

**Review of Heritage overlay 3 (reports)**

**Report 1: Review of Heritage Overlay 3, South Melbourne, Albert Park & Middle Park**

**Report 2: New Citation for Middle Park/ St Kilda West**



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# Review of Heritage Area H03

South Melbourne, Albert Park,  
and Middle Park

Prepared for  
The City of Port Phillip  
July 2010

This Heritage Review has been undertaken in accordance with the principles of the Burra Charter adopted by ICOMOS Australia

This document has been completed by  
Simon Reeves and David Wixted



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Review of Heritage Area HO3

South Melbourne, Albert Park, Middle Park and West St Kilda

Prepared for

July 2010

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# 1.0 Introduction

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## 1.1 Background and Brief

### Project Background

This study was commissioned by the City of Port Phillip in January 2008 to review the municipality's largest heritage precinct, HO3, which covers most of South Melbourne, Albert Park and Middle Park, plus a small portion of West St Kilda. The extent of the precinct was defined and documented in the *Port Phillip Heritage Review* (2000), informed by previous assessments in the *South Melbourne Conservation Study* (1975) and the *South Melbourne Urban Conservation Study* (1987). The precinct incorporates elements that area associated with a wide range of periods, styles, building type and historic themes, yet has a Statement of Significance of just over 200 words, as follows:

The South Melbourne, Albert Park, Middle Park and St. Kilda north of Fitzroy Street area encompasses the Bay shoreline and is further defined by Fitzroy Street in the south, St. Kilda Road in the east and generally by Pickles and York Streets and Kingsway in the north. It is historically important (Criterion A) as one of Melbourne earliest suburbs, founded in response to the demand for accommodation arising from the Gold Rush of the early 1850's. The layout of streets and parks is highly distinctive, recalling British planning practices at St. Vincent Place and the Heather Street gardens. The development of the plan is expressive of the boom times of the 1870's and 1880's and especially demonstrated by the Council's Emerald Hill civic precinct development, the Queens Road/St. Kilda Road subdivision of parkland, and the development of the Beaconsfield Parade foreshore as a resort for the metropolis. The diversity of development within the discrete periods of growth characteristic of the Area constitutes a special heritage valued not only by its residents but by Melbourne at large (Criterion G). This importance is due to the area's ability to inform present generations about a way of life now past, when communities were to a large extent self-contained as a consequence of limited personal mobility.<sup>1</sup>

In recent years, the pertinence of this broad statement has been questioned when dealing with planning applications in some of the specific areas within the precinct. The current study was commissioned to re-assess HO3 with a view of identifying a number of smaller and more manageable sub-precincts within.

## 1.2 Project Methodology

### Review of Previous Studies

The project commenced with a review of existing documentation relating to the area presently covered by HO3. This comprised the following documents:

- Yuncken Freeman Architects Pty Ltd, and Ashton Wilson. 'South Melbourne Conservation Study'. Report prepared for the South Melbourne City Council, June 1975
- Allom Lovell Sanderson Pty Ltd. 'South Melbourne Urban Conservation Study'. Report prepared for the South Melbourne City Council, May 1987.
- Andrew Ward. 'Port Phillip Heritage Review: Version 2'. 6 volume report prepared for the City of Port Phillip, August 2000.

The potential heritage significance of the study area was first assessed in 1975 in the *South Melbourne Conservation Study*, completed by Yuncken Freeman Architects (in association with Ashton Wilson). This identified 29 precincts of various sizes, characterised by the predominant type, use and era of their built fabric. The precinct were as follows:

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1 Andrew Ward, *Port Phillip Heritage Review: Version 2*, Vol 1, p 77.





- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (1) Emerald Hill                                      | (16) Pickles, Smith & St Vincent Streets                              |
| (2) St Vincent Place                                  | (17) Victoria Ave, Richardson, Foote & Danks Sts                      |
| (3) Howe Crescent                                     | (18) Danks Street, Kerferd Road, Pickles Street & Beaconsfield Parade |
| (4) Ward Street                                       | (19) Bridport Street Shopping Centre                                  |
| (5) Bridport, Cecil, Park & Clarendon Streets         | (20) Armstrong Street Shopping Centre                                 |
| (6) Albert Road, Ferrars Place & Bridport Streets     | (21) Clarendon Street   |
| (7) Nelson Road, York, Ferrars and Park Streets       | (22) Ferrars Street   |
| (8) Draper and Brooks Streets                         | (23) Canterbury Road  |
| (9) Kerferd Road, Richardson, Ferrars & Bridport Sts  | (24) Kerferd Road   |
| (10) Greig & Durham Streets                           | (25) Beaconsfield Parade  |
| (11) Kerferd Rd, Victoria Ave, Danks & Richardson Sts | (26) Nelson Road  |
| (12) Middle Park Area                                 | (27) St Vincent Street  |
| (13) Moray, Park, Clarendon & Coventry Streets        | (28) Richardson Street  |
| (14) Clarendon St, Albert Rd, Moray St & Kings Way    | (29) Victoria Avenue  |
| (15) Cecil, Ferrars, Park & Coventry Streets          |   |

Each of the precincts was also given a rating as to its perceived potential as a conservation zone:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>Very High Potential</i> | Precincts Nos 1, 2, 3 and 4;                              |
| <i>High Potential</i>      | Precincts Nos 12, 20 and 24;                              |
| <i>Medium Potential</i>    | Precincts Nos 5 to 11, 14, 17 to 19, 21, 23 and 26 to 28; |
| <i>Low Potential</i>       | Precincts Nos 13, 15, 16, 22 and 25;                      |

These areas were assessed in greater detail as part of the *South Melbourne Urban Conservation Study*, which was completed by Allom Lovell Sanderson in 1987. This study proposed two large Urban Conservation Zones, which, to a large extent, corresponded with the area covered by the 29 precincts identified in 1975. These two zones were further divided into fourteen sub-precincts, each designated by a letter, which reflected particular historical themes, phases of development or architectural styles within the broader areas.

*Urban Conservation Zone 1 (UC1)*

- A Emerald Hill
- B Orphanage Estate
- C St Vincent Place
- D South Melbourne Residential
- E Kerferd Road
- F Middle Park
- G Yarra Industrial
- H Military Reserve

*Urban Conservation Zone 2 (UC2)*

- I Beaconsfield Parade and the Foreshore
- J Albert Park
- K Albert Road
- L St Kilda Road
- M Heather Street Reserve
- N St Vincent Gardens

The amalgamation of metropolitan municipalities in the late 1990s, which saw the City of South Melbourne merge with the Cities of Port Melbourne and St Kilda, prompted a review of previous heritage studies. The *Port Phillip Heritage Review*, completed by Andrew Ward in 2000, re-assessed UC1 and UC2 and recommended their consolidation to form a single heritage overlay area, HO3. A significant difference between the old Urban Conservation Zones and the new Heritage Overlay area was the inclusion of a portion of the former City of St Kilda, located between Fraser and Fitzroy streets.

The original citation for HO3 described a number of specific areas within that evidently have a definable character of their own. Reference is made, for example, to the following:

- Modest timber cottages in the narrow back roads of South Melbourne;
- Federation-era housing between Mills and Mary Street in Middle Park;
- Victorian-era housing near St Kilda railway station;
- The South Melbourne shopping area, centred around Clarendon and Park Streets;
- The Albert Park Shopping area, centred around Victoria Avenue and Bridport Street;
- The Middle Park shopping area, centre around Armstrong Street;

Based on a close reading of the original citation, the present consultants had initially suggested the following as possible sub-precincts within HO3:

Precinct	Description	Size
<i>1. Albert Park Precinct</i>	The full extent of the park, perhaps including some contiguous housing or other sites that relate to it	Large
<i>2. Albert Park Commercial Precinct</i>	Commercial development (shops, hotels, etc) along Albert Avenue and Beaconsfield Parade, perhaps including some contiguous residential development;	Medium
<i>3. Heather Street Gardens Precinct</i>	Triangular-shaped public gardens, plus remnant Victorian terrace housing that overlooks it	Small
<i>4. Middle Park Residential Precinct</i>	Predominantly Edwardian housing in the area bounded nominally by Mills Street, Canterbury Road, Mary Street and Beaconsfield Parade	Large
<i>5. Middle Park Commercial Precinct</i>	Commercial development along Armstrong Street (considered as a discrete precinct, or perhaps as part of the broader residential precinct indicated above)	Medium
<i>6. South Melbourne Commercial Precinct</i>	Commercial development (shops, hotels, etc) along Clarendon Street and Park Street	Medium
<i>7. South Melbourne Civic Precinct</i>	Town hall, police station, etc (considered as a discrete precinct, or perhaps as part of the commercial precinct indicated above)	Small
<i>8. St Kilda Railway Precinct</i>	Small pocket of Victorian housing in the vicinity of the former St Kilda Railway Station (area nominally bounded by Mary and Fitzroy Streets, Canterbury Road and Beaconsfield Parade)	Small
<i>9. St Vincent's Garden Area</i>	Expansion of existing HO258 to cover full extent of crescent-shaped estate, bounded by Howe Crescent, Park Street, Nelson Road, Cardigan Place and Bridport Street	Medium
<i>10. Early Victorian Housing (South Melbourne)</i>	Area corresponding to the extent of built-up development indicated on the 1855 Kearney Map of South Melbourne. Nominally bounded by Albert Road, Nelson Road and Crockford Road	Large



## Historical Map Research

In order to gain an increased understanding of the development of the study area, reference was made to a number of historical maps that covered South Melbourne, Albert Park and St Kilda West. These maps, most of which were sourced from the Map Collection at the State Library of Victoria, included the following:

- James Kearney's *Map of Melbourne and Suburbs* (1855);
- Crown Land Office, *Plan of Building Lots in the Municipality of Emerald Hill* (1857)
- Map of Albert Park (1864)
- Commander H L Cox's *Map of Hobson's Bay and River Yarra* (1866);
- Clement Hodgkinson's *Map of Lagoon in Albert Park* (1871);
- J Vardy's *Plan of the Borough of St Kilda* (1873) [maps No 2 WW to 7 WW inclusive]
- MMBW Plans Nos 19, 20, 21 and 34 (1894-95), and revised issues of Nos 34 and 35 (1944);
- Miscellaneous lodged plans of land subdivisions (held by the Land Survey & Information Centre)

Information shown on these maps, such as the extents of residential development at any given time, boundaries of residential subdivisions and the location of key public buildings or other landmarks, was transferred onto a present-day map of the study area (hereafter referred to as the key map).

## Fieldwork

In order to evaluate comparatively the recommendations of the three previous heritage studies, the 29 precincts (1975) and the two zones and fourteen sub-precincts (1987) were plotted onto a current map of HO3 and environs. This map was further annotated with historical information relating to known land subdivisions and housing estates, in order to suggest where additional boundaries might be perceived.

This annotated map served as the basis for fieldwork survey of HO3, which was undertaken in late February 2008. This began with a 'windscreen' survey of the entire area, in order to gain a broad insight into its historic grain and to identify, by visual inspection and by reference to the key map, potential boundaries for new precincts. During fieldwork, the key map was further annotated to assist in this process.

## Nominated Precincts

At the conclusion of the first stage of research and fieldwork, the original list of nominated precincts within HO3 was revised to comprise the following:

1. Emerald Hill Residential Precinct (South Melbourne);
2. St Vincent Place East (South Melbourne);
3. Albert Park Residential Precinct (including Bridport Street and Victoria Avenue);
4. Kerferd Road Precinct (Albert Park/Middle Park)
5. Middle Park Residential Precinct (including Armstrong Street);
6. St Kilda West Residential Precinct
7. Albert Park Lake Precinct

This selection, however, was further revised following further research, fieldwork and discussions with council. It was subsequently resolved that:

- Two commercial strips within otherwise residential areas should be considered as discrete precincts in their own right. This gave rise to the creation of two new sub-precincts for Armstrong Street (formerly within the proposed Middle Park Residential Precinct) and Bridport Street/Victoria Avenue (formerly within the proposed Albert Park Residential Precinct);

- The Middle Park and St Kilda West Residential Precincts be combined. Although these were once separated by the municipal boundary between the old Cities of St Kilda and South Melbourne, it was considered that their history and pattern of subdivision overlapped considerably.
- Kerferd Road would be eliminated for consideration as a separate linear precinct. Although the wide road reserve is indisputably a significant element in the urban landscape, it was considered that the contrast between the built form along the east and west sides did not suggest a cohesive heritage precinct. Instead, Kerferd Road was to be considered as the clearly distinguishable border between the Albert Park and Middle Park Residential Precincts, with the road reserve itself included as part of the latter.
- The St Vincent Place East Precinct, originally mooted to include only those crescent-shaped streets, should be expanded to include the contiguous streets to the south. Historic maps indicated that both areas remained undeveloped until the 1860s, and subsequently filled out with the same type of dwellings.

