at the South Melbourne oval (now soccer field) is notably large, with steel columns and rendered banding, while the two smaller one ones, at the St

Kilda Oval, are virtually identical, with gambrel roofs on timber columns, weatherboard spandrels and gable ends to the field. At the rear of one of the St Kilda stands is a contemporaneous electrical substation, also in red brick.

Another early electrical substation, albeit with a roughcast finish, stands at the opposite end of the park, fronting Albert Road behind the girls' school. The school itself (1935) is a monumental modern building in cream-and-blue brick, designed in a striking style derived from the work of Dutch architect Willem Dudok. Like the former technical school at the opposite end of Albert Road, this building has little to do with the historical development of the park as a recreation reserve, but otherwise remains as an outstanding architectural specimen in its own right. It is also one of several eye-catching structures along the park's northern frontage that date from the 1930s, which include the memorial gates opposite Cecil Street and the former Army Drill Hall. The latter is contemporaneous with the girls' school but is entirely different in form and detailing: a row of three domestically-scaled Moderne buildings in red brick, with hipped roofs clad in terracotta tiles. This is now the only evidence of army occupation in Albert Park. No trace remains of the barracks that once occupied the park's south-western corner, although a memorial (in the form of a boulder with plaque) marks the site.

Many of the parks' recreational buildings from the early post-war era have been demolished over the past decade or so. The row of boathouses at the northern end of the lake, which was largely redeveloped in the 1950s and '60s, has since been redeveloped again. Today, all that remains of the initial post-war boom is the much-altered premises of the Albert Park Yacht Club. More intact, and more architecturally distinguished, is the Power House boatshed on the opposite side of the lake, which dates from 1965. Designed by noted modernist architect Best Overend, this is a striking building with panels of clinker brick (since overpainted) set within a concrete frame, and a series of curved rooflets.

Numerous sporting pavilions have been demolished or replaced in recent years; one of the few that remains is on the north side of the John Blackham Oval. Typical of the era, this substantially intact two-storey building is an elevated glass-walled box projecting over a plinth-like concrete-block ground floor. On the opposite (east) side of the lake, the 1960 golf course office building is still standing, albeit in an altered state. It is a single-storey brick building (since overpainted) with horizontal strip windows and a low-pitched roof with broad eaves and pergola-like frames. Another interesting remnant of the park's post-war recreational facilities is a paved barbecue area to the north of the boatshed row. Two barbecues are enclosed within a configuration of squat piers and dwarf walls, realised in tumbled brick with glazed tile coping. The buildings occupied by the St Kilda and Middle Park bowling clubs both have post-war additions of somewhat undistinguished form.



Figure 6.37-8 – General view of the lake, showing row of mature trees; note also concrete edging to lakeside



Figure 6.37-9 – The former Middle Park Railway Station (now a café) on the western edge of the park

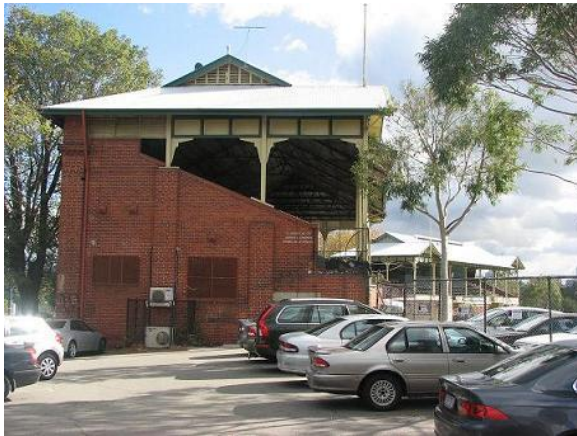


Figure 6.37-10 – One of the two surviving inter-war grandstands at the St Kilda Cricket Ground (now Junction Oval)



Figure 6.37-11 – The former military drill hall (1935), on the park's northern edge



Figure 6.37-12 – The golf course building (1960), which once included the celebrated Rob's Drive-in Restaurant



Figure 6.37-13 – One of the few surviving 1960s sporting pavilions, located near the John Blackham Oval

Buildings of more recent origin, which are considered to be non-contributory elements within the park, include the Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre, the Point Restaurant, the Indoors Sports Centre on Aughtie Drive, and the numerous new pavilions flanking the sports fields along the west and south-west side of the park. Recent additions to the rear of the MacRobertson's Girls' High school, and some modern housing behind the former St Kilda railway station, are also considered as non-contributory.

Topographically, the parkland around the lake is generally flat, although there are some artificial hillocks near the golf course on the east side of the lake, and the former driving range on the west side. Most of the open spaces, comprising the golf course, driving range and the numerous sports fields and picnic areas, are grassed. Trees exhibit a variety in terms of age, species and configuration. Aside from the aforementioned rows of mature trees that mark the carriageways, the oldest surviving trees include a cypress row beside the railway line in the south-west of the park, another cluster near the golf club, and a group of conifers to the north of the Harry Trott Oval.

A remnant River Red Gum near the corner of Queens Road and Fitzroy Street, known as the Corroboree Tree for its association with the original Koori occupation of the site, is a unique landscape element in the park. Other noteworthy plantings include Canary Island date palms (along the edge of the lake, and in a group behind The Point restaurant), Norfolk Island pines (along Hockey Drive), pepper trees (near the St Kilda Park Primary School) and a row of mature deciduous trees between the boatsheds and the lake.

