

Ravendene, 209–211 Domain Road, South Yarra (recommended as significant within HO6 South Yarra Precinct in this Review)

Ravendene at 209–211 Domain Road, South Yarra is a block of 16 flats erected in 1950. The building was constructed by a cooperative company, chaired by F R Lee. Constructed in oatmeal brick, the primary façade is of Georgian proportions and serrations, including slightly recessed corner windows, line the secondary façade not visible from the streetscape.



Figure 24. Ravendene 209–211 Domain Road, South Yarra, built 1950. (Source: CoMMaps)

20W–26W Toorak Road, South Yarra (recommended as significant within HO6 South Yarra Precinct in this Review)

20W–26W Toorak Road is a three-storey orange brick block of flats above a pilotis-form carpark and flat roof with solid, slightly projecting fascia. Designed by émigré architect Michael R E Feldhagen, it exhibits a modular postwar Modernist design with projecting balconies, looped metal balustrade, stacked brickwork and original fence.



Figure 25. 20W–26W Toorak Road West, South Yarra, constructed 1966. (Source: CoMMaps)

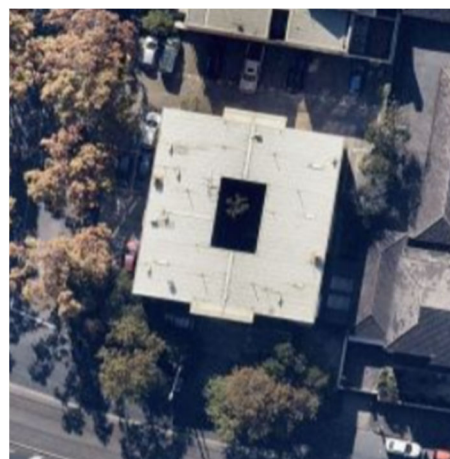


Figure 26. Aerial view of the building footprint at 20W–26W Toorak Road West, South Yarra, constructed 1966. (Source: Nearmap 2019)

Greyfriars, 53 Balaclava Road, St Kilda East (HO219, City of Glen Eira)

A complex of forty-three flats in two-and three-storey hip-roofed cream brick blocks around a central garden area. The building was erected in 1949–51 as Melbourne’s first flats conceived on a co-operative system for the OYO market, they were designed by entrepreneurial architect Bernard Evans, who was also a director of the company that built them (Built Heritage 2020:99).



Figure 27. 53 Balaclava Road, St Kilda East, built in 1949–51. (Source: Built Heritage Pty Ltd 2019)

Deansgate, 9 Southey Street, Elwood (significant within HO7 St Kilda, Elwood, Balaclava, Ripponlea precinct, City of Port Phillip)

A block of early post-war flats in the Georgian Revival style. Designed by Bernard Evans and Associates and constructed in 1949, the building comprises 29 small or 'minimum' flats. The building includes a central court with gallery.



Figure 28. Deansgate, 9 Southey Street, Elwood, built in 1949. (Source: Hermes)

Merton Court, 169 Ormond Road, Elwood (significant within HO8 Elwood: Glen Huntly and Ormond Roads precinct, City of Port Phillip)

Three storey postwar cream brick Modernist flats built around an enclosed central courtyard, constructed in 1951 at a cost of 10,000 pounds for Merton Court PL. Designed by Bernard Evans and Associates.



Figure 29. Aerial imagery showing the Merton Court, 169 Ormond Road, Elwood, built in 1951. (Source: Nearnap 2019)

Within the study area, Sheridan Close compares well to Ravendene at 209–211 Domain Road, South Yarra and 20W–26W Toorak Road, South Yarra (both recommended as significant within a precinct). Sheridan Close showcases a similar form to Ravendene, comparable Modernist characteristics and is constructed of similar oatmeal brick. Ravendene features one elongated block with splayed alignment allowing some serration along the western side offering views to Domain Road for apartments towards the rear of the block. Similar to Sheridan Close, Ravendene was also constructed by a cooperative company chaired by F R Lee. While of a different scale, the distinction between the front façade with multipaned Georgian Revival style windows and cantilevered reinforced concrete open galleries at the back of the building is also similar. Both Sheridan Close and 20W–26W Toorak Road share an enclosed courtyard form, and undercroft parking, however Sheridan Close, with its larger scale and broader detail palette, is a stronger example of the type. 20W–26W Toorak Road, South Yarra constructed over fifteen years later than Sheridan Close, shows the stylistic transition to true Modernism was complete. As a larger building situated on a major Melbourne thoroughfare, Sheridan Close has a more pronounced street presence than both buildings. All three examples exhibit fine design detailing and includes design elements that are typical of Modernist architecture, such as the open ground floor construction which gives the building a sense of lightness. The provision of ample undercroft parking is indicative of social change whereby car ownership was becoming more common and needed to be provided for in housing.

Architecturally, Sheridan Close is a strong example of the work of architect, Bernard Evans & Associates. Stylistically it combines the Georgian Revival detailing, also seen at Deansgate (significant within HO7, City of Port Phillip), and Modernism, as seen at Merton Court (significant within HO8, City of Port Phillip). Both these examples are similar with their courtyard driven configuration and setting, but differ in scale, form and demographic. Sheridan Close offers an enhanced sense of grandeur, architectural refinement and individuality as a stylistic hybrid. While Greyfriars (HO219, City of Glen Eira) is notable as the first flat complex designed as a co-operative system for the OYO market, Sheridan Close is more refined aesthetically and of a greater scale. All four buildings are united in their cream brick materiality, which appears to have been a popular material choice by Bernard Evans & Associates in the postwar period.

Sheridan Close is a highly intact example of a luxury flat development of the postwar period demonstrating the pattern of residential development at this time, immediately after the lifting of the City of Melbourne's three storey residential limit and prior to the trend to build apartment towers from the 1960s. The building is characterised by the combination of several popular interwar styles at the cusp of a purer form of Modernism becoming a style associated with the development of tall residential apartment blocks. Sheridan Close is an early example of a block specifically designed for the Own Your Own market.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

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 of 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).
-

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend inclusion of 485–491 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual Heritage place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

Melbourne Planning Scheme

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01–4)	No
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

Other

N/A

REFERENCES

Age as cited.

Argus as cited.

Built Heritage 2020. Post-war & hidden gems heritage review 2020, stage two: citations. Prepared for the City of Glen Eira, adopted by Council on 11 August 2020.

Butler-Bowden, Caroline and Pickett, Charles 2007. *Homes in the Sky: Apartment living in Australia*. Miegunyah Press, Carlton.

Construction, as cited.

Dunstan, David 2007, 'Evans, Sir Bernard (1905–1981)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/evans-sir-bernard-12465/text22419>, published first in hardcopy 2007, accessed 20 January 2021.

Goad, Philip and Julie Willis (eds) 2012. *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*. Cambridge University Press, Melbourne.

Gould, Meredith 1985. 'South Yarra Conservation Study'. Prepared for the City of Melbourne.

Leader as cited.

Lewis, Miles. Melbourne Mansions Database: <https://www.mileslewis.net/melbourne-mansions/>, accessed March-April 2018.

Lewis, Miles (ed) 2011. Australian Architectural Index.

Master Builders' Federation of Australia & Illuminating Engineering Society of Australia (N.S.W.) 1951. *Building and engineering*. Building Pub, Sydney.

Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan, as cited. State Library Victoria.

Melbourne Building Application Index (MBAI), retrieved from Ancestry.com 2015, Victoria, Australia. Selected Trial Brief and Correspondence Registers and Other Images, 1837–1993 [database on-line], <http://ancestry.com.au>, accessed March-April 2018.

Nearmap, as cited.

O'Hanlon, Seamus 2008. 'Flats' in *eMelbourne*, <https://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00582b.htm>, accessed 20 January 2021.

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), City of Melbourne building plans and permits (1916–1960), VPRS 11200, 11201.

Pratt, Charles Daniel between 1950–54. 'Aerial view of St. Kilda Road Melbourne Victoria', State Library Victoria: Airspy Collection, accessed 20 January 2021.

Sands & McDougall (S&Mc). Melbourne and Suburban Directories, as cited.

Serle, G 1996. *Robin Boyd: a life*. Melbourne University Press, Carlton South:VIC.

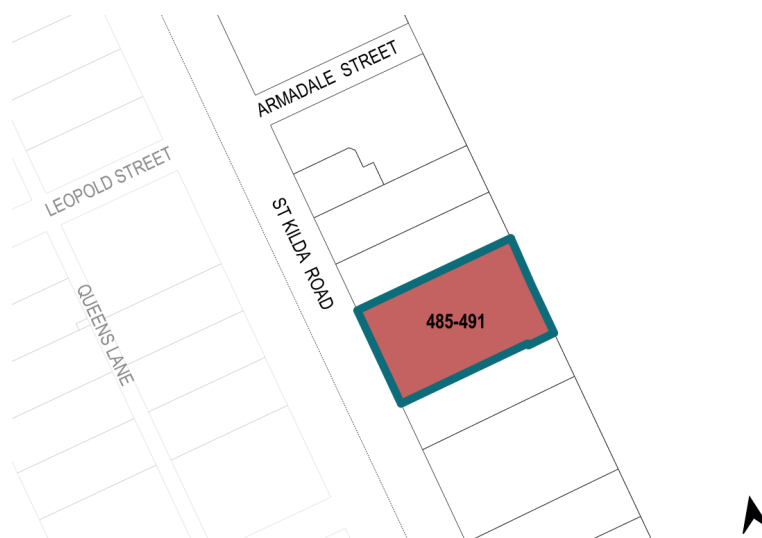
PREVIOUS STUDIES

South Yarra Conservation Study 1985 Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Sheridan Close

PS ref no: ~~HOxxx~~HO1413



What is significant?

Sheridan Close at 485–489 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, built in 1951–53 and designed by Sir Bernard Evans, is significant.

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

- original built form surrounding an enclosed trapezoidal courtyard garden
- open access galleries and protruding stairwell towers on the internal sides
- face oatmeal brick construction, concave western façade, serrated northern and southern façades, and inner façades facing into the courtyard
- terracotta tiled hipped roof to north, south and east sections of the building, accessible terraces to the west section of the building
- pillars and ground floor undercroft parking
- complex's original materials as well as its detailing
- complex's high level of integrity to its original design representative of Postwar Modernist architecture, including influences of earlier styles such as Georgian Revival and the Moderne;
- pattern and size of original Georgian Revival style fenestration on the western façade
- Modernist style fenestration with asymmetrical glazing maximising light on the northern and southern sides
- other original elements including timber and aluminium window frames
- original or early volcanic rock edging, garden beds and layout of the central courtyard garden

- lamps ~~and stepping stones~~ within the courtyard garden.

More recent changes, including window, balustrading and door replacements, are not significant.

The tree plantings contribute to the setting of the place but are not significant in their own right.

How is it significant?

Sheridan Close at 485–491 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, is of local historical, ~~representative~~, aesthetic and associative significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

Sheridan Close is historically significant as an early example of an Own-Your-Own (OYO) flat complex in Melbourne, ~~and predated a forerunner to~~ strata-title legislation which was introduced in 1967. ~~It pioneered a new typology of luxury, purpose-built, high-density living.~~ It was the largest block of OYO flats built in Melbourne when it was completed in 1953. It is significant for its capacity to demonstrate a period of residential growth along the St Kilda Road corridor. The high quality and grandeur of Sheridan Close is indicative of the prestige of a St Kilda Road address at that time. The integration of car parking within the building reflects the expectation of individual car ownership. It is also notable for its ongoing use as residential flats. (Criterion A)

Sheridan Close is aesthetically significant for its grandeur, scale and unusual stylistically hybridised design. The arrangement of the complex around an enclosed trapezoidal courtyard illustrates the exclusivity of the complex and harks back to the planning model of European piazzas. The complex is stylistically transitional. It is characterised by its juxtaposition of Modernist design principles with earlier styles such as Georgian and Moderne that were popular in the interwar era. These earlier styles would have been familiar to and popular with the wealthy demographic at which the complex was marketed and were commensurate with its prestigious address. Modernist design principles are at work, however, in the raising of the north and south sections of the building on pillars to create undercroft car parking areas and in the environmental considerations evidenced in the serrated profile of these wings to provide individual dwellings with light and views.

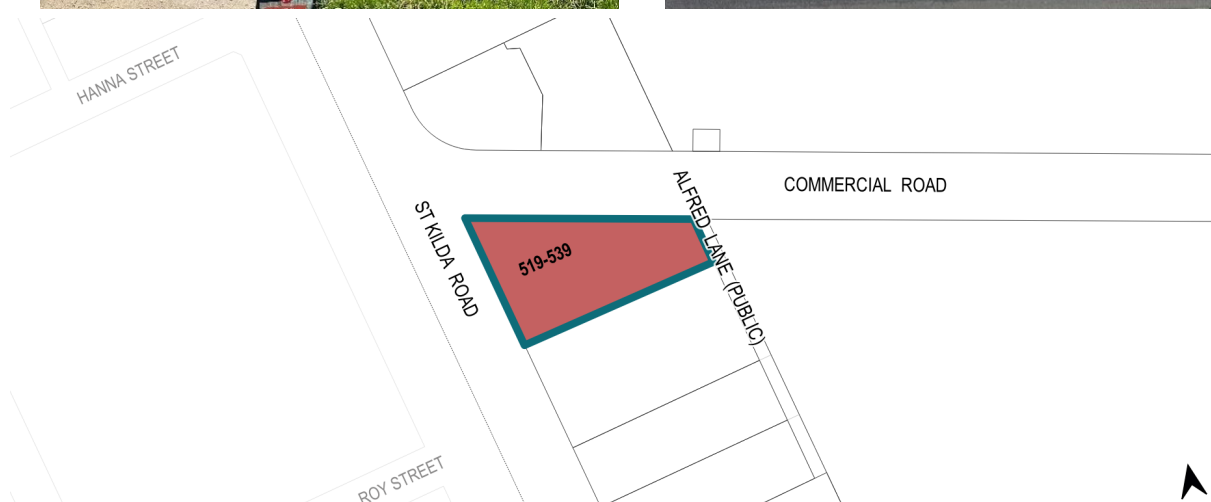
The visual dominance and concavity of the main St Kilda Road façade with its simple yet refined detailing contributes to the building's aesthetic significance and makes a notable contribution to the St Kilda Road streetscape. The oatmeal-coloured face brickwork construction is uncommon in this area and visually striking. (Criterion E)

Sheridan Close is significant for its association with architect Sir Bernard Evans who was an ~~exponent~~ ~~key proponent~~ of the Own Your Own movement. Evans is also notable for his public contribution and advocacy in support of taller residential city buildings with greater open space and setbacks from the street in Melbourne. This was achieved through service on several council committees and roles as the Lord Mayor of Melbourne (1959–61) and a commissioner of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (1956–73). As well as Sheridan Close, Bernard Evans, through his architectural practice, built many buildings of different uses and styles including Emerald Hill Court, South Melbourne; AMPOL House, Carlton; the CRA building, 99 Collins Street; and the Legal and General Assurance building, St Kilda Road. (Criterion H)

Primary source

South Yarra Heritage Review 2022 [\(updated March 2024\)](#) (GML Heritage)

SITE NAME: Former Chevron Hotel
STREET ADDRESS: Part 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID: 108646



SURVEY DATE:	January 2021	SURVEY BY:	GML Heritage
PLACE TYPE:	Individual Heritage Place	EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY:	No
PROPOSED CATEGORY:	Significant	FORMER GRADE:	D
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Leslie M Perrott and Anketell and K Henderson (1934 and 1939); Peddle Thorp (2006)	BUILDER:	EA Watts
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Interwar Period (c1919–c1940)	DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:	1934 (first stage) 1939 (second stage)

THEMES

ABORIGINAL THEMES:	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES:
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not identify any clear or direct associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	N/A
HISTORICAL THEMES:	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES:
14 Social and community life	14.1 Guesthouses, holiday flats and residential hotels

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend inclusion of part of 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual heritage place.

Extent of overlay: Refer to map.

SUMMARY

The former Chevron Hotel at 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, was built in 1934 to a design by Leslie M Perrott. Extensive additions, also designed by Perrott in the same style, were undertaken in 1939. The building occupies a prominent corner site on the intersection of Commercial Road and St Kilda Road. The luxury hotel became a fashionable place to stay and hosted visiting celebrities. The building operated as a hotel until the 1970s, after which it briefly became a residence for nurses at the nearby Alfred Hospital, and then various nightclubs. The building was converted to apartments in 2006.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Hotels in Melbourne

Nineteenth-century public hotels played an important role in Melbourne's early development. Typically located on prominent corner sites, especially on main arterial roads, hotels were familiar landmarks that provided entertainment, food and drink, and accommodation to visitors and locals. Many hotels also provided a rest stop for horses and often incorporated stables. Public hotels were also used as venues for election polls, coroners' inquests, and informal meetings for communities or professional groups in the nineteenth century. Publicans typically lived on site.

The development of hotels in Melbourne has been largely shaped by liquor licensing legislation. Legislation in the 1830s required that licensed premises provide accommodation to the public and the sale of alcohol was limited to consumption on the premises only (Dunstan 2008). Melbourne's earliest hotels were modest buildings, typically constructed of timber weatherboard (Dunstan 2008). The rapid increase in the immigrant population in the 1850s increased the demand for hotels in Melbourne. Several hotels were opened in South Yarra in the 1850s, including the Botanical Hotel on Domain Road (1854); the South Melbourne Hotel (later known as the Fawkner Club Hotel) (c1855) in Toorak Road West; and an early hotel near Clowes Street (c1850s). The increased population and wealth circulating from the goldrushes contributed to the booming hotel trade in Melbourne in the 1850s to 1860s. Hotel trading hours were restricted to Monday-Saturday, however many establishments conducted illegal after-hours trade; the authorities often overlooked 'sly grog' activity during this period (Dunstan 2008). In the 1870s social reformers and temperance activists in Victoria were successful in reducing hotel trading hours.

Working-class inner-city districts had many more hotels than suburban areas. For example, Collingwood had 87 hotels, Richmond 64 and Footscray 33, while Hawthorn and Kew had nine and seven respectively (Dunstan 2008). They were largely places where men congregated, although women often worked as publicans and hotel staff. Hotels varied in their perceived levels of respectability (Dunstan 2008).

In 1885 parliament proposed new regulations to the licensing act, including the prohibition of barmaids and a statutory fix on the number of hotels allowed in a district according to the population, thereby enabling communities to limit the number of hotels in the area.

In the early 1900s, falling hotel standards and pressure from the temperance movement prompted the Victorian government to reduce the number of liquor licenses. The Licenses Reduction Board was appointed in 1907 under the *Licensing Act 1906*. The board's purpose was to reduce the number of hotel licenses in Victoria. Hotels were assessed on factors such as the character of premises, whether they provided adequate accommodation, their business conduct and record of past offences against the Liquor Acts. *Between* 1907 and 1916 the Board closed 1054 hotels (PROV 2021). Many hotel buildings were demolished or adapted to other uses because of these closures.

The Licensing Act 1906 provided that ten years after the creation of the Board, there should be local polls held in every district to determine whether further reductions should be made (PROV 2021). Polls taken in 1920 and 1922 provided that the Board should continue its work (PROV 2021). In turn, many hotel owners upgraded and refurbished their buildings during the 1920s and 1930s in order to retain their liquor licenses (Dunstan 2008).

The reduction in the number of hotels was met with a rise in small-scale boarding houses as places offering accommodation in the interwar period. An example of such boarding houses in the area is The Oaks (65 Park Street, South Yarra), built in 1902 for Elias Cunliff in a domestic residential style as a superior class of boarding house for those visiting Melbourne for special occasions.

The interwar period also saw the introduction of purpose-built high-end hotels and residential hotels. Examples in South Yarra include the Botanical Hotel and Chevron Hotel. The original Botanical Hotel in Domain Road was demolished and rebuilt in 1924 as a residential hotel. The Chevron Hotel, 519–539 St Kilda Road, which opened as a residential hotel in 1934, provided considerable glamour to hotel living with the luxuries of a swimming pool and tennis courts. Residential hotels provided upmarket, modern private suites as well as shared lounges and recreation areas. Meals and laundry services were provided by a residential manager and staff.

Large Victorian-era hotels in the central city came under risk of demolition during the building boom of the 1960s and 1970s. Some of the remaining early hotel buildings have been refurbished as restaurants, cafes, housing or offices.

SITE HISTORY

The place occupies the traditional Country of the Bunurong people. In November 1865, GBW Lewis purchased Crown Allotments 30–35 in the Parish of Melbourne South (Department of Crown Lands and Survey, 1922). The subject site is located on allotments 30, 31, and 32 (Figure 1).

In 1896, the majority of the subject site was still undeveloped. A row of four terrace houses had been built on the south of the land parcel, on Crown Allotment 32 (Figure 1), leaving allotments 30 and 31 vacant (MMBW Detail Plan no. 906, 1896).

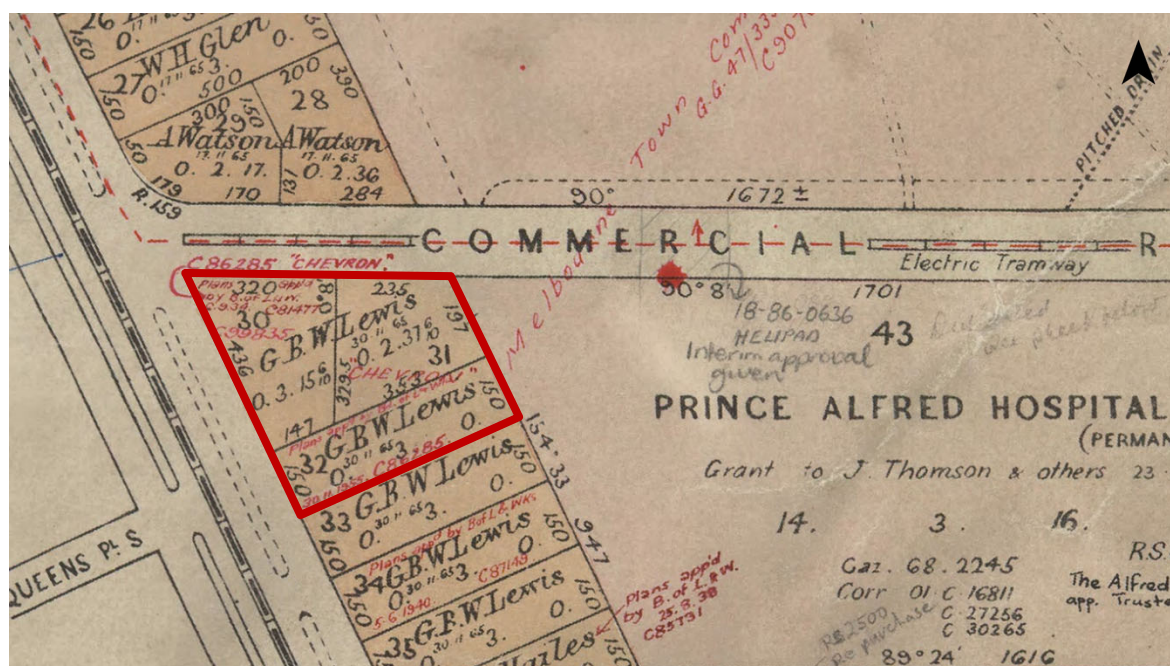


Figure 1. Detail from the South Melbourne parish plan showing the subject site (including Crown Allotments 30, 31 and 32) indicated in red. (Source: Public Records Office Victoria)

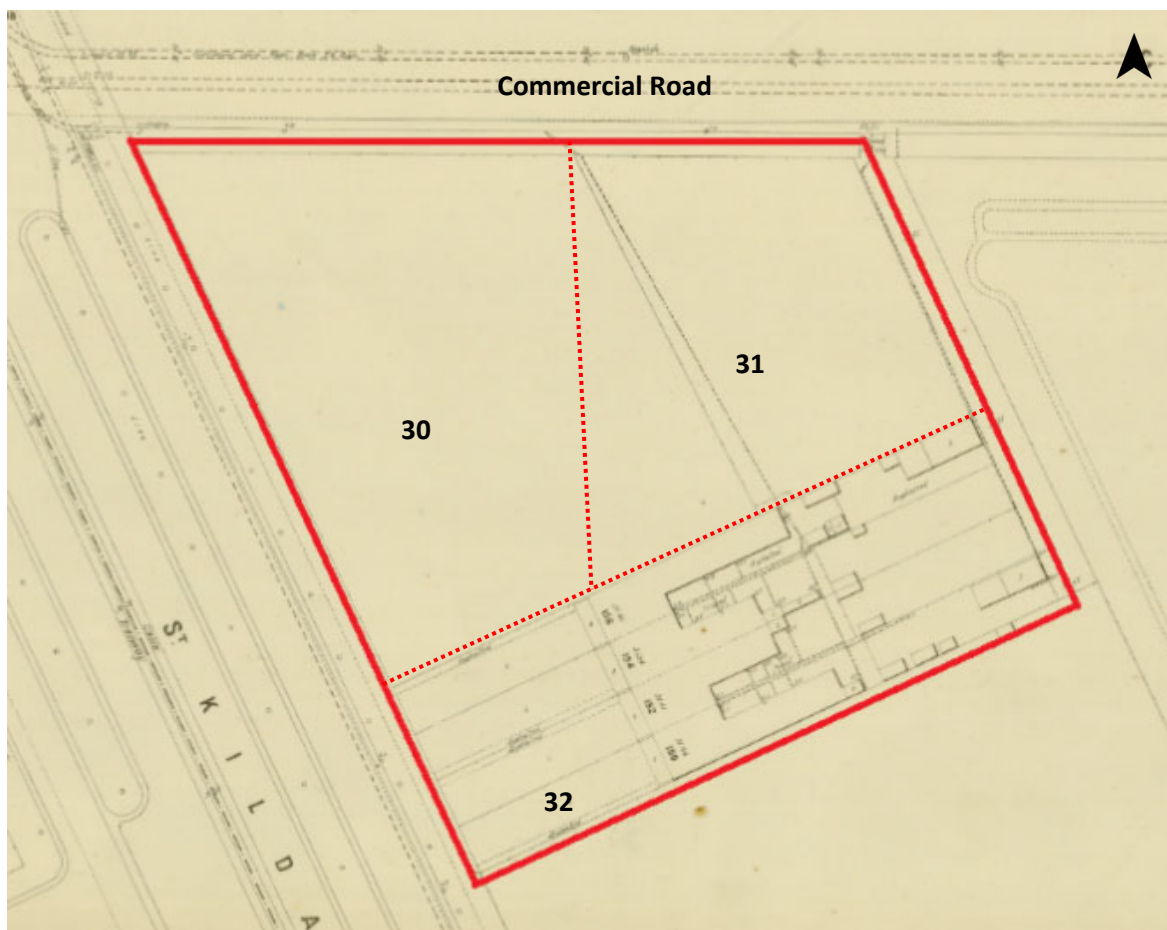


Figure 2. Extract from a Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan No. 906, 1896, showing the subject site outlined in red. The dotted lines and numbers indicate the Crown Allotment boundaries and numbers. (Source: State Library Victoria)

In 1913, a two-storey brick villa was constructed for Annie Foster Turner on Crown Allotment 30 on the southeast corner of St Kilda Road and Commercial Road to a design by WH Webb, architect (MCC registration no 4229, as cited in Lewis 2011, ref 83590). By the 1930s, the villa had been converted to a guesthouse named the ‘Chevron’. In 1934 the company Chevron Ltd was formed to purchase and develop the site for a new hotel business which was to be operated under the brand of ‘Chevron’. The land was acquired by the company for £11,500 (*Argus*, 11 April 1934:7). It was planned to open the new hotel in time for the celebration of Victoria’s centenary in 1934 (*Argus*, 26 October 1939:12).