### Preparation of Datasheets

The final list of nominated sub-precincts stood as follows:

- Emerald Hill Residential Precinct
- St Vincent Place East (South Melbourne)
- Albert Park Residential Precinct
- Bridport Street/Victoria Avenue Commercial Precinct (Albert Park)
- Middle Park and St Kilda West Residential Precinct
- Armstrong Street Commercial Precinct (Middle Park)
- Albert Park Lake Precinct

Individual citations were then prepared for each of these, using the standard format adopted by the City of Port Phillip in previous heritage studies. Each of these comprised:

- **Existing designations:** References were cited if the proposed precinct was already included the respective registers of the Heritage Council, the National Estate or the National Trust of Australia (Victoria). Inclusion on any previous heritage studies was also cited.
- **History:** This was drawn from standard primary and secondary sources, including the previous heritage studies, the aforementioned historic maps, the *Sands & McDougall Directory* and other sources as indicated in the bibliography.
- **Description:** Based on subsequent fieldwork surveys. This fieldwork was more detailed than the broad 'windscreen;' survey that had been undertaken at the beginning of the project, and included a combination of car-based and pedestrian surveying. Copies of the existing colour-coded heritage policy map (red/green) were taken along, in order to confirm the current grading of any specific places that might be disputed.
- **Thematic Context:** Inclusion of numbered themes, drawn from the thematic history prepared by Andrew Ward for the *City of Port Phillip Heritage Review (2000)*;
- **Comparative Analysis:** Drawn largely from the existing heritage studies, and from additional fieldwork that was undertaken where necessary.
- **Statement of Significance:** Compiled in the standard tripartite format endorsed by Heritage Victoria, identify WHAT is significant, WHY it is significance and HOW it is significance. It is worth noting here that the original Statement of Significance for HO3 (which was not prepared in this tripartite format) was not considered to contain sufficient detail for any of it to be effectively re-cycled in the new Statements of Significance. Consequently, it was considered more appropriate to prepare entirely new statements for each of the new precincts.
- **Recommendations:** Including any policy recommendations for preservation /management of specific elements of significance within that particular precinct



- **Mapping:** Each datasheet included a colour-coded map showing the location and extent of the precinct, and the places within that were graded as *significant*, *contributory* and *non-contributory* in accordance with the definitions provided in the planning scheme.

### Consultation

When draft citations had been completed, copies were circulated amongst all property owners within the respective precincts to elicit any comments, corrections or suggestions. Consequently, a number of revisions were made to the citations during August and September 2008.

### 1.3 Study Team

The study team that completed this study comprised

David Wixted            Principal, *heritage ALLIANCE*

Simon Reeves        Architectural historian, *heritage ALLIANCE*

### 1.4 Limitations

The original brief did not require a complete re-survey of the entire HO3 precinct. That is, every single property within its boundaries was not re-assessed as to whether it was still considered to be either *significant*, *contributory* and *non-contributory* in accordance with the definitions provided in the planning scheme.

Revisions to these gradings were only recommended if, for example, a significant or contributory building was incidentally found to have been demolished or altered during the course of the fieldwork survey. Also, a number of buildings previously graded as non-contributory (such as post-war buildings considered to be of significance in their own right) were recommended to be upgraded to significant or contributory.



## 2.0 New Precincts



## 2.1 Emerald Hill Residential Precinct

### Existing Designations:

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

### Previous Heritage Studies:

Conservation Study 1975:	Precincts 4, 5, 6 (part), 13 (part), 14 (part), 15 and 21 (part)
Conservation Study 1987:	UC1: Precincts A and M
Heritage Review 2000:	Heritage Overlay 3 (part)

### Location and Extent:



*Note to scale. Note individually significant heritage place indicated in darker grey*



**History:** When Melbourne was first settled in the 1830s, the low-lying and largely swampy land to the south of the Yarra River was initially considered unsuitable for development. With the onset of the Gold Rush in 1851, an immigration depot was established on the western side of St Kilda Road, but this quickly became inadequate for the many thousands of incoming fortune-seekers. To alleviate this pressure, the government allocated part of the swampland further to the west, which developed into sprawling settlement of tents nicknamed Canvas Town. In the City of Port Phillip Heritage Review, Andrew Ward paints a vivid picture of this early development: When William Howitt arrived in September 1852, the locality was covered in tents in which hundreds of immigrants were housed at the punitive rate of five shillings a week. From December, a much larger Canvas Town of government tents with some timber barracks near Princes Bridge “bloomed” along the west side of St. Kilda Road, south of its junction with City Road. Thousands were housed there until 1854.<sup>2</sup> A more ordered solution was needed and it was in 1852 that surveyor Hoddle prepared a plan for a new township to be located on and around Emerald Hill, which represented the highest point in the area. Hoddle’s scheme imposed a grid-like street layout, set at an angle between the existing thoroughfares of Sandridge Road (now City Road) and Beach Road (now Albert Road).

The first land auction took place in August 1852, when 67 allotments were sold in the area bounded by Grant, Clarendon, Coventry and Cecil streets.<sup>3</sup> Residential settlement was facilitated by the creation of some new streets that bisected the existing blocks, such as Coventry Place and Morris Street. Neither of these streets was provided with a rear laneway, as running water would not be introduced in the area until 1860.<sup>4</sup> Mostly speculators, the new land owners included one Robert Patterson, who, between 1853 and 1855, erected a colony of prefabricated iron houses on a one-acre block bounded by Coventry, Dorcas, Ferrars and Montague streets.<sup>5</sup> This development commenced with a row of five six-roomed cottages along the south side of Coventry Street, followed by fourteen smaller two-roomed cottages in what became known as Patterson Place.<sup>6</sup> Around the same time, a number of prefabricated timber houses of southeast Asian origin (now generally referred to as Singapore Cottages) are known to have been erected by a Chinese carpenter named Louis Ah Mouy.<sup>7</sup> The early presence of Chinese immigrants in South Melbourne – initially spurred by the Gold Rush of the early 1850s – also prompted the erection of a lodging house between Raglan and Cobden Streets in 1855.<sup>8</sup> A joss house opened a year later, which was replaced ten years thence by a larger and grander structure, the See Yup- temple (which still survives at 76 Raglan Street).

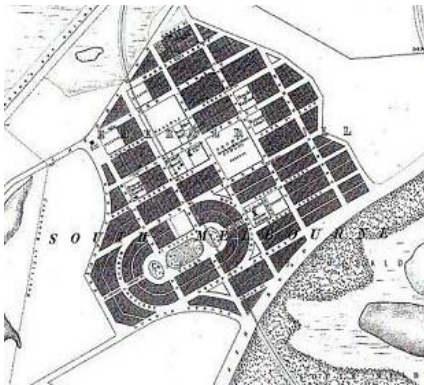


Figure 1 The proposed extent of Emerald Hill (1855)  
(source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 2 The developed extent of Emerald Hill (1866)  
(source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Ward, op cit, pg 12

<sup>3</sup> A Bunnett, ‘Early Development’, in *Lurking in Lanes: A Back Fence History of the Lanes and Little Streets of Port Phillip*, p 5.

<sup>4</sup> A Bunnett, ‘Early Development’, p 5.

<sup>5</sup> M Lewis, *The Portable Building*, Section 25.15.

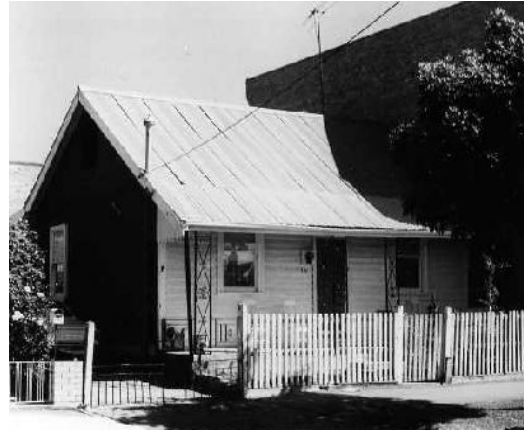
<sup>6</sup> The larger iron houses stood at what were Nos 88, 90, 98, 106 and 110 Coventry Street (now 1 Patterson Place and Nos 381, 391, 399 and 401-403 Coventry Street) and the smaller ones at Nos 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16 Patterson Place and 88a Coventry Street (to the rear of No 90, fronting Patterson Place). See MMBW Detail Plan Nos 541 & 545, dated October 1894.

<sup>7</sup> National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Citation for Singapore Cottage at 17 Coventry Place, South Melbourne (B7150).

<sup>8</sup> S Priestley, *South Melbourne*, p 64.



*Figure 3 Robert Patterson's two-roomed prefabricated iron cottages in Patterson Place, still intact in a photograph taken in 1933 (source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)*



*Figure 4 A larger iron cottage at 391 Coventry Street, photographed in 1961 in an altered state. (source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)*

Emerald Hill remained part of the City of Melbourne until 1855, by which time rate books revealed that more than one thousand dwellings had been built. The creation of a separate municipality, the Borough of Emerald Hill, prompted a minor residential boom. As building regulations imposed by the City of Melbourne were no longer applicable, a proliferation of cheaper timber buildings (and more prefabricated dwellings) ensued. The new Borough of Emerald Hill also required its own official infrastructure, and three separate but contiguous sites were reserved for a town hall, police station and mechanics' institute at the corner of Cecil and Dorcas streets. Reserves had already been granted for the various religious denominations: the largest of these, occupying an entire block on the crest of Emerald Hill, was allotted for the Protestant Orphan Asylum. Its Roman Catholic counterpart was granted a rather smaller site further south along Cecil Street, where construction of a new building commenced in 1856. Church reserves were granted for the Roman Catholics on Montague Street, the Presbyterian and Wesleyans on Dorcas Street and the Church of England on Clarendon Street. The latter initially occupied a timber building (relocated from another site) before the present bluestone church – the first in Emerald Hill – was completed in 1857. A new courthouse was also opened in 1858, replacing a temporary one established three years earlier.

One of the most influential local developments of this period, however, was the opening of the new Melbourne-to-St Kilda railway in May 1857. As a result of pressure from local politicians, its route had been revised so that it passed through Emerald Hill, in a deep cutting running parallel to Ferrars Street. While the new railway certainly made the area more accessible to the city, the cutting itself created a barrier between the two parts of Emerald Hill, which discouraged the development of the western portion for some time. During the late 1850s and early 1860s, the section bounded by Montague, Park, Moray and York Streets remained the most densely settled part of the new borough. By that time, Clarendon Street was already emerging as the principal commercial centre – a pattern of development facilitated by the regrading in the early 1860s of a street that had previously been too steep to attract much retail trade.<sup>9</sup> As described by Allom Lovell Sanderson in 1987: the roads were broad and without adornment. The surfaces were rough and there were constant arguments about where the levels should be set. Establishing these levels was important in a district subject to flooding. In some cases this involved lowering the roadways several feet, leaving the buildings on land above the roadway. Evidence of this can be still seen today at St Luke's Church where a bluestone wall in Dorcas Street marks the difference between the original and the new street level.<sup>10</sup>

As shown on Cox's map of South Melbourne (1866), Emerald Hill was an insular settlement with clearly defined (if irregular) boundaries, which corresponded to some extent to the 1852 town plan. Its edges were defined by present-day Nelson Street and Cecil Street (to the west), Bridport Street and Albert Road (to the south), Eastern Road and Moray Street (to the east) and Market Street and City Road (to the north). On the map, most of the

9 Information provided by Adair Bunnett.

10 Allom Lovell Sanderson, p4/3

blocks were sparsely settled, with houses and shops (indicated as hatched shapes) mostly freestanding. Some blocks, such as those on the edges of the township (eg Nelson Road, Bridport Street, City Road and the northern blocks of Eastern Road), were particularly sparse. The most densely settled block was bounded by the railway line and Park, Bank and Cecil streets, with a series of narrow lanes giving access to approximately forty individual buildings. Public buildings (shown in black on Cox's map) included four churches, two orphanages, a school, and the cluster of official buildings (including the town hall) at the corner of Dorcas and Cecil streets. The adjacent Market Reserve was still vacant at that time; its first sheds were built in 1867. Another noteworthy element shown on Cox's map was the V-shaped kink along the eastern boundary of the developed area, flanking Park Street. This unusual form, which had been recorded on maps as early as 1857, subsequently led to the formation of two triangular-shaped public parks that were collectively named La Trobe Reserve.<sup>11</sup>

Cox's map also shows a few new houses on the east portion of St Vincent Place – a distinctive estate of curved crescents that had been proposed in 1854 as an extension to Emerald Hill, but which had lain undeveloped since. These houses, on what later became Howe Crescent, represented the first development beyond the limits of the original Emerald Hill plan. By the early 1870s, residential settlement had spread even further beyond the limits, to Bridport Street, Cardigan Place and – on the eastern side – along a series of new streets off Eastern Road, including Palmerston and Stead streets. However, as Allom Lovell Sanderson has noted: While there was considerable building activity, the area appears not to have been closely built upon during the first two decades. As a result, subsequent development has been in the nature of an infill between, and replacement of, the first buildings. The quality can be recognised today and is the foundation of the character.<sup>12</sup>

The Borough of Emerald Hill was elevated to the status of a town in 1872, and it was proposed to build a new Town Hall on the site of the Protestant Asylum, although this was not realised until 1880. By that time, the area had commenced a second development boom, prompted in part by the Melbourne Harbour Trust (formed in 1877), which was transforming the city's docks along the Yarra River and thereby increasing the value of South Melbourne as a residential, business centre. During the 1880s, the sparsely settled blocks shown on Cox's 1866 map were subdivided into smaller lots with narrow laneways, and subsequently filled out with a layer of infill housing. The hitherto under-developed parts of Emerald Hill, such as Nelson Road and the streets closer to the Albert Park reserve, expanded with large dwellings, transforming these strips into prestigious residential addresses for thriving local businessmen and others. Commercial development on Clarendon Street underwent a comparable infill, with the erection of new residential shops, hotels and banks. A particularly notable infill took place in 1880 when rows of Boom-style residential shops were built along the street frontages of the new South Melbourne Town Hall site. The Trustees of St Luke's Church of England followed suit, and erected a row of shops along the property's Clarendon Street frontage in 1881.