Along from the sealed vehicle roadways (ie Aughtie Drive, Lakeside Drive, Albert Road Drive, Ross Gregory Drive, Hockey Drive and Village Green Drive) and their associated carparks, the reserve has an extensive network of pedestrian and bicycle pathways, variously gravelled, asphalted or concrete paved. These are dotted with a number of structures of recent origin including barbecue pavilions, toilet blocks and information shelters in a matching style, with pyramidal roofs and belvederes. The pathway around the lake incorporates a "fitness circuit", with various timber- and/or steel-framed pieces of exercise equipment. Bench seating is generally of recent origin (with steel framed and thin timber slats), although a few of those once-ubiquitous mid-century counterparts survive, with pre-cast concrete frames and heavier timber slats. Near the corner of Albert Road and Lakeside Drive is a carved timber bench, with a metal plaque commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Save Albert Park vigil (2004).

6.37.3 References

1. Vardy Map (1855)
2. Map of Albert Park (1864)
3. Cox Map (1866)
4. Clement Hodgkinson's Map of Lagoon in Albert Park (1871)
5. MMBW Map (1895)
6. Melbourne Publishing Company's Map of Municipality of South Melbourne (1921);
7. Jill Barnard and Jenny Keating, *People's Playground: A History of the Albert Park* (1996).

6.37.4 Thematic Context:

- The First Railways
- The Late Nineteenth Century Boom
- Depression and Recovery: The Inter-War Years
- Schools: Government Intervention
- Ways of Life: South Melbourne

6.37.5 Comparative Analysis

The Albert Park reserve is by far the largest public open space within the City of Port Phillip. With an area of 225 hectares, is more extensive than the remainder of the municipality's public open spaces put together – a total of 176 hectares, comprising 24 significant parks, 70 neighbourhood parks, 54 playgrounds, 5 sports grounds and 9.2 kilometres of foreshore reserve.

Notwithstanding its vast scale, some pertinent comparisons can be drawn between Albert Park and other local parks. As an example of a gazetted public reserve dating back to the 1850s and '60s, it can be compared with the St Kilda Botanical Gardens (1859) and Alma Park (1867). As a venue for sporting activities of varied kinds, Albert Park is also broadly comparable with the J L Murphy Reserve in Port Melbourne (which has separate fields for football, cricket, baseball and soccer) and Elwood Park (with cricket ovals, tennis courts, croquet pitch and a former bowling green). Specific elements within the park, such as the former ovals of the South Melbourne and St Kilda cricket clubs, have counterparts elsewhere in the municipality. These include the former Workingmen's Cricket Ground on Queens Road (which, as mentioned before, originally formed part of Albert Park) and the Port Melbourne Cricket Ground on Williamstown Road (established 1874). The latter has a substantial inter-war grandstand, with red brick base and steel-clad roof, not unlike those seen at Albert Park. Finally, those buildings at Albert Park specifically associated with water-sports have parallels with developments along the foreshore reserve. The boatsheds of the yachting, sailing and rowing clubs on Albert Park Lake have their equivalents on the beaches at Port Melbourne, Albert Park, Middle Park, St Kilda and Elwood. The Elwood foreshore also has a sea scout hall.

The reserve at Albert Park stands not merely because of its huge scale, but also because of its ability to simultaneously demonstrate a number of significant themes that have shaped the municipality. These not only include passive recreation and sporting activities of many kinds, but also the expansion of transport infrastructure (ie the railway line and stations), educational facilities (ie the three schools on the park's periphery) and even military presence (ie the drill hall). In this regard, Albert Park's most pertinent comparator is Royal Park in Parkville, which is similarly vast and has an equally multi-layered history.

6.37.6 Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Albert Park, comprising some 226 hectares bounded by Canterbury Road, Albert Road, Queens Road and Fitzroy Street, developed as a public reserve from the mid-1850s. Dominated by a massive Y-shaped lake (reclaimed from what was originally swampland), the park soon developed as a centre for recreational and sporting activities. During its long history, parts of the site have been usurped (sometimes temporarily and sometimes permanently) for railway, educational and military purposes.

As it exists today, the park contains evidence of several successive phases of development, which includes ornamental tree plantings, pedestrian and vehicle thoroughfares (some of which at least partly follow the alignment of original carriageways), three schools, two cricket grounds, two bowling greens, two restaurants, a former drill hall, several boathouses and innumerable playing fields and pavilions.

How is It Significant?

The precinct is of historical, aesthetic and social significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is It Significant?

Historically, the Albert Park Lake reserve is significant as a unique cultural landscape within the City of Port Phillip and, more broadly, within Melbourne's inner suburbs. Dating back to the mid-1850s, the extent of the park has changed only slightly over the past 150 years, while its lake has remained as its dominant element since it began to be formalised in the 1870s. These elements, plus some avenues of mature trees and remnants of original carriageways (maintained in the alignments of present-day roadways), provide evidence the park's early years as a mid-Victorian pleasure ground.

Notwithstanding this ongoing use for passive recreation, the park is especially notable for its continuous existence as a major sporting venue. This has been a recurring theme since the park's earliest days, with the establishment of facilities for cricket (mid-1850s), lawn bowls (mid-1860s), recreational boating (early 1870s), golf (late 1910s), soccer (1940s) and other sports, as well as the annual Formula One Grand Prix (since 1996). Some of these facilities, such as the cricket oval (1856) and bowling club (1865) at the St Kilda end of the park actually represent the oldest surviving facilities in Victoria.

The park's prestigious position in Melbourne's inner suburbs is reflected in the presence of a number of buildings (including three schools, two railway stations and a former drill hall) that, although not directly associated with the park's ongoing recreational use, nevertheless provide significant evidence of the expansion of community facilities and government presence over the course of many decades.

