



Heritage Report & Place Citation

21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction & Background

Trethowan Architecture have been commissioned by the City of Port Phillip Council to undertake a *Heritage Review* of the property at 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne.

1.2 Key Findings

The key findings are:

- 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne has been assessed to be of local significance.

1.3 Recommendations

It is recommended that the City of Port Phillip Council:

- Adopt the '*Heritage Report & Place Citation: 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne*' (2023) and include it as a Reference Document in the Planning Scheme.
- Implement the '*Heritage Report & Place Citation: 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne*' (2023) by:
 - Adding 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne to the Heritage Overlay of the City of Port Phillip Planning Scheme with the schedule entry shown in the place citation.
 - Include the new Statement of Significance for the significant place as an incorporated document in the Planning Scheme.



2 Methodology

The Review has been undertaken in accordance with the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 2013* (the 'Burra Charter') and the Victorian Planning Practice Note No. 1 'Applying the Heritage Overlay DELWP' (2018) (the 'Practice Note').

The following stages of work were undertaken and are detailed in this section:

Step One:

- Inception meeting to discuss subject place for detailed assessment.

Step Two:

- Fieldwork inspection of the subject property.
- Historical research into the place and locality undertaken.

Step Three:

- Undertake a detailed assessment of the place in accordance with PPN1 and having regard to the Burra Charter.
- Prepare draft citation for the place should it be found to meet the significance threshold, using Council's standard template.

Step Four:

- Preparation of a draft final report detailing the findings, recommendations and the draft citation.
- Meeting 3 to discuss findings of draft report. Council to provide one set of consolidated comments on draft report.

Step Five:

- Submission of the final report and final citation incorporating Council feedback (with potential for review).

2.1 Step One

A meeting was held via Microsoft Teams on 12 October 2022 to confirm the site to be surveyed, the methodology, and exchange information. Following this, Trethowan Architecture prepared meeting minutes and a final project plan outlining dates for the delivery of each stage of work.

2.2 Step Two

2.2.1 Review of Documentation

Prior to embarking on fieldwork, Trethowan Architecture undertook a desktop review of the site. This included review of all background information provided by Council, previous heritage studies and any other additional historical research.

2.2.2 Fieldwork

The fieldwork involved a heritage consultant surveying, at street level, the place identified by Council. The place was externally inspected on foot, photographed from the public realm and recorded (in notes and photographs). The fieldwork was used to inform:

- An understanding of the place
- Any trees, fences or outbuildings of note
- Intactness and integrity
- An up-to-date photograph

- Any other considerations that may arise in the course of the assessment.

A description of the individual place and precinct was prepared. This set out the context (wider setting), the elements of the site (e.g., fence, garden, outbuildings), the size and massing of the building, its materials, its stylistic influence(s), features of note, any alterations and poor condition if observed.

2.2.3 Place History

Answers to fundamental questions such as when the place was created/built, for whom, by whom (builder and designer), for what purpose, and how it has changed over time (both physically and in use).

Researchers drew upon primary and secondary sources such as the following:

- Building permit index cards and associated plans where available
- Previous heritage studies and the 2021 Thematic Environmental History
- Local histories
- Certificates of title
- Rate books
- Public building files (held at the Public Records Office of Victoria)
- Parish plans
- Trove and Newspapers.com newspaper searches
- State Library of Victoria online collections of historic maps, plans and photos
- Sands & McDougall street directories

2.3 Step Three

The following tasks were conducted:

- Comparative analysis
- Assessment against criteria

As the place was found to meet the threshold of significance at a local level we progressed to the following stage:

- Preparation of Statement of Significance
- Preparation and review of citation

2.3.1 Comparative Analysis

Comparative analysis is an essential step to determine if a place meets the relevant threshold for heritage significance. The 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' Practice Note (2018) advises that:

... some comparative analysis will be required to substantiate the significance of each place. The comparative analysis should draw on other similar places within the study area, including those that have previously been included in a heritage register or overlay.

For the purpose of this review, places of local significance to the City of Port Phillip were selected as comparators, including comparable places around South Melbourne and Port Melbourne. Similar places were used as 'benchmarks' in determining a reasonable threshold in terms of integrity, period or other features. This might include how well a place represents important features of a particular style or typology, or how well it demonstrates the history of the municipality. In determining historical significance, the revised Thematic Environmental History provided valuable guidance in establishing what local themes were important in the municipality.



When a place is considered to be of equal or better quality than the benchmarks, it can be assessed as meeting the threshold of significance. On passing this test, a place can be recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay.