Figure 5 View of Emerald Hill in 1875, looking west across Bank Street from the top of the Presbyterian church (source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

11 Allom Lovell & Associates, 'South Melbourne Urban Conservation Study', p 3.24. In this study, the Heather Street Reserve (as it was then described) was documented, assessed and recommended for inclusion as a discrete heritage precinct in its own right.

12 Allom Lovell Sanderson p3/3



Figure 6 The extent of commercial development along Clarendon Street, as seen in a c.1908 postcard (source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 7 Emerald Court, the Housing Commission of Victoria's first high-rise flat development (1959-60) (source: 22nd Annual Report of the HCV)

The prosperity associated with the Land Boom of the 1880s not only brought with it associated residential and commercial expansion, but also municipal improvements. The City of Emerald Hill was officially declared in September 1883 and, only a few days later, was re-named the City of South Melbourne. Such was the extent of speculative development in South Melbourne during the Boom period that, by the time the boom ended in the early 1890s, the old Emerald Hill area had almost entirely filled out. The MMBW plan of the area, prepared around 1895, depicts entire streets of densely-packed single-fronted cottages and double-fronted villas, punctuated by the occasional corner shop or hotel. Apart from key public buildings such as the numerous churches and schools, which still occupied generous reserves, there was little vacant land remaining: the odd allotment here and there, and a few larger sites in Park Street, Ferrars Street and Moray Street.

While these few remaining vacant sites were gradually built upon during the twentieth century, development during that period was otherwise characterised by the construction of new buildings on the sites of older ones. Residential development continued during the Edwardian and inter-war periods, while a number of new public buildings also appeared, such as the Presbyterian Church at 222 Dorcas Street (1909) and the Salvation Army Citadel at 232 Dorcas Street (1909).

As new development continued into the post-war era, some of the earliest evidence of European settlement in the Emerald Hill area was lost. The cluster of prefabricated iron houses in and around Patterson Place, for example, gradually disappeared during the 1950s and '60s. Most of these were demolished, although a few were dismantled for possible relocation elsewhere – one, for example, being re-erected at the Pioneer Settlement at Swan Hill.<sup>13</sup> By the early 1970s, only one survivor still remained in more or less intact condition, at 399 Coventry Street. This was acquired and restored by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), and now, along with two other rare examples relocated to the site from Fitzroy and North Melbourne, forms part of a unique prefabricated house museum.

However, it was the Housing Commission of Victoria that brought about for the most fundamental transformation of Emerald Hill in the post-war era. On resuming its slum reclamation programme, clusters of modest Victorian housing in South Melbourne were considered as prime candidates for redevelopment. A large site bounded by Moray, Dorcas and Coventry streets (just outside the present boundaries of the precinct) was acquired and cleared for *Emerald Hill Estate*. Completed in 1960, this was dominated by the Commission's first foray into high-rise apartments in the form of a seventeen-storey tower block, surrounded by low-rise walk-up flats. Soon afterward, the Commission eyed the nearby block bounded by Park, Cecil and Bank Streets and the railway line. This had been the most densely developed block on Cox's 1866 map and, almost a century later, its rabbit-warren of small dwellings and narrow laneways had certainly deteriorated into sub-standard accommodation.

13 M Lewis, *The Portable Building*, Section 25.15.



These buildings (including some shops on Cecil Street and a corner hotel) were gradually acquired from the early 1960s, and several redevelopment schemes were considered before the Commission proposed a thirty-storey tower block on an E-shaped plan. Construction commenced in late 1967 and the building opened in 1969. While this was the tallest building ever erected by the Commission (and one of the tallest apartment buildings in Victoria at the time), it was also the swan song for the ambitious high-rise programme.

From 1972, the Commission returned to low-rise residential development. Once again, the Emerald Hill area served as a laboratory for new housing types. The Commission erected a three-storey block of modern terrace houses in Raglan Street in 1975 that, with their face brick walls and tiled roofs, represented a stark contrast to the massive concrete counterparts of the previous decade. The Raglan Street flats subsequently received the RAI A Bronze medal for Housing in 1975 – the first time that the Housing Commission had ever received a state architectural award.<sup>14</sup> From the early 1980s, when the Housing Commission was restructured and re-branded as the new Ministry of Housing, new residential developments became even more intimately scaled and often included design input from private architectural firms.<sup>15</sup> In South Melbourne, large area bounded by Nelson Road, Pickles Street and Normanby Road (just outside the boundaries of the present precinct) was redeveloped with townhouses and low-rise flats designed by Robert Pierce, Geoff Sargeant and others.<sup>16</sup> While this necessitated the demolition a number of early Victorian cottages, the replacement buildings were designed in a sympathetic fashion that paid some homage to the traditional scale, form, setback and materials of the historic streetscapes. Since that time, a comparable approach has been encouraged for most new residential development within this historic area.

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**Description:** The boundaries of this precinct cover most of what was defined in the mid-1850s as the original Emerald Hill settlement. The eponymous hill – once the site of the Roman Catholic orphanage and latterly (since 1879) of the South Melbourne Town Hall and associated government buildings – remains as a prominent feature, with the surrounding residential areas sloping gently downwards in all directions. While the hill itself forms the historical, cultural and topographical lynchpin for the current precinct, it should be noted that it does not, strictly speaking, form part of it. Not only has it already been incorporated into the heritage overlay schedule as a separate area, the *Emerald Hill Estate* (HO30), but it is also included on the *Victorian Heritage Register* (H1136) as a precinct of state significance.

The original street grid of the Emerald Hill settlement, laid out at an angle slightly off north-south/east-west, remains strongly evident throughout the precinct. The rectilinear layout is interrupted at the edges only by the sinuous thoroughfare of Nelson Road, the angled configuration of Heather Street (incorporating two public reserves of distinctive triangular form), the gentle curve of Palmerston Crescent and the eastern strip of Cobden Street. Most of the major streets retain rear laneways, which demonstrate the introduction of running water and nightsoil services in the 1860s. Coventry Place and Morris Street, the two narrow one-way streets laid out between York and Coventry Streets in the mid-1850s, predate this development and, lacking rear laneways, provide rare evidence of the more *ad hoc* pattern of residential settlement at that time.

The built fabric within this predominantly residential precinct remains heterogenous, with dwellings that date from the initial phase of settlement, later phases of infill, and subsequent phases of redevelopment. The earliest surviving houses tend to be concentrated in the narrower side-streets away from the more prominent commercial and residential thoroughfares. Pockets of these buildings can be found west of the former South Melbourne railway station (notably in the aforementioned Coventry Place and Morris Street, and in nearby Eville Street), and in those east-west streets to the south of the South Melbourne Town Hall (eg Dow, Napier, Cobden and Raglan streets, and the narrow streets between them). These early dwellings vary in scale, form and materials, but are broadly comparable in their simple expression and plain, unadorned surfaces.

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14 Philip Goad, *Judging Architecture: Victorian Architecture Awards, 1929 to 2003*, p 291. See also *Architect*, November 1975, p 12.

15 John Devenish, 'Victorian Ministry of Housing: Style replaces Stigma', *UIA: International Architect*, No 4 (1984), p 20.

16 'Ministry of Housing: Infill Housing, South Melbourne', *UIA: International Architect*, No 4 (1984), p 26.

Modest double-fronted timber cottages proliferate throughout the precinct. These were generally built very close together and with narrow setbacks – in many cases, being set back only by the width of their verandahs (eg 75 Cobden Street, 72 Raglan Street, 10 Dow Street; 16 and 18 Coventry Place and many others). One early cottage at 1 Morris Street, dating back to 1855, is actually built right to the street but with its principal façade (and verandah) perpendicular to it – a unique survivor of early building activity prior to formal planning and street layouts. As Allom Lovell Sanderson have succinctly noted, “these early timber-clad buildings are of significance to Melbourne as a whole, because of their rarity in a city dominated by masonry buildings. Every opportunity to preserve these buildings should be taken.”<sup>17</sup>

Modest houses of this type tend to be small in scale, with relatively low roofs and often originally only one room deep (invariably since extended). Others are two rooms deep, but with separate gabled roofs to create a distinctive M-shaped profile to the side elevations (eg 11 Coventry Place; 92 Cobden Street, 47 and 49 Church Street). While these early cottages are mostly of timber construction, there are also some counterparts in brick (eg 22 Raglan Street, or the unusual semi-detached pair at 348-350 Moray Street), and a few in bluestone (eg 314 Coventry Street). An interesting example in rendered brick (74 Raglan Street) is also built right to the street boundary. Robert Patterson’s last intact surviving six-roomed prefabricated iron houses still stands at 399 Coventry Street, while another evidently remains at No 391 in a somewhat altered condition.<sup>18</sup> Another much-altered iron house exists nearby at 306 Bank Street, now with a brick façade that is believed to date from the early 1880s.<sup>19</sup> Further evidence of this era of prefabrication (and, indeed, of early Chinese settlement) is provided by a unique remaining example of a timber-framed “Singapore Cottage”, one of several known to have been built by carpenter Louis Ah Mouy, which rather miraculously survives at 17 Coventry Place.

Early single-fronted cottages, which are also found in large numbers throughout the precinct, are of comparable simplicity to their double-fronted counterparts. These are most commonly of timber construction – often block-fronted (eg 84-86 and 154 Cobden Street, 89 Napier Street, 8-12 Clarendon Place to name only a few) but sometimes in conventional weatherboard (117 Napier; 8 Dow Street). Most of these cottages have low roofs of hipped or longitudinal gabled form, although there are some (eg 8 Coventry Place, 13 and 15 Coote Street) with gable ends facing the street. Examples of brick construction can also be found, frequently in pairs (eg 79-81 Cobden Street, 83-85 Napier Street, 66-68 Raglan Street and 12-14 Dow Street) or in longer rows (eg groups of four at 58-64 Raglan Street and 292-296 Moray Street). These early masonry dwellings tend to be characterised by face brickwork (albeit usually overpainted) rather than a rendered finish. A rare example in bluestone, with a flat parapet and no front verandah, stands at 76 Cobden Street.

Later single-fronted cottages, dating from the 1870s and ‘80s, take the ubiquitous form with front verandahs on timber posts or iron columns, hipped roofs with bracketed eaves and brick chimneys, and slate or corrugated iron roofing. Some examples in brick construction, whether rendered or bichromatic, have typical Boom-style parapets with balustrades, orbs and other embellishments. Notable clusters include the fine rows of 1870s cottages along Palmerston Crescent, Stead Street and the eastern end of Cobden Street (which fall just outside the original 1855 extent of the Emerald Hill township) and the Boom-style cottages in the narrow stretch of Thomson Street (west of Clarendon Street). Another pair, in bichromatic brick, stands in the even narrower and bluestone-pitched street known as Gladstone Grove (off Montague Street, near Patterson Place). Single-fronted timber cottages exist in some notable strips in Queen Street, Emerald Street, Nelson Place, Hotham Street, Union Street, Francis Street, Coote Street, Coventry Place, Morris Street and Palmer Street.