Aesthetically, the park is significant as a major open space in the midst of surrounding residential areas that are generally characterised by dense development. The park is not only the largest public open space in the City of Park Phillip, but one of the largest in inner Melbourne. Its distinctive Y-shaped lake remains as its most prominent and defining element, enhanced by an ornamental landscaped island (an important remnant of its original 1870s layout) and avenues of palms and other trees. Other elements that contribute to the aesthetic significance of the park include numerous avenues and clusters of mature deciduous and evergreen trees, and several prominent architect-designed buildings from the 1880s to the 1960s. These are of aesthetic or architectural significance in their own right, and are only enhanced by their fine parkland or lakeside setting.

Socially, the lake and its reserve are significant as an important focus for passive and active recreation at the local and regional levels. From its foundation in the 1850s until the present day, it has served as a venue for countless processions, special events, picnics and so on, as well as sporting activities. The park and its lake remain as a significant epicentre for sporting activities at a metropolitan level

(and, in the case of the Grand Prix, at a international level), while also serving as a vital and much-appreciated local park for those residents who live in the vicinity. The social significance of the park is underscored by the existence of the very active Save Albert Park group, which was formed in the mid-1990s to maintain the park as a public reserve and to protect it from inappropriate development.

6.37.6.1 Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay Table in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

6.37.7 Assessment

Simon Reeves, Heritage Alliance. Revised September 2008 and February 2009.

6.38 Port Melbourne Cricket Ground – H0447

6.38.1 Port Melbourne Cricket Ground

Existing designations:

Heritage Council Register:	N/A
National Estate Register:	N/A
National Trust Register:	N/A

6.38.2 History

Vacant allotments in Port Melbourne in the 1860s and 1870s provided ideal locations for informal sports including cricket and football. In 1867, a local cricket team – the North Sandridge Cricket Club - was formed. At this time large local employers including Swallow and Ariell of Stokes Street and J Kitchen Pty Soap Manufacturers of Ingles Street also fielded their own teams. In 1874 a meeting resulted in the formation of a new club – the Sandridge Cricket Club. Both teams played at various locations in the district before coming together to use then vacant land at the corner of Williamstown Road and Ingles Street from 1874. The present ground occupies this site today. By the late 1870s the ground had been fenced, and by 1881 the former gatekeeper’s residence was relocated to the ground for use as a cricket pavilion.

Football in the municipality developed similarly with the afore-mentioned companies fielding their own teams, as well as a local team also in existence. Despite the granting of land for a ground near the J Kitchen works opposite the cricket ground, the proposal did not develop further, and from the middle of the 1880s, the football and cricket teams shared the present ground, as they do today.

By the early years of the twentieth century the ground was rundown and infighting between the football and cricket teams, meant that little progress on improvements could occur. The Council was not prepared to contribute unless the ownership of the ground, vested in the two clubs, came under its control. In August 1912 a public meeting was held to facilitate a referendum on whether the Council should take control of the ground. Overwhelmingly, people voted for the plan and a new committee of management, comprising Council and representatives of the cricket and football clubs was established in November the same year. The advent of the World War I saw a scaling down of activity at the ground, however, and by the end of 1918, plans were proposed by the Council to relocate the ground to the lagoon and reuse the land for housing. The burning down of the cricket pavilion and the refusal to grant membership to the club by the Victorian Cricket Association in 1914, made the continued use of the ground for sports more tenuous. However, by a single vote at a public meeting in 1919, it was resolved to rebuild the pavilion and remain at the present site.²⁹⁷ In 1927 the foundation stone was laid for the construction of the brick grandstand, and it was officially opened on 14 April 1928, by the Mayor Cr. A Tucker, accompanied by a gala procession. The stand cost £8,000, and was reputedly built entirely from Australian materials.²⁹⁸ The ground was subsequently fenced in cyclone wire and paling fence, with brick amenities blocks and ticket entry kiosks set within the perimeter fence.

In 1942 the stand and ground was requisitioned for use by the US Army. In the 1970s the stand was named in honour of Norman Leslie Goss, (b. 1915), a Hawthorn footballer who started his career playing for Port Melbourne. His name is formed in painted metal lettering fixed to the fascia. The facility remains in use today, hosting both cricket and football matches.

²⁹⁷ The brief historical outline is taken from U’Ren, Nancy and Turnbull, Noel, *A History of Port Melbourne*, Oxford University Press, 1983, various pages.

²⁹⁸ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 119-123.

6.38.3 Description

The Port Melbourne Cricket Ground is located on the west side of Williamstown Road, and its northern boundary is Ingles Street. To the south and west it is enclosed by industrial buildings. The ground is fenced with cyclone wire topped with barbed wire, into which is inset the brick ticket entry kiosk/canteen and toilet /store buildings to Williamstown Road - this last is part screened by a section of paling fence - and a further brick ticket entry kiosk and a toilet block to Ingles Street. To the west the brick wall of neighboring buildings forms the boundary and a high timber paling fence topped with barbed wire encloses the ground to the south. The main vehicular entry is from Williamstown Road, close to the Norman L Goss Stand. The oval has a painted timber picket fence to its perimeter, and there is a single row of slatted timber seating forms behind. To the north end of the ground are the brick toilet block and ticket entry kiosk to Ingles Street. The brick toilet block is utilitarian in its form and fabric, with unpainted brick walls, concrete floors, ceramic tiling and is partly open to the sky. The ticket entry kiosk is of red face brick with painted ledged timber doors to both the ground and Ingles Street. The scoreboard structure is constructed of weatherboards with metal cross-bracing and topped with a corrugated iron enclosure, framing the scoreboard. There are three timber doors in the rear (north side) and corresponding hinged timber awnings concealing openings facing the ground. A metal stair leads to a door at first floor level in the west side. There is a 'mound' to the north-east corner of the ground, planted with cypresses and shrubs. Enclosed by the cyclone wire fencing to Williamstown Road and Ingles Street, a number of small bluestone and cement retaining wall elements are evident to the base of the mound. The time clock is set at the top of the mound facing the ground.