2.3.2 Assessment Against Criteria

The Practice Note advises that assessment of whether a place meets the local or State threshold should be determined in relation to model heritage criteria (also known as the HERCON Criteria) which are as follows:

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

For the assessed place, a discussion was prepared for each of the criteria that the place was considered to meet the threshold of local significance for. In some cases, this discussion concluded that the place did not meet the threshold for that criterion.

2.3.3 Statements of Significance

Given the individual place was found to meet the threshold of local significance for at least one criterion, a Statement of Significance was prepared, summarising the most important facts and the significance of the place.

The Statement was prepared in accordance with the *Burra Charter*, using the HERCON criteria and applying the thresholds of local significance. The assessment is summarised in the format recommended by the 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' Practice Note (2018), namely:

What is significant? - This section should be brief, usually no more than one paragraph or a series of dot points. There should be no doubt about the elements of the place that are under discussion. The paragraph should identify features or elements that are significant about the place, for example, house, outbuildings, garden, plantings, ruins, archaeological sites, interiors as a guide to future decision makers. Mention could also be made of elements that are not significant.

How is it significant? - A sentence should be included to the effect that the place is important because of its historical significance, its rarity, its research potential, its representativeness, its aesthetic significance, its technical significance and/or its associative significance. These descriptors are shown in brackets at the end of the heritage criteria listed above. The sentence should indicate the threshold for which the place is considered important.

Why is it significant? - This should elaborate on the criteria that makes the place significant. A separate point or paragraph should be used for each criterion satisfied. The

relevant criterion should be inserted in brackets after each point or paragraph. Each point or paragraph may include the threshold for which the place is considered important.

Mapping and Curtilages

The 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' Practice Note (2018) states in regard to mapping:

The Heritage Overlay applies to both the listed heritage item and its associated land. It is usually important to include land surrounding a building, structure, tree or feature of importance to ensure that any development, including subdivision, does not adversely affect the setting, context or significance of the heritage item. The land surrounding the heritage item is known as a 'curtilage' and will be shown as a polygon on the Heritage Overlay map. In many cases, particularly in urban areas and townships, the extent of the curtilage will be the whole of the property (for example, a suburban dwelling and its allotment).

However, there will be occasions where the curtilage and the Heritage Overlay polygon should be reduced in size as the land is of no significance. Reducing the curtilage and the polygon will have the potential benefit of lessening the number of planning permits that are required with advantages to both the landowner and the responsible authority.

On this basis, the following mapping type is recommended:

- Individual place to be mapped to the extent of the title boundaries.

The precise area recommended for HO protection is described in the place citation.

Statutory Recommendations

The statutory recommendations for places and precincts assessed to be of local significance are made in accordance with relevant policies and guidelines set out in the 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' Practice Note (2018).

The Practice Note describes additional controls that can be ticked in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay for a place or precinct, including:

- External Paint Controls – to control changes to paint colours; particularly important if evidence of an early colour scheme survives; note that a planning permit is always required to paint a previously unpainted surface (e.g., face brick, render, stone, concrete, timber shingles).
- Internal Alteration Controls – to be used sparingly and on a selective basis for special interiors of high significance.
- Tree Controls – to be applied only where a tree (or trees) has been assessed as having heritage value, not just amenity value.
- Solar energy systems controls apply.
- Fences and Outbuildings which are not exempt from advertising planning permit applications – demolition applications for early fences and/or outbuildings that contribute to the significance of a place must be publicly advertised if this box is ticked, and the accelerated VicSmart permit process cannot be used; note that a planning permit is required to alter, demolish or replace a fence or outbuilding even if this box is not chosen, however public notice of the permit application is generally not required.
- Included on the Victorian Heritage Register – can only be entered by Heritage Victoria.
- Prohibited uses may be permitted – this allows additional uses not normally permitted in a given zone, subject to a planning permit; it is most frequently used to give redundant buildings a wider range of future use options to ensure their long-term survival, e.g., purpose-built shops in residential areas.
- Aboriginal heritage place – note that Aboriginal heritage significance was not assessed as part of this Study.



2.4 Step Four

In preparing this outcomes report, the place has been briefly reviewed against relevant comparators, and relevant additional recommendations made.

2.5 Step Five

This report and the attached citation constitutes the final step in the Study.

2.6 Additional – HERMES Orion Entry

The 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' Practice Note (2018) specifies that:

All statements of significance should be securely stored in the HERMES heritage database.

Where a planning scheme amendment has resulted in the addition of, or amendments to, places in the Heritage Overlay, the strategic justification (that is, heritage study documentation and statements of significance) should be entered into the department's HERMES heritage database.