Double-storey houses are most commonly manifested as terraced dwellings. The earliest examples, dating back to the 1860s or earlier, are typically of rendered brick and often with front porches only at ground floor level. Facades remain exposed at the upper storey, with windows simply treated and plain moulded architraves and parapet detailing (eg 131-133 Cobden Street, 142-144 Napier Street, *Waterloo Terrace* at 29-33 Palmer Street and *Trafalgar Terrace* at 1-5 Clarendon Place and many others). These early terraces also tend to be relatively small in scale, often with particularly narrow frontages (eg 123 Napier Street and 45 Church Street). Amongst

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17 Allom Lovell Sanderson, p 3/13

18 Information provided by Adair Bunnnett, who has further noted that the “In Patterson Place, behind the remaining iron house is what is undoubtedly the frame of an iron house, which has received new cladding”.

19 National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Citation for 306 Bank Street (B5433). See also Lewis, *op cit*, Section 25.14.

these double-storeyed terrace houses are some notable survivors of bluestone construction (eg 127 Cobden Street, 163 Napier Street, 9-11 Clarendon Place and 5-9 Cecil Place) and even some in timber (eg 27 Palmer Street, 347 Moray Street, 116 and 140 Napier Street and 225 Cecil Street).



Figure 8 Typical early double-fronted weatherboard cottages, in a row along south side of Thomson Street



Figure 9 Prefabricated iron house (c.1853) at 399 Coventry Street, with double-storey terraces and corner hotel



Figure 10 Early houses in Cobden Street, including Georgian-style terraces and a double-fronted timber villa



Figure 11 Row of single-fronted brick cottages, with typical Boom-style parapets, in Thomson Street

Larger and grander terraces, dating from the later 1870s and '80s, tend to take the typical form with double-storey porch/balcony, cast iron columns and wrought iron lace friezes, and ornate moulded cornices and parapets. Although these can be found scattered throughout the area (eg 106-108 Napier Street; 153 Cecil Place; 20 Raglan Street, and notably along both sides of Ward Street), they otherwise tend to proliferate in those streets to the precinct's southern edge. Particularly fine rows can be found along both sides of Raglan Street (west of Clarendon Street), in Bridport Street (row of eight at Nos 10-24) and Cecil Street (Nos 148-174, 157-163 and 173-179). This part of the precinct also contains a few large detached Victorian residences. Double-fronted double-storey townhouses, such as the notably early *Park House* at 352 Moray Street (c.1856) and another at 116 Raglan Street, contrast with the larger and grander *Claremont*, an exceptional Italianate mansion with tower at 286 Albert Road.

The commercial strip of Clarendon Street remains strongly characterised by late Victorian double-storey residential shops, which are similarly expressed with rendered facades and Italianate detailing such as arched windows, projecting sills, rusticated quoining, dentillated cornices and other moulded embellishments. Some of these shops retain remnants of their early or original shopfronts, with splayed entrances, tiled spandrels and timber-framed windows. The strip also includes the three-storeyed Albion Hotel (now Clarendon Hotel) at No 209 and two equally striking bank buildings: the former Bank of Australia (now a bottle shop) at No 295, in the

Renaissance Revival style, and the former ES&A Bank (now ANZ) at No 307, in the Gothic Revival style. Further south, at No 351, a single-storey Classical-style building (now an accountant's office) represents a surviving fragment of the former Melbourne Savings Bank premises (1884) that once occupied the entire corner site.



*Figure 12* Suo Marte Terrace (1885), a fine row of double-storey rendered terraced houses in Ward Street



*Figure 13* Row of ornate Boom-style rendered brick residential shops along Clarendon Street

Although Clarendon Street was (and still is) the precinct's principal commercial zone, a number of Victorian shops of comparable (or even earlier) date can be found in Moray Street. There are several residential shops (Nos 206-208, 244), as well as traditional 'corner shops', with the ubiquitous splayed entrance, at Nos 290 (in bichromatic brick) and Nos 283, 299 and 315 (in rendered brick). A notable survivor is the early (c.1870) single-storeyed shop at No 300-302. Victorian residential shops can also be found scattered throughout the precinct, including several in rendered brick (eg 168 and 174 Cecil Street) and at least two early block-fronted timber examples (ie 378 Coventry Street and 440 Park Street, the latter with shopfront windows retaining mid-twentieth century advertising decals).

Other non-residential buildings within the precinct include some notable survivors from the 1850s. The original Emerald Hill Mechanics Institute (1857), for example, still stands at 170-172 Cecil Street – albeit now concealed by a new frontage added in 1884. Ecclesiastical presence is concentrated along the prominent thoroughfare of Dorcas Street, where two notably early bluestone churches remain at Nos 210-218 (1857) and the Former St Efstaphius Church at No 327 (1860), respectively associated with the St Luke's Anglican and the Presbyterian congregations. Later manifestations of this theme include the polychrome brick former Baptist Church at No 250 (1877), the rendered brick Presbyterian Church at No 223 (c.1909), and the not dissimilar Salvation Army Citadel at No 232 (1911). The large Roman Catholic complex of SS Peter & Paul, bounded by Dorcas, Montague and Bank Streets, is an especially conspicuous presence in the area, with a bluestone church (1872), a large two-storey rendered masonry Presbytery on Dorcas Street (1876), and a red brick Parish School on Bank Street (1891). Towards the southern end of the precinct, the former (if considerably altered) St Vincent de Paul's Boys' Orphanage (now Mackillop Family Services) at 237 Cecil Street (1856) and the See Yup Chinese temple at 76 Raglan Street (1866) remain as two other important early markers of religious activity in the area.

The precinct also contains a considerable number of surviving nineteenth century hotels, which, like the corner shops, have traditional splayed entrances. Some of these hotels are simply detailed, with stark rendered walls, plain parapets and windows while others – generally of later date – are embellished with rendered cornices, stringcourses, architraves and other decorative mouldings.

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#### References:

Kearney Map (1855)

Cox Map (1866)

MMBW Map (1895)

*Sands & McDougall Directory* (various)

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Job 2008-05 City of Port Phillip: Review of Heritage Area HO3





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## Thematic Context:

### 5.3 *Transport*

#### 5.3.1 The First Railways

### 5.5 *Settlement, Growth & Change*

#### 5.5.1 Three settlements: Sandridge, St. Kilda & Emerald Hill

#### The late Nineteenth Century Boom

### 5.7 *Government Services*

#### 5.7.2 Local Government: The Emergence of Cities

#### 5.7.2 South Melbourne

### 5.8 *Ways of Life*

#### 5.8.2 South Melbourne

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**Comparative Analysis:** Emerald Hill was one of the three original settlements that developed in what is now the City of Port Phillip from the mid-nineteenth century, and, as such, can be pertinently compared with the other two. These two settlements – comprising St Kilda and Port Melbourne (formerly Sandridge) - are in fact slightly older than Emerald Hill, as both trace their origins back to the early 1840s.

The early settlement in St Kilda was spurred by the area's appeal as a seaside resort, and residential development initially took place in the elevated area known as St Kilda Hill, defined by Carlisle, Barkly, Fitzroy streets and the foreshore. Not unlike Emerald Hill, the housing in this area still provides evidence of several successive booms of development: simple cottages and terraces from the 1850s (and later) and generally grander dwellings from the 1870s and '80s. Most of the early houses, however, are of brick construction, as virtually all of the timber cottages that once proliferated in the area have disappeared amidst a wave of inter-war development. This phase, which saw countless apartment blocks erected in St Kilda Hill, has no counterpart in Emerald Hill, where new development in the 1920s and 30s was limited. Also in contrast to Emerald Hill, large parts of St Kilda Hill (such as Barkly Street) still remained under-developed at the turn of the century, which explains why parts of that area remain strongly characterised by Edwardian and inter-war residential infill.

Like Emerald Hill, Sandridge (Port Melbourne) began with a town plan laid out by Robert Hoddle, which was revised to its present form in 1855. Its subsequent development echoes that of Emerald Hill, with residential and commercial development in the 1850s and '60s, followed by a subsequent boom in the 1870s and '80s, and successive layers of redevelopment in the twentieth century. Today, Port Melbourne's building stock remains comparable to that in the Emerald Hill area. There is remnant housing from the 1850s and '60s – mostly of brick construction – and later dwellings from the 1870s and '80s. Port Melbourne also has a distinct area of larger and grander Victorian dwellings (in Evans and Station streets), which is comparable to those along Nelson Road, Albert Road and Raglan Street in Emerald Hill. The Bay Street streetscape – Port Melbourne's principal commercial strip – also has parallels with Clarendon Street. Both are characterised by Victorian residential shops, although the former tends to retain a higher proportion of buildings (including hotels) from the 1870s. Port Melbourne also has more surviving government buildings from its earliest phase, ie court house (1860), post office (1861) and police station (1864). Counterparts in Emerald Hill no longer survive, having been replaced by newer buildings (mostly located in the South Melbourne Town Hall precinct) from the 1880s to the 1920s.

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## Statement of Significance:

### *What is Significant?*

The Emerald Hill Residential Precinct, nominally bounded by Nelson Road, York Street, Eastern Road, Albert Road, Cecil Street and Park Street, covers a large part of the original Emerald Hill township of 1852. The area underwent rapid settlement during the 1850s and 60s, followed by a second boom in the late 1870s and 1880s that served as an infill to the previously sparse development. As it exists today, the precinct is characterised by often heterogeneous streetscapes where simple cottages, villas and terraces in brick, timber and stone (dating from the earlier period) are scattered amongst generally grander dwellings (dating from the later period). This predominantly residential precinct is split into two halves that flank the eponymous Emerald Hill (now the site of the South Melbourne Town Hall and other official buildings), with Clarendon Street running alongside as the area's chief commercial strip, dominated by residential shops, banks and hotels dating from the 1880s.

### *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 the most intact remaining portion of the original Emerald Hill township, which represents the earliest phase of residential and commercial development in South Melbourne. This is evidenced by the road layout, which remains largely intact with its angled rectilinear grid, the odd curve of Nelson Road, and the network of narrow streets and laneways within. The survival of original bluestone pitching, kerbing, guttering and spoon drains is notable, and forms a significant part of the nineteenth century grain of the precinct. The distinctive twin triangular reserves at Heather Street, which date back to at least 1862, are not only important as remnants of public open space associated with the early township, but also as rare surviving examples of island reserves in the entire metropolitan area.

The building stock includes a perhaps surprising number of surviving houses that date from the 1850s and '60s, typically in the form of cottages, villas and terraces of modest scale and simple form and detailing. The large number of early timber dwellings (ie modest single-fronted and double-fronted cottages) is of particular note, as these tend to be less common elsewhere in the municipality (ie in the contemporaneous settlements at Port Melbourne and St Kilda). Some of the oldest houses in South Melbourne can be still found in the streets to the west of the railway line (eg Coventry Place, Morris Street, Coote Street and Eville Street), where the initial land sales and residential development took place from the early 1850s. These include rare surviving examples of prefabricated iron and timber dwellings. This early phase of development is also demonstrated by some contemporaneous and generally prominent non-residential buildings, including several bluestone churches and the former orphanage in Cecil Street.

Later houses, dating from the late 1870s and 1880s, provide evidence of the significant boom that saw the previously sparsely developed borough transformed into a full-fledged city (changing its name to South Melbourne in 1883). This phase is evident both in the pervasive layer of infill housing that can be seen throughout the precinct, as well as more cohesive rows in the few hitherto undeveloped areas (eg Boom-style terraces in Raglan Street and Ward Street, and cottages in Thomson Street West, Cobden Street East, Stead Street and Palmerston Crescent). This phase is also demonstrated by the commercial development along Clarendon Street, which ties the two residential halves of the precinct together.

Architecturally and aesthetically, the precinct is significant for its fine and rare collection of mid-Victorian dwellings. While these generally exist as scattered specimens rather than cohesive streetscapes, they nevertheless provide a valuable overview of various housing types in the 1850s and 60s: modestly-scaled cottages, villas and double-storey terraced rows in timber, brick, bluestone and even iron. These often simple houses (eg weatherboard villas built almost to the street, with basic gabled roofs, and faintly Georgian-style rendered terraces with plain parapets and verandahs only to ground level) represent a distinct and striking contrast to their more embellished (and more ubiquitous) counterparts of the 1880s. The South Melbourne Residential Precinct represents not only the finest and more extensive collection of early houses in the City of Port Phillip, but also one of the finest in Melbourne.