Architect Leslie M Perrott was commissioned to design the hotel. The Chevron Hotel was limited to the confines of Crown Allotment 30, at the corner of St Kilda Road and Commercial Road. The unusual shape of the site is reflected in the layout and design of the hotel and gardens (Figure 6), which made complete use of the allotment (*Argus*, 26 April 1934:13). Anketell and K Henderson, consulting architects for Chevron Ltd, were involved in finalising and approving the design (*Argus*, 30 August 1934:17).

Construction of the Chevron Hotel was completed by builder EA Watts in 1934 (*Argus*, 2 May 1939:2). The 1913 villa was demolished in May 1934, and by August several sections of the new hotel had been roofed and two floors were open for occupation. The rest of the building was to be ready for occupation six weeks later, meaning that the hotel was completed in roughly 20 weeks; such quick completion was rare and likely possible due to the concrete construction of the building (*Age*, 7 August 1934:15). This established an Australian record for a building of that size (*Argus*, 26 October 1939:12). The estimated

cost of the hotel was £68,000, plus the internal fittings that were costed at £16,000 (*Argus*, 11 April 1934:7). The hotel's swimming pool was opened by the then prime minister, Joseph Lyons, in October 1934 (*Argus*, 6 October 1934:21).

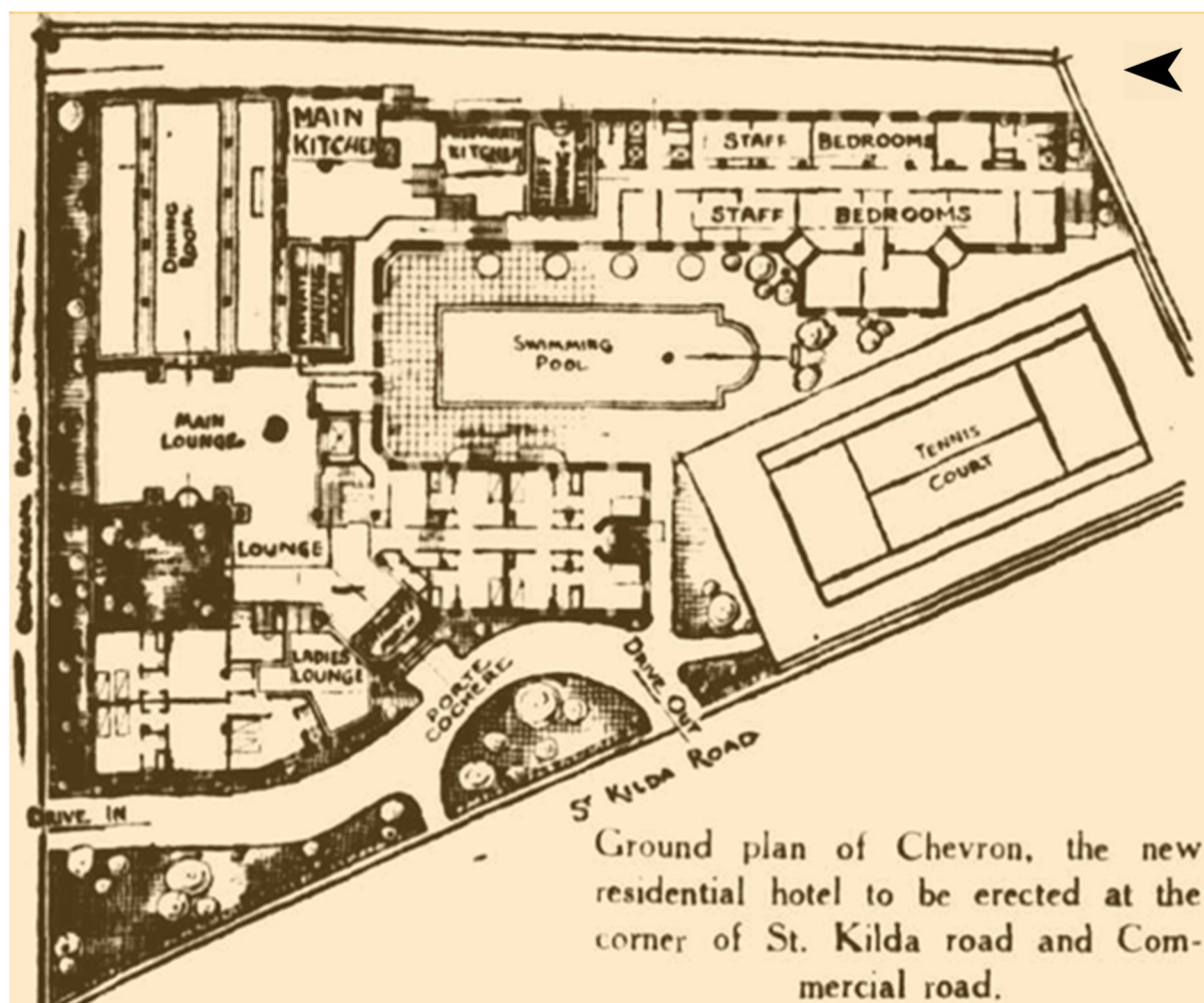


Figure 3. The ground-floor plan of the Chevron Hotel as it was built in 1934, prior to the later extensions. (Source: *Argus*, 26 April 1934:13)

The hotel was designed to be a luxury establishment, along the lines of a country club (Spicer 2008). It was noted for its provision of a bathroom connected to every bedroom, and each room had central heating. The restaurant's kitchen fittings were thought to be some of the best in Australia (*Argus*, 30 August 1934:17). Along with a swimming pool in the central courtyard, the hotel had a tennis court, private garages, telephone lines and a panel that allowed guests to be paged. These modern features would have contributed to the prestigious status of the hotel and attracted a wealthy clientele. It was also noted that the hotel was to be one of only a handful in Melbourne that did not have a liquor licence (*Argus*, 30 August 1934:17). The hotel's exterior was described at the time as follows:

The structure is of brick and reinforced concrete, and the external walls are of brown brickwork and cream rendering. The shutters to the windows will be painted an apple green, and the wide eaves are surmounted with a brown and buff tiled roof. The South Court incorporates the swimming pool, a fountain, and flagged walks which will be kept bright with flowers and shrubs. The octagonal tower marks the entrance, and permits extensive views from the lookout (*Argus*, 30 August 1934:17).

The hotel immediately became popular with guests, and soon extensions were needed. Chevron Ltd purchased the freehold of the site next door (originally Crown Allotment 31, see Figure 2), in January

1936. The site was then addressed 2 Commercial Road, and it was occupied by a guesthouse named St Anne's (*Age*, 13 July 1937:12). This acquisition cost the company £12,225, and increased Chevron Ltd's land holding from 27,000 to 46,000 square feet. The company later purchased the lease of St Anne's in 1937, allowing them to demolish the existing buildings to extend the hotel (*Age*, 13 July 1937:12).

Extensive additions to the hotel were completed in October 1939. These were also built to the design of Perrott by builder EA Watts (*Argus*, 26 October 1939:12; *Herald*, 16 February 1938:18). These were intended to blend seamlessly with the original 1934 portion (*Argus*, 26 October 1939:12). It was estimated that the extension would cost £59,000, and would take 21 weeks to complete (*Herald*, 1 May 1939:23; *Argus*, 26 October 1939:12). Fifty-four new bedrooms were added, supplementing the existing 200. The front entry was relocated onto Commercial Road and was demarcated by a canopy of cantilevered steel and stamped metal (*Argus*, 26 October 1939:12). Further public spaces such as smoking rooms and an enlarged dining room were added.



Figure 4. Two views of the Chevron Hotel from 1954, showing the building with the 1939 additions outlined in red. (Source: State Library Victoria: Wolfgang Sievers Collection 1954, Accession Numbers H98.30/246 and H98.30/247)

The Chevron Hotel was sold in 1953 for £215,600, to a group under the directorship of S Korman, H Korman, E Fookes, F S Lloyd and J A Gentles, named Chevron Private Hotel Ltd (*Herald*, 13 November 1953:6; *Age*, 14 November 1953:4). Under the new ownership, the buildings at 533–539 St Kilda Road, on the land that formed the original Crown Allotment 32, were purchased for £53,500. Crown Allotment 32 had previously been occupied by a row of four terrace houses. The buildings were to be immediately demolished for a new portion of the hotel. Chevron Private Hotel Ltd also purchased a property on the opposite site of Commercial Road, named Arundel, planning to build a substantial 250-car garage providing parking for hotel guests (*Herald*, 13 November 1953:6; *Age*, 14 November 1953:4).

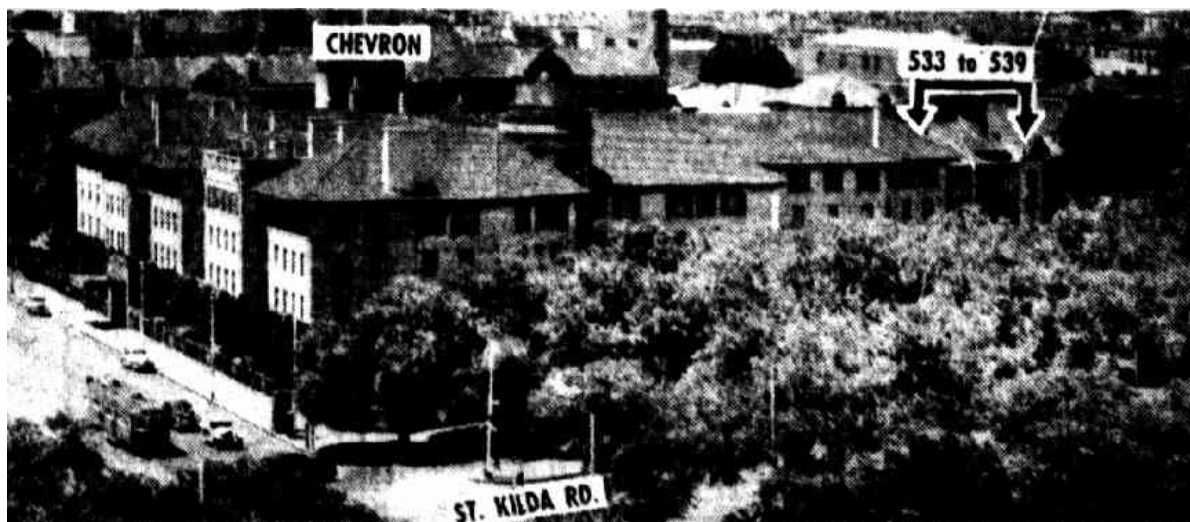


Figure 5. A photograph from 1953 showing the existing Chevron Hotel and the recently acquired land at 533–539 St Kilda Road. (Source: *Herald*, 13 November 1953:1)

The new section of the hotel was expected to be set 120 feet back from the St Kilda Road elevation, and was planned to be finished in time for the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. The design of the new building was to be modelled on the recently completed Surfrider Hotel in Waikiki, Hawaii, and the Saxony Hotel in Miami, Florida (*Herald*, 13 November 1953:6). It appears that these plans did not come to fruition, as no significant changes are recorded at the site in the 1950s or 1960s (MBAI). Instead, the land was used as a car park (Stephenson and Turner, 1976, SLV). Permission for a liquor licence for the hotel was eventually sought, and this was granted in 1954 (*Age*, 30 September 1954).

During the height of the hotel's popularity, in the 1950s, it hosted many famous figures and important events, such as Frank Sinatra who resided at the hotel while touring, and the actors Ava Gardner and Gregory Peck who were guests while filming *On the Beach* in 1959. In 1962, the hotel hosted the Logie Awards (Peddle Thorp 2017).

The hotel was sold again in 1966 for \$1.7 million, to an investment company (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 May 1966:17; *Canberra Times*, 4 April 1966:11). By the 1970s, the hotel had become less popular with guests, and the site eventually became a residence for nurses working at the Alfred Hospital next door. In 1978, part of the building was altered for that purpose by the Alfred Hospital (MBAI 49921). With a decline in the provision of on-site accommodation for nurses, the site was eventually turned into a nightclub. Alterations for this purpose occurred in 1988 (MBAI 65197). The building ceased operating as a nightclub in 2001 (Peddle Thorp 2017).

The site was purchased by property developers in 2004, with the intention of converting the building into residential apartments, and constructing new apartment towers on the adjoining land (Chevron Apartments, 2020). One of the southern wings of the original hotel was truncated to accommodate the redevelopment in 2005. The building opened for residents in 2006 (Peddle Thorp 2017).

Leslie M Perrott, architect

Leslie Marsh Perrott (1892–1975) studied architecture at Melbourne Technical College (now RMIT) and then trained as an architectural draftsman in New York, during which time he patented a concrete reinforcing system. On his return to Melbourne in 1914, Perrott established a private practice focusing on residential concrete construction. From the mid-1920s Perrott travelled to the United States to study hotel design, and was subsequently commissioned to design the former Hotel Alexander in Spencer

Street (now known as 630 Little Collins Street), Melbourne, which was built in 1928 (HO1077) (Statham 2012:537). As his practice grew, he engaged designers Colin McKenzie and Keith Mackay, and continued to focus on hotels in both Melbourne and regional Victoria. Some notable hotels from this period include the Hotel Australia (1939) in Melbourne; and the Grand Hotel (1936), the Working Men’s Club (1936) and the Settlers’ Club (1937) in Mildura. During the interwar period, Perrott studied public housing, continued to experiment with concrete construction, and wrote for the *Journal of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects*. He was an active member of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects, and was elected as vice-president in 1935 and president in 1939 (Statham 2012:537).

Perrott also took an interest in town planning and designed a number of urban redevelopment plans for the City of Melbourne. He was instrumental in establishing the Town and Country Planning Association of Victoria and chaired the Australian Institute of Urban Studies (Statham 2012:537). In 1955 Perrott was awarded the Barrett Memorial Medal for distinguished services to town planning. Throughout the 1950s, the firm of Leslie M Perrott & Partners specialised in large-scale projects, including the Southern Cross Hotel (1962) and Princes Gate project (1963) in Melbourne. Following Perrott’s retirement in 1966, the firm continued as Perrott, Lyon, Timlock & Kesa and later as Perrott Lyon Mathieson.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site of the former Chevron Hotel at 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of St Kilda Road and Commercial Road. The former Chevron Hotel, is a large four-storey building comprising two wings constructed in 1934 and 1939. The site now incorporates a 2006 apartment complex (Figure 6).



Legend

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 First stage (1934)</p> <p>2 Second stage (1939)</p> | <p>3 Apartment complex (2006)</p> |
|--|--|

Figure 6. Aerial photograph of 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, showing the key buildings and later structures. (Source: Nearmap 2021 with GML overlay)

The former Chevron Hotel building stretches the entire length of the Commercial Road boundary. The block (incorporating portions numbered 1 and 2 on Figure 6) has a broadly rectangular footprint at the ground floor. Two smaller wings project southward from the 1934 portion. One of these smaller wings forms the St Kilda Road façade. A short brick tower sits in a setback corner created by the intersection of the Commercial Road and St Kilda Road sections of the building, which splays towards the tower to highlight the former primary entry point.

The foundation courses are in a brown brick, while the ground-floor features red face brick terminating in a projecting brick course at the sill height of the first-floor windows. The upper floors are treated in render, with a projecting string course at the sill height of the third-floor windows. The hipped roofs are clad in terracotta tiling and have timber-lined eaves. These details delineate the horizontal sections of the elevations in a broad reference to the form of a Renaissance palazzo influenced by the Commercial Palazzo style (or Chicagoesque style) architecture that was popular in the United States. This form is recognisable by the expression of a 'base' floor, a simply treated midsection and an upper section, all divided by string courses and capped by a cornice above window height. The building terminates in a prominent roof form. Other elements characteristic of the style include the use of vertical bays and restrained decorative rendered detailing mainly to the parapet and spandrels.

The windows are grouped and spaced following a consistent pattern and most retain their original louvre-style shutters. The spandrels between the first and second floor windows are differentiated from the rest of the render with slightly raised panels. There is a series of chimneys with a uniform design, constructed of concrete render with minimal detailing.

The St Kilda Road elevation follows the alignment of St Kilda Road. It includes the low brick tower with chamfered corners, on top of the hotel's original entry, set on the angle in the corner. The tower is surmounted by a hipped terracotta roof with a weathervane. The top floor bears a deep render cornice and decorative panels around the window openings. A contemporary enclosed glass verandah has been built on the ground floor to the south of the tower (Figure 7). The original porte cochère and formal entrance to this 1934 portion (Figure 8) have been removed.



Figure 7. The tower on the St Kilda Road elevation. The enclosed glass verandah is visible to the right of the base of the tower. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

The ground floor of the Commercial Road elevation maintains the same setback for the extent of the property. The 1934 portion of the building was designed with a symmetric façade to Commercial Road, with a series of three bays broken by recessed light wells (Figure 8 and Figure 9). The central bay of the 1934 portion originally comprised a rooftop terrace behind a parapet roof, while the rest of the building has hipped roofs (Figure 8).

The 1939 portion was added to the east of the existing 1934 building, continuing the same architectural detailing. The 1939 addition features a formal entry to this portion of the building, with curved brick corners giving way to the opening; these curves are constructed out of cream Roman bricks with bands of dark brown (Figure 10). This entry has a boxed cantilever verandah above.

The 2004–05 redevelopment of the site and conversion to an apartment complex resulted in: removal of the southern section of the 1934 portion, removal of the courtyard with a swimming pool between the southern wings, and alteration to the ground floor to accommodate commercial premises. New openings are inserted at various points across all elevations. Modern black awnings have been placed over the ground floor shopfronts, however some detailing to the original window openings, including the voussoirs, are retained (Figure 11).

The apartment complex (completed in 2006) has been erected on the land to the south of the original building, separated from the former hotel building by a courtyard and landscaping. The landscaping elements in the central courtyard are not original.

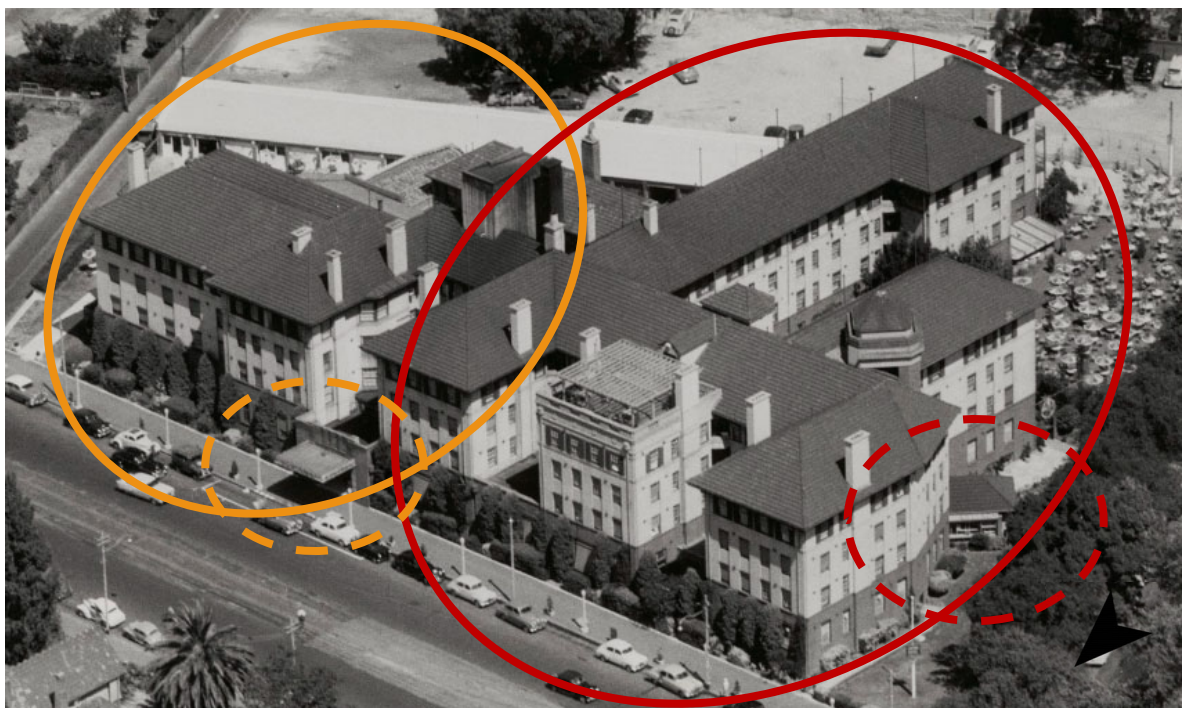


Figure 8. A c1950–54 image of the Chevron Hotel showing the buildings from the first (outlined in red) and second (orange) constructions. Note the symmetric design of the Commercial Road elevation of the 1934 portion, featuring a central bay with a rooftop terrace. The formal entrances of each portion are outlined in dashed lines. The projecting entryway to the 1934 portion has been removed. (Source: Joseph Pratt c1950–54, State Library Victoria: John Etkins Collection, Accession No. H2016.33/62)



Figure 9. The Commercial Road elevation of the building, showing the upper floors of the building are -divided in bays and recessed light wells. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 10. The formal entry of the 1934 portion fronting Commercial Road, finished with brown and red bricks with decorative cream and brown roman bricks. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 11. Evidence of original window openings on the ground floor. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

INTEGRITY

The former Chevron Hotel at 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, remains largely intact. The building retains its original built form as a four-storey hotel. Original architectural features that have been retained include the overall built form including the hipped and parapet roof forms, original pattern of fenestration (on the upper floors), window shutters, rendered detailing including string courses and spandrel panels, chimneys, chamfered brick tower and decorative brick entryway on the 1939 portion of the Commercial Road façade.

Substantial changes were introduced during redevelopment between 2004 and 2005, with the removal of part of the 1934 portion and original landscaping elements. Despite the removal of part of the southern wing and the projecting formal entrance of the 1934 portion, both key elevations to Commercial Road and St Kilda Road are still highly intact. Alterations are primarily made to the ground floor shopfronts and openings. A sunroom has been added to part of the St Kilda Road façade. These alterations to the ground floor do not diminish legibility of the building. Overall, the former Chevron Hotel has high integrity.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The former Chevron Hotel at 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, is an example of an interwar residential hotel erected in Melbourne. The former Chevron Hotel represents the manner in which luxury country club style accommodation, on a large scale, was provided in Melbourne in the interwar period. This style of hotel is an uncommon typology for the City of Melbourne and the era in which it was built.

Many of the new luxury hotels were modelled on fashionable and glamorous hotels in the United States; the prevalence of Hollywood films in Australia had encouraged a growing interest in American lifestyles. Leslie M Perrott travelled to the United States in the 1920s to gain ideas for hotel designs, and the Chevron Hotel reflects features of the types of hotels he would have seen there. The architecture of these country club style hotels often alluded to exotic or countryside destinations, with picturesquely massed low-rise buildings that made use of their expansive sites. Much like golf clubs and ski chalets, incorporation of exclusive recreational facilities was important. The integration of swimming pools and tennis courts was especially popular. Additionally, these hotels often featured bedrooms with ensuites, heating, and cooling, at a time when these were not yet commonplace.

Large purpose-built high-end residential hotels such as the Chevron were uncommon in the City of Melbourne before the interwar period, as visitors to the city generally relied upon small-scale boarding houses or the accommodation provided by public hotels. The Hotel Windsor, 103–137 Spring Street, Melbourne (VHR H0764; HO739), commenced in 1883, is an example of a large and ornate hotel that had combined uses, such as a Coffee Palace, before becoming a dedicated hotel. A purpose-built hotel annexe was constructed at the Windsor in 1961.

In the City of Melbourne two close examples of interwar residential hotels include the former Alexander Hotel at 630 Little Collins Street, and the Hotel Australia on Collins Street (demolished), which were also built to the designs of Leslie M Perrott (in 1928–29 and 1939, respectively), who designed the former Chevron Hotel.

Outside the city of Melbourne, several inner suburban residential hotels are found in the City of Port Phillip. These hotels, designed, built and owned by developer and proprietor John Robert Daley, demonstrate trends in interwar residential hotels.

The subject building can be compared with the following examples within and outside the City of Melbourne, being of a similar historical use, scale, location or creation date.

Former Alexander Hotel, 630 Little Collins Street, Melbourne (HO1077)

A twelve-storey rendered concrete hotel with a basement, the former Alexander Hotel was designed in the Palazzo style by Perrott and built in 1928–29. Perrott and the owner of the Alexander Hotel had spent five months touring the United States in 1924, for new ideas in hotel accommodation.



Figure 12. 630 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, built in 1928–29. (Source: CoMMaps)

Former Salvation Army Peoples' Palace, 131 King Street, Melbourne (HO1048)

The former Salvation Army People's Palace is a seven-storey rendered reinforced concrete building with a basement. It was designed in the Greek Revival style by Percival Dale of the Salvation Army, and built in 1926 at a cost of £80,000. The building was planned to accommodate 500 people.



Figure 13. 131–135 King Street, Melbourne, built in 1926. (Source: CoMMMap)

Batman's Hill Hotel, 66–70 Spencer Street, Melbourne (HO1076)

Significant interwar renovations and additions to this Victorian-era building were carried out between 1926 and 1928 by Ivanhoe builder George Andrew. The renovations were designed by architects and engineers Greenwood Bradley & Allen, working in association with specialist hotel architects Sydney Smith & Ogg. The façade was completed in the Greek Revival style.



