

---

# ELMHURST FLATS



richmond church street  
richmond church street 391



6356.JPG

---

## Location

391 Church Street, RICHMOND VIC 3121 - Property No 191170

## Municipality

YARRA CITY

## Level of significance

Incl in HO area indiv sig

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO315

## Heritage Listing

Yarra City

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 2014

Elmhurst Flats, 391 Church Street, Richmond

This site is subject to a Statement of Significance for the building, as well as a Statement of Significance for the Precinct in which it is located.

Please find below the Statement for the building, followed by the Statement for the Precinct.

## Statement of Significance for the building

### What is significant?

The Elmhurst Flats at 391 Church Street, Richmond was created in 1934 for E. Howard. Lawson and has other historical associations with tenants such as Myra Emily Trebilcock, mender; Lois Lord, home duties and Constance Burkett, home duties. The place has good integrity to its creation date.

Fabric from the creation date at the Elmhurst Flats is locally significant within the City of Yarra, compared to other similar places from a similar era.

### How is it significant?

The Elmhurst Flats at 391 Church Street, Richmond, is historically and architecturally significant to the locality of Richmond and the City of Yarra.

### Why is it significant?

The Elmhurst Flats is significant as a distinctive two-storey stuccoed block of ten flats in an exotic Mediterranean Villa style, with hipped and tiled main roof, cantilevered concrete balcony, unusual saltire cross cement balustrade and coupled spiralled columns. It was developed by Howard Lawson who created the significant Beverley Hills Flats and Stratton Heights apartment developments, South Yarra, and the Mt Martha Gardens of the Moon development.

## Precinct statement of significance

### Component streets include:

Church Street,

Darlington Parade,

Dickmann Street,

Elm Grove,

George Street,

Richmond Terrace,

Waltham Place,

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

#### Subdivision

The Church Street Heritage Overlay Area includes parts of the first suburban Crown Allotments sold in the City, being Crown Portions 20, 21, 26 and 27, each 25 acres in area. Allotments 21 and 22 were purchased in 1839 by Rev. Joseph Docker (squatter), Allotment 20 by Charles Williams (auctioneer), and Allotment 26 by W H Yaldwyn (squatter, banker).

The Waltham Street and Darlington Parade areas were subdivided in 1853 and further subdivided in the 1880s. Docker had subdivided his two allotments by 1853, with plans for a model village set out on the flat below his townhouse at 370 Church Street.

By the turn of the century, most of the Heritage Overlay Area was developed. The topography of the Heritage Overlay Area, the highest point in Richmond, attracted both the churches and the wealthier colonists with the result that the majority of the earliest residences were of a more substantial nature compared with other sections of Richmond.

This area has remained one of the most prestigious parts of Richmond for residential development. As an example, Howard Lawson's Elmhurst Flat block of 1934 aimed to tap into this prestigious residential location, paralleling with his significant Hollywood style Beverley Hills and Stratton Heights Flats, sited across the Yarra River at South Yarra.

#### Large villas

By 1855, villas with large gardens and orchards had been established in Church Street between Brougham and Elm Streets. Early houses which survive include Doery House (353 Church Street) and Messenger House (333 Church Street, formerly Stonehenge), the latter being built prior to 1843 for Captain John Roach (28) and remodelled in the Edwardian period.

#### Major church complexes

Three major church complexes were established in the Heritage Overlay Area in the mid-1800s. St Stephen's Anglican Church (1850-1876) at 360 Church Street was designed by Blackburn and Newson on land donated to the church by the Rev. Joseph Docker and is one of the earliest bluestone churches built in Victoria. The Wesleyans began the construction of a temporary timber chapel (later the schoolhouse) in 1853, bluestone chapel in 1858, and added a schoolhouse (1871) and a parsonage (1876). St Ignatius' Roman Catholic Church (326) was built in stages between 1867 and 1928, to a design by prominent architect William Wardell, with the bluestone Presbytery added in 1872.

#### Civic buildings

Other non-residential developments in the Heritage Overlay Area included the former Richmond United Friendly Society Dispensary (1884; 294 Church Street), and the Hibernian Hall (1872; 316 Church Street), which was built as a temperance hall. The Richmond RSL was built in 1922, as an expression of the continuing premier civic status of this part of Church Street in the 20th century. The Richmond Library is the most recent civic development in the area.

#### Commercial development

Commercial development extended north from the major thoroughfares of Swan St and south from Bridge Road in the late Victorian and Edwardian-eras.

#### Main development era

The main development period evident in the heritage overlay is that of the Victorian and Edwardian-period, with a contribution from some well preserved inter-war buildings and individually significant places of all eras. Large houses, religious and public buildings from this period are the key elements in the heritage overlay.

#### Contributory elements

The Church Street Heritage Overlay contributory elements include (but not exclusively) large detached Victorian-era and Edwardian-era and small attached Victorian-era, one and two storey houses having typically:

- . pitched gabled or hipped roofs, with some facade parapets,
- . face brick (red, bichrome and polychrome) or stucco walls;
- . corrugated iron, unglazed Marseilles pattern terra-cotta tiles, and slate roofing;
- . Chimneys of either stucco finish (with moulded caps) or of matching face brickwork with corbelled capping courses;
- . Typically with post-supported verandah elements facing the street;
- . Less than 40% of the street wall face comprised with openings such as windows and doors; and
- . Front gardens, originally bordered typically by timber picket front fences of around 1m height;

Contributory elements also include shops and residences of the Victorian and Edwardian-eras, with:

- . Display windows and recessed entries;
- . Zero boundary setbacks;
- . Mainly one storey scale;
- . Attached rectilinear plan form, a parapeted roofline; and

Substantial Victorian-era ecclesiastical buildings with:

- . Free standing rectilinear form
- . Pitched roofs, some towers and spires positioned to be visible from a distance;
- . Fenced yards, with potential use of timber or iron pickets and a stone base for the frontage fence;
- . Two storey and greater wall heights;
- . Stone, masonry or stuccoed masonry facades, slate or tiled roofs; and
- . Less than 40% of the street wall face comprised with openings such as windows and doors.

Contributory elements also include:

Public infrastructure, expressive of the Victorian and Edwardian-eras such as stone pitched road paving, kerbs and channels, and asphalt paved footpaths - mainly in side streets.

Many significant buildings within the Heritage Overlay Area have their own heritage overlay (HO241, HO242, and the St Ignatius complex) but nevertheless are contributory to the Church St Heritage Overlay Area.

How is it significant?

HO315 Church Street Heritage Overlay Area, Richmond is **aesthetically and historically** significant to the City of Yarra (National Estate Register [NER]Criteria E1, A4)

Why is it significant?

The Church Street Heritage Overlay Area is significant:

- . As one of the first parts of Richmond to be subdivided and developed, as expressed by early buildings like Messenger House 333 Church Street, from the 1840s;
- . As the chosen site for a high number of individually significant 19th and early 20th century buildings set in grounds and including early ecclesiastical and civic buildings, and some Melbourne landmarks, as well as substantial residential buildings that were attracted to the area by its elevated topography, high amenity and proximity to churches;
- . As the site of key civic or institutional buildings in Richmond