The toilet/store building and canteen/ticket entry kiosk adjoining Williamstown Road similarly are utilitarian structures of red face brick with skillion roofs of corrugated iron. The canteen has a series of metal retractable shutters facing the ground and bracketed shelves beneath.

Other minor structures include advertising hoardings set to the Williamstown Road boundary, on the grassed area adjoining the mound. There are also two former coaches' boxes, elevated relocatable structures, now used for press commentary, at the Ingles Street end of the ground. Adjoining the vehicular entrance from Williamstown Road is the ground keeper's office – a small brick structure set in the corner of the asphalt parking area to the east and south of the Norman L Goss Stand, the main element of built form to the site. Service-related enclosures include site sheds are located behind the stand. There is also a brick, corrugated iron and glass structure to the west of the Goss Stand. This structure was originally constructed as the 'away' team's rooms; it remains in-situ and is of similar date and form and fabric as the amenities and store buildings to the north and east sides of the ground. In 2001 a first floor addition of brick and curved corrugated iron, has added new coaches' boxes, and timekeeper's and statistician's rooms to the building.²⁹⁹

The Norman L Goss Stand was constructed in 1927-28 with the granite foundation stone of 12th November 1927 set into the east elevation facing Williamstown Road. The stand is constructed of red face brick laid in English bond, with dressings of both painted and unpainted render. The stand comprises a large raked undercover seating area, accessed by stairs from the front of the stand, set atop a brick sub-structure containing players rooms, offices, social club, kitchen, change and ablutions facilities, training room and players race. These spaces are accessed from painted timber ledged and braced paired doors in the south, east and west elevations. There is a small brick kiosk adjoining the south side, facing Williamstown Road.

The interior spaces are relatively intact to their date of construction, with areas of strapped plaster ceilings, painted brickwork, terrazzo flooring and interwar tiling evident. The major alteration to the interior has been the removal of a wall adjoining the west side of the social club room, incorporating a former change room thus enlarging the social club space and the absorption of the east end of the corridor that ran the full length of the stand to the north for use as an adjoining bar area.

²⁹⁹ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 120.

Windows are generally metal-framed fixed windows, with an inset lower hopper sash for ventilation, rendered lintels above and sills of bull-nose bricks. Ventilators are screened by faceted painted metal vent caps. The seating area is approached by a sloping asphalt ramp from the east and west which meets at a point above the player's race. Open tread timber stairs with open timber handrails are set at either end of the stand, accessing the two side aisles. A small brick podium with a cyclone wire fence is approached by a timber stair from the east and a metal (presumed replacement stair) from the west side. These stairs also provide access to the centre aisle of the seating area. There is a row of fixed metal framed windows set in the plinth beneath the seating area – these illuminate the internal corridor that ran the full length of the stand. The seating area comprises a timber seating plat, of unpainted boarding with painted timber slatted benches and a timber back rails supported by metal uprights. Row identification is painted directly onto the flooring. The ends of the stand are infilled with non-original timber framed clear glazing for weather protection. The stand has a gabled roof of corrugated asbestos cement supported by a series of over-painted metal Fink trusses with a



Figure 6.38-1 – The ‘away’ team’s rooms with the 2001 addition in the foreground and the Norman L Goss Stand, looking east.



Figure 6.38-2 – From left: the scoreboard; hoardings and ticket entry kiosk to Ingles Street.



Figure 6.38-3 – The Norman L Goss stand.



Figure 6.38-4 – Seating area, Norman L Goss Stand.



Figure 6.38-5 – Timber seating plats and painted row identifiers.



Figure 6.38-6 – Entry ramp and access stairs, Norman L Goss Stand.



Figure 6.38-7 – Rear elevation showing unpainted brick and render finishes.

6.38.4 Thematic Context (Victoria's Framework of Historic Themes)

- Shaping cultural and creative life (09)
- Participating in sport and recreation (9.1)

6.38.5 Comparative Analysis

Melbourne's 1920s grandstands emerged gradually from nineteenth century grandstand form, seen in Nathaniel Billings' stand at Brunswick Street for Fitzroy (1888),³⁰⁰ George Clegg's stand at Ballarat City Oval (1898),³⁰¹ Toorak Park Stand at Prahran Oval (c. 1905, demolished),³⁰² The Gardiner Stand at Carlton's Optus Oval (1909),³⁰³ and Richmond Stand, now the Jack Dyer Stand, at Punt Road (1914, 1927).³⁰⁴ Their principal alterations were internal, but most added screens across the ends, as wind and rain protection. Corio and the Junction Ovals had at least two of these grandstands by 1912-13.³⁰⁵ These usually comprised multiple pane windows in a timber or steel frame, over-painted. 1930s stands usually integrated these more with the complete design, whereas in the 1920s stands, these glass screens, often set in from the gables above, usually look added on. New corrugated roof cladding in asbestos cement was also popular, supplanting earlier corrugated iron or steel sheet which was noisy in heavy rain.