Figure 14. 66–70 Spencer Street, Melbourne, built 1926–28. (Source: CoMMaps)

Carlton Hotel, 193–199 Bourke Street, Melbourne (HO1001)

Built on the site of the former Queensland Hotel, the Carlton Hotel is a five-storey steel-framed and brick hotel with a basement and an accessible rooftop area. It was designed by Sydney Smith, Ogg & Serpell in the Moderne style, and built by Thompson & Charters Pty Ltd for Carlton & United Breweries in 1937.



Figure 15. 193–199 Bourke Street, Melbourne, built in 1936. (Source: CoMMaps, n.d.)

Former Botanical Hotel, 161–173 Domain Road, South Yarra (recommended as significant within HO6 in this Review)

The site at 161–173 Domain Road, South Yarra, contains two buildings: the former Botanical Hotel and the 1975 addition to the hotel. The original Botanical Hotel established on the site in 1854 was demolished and rebuilt in 1924 as a residential hotel that was also named the Botanical Hotel. The then owner John Robert Daley designed and built the new building himself. Daley was a prominent landowner who, in addition to the Botanical Hotel, designed, built, owned, and operated several residential hotels in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1992 the 1924 former Botanical Hotel was redeveloped as private apartments with commercial premises at ground level. The 1975 single-storey addition was designed by McIntyre, McIntyre & Partners, architects; this building currently operates as a brasserie, wine store and bar known as the Botanical Hotel.



Figure 16. 161–173 Domain Road, South Yarra, built in 1924. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Former Fortuna Residential Hotel, 65 Ormond Esplanade, Elwood (contributory within HO8 Elwood: Glen Huntly and Ormond Roads, City of Port Phillip)

John Robert Daley owned, designed and constructed the former Fortuna Residential Hotel building hotel in Elwood in 1927. The three-storey rendered brick building has a symmetrical composition with three vertical bays. The recessed balconies have rendered brick balustrades decorated with a recessed rectangle motif. It was used as a servicewomen's home in the 1940s.



Figure 17. 65 Ormond Esplanade, Elwood, built in 1927. (Source: Nearmap 2021)

Former Regal Private Hotel, 149 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda (significant within HO5 St Kilda Hill, City of Port Phillip)

The Regal Private Hotel complex is a prominent example of a conversion of an earlier Victorian residence to private hotel. Owner John Robert Daley designed and constructed the additions to the original house which included extensive remodelling of the principal façade.

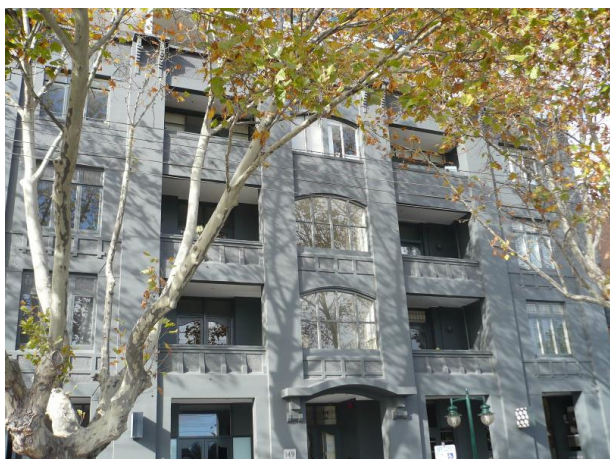


Figure 18. 149 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda, built in 1922. (Source: Hermes 2018)

The former Chevron Hotel is comparable to the above hotels as an example that demonstrates the rise of private residential hotels during the interwar period. The low-rise built form and country club-style of the subject building is less common within the City of Melbourne. Other purpose-built hotels, particularly those from the postwar era, exhibit vertical massing that often makes them indistinguishable from surrounding commercial buildings. The former Chevron Hotel is distinguished from many inner city hotels that had land constraints, which meant that sprawling, low-rise buildings, combined with facilities like tennis courts and swimming pools, were unlikely to be built.

Architecturally, the subject building features similar detailing to the above examples, displaying varying degrees of influences by the Commercial Palazzo style (or Chicagoesque style) architecture that was popular in the United States. The elements commonly seen in these examples include the use of vertical bays articulated by pilasters and restrained decorative rendered detailing mainly to the parapet, pilasters and spandrels.

The former Alexander Hotel is a purer representation of the Commercial Palazzo style, having a rusticated base, simple midsection and top floors separated by major cornices.

The former Alexander Hotel at 630 Little Collins Street, also built to the designs of Perrott, is distinguished from the former Chevron Hotel. The former Chevron Hotel took advantage of its larger more suburban site and responded to its low-rise surroundings, while the former Alexander Hotel was designed to fit its urban environs.

Although comparable as a purpose-built residential hotel, the former Salvation Army Peoples' Palace had different target demographics, while the former Alexander Hotel provides more direct comparison in terms of their clientele. Like the former Chevron Hotel, the former Alexander Hotel was known for attracting wealthy and glamorous clientele. Designed by Perrott, both indicate the movement towards the development of this type of residential hotels in Melbourne from the interwar period. They also establish Perrott as the primary architect of this typology in that period.

Like the subject hotel, the former Botanical Hotel, rebuilt in 1924 as a residential hotel, and two hotels in the City of Port Phillip (former Fortuna Residential Hotel and Regal Private Hotel) demonstrate the increasing popularity of residential hotels in inner suburbs during the interwar period.

Overall, the former Chevron Hotel compares favourably to the above interwar residential hotels in the City of Melbourne and City of Port Phillip in terms of its original use and design influence. Like the former Chevron Hotel and other examples above, interwar residential hotels often exhibited elements influenced by commercial architecture of the time, represented by the use of Commercial Palazzo style. Despite the recent changes, it is a highly intact example of the type. The Chevron is somewhat distinguished within the typology by its low-rise country club form that takes advantage of its inner suburban site. Originally designed to integrate sporting facilities like tennis courts and a swimming pool, these features place the Chevron Hotel in a class of luxury hotel, influenced by American trends with a focus on lifestyle and leisure. The lack of directly comparative purpose-built private hotels from the interwar period leaves the subject site as a relatively uncommon example of the typology within the City of Melbourne.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

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 understanding 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).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend inclusion of part of 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual heritage place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

Melbourne Planning Scheme

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01–4)	No
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

Other

N/A

REFERENCES

Age, as cited.

Argus, as cited.

Building Permit 49921 for 519–531 St Kilda Road, South Yarra, dated 20 December 1978 (MBAI).

Building Permit 65197 for 519–531 St Kilda Road, South Yarra, dated 8 September 1988 (MBAI).

Canberra Times, as cited.

Chevron Apartments 2020. *About*, www.chevronapartments.com.au, accessed 20 December 2020.

City of Melbourne Interactive Maps (CoMMaps), <http://maps.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>, accessed January–March 2021.

Dunstan, David 2008. 'Hotels', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au>, accessed 1 March 2021.

Herald, as cited.

Hermes record for '149 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda', City of Port Phillip, accessed 3 November 2021.

Lewis, Miles (ed) 2011, *Australian Architecture Index*.

Melbourne Building Application Index (MBAI) retrieved from Ancestry.com 2015, Victoria, Australia. Selected Trial Brief and Correspondence Registers and Other Images, 1837–1993 [database on-line], <http://ancestry.com.au>, accessed March–April 2018.

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan, as cited. State Library Victoria.

Nearmap, as cited.

Peddle Thorp 2017. *Projects Revisited—Chevron Apartments*, www.pta.com.au, accessed 22 December 2020.

Pratt, Charles Daniel c1950–1954. 'Aerial view of the Chevron complex St Kilda Road Melbourne Victoria', State Library Victoria: John Etkins Collection, accessed 12 April 2021.

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV). Regional Land Office Parish and Township Plans Digitised Reference Set, VPRS 16171.

Sievers, Wolfgang 1954. 'Chevron Hotel, Corner Commercial Road and St Kilda Road, Prahran', State Library Victoria: Wolfgang Sievers Collection, accessed 22 December 2020.

Spicer, Chrystopher 2008. 'Chevron Hotel' *eMelbourne*, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/>, accessed 28 April 2021.

Statham, John 2012. 'Perrott, Leslie M.' in Julie Willis and Philip Goad (eds) 2012, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*. Cambridge University Press, Melbourne.

Stephenson and Turner 1976. 'Aerial view of St Kilda and Commercial Roads, Melbourne'. State Library Victoria Photographic Collection, accessed 22 December 2020.

Sydney Morning Herald, as cited.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

South Yarra Conservation Study 1985 Ungraded

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Former Chevron Hotel
Hotel

PS ref no: ~~HOxxx~~ [HO1414](#)



What is significant?

The former Chevron Hotel at part of 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, built in stages from 1934 to 1939, is significant.

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

- external form and massing of the 1934–39 buildings, including the prominent roofline
- original materiality of the 1934–39 buildings, including face bricks, render and terracotta tile
- alternating light wells on the Commercial Road elevation, including the parapet wall above one projecting wing at the location of a former roof terrace
- brick tower with chamfered corners, tile roof, decorative render and weathervane
- formal entry way on Commercial Road, built as part of the 1939 additions, featuring highly decorative brickwork and a cantilevered, boxed awning
- pattern and size of original fenestration above the ground level, and the louvred shutters
- detailing such as the projecting brick course at the first-floor sill height, and the string courses beneath and above the third level windows
- roof details including the projecting eaves and chimneys
- other decorative details such as the string course beneath the fourth floor
- building's high level of integrity to its original 1934 and 1939 designs, especially evident on the St Kilda Road and Commercial Road elevations.

More recent alterations and additions, including alterations to the ground floor are not significant.

How is it significant?

The former Chevron Hotel at part of 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

The former Chevron Hotel at part of 519–539 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, is of historical significance as an early and substantial example of a large, private, low-rise luxury hotel that modelled the American style of the 1930s. Large private luxury hotels were uncommon in Melbourne until after World War II. In the interwar period, most visitors to the city relied on the accommodation provided by smaller boarding houses and hotels. Although some private hotels had been established in the City of Melbourne in the preceding decades, the Chevron is a clear example of the transition towards large luxury private hotels designed in the American manner. The Chevron Hotel is possibly the only existing example of such a building from the interwar period in the City of Melbourne. It is of historical interest on account of the many well-known guests who stayed there, including Frank Sinatra, and the Hollywood actors Gregory Peck and Ava Gardner who stayed while filming *On the Beach* in 1959. (Criterion A)

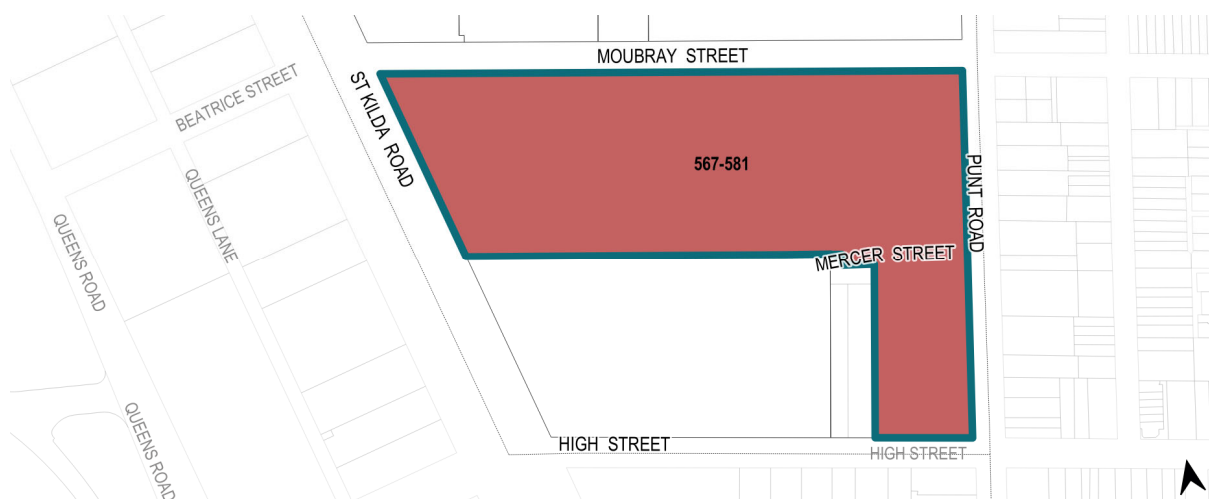
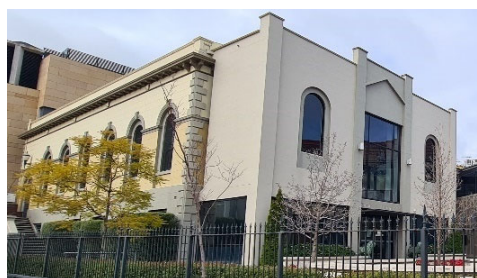
The former Chevron Hotel is of representative significance as an interwar residential hotel erected in the City of Melbourne. Overall form and planning of the former Chevron Hotel are demonstrative of the residential hotels of the 1930s and 1940s that provided upmarket, modern private suites as well as shared lounges and recreation areas. It also represents influences by commercial architecture of the time, represented by the use of Commercial Palazzo style detailing including the use of vertical bays articulated by pilasters and restrained decorative rendered detailing, pilasters and spandrels. (Criterion D)

The former Chevron Hotel is of aesthetic significance for its country club-style of architecture and site planning that distinguish the subject building within the typology. Designed by architect Leslie M Perrott, the former Chevron Hotel features picturesque massing reminiscent of exotic destinations or the countryside, and integrated recreational facilities (including a swimming pool and tennis courts) across its larger site. The former Chevron Hotel represents how hotel establishments in Melbourne began to provide luxury accommodation on a large scale, influenced by the fashionable hotels in the United States. While drawing on classical architectural roots the former Chevron Hotel plays with the Palazzo form of a three-part façade, creating a more informal version of the style. The picturesque nature of the former Chevron Hotel is highlighted by elements like its low-rise form, diagonal tower, shuttered windows and terracotta roof. (Criteria E)

Primary source

South Yarra Heritage Review 2022 ([updated March 2024](#)) (GML Heritage)

SITE NAME: Wesley College
STREET ADDRESS: Part 567–581 St Kilda Road, Melbourne
PROPERTY ID: 108651



SURVEY DATE:	July 2021	SURVEY BY:	GML Heritage
PLACE TYPE:	Individual Heritage Place	EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY:	HO6 South Yarra Precinct
PROPOSED CATEGORY:	Significant	FORMER GRADE:	A, C
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Charles Webb (1866) Harry Norris (1933–1937)	BUILDER:	Not known
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Victorian Period (1851–1901) Federation/Edwardian Period (1902–c1918) Postwar Period (1945–1975)	DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:	1866 1933–37 1982–84

THEMES

ABORIGINAL THEMES:	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES:
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not identify any clear or direct associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	N/A
HISTORICAL THEMES:	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES:
8 Education	8.2 Private schools

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend inclusion of part of 567–581 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual heritage place.

Extent of overlay: Refer to map.

SUMMARY

Wesley College at part of 567–581 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, is a large school site that incorporates multiple buildings and landscape elements. The land was reserved for the purpose of establishing a Wesleyan grammar school in 1854 and the first school building opened in 1866. For over 150 years, and continuing, Wesley College has occupied the subject site. The site features two main clusters of buildings: the Middle School (built 1866) and the Senior School (built 1935). The school opened in 1866 with one school building. Since then, the campus has had several significant waves of development, involving the addition of new buildings and modification of existing buildings. As a result, the site is layered with different development periods and architectural styles, reflecting the changing needs of the school. Most strongly represented in the built fabric and layout is the substantial development undertaken between 1933 and 1937.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Private schools in Melbourne

Education in Melbourne's early settlement period was provided by government-aided institutions, by private (independent) schools established by the various Christian denominations, or at home by private tutors or governesses. Following separation of Victoria from the Colony of New South Wales in 1851, a dual system of education was established in Victoria. The Denominational School Board (DSB) was responsible for administering private schools while the National Schools Board was responsible for public schools. In 1862 these two boards were abolished and replaced with the Board of Education, which funded both private and public schools. In addition to the private and public schools, a third category of educational institution was introduced in 1854, called 'public grammar schools'; the University of Melbourne was established that year and these schools would prepare boys for university entrance (Hooper 2008).

The major Christian denominations each aspired to a church-run 'grammar' school (for boys), and it was proposed in the 1850s that these should be situated within a mile of central city (Lewis 1995). In East Melbourne the Presbyterians established Scotch College in 1850 and the Catholics established St Patrick's College in 1854. The Anglicans and the Wesleyans sought land outside the city centre, on what was then considered the outskirts of the settlement in South Yarra. A site was surveyed on St Kilda Road for a Church of England grammar school in 1855 and Melbourne Grammar School was opened there in 1858. Further southeast along St Kilda Road, a Wesleyan grammar school, known as Wesley College, was established by the Methodist Church in 1866.

In 1908 the Associated Public Schools of Victoria (APS) was established. Its founding members included Melbourne Grammar School, Scotch College, Geelong Grammar School, Wesley College and Xavier College, and later Geelong College (*Geelong Advertiser*, 20 February 1908:4). The purpose of the association was to coordinate sporting competitions between the participating schools.

SITE HISTORY

The place occupies the traditional Country of the Bunurong people. Wesley College is a complex site with multiple buildings erected and modified in successive waves of development. The following indicates the names and build dates of the buildings that currently occupy the site (Figure 1).



Legend

Middle School

- 1 Main building (1866, 1934)
- 2 Menzies wing (1934)
- 3 Holt Wing (1934)
- 4 Adamson Hall (1908, 1918, 2012)
- 5 North Wing (former Library) (reconstructed 1990)
- 6 East Wing (former Cato building) (1934, 1990)
- 7 West Wing (c1866–1878; 1934; 1990)
- 8 Science block (c1866–1878; 1934; 1980s)
- 9 Sports Directorate
- 10 Performing arts building (2013)
- 11 Hattam Quadrangle
- 12 Nye Quadrangle
- 13 Gwillim Quadrangle

Senior School (former Junior School)

- 14 Chapel (1936)
- 15 Swimming pool and gymnasium (1935, c1982)
- 16 Senior School faculty building (1935)
- 17 Senior School resource building (1984)
- 18 Sports hall (1982)

Grounds

- 19 Front Turf
- 20 Back Turf
- 21 Percy Lane memorial gates

Figure 1. Aerial photograph of the subject site, showing the key buildings and later structures. The red indicates the 1908 period of development; the orange overlay indicates structures added or altered in 1933–37 and the green overlay denotes structures substantially modified or constructed from the 1970s onwards. (Source: Nearmap 2022 with GML overlay)

Development 1854–1901

The land at 567–581 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, forms part of Crown Allotment 47, which was reserved for the purpose of establishing a 'Wesleyan grammar school' in 1854 (Figure 2) (PROV VPRS 16171).

In 1865, Governor of Victoria Sir Charles Darling laid the foundation stone of Wesley College and construction of the main building (Figure 1: Number 1 was complete the following year (*Argus*, 30 December 1865:4; *Age*, 12 January 1866:6). The two-storey structure with paired three-storey towers was built adjacent to Greville Street (now Moubray Street), facing St Kilda Road (Figure 3). It is extant today but has been substantially altered. A large cricket ground was established at the present location of the Front Turf.

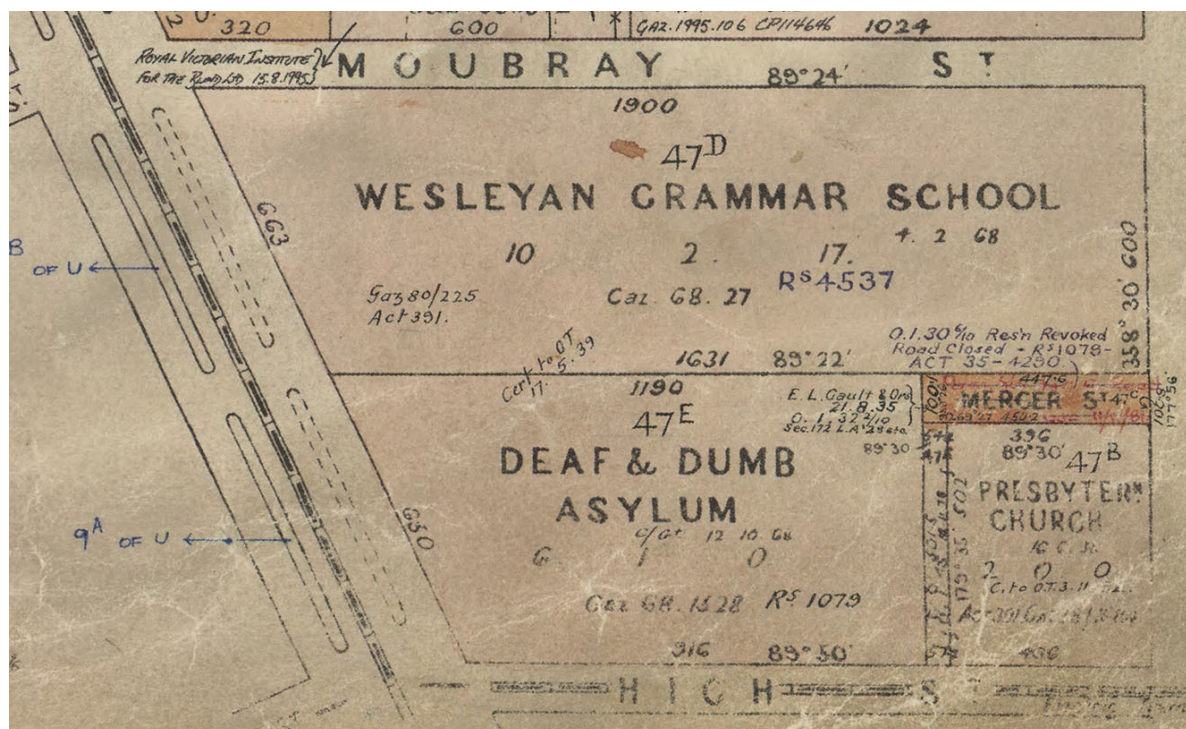


Figure 2. Detail from parish plan showing the subject site in 1872. (Source: Vale 1872, State Library Victoria)



Figure 3. Photograph of Wesley College in c1880 by Donald McDonald. (Source: Bib ID 6160626, National Library of Australia)

Dr James Corrigan served as headmaster of Wesley College from its opening in 1866 until 1871 (Wesley College 2021). Corrigan was born in Ireland where he became a teacher and, later, the headmaster of a Wesleyan school in the north of Ireland. In 1865 he was appointed inspector of National Schools in Ireland. The following year, Corrigan moved to Victoria where he soon established himself as a prominent educationist (Gill 1969). Other founding members of the school's administration included

Reverend James S Waugh, president of the school council from 1866 to 1884), Reverend Daniel Draper, and Walter Powell, benefactor.

Military associations were formed early in the school's history; by 1867 the Wesley College Cadet Corps had been established and this was active intermittently until 1975 (Wesley College 2021).

By 1870 there were 207 boys enrolled at Wesley College, 62 of whom were boarders (Wesley College 2021). Sport was an important aspect of school life and by the late 1860s and early 1870s Wesley was participating in public school competitions in football, cricket and rowing. This was reflected in the early development of the front sports oval (Figure 4).

Additions made to the campus between 1866 and 1878 resulted in the creation of Nye Quadrangle (Figure 1: Number 12), which was named after Reverend Edward Nye (Figure 4). The West Wing (Figure 1: Number 7) was completed in 1866–88; the North Wing (Figure 1: Number 5), originally named Powell Wing after one of the school's early benefactors, was built in 1873 (Lemon 2004:49). Powell Wing comprised two new dormitories, with accommodation for 35 extra boarders and was completed at a cost of £4000 (*Leader*, 12 July 1873:13). The Wesley chemical laboratory formed the south wing and was built in 1878 (Figure 1: Number 8) (Wesley College 2021). These buildings added between 1868 and 1878 were largely upgraded from the 1970s and onwards.

The Old Wesley Collegians' Association, originally called the Old Boys' Society, was formed in 1882 (Wesley College 2021) with the purpose of holding 'social gatherings of its members and foster the interest of Collegians'. It continues to operate to the present day.

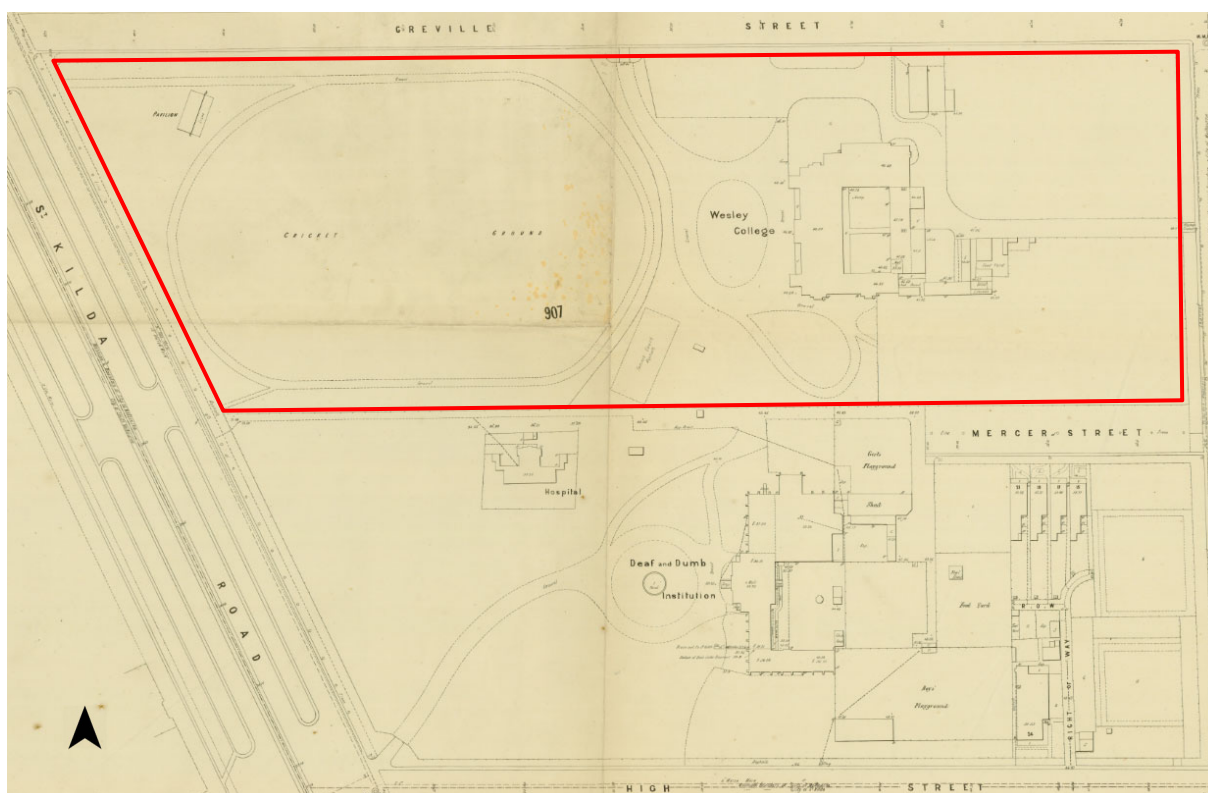


Figure 4. Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works Detail Plan no 907, 1896, showing the 1866 building with extensions, and the sports oval at the corner of Greville Street and St Kilda Road. (Source: State Library Victoria)

Enrolments reached a low of 74 pupils in 1896 in the aftermath of the 1890s depression and a school sub-committee was formed to consider the school's future (Wesley 2021). Despite its financial concerns the school had developed a prestigious reputation by this time and was regarded as a landmark building

on St Kilda Road. A description of the school, published in 1901, details the prominent appearance of the school set amongst an orchard and elaborate gardens (Figure 5):

Wesley College is healthily situated on a slope facing the Albert Park Lake, and only half a mile from the sea. Its massive pile of buildings is surrounded by garden and lawn and orchard. The beautifully mingled foliage of tree, shrub and flower would delight the eye of the artist. The building, a view of which is given, is a handsome edifice in the Italian style, possessing a noble façade, with loggia, and a tower at each extremity. (Leader, 1 January 1901:91).