Later Victorian houses in the precinct generally expressed as single- or double-fronted cottages or double-storeyed terraces in rendered or bichromatic brick, with cast iron columns, lace friezes and ornate rendered parapets. The contemporaneous residential shops also follow a typical form: single-fronted buildings or 'corner shops' with splayed entrances, usually in rendered brick, with moulded cornices and parapets. All of these



buildings are significant in their own right are representative and generally intact examples of the florid Boom style of the 1880s.

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**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.

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

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## 2.2 St Vincent Place East (South Melbourne)

### 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)

### Location and Extent:



*Not to scale. Note individually significant heritage places indicated in dark grey*

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”<sup>20</sup>



Figure 14 Detail of subdivision plan (1857), showing Hodgkinson's revised layout of St Vincent Place (source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 15 Cox map (1865), showing the first houses, on what is now Howe Crescent (source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

<sup>20</sup> Ward, Vol 1, p74

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 Roche 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.<sup>21</sup>

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).

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.

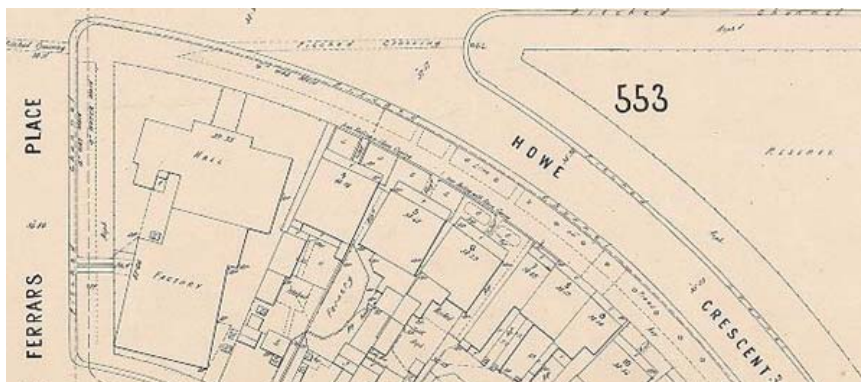


Figure 16

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: MMBW)

21 Allom Lovell Sanderson, p 3/15



Figure 17 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.

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**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 18 Small single-storey timber villa at 16 Ferrars Place, and larger two-storey terraces at Nos 17-18.



Figure 19 The row of even grander terraced houses that curves around Howe Crescent



Figure 20 Former doctor's townhouse (later RAI A offices) at 30 Howe Crescent, with polychrome church alongside



Figure 21 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.<sup>22</sup> 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

22 Ward, Vol 1, p74.





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 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.

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#### References:

Vardy Map (1855)

Cox map (1866)

MMBW Map (c.1895)

*Sands & McDougall Directory*. (various editions, 1864 onwards)

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#### Thematic Context:

5.5.2 The late Nineteenth Century Boom

5.8.2 Ways of Life: South Melbourne

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**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.

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#### Statement of Significance:

*What is Significant?*

[heritage ALLIANCE](#)



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.

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**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.

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

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## 2.3 Albert Park Residential Precinct

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### Existing Designations:

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

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### 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)

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### Location and Extent:



*Not to scale. Note individually significant heritage places indicated in darker grey*

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.<sup>23</sup>

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.<sup>24</sup> 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.<sup>25</sup> 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."<sup>26</sup>

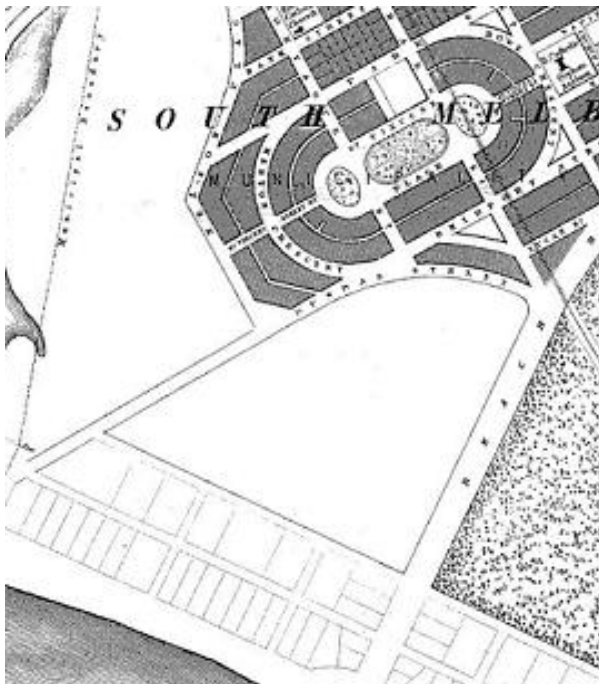


Figure 22 Detail of Kearney Map (1855) showing the limited development of this area, south of Emerald Hill (source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

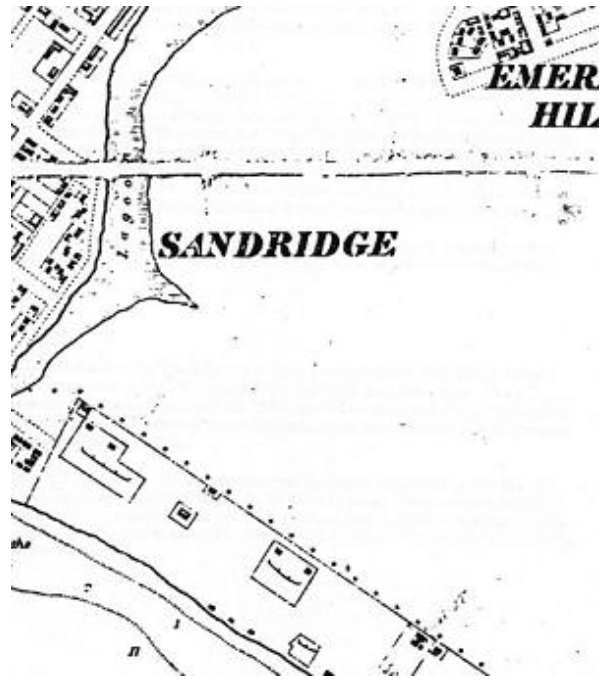


Figure 23 Detail of Cox Map (1866), showing that little had changed by that time; note military barracks near beach (source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

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

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

25 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.

26 Allom Lovell Sanderson, 3/16.

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.<sup>27</sup>

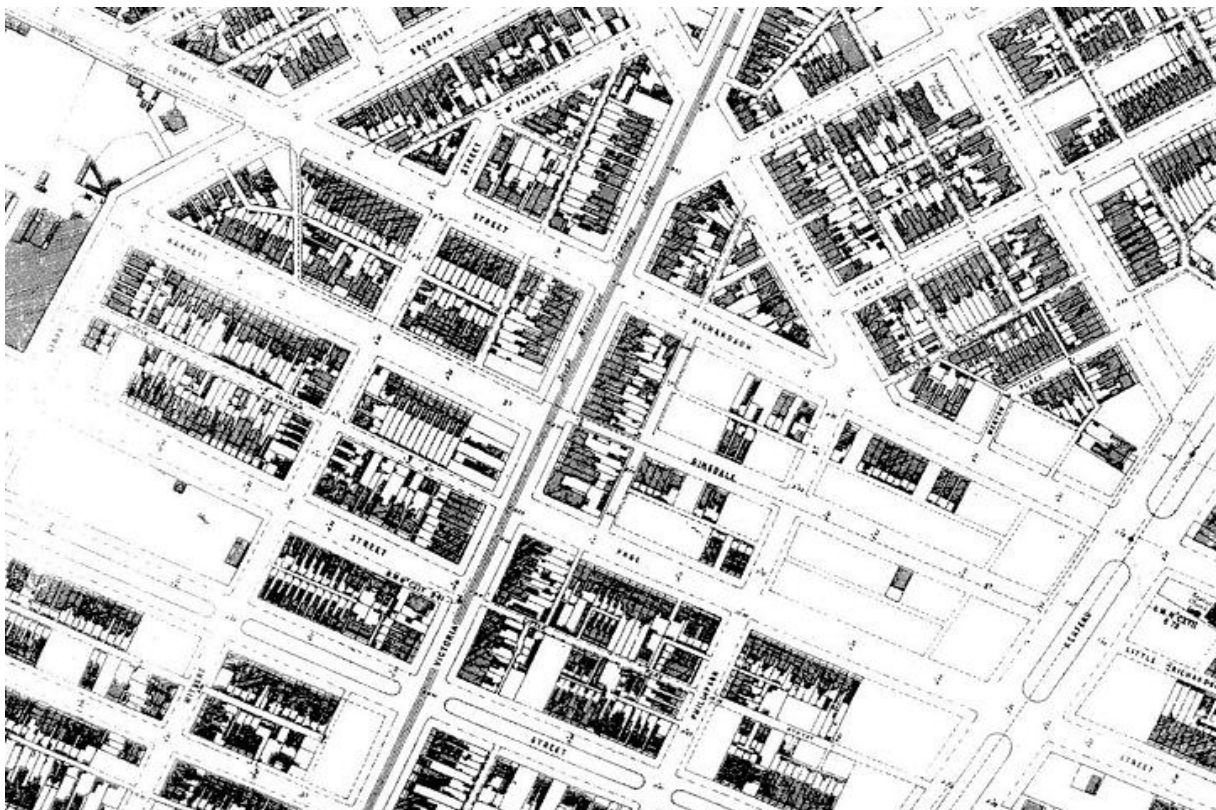


Figure 24 Detail of MMBW Map (1895), showing Victoria Avenue in centre; note relatively dense residential development, gasworks at extreme left, and vacant land (including Dinsdale Street) along Kerferd Road side. (source: Map Collection, Education Resource Centre, University of Melbourne)

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

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 25 1940's Postcard showing west side of Kerferd Road  
(source: Port Phillip City Collection)



Figure 26 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.<sup>28</sup>

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.<sup>29</sup>

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

28 Allom Lovell Sanderson 3/16.

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

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.<sup>30</sup> 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.

**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.



Figure 27 Typical row of single-fronted block-fronted Victorian cottages in St Vincent Street



Figure 28 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).

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





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 29 A particularly fine row of double-storey rendered terrace houses in Montague Street



Figure 30 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.

References:

Kearney Map (1855)

Cox Map (1866)

MMBW Map (1895)

*Sands & McDougall Directory* (various)

Thematic Context:

5.5 *Settlement, Growth & Change*

The late Nineteenth Century Boom

5.8 *Ways of Life*

South Melbourne



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**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.

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## 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.

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#### 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.

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

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## 2.4 Bridport Street/Victoria Avenue Commercial Precinct (Albert Park)

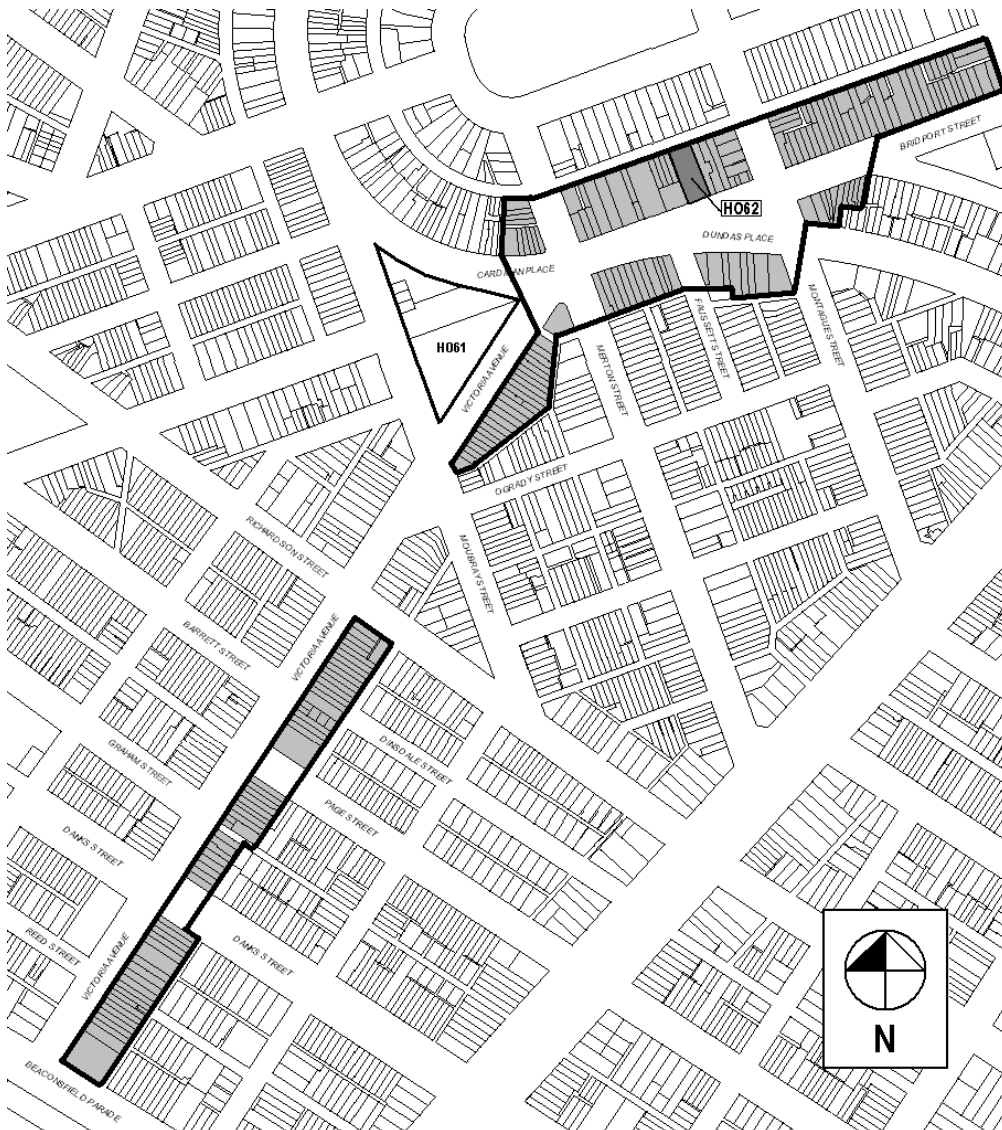
### Existing Designations:

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)

### Location and Extent:



*Not to scale. Note individually significant heritage places indicated in darker grey.*

**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 31 Looking north along Victoria Avenue, c. 1890s  
(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 32 Looking west along Dundas Place, c. 1890s  
(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 33 Looking west along Bridport Street, c.1890s  
(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 34 Looking west along Bridport Street, c.1908  
(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

As noted by Allon 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).<sup>31</sup> 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 (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.

<sup>31</sup> Allon Lovell Sanderson, p 3/16.

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.<sup>32</sup>

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**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 127-129 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 fitouts, 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.

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





Figure 35 Continuous row of Victorian residential shops along the south side of Bridport Street



Figure 36 Group of three residential shops in Bridport Street, showing original shopfronts at ground floor



Figure 37 The Biltmore (ex coffee palace) on Bridport Street, with late Victorian shops (1900) alongside



Figure 38 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 39 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.

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#### References:

Cox Map (1866)

MMBW Map (c.1895)

*Sands & McDougall Directory* (various, 1888 onwards)

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#### Thematic Context:

5.3.1 The First Railways

5.3.4 Tramway and Railway Improvements

5.5.2 The late Nineteenth Century Boom

5.8.2 Ways of Life: South Melbourne

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**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.

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#### 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.

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### *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.

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### 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.

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

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## 2.5 Armstrong Street Commercial Precinct (Middle Park)

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### Existing Designations:

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

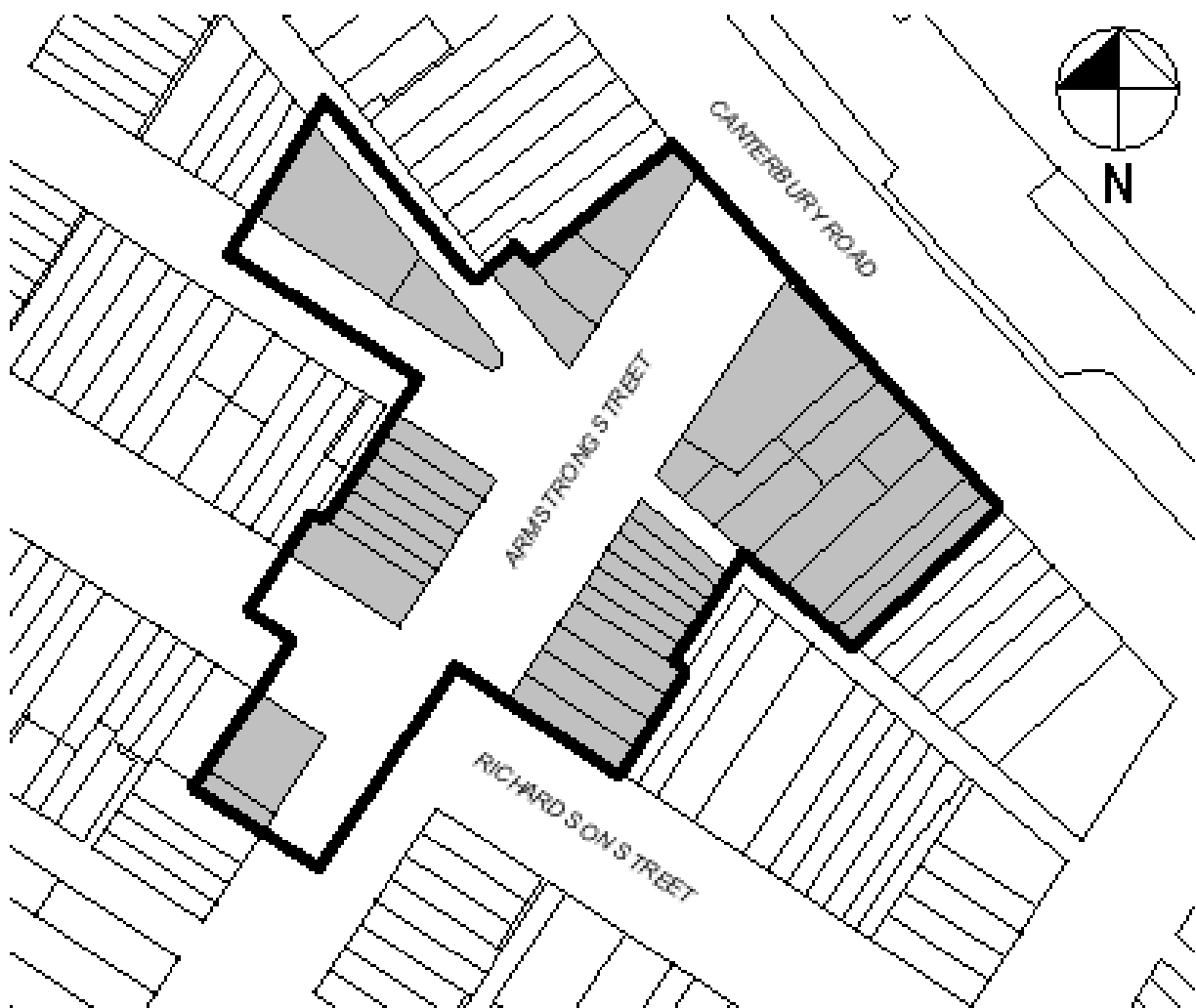
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### Previous Heritage Studies:

Conservation Study 1975:	Precinct 20
Conservation Study 1987:	UC1: Precinct F (part)
Heritage Review 2000:	Heritage Overlay 3 (part)

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### Location and Extent



*Not to scale.*

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 Chegvidden 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.

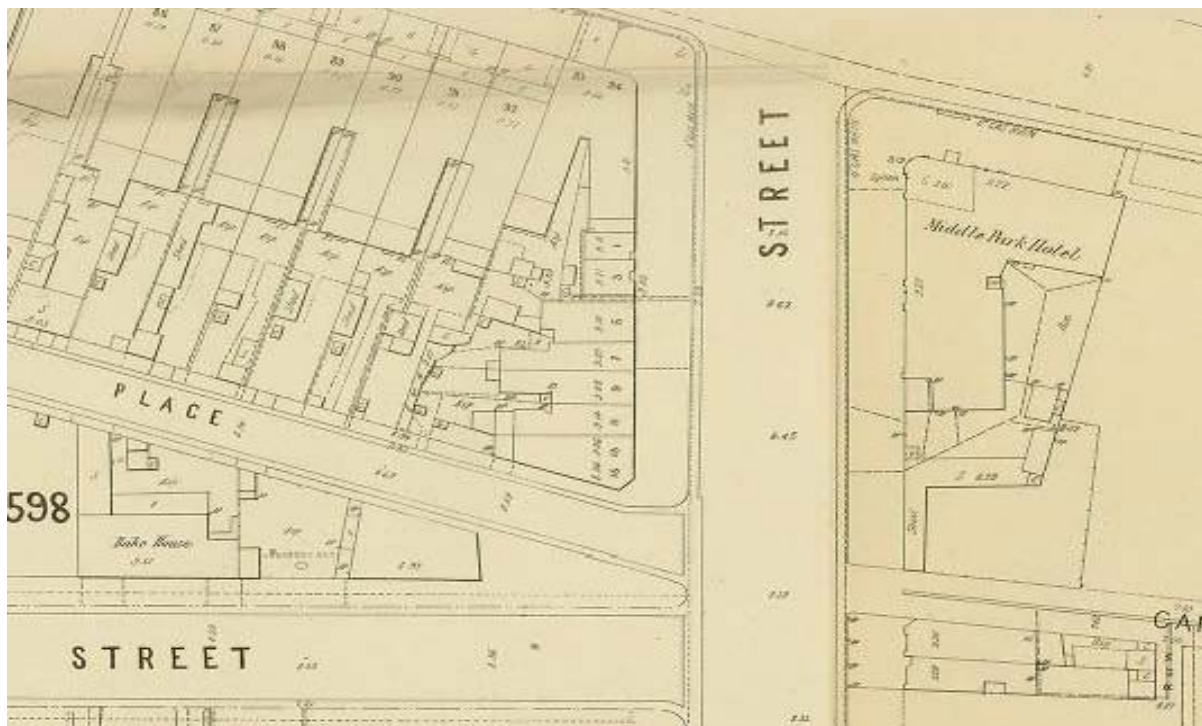


Figure 40 Part of MMBW Detail Plan (c.1895), showing commercial development along Armstrong Street; note Middle Park Hotel (now Gunn Island Hotel), and bakery on corner of Erskine Street, with bakehouse indicated at rear (source: Map Collection, Education Resource Centre, Melbourne University)

When the street addressses 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 41 Looking east along Armstrong Street, circa 1910s; note cast iron street lamp in centre of road (source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 42 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.

**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 43 The Canterbury Buildings (1888) on the corner of Armstrong Street: note cast iron street lamp.



Figure 44 The mixture of Victorian, Edwardian and Inter-war Shops along the south of Armstrong Street



Figure 45 The mixture of Victorian and Edwardian shops along the north side of Armstrong Street

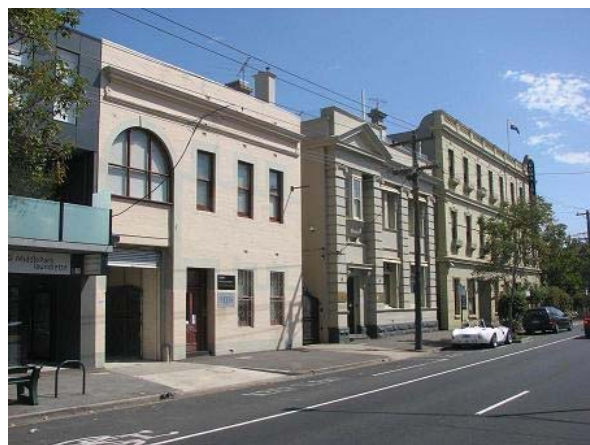


Figure 46 The former motor garage (1911), State Savings Bank (1914) and hotel (1889) on Canterbury Road

#### References:

Vardy Map (1855)

Cox Map (1866)

MMBW Map (1895)

*Sands & McDougall Directory* (various, 1888 onwards)

#### Thematic Context:

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

**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).

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#### 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.

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#### 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.