This will be done once a planning scheme amendment has been gazetted. Once the place has been added to HERMES Orion, the records of the place added to the City of Port Phillip Heritage Overlay will be visible on the Victorian Heritage Database.

Should the place be found to not meet the threshold of local significance it should be entered into the HERMES Orion database to note that it has been 'Researched but NOT recommended'. These records are not published for the general public to see but are accessible to Council staff and those with access to the database.



3 Key Findings

The following section outlines the outcome of the fieldwork and review of the identified place. In summary, the place is recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay as an individual place. The reasoning behind the recommendation is included below.

3.1 Recommended for the Heritage Overlay

The individual heritage place has been assessed to be of local significance as set out in the attached Citation (see Appendix C).



4 Appendix A – Assessment of Findings

4.1 Places of local significance

The following individual place is recommended for inclusion in the City of Port Phillip Heritage Overlay:

- House at 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne



Appendix B – Draft HO SCHEDULE

SCHEDULE TO THE HERITAGE OVERLAY

The requirements of this overlay apply to both the heritage place and its associated land.

PS Map Ref	Heritage Place	External paint controls apply?	Internal alteration controls apply?	Tree controls apply?	Solar energy controls apply?	Outbuildings or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-4	Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017?	Prohibited uses permitted?	Aboriginal heritage place
	<i>House</i> 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne Statement of Significance: 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No



Appendix C – Place Citation

City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Place name: **House**
Other names: -

Citation No:
2457



Address: **21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne**

Heritage Precinct: **None**

Category: **Residential: House**

Heritage Overlay: **HO562**

Period/Style: **Federation: Transitional**

Graded as: **Significant**

Constructed: **1905**

Victorian Heritage Register: **No**

Designer: **Unknown**

Amendment: **C215port**

Comment: **New Citation**

Significance

What is significant?

The transitional style Federation period house at 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne, built in 1905 is significant.

Alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

The house at 21 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne is of local historical representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

The house is historically significant as a rare surviving example of housing in this part of South Melbourne that was developed at the turn of the twentieth century. It is associated with the Federation period of development that took place on land typically subdivided and sold off during the 1880s. (Criterion A)

The house is of representative significance as a good and largely intact example of a Federation period house built in a transitional style, demonstrating the continuation of the Victorian residential idiom into the early twentieth century. Victorian elements comprise the overall attached cottage form with symmetrical design, brick and bluestone banding, tiled terrace, boundary walls and full length front verandah with decorative frieze, hipped slate roof and symmetrical chimney position. More typically Edwardian elements comprise brick and rendered Chimneys with terracotta pots, turned timber verandah posts, original timber multi paned door, and square bays with tall sash windows. (Criterion D & E)

Thematic context

Victoria's framework of historical themes

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state: 6.3 Shaping the suburbs

Port Phillip thematic environmental history

5. Buildings and Cultural Landscapes 5.2 Shaping the suburbs

History

Contextual history

The suburb of South Melbourne, known as Emerald Hill between 1855 and 1883, is part of the traditional Country of the Yalukit Willam clan of the Boon Wurrung people, part of the broader Kulin nation, whose name means 'people of the river'.

South Melbourne, initially called Emerald Hill by British colonists, was hemmed in on all sides by the swampy lowlands. The colonists treated the 'island' as a wasteland for grazing, dumping, camping and recreation in the 1830s-40s. To the east of the future Kings Way, settlement was not only constrained by the swamplands but also by the desire to keep free the area around the military reserve west of St Kilda Road. The first sixty-seven allotments of the 1852 Subdivision of Emerald Hill were auctioned on 18 August. (Lemon, p.7) Many buyers were speculators, none of whom planned to reside in the area. Development in the 1850s was rapid, with 1,149 houses assessed for rates by the Melbourne Corporation by 1855. (Lemon, p.8) The Sandridge Road was improved to make it an acceptable path through the marshes. Toll gates were established on the major roads through the district to raise funds up until 1878. The Emerald Hill municipality was created in 1855 and a railway line through from Melbourne to St Kilda opened in 1857. Emerald Hill was free from the building restrictions of Melbourne municipality that had been introduced to reduce the risk of fire. This led to the rapid construction of timber buildings in the suburb.