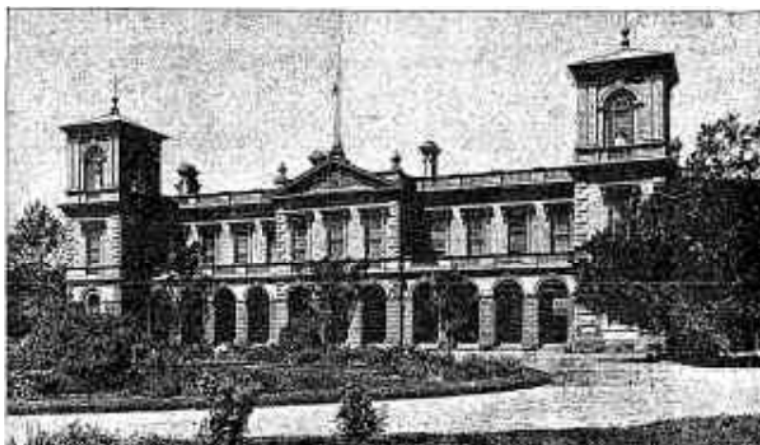


Figure 5. Early landscaping in front of the main building in 1901. (Source: *Leader*, 1 January 1901:91)

Development 1902–1918

From 1902 until 1932 the school headmaster was Lawrence Arthur Adamson, who was an important educationist and teacher, a barrister, and an administrator of cricket and Australian Rules football (Clements 2021). He was the longest serving headmaster (and principal) in the school's history. Under Adamson's stewardship, the school was significantly expanded. His substantial personal donations funded much of this development.

A significant increase in enrolments in the early twentieth century fuelled the need for additional buildings. In 1902 a Preparatory School was housed in a small timber pavilion in the area that now forms part of the Back Turf (Wesley College 2021). In the Middle School area, physics and chemistry laboratories and a science room were built in 1906. The science buildings were partially funded by a large personal donation from Adamson with further contributions made from a concerted fundraising campaign by the school (Wesley College 2021). The foundation stone for Adamson Hall (Figure 1: Number 4) was laid in March 1908 and construction was completed the same year. The building was built of stone and designed in the Italianate style (Figure 6) (Wesley College 2021; *Lion Magazine*, April 2016).

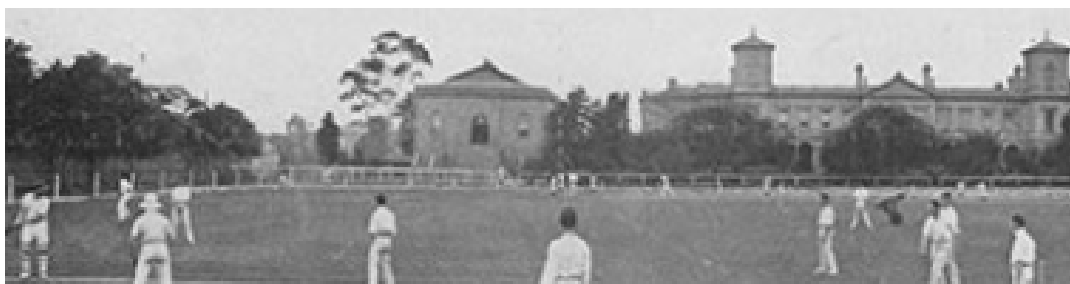


Figure 6. Wesley College cricket club on the Front Turf, c1908. Adamson Hall is visible on the left, and the main building is on the right. (Source: Collections of Wesley College Melbourne, via Wesley College 2021)

The Percy Lane memorial gates were erected in 1910 at the main entrance on Moubray Street. They were gifted to the school by Lane's parents in memory of their son, who was a former student (Wesley College 2021). The iron picket fence on the St Kilda Road boundary was installed in 1913 (Wesley College 2021).

In c1915 a 'boys' building', containing dormitories, a drawing room and reading room, was erected to accommodate boarding students (*Bendigonian*, 9 February 1915:23). By this time, Wesley College was one of the largest of the six public schools in Victoria. Its campus incorporated a dining hall, classrooms, a lecture theatre, science laboratories, gymnasium and preparatory school, and the 'boys building'. The grounds also had tennis courts and playing fields. A prayer service was delivered by the school chaplain every fortnight that was open to 'every ecclesiastical denomination' (*Bendigonian*, 9 February 1915:23). The school awarded scholarships for entrance into university, Duntroon Military College, and the state and federal public service (*Bendigonian*, 9 February 1915:23; *Spectator and Methodist Chronicle*, 25 December 1918:1263).

Adamson strongly supported the college cadet corps and frequently paid tribute to alumni who enlisted in military training and service during World War I (Clements 2021). At the conclusion of the war, the total death toll of Wesley alumni was at least 148 (Wesley College 2021). The Wesley Old Boys' Association organised the installation of several memorials to honour the fallen alumni. Four war memorial lions, sculpted in Sicilian marble by Italian-born sculptor Ettore Cadorin, were installed outside the front entrance of Adamson Hall in 1916 (Wesley College 2021). Adamson commissioned and funded this work (Wesley College 2021 and *Lion Magazine*, April 2016).

A new parapet was built on the Adamson Hall, fronting St Kilda Road in c1918 (*Age*, 7 February 1933:6). The remodelled façade included an electric clock that was conceived as part of the war memorial works (*Age*, 7 February 1933:6). A memorial stairway was added to the southern façade c1918 (*Argus*, 16 December 1919:4). Adamson Hall was fitted with electric light in 1922 and a suspended ceiling installed 1922–24.

Development 1919–1945

By 1919 enrolments reached capacity at 560 pupils. An enrolment cap remained in effect until the end of the 1930s (Wesley College 2021).

Harold J Stewart was appointed headmaster in 1933 and remained in this role until 1939. During his administration, the school and grounds were substantially rebuilt. Between 1933 and 1936, modifications and additions were made to the main building to the design of architect Harry Norris. A new science block, chapel, swimming pool and gymnasium building were constructed, and two sports ovals

established. The works at Wesley College were said to be largest school reconstruction to be undertaken in Australia at the time (*Mercury*, 28 September 1933:6).

Benefactors, George and Alfred Nicholas, provided funds for the entire program of works, which had a combined total cost of approximately £125,000–200,000 (Wesley College 2021; *Age*, 29 September 1933:11; Lemon 2004:248). The Nicholas brothers owned the successful pharmaceutical company Nicholas Pty Ltd which made 'Aspro', an Australian brand of aspirin (Gurr and Willis 2012:503). They made significant donations to other notable Methodist educational institutions in Melbourne, including Queen's College and Methodist Ladies' College. Both the Nicholas brothers had children who attended the school from 1929 onwards (Lemon 2004:250). Harry Norris, the architect responsible for the developments at Wesley in the 1930s, was a business associate of the Nicholases and designed several buildings for the Nicholas brothers including the Burnham Beeches mansion in Sherbrooke and the Nicholas Building at the corner of Swanston Street and Flinders Lane in Melbourne.



Figure 7. Plan for the Wesley College main building prepared by Harry Norris, 1933. The original design shows the towers and façade of the main building relatively unchanged in the executed building, see Figure 11. (Source: *Age*, 29 September 1933:11)

In 1933 construction of the new Wesley school buildings (Figure 1: Number 2 and Number 3) commenced (Lemon 2004: 247), with more than 900 men working on the site (Wesley College 2021; Lemon 2004:264). Within the context of the Great Depression, the building works at Wesley College were significant as this provided temporary employment to many tradesmen desperate for work. The first phase of works, involving the modification and extension of the cluster of buildings now known as the Middle School, was completed in 1934 (Figure 7 and Figure 8). This included the construction of two additional splayed wings and extensive remodelling of the original main building, including construction of new towers and instatement of giant order columns to the principal façade (Figure 9).

During construction, a storm caused considerable damage to the roof of Adamson Hall. The 1918 memorial clock, previously located on the façade of Adamson Hall, was incorporated into the façade of the remodelled main building while the roof of Adamson Hall was repaired (*Age*, 7 February 1933: 6). The façades of the existing buildings (Figure 1: Number 5, Number 6 and Number 7) fronting Nye Quadrangle were updated, although some original walls, window openings were retained (Lemon 2004:526). Additions included a twin double-storey classroom and administration buildings and a new science laboratory wing (Figure 1: Number 8). The asphalt quadrangle in front of the main building was replaced with a new garden to which the memorial marble lions were relocated (*Australasian*, 7 October 1933:8).

In 1935 works started on the cluster of buildings located on the southeast portion of the site (now the Senior School). The works included the construction of the Senior College faculty building (Figure 1: Number 16) originally known as the Junior School building fronting Punt Road (Figure 17), an indoor swimming pool and gymnasium building (Figure 1: Number 15) (Figure 13, Figure 15), and a chapel (Figure 1: Number 14) (Figure 14, Figure 16). Beneath the chapel, an additional Junior School facilities space was built, with lockers, showers, a hobby room, caretaker's quarters and sports storage area (Lemon 2004:248).

The new Junior School buildings opened in 1935 and in 1936 Rev CC Dugan opened the new chapel. The chapel was constructed of yellow sandstone and reportedly included a stone from the House of Commons in London (*Herald*, 1 February 1936:8). Above the main entrance, a dedication was inscribed, which reads: 'In memory of all Wesley Collegians who enlisted in the Great War 1914–1918' (*Age*, 3 March 1936:10).

In 1936 the former preparatory school was demolished to make way for a new sports oval fronting Punt Road. Both the front oval (Front Turf, Figure 1: Number 19) and the back oval (Back Turf, Figure 1: Number 20) were completed in 1936 (*Herald*, 9 July 1936: 48). Iron picket fencing to match the St Kilda Road fence was extended along Moubray Street and the southern boundary. A scoreboard and shelters for spectators, referred to as doggy boxes, were built on the front oval in 1937 (Lemon 2004:248).

The new campus was formally opened in March 1937 by the Governor of Victoria, Lord Huntingfield (*Age*, 20 February 1937:30).

The Nicholas Memorial Garden at the corner of St Kilda Road and Moubray Street was created in 1938 (Lemon 2004:248). Long-time benefactor Alfred Nicholas died the following year, and a memorial window was installed at the chapel in his honour (Wesley College 2021).

World War II had a significant impact on the school. The Wesley College Cadet Corps was reactivated in 1941 and membership quickly reached 320. First World War veteran Captain Potts trained the young cadets (Wesley College 2021). From 1942–44 the grounds were occupied by a branch of the Master-General of ordinance allied land headquarters known as the Land Headquarters Inspection Division (Figure 16, Figure 17, Figure 18, Figure 19). Wesley students attended classes at Scotch College in Hawthorn for the duration of the period of military occupation (Wesley College 2021). Classes resumed at the St Kilda Road campus in 1944. By the end of the Second World War, 139 former Wesley students had died in military service (Wesley College 2021).

Wesley College celebrated its centenary in 1966, the same year it opened its Glen Waverley campus.

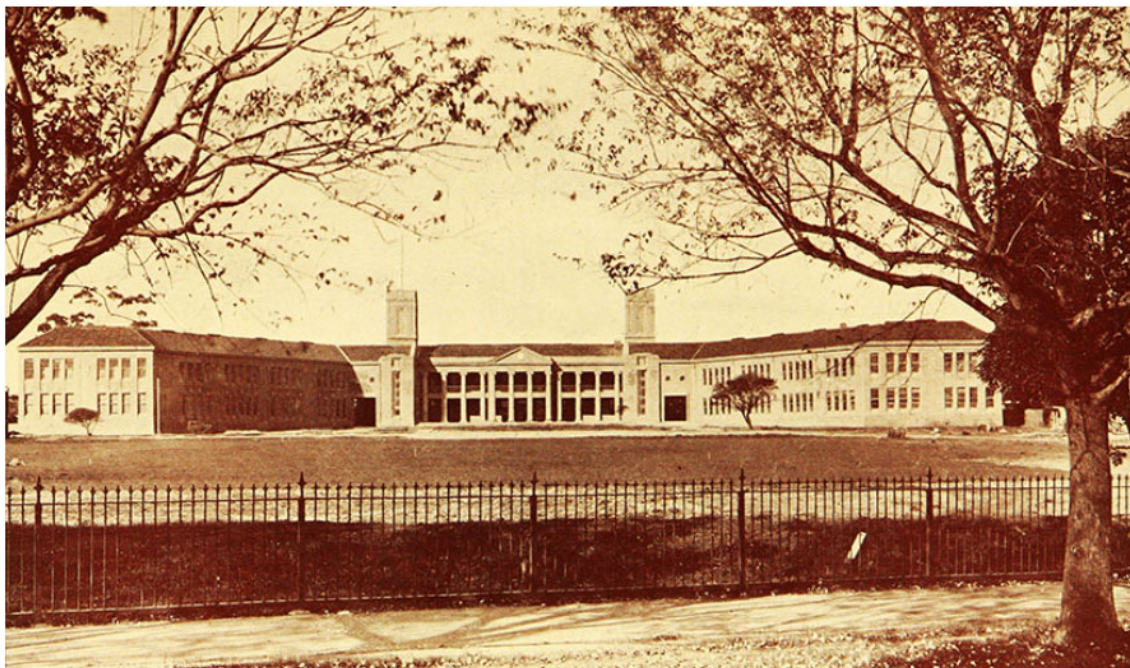


Figure 8. The new Wesley College main building from St Kilda Road, incorporating the Menzies Wing (Figure 1: Number 2, left) and Holt Wing (Figure 1: Number 3) right), c1933. (Source: Collections of Wesley College Melbourne, via Wesley College 2021)



Figure 9. The remodelled façade of the main building, c1934. (Source: Collections of Wesley College Melbourne, via Lemon 2004:249)



Figure 10. Wesley College Middle School looking northeast. (Source: Charles D Pratt, 1945, State Library Victoria: Airspy collection, Accession No. H91.160/469)



Figure 11. South-western corner of Nye Quadrangle, showing the remodelled West Wing and connecting science block, 1934. (Source: Collections of Wesley College Melbourne, via Lemon 2004:252)



Figure 12. South-western corner of Nye Quadrangle, showing the remodelled West Wing and connecting science block, 1934. (Source: Collections of Wesley College Melbourne, via Lemon 2004:252)



Figure 13. The building on the right is believed to be the western elevation of the original swimming pool and gymnasium building. (Source: Collections of Wesley College Melbourne, via Wesley College 2021)



Figure 14. Wesley College Chapel. (Source: Collections of Wesley College Melbourne, via Wesley College 2021)

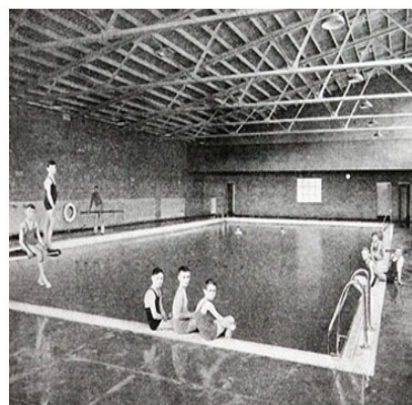


Figure 15. The new swimming pool building, c1934. (Source: Collections of Wesley College Melbourne, via Wesley College 2021)



Figure 16. Military ranks at Wesley College. The chapel and Senior School faculty building are visible in the background, 1942–1944. (Source: Collections of Wesley College Melbourne, via Wesley College 2021)



Figure 17. Senior College Faculty Building, Punt Road 1945. (Source: Australian War Memorial, Accession No. 116132)



Figure 18. Southern façade of Adamson Hall during military occupation (1942–44). (Source: Australian War Memorial, Accession No. 026405)



Figure 19. Middle School buildings and former cricket ground (the Back Turf) with slit trenches, 1942–44. (Source: Australian War Memorial, Accession No. 026407)

Development 1970–onwards

The school was vested in the Uniting Church in Australia in 1977 and coeducation for boys and girls was introduced in 1978. The admission of female students added further pressure for the school to expand.

Incremental additions and alterations were made between c1971 and 1988 to the buildings fronting Nye Quadrangle (Figure 1: Number 5, Number 6 and Number 7) (MBAI, Lemon 2004:529). A new scoreboard was built in 1973; presumably this is the recent structure that is located on the western edge of the oval, adjacent to St Kilda Road (MBAI). Detailed descriptions of the changes are not provided in building permit records, but it appears from analysis of aerial photographs that these were mostly infill developments around the science block building (Figure 1: Number 8) and Gwillim Quadrangle (Figure 1: Number 13). Although the appearance and fabric had changed as a result of periodic modifications, the buildings fronting Nye Quadrangle retained their historical footprint, and some of the original walls and bluestone foundations (Lemon 2004:529).

In the 1980s the Senior School was significantly expanded. The building permit application card for Wesley College shows several entries for costly additions and alterations to the Senior College. It is likely that the façades of the swimming pool and gymnasium building (Figure 1: Number 15) were remodelled during this period of development (MBAI). A two-storey rendered brick extension was also added to the northern end of the swimming pool building that appears to have been constructed c1982 (MBAI). The interior of the pool and roof structure was not changed. Permits were granted for the construction of a three-storey sports hall in 1982 (Figure 1: Number 18), and a Senior School resource building (Figure 1: Number 17) in 1984 (MBAI).

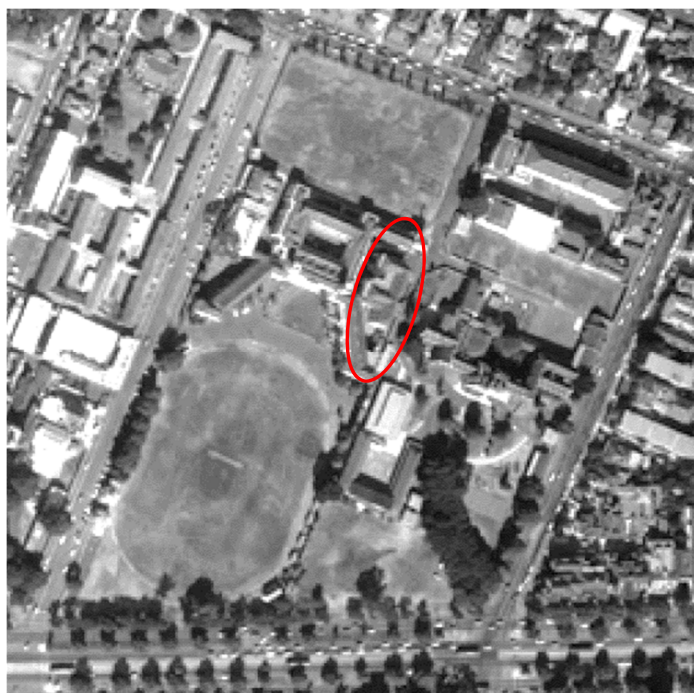


Figure 20. Aerial photograph showing the layout of the school in 1977. The area outlined in red shows infill development around the science block. (Source: Landata, Melbourne traffic study 1977)

A significant fire occurred at the school in November 1989 that caused \$3 million worth of damage to the school's main building and affected fifty rooms (Lemon 2004:530). The fire gutted the historic Nye Quadrangle (Figure 1: Number 12), destroying the library (North Wing, Figure 1: Number 5), offices and some classrooms (West Wing, Figure 1: Number 7) (Figure 21, Figure 22). The roof and first level of the Cato Building (East Wing, Figure 1: Number 6) were also significantly damaged.



Figure 21. Photograph showing the West Wing destroyed by fire, 1989. (Source: Wesley College 2021)

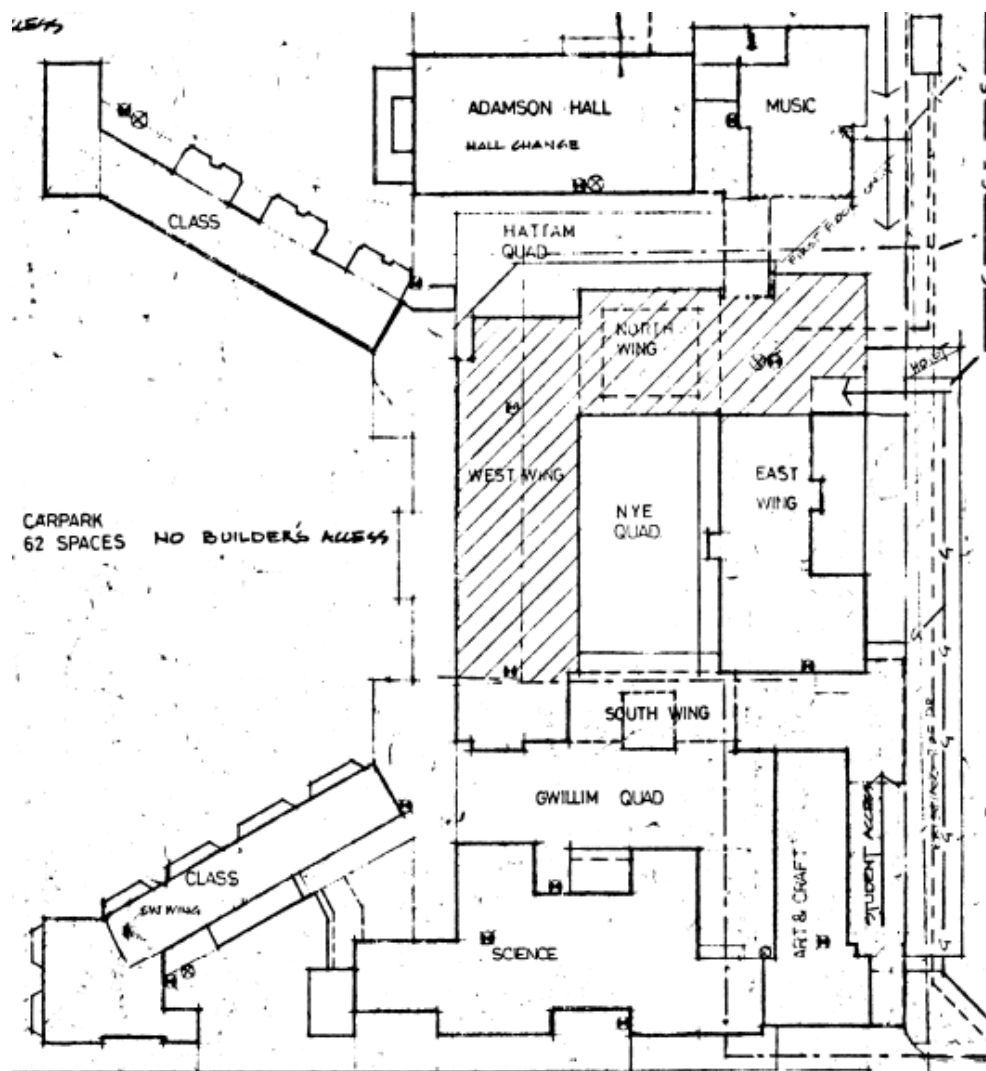


Figure 22. Plan of the Middle School, with buildings that had to be substantially reconstructed after the fire shown in cross hatching. (Source: McGlashan & Everist & Daryl Jackson 1990)

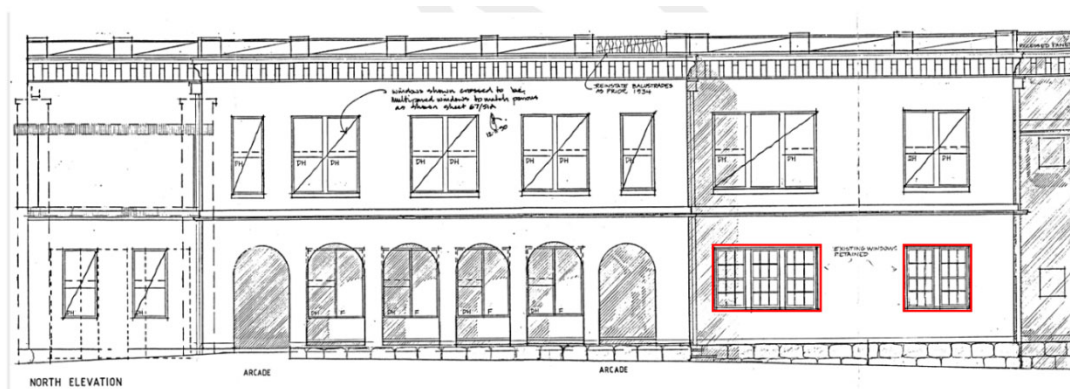


Figure 23. Plan showing reconstruction of the Powell Wing (northern façade). The surviving original windows are outlined in red. (Source: McGlashan & Everist & Daryl Jackson 1990 with GML Heritage overlay)

The school council decided to retain as much of the burnt-out structures as it could and reconstruct the original façades (Lemon 2004:534). McGlashan & Everist and Daryl Jackson, architects, with Connell Wagner, engineers, oversaw the reconstruction of the Nye Quadrangle and buildings in 1990 (McGlashan & Everist & Daryl Jackson, 'Wesley College Prahran Quadrangle Reinstatement', 1990). The works involved the reconstruction of the West Wing and South Wing to match their 1930s form and materiality. Some of the North Wing's original and early fabric survived, including the bluestone foundations and two early (1930s) windows (Figure 23).