The Norman L Goss Stand is a very well-preserved example of VFA and VFL stands built in the 1920s around Melbourne suburbs. In materials and general design it compares directly with the former South Melbourne Cricket and Football Club Grandstand at Lakeside Oval, designed by Clegg and Morrow (1926-8).³⁰⁶ That also had (i) half-timbered gables sheeted in asbestos cement at each end, besides a smaller gable at the centre, above the oval fascia, (ii) a front apron in red face brick with piers forming pedestals for the steel canopy columns, (iii) a steel truss canopy frame, and (iv) a broad back in red face brick with a row of small windows above the grandstand seating, and larger windows below with cement rendered lintels. South Melbourne grandstand was cranked to follow the oval outline, but Port Melbourne was straight-fronted. (Figure 6.38–8, Figure 6.38–9)

In this aspect it is closer to contemporary VFL stands such as the Reynolds Stand at Windy Hill for Essendon (1922) (Figure 6.38–11),³⁰⁷ the Old Stand at Arden Street North Melbourne (c. 1924-5)³⁰⁸ St Kilda Junction Oval's GP Newman Stand (1925), now the Kevin Murray Stand,³⁰⁹ and contemporary VFA grandstands such as Coburg City (1925, altered).³¹⁰ There is also a close correspondence with smaller VFA grandstands, such as the Ratepayers/Tramways Stand (1920) and Main Stand (1935) at Camberwell Sports Ground,³¹¹ Oakleigh's Old Grandstand (1923) at Dandenong Road, with a central half-timbered gable,³¹² the A R Glenn Stand at Brunswick Park

³⁰⁰ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 27.

³⁰¹ www.nattrust.com.au/trust/grandstand_city_oval_ballarat, accessed 5 May 2011.

³⁰² Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 114-115.

³⁰³ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 114-115.

³⁰⁴ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 128-133.

³⁰⁵ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 48-9 (Corio); p. 76 (Junction).

³⁰⁶ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 84-9. Conrad Hamann: index to Australian architects, Lovell Chen research files, accessed 5 May 2011; Fraser Brown, *George Clegg, Architect: 1890-1944: a Study of a Provincial Architect and his Partners*, Investigation report, University of Melbourne, 1989.

³⁰⁷ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 180, 187.

³⁰⁸ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 14-16.

³⁰⁹ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 75-9.

³¹⁰ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 39.

³¹¹ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 31, 33.

³¹² Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 110, 112.

(1925), with its central gable and gabled hip roof endings,³¹³ Geelong's Brownlow Young Stand at Corio Oval (1925),³¹⁴ and the more Neo-Classically detailed Preston (1925, canopy altered).³¹⁵ This genre of stand, with red face brick base, slanted spectator apron, central race, symmetrical composition and low gabled roof, persisted in the cranked Yarraville Stand (1929, 1940)³¹⁶ and Springvale (1936).³¹⁷ By this time, however, newer stands were visibly incorporating reinforced concrete use, semi-cantilevered awnings, curved stand endings and modernist exteriors, beginning with the reinforced concrete stand at Northcote (1925)³¹⁸ and developing with the concrete and then Southern Stands at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (1928, 1936-7),³¹⁹ the Michael Tuck Stand at Glenferrie Oval for Hawthorn (1937-8)³²⁰ and Harry Winbush's stand for Richmond at Punt Road (1938, altered) and Showers Stand for Essendon at Windy Hill (1939).³²¹

Melbourne's 1920s grandstands generally employed residential details, especially half-timbered gables and roofs of similar pitch, being applied to medium or large institutional buildings. There was some application of similar domestic bungalow forms to other public buildings such as railway stations (Mentone, Showgrounds, each c. 1915) or Churches, as with the Mount Pleasant Uniting Church, Nunawading (1917) and Church of Christ Balwyn (1926). Generally, however, this was the limit of bungalow elements outside of domestic architecture.

³¹³ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 21-5.

³¹⁴ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 51.

³¹⁵ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 126 (middle).

³¹⁶ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 188-9.

³¹⁷ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 140-1.

³¹⁸ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 104-5.

³¹⁹ See esp. Gina Levenspiel and others for Lovell Chen on behalf of the Melbourne Cricket Club, *Melbourne Cricket Ground: an Historical Survey*, Melbourne, 2006.

³²⁰ Conrad Hamann, *A History of Australian Architecture*, Pt. 3, 1900-1945, Educational Media, Melbourne, 1985; Philip Goad and others, *Melbourne Architecture*, Watermark, Sydney, 1999, 2009, p. 147 item 267.

³²¹ Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 128-133 (Richmond) and 184-5 (Essendon).



Figure 6.38-8 – The South Melbourne Cricket and Football Club Grandstand, (1926-28) showing distinctive cranked form and open roof carried over trusses with gable ends.



Figure 6.38-9 – South Melbourne Grandstand, showing early painted signage and original timber seating.



Figure 6.38–10 – The west elevation of the South Melbourne Grandstand, showing row of highlight windows beneath the eaves.



Figure 6.38–11 – R S Reynolds Stand, Windy Hill, Essendon, c.1922.

Source: Caruso, Santo, Football Grounds of Melbourne.

6.38.6 Statement of Significance

The Port Melbourne Cricket Ground (TEAC Oval) is of local historical and social significance.