From the 1850s-1860s the gold rush period saw the rapid formation of a new suburb, 'out of the canvas' as new arrivals sought new residences and services close to their arrival point in the colony. While land northwards was eventually reclaimed for industrial use, expansion eastwards was stymied by the military reserve (later Victoria Barracks). The military reserve extended as far west as Moray Street, but was reduced to Hanna Street (King's Way) in 1862. Lowlands to the south would eventually be reclaimed for recreation (Albert Park). In the 1870s-80s the area became known for its cheap and well-located land for factories and worker housing. The population of South Melbourne grew from 17,101 in 1871, to 25,374 in 1881. In 1881 most of the land between the Barracks and Emerald Hill was sold, requiring filling and leveling. As a result, population saw an even greater increase to 41,724 by 1891. After the 1890s Depression, the area reached a new peak in industrial and residential development in the early twentieth century, but population growth slowed to 46,190 in 1911. In the Interwar and early post-war period South Melbourne fell into relative decline as population fled the inner city.

By 1947 the population fell to 43,452 and saw further declines in the post-war period. The remnant inner urban 'slums' became a concern of new government interventions in the 1960s, with significant interventions by the Victorian Housing Commission to demolish what was considered substandard housing and move tenants into modern tower developments. Nonetheless, the late twentieth century saw a resurgence in appreciation for the communities and identity of the inner city, including South Melbourne. This led to movements to conserve historic areas as well as experiments in new forms of medium density housing. New processes of gentrification concurrently led to fresh development pressures and an economic transformation of the area away from its industrial past.

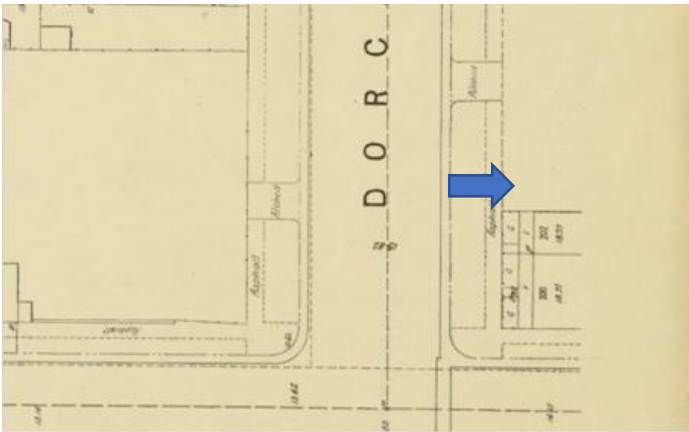


This section of Dorcas Street was sold and developed late compared to the rest of South Melbourne. While allotments were sold in the late nineteenth century, the area was not substantially built up until the early twentieth century. This may have been partly due to the Depression of the 1890s that hit South Melbourne with its industrial base particularly hard. Nonetheless the Edwardian period saw a recovery of building activity in its newer areas (Lemon, p.17-18). Most of the development that occurred during the Federation/Edwardian period occurred on subdivisions laid out during the 1880s boom period, as well as in the continuing subdivision of mansion estates in St Kilda, Elwood, Balaclava and Ripponlea. (Thematic History, p.84).

21 Dorcas Street

The subject site is in Crown Allotment 19, Section 59 of the South Melbourne Parish. In 1888, Allotments 18-20 were the property of the Anthony brothers, including Thomas Wilkinson, Henry Redmond, Robert and Arthur (Title V2208 F981). They were registered as timber merchants based in a'Beckett Street, Melbourne. Allotment 19 remained vacant land until 1904-5 (South Melbourne Rate Book 1904-5).

In 1905, the Anthony brothers sold Allotment 19 to Frances Harriett Roberts (nee Brighton) (Title V3066 F057). The house was constructed shortly after the purchase and was registered as a brick house with 6 rooms (South Melbourne Rate Book 1906-07).



21 Dorcas Street see MMBW c.1895 shows the property was still vacant along with most of this section of Dorcas Street.



Crown allotment map (c.18 --) SLV shows an F. Murphy as the purchaser of the properties in this section of Dorcas Street.

References

Andrew Lemon, 'A History of South Melbourne', p.4/1 of Allom Lovell Sanderson *City of South Melbourne Urban Conservation Study* 1986

Census of Victoria

Way Back When, *City of Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History*, 2021

South Melbourne Rate Books

Sands & McDougall Melbourne Street Directory.

Description

The house at 21 Dorcas Street is a single storey brick cottage set back from the street with a front garden and central path. The house extends the width of the property like a terrace house. The projecting brick party walls at each side boundary have rendered brackets and crown mouldings in an Italianate style with incised designs on render, and recessed arches inside the verandah side walls.

The whole is red brick with bluestone banding consisting of one band at window sill level and a second midway up. The façade is tuckpointed brick, and while the mortar is degraded in places looks originally to have been black ribbon tuckpointing. The facade is symmetrical, with two square bays each with a pair of very tall (Edwardian) rectangular windows with timber sashes and bluestone sills. The door is an original Edwardian timber five panel multi pane door with central door knocker, letter slot, side lights and transom window.