In 1993 landscaping works were carried out to the Gwillim, Nye and Hattam quadrangles, also to the design of McGlashan & Everist and Daryl Jackson. The works involved resurfacing the quadrangles with pavers, establishment of garden beds and addition of new pergolas in the Nye Quadrangle.

Further developments were made between 2010 and 2013 to designs prepared by Cox Architecture. Works included the construction of a new performing arts building (Figure 1: Number 10) and refurbishment of Menzies Wing (Figure 1: Number 2) and Adamson Hall. The 'Moubray Street Precinct Redevelopment' as it was named, was opened in 2014 by the Governor-General, Dame Quentin Bryce AD, CVO (Wesley College 2021).

The Chapel, Senior School faculty building, and Middle School buildings all appear to have been recently rendered. It is likely that this treatment was undertaken in 1990–2013 with the refurbishment works were being undertaken.

Charles Webb, architect

Charles Webb (1821–1898) designed some of Melbourne's most prominent nineteenth-century buildings. Born in Suffolk, England, Webb completed his articles in London and arrived in Melbourne in 1848, where he joined his elder brother James (1808–1870). The brothers set up an architecture and surveying practice, undertaking numerous commissions for houses, stores, warehouses, and churches, including the first iteration of St Paul's Anglican Church (1850–52, demolished). From 1854 to 1858 Webb partnered with Thomas Taylor (c1820–1872), completing Christ Church, South Yarra; St Andrew's Church, Brighton; and Melbourne Church of England Boys' Grammar School, South Yarra (all built in 1856). Webb continued in sole practice from 1858, and in 1888 was joined by two of his sons, Charles Hayward Webb (1856–1943) and Alfred William Webb (1859–1934). Webb designed many prominent buildings in the Italianate or Renaissance Revival style, including the Royal Arcade, Melbourne (1869); the South Melbourne Town Hall (1878); and the Grand Hotel (now Windsor Hotel) (1883–84). Webb also

designed many churches in the Gothic Revival style, including the Church of Christ in Swanston Street, Melbourne (1863) (Willis 2012:757).

Harry Norris, architect

Harry Norris (1888–1967) was a notable Moderne architect who designed many buildings in Melbourne in the 1920s and 1930s. His architectural career started when he was articled to Ward & Carleton architects from 1906 until 1911. He won second prize in the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects student competition in 1910. By 1920, he had established his own practice with an office on Collins Street. In its early years, the practice specialised in domestic and commercial projects, particularly motor garages, factories and bakeries. In 1922 Norris was a provisional director of Overseas Motors Ltd. Alfred M Nicholas was also a director of the company and the two established a strong professional relationship that resulted in Norris receiving several substantial architectural commissions, including the Nicholas Building, Melbourne (1925–26); ‘Carn Brea’, Hawthorn (rebuilt in 1928); ‘Burnham Beeches’, Sherbrooke (1930–33), and Wesley College, Melbourne (1933–39). George James ‘G J’ Coles was another of Norris’s clients. Coles sent Norris to the United States of America in 1929 to investigate chain store architecture. When he returned, Norris designed and remodelled many stores for Coles in Melbourne and Sydney. Norris travelled regularly to the United States in the 1930s to study commercial and industrial architecture. His work exhibits a wide range of stylistic approaches, including Spanish Baroque (Majorca House, Melbourne 1931); Moderne (Block Court, Melbourne 1929 and Mitchell House, Melbourne 1938); Georgian Revival (Vice-Chancellor’s House, University of Melbourne 1937); and Dudokian Modernism (Mission to Seamen, Port Melbourne 1937, demolished). After World War II Norris continued to practise but with limited output. He died six months after his retirement in 1967 (Gurr and Willis 2012:503).

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Wesley College has been continually used as a place of private education since 1866 (except for the period of military occupation from 1942–44), serving its pupils past and present, parents, families, teachers, benefactors and administrators on site for over 150 years. Community connections are demonstrated in this longstanding use and the school retains a visible and active presence in the community. The school retains a close association with alumni and their families and the Old Wesley Collegians’ Association and the Wesley College Foundation have a strong and active membership base. Wesley College’s numerous war memorials are also important as they are tangible links to previous generations of alumni, for the descendants, staff and students and the wider community. *Examples of memorials include the Percy Lane Memorial Gates, Italian wellhead copy and marble lions, both located at the main building forecourt; two memorial stairwells and Alan Kerr memorial doors on Adamson Hall.*

SITE DESCRIPTION

Wesley College occupies an L-shaped allotment with street frontages to St Kilda Road, Moubray Street, Punt Road and High Street, Melbourne. The main land parcel is aligned east–west; the Middle School is sited in between the Front Turf and Back Turf and faces St Kilda Road. Its main entrance is located off Moubray Street. The second land parcel is aligned north–south and comprises the Senior School buildings and chapel, and is accessed via the Punt Road entrance.

The campus demonstrates successive waves of development with construction dates ranging from 1866–2014 (as referenced in Figure 24 and Figure 36). While many of the buildings have been altered to varying degrees, the overall layout and built form most strongly reflect the 1933–37 period of

development. Across the campus, buildings are constructed of brick (either face cream brick or rendered brick) and generally have similar scale and form.

The Middle School buildings are two-storey buildings constructed of rendered brick with hipped terracotta tiled roofs except for the four-storey stone and glass Performing Arts building and the gabled roof Adamson Hall. The Middle School buildings are clustered around three quadrangles separated by arcades with elevated walkways. This appears to be generally in line with the 1930s layout of the school.

Middle School



Legend

Middle School

1	Main building (1866, 1934)	9	Sports Directorate
2	Menzies wing (1934)	10	Performing arts building (2013)
3	Holt Wing (1934)	11	Hattam Quadrangle
4	Adamson Hall (1908, 1918, 2012)	12	Nye Quadrangle
5	North Wing (former Library) (reconstructed 1990)	13	Gwillim Quadrangle
6	East Wing (former Cato building) (1934, 1990)	19	Front Turf
7	West Wing (c1866–1878; 1934; 1990)	20	Back Turf
8	Science block (c1866–1878; 1934; 1980s)		

Figure 24. Aerial photograph of the Middle School campus with key buildings. The red indicates the 1908 period of development; the orange overlay indicates structures added or altered during the 1933–1937 period of development and the green overlay denotes structures substantially modified or constructed from the 1970s onwards. (Source: Nearmap 2022 with GML overlay)

Main building (1866, modified 1934) (Figure 24: Number 1), and Menzies Wing and Holt Wing (1934) (Figure 24: Number 2 and Number 3)

The Main Building, incorporating the flanking Menzies Wing (to the north) and Holt Wing (to the south), face St Kilda Road (Figure 25). The three elements of the building are rectangular and have a similar scale and massing.

The principal façades have symmetrical arrangements with detailing in the stripped back neo-Classical style.

The central form (built 1866, remodelled 1934) has a central pediment portico and horizontal corniced parapet supported by giant order Ionic columns. The parapet and columns enclose a double storey verandah with a metal balustrade in a geometric design. Two towers with pared back decorative detailing bracket the central form. The fenestration is regularly spaced and openings have generally uniform proportions. Window openings have round headed arches at ground level and rectangular openings on the first level. The windows are tall, sash windows with recently replaced frames and glazing.

Menzies Wing and Holt Wing (1933–36) are identical except for alterations to the ground floor windows of the latter. Each façade is divided into five bays that are delineated by pairs of engaged pilasters with vertical grooving. The inner four bays have regularly spaced rectangular window openings in groups of five and four on both levels; the outer bay has no openings but features a second pair of engaged columns and decorative moulding on the terminating façades. Recent glazing and aluminium frames have been installed in all window openings; a projecting glazed framework encloses the ground level windows of the Holt Wing and the terminating bays of both wings. Where the splayed wings connect to the main building, there is a narrow bay with a pair of small hexagonal windows on the upper level and double width entrance with moulded surrounds at ground level. This section also comprises a projecting double-storey tower element with vertical glazed bands and detail that matches the main building.

The Main building, and Menzies and Holt Wings have a terraced lawn setting overlooking the Front Turf to the west. On either side of the entrance is a geometric garden bed each with two marble lions mounted on stone plinths. Interpretive panels communicating the school's military associations are erected in- both garden beds.



Figure 25. Main building incorporating the Menzies Wing (left) and Holt Wing (right) (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Adamson Hall (1908, modified 2012) (Figure 24: Number 4)

Adamson Hall is a rectangular two-storey rendered brick building with a horizontal parapet (Figure 26). It comprises a basement level and raised ground level. The main hall building has an extension to the west (new façade added c1918, recently remodelled). The hall exhibits elements associated with the Italianate style, including quoins on the outer corners, a cornice with decorative brackets, round-headed arched openings with hood moulds and moulded stringcourse.

On the northern elevation, an external staircase leads to a side entrance (Figure 26). The stairway has a rendered balustrade with engaged square pilasters supported by blind arches. The basement level openings are rectangular and new windows have been installed. On the raised ground level, the windows have round-headed arched openings with moulded hoods featuring central keystones.

The southern elevation has the same detailing with c1918 additions including the first-level deck and two projecting memorial stairwells with square columns and segmental arched openings; wide entrance stairs with engaged piers (Figure 27). More recent modifications include modifications to the ground level window openings.

The western elevation is a recent extension constructed of rendered brick. The façade is divided into three bays by engaged square columns (Figure 26). The central bay has a large rectangular window on the first level and the outer bays have a single arched window with recessed surrounds. Except for the pilaster bases, the ground level surfaces are predominately glazed.

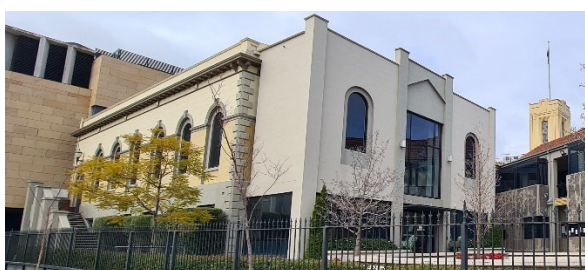


Figure 26. Northern and western façades of Adamson Hall, viewed from Moubray Street. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 27. Southern elevation of Adamson Hall. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

North Wing (former Library, originally built 1873, modified 1934, reconstructed 1990) (Figure 24: Number 5)

The North Wing has a rectangular built form with a projecting first level wing fronting Hattam quadrangle (Figure 28). The building was reconstructed in 1990 in the Victorian Italianate style, with balustrade parapet, bracketed cornice, and arcaded loggias on the north and south. On the western side of the northern elevation two windows dating from 1934 were retained, along with the bluestone foundations. Its southern elevation has rectangular first level window openings and its ground level is set back behind an arcaded loggia (Figure 29).

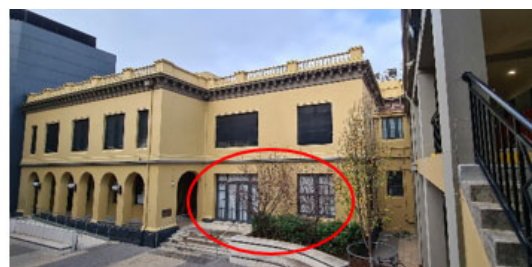


Figure 28. Northern elevation of the North Wing with 1934- windows outlined in red. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

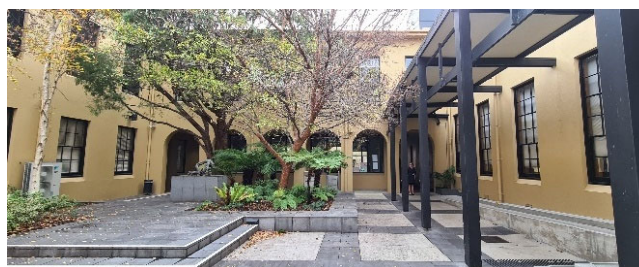


Figure 29. Southern elevation of the North Wing, fronting the central courtyard. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

East Wing and West Wing (c1934, substantially reconstructed 1990) (Figure 24: Number 6 and Number 7)

The East Wing (formerly the Cato Building) (Figure 30) and West Wing (Figure 31) are nearly identical except for a flat roofed pergola and moulded door surrounds on the East Wing. The façades have highly symmetrical arrangements with uniformly spaced and proportioned rectangular window openings. *First level windows have contemporary metal frames and glazing, and ground level windows are multi-paned. It appears that the original 1930s framing may be intact on the East Wing. The moulded door surrounds to the East Wing appear to be original.*



Figure 30. East Wing, formerly the Cato Building (Source: GML Heritage 2021) Figure 31. West Wing (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Hattam Quadrangle (Figure 24: Number 11)

Adamson Hall, the Performing arts building and the North Wing have frontages to the northernmost quadrangle, originally known as the Hattam Quadrangle. Façades presenting to the quadrangle represent different construction periods and architectural styles (Figure 32, Figure 33). Approaching the north quadrangle, on the Moubray Street side, there is recent infill development and a sunken lawn garden. An elevated walkway traverses the entrance to the courtyard.



Figure 32. Hattam Courtyard, showing Adamson Hall (left); Performing arts building (centre); and North Wing (right) (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Figure 33. Image showing 1930s windows on the North Wing and part of the elevated walkway. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Nye Quadrangle (Figure 24: Number 12)

The West Wing, North Wing and East Wing buildings all have frontages to the Nye Quadrangle. At the southern end of the quadrangle there is an enclosed elevated walkway and an arched loggia underneath separating this area from the adjacent Gwillim quadrangle (Figure 34). The façades fronting the quadrangle are alike in form, scale, materials and detailing.

The quadrangle has bichromatic paving arranged in a gridded pattern. There is a raised terrace and several geometric garden beds planted with groundcover and medium sized trees (Figure 29).



Figure 34. Nye Quadrangle, facing south. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Gwillim Quadrangle (Figure 24: Number 13), Sports Directorate and Science block (Figure 1: Number 9)

Gwillim Quadrangle is the school's southernmost quadrangle. The science block (Figure 1: Number 8) and Sports Directorate building (Figure 1: Number 9) frontages to this quadrangle (Figure 35). There have been extensive alterations to the science block, but aerial photographs indicate that the original roof form is extant.

Like the Nye Quadrangle the façades fronting the Gwillim quadrangle are generally visually cohesive, having similar scale, form, materials and detailing. The built form and fenestration patterns of the sports directorate appears to be consistent with the 1930s design but contemporary window and door frames and glazing have been installed. The quadrangle also has two modern pergolas attached to external walls, bichromatic paving and rectangular garden beds.



Figure 35. Gwillim Quadrangle, showing sports directorate (middle-left) and science block (right). (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Performing arts building (2014) (Figure 24: Number 10)

Recent addition to the Middle School campus is the performing arts building. It is a four-storey structure constructed of stone, glass and concrete with frontages to Moubray Street and Punt Road. The building has a geometric form, solid massing and a flat roof. Facing Punt Road, the first-floor level projects over the recessive ground floor and is supported by narrow, rectangular concrete columns. The first and second floor levels of the façade are clad in stone with irregularly spaced glazed vertical bands of varying widths. The third storey is set back and comprises glazed surfaces divided by a projecting concrete framework. The third and ground floor levels of its north façade are predominately glazed surfaces with a deep set back. The midsection features expanses of stone cladding punctuated by narrow bands of vertical glazing on the eastern side.

Senior School (former Junior School)



Legend

Senior School (former Junior School)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 14 Chapel (1936) | 17 Senior School resource building (1984) |
| 15 Swimming pool and gymnasium (1935, c1982) | 18 Sports hall (1982) |
| 16 Senior School faculty building (1935) | |

Figure 36. Aerial photograph of the Senior School campus with key buildings. The red indicates the 1908 period of development; the orange overlay indicates structures added or altered during the 1933–1937 period of development and the green overlay denotes structures substantially modified or constructed from the 1970s onwards. (Source: Nearmap 2022 with GML overlay)

Chapel (1936) (Figure 1 and Figure 36: Number 14)

The chapel has a narrow rectangular form with solid vertical massing. The chapel is accessed by stairs to the north and is elevated above a basement level. It is constructed of rendered stone on concrete foundations and has a hipped terracotta tiled roof concealed behind a simple parapet. Its design is Moderne style, with some restrained Art Deco detailing.

The principal façade, fronting Punt Road (Figure 37 and Figure 38), has an asymmetrical arrangement that is dominated by a square projecting tower on the northeast corner (Figure 37). Its composition is divided into three vertical bays. The central bay is set back from the other planes and has a segmentally arched opening with a recessed stained glass window. At ground level there is an original timber door entrance with moulded surrounds. On either side there is a sidelight and lantern. The outer bays feature

decorative concrete ventilation shafts at ground level. Moderne detailing includes the stepped tower, and decorative linework, including a recessed college symbol and carved lettering.

The side elevations are divided into vertical bays by engaged pilasters that extend above the roofline. Each pilaster has a narrow segmentally arched double height opening containing a recessed stained-glass window. The top section of each pilaster has a grooved geometric design. On the basement level there are square profile metal-framed louvre windows and a double width entrance door on the north. The southern elevation has had new window and door openings installed at basement level. The rear of the building has parapet walled stairs leading to the chapel's back entrance on the north and south.



Figure 37. Principal façade of the Chapel, fronting Punt Road to the east. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 38. Detail showing main entrance doors, facing Punt Road. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Samuel Swimming Pool and gymnasium (1935, remodelled c1980s) (Figure 36: Number 15)

The swimming pool and gymnasium building is a two-storey building comprising three rectangular forms; including a small squarish component with a concealed tiled lantern roof, a large rectangular form with corrugated metal skillion roof (1935) and a flat roofed rectangular form at the southern end. The façades of these built forms date from the 1980s and are constructed of cream brick on the eastern elevation and rendered brick on the western elevation.

The north section of the eastern façade is divided into a series of vertical bays consisting of cream narrow sections of full height cream brick alternated with indented glazed sections (Figure 39). On the first level the glazed sections have full-width modern glazing that terminates just before the roofline. A concrete spandrel separates the ground and first levels. At the northern end, the building connects to an external staircase and decorative stepped brick wall set at a 90-degree angle to the building. The first level overhangs the recessed ground level plane forming an undercover walkway that extends the length of the building.

The central built form contains the 1935 swimming pool built form and skillion roof with exposed steel trusswork on the inside (Figure 40).

The southern end of the built form features large vertical brick planes interspersed with recessed full height glazing set at an angle (Figure 41). The ground level plane is also recessed but has concrete columns instead of full height planes of brickwork.

At the intersection of the two forms there is an external brick stairwell and elevated walkway constructed of concrete.

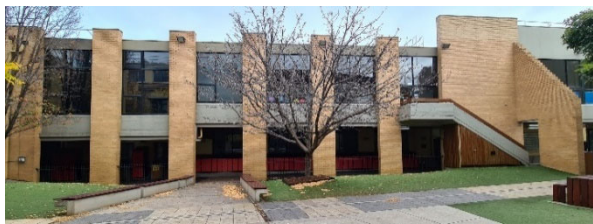


Figure 39. Eastern elevation, north section, containing the swimming pool. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

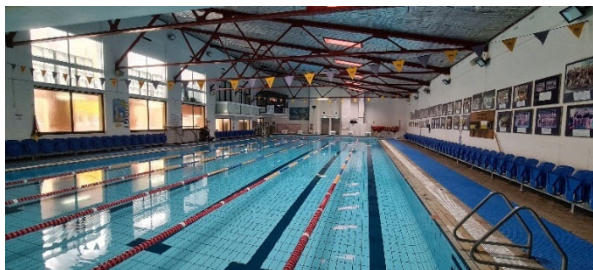


Figure 40. Swimming pool interior showing original 1935 skillion roof structure with exposed trusswork. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

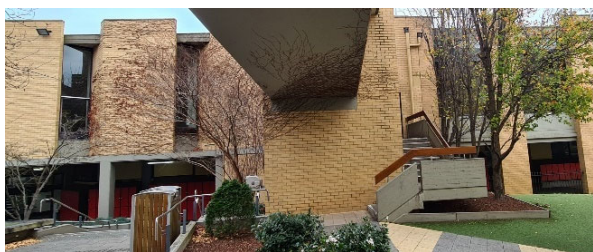


Figure 41. Eastern elevation, intersection of the central and southern section. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Senior School faculty building (1935) (Figure 36: Number 16)

The Senior School building is a rectangular double-storey rendered brick structure with hipped terracotta tiled roof. Along its eastern elevation, fronting Punt Road, it has a symmetrical arrangement with giant order engaged square pilasters dividing the façade into seven vertical bays. The central bay is distinguished from the others by its larger window openings, double width entrance door and flanking side doors, and its moulded detailing (Figure 42). On the outer bays, the fenestration is regularly sized and spaced, comprising rectangular windows with recent metal frames and glazing.

On its western elevation the building has a single-storey flat roof rectangular wing at its northern end (Figure 43). Double width rectangular window openings with recent metal frames and glazing are regularly spaced along ground and first levels. Above the ground level openings are concrete lintels with vertical grooving. A narrow-moulded cornice extends along the length of the building above the first level windows.

The northern elevation has double window openings with original multi-paned window frames (Figure 44). A side entrance retains the original timber door and sidelights (Figure 45).



Figure 42. Photograph showing detail of moulded surrounds and pilasters on the Punt Road façade. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 43. Western façade of the Senior School building. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 44. Northern elevation of the Senior School faculty building, showing some of the original multipaned windows intact. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

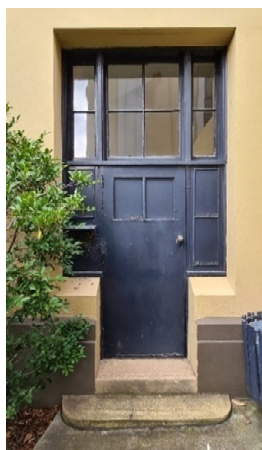


Figure 45. Northern elevation of the building showing original door and highlight windows intact. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Senior School resource building (1984) (Figure 1 and Figure 36: Number 17) and Sports Hall (1982) (Figure 1 and Figure 36: Number 18)

The Senior School campus comprises two late twentieth century buildings.

The Senior School resource building is on a corner site with prominent frontages to High Street and Punt Road. It is a three-storey cream brick structure with a basement level, a flat roof and wide overhanging eaves. The façade fronting High Street frontage has a gridded arrangement comprising four vertical bays delineated by projecting concrete columns. The first, second and third floor levels have glazed surfaces with concrete spandrels between each floor.

Engaged concrete vertical members divide the Punt Road façade into three bays. The central bay has glazed surfaces on the ground and third levels, and a projecting window bay on the second level. The outer bays have unbroken face brick surfaces; on the northernmost bay this surface terminates at first

level, forming an undercroft over the entrance. Raised metal lettering and the Wesley College school crest are affixed to the wall on the first level of the northernmost bay.

The sports hall is a single-storey structure built over a ground level open carpark. It is cream brick with a corrugated metal pitched roof. Its southern elevation, fronting High Street, features an expanse of face brick punctuated by engaged concrete columns. The northern façade has had recent modifications, including the addition of steel frame pergola and, on the first level, a projecting full length window bay and deck. The deck forms a verandah roof over the ground plane.

Grounds

Sports fields (both 1937) (Figure 24: Number 19 and Number 20)

The Front Turf (Figure 1: Number 19) is a large, levelled sports oval with frontages to St Kilda Road and Moubray Street. Along the southern edge there are five regularly spaced spectator shelters. Constructed of rendered concrete, the shelters have a simple three-sided geometric form with box cantilever roofs, side window openings and built-in timber seating (Figure 46). Towards St Kilda Road there is a recently built enclosed spectating structure with an expansive glazed wall facing the oval. Near the Moubray Street entrance there is an early scoring shelter. It has a simple box form with four window openings facing the oval. On its eastern elevation it has a moulded rectangular frame scoreboard that appears to be original to the time the oval was laid out (Figure 47).

An early baseball pitch surfaced with gravel and dirt is located on the western boundary of the school, near the tennis courts at the St Kilda Road and Moubray Street intersection (Figure 48).

The Back Turf (Figure 1: Number 20) fronts Punt Road and comprises a levelled rectangular sports field with recent basketball court and soccer net (Figure 49).

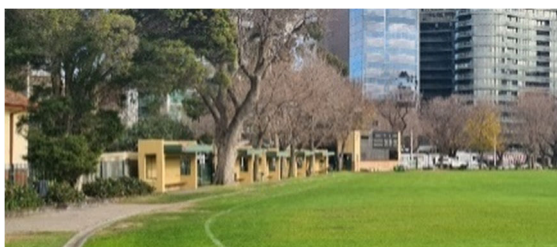


Figure 46. Shelters on the southern side of the Front Turf. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 47. Early scorebox structure, Front Turf. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 48. Early baseball pitch adjacent to St Kilda Road. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 49. Back Turf, on the left is the Middle School East Wing and Performing arts building. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Gates and fencing

A cast iron picket fence (1913–37) lines the western, northern and eastern boundaries (Figure 50).

At the Moubray Street entrance, the 1910 Percy Lane memorial gates (Figure 27: Number 21) feature ornate square columns with cornice capitals topped with decorative acorn elements (Figure 51).

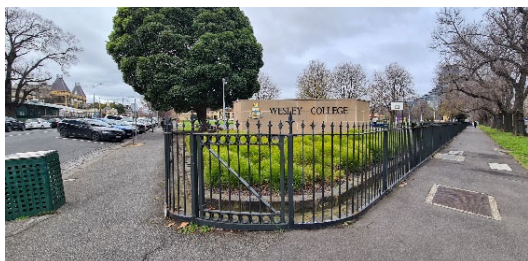


Figure 50. Cast iron picket fence on the corner of St Kilda Road and Moubray Street. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 51. Percy Lane Memorial Gates at the Moubray Street entrance. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Monuments and artworks

Wesley College has a large collection of memorials and artworks that are displayed on campus.

Examples of memorials include the Italian wellhead copy (Figure 52) and marble lions (Figure 53), both located at the main building forecourt; memorial stairwells and Alan Kerr memorial doors on Adamson Hall (Figure 54). There are also several recent sculptures located in the Middle School quadrangles.



Figure 52. Copy of Italian wellhead located outside the Middle School entrance. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 53. Two of the four marble lion sculptures commissioned by former headmaster Lawrence Adamson in front of the main building. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 54. World War I memorial plaques on Adamson Hall. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

INTEGRITY

Wesley College displays varying levels of integrity. Elements of its construction dating from 1866–1878, 1908, 1934–1936 remain intact and reflect the site’s layered development. Waves of subsequent development are evident in additions and infill development across the campus. Other forms of building modifications, including re-rendering of surfaces, roof repairs and replacements, and installation of new frames and glazing, have generally been like-for-like.