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

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## 2.6 Albert Park Lake Precinct

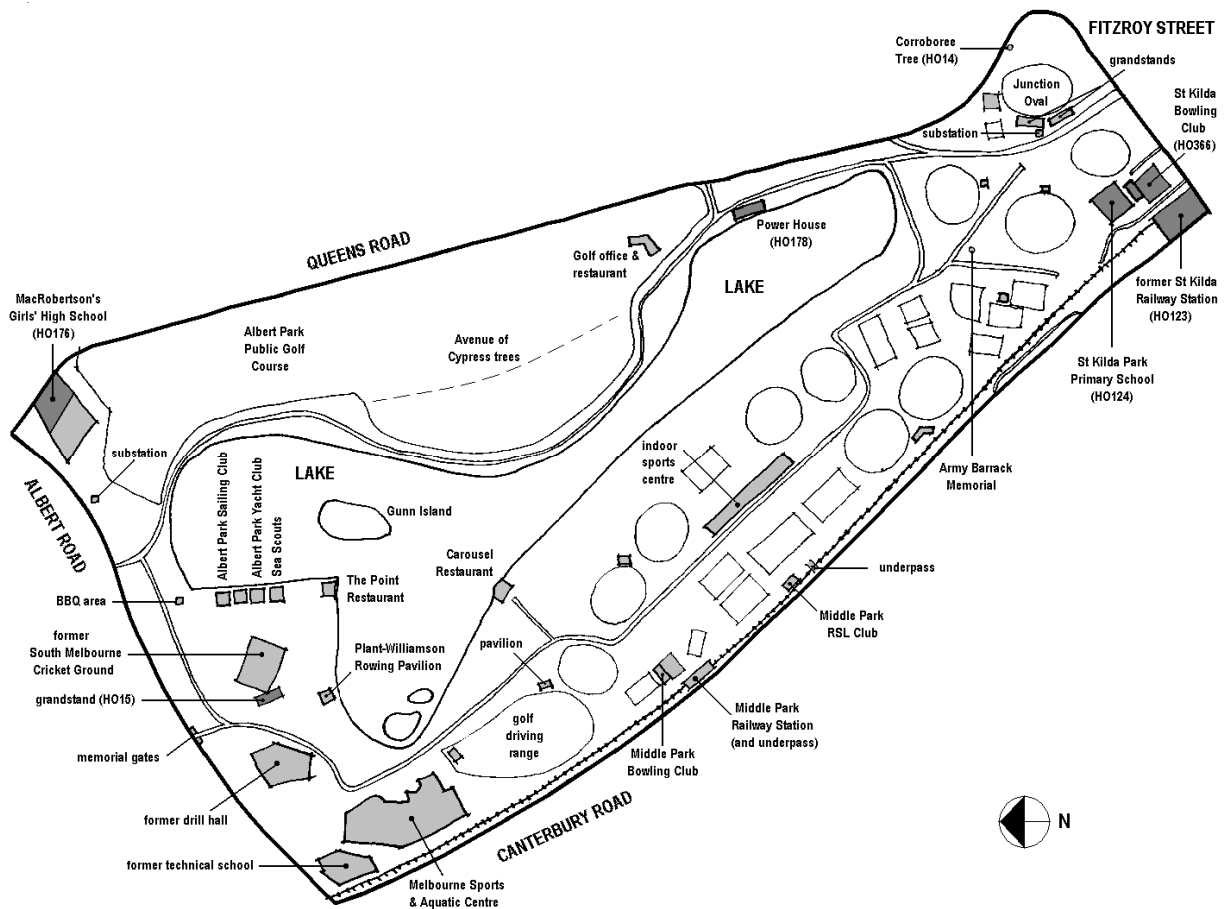
### Existing Designations:

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)

### Location and Extent:



*Not to scale. Note individually significant heritage places indicated in a darker grey*

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).<sup>33</sup>

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 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).

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33 Ward, Vol 1, p47.



Figure 47 General view of the 'Albert Park Lagoon' in 1876, showing recreational boating and early boatsheds  
(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 48 Aerial photograph of Albert Park, 1900  
(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

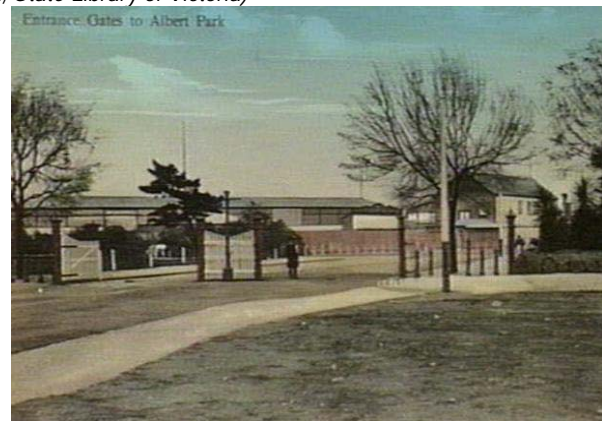


Figure 49 Main entry gates to the Albert Park reserve on the north side (at Cecil Street), circa 1908

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.

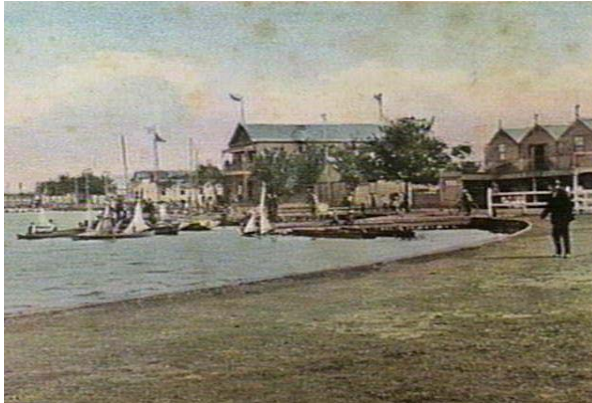


Figure 50 Boathouses on the lake, circa 1912  
(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

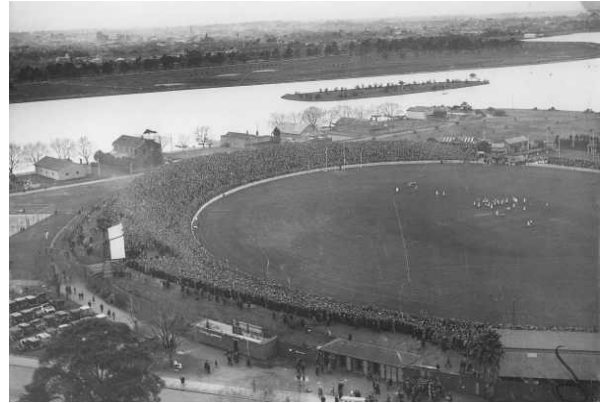


Figure 51 Football match at South Melbourne Oval, 1920s  
(source: Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

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.

**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 52 Row of mature cypress trees along southwestern boundary of Albert Park reserve*



*Figure 53 The St Kilda Bowling Club pavillion 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.



Figure 54 General view of the lake, showing row of mature trees; note also concrete edging to lakeside



Figure 55 The former Middle Park Railway Station (now a café) on the western edge of the park

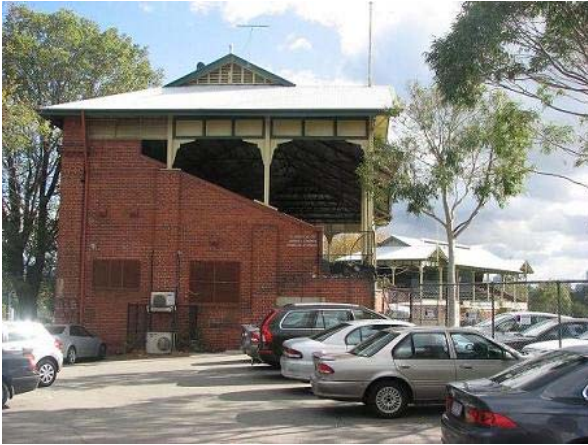


Figure 56 One of the two surviving inter-war grandstands at the St Kilda Cricket Ground (now Junction Oval)



Figure 57 The former military drill hall (1935), on the park's northern edge



Figure 58 The golf course building (1960), which once included the celebrated Rob's Drive-in Restaurant



Figure 59 One of the few surviving 1960s sporting pavilions, located near the John Blackham Oval

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.

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).

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#### References:

Vardy Map (1855)

Map of Albert Park (1864)

Cox Map (1866)

Clement Hodgkinson's *Map of Lagoon in Albert Park* (1871)

MMBW Map (1895)

Melbourne Publishing Company's *Map of Municipality of South Melbourne* (1921);

Jill Barnard and Jenny Keating, *People's Playground: A History of the Albert Park* (1996).

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#### Thematic Context:

5.3.1 The First Railways

5.5.2 The Late Nineteenth Century Boom

5.5.3 Depression and Recovery: The Inter-War Years

5.6.2 Schools: Government Intervention

5.8.2 Ways of Life: South Melbourne

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**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.

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## 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 Port 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.

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#### Recommendations:

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

---

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

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## 3.0 Bibliography

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### Maps [all sourced from the Map Collection, State Library of Victoria]

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Crown Land Office. *Plan of Building Lots in the Municipality of Emerald Hill* (1857)

Hodgkinson, Clement. *Map of Lagoon in Albert Park* (1871);

Kearney, James. *Map of Melbourne and Suburbs* (1855);

*Map of Albert Park* (1864)

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works. Plans Nos 19, 20, 21 and 34 (1894-95), and revised issues of Nos 34 and 35 (1944);

Vardy, J. *Plan of the Borough of St Kilda* (1873) [maps No 2 WW to 7 WW inclusive]

# **REVIEW OF HERITAGE AREA H03**

**New Citation for Middle Park/St Kilda West**

**prepared for**

**Port Phillip City Council**

**30 July 2010**



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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND AND BRIEF

In January 2008, the City of Port Phillip engaged Heritage Alliance, heritage consultants, to undertake a review of the municipality's largest heritage precinct, HO3. Covering most of South Melbourne, Albert Park, Middle Park and St Kilda West, the precinct had previously been defined and documented in the *Port Phillip Heritage Review*, prepared by Andrew Ward & Associates in 2000, which, in turn, was informed by previous assessments in the *South Melbourne Conservation Study* (1975) and the *South Melbourne Urban Conservation Study* (1987).

The 2008 review by Heritage Alliance, which was largely undertaken by staff member Simon Reeves, proposed breaking the existing HO3 into a series of smaller and more specific precincts. After preliminary fieldwork, research and meetings it council, it was resolved that new citations would be prepared for seven new precincts. These were released to council, in several stages, during 2008.

Following several rounds of feedback from councillors, local residents and other stakeholders, the completed citations were reviewed by Heritage Alliance in September 2008 and again in February 2009, during which time a number of corrections, revisions and improvements were made. In March 2009, Simon Reeves left the office of Heritage Alliance to establish his own heritage consultancy, Built Heritage Pty Ltd.

In May 2010, the City of Port Phillip commissioned a further review of the Heritage Alliance material, concentrating on a substantial re-write of the citation for the Middle park/St Kilda Wets Precinct. This was to be undertaken by Simon Reeves, who, although he had been responsible for much of the original report, was no longer employed by Heritage Alliance. This circumstance raised thorny issues relating to the ownership of copyright and intellectual property. As Simon Reeves now represented Built Heritage Pty Ltd, he was not in a position to make changes to documents that were effectively the property of another consultancy. While he could certainly suggest revisions that might be appropriate, the revisions themselves could only be made to the document by Heritage Alliance. It was finally resolved that an entirely new citation be prepared for Middle Park/St Kilda West, which would quote from all earlier studies but which would be prepared entirely by Built Heritage Pty Ltd.

Built Heritage Pty Ltd were also asked to compile a list of suggested revisions to the remaining six Heritage Alliance citations. Specific areas of concern were as follows:

### **Incorporation of previous heritage studies into the citation**

It was felt that the citations should make greater reference to the three earlier heritage studies – that is, those prepared by Yuncken Freeman Architects (1975), Allom Lovell Sanderson (1987) and Andrew Ward & Associates (2000)

### **References to Exemplary Buildings**

It was felt that references to specific buildings should be clarified, so that it was clear that they were being cited as representative examples rather than exemplary ones.

### **References to Churches and Manses**

It was felt that there could be increased reference to churches and manses.

### **Use of Photographs from Port Phillip City Collection**

It was felt that appropriate historical photographs might be sourced from the heritage database maintained by the City of Port Phillip, which is available online at [www.heritage.portphillip.vic.gov.au/port\\_phillip\\_city\\_collection](http://www.heritage.portphillip.vic.gov.au/port_phillip_city_collection)

## 1.2 OUTCOMES

The present report comprises two parts:

- A) A new 13-page HO citation for the Middle Park/St Kilda West Precinct, which is considered to entirely supersede the one that was originally prepared by Heritage Alliance in 2008-09.
- B) A list of suggested revisions to the remaining citations, which have been listed according to the four areas of concern indicated on the previous page. It is stressed that these revisions are in no way prescriptive; they are not essential corrections that *must* be made, but merely suggested revisions that *might* be made to satisfy the specific issues raised by the councillors.

It is expected that the list of revisions will be passed on to the staff of Heritage Alliance, who will then have the final say in whether it is appropriate to include any or all of the revisions in what is ultimately their report.

## 1.3 PERSONNEL

This report was prepared by Simon Reeves, principal of Built Heritage Pty Ltd. He was responsible for all aspects of the project: the site fieldwork, photography, supplementary research, new mapping, and the writing up of the report.

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## **2.0 NEW CITATION FOR MIDDLE PARK/ST KILDA WEST**



## 2.7 MIDDLE PARK & ST KILDA WEST PRECINCT

### Existing Designations:

*Victorian Heritage Register* Nil

*Register of National Estate* Nil

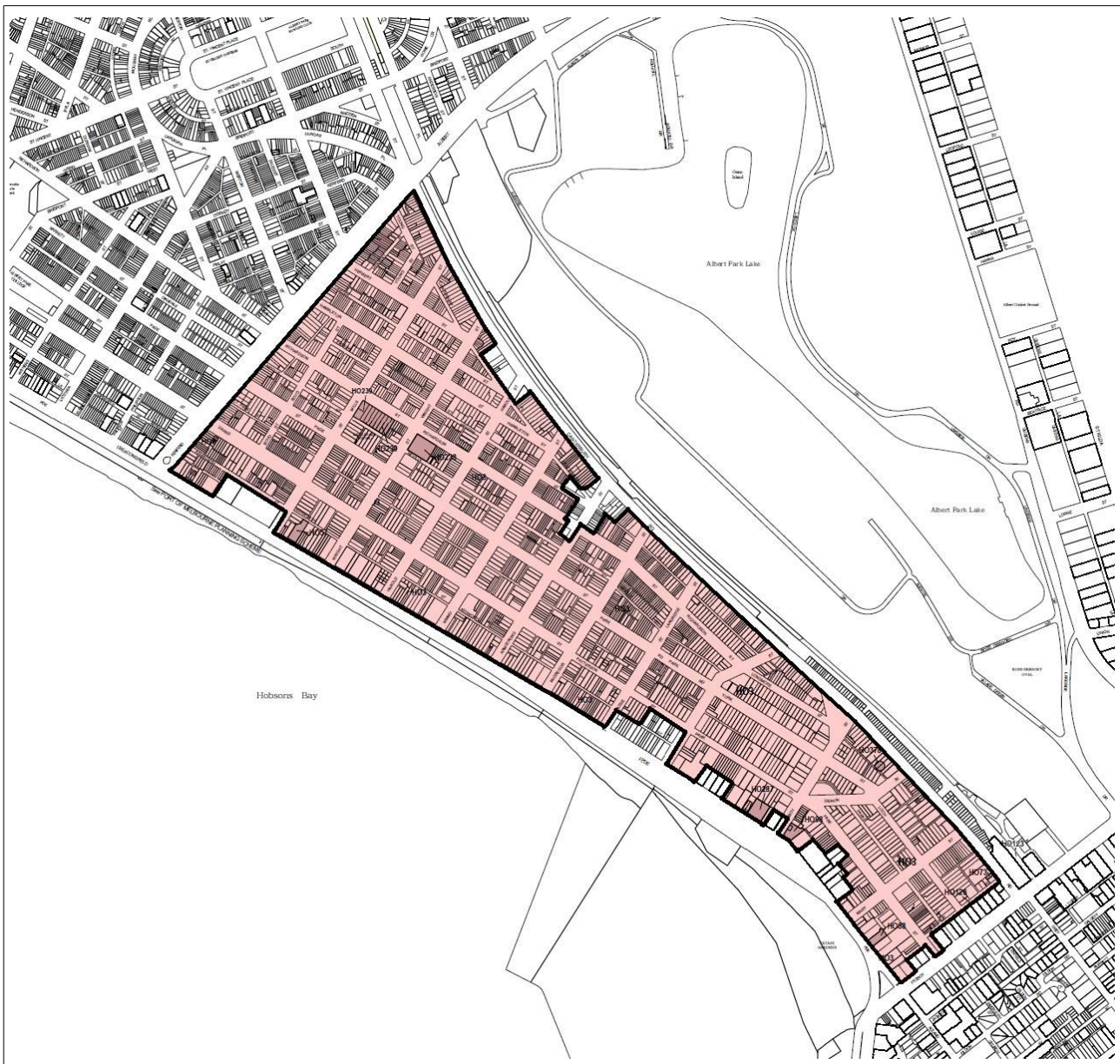
*National Trust (Victoria)* Nil

### Previous Heritage Studies:

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

*Conservation Study 1987* UC1: Precincts E (part) and F

*Heritage Review 2000* HO3 (part)



### Extent of Listing

Area bounded by Kerferd Road, Beaconsfield Parade, Canterbury Road and Fitzroy Street, but excluding certain portions of Armstrong Street, Beaconsfield Parade, Canterbury Road and Fitzroy Street as indicated above.

## 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 Middle Park.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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,

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; Middle Park was occupied by swamp, sand dunes and ti-tree.<sup>3</sup>

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 Western Swamp 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.<sup>4</sup>

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”.<sup>5</sup> 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.

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

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

3 Ward, *op cit*, p 24.

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

5 *Ibid*, p 163.

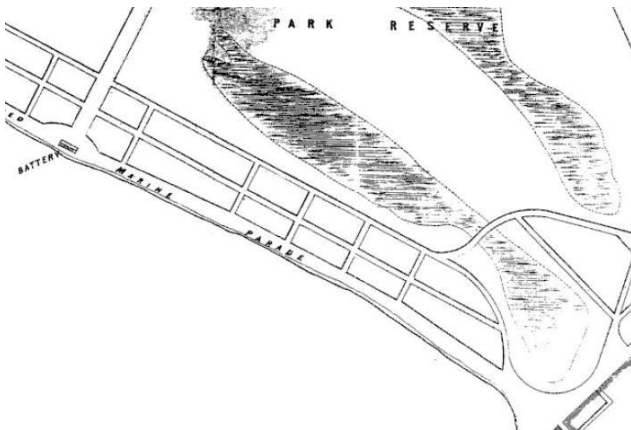


Figure 1: Detail of 1855 survey map, showing land between Kerferd Road (top left) and Fitzroy Street (lower right) (source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)

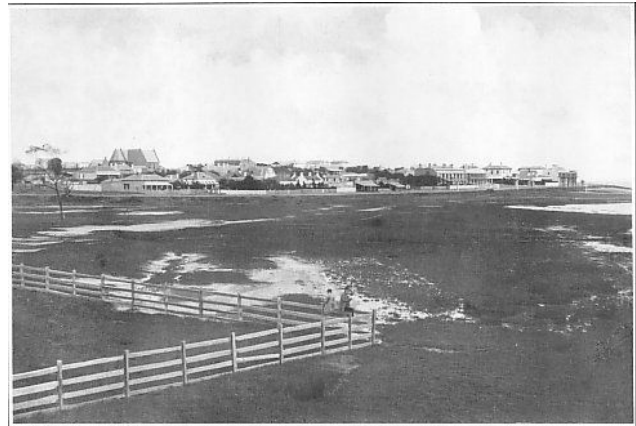


Figure 2: A rare photograph of the Western Swamp, c.1855, looking south-east towards Fitzroy Street, St Kilda (source: J B Cooper. *A History of St Kilda*, p 200)

In 1870, the Borough of St Kilda took the first decisive steps to reclaim this land when the Western Swamp was partially drained “at the at the insistence of the Central Board of Health”.<sup>6</sup> 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 Middle Park 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 tree swamp followed immediately, the district remained remote and unappealing.<sup>7</sup>

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.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p 200, quoting the first annual statement of the Borough of St Kilda, dated 30 September 1870.

<sup>7</sup> Allom Lovell Sanderson, *op cit.* p 3/18.

<sup>8</sup> *Argus*, 18 January 1879, p 6.

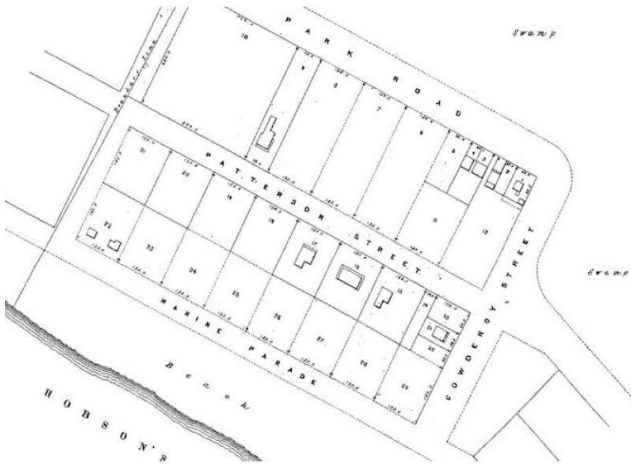


Figure 3: Detail of the Vardy Map (1873) showing the sparsely developed allotments in St Kilda West (source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 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 seaside 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.<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup> 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”.<sup>11</sup>

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 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 & Furran (1895), Sydney Smith & Ogg (1898) and Thomas Ashworth (1913).<sup>12</sup> 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.

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

10 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.

11 J B Cooper, *op cit*, p 214.

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



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 ones 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.

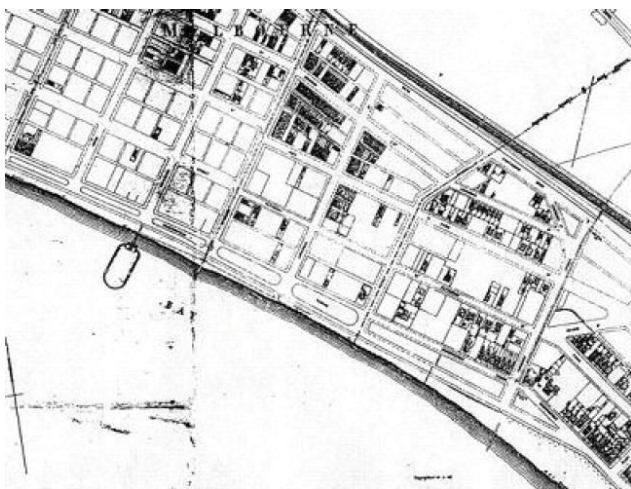


Figure 5: Detail of the MMBW Map (1895) showing the extent of residential development by the Boom period (source: Map Collection, State Library of Victoria)



Figure 6: 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.<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup> 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.”<sup>15</sup>

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).<sup>16</sup> 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 already somewhat abated; indeed, as Andrew Ward has succinctly put it, “by the the outbreak of the Great War, the rush to populate the municipality was all but over”.<sup>17</sup>

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.<sup>18</sup> 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.<sup>19</sup> 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 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.<sup>20</sup> 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.

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

14 *Ibid.*

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

16 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.

17 Ward, *op cit*, p 76.

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

19 Ward, *op cit*, p 76.

20 Longmire, *op cit*, p 199.

## 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, Harold 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 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).

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. Today, amidst the subsequent overlay of later twentieth century redevelopment, evidence of the earlier phase remains in the form of numerous double-storey Victorian 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 7: Double-storey Boom-style Victorian terrace houses, Kerferd Road



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



Figure 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.

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 10: Victorian and Edwardian two-storey terrace houses, Mary Street



Figure 11: Edwardian red brick villas, Richardson Street (note street trees)



Figure 12: Mixed streetscape in 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 along the perimeter thoroughfares of Canterbury Road and Beaconsfield Parade, and in the streets east of Fraser Street. It is in the latter area, for example, that 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 Kerferd Road (overlooking the bay and park respectively) 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 343 Beaconsfield Parade) or unusual finishes (eg 350 Beaconsfield Road).

## 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 is otherwise considerable contrast between their built fabric. In Albert Park, Beaconsfield Parade has many Victorian cottages, terraces and villas with few inter-war or post-war apartment blocks, which results in a low-rise streetscape. 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 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.

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 13: Victorian timber cottages in Chusan Street, St Kilda East



Figure 14: Row of Edwardian red brick villas in Inkerman Street, St Kilda East



Figure 15: 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])

### 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 UC1(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 UC1(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.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Ward, *op cit*, p 73.

## 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 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.

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.

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)



## Thematic Context

### 5.3 Transport

#### 5.3.4 *Tramway and Railway Improvements*

### 5.5 Settlement: Growth and Change

#### 5.5.2 *The Late Nineteenth Century Boom*

#### 5.5.3 *Depression and Recovery: the Inter-War Years*

### 5.8 Ways of Life

#### 5.8.2 *South Melbourne*

#### 5.8.3 *St Kilda*

## 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 the notable avenues in Richardson Street and Mary Street.

## References

### Books

J B Cooper, *The History of St Kilda from its First Settlement to a City and After, 1840 to 1930*. 2 vols (1931).

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### Historic Maps

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Melbourne Harbour Trust (Sir John Coode, engineer), "General Plan shewing Harbour Improvements" (1879)

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## Assessment

Simon Reeves, Built Heritage Pty Ltd, June 2010.