The verandah has turned timber posts in an Edwardian style that appear original. Decorative lacework is missing but in keeping with the Edwardian timber posts may have been quite simple. The verandah floor is tiled in a Victorian styled diamond and square pattern, with bluestone footings. The verandah roof is corrugated iron. Above the verandah runs a decorative cornice frieze with moulded rosettes on brick and moulded corbels.

The roof is hipped with square and diamond shaped slate tiles and iron ridges. There are two symmetrically placed face red brick chimneys with rendered crowns and terracotta chimney pots.



Front view of the house. Source: Trethowan Architecture.

Comparative analysis

From a historical perspective there are few other remnant houses in this area of South Melbourne towards St Kilda Road as the area has been largely redeveloped with high rise buildings. As a building type, the house can be compared to other transitional style houses around the turn of the twentieth century that combine typical Victorian and later Edwardian characteristics. The house can also be compared to Victorian brick villas, demonstrating the persistence of the earlier form into the twentieth century.

Remnant houses in this area of South Melbourne

- House, 42 Albert Road, South Melbourne (Citation 2229) is a boom style double storey Victorian terrace house built in 1881, historically associated with the late nineteenth century when this section of Albert Road was occupied exclusively by terraces and villa residences. While the subject property demonstrates similar terrace characteristic it is different in scale and is more representative of the lower scale villa type of development in the area.
- Houses, 328 Kings Way, South Melbourne (Citation 39) is a pair of attached terrace houses built in 1890. It is important as a survivor in an area recently almost totally redeveloped for offices, whilst the mansard treatment to the uppermost floor creating a third floor is unusual. By comparison, the subject property is again distinctive in representing the single-storey villa type of development in the area as opposed to the Victorian terrace type.

Transitional Federation houses

- ‘Palmville’ at 240 Graham Street, Port Melbourne (Citation 30) is a conservative Federation period single fronted symmetrical black brick villa with hipped corrugated iron clad roof, extended side walls, cast iron verandah, bayed windows and symmetrical Italianate chimneys. There are tiled panels in the frieze. The house, built in 1899 at the turn of the twentieth century, is similar to the subject property in its conservative, symmetrical overall form and design but also more classically Victorian in the consistent Italianate detailing of the chimneys, frieze and verandah. The subject property compares favourably in terms of form, and demonstrates a more transitional Edwardian style in its substitution of more restrained turned timber posts to the verandah, and Arts & Crafts detailing to the chimneys. The subject property is also distinguished by its square or box rather than canted bay windows.
- 192 Liardet Street, Port Melbourne, (Citation 664) is a transitional style timber house representative of the transition from Victorian to Edwardian timber homes. While different in materiality, the subject site compares favourably in terms of scale, symmetry and carrying across conservative Victorian form with typical Edwardian elements such as the turned timber posts and Arts & Crafts chimneys. The subject property is also more intact.
- Creswick House, at 139 Bridge Street, Port Melbourne (Citation 262) is a transitional styled Edwardian house combining elements of the Victorian terrace house with Federation Arts & Crafts style. While different in terms of scale, the subject property compares favourably in terms of the combination of Victorian and Edwardian elements, such as the subject property’s incorporation of the conservative terrace house form with the tall Edwardian windows.
- A number of transitional houses are also located within precincts around Albert Park, Middle Park and St Kilda West. The house at 402 Richardson Street, Middle Park for example exhibits similar representative features such as frieze, tall vertical windows, hipper roof and verandah side walls with ornamented ends. By comparison, 21 Dorcas Street retains its slate roof, original verandah posts, door, and is also distinguished historically by its location as a remnant house in this area of South Melbourne.

Victorian villas

- 21 Ross Street, Port Melbourne (Citation 677) is an unusually intact example representative of the more substantial brick suburban villas built in other suburbs in the 1880s. It is of interest for its atypically elaborate design in an area predominantly of simple timber cottages. By comparison, the subject property demonstrates remarkable similarity in overall form and composition distinguished by the substitution of the Edwardian styled windows, door, chimneys and verandah posts.



240 Graham Street



192 Liardet Street



139 Bridge Street



21 Ross Street

Assessment

This place has been assessed in accordance with the processes and guidelines outlined in the Australia ICOMOS *Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance (The Burra Charter) 2013*, using the HERCON criteria.

Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay as an individual place.

Extent of HO: Whole of property as defined by the title boundaries.

No specific HO controls are required.

Primary source

Trethowan Architecture, *South Melbourne Structure Plan Heritage Review*, 2023.

Other studies

Not applicable.

Other images

None