The Middle and Senior School campus layouts have high integrity to the 1930s period of development, in particular the grouping of buildings around quadrangles and presentation of façades fronting the

quadrangles. The arrangement of buildings (Figure 1: Number 5, Number 6 and Number 7) around the Nye Quadrangle is particularly notable as it demonstrates the original layout of the site as developed in the period 1866–78. While the buildings fronting this quadrangle have been modified, their general footprint and siting is unchanged.

Adamson Hall (Figure 1: Number 4) has medium integrity to its 1908 design. It retains its original built form and Italianate elements, including arched windows, cornice and brackets, on its northern façade. The southern façade retains modifications from the interwar period, including the deck and memorial stairwells, and represent developments at the school under Adamson’s stewardship. The remodelled western façade is clearly distinguished as a recent addition and does not diminish the legibility of the original built form.

The main building (Figure 1: Number 1) and the flanking Menzies Wing (Figure 1: Number 2) and Holt Wing (Figure 1: Number 3) have been altered, but their 1934 design remains highly legible and the building has moderate overall integrity. The built form, comprising the central building and splayed wings, has been retained, along with the roof, towers, pilasters and moulded cement detailing. The projecting glazed framework on the ground floor of the Holt wing and terminating bays disrupts the façade’s symmetrical arrangement but appears to be a reversible element. New glazing and window frames have been added, but window openings and the pattern of fenestration is intact.

The chapel (Figure 1: Number 14) retains its original (1936) built form and design features, including its vertical massing, corner tower, asymmetrical façade, pattern of fenestration, stained glass windows, and Moderne detailing. The rendering of the original yellow sandstone has resulted in the loss of the original surface texture. Despite the modification to the surface materials, it has high integrity on the basis that it retains its original form and detailing, including windows and doors.

The Senior School faculty building (Figure 1: Number 16) has fair-high integrity to its 1935 design. It retains its original built form, roof, decorative moulding and pattern of fenestration. The eastern façade, fronting Punt Road, is more highly intact, retaining its symmetrical arrangement and pattern of fenestration. All window frames and glazing are recent. Some of the original multi-paned windows and a timber door are intact.

The swimming pool and gymnasium building (Figure 1: Number 15) retains its original (1935) pitched roof form and exposed internal trusswork.

In general, the grounds are highly intact. Iron picket fencing dating from 1913 and 1937, and the Percy Lane memorial gates (1910) have been retained. The Front Turf (Figure 1: Number 19) has high integrity to its 1937 design. It retains the oval, score board, doggy boxes and baseball pitch. The Back Turf (Figure 1: Number 20, 1937) is intact.

Overall, the campus has fair integrity, with some individual buildings displaying high levels of integrity.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In the nineteenth century, secondary education in Victoria was provided by the churches or private concerns rather than by the government.

The four major Christian denominations in Melbourne each aspired to a church-run ‘grammar’ school for boys in the early 1850s. Melbourne Grammar School (1858) and Wesley College (1866) were established in the South Yarra area while Scotch College (1850) and St Patrick’s College (1854) were established in East Melbourne.

The following examples are all comparable to Wesley College in terms of their use as education facilities. Some of the examples include private schools established in the Victorian period that are

comparable to Wesley College on the basis of their historical development, while latter examples are comparable to Wesley College as examples of schools built in the interwar period.

Due to the limited number of comparable sites within the City of Melbourne, examples from other municipalities have also been selected. Examples are within the City of Melbourne unless otherwise noted.

Private boys' schools

Melbourne Grammar School, 321–369, 93–151 Domain Street, 2–124 Bromby Street, and 1–99 Domain Road, Melbourne (VHR H0019; HO400)

Melbourne Grammar School sits on a 15-acre site granted by the Victorian Government in the 1850s, with a fine and highly intact group of bluestone buildings designed by Webb and Taylor. The choice of a Tudor-Gothic style was intended to reflect the status of the institution and its modelling on earlier 'public schools' in England. Further facilities have been built through the school's history, including a collection of well-designed postwar buildings.



Figure 55. Melbourne Grammar School, 321–369 St Kilda Road, 93–151 Domain Street, 2–124 Bromby Street, and 1–99 Domain Road, Melbourne, established in the 1850s. (Source: SOHE 2008 via Hermes)



Figure 56. Detail from aerial photograph showing Melbourne Grammar School campus. (Source: Nearmap 2021)

Scotch College, 1 Morrison Street, Hawthorn (HO608, City of Boroondara)

Scotch College was founded in 1851 by the Free Church of Australia Felix (the Scottish Presbyterian Church). It was originally located in East Melbourne and moved to a large site in Hawthorn in 1915. The first wave of development at the Hawthorn campus took place 1917–1926 with buildings constructed in the Queen Anne style. In the 1930s a substantial second wave of development occurred, with additions built in a style which combined the Moderne with the Scottish Baronial. A third development phase, which involved remodelling many of the early buildings, was undertaken in the 1950s.



Figure 57. Scotch College, Hawthorn, 1917, established in 1851. (Source: National Trust Vic not dated via Hermes)



Figure 58. Detail from aerial photograph showing Scotch College campus. (Source: Nearmap 2021)

Geelong Grammar School, 50 Biddlecombe Road, Corio (HO142, Greater City of Geelong)

The original school buildings of Geelong Grammar School were established in 1855 in Maude Street, Geelong. The school relocated to its present site at Corio c1912 and construction of the main building was completed in 1913. The present school, designed in a Medieval Revival style, is dominated by a clock tower and cloistered façade. The main wings are built of red brick with contrasting render and arranged around a central quadrangle.



Figure 59. Detail from aerial photograph showing Geelong Grammar School campus. (Source: Nearmap 2021)

Brighton Grammar School, 90 Outer Crescent, Brighton (HO323, City of Bayside)

Brighton Grammar School was established in 1882 at its present location in Brighton. The main building is a two-storey structure with a hipped, terracotta tiled roof. It shows notable elements designed in the Collegiate Gothic style, including a tower, adjoining wings and quadrangle. The walls are of roughcast render with smooth rendered quoins. Central to the façade is a three-storey castellated tower constructed of rendered and face brick. Windows are timber-framed with double-hung and hopper sashes.



Figure 60. Main building of Brighton Grammar School, established in 1882, fronting an internal quadrangle. (Source: Bayside City Council 2019 via Hermes)



Figure 61. Detail from aerial photograph showing the school campus of Brighton Grammar School. (Source: Nearmap 2021)

Training and school buildings constructed 1927–1937

Melbourne High School, 1 Forrest Hill, South Yarra (VHR H1636; HO2, City of Stonnington)

Melbourne High School was built in 1927 to designs prepared by Percy Everett. The school was the successor of the Model and Training School established in Spring Street, Melbourne, in 1854. In 1926 construction of the new school commenced on an elevated site in South Yarra. The design reflects the Collegiate Gothic style. The main building is constructed of red brick with contrasting render used to highlight openings, crenellations, and panels. The symmetrical front façade contains a central tower entrance bay with octagonal turrets, and flanking wings which terminate in protruding end bays. During World War II the site was occupied by the Royal Australian Navy. (Hermes record no:1069).



Figure 62. Principal façade of Melbourne High School, built 1927. (Source: Heritage Victoria 2009 via Hermes)

Emily McPherson College, 379–405 Russell Street, Melbourne (VHR H1646; HO485)

The two-storey neo-classical building was designed by Public Works Department architect Evan Smith in 1926 and constructed the following year. The college is of architectural significance for its distinctive neo-Classical design, the austerity and simplicity of which reflected the kind of values to be imparted to the students of the college. The monumental Doric portico and Classical composition emphasised sober traditionalism, appropriately enough for an institution of learning, while the regular colonial Georgian fenestration was reminiscent of popular domestic styles at the time.



Figure 63. Principal façade of Emily McPherson College, built 1927. (Source: Heritage Victoria 2008 via Hermes)

In comparison to the given examples, Wesley College and Melbourne Grammar School are historically unique within the City of Melbourne as examples of places that have continually operated as schools since 1866. Historically, Wesley's use and location are unchanged since 1854 when the site was reserved for the purpose of establishing a Methodist secondary school. Architecturally, the school's development is highly layered, demonstrating the changing requirements of the school. The school retains traces of its early establishment (1866–1878), evident in the layout of the main building, Nye Quadrangle and the front oval. While the prevailing built form largely reflects the 1930s development, successive additions and modifications are discernible and demonstrate the school's expansion, as well as response to the 1989 fire that led to the reconstruction of several buildings. More recent developments (from the 1970s onwards) have been designed to match, or complement, the 1930s buildings giving the school a generally cohesive appearance, despite the eclectic architectural styles that are represented.

Wesley College and the private school examples are alike in their general layout, having a prominent main building with adjoining rear wings forming a quadrangle. Wesley College, Melbourne Grammar School, Scotch College, and Geelong Grammar School are some of the first private schools established in Victoria that were based on the English public school model. Within this group, Wesley College and Melbourne Grammar School are distinguished in retaining their extensive landholdings that derived from Crown grants in the 1850s. While they represent different architectural styles and construction dates, the main buildings share common features. They are two-storey structures of masonry construction with hipped roofs, highly symmetrical façades which incorporate one or more towers and horizontal massing. They are comparable in terms of their site layout, which generally comprises a large allotment with one or more full-sized ovals. Among this group, a range of revivalist styles are represented, mostly drawing from the Medieval period, such as Tudor Queen Anne (Figure 57) and Gothic (Figure 55, Figure 60) revival. It is likely that historicist styles were applied to these schools to emulate the English public school model, thereby reinforcing the schools' prestige in the British colonies. Wesley College is unique as a Neo-Classical interpretation. Like the other private schools listed in the examples, Wesley College presents as an extensive complex of buildings spread across a large site with expansive playing fields.

Melbourne High School is not a private school but displays many of the characteristics listed in the above in relation to private schools, including built form, symmetrical treatment, and application of a medieval revivalist style, in this case a Tudoresque influence. It is similar to Wesley College for its presentation to the public domain and local landmark status. The main building of both of these colleges is a commanding edifice sited prominently behind a large oval.

Stylistically, Wesley College is most directly comparable to Emily McPherson College in Melbourne. While the Emily McPherson College was established as a domestic science college for women, and therefore does not fit in with the private school typology, it exhibits some stylistic similarities. Both schools show elements of the stripped back Neo-Classical style, demonstrated in the use of rendered brick surfaces, use of columns, pediments, and horizontal parapet walls. Like Emily McPherson College, the original 1930s windows at Wesley College were multi-paned with steel frames. The absence of extravagant ornamentation in this example and Wesley College reflects post World War I trends toward more restrained and functional buildings. Emily McPherson College is distinguished by its smaller land parcel.

Wesley College is characterised by its large grounds and use of rendered brick, which differs from the other early comparative private schools that are typically stone or face brick and trend toward more historicist styles such as Gothic or Medieval revival. In this way, Wesley College is stylistically comparable to the Emily McPherson College which was also built in the interwar period. As two examples of interwar stripped back Neo-Classicism they are comparable. The Emily McPherson College, while more highly intact, is sited on a smaller land parcel with one main building. Wesley College's large, picturesque grounds and collection of Norris' designed buildings provide a more substantial example of interwar educational architecture.

While less intact than the VHR-listed examples, such as Melbourne Grammar School or Melbourne High School, Wesley College is still closely likened to the HO-listed schools discussed above which demonstrate similar historical developments. Allocation of large land parcels and the planning and layout of the school (adopting a central main building and quadrangles) reflect the development pattern of early large scale educational institutions influenced by the English public school model. The staged development and changes to the buildings and grounds of Wesley College are also important as evidence of continuing educational use of the site.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

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 understanding 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).
-

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend inclusion of part of 567–581 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual heritage place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

Melbourne Planning Scheme

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01–4)	Yes – Iron picket fencing and Percy Lane memorial gates
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

Other

N/A

REFERENCES

Age, as cited.

Australasian, as cited.

Australian War Memorial photographic collection, awm.gov.au, as cited.

Bendigonian, as cited.

City of Melbourne i-Heritage (i-Heritage) database 2021. <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>.

City of Melbourne Interactive Maps (CoMMaps) 2021. <http://maps.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>, accessed 1 June 2021.

Clements, M A 2006. 'Adamson, Lawrence Arthur (1860–1932)'. Australian Dictionary of Biography. National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, originally published in 1988, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography>, accessed 24 June 2021.

Cox Architecture 2013. 'Wesley College Moubray Street Redevelopment' Projects. <https://www.coxarchitecture.com.au/project/wesley-college-moubray-street-redevelopment/> accessed 2 July 2021.

Geelong Advertiser, as cited.

Gill, Peter 1969. 'Corrigan, James (1823–1871)'. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/corrigan-james-3264/text4943>, published first in hardcopy 1969, accessed online 30 June 2021.

Google Maps, as cited.

Gurr, Victoria and Julie Willis 2012. 'Harry A Norris' in Philip Goad and Julie Willis (eds) 2012. *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Herald, as cited.

Hermes, as cited.

Hooper, Carole 2008. 'Education, prior to 1872', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne. www.emelbourne.com.au, accessed 2 July 2021.

Leader, as cited.

Lemon, Andrew 2004. A Great Australian School: Wesley College examined. Wahroonga (NSW): The Helicon Press.

McDonald, Donald 1870. Wesley College, St. Kilda Road, Melbourne, ca. 1880. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-138171400>, accessed 11 January 2022.

McGlashan & Everist & Daryl Jackson 1990. 'Wesley College Prahran Quadrangle Reinstatement', building plans.

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail plan, as cited. State Library Victoria.

Melbourne Building Application Index (MBAI), retrieved from Ancestry.com 2015, Victoria, Australia. Selected Trial Brief and Correspondence Registers and Other Images, 1837–1993 [database on-line], <http://ancestry.com.au>, accessed online March 2021.

Mercury, as cited.

Nearmap, as cited.

Pratt, Charles Daniel 1945. 'Albert Park Lake and South Yarra, looking north-easterly', State Library Victoria: Airspy collection of aerial photographs, accessed 11 January 2022.

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV). Regional Land Office Parish and Township Plans Digitised Reference Set, VPRS 16171.

Recorder, as cited.

Spectator and Methodist Chronicle, as cited.

State Government Victoria 2021. *Landata*, landata.vic.gov.au, accessed 11 January 2022.

Wesley College 2021. *About Wesley—Our History*. <https://www.wesleycollege.edu.au/>, accessed 30 June 2021.

Willis, Julie 2012. 'Webb, Charles' in Philip Goad and Julie Willis (eds). *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

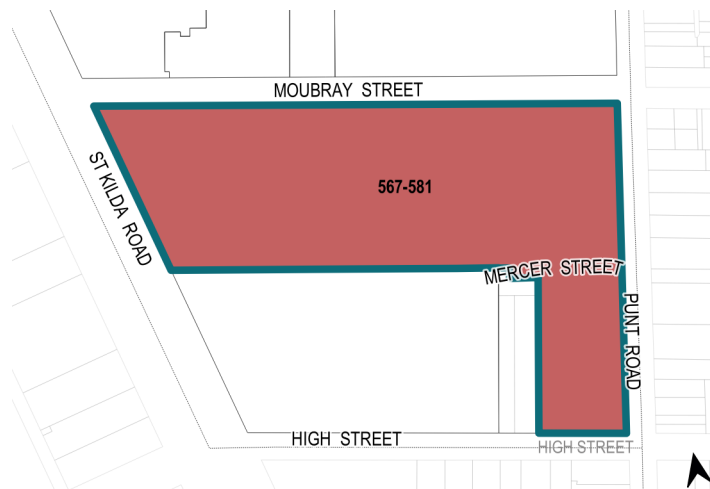
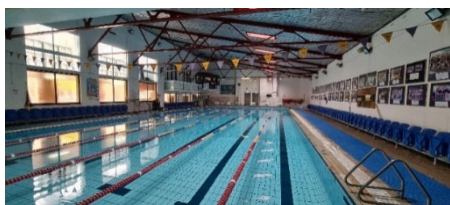
PREVIOUS STUDIES

South Yarra Conservation Study 1985 A; C

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Wesley College

PS ref no: ~~HOxxx~~HO1415



What is significant?

Wesley College at part of 567–581 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, developed from 1866 onwards, is significant.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place (Figure 1) include (but are not limited to) the:

- form, materiality and detailing of the 1908 Adamson Hall (Figure 1: Number 4) and the 1918 stairwell additions, memorial plaques and detailing

- 1866–1878 form of the main building (Figure 1: Number 1) and scale and siting of buildings fronting the Nye Quadrangle
- form, composition, materiality, detailing and original pattern of fenestration of the 1934 Menzies and Holt Wings (Figure 1: Number 2 and Number 3) and the composition, materiality and detailing of the 1934 main building façade
- remaining 1930s windows and bluestone foundations of the North Wing (Figure 1: Number 5)
- original window frames and moulded door surrounds on the West Wing (Figure 1: Number 7)
- the form, materiality and detailing of the chapel (Figure 1: Number 14), including the corner tower, pattern of fenestration, stained glass windows, and Art Deco grooved and moulded decorative elements
- the form, materiality and detailing of the 1935 Senior School faculty building (Figure 1: Number 16), and its original pattern of fenestration and remaining original multi-paned windows and entrance door
- roof structure and exposed trusswork of the 1935 indoor swimming pool and gymnasium (Figure 1: Number 15)
- original and early doggy boxes, score board and baseball pitch in the Front Turf (Figure 1: Number 19)
- original and early iron picket fencing and Percy Lane memorial gates (Figure 1: Number 21)
- use of hipped terracotta tiled roofs and rendered brick across the site
- school’s siting and uninterrupted views of the main building from St Kilda Road.

More recent alterations and additions, including the 1980s modifications to the Swimming pool and gymnasium building (Figure 1: Number 15), Senior School resource building (Figure 1: Number 17) and sports hall (Figure 1: Number 18) demonstrate a later wave of development and contribute to the significance of the place. The 1990s reconstructed and refurbished façades of the north, fronting the Nye Quadrangle also contribute to the significance for representing the form and materiality of the 1930s buildings.

The performing arts building (Figure 1: Number 10), Middle School campus infill, and recent scoreboard are not significant.



Legend

Middle School

- 1 Main building (1866, 1934)
- 2 Menzies wing (1934)
- 3 Holt Wing (1934)
- 4 Adamson Hall (1908, 1918, 2012)
- 5 North Wing (former Library) (reconstructed 1990)
- 6 East Wing (former Cato building) (1934, 1990)
- 7 West Wing (c1866–1878; 1934; 1990)
- 8 Science block (c1866–1878; 1934; 1980s)
- 9 Sports Directorate
- 10 Performing arts building (2013)
- 11 Hattam Quadrangle
- 12 Nye Quadrangle
- 13 Gwillim Quadrangle

Senior School (former Junior School)

- 14 Chapel (1936)
 - 15 Swimming pool and gymnasium (1935, c1982)
 - 16 Senior School faculty building (1935)
 - 17 Senior School resource building (1984)
 - 18 Sports hall (1982)
- Grounds*
- 19 Front Turf
 - 20 Back Turf
 - 21 Percy Lane memorial gates

Figure 1. Aerial photograph of the subject site, showing the key buildings and later structures. The red indicates the 1908 period of development; the orange overlay indicates structures added or altered in 1933–37 and the green overlay denotes structures substantially modified or constructed from the 1970s onwards. (Source: Nearmap 2022 with GML overlay)

How is it significant?

Wesley College at part of 567–581 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, developed from 1866 onwards, is of local historical, aesthetic and social significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

Wesley College at part of 567–581 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, is of local historical significance as the first school registered in Victoria and one of six private ‘grammar’ schools in Victoria allocated a Crown reserve in the 1850s. As one of Victoria’s oldest private schools and one of the original six ‘public schools’ that comprised the Associated Public Schools of Victoria, it represents efforts to establish the English public school model in Victoria. Wesley College has occupied the site since the construction of the main building in 1866. It is one of Melbourne’s most distinguished and long-established private schools that drew students from the local area as well as further afield, and provided boarding facilities until 1982. Wesley College has been a leading exemplar of progressive and liberal education in Melbourne, demonstrated by its tolerance in matters of religious faith and introduction of co-education in 1978. (Criterion A).

Wesley College is historically significant for its military associations. In 1867 the school established a Cadet Corps, which operated until 1975. During World War II the campus was occupied by the Land Headquarters Inspection Division which undertook military operations between 1942 and 1944. The school’s military associations are represented in the many war memorials and plaques located in the buildings and grounds that commemorate alumni who served in both world wars. (Criterion A)

The influence Wesley College has had on Victoria and Australia as a whole is seen in the list of its celebrated graduates, including Samuel Alexander OM, philosopher and the first Jewish fellow of an Oxbridge College, and Sir Robert Menzies and Harold Holt, who were both former Australian prime ministers. Thirteen Rhodes Scholars were educated at Wesley as well as many nationally recognised names in the arts, sports and politics. The memorial marble lions, replica Italian wellhead, the memorial stairs on the Adamson building and the honour board in the chapel are of particular historical significance for their association with Wesley College alumni who served in the armed forces during World War I. (Criterion A)

Aesthetically, Wesley College is significant as an important example of a private school expanded and developed over 18 decades. The school is picturesquely sited behind a large oval overlooking St Kilda Road. The school’s revivalist architecture style, site placing and adopting of quadrangles reflect the conservative architectural expression typically applied to Victorian schools with links to the English public school model. The college’s main building with prominent pediment, the splayed wings and towers, have a strong aesthetic impact viewed from St Kilda Road and Moubay Street. While individual buildings have varying degrees of intactness the site retains consistency in terms of its main elements and planning. The consistent use of rendered brick surfaces, terracotta tiled roofs, and decorative detailing—including the use of engaged pilasters, vertical grooving and uniform fenestration patterns—are applied to the 1930s buildings, creating a sense of visual unity. The main building, including the Menzies Wing and Holt Wing, and Senior School Faculty Building show elements of the Neo-Classical style. The school chapel reflects a more modern approach, evident in the use of its asymmetrical composition with prominent corner tower, Art Deco detailing and parapet roof. Finely moulded representations of the college’s symbols and motifs are embedded into the façades of the main building, the Menzies and Holt wings, chapel and the Senior School building. The aesthetic importance of Wesley is reflected in the consistent use of materials, fine detailing and modern interpretation of historicist elements, such as pilasters and towers. The school architecture is greatly enhanced by its grounds and setting, including the expansive ovals, memorials and artworks, early spectating booths and scoring box, iron picket fencing and memorial gates. (Criterion E)

Wesley College is socially significant to the City of Melbourne. It has been used continuously as a school for over 150 years (except for the period of military occupation from 1942 to 1944), and holds close associations with the alumni community. The social value of the place connects to many among the wider Wesley College community who resonate with the strong ongoing activity and membership of the Old Wesley Collegians' Association and the Wesley College Foundation. Wesley College's numerous war memorials are also important to the alumni and veteran community, and to the families of the alumni they commemorate. *Examples of memorials include the Percy Lane Memorial Gates, Italian wellhead copy and marble lions, both located at the main building forecourt; two memorial stairwells and Alan Kerr memorial doors on Adamson Hall.* (Criterion G)

Wesley College, Melbourne, is of associative significance for its links to the people that were most instrumental in shaping the school: Lawrence Arthur Adamson, principal of Wesley College (1902–1932) was instrumental in expanding the Wesley College campus on St Kilda Road, and helped shape the vision for its built form. His crucial role in financially supporting the built development of the school, and in recognising and supporting the school's military associations is commemorated by Adamson Hall. (Criterion H)

Architect Harry Norris (1888–1967) was a distinguished architect whose name is synonymous with the 1930s Moderne style. The suite of buildings he designed for Wesley College was a substantial commission and reflects Norris's prominence as an architect in the peak of his career. The refined quality of the designs, their close proximity to one another and their visual prominence when viewed from St Kilda Road and Punt Road, make this collection of buildings an important example of Norris's designs. The buildings of Wesley College are distinguished for their thematic and stylistic coherence and interwar construction. As a group, they represent Norris's capability across a range of styles, including stripped back Neo-Classical and Moderne styles. Several of Norris' finest works, including the Nicholas Building and Wesley College, were commissioned by the Nicholas family, the subject site therefore represents an important line of patronage in the architect's work. (Criterion H)

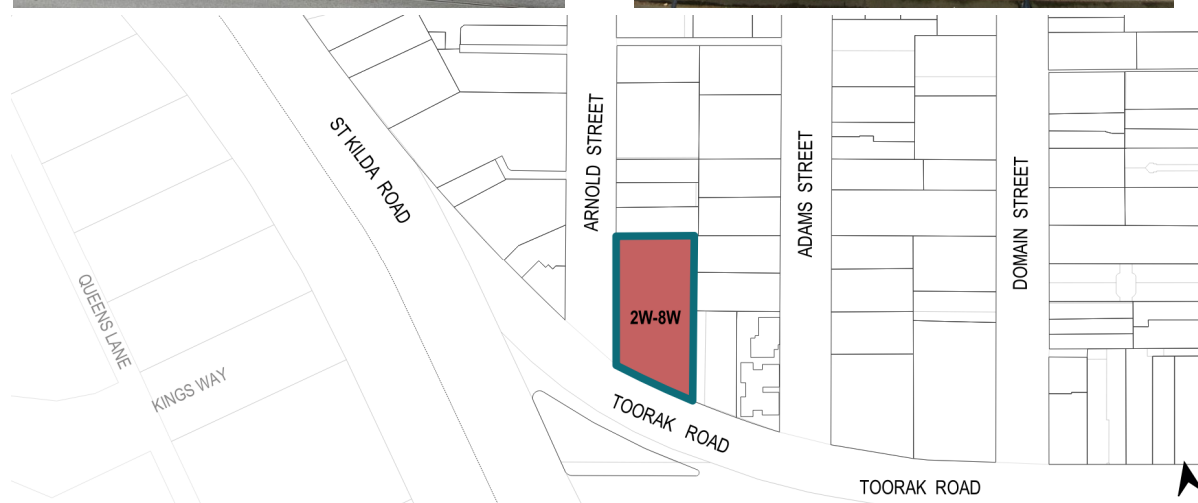
Primary source

South Yarra Heritage Review 2022 ([updated March 2024](#)) (GML Heritage)

SITE NAME: Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue

STREET ADDRESS: 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra

PROPERTY ID: 109540



SURVEY DATE:	February 2021	SURVEY BY:	GML Heritage
PLACE TYPE:	Individual Heritage Place	EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY:	H06 South Yarra Heritage Precinct
PROPOSED CATEGORY:	Significant	FORMER GRADE:	A
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Nahum Barnet	BUILDER:	Rispen Bros
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Interwar Period (c1919–c1940)	DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:	1930

THEMES

ABORIGINAL THEMES:	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES:
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not identify any clear or direct associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	N/A
HISTORICAL THEMES:	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES:
9 Religion and spirituality	9.2 Establishing places of worship

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend inclusion of 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual heritage place.