The Port Melbourne Cricket Ground has been used for cricket since 1874, and for football from the middle of the 1880s. Over time, improvements and changes have been made and the construction of the Norman L Goss Stand in 1927 was a significant expression of confidence in the ongoing use of the ground by football and cricket teams, and remains largely intact with limited minor and generally

sympathetic alterations occurring since its date of construction. The retention of the later ticket entry kiosks and amenities buildings which occupy parts of the perimeter of the ground are also of significance, unifying and enclosing the facility. The ground was also requisitioned by the US Army in 1942, adding a broader dimension to its historic use. It continues to be a well-used facility, providing a gathering place for the local community and as such has considerable social significance to the local area.

6.38.7 Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

Paint controls are recommended.

Tree controls and internal controls are not recommended.

6.38.8 Assessment

Lovell Chen 2011

6.38.9 References

1. The brief historical outline is taken from U'Ren, Nancy and Turnbull, Noel, *A History of Port Melbourne*, Oxford University Press, 1983, various pages.
2. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 119-123.
3. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 120.
4. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 27.
5. www.nattrust.com.au/trust/grandstand_city_oval_ballarat, accessed 5 May 2011.
6. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 114-115.
7. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 114-115.
8. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 128-133.
9. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 48-9 (Corio); p. 76 (Junction).
10. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 84-9. Conrad Hamann: index to Australian architects, Lovell Chen research files, accessed 5 May 2011; Fraser Brown, George Clegg, *Architect: 1890-1944: a Study of a Provincial Architect and his Partners*, Investigation report, University of Melbourne, 1989.
11. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 180, 187.
12. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 14-16.
13. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 75-9.
14. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 39.
15. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 31, 33.
16. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 110, 112.
17. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 21-5.
18. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 51.
19. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, p. 126 (middle).
20. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 188-9.
21. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 140-1.

22. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 104-5.
23. See esp. Gina Levenspiel and others for Lovell Chen on behalf of the Melbourne Cricket Club, *Melbourne Cricket Ground: an Historical Survey*, Melbourne, 2006.
24. Conrad Hamann, *A History of Australian Architecture, Pt. 3, 1900-1945*, Educational Media, Melbourne, 1985; Philip Goad and others, *Melbourne Architecture*, Watermark, Sydney, 1999, 2009, p. 147 item 267.
25. Caruso, Santo, *Football Grounds of Melbourne*, 2002, pp. 128-133 (Richmond) and 184-5 (Essendon).

6.39 Edwards Park – H0448

6.39.1 Edwards Park

Existing designations:

Heritage Council Register: N/A

National Estate Register: N/A

National Trust Register: N/A

6.39.2 History

The following overview history is summarised from the Edwards Park: Conservation Analysis and Masterplan (Australian Landscape Management for the City of Port Phillip, November 2001).

The site of Edwards Park originally formed part of a large saltwater lagoon that extended inland from the present Lagoon Pier to Ingles Street in the north. The location and form of the lagoon was a major influence on the early development (subdivision layout) of Port Melbourne from the 1850s through the later nineteenth century, however by the mid-1870s the process of filling the lagoon had begun. While it had been anticipated that the reclaimed land could be built on, stability proved to be an issue, and ultimately much of the land was reserved for public open space, including Edwards Park, which was gazetted as an ornamental reserve under the management of the local Council in December 1897.

Development of the reserve was slow, with a petition from local residents in 1911 to the Council complaining it was being 'utilised as a tip for all kinds of filth and rubbish' and asking that the lands be 'beautified for gardens and other improvements'. While the response from Council in 1912 was a promise to consider the matter and a recommendation that provision be made for laying down grass and for planting trees and shrubs in the park, it is not clear what, if any, development occurred prior to 1920.

From 1914, the Guild of Plan had been lobbying the Council to provide a suitable site for a playground, apparently in Edwards Park, however it was not until January 1923 that the Council's Public Works Committee recommended that a children's playground should be 'fitted up for use' including 'provisions for a sand patch' followed by a recommendation in December the same year for a drinking fountain to be placed in the playground. The layout and location of this early playground is unclear.

Substantial planting works appear to have been undertaken in the 1920s. In March 1923, Council minutes note that the local branch of the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) was asked whether it wishes to plant trees in the park in memory of local soldiers killed in WWI. Subsequently, in April, the Public Works Committee recommended that 'the matter of planting palms in Edwards Park be left in the hands of the Mayor (Cr Edwards), Cr Sinclair, and the Town Clerk, Mr Anderson.' It is not known whether the palm avenues were commemorative plantings; if so, this would be an unusual choice of tree species.

A 1931 aerial photograph shows perimeter plantings of pines thought (based on residents' descriptions) to have been *Pinus radiata* around the edges of the park. Another row divided the main part of the reserve from the northern section which was to be developed for a playground. Radial paths are evident bisecting the park and these had been planted with palms. A central circular feature was located at the intersection of the radial paths in the 1931 photograph a later view (1945) shows shrubs planted around this circular feature. The date the paths were laid out and source of the design are both unknown.

By 1945 the aerial photograph shows the playground including a shelter structure developed in the northern section of the reserve, and in 1949, the Elderly Citizens and Trugo Clubrooms, also located in this part of the reserve, were opened.

An aerial photograph of 1968 shows that by this date the perimeter plantings of pines had been removed and that the eastern boundary of the park had been extended to include part of the Esplanade East road reservation including street trees. New trees had been planted on the southern boundary nature strip. A stone feature had been constructed in the centre surrounded by a garden bed and a large central circle was evident on the axis of the palm avenues.

6.39.3 Description

Edwards Park comprises 1.21 hectares of landscaped parkland, and is situated north of the Lagoon Reserve, separated from it by Liardet Street. It is bounded to the east and west by Esplanade East and Esplanade West and to the north Lagoon Lane separates the park from the surrounding residential area.

The southern part of the park retains its original layout of radial paths and mature palm avenues set into lawn. While retaining these key features, the park has otherwise undergone significant change, including the removal of perimeter plantings of pines and the modification of boundaries on the east and west to include additional land and later plantings.

The path that followed the northern boundary of the original reserve has been removed and additional palms have planted along this general alignment. The Esplanade East 'plantation' and footpath have been incorporated into the park. To the west, the triangle of land previously bounded Dow and Liardet Streets and Esplanade West has also been incorporated into the park; this change appears likely to have occurred at the end of the 1970s. Later plantings across the reserve as a whole are varied and include both exotic and indigenous species; these do not contribute to significance. Park furniture (lights, seats, bins and the like) vary in terms of their age and origins; refer to the Conservation Analysis and Masterplan for more detail.

North of the park proper is the Port Melbourne Community Centre, including a clubroom building of the late 1940s (opened 1949) and the green itself. The playground is located west of the Trugo Club; it has undergone periodical upgrade and renewal works and is of recent origins.

6.39.4 Comparative Analysis

The following comparative analysis has been taken from the Edwards Park: Conservation Analysis and Masterplan, Australian Landscape Management for the City of Port Phillip, 2001.

Throughout the City of Port Phillip, the majority of parks, gardens and reserves are located on relatively flat or gently undulating sites. The older and more significant parks of the municipality - St Kilda Botanic Gardens (1859), Alma Park (1868), Albert Park (reserved 1876) and St Vincent Gardens (reserved 1869) were contemporary with the development of many of the major parks and gardens of Melbourne. A number of the smaller reserves in the municipality (Alfred Square and O'Donnell Garden), like Edwards Park, have a more formal layout.

The Canary Island Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) form a link between the smaller reserves like Edwards Park and O'Donnell Gardens and the larger and more formal gardens like St Vincents Gardens and the St Kilda Botanic Gardens and the foreshore planting of Catani Gardens. Palms are also used as avenue plantings in the St Kilda Botanic Gardens and Catani Gardens while they form the perimeter plantings in Alfred Square and St Vincents Gardens. More recently in the municipality, palms have been planted along the foreshore.

6.39.5 Statement of Significance

The following analysis and statement of significance are from the Edwards Park: Conservation Analysis and Masterplan (Australian Landscape Management for the City of Port Phillip, November 2001). Minor modifications have been made to the text.

Historic and Social Significance

Edwards Park is historically and socially significant in the local context. Port Melbourne Council's reluctance to commit funds to land they did not own contributed to the long delay in the initial development of the Park. Edwards Park, lying between the Esplanades, reflects the presence of the original saltwater lagoon. It is a reminder of the early history of the suburb and the efforts by early residents to provide for public open space and of the Guild of Play's pressure on Council to provide for a children's playground. Apart from the rail reserves (Turner, Hester, Walter, Smith, Gill, Howe, Fennel and Page Reserves), Edwards Park is the most substantial and more intact of the public open spaces developed in Port Melbourne in the same period.

Edwards Park is an important focus for the everyday needs of local residents, a role which will become increasingly important as the residential density builds in this area. The park also provides an important focus for the community of Port Melbourne, through the Community Centre. The Port Melbourne Trugo Club established in the 1930s and the children's playground are important historical links with the pressure to provide recreational facilities in public open space in the early 1900s. While not the earliest playground in Port Melbourne, the first playground erected in Crichton Reserve in 1911 was dismantled soon afterwards; Edwards Park playground is the playground longest in continual use.

Aesthetic Significance

The radial layout of paths in the original reserve is reinforced by the palm avenues which are an important link to earlier planting in the grander parks and gardens of Port Phillip. The simple layout and flat lawns represent a style common to many of the suburban parks developed in working class suburbs in the early years of the twentieth century. The views in and out of the park to the Port Melbourne Town Hall and the city skyline are an important feature of the park. Later plantings and mounds detract from the original design intent.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Significance

Edwards Park is of local historical, social and aesthetic significance.

While it retains no extant elements from its earliest reservation, Edwards Park reflects the nineteenth [century] layout of the suburb around it and the presence and outline of the saltwater lagoon. While the early perimeter plantings of pines have been removed, it retains the major elements of the twentieth century layout and as such is demonstrative of the principal period of its development. Of particular significance is the radial layout of paths on the flat grassy plane and the accompanying mature palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) avenues. While the particular combination of elements and features that make up the playground and Trugo Club grouping at the northern end are not of particular significance, the historical use of this part of the reserve for such recreational pursuits contributes to the significance of the place.

Edwards Park is significant as a focus for the daily recreational activities for the senior citizens, children and wider community of Port Melbourne. The park continues to be the home of the Port Melbourne Trugo Club.

6.39.6 Recommendations

It is recommended that Edwards Park be included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

The extent of the Heritage Overlay should include the main park with its radial avenues of palms and the northern area where the Trugo Club and playground are located. The triangular site on the western side (formerly bounded by Dow and Liardet Streets and Esplanade West) should be excluded).

The schedule entry should identify that tree controls apply, but that these controls are applicable only in the case of the mature palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) avenues.

6.39.7 Assessment

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Australian Landscape Management: Edwards Park: Conservation Analysis and Masterplan, prepared for the City of Port Phillip, 2001.

6.39.8 References

Australian Landscape Management: Edwards Park: Conservation Analysis and Masterplan, prepared for the City of Port Phillip, 2001.

Figure 5 Aerial Photograph of Edwards Park c.1931 (Port Phillip Library Services)

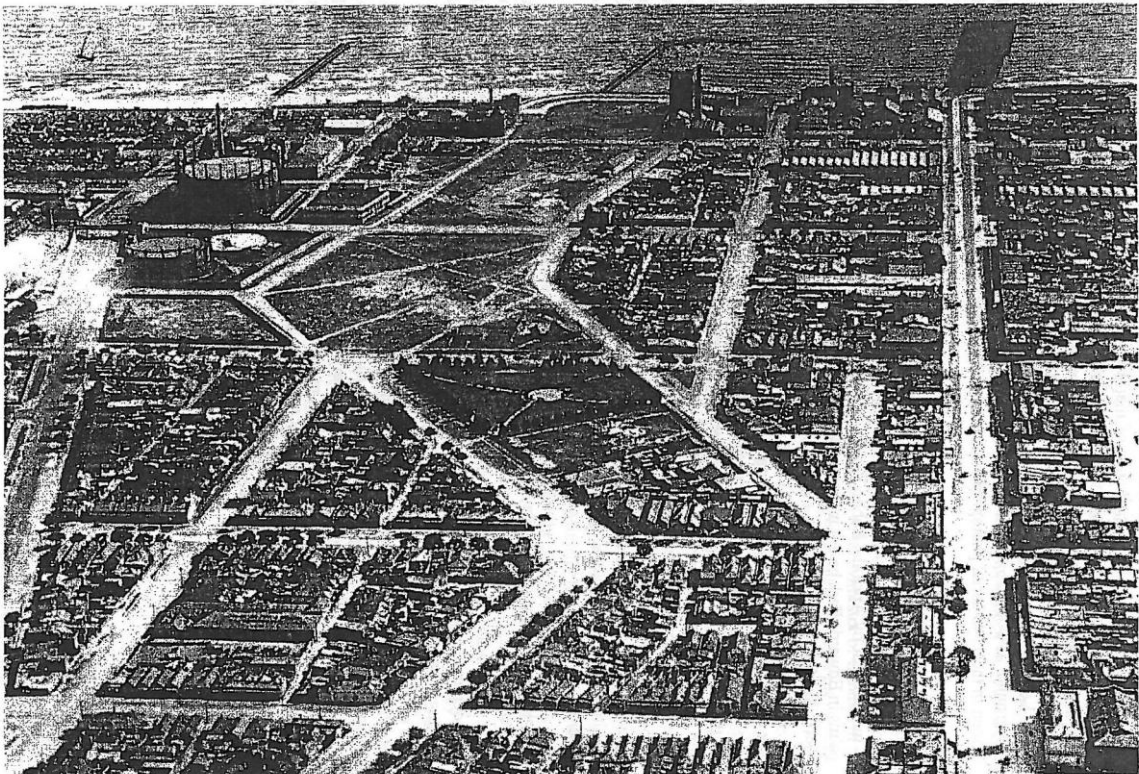


Figure 6.39-1 – 1931 oblique aerial view (Port Phillip Library Service)



Figure 6.39-2 – 1945 aerial view (University of Melbourne 1945 photomaps)

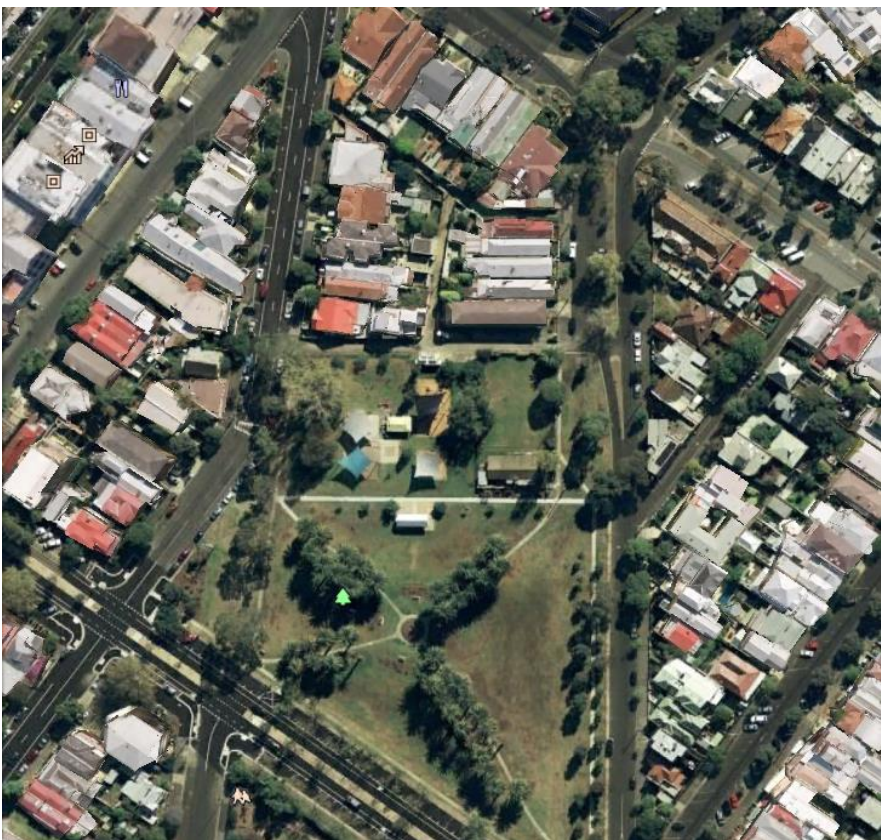


Figure 6.39-3 – Recent aerial view (Google Earth)