Extent of overlay: Refer to map.

SUMMARY

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue in South Yarra was built in 1930, to a design by the architect Nahum Barnet. It replaced a smaller synagogue established in 1841 on Bourke Street, Melbourne, where the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation had previously worshipped. The subject building was designed with architectural references to the Bourke Street synagogue. A significant amount of the original synagogue's built fabric, including fixtures, fittings and gates, were incorporated into the subject building. The building is notable, both externally and internally, for its large copper-clad dome and its highly detailed and finely executed design. The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation is the longest established Jewish congregation in Victoria and continues to use the site as their principal place of worship.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Judaism in Melbourne

The Jewish community has been present in Melbourne since colonial settlement, with the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation being formed as early as 1841. Between 1841 and 1850, the Jewish population grew from 57 to 200 (Rechter 2008).

Like many other faith communities in the Colony of Victoria, the Jewish population grew following the discovery of gold in 1851 and subsequent gold rushes. Although the community was not as populous as the overwhelmingly Christian population of the colony at that time, Jewish congregations were formed in rapid succession across Victoria. The first purpose-built synagogue of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation was built on Bourke Street, Melbourne in 1847–48. Congregations had also built synagogues in Ballarat and Geelong by 1861, and the Jewish community in Victoria counted over 3000 members in that year (Rechter 2008). Synagogues were subsequently erected in St Kilda (1872) and East Melbourne (1877). While the Melbourne Jewish community had previously been of predominantly English extraction, the gold rush brought people from across Europe, including from Germany and Austria.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century Melbourne's Jewish population was mostly concentrated in central Melbourne and Carlton. The Kadimah Centre was an important Jewish cultural centre and library established in 1911. It was first located on Bourke Street, Melbourne, but relocated to Carlton in 1915. Carlton's affordable rent and existing Jewish community attracted Jewish migrants to settle and conduct business in the area. As the city grew some of the community's more prosperous members moved to St Kilda during this period (Rechter 2008).

The interwar period saw further expansion of the community. Many migrants came from Poland and Germany. This further diversified the community, with Polish Jews bringing their culture and the Yiddish language, and German Jews driving an emphasis on Reform Judaism (Rechter 2008).

After World War II there was a second influx of Jewish migration to Melbourne, including a significant number of Holocaust survivors. A strong Jewish community developed in Melbourne's south-east, especially in the suburbs of St Kilda, Balaclava, Elsternwick and Caulfield. The availability of larger tracts of land in these areas supported the establishment of independent Jewish schools.

SITE HISTORY

The place occupies the traditional Country of the Bunurong people. The land at 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, is located on part of lot 5 and on the entirety of lot 6 of Crown Allotment 4 in the Parish of Melbourne South (PROV VPRS 16171). Both blocks were sold in the 1846 land sales, with Block 5 being sold to P Davis, and Block 6 to C Curtis (Figure 1).

Lots 5 and 6 appear to have been amalgamated and then re-subdivided between 1846 and 1888; the subject site remained largely undeveloped until at least 1896 (Figure 2) (MMBW Detail Plan no 897, 1896). The subject site and adjacent allotments were advertised for sale in 1888. All properties were owned by the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company Ltd at the time, which had instructed auctioneers CJ & T Ham to sell the freehold land belonging to them (Figure 4) (*Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 9 March 1888:2).

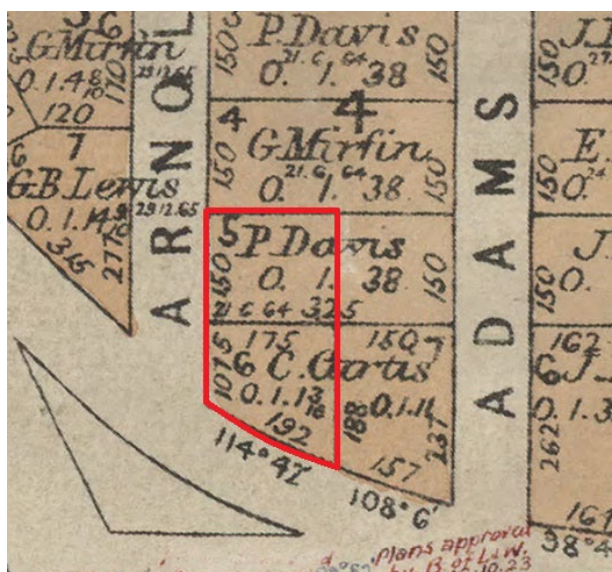


Figure 1. The subject site, highlighted in red, comprising part of two lots within Section 4 (Parish of South Melbourne). (Source: Public Records Office Victoria, VPRS 16171)

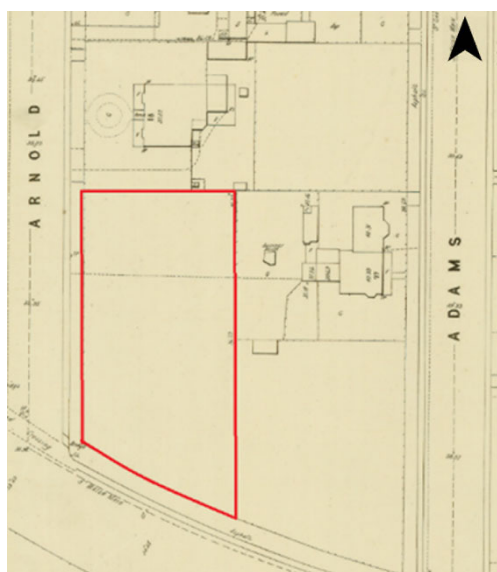


Figure 2. An extract from MMBW detail plan no 897, 1896, with the subject site highlighted in red. The subject site and the land to the east was still undeveloped at that time. (Source: State Library Victoria)

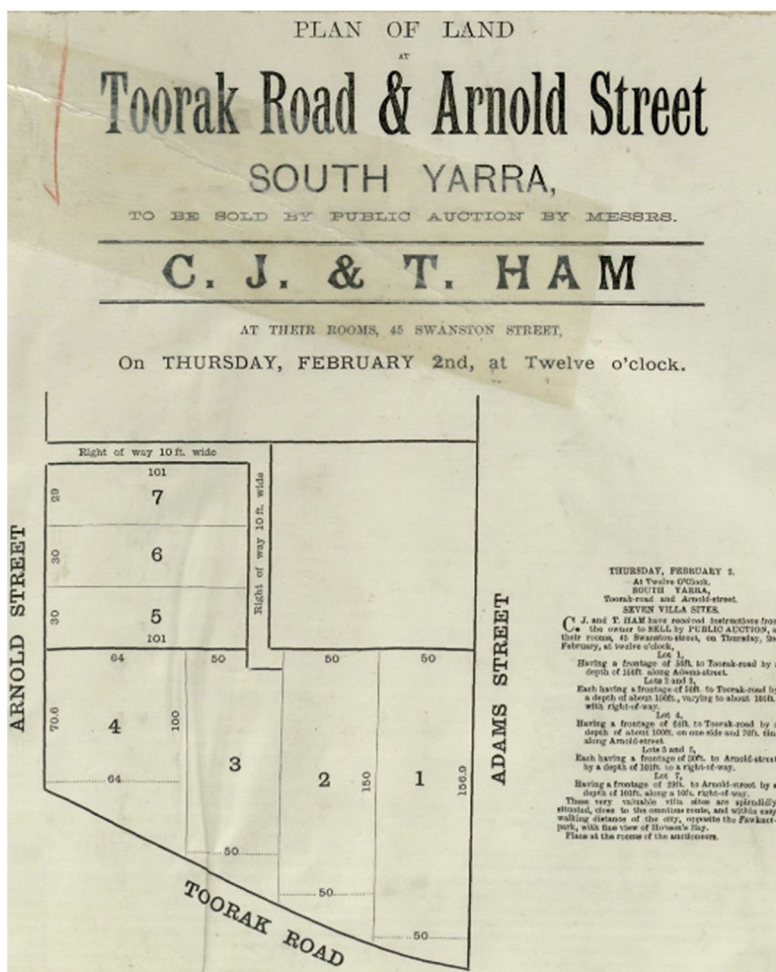


Figure 3. The 'Plan of land at Toorak Road & Arnold Street, South Yarra' dated to 1888, when the land was owned by the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company Ltd. The subject site occupies lots 3 through to 7 of this subdivision. (Source: State Library Victoria: Vale Collection)

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation, established in 1841, is the oldest and longest running Jewish congregation in Victoria (MHC 2012). Prior to the erection of the subject building, the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation was located at a site on Bourke Street in the city. Various reasons were noted as influencing the decision to leave the Bourke Street site: by 1929 the synagogue was no longer adequate for the size of the growing congregation; the noise caused by the city environs was distracting to those worshipping; and the general community had left the city to live in the suburbs, making its location inconvenient (*Argus*, 6 May 1927:17). This inconvenience was particularly highlighted for many orthodox Jews, who due to prohibitions on certain activities on the Sabbath, needed to be within walking distance of the synagogue (Aron & Arndt, 1992:95). Jewish communities had been aware that new synagogues were needed outside the central section of Melbourne as early as 1915, when it was noted that ‘more synagogues [should be built] in the St Kilda and Toorak districts, where they were much needed’ (Aron & Arndt 1992:21–22). This indicates that the communities had gradually moved towards the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne.

The Bourke Street synagogue had been constructed in 1853, and when sold by the congregation in 1929, was noted as being one of the oldest buildings in the city (*Herald*, 1 May 1929:4). The building was demolished shortly after the congregation left.

Barnet deliberately chose to design the synagogue in a classical style, as it reflected the ‘history and origins’ of the congregation at their Bourke Street site (Figure 4). The choice of Corinthian columns on the front portico was one of the many deliberate references to the earlier synagogue. Reflecting the predominantly British heritage of many of the congregants, Barnet stated that he selected a classical basis for the design to ‘make it plainly obvious that we were loyal British Jews’ (MCH 2008:15).

The foundation stone of the new synagogue on Toorak Road was laid in April of 1929 (Figure 5) (*Argus*, 15 April 1929:5). The following description of the building was published in the *Herald* in July 1929, during the course of its construction (Figure 6):

Designed in the style of the Italian Renaissance, with a dome of the summit of which will be 100 feet [30.5 metres] above street level, a new synagogue for the Jewish community of Melbourne is being erected on the corner of Toorak Road and Arnold Street, South Yarra.

The building will be the Great Synagogue, really the cathedral synagogue, of Melbourne. The architect is Mr Nahum Barnet, of Queen Street, who has designed large buildings for various denominations.

Constructed in brick and cement, steel and concrete, the new synagogue will be dignified and impressive. It will be a landmark, with its covered dome.

... the main entrance, in Toorak Road, is raised by a flight of steps, about seven feet above the street, into a crush vestibule. The synagogue will seat a congregation of 1200. Attached to the main building is a minor synagogue for Sabbath school. (Herald, 16 July 1929:21)

The dome was intended as a memorial to those who died in World War I (*Hebrew Standard of Australasia*, 19 April 1929:10). A further description of the building was published in the *Herald* the following year:

... several domes are salient features of the skyline of Melbourne, and yet another is added in that of the Synagogue, a dignified symbol of the principal house of worship of Melbourne Jewry. This copper-sheathed dome rises 100 feet [30.5 metres] from the pavement line. The construction is entirely of steel ribs, with a liaison of Oregon pine to give security to the sarking material to which the copper plates are attached.

The dome is surmounted by a copper covered cupola and with a finial representation of the Shield of David [Star of David], the emblem of the Jewish faith. The inner dome over the auditorium of the synagogue is 70 feet [21.3 metres] from the floor to its apex and is 60 feet [18.3 metres] in diameter. It is finished in fibrous plaster. From it is the illumination of the synagogue with direct and indirect lighting (Herald, 5 February 1930:13).



Figure 4. A newspaper article comparing the new synagogue on Toorak Road (left) to the Congregation's old synagogue on Bourke Street, Melbourne (right). The classical language of the original 1853 building was carried through to the new site by the architect, Nahum Barnet, through the similarity of both façades. (Source: *Argus*, 18 January 1930:17)



Figure 5. The ceremonial laying of the foundation stone of the new synagogue on Toorak Road in April of 1929. (Source: *Argus*, 15 April 1929:5)

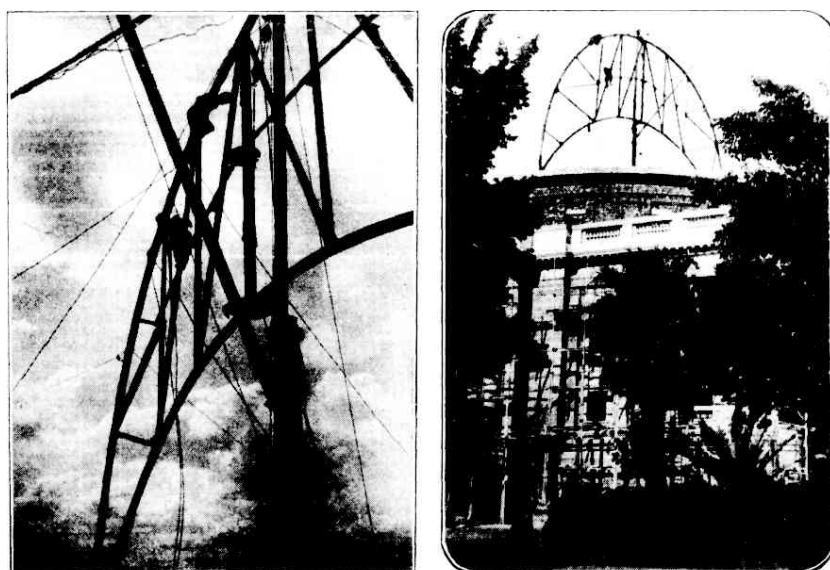


Figure 6. The synagogue under construction in December 1929, when the steel frame for the dome was erected. (Source: *Argus*, 6 December 1929:5)

The site was officially consecrated on the 25 May 1930. The consecration ceremony drew guests from Jewish communities around the country, as well as from all of the major religious denominations in Melbourne. Commencing with a procession, the consecration ceremony featured a full choral service, and included the noted military general and engineer Sir John Monash to open the Ark to place the Scrolls of the Law inside (*Herald*, 24 May 1930:30). The synagogue was noted as having the ability to seat 1200 congregants at that time (*Herald*, 24 May 1930:30).

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation has been connected to many influential figures in the social and public life of Melbourne. Congregants have included figures such as Sir Benjamin Benjamin, a three-time Mayor of Melbourne and Member of the Legislative Council, who also held presidency of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation 13 times (MHC, 2021), Sir John Monash, Sir Isaac Isaacs (first Australian-born Governor-General) and Sir Zelman Cowen (19th Governor-General). These public figures were all involved with the congregation, and had various religious rites celebrated there (MHC, 2021).

The rabbi of the congregation at the time of construction was Sir Israel Brodie, who had commenced his role in 1923 before leaving in 1937. Brodie was also the head of the Victorian Beth Din (Jewish religious court), before later serving as an army chaplain in World War II, and as the Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth (Rubinstein, 1993).

In 1973, under the guidance of the influential mid-century architect and planner Dr Ernest Fooks, the congregation commenced a scheme to install a set of stained-glass windows. The windows were designed by the Israeli artist Rimona Kedem (MHC, 2021). Kedem was trained at the Avni Art Academy in Tel Aviv, before being awarded a scholarship to the Art Academy of Mexico, later coming to Australia to study and practice (Qdos Art, 2019).

The congregation has over 900 members and continues to host regular services and lifecycle events (MHC 2021).

Nahum Barnet, architect

Nahum Barnet (1855–1931) was born in 1855 on Swanston Street, Melbourne, the son of a Polish jeweller, pawnbroker and tobacconist and his London-born wife. After attending Scotch College, he later matriculated from the University of Melbourne and was articled as an architect to Terry & Oakden from 1876 to 1879. Barnet had success in design competitions at this time, and with Terry & Oakden won the commission for the Working Men’s College (now RMIT) building in La Trobe Street (Lewis, 2005).

By 1879, Barnet was tendering under his own name. In 1880, he had become the secretary of the Anglo-Jewish Association, and two years later was the honorary Architect to the Jewish Philanthropic Society. During this time Barnet also developed an extensive clientele base drawn from the Jewish community, for whom he designed a number of residential and commercial projects. Barnet was a prolific Architect in Melbourne throughout his lifetime, producing an extensive number of commercial buildings, theatres and places of worship alongside his residential work. Such was the popularity of his work, that it was claimed that he had designed a building on every street in Melbourne (Lewis, 2005).

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, has been continually used as a synagogue in the City of Melbourne since 1930, serving its congregation on site for over 90 years. As the second synagogue belonging to the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation (formed in 1841), the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation is the oldest surviving Jewish congregation in the State of Victoria and has retains active connections with the community. Originally located in Bourke Street,

Melbourne, the congregation moved to its current site in order to provide a larger place of worship closer to the suburbs in which the community had begun to settle. The architect of the synagogue, Nahum Barnet, chose to design the new building with direct references to the old synagogue, as it was considered to be important in the history of the congregation. These direct references can be seen in the choice of the classical style architecture and use of a dominant front portico with Corinthian columns. Further enhancing this connection to the old synagogue is the presence of materials brought to the new synagogue from Bourke Street in 1930. These include Victorian gates and carved wooden seats, and the bimah, which has been placed in the minor synagogue at the subject site. The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation continues to use the site as their place of worship and for social gatherings and events. The community of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue forms a specific subsection of the wider community who have used and visited the place regularly since its construction; this suggests that there would be some form of community attachment that spans multiple generations.

The Synagogue also continues to connect with the community through its memorial objects. The foyer area houses several memorial boards, plaques, and commemorative items. This means the synagogue provides tangible links to previous generations, including the descendants these soldiers and the congregation and community more broadly.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The place occupies the traditional Country of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people. The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, is located on the corner of Toorak Road and Arnold Street, with the principal façade facing Toorak Road. The Toorak Road boundary follows the course of the road, creating a triangular forecourt that contains a mature Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*).

The synagogue is a three-storey structure built of brick with parapet walls concealing a hipped corrugated metal roof. The street-facing façades are predominantly finished in concrete render, while remaining walls are left as face brick. The most striking feature of the building is the steel-framed, copper-clad dome, surmounted with a small cupola and a finial bearing the Star of David. The drum of the dome features panels with decorative festoons atop a dentilled cornice, visible at street level (Figure 7). Architecturally, the synagogue is an example of interwar classicism.

It has a basement floor built at street level, a raised ground floor and a first level. On the Toorak Road frontage, wide concrete steps lead to the main entrance on the raised ground floor level. The ground level is mostly located underneath the dome and contains the central synagogue and foyer, both of which have double-height ceilings. The first level surrounds the dome on the north, east and west and has administrative and amenity rooms on the ground and first levels. The basement floor has single entrance doors on the north and west (Arnold Street) elevations. It contains a minor synagogue and additional rooms.

The principal façade to Toorak Road is dominated by a central, shallow portico in the style of a Greco-Roman temple (Figure 8). The principal façade has a layered, symmetrical arrangement made up of two stepped planes and a projecting portico. The first layer of this stepped façade is treated in deeply articulated ruled render, the second layer is smooth with pilasters carrying an entablature and a deep dentilled upper cornice (Figure 9). There is a frieze between the heads of the pilasters. Above the cornice, a low parapet wall with balusters is set around the top of the building.



Figure 7. The building's dome, surmounted with cupola and finial bearing the Star of David. The detailing on the drum of the dome can also be seen. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 8. The classically styled portico that dominates the Toorak Road façade. The pediment with cornice, Corinthian columns and pedestals can be seen. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 9. The eastern half of the front elevation, showing the stepped back form of the façade. The ruled render inner step back can be seen, along with the outer step back featuring pilasters. The prominent basement level is also visible underneath. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

The portico is surmounted with a pediment that has dentilled detailing around the interior of the tympanum and a simplified entablature. To the rear of the pediment is the outline of a faux attic floor.

The portico is supported by Corinthian columns, each of which is mounted on a pedestal. Set between the columns are three sets of double doors with transom lights at ground level and steel frame windows to the first floor above. A panel bearing Hebrew script is mounted above the central doorway that reads 'Holy Congregation remnant of Israel' (Figure 8). Below the ground floor, the basement level is separated by a thick, projecting stringcourse and is treated in deeply articulated ruled render. The land slopes down to the west of the block, making the basement floor a more visually prominent element on this side of the building (Figure 10).

The portico is accessed by a set of concrete stairs flanked by a pair of wrought iron lamps set atop the balustrades. Set between the pedestals of the columns, and in front of the doors, are geometrically patterned mild steel gates (Figure 11). The threshold between the gates and the doorways are marked by decorative tile flooring in a Greek key pattern (Figure 12).

The Arnold Street elevation is significantly longer than that of Toorak Road, and continues much of the same detailing of the principal façade. Notably, mid-way along this façade is a narrow faux temple style portico with a pediment supported by paired pilasters flanking a recessed bay (Figure 10). Windows are set between the paired pilasters on both floors, with detailed spandrels between.

The extent of this elevation to the south of the portico (near the corner of Arnold Street and Toorak Road) has a regular pattern of pilasters, with a decorative frieze running between the heads of the pilasters and windows set in the spaces between. The northern extent of the elevation has a small rectilinear projecting wing and is simply treated with plain render walls, a cornice above first floor height and three centrally placed windows at each floor level.

The window openings between the pilasters are set on both levels of the building, providing space for decorative spandrels between. A decorative architrave surrounds the windows on both floors, with stylised voussoirs, giving the appearance of larger, single storey windows. Due to the fall of the land the basement level of the building is higher on this elevation, allowing for low set windows.

The staircases located on this elevation, leading up to the principal floor, have later mild steel balustrades with stylised Stars of David inset at intervals between the balusters. A steel security gate has recently been placed across the entry to one of the staircases.



Figure 10. The Arnold Street elevation of the building. The portico, which mimics the larger version on the Toorak Road elevation, can be seen in the centre. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 11. Detail of the entrance doors on the principal, set behind mild steel gates. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 12. Detail of the tiled threshold with Greek key pattern. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 13. The recent security gate that has been placed across one of the staircases on the Arnold Street elevation. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

The rear and east façades of the building have been left as red face brick with concrete lintels to the windows. A large timber fire escape is present on the eastern side of the building.

In the rear courtyard is a small rectangular building, which is used as a sukkah (Figure 14). This building is contemporary with the synagogue. The sukkah features a red face brick façade to Arnold Street. The central doorway is set within a small pedimented portico, supported by two Tuscan columns on

pedestals. Either side of the portico are two full height niches with keystone motifs. The gable of the building is hidden behind a decorative concrete render parapet. The remainder of this building is a simple, steel-framed gable roof structure, with most of the walls being occupied by sliding lattice doors. The steel roof is also retractable, though not currently functioning, a feature designed for the religious festival Sukkot.



Figure 14. The Arnold Street façade of the sukkah, located to the rear of the synagogue building. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

The rear courtyard is separated from Arnold Street by a concrete render perimeter wall, with a Victorian palisade gate (Figure 15). The gate was re-located from the Congregation's earlier site in Bourke Street, Melbourne.



Figure 15. The Victorian gates removed from the original Bourke Street synagogue and installed as part of the perimeter wall on the new site along Arnold Street. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

Interiors

The interior of the synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road is richly decorated, continuing many of the classical details evident on the exterior of the building.

The foyer of the synagogue is the first room entered from the principal façade. The black and white tiled floor design continues with borders in the Greek key pattern, as seen in the threshold between the front gates and doors. The remainder of the tiles, that appear to be hand painted, have a geometric pattern (Figure 16). Walls have timber panelling to door height. The doors leading into the Synagogue from the foyer are flanked by pairs of ionic columns with entablature; the doors are surmounted with rounded pediments (Figure 17). The staircases, with terrazzo treads, have metal balusters that incorporate a menorah pattern. Several memorial boards, plaques, and commemorative items are located in this foyer area.

The principal synagogue of the building is expansive, enhanced by the two-storey open volume crowned by the interior of the dome. The main floor is raked, to enable visibility of the bimah. Upstairs, the horseshoe shaped balcony with similarly stepped seating provides the women’s gallery. The balcony is supported by Tuscan columns, with ionic columns above to support the roof. The solid balustrade features panels with rosettes, a detail that has been copied from the original Bourke Street synagogue. Fixed seating on the main floor and balcony is made of timber and includes a mix of new seating and original seating from the Bourke Street Synagogue (Figure 18).



Figure 16. An example of the tiled flooring in the front foyer of the building. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 17. An image showing columns in the front foyer, along with some of the commemorative materials in the room. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 18. An example of some of the timber seating brought to the synagogue from the Congregation's former site on Bourke Street, Melbourne. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

The interior of the drum of the dome has regularly spaced rectangular window openings between rows of cornice (visible in Figure 19 and Figure 20). All windows have been fitted with contemporary stained-glass designs by the artist Rimona Kedem. Each window depicts one of the twelve Tribes of Israel. Between the windows are pairs of decorative moulded panels. The interior of the dome itself is panelled in plaster; each panel is inset with a rosette. A large rosette is placed at the apex of the dome (Figure 19).

The alcove where the Ark is placed (Figure 20), is highly ornate. A deeply modulated colonnaded screen runs across the wall of this section of the building. The screen features Corinthian columns, stepped cornicing and fine use of scagliola work (Figure 21). The Ark is centrally placed. The bimah is constructed of finely carved, Tasmanian Blackwood. The blackwood carving has friezes of fruit, foliage and Torah scrolls.

A smaller synagogue is located in the basement. This room is simply treated, with dado height panelling and plain plaster walls above. Notably, this room features the Ark and the bimah of the original Bourke Street synagogue, which was brought to the site at the time of construction (Figure 22). Also included in the basement level is the congregation's boardroom.

On the first level there is a function room with plastered barrel-vaulted ceiling and parquetry floor. This room features original decorative features, including timber dado panelling, double doors with porthole windows, timber door surrounds and leaded windows (Figure 23).

Many of the windows across the building have been replaced with modern stained-glass designs, all by Rimona Kedem. Most of these windows have been donated by congregants.



Figure 19. The interior of the dome, as seen from the ground floor of the synagogue. The modern stained glass windows depict each of the Tribes of Israel (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 20. A view of the Ark and bimah, taken from the women's gallery balcony. The horseshoe shape of the balcony is evident. The cornice and windows set in the drum of the dome can be seen clearly above. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 21. Two views of the apse of the synagogue, which houses the Ark and the bimah. The Ark is shielded behind the central blue velvet curtains. The colonnaded screen with heavy decoration and scagliola work is evident on the wall. The extensive Tasmanian Blackwood carving on the bimah is also visible. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 22. The Ark and bimah removed from the original Bourke Street synagogue and brought to the site, housed in the minor synagogue in the basement level. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 23. The Function room above the foyer. Notable features include the barrel vaulted ceiling, parquetry floors, original doors and timber door surrounds and timber dado panelling. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

INTEGRITY

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, exhibits a high level of integrity to its original design by the architect Nahum Barnet. The overall form of the building has not been altered, including the large copper clad dome. The principal façades of the building, facing Toorak Road and Arnold Street, show little sign of alteration and have retained the classically ornamented original design scheme, including porticos, pediments, pilasters, string courses, cornices, window detailing and parapet walls. The render has been retained in its unpainted form. Minor detailing, such as threshold tiles, doors and gates, have also all been retained. Many windows across the building have been changed from their original glazing to new, stained-glass windows created by the artist Rimona Kedem. This further enhances the historical and social resonance of the building.

The sukkah at the rear of the building retains its original principal brick façade with small portico and niches. The sukkah retains its original retractable roof and doors, however these are in poor condition and are not operational. The perimeter wall facing Arnold Street has been retained in original condition, as have the Victorian-era gates that were originally part of the Bourke Street synagogue. .

Minimal changes have been made to the exterior of the site. Mild steel balustrades to the Arnold Street façade's staircases do not detract from the building. The recent security gates placed over the entry to one of these staircases similarly do not detract and are easily reversible.

Internally, the building retains much of its rich and ornate interior design scheme. This is evident in the front foyer, main synagogue, minor synagogue and the upstairs function room. Little change has been made to any surfaces. Alterations to the choir loft in the apse of the synagogue do not detract from the scheme, and are not noticeable as the loft has retained curtains which shield it from the room. Later changes to bathrooms do not detract from the building.

The triangular forecourt and mature Canary Island Date Palm, which appears to be an early planting dating to 1945, appear to be continuous elements of the place. They contribute to and enhance the overall integrity of the place. Overall, the building retains a very high integrity.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

There are currently 11 synagogues in Victoria that are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register or Heritage Overlay, or identified as potential heritage places by local government authorities (HERMES). Among these examples, the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue is one of two purpose-built synagogues constructed in the interwar period, with the other one being the St Kilda Hebrew Congregation Synagogue in St Kilda (VHR H1968; HO89, City of Port Phillip).

The majority of synagogues predating World War II were completed by 1877, including the two examples within the City of Melbourne: the former Bourke Street synagogue, built in 1847–48 (demolished); and the East Melbourne Hebrew Congregation on Albert Street, built in 1877 (VHR H0495; HO124). Synagogues built in Victoria during the nineteenth and early half of twentieth century generally employed classical architectural features, as also seen in regional examples such as the synagogue at 2–4 Barkly Street, Ballarat East (VHR H0106; HO8, City of Ballarat) and the former Synagogue at 74–78 McKillop Street, Geelong (VHR H1103; HO240, City of Greater Geelong), both built in 1861.

Postwar synagogues in Victoria were usually built in Modernist styles in the decades after World War II. This period saw significant Jewish immigration to Australia, with the geographical displacements of the war. The choice of Modernist architecture signified a break from traditional European forms for the communities in Victoria, influenced heavily by wartime experiences and the diverse backgrounds of the congregants.

The following pre-World War II examples of synagogues within and beyond the City of Melbourne compare to the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road, being of the same use, and for their use of elements inspired by Classical architecture.

East Melbourne Synagogue, 494–500 Albert Street, East Melbourne (VHR H0495; HO124)

The East Melbourne Synagogue was built in 1877 to a design by eminent church architects Crouch and Wilson. The façade was completed in 1883, in the Renaissance Revival style. The façade features pilasters, aediculae over windows, and a large pediment. The building is notable for its two steep, octagonal domes. Internally, the synagogue has an upper balcony serving as the women's gallery.



Figure 24. East Melbourne Synagogue, 494–500 Albert Street, East Melbourne, built in 1877. (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

Former Mickveh Yisrael Synagogue, 275–285 Exhibition Street, Melbourne (VHR H0766; HO635)

A simple brick building, built in 1859 to a design by the architects Knight and Kerr. The building’s primary ornamentation is evident on the front façade, with classical references including pilasters and a stylised pediment gable. The building became a school after the 1877 East Melbourne Synagogue was built and is now a restaurant.



Figure 25. Former Mickveh Yisrael Synagogue, 275–285 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, built in 1859. (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

St Kilda Hebrew Congregation Synagogue, 10–12 Charnwood Grove, St Kilda (VHR H1968; HO89, City of Port Phillip)

The St Kilda Hebrew Congregation Synagogue was built in 1927 to a design by the architect Joseph Plottel on a site that had been subdivided from the grounds of a large mansion. Built in red brick, the façade is relatively simple with the primary decoration being placed above the entry. The building is topped by a large dome. Internally, the synagogue has an upstairs women’s gallery and fine timber carving.



Figure 26. St Kilda Hebrew Congregation Synagogue, 10–12 Charnwood Grove, St Kilda, built in 1927. (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

Synagogue, 2–4 Barkly Street, Ballarat East (VHR H0106; HO8, City of Ballarat HO8, VHR H0106)

A single-storey, rectangular building designed in a simple classical style. The principal façade has a horizontal parapet embellished with a heavy cornice. Underneath the cornice is a projecting pedimented portico supported by four rectangular columns. Primary ornamentation to the front of the building is the pedimented portico and parapet wall. The building was designed by a local Ballarat architect, TB Cameron.



Figure 27. Synagogue, 2–4 Barkly Street, Ballarat East, 1861. (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

Former Synagogue, 74–78 McKillop Street, Geelong (VHR H1103, City of Greater Geelong HO240, VHR H1103)

A single-storey concrete rendered synagogue built by the builders Jones and Halpin, to designs by the local Geelong architect John Young. Built in a classical style, the building has decorative treatment to all elevations. The principal façade features large corner piers, pediment and a semi-circular gable light set above a porch.



Figure 28. Former Synagogue, 74–78 McKillop Street, Geelong, 1861. (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

Built in 1930 using the elements inspired by classical architecture, the subject building is one of the last classical-styled synagogues built in Victoria. When compared with images of the former Bourke Street Synagogue, many stylistic similarities can be seen. The choice to replicate the architectural language of

the earlier building demonstrates the community's connection to their former site at the time of construction.

The subject site is comparable with the East Melbourne Synagogue in scale and refinement of design. Both are fine examples of Renaissance Revival architecture that was popular during the nineteenth century and was revived again in the interwar period often in a more restrained manner. When compared to the earlier examples of synagogues at 275–285 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, 2–4 Barkly Street, Ballarat East, and 74–78 McKillop Street, Geelong, the subject site is distinguished by its landmark quality. The size and scale of the subject site indicates the prosperity that the Jewish community in Melbourne had found in the period between the 1860s and 1930s. Although built much earlier, the sites are comparable by their use of classical references. This may be representative of the notion expressed by Nahum Barnet that classically designed synagogues implied the congregants were 'loyal British Jews' (MCH 2008:15). These three buildings are no longer in use as synagogues.

Although representing different interpretation of classical language, the subject site is most comparable with the St Kilda Hebrew Congregation Synagogue, built in 1927, in terms of age, scale, and the use of the dome. The St Kilda Hebrew Congregation Synagogue exhibits the influence of Byzantine architecture while the design of the subject site was based on the demolished Bourke Street synagogue that used a simple Greek temple form. The St Kilda Hebrew Congregation Synagogue and the subject site both exhibit a grander scale than their predecessors, indicating the prosperity and aspirations of both congregations in the first decades of the twentieth century. While there are similarities in the form of both buildings, the subject site exhibits a more elaborate design scheme when compared to the relatively stripped-back exterior of the synagogue at St Kilda. The subject site utilises its corner site in a prominent setting, and is distinguished by the highly detailed application of classical motifs to almost all prominent surfaces, both internally and externally.

Overall, the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue is characterised as a highly intact building bearing an impressive form and highly refined design scheme. The scale and quality evident in the synagogue's construction place it as one of the largest and most impressive of its kind in Victoria. Its siting on the corner of Toorak Road and Arnold Street and a prominent substantial copper clad dome are also notable. The prestigious siting and striking visual prominence of the dome have contributed to it being a landmark building in the area. The building's exterior is characterised by its ornate detailing and sophisticated composition, including its large, classical portico, and extensive external detailing in concrete render moulding, carved Hebrew lettering and Greek key pattern tiles. The building is important as being the last synagogue built in Victoria at such an impressive scale before World War II.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

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 understanding 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).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend inclusion of 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as an individual heritage place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme:

Melbourne Planning Scheme

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	Yes
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	Yes
TREE CONTROLS	Yes – Canary Island Date Palm, (<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>) at the triangular forecourt
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01–4)	Yes – Sukkah and Victorian palisade gate and perimeter wall
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	Yes
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

Other

Recommended to be nominated to be included on the Victorian Heritage Register.

REFERENCES

Argus, as cited.

Aron, Joseph and Arndt, Judy 1992. *The Enduring Remnant: the First 150 years of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press.

Herald, as cited.

Lewis, Miles 2005. 'Barnet, Nahum (1855–1931)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, originally published 2005. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography>, accessed 2 February 2021.

Melbourne Hebrew Congregation (MHC) 2008. *The Architecture and Leadlight Windows of the Melbourne Synagogue*. Melbourne: Melbourne Hebrew Congregation.

Melbourne Hebrew Congregation (MHC) 2021. 'Our History'. www.melbournesynagogue.org.au, accessed 1 February 2021.

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan, as cited, State Library Victoria.

Mercury and Weekly Courier, as cited.

Plan of land at Toorak Road & Arnold Street, South Yarra, 1888, State Library Victoria: Vale Collection, accessed 17 February 2021.

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV). Regional Land Office Parish and Township Plans Digitised Reference Set, VPRS 16171.

Qdos Art 2019, 'Rimona Kedem', www.qdosarts.com, accessed 18 February 2021.

Rechter, Bernard 2008. 'Jews and Judaism', *eMelbourne*. School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, <http://www.emelbourne.net.au/>, accessed 2 June 2021.

Rubinstein, Hilary 1993. 'Brodie, Sir Israel (1895–1979)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, originally published 1993. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography>, accessed 2 February 2021.

Slater, L. Oscar 1987. *Walking Tour of South Yarra West*. South Yarra: Prendagast Publishers.

Victorian Heritage Database (VHD), as cited.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

South Yarra Conservation Study 1985 A

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage Place: Melbourne
Hebrew Congregation
Synagogue

PS ref no: ~~HOxxx~~HO1416



What is significant?

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, built in 1930, is significant.

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

- building's original external form, including prominent dome
- building's integrity to the original design by Nahum Barnet
- buildings materiality, including concrete render, walls left in face brick and copper cladding to the dome
- front portico, including pediment, columns on pedestals and associated detailing

- entire detailing to external walls, including parapets, balustrading, pilasters and other decoration expressed in concrete render
- external detailing to the drum of the dome
- original pattern of fenestration
- stairs accessing both the Toorak Road and Arnold Street elevations, including associated balustrading
- concrete rendered brick perimeter wall on the Arnold Street frontage, including Victorian gate removed from the congregation's original site on Bourke Street in Melbourne
- sukkah building located to the rear of the synagogue building fronting Arnold Street, with front façade including portico, niches and pediments, as well as the retracting nature of the roof and the walls
- stained-glass windows
- highly intact interior of the building, including the internal moulded detailing (columns, cornices, stringcourses, rosettes, pediments and panels); its carved timberwork (including Arks, bimahs, seats, friezes and fittings); its scagliola surface treatments, tiled and parquet flooring, original doors and windows, barrel vaulted and dome ceilings
- memorial objects in the foyer area, including memorial boards, plaques, and commemorative items
- triangular forecourt and mature Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*).

More recent additions, including the security gates on the Arnold Street elevation, and the fire escape to the eastern elevation, are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, is of local historical, representative, aesthetic and social significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, is of historical significance to the City of Melbourne, as the principal place of worship for the oldest Jewish congregation in Victoria. The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation was formed in 1841, and was originally housed at a site on Bourke Street in Melbourne. The congregation chose to move to the subject site in order to provide a larger place of worship closer to where many of its congregants had settled. The erection of a substantial and highly ornate synagogue on in a prestigious location is indicative of the growth of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation and its increased social prominence since its formation in 1841. (Criterion A)

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra, is of representative significance as a synagogue designed in a classically inspired architectural style, typical of the pre-World War II synagogues in Victoria. The characteristics of a synagogue that used references to classical styles include external elements such as porticos, pilasters and gable ends styled to represent pediments, as well as interior decorative elements. The former site of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation, on Bourke Street in Melbourne, had also been built in the classical style, and was directly referenced in the design of the subject site. (Criterion D)

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Synagogue is of aesthetic significance as a highly decorative, architecturally refined interpretation of classical architecture in the interwar period. The synagogue is significant for its prestigious siting and striking visual prominence of the dome that have contributed to it being a landmark building in the area. The building's exterior is characterised by its ornate detailing and sophisticated composition, including its large, classical portico, concrete render moulding, carved Hebrew lettering and Greek key pattern tiles. The interior of the building is aesthetically significant for its

equally refined decorative elements, surfaces, and internal fittings. Significant features of the interior include the treatment of the underside of the dome, the decorative colonnaded screen housing the Ark with refined scagliola work, and the use of columns, friezes and cornices. Additionally, the horseshoe shaped balcony, tiled surfaces of the foyer, and barrel-vaulted ceiling of the function room are also important to the aesthetic value of the building. Significant fixtures and fittings include interior light fittings, staircase balustrading, timber seats contemporary with the building, and the stained-glass windows. The extensive finely crafted Tasmanian blackwood carving to the bimah is an outstanding example of ornate timberwork. The fine quality of the timberwork brought from the original synagogue on Bourke Street, Melbourne, including wooden seats and the original bimah, further enhance the aesthetic character of the interior. The triangular forecourt setting and mature Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) contribute to and enhance the overall integrity and aesthetic significance of the place. (Criterion E)

The synagogue at 2W–8W Toorak Road, South Yarra is socially significant to the City of Melbourne. As the second synagogue belonging to the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation, which was formed in 1841, The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation is thus the oldest surviving Jewish congregation in the State of Victoria, and has remained an active community. The congregation moved to the current site in 1930 in order to provide a larger place of worship and closer to the suburbs in which the community had begun to settle. The Architect of the synagogue, Nahum Barnet, chose to design the new building with direct references to the old Bourke Street synagogue, as it was considered to be important in the history of the congregation. These direct references can be seen in the choice of the classical style architecture and use of a dominant front portico with Corinthian columns. Further enhancing the ongoing connection of the congregation to both sites, is the presence of materials brought to the new synagogue from Bourke Street, in 1930. These include Victorian gates and carved wooden seats, and the bimah, which has been placed in the minor synagogue at the subject site. The Synagogue also continues to connect with the community through its memorial objects (memorial boards, plaques, and commemorative items in the foyer). The synagogue provides tangible links to previous generations, including the congregation and community more broadly. The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation continues to use the site as their place of worship and social gatherings and events. (Criterion G)

Primary source

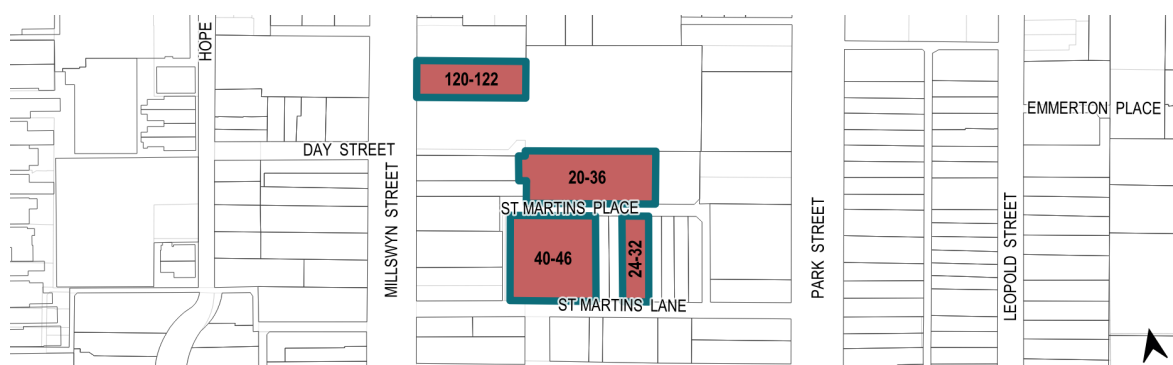
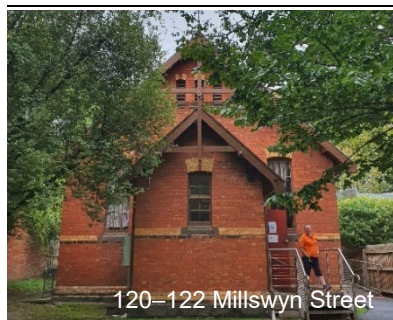
South Yarra Heritage Review 2022 [\(updated March 2024\)](#) (GML Heritage)

2 Serial listing place citation

SITE NAME: St Martins Youth Arts Centre complex

STREET ADDRESS: 24–32 and 40–46 St Martins Lane, 20–36 St Martins Place, 120–122 Millswyn Street, South Yarra

PROPERTY ID: 108680 (24–32 St Martins Lane); 108677 (40–46 St Martins Lane); 106647 (120–122 Millswyn Street); 108685 (20–36 St Martins Place)



SURVEY DATE:	March 2021	SURVEY BY:	GML Heritage
PLACE TYPE:	Serial listing	EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY:	HO6 South Yarra Heritage Precinct
PROPOSED CATEGORY:	Significant	FORMER GRADE:	C (120–122 Millswyn Street)
DESIGNER / ARCHITECT / ARTIST:	Samuel Charles Brittingham (120–122 Millswyn Street) Gordon Murphy (40–46 St Martins Lane)	BUILDER:	Donald McLennan (40–46 St Martins Lane)
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD:	Victorian Period (1851–1901) Interwar Period (c1919–c1940) Postmodern (c1975–c2000)	DATE OF CREATION / MAJOR CONSTRUCTION:	1889 (120–122 Millswyn Street) 1930 (24–32 St Martins Lane) 1956, 1982 (40–46 St Martins Lane)

THEMES

ABORIGINAL THEMES:	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES:
Research undertaken in preparing this citation did not identify any clear or direct associations with Aboriginal people or organisations.	N/A
HISTORICAL THEMES:	DOMINANT SUB-THEMES:
14 Arts and culture	14.8 Theatre
9 Religion	9.2 Establishing places of worship

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend inclusion of 24–32 and 40–46 St Martins Lane, 20–36 St Martins Place, and 120–122 Millswyn Street, South Yarra, in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme as a serial listing.

Extent of overlay: Refer to map.

SUMMARY

St Martins Theatre was established as the Melbourne Little Theatre in 1934. The theatre company has provided training to emerging actors and delivered a program of performances to the public from this site since 1934. Several prominent figures from Victoria's theatre industry have been associated with the theatre since its formation. It was one of the earliest local theatre companies established in Australia and the first to be established in Melbourne.

The St Martins Youth Arts Centre complex comprises four sites on discrete allotments. The principal site is 40–46 St Martins Lane, which contains the purpose-built theatre building, erected in 1956, and the 1982 additions. The converted former warehouse at 24–32 St Martins Lane, and the former church hall at 120–122 Millswyn Street are rehearsal and education spaces. 20–36 St Martins Place is a rectangular block of land, also under the management of St Martins Theatre, which contains a carpark and a mature Peppercorn tree with a memorial plaque dedicated to St Martins' former theatre director Irene Mitchell. In 1977 the Victorian Government purchased the subject sites and in 1979 it was reserved for ongoing use as a youth arts centre under the management of St Martins Theatre Guild.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Theatres in Melbourne

Melbourne's first theatre was a timber building in Bourke Street that opened in 1842 with a series of amateur performances. By 1880 seven substantial theatres had been built within the central city area. Theatre productions appealed to a wide audience from different socio-economic classes. Programs were varied and influenced by prevailing fashions in Britain, such as Shakespearian productions, farces, and even quasi-circus type shows. During the boom period of the 1880s Melbourne's only surviving nineteenth-century theatres, the Princess Theatre and Her Majesty's (first named the Alexandra) were built (Colligan and Van Straten 2008).

In the early twentieth century, popular British and American productions dominated Melbourne's theatre programs. The onset of World War I restricted the entry of overseas actors to Australia and halted touring international productions. In response, theatre companies turned to the promotion of local acting talent. During the Depression many of the city's live theatre venues closed or were 'wired' for the recently introduced 'talkies'. Two of Melbourne's most popular theatres, the Theatre Royal and the Bijou, closed in 1933 and 1934 respectively (both demolished) (Colligan and Van Straten 2008). The introduction of motion film also contributed to the changing tastes and the demise of commercial theatre productions in this period.

The closure of many of the larger theatre venues in the central city was met with growing activity in smaller, largely amateur, community theatre particularly in Melbourne's inner suburban areas. The Melbourne Little Theatre, established in 1931, was one of the first amateur theatre companies formed in Melbourne. Other local and amateur theatre companies founded during the 1930s included the Workers' Theatre Group, founded in 1935 (now known as Melbourne New Theatre); and the Hartwell Players, formed in Camberwell in 1938. The National Theatre Movement was also established in 1935, to provide training and performance opportunities for young people in opera, dance and drama. The National Theatre was based in the hall of St Peter's Eastern Hill Anglican Church in its early years; it later occupied the Village Theatre in Toorak (destroyed by fire in 1962), then the Empress Theatre, Prahran (destroyed by fire 1971) before moving to the former Victory Theatre in St Kilda (Colligan and Van Straten 2008). During the Second World War amateur theatre in Melbourne faced wartime restrictions.

After World War II many of the commercial theatres reverted to imported variety shows with international headliners. While commercial theatres typically catered to the middle class and showed popular productions, Melbourne's local and amateur theatres provided more challenging and experimental productions and embraced social and cultural diversity.

New Wave theatre developed as a movement in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Influenced by European immigration and with a strong focus around student life at the University of Melbourne, the alternative theatre scene was fostered in intimate performance spaces within Melbourne's inner suburbs. Whereas the early picture palaces of the twentieth century crammed many hundreds of people into large theatres to be fed mainstream, or 'pop' culture, the alternative scene of the 1960s and 1970s developed as part of a counter-culture. Commercial theatre and cinemas experienced a decline in attendance during the 1970s and 1980s. This demise was countered with a significant growth of 'live theatre', especially in small live theatre venues that constituted adapted existing structures. One of the most significant of these alternative performance spaces was La Mama in Carlton, founded by Betty Burstall in 1967 in a former shirt factory (Context 2015:9–10).

Other examples include the Union Theatre Repertory Company at the University of Melbourne, founded in 1953 (which became the Melbourne Theatre Company in 1968); and the Emerald Hill Theatre, founded in 1962–66 in South Melbourne. The Handspan Theatre Company, a puppetry theatre group

established in 1977 in Fitzroy. Described as a ‘professional, experimental and mainly adult theatre company’, the group operated from a studio at 108 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy. (Context 2015:9–10).

Amateur theatre groups were largely unfunded enterprises and made do with whatever suitable accommodation was available. Theatre groups often used local halls, such as mechanics institutes or church halls. Purpose-built local theatres were uncommon.

Church halls and chapels in Melbourne

Ancillary church buildings belonging to the major Christian denominations—including mission churches, chapels of ease and mission halls—were common in the City of Melbourne, including South Yarra, from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. They were built to supplement the functions of parish churches by broadening the geographic reach of the parish. Chapels of ease were often built for the convenience of those who lived some distance from the parish church; they were also intended to provide an additional place of worship, thereby reducing the occurrence of overcrowding of the parish church on Sundays. Mission halls had a range of uses; some were used for Sunday services but were also used for education and meetings. These supplementary places of worship were often provided specifically for the working class, including local domestic servants (*Telegraph*, 27 August 1887:6). A mission hall or chapel of ease was typically smaller and plainer than the main church and was often located on quieter residential streets rather than on main roads and prominent corners. The modest character of these buildings reflects both their ancillary role to the main church, as well as the stratification of class in religious congregations.

Mission chapels and mission halls—sometimes referred to as churches of ‘low tendencies’—were intended to provide a welcoming and non-intimidating space for the poor and non-believers. The purpose of mission chapels and mission halls was to attract new members to the church. Mission workers went out into the community and zealously sought to convert people to Christianity. The mission chapels and halls provided ‘bright, simple and attractive’ services that were more informal and accessible than services typical of the main churches (*Telegraph*, 27 August 1887:6). They often provided comfort and solace to the poor. Single-room Sunday schools were sometimes built alongside small chapels and mission halls. Mission chapels and halls flourished in Melbourne in the late nineteenth century in areas where there was a large working-class population. The activities of mission chapels and halls declined following World War II on account of greater social mobility and the gentrification of the former working-class pockets of South Yarra.

Chapels of ease, as their name implied, provided a place of worship that was easier to access than the parish church and these were established in large parishes where there was a large section of the population that was at a considerable distance from the church. St Joseph’s Catholic Church in South Yarra (City of Stonnington) established the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church chapel of ease at 39–45 Bromby Street, South Yarra (assessed as an individual heritage place in the Review), and another in Toorak (demolished).

SITE HISTORY

The place occupies the traditional Country of the Bunurong people. The sites at 24–32 and 40–46 St Martins Lane, 20–36 St Martins Place, and 120–122 Millswyn Street, South Yarra, are historically linked through their connection to the Melbourne Little Theatre Company (renamed St Martins Theatre in 1962). This began as an amateur theatre company but grew to be a professional organisation and cultural institution that has maintained its community character and focus. Over the period 1934–68, the company acquired the four subject sites. The Victorian Government purchased the four sites from the company in 1979 and reserved the land for ongoing use as a youth arts centre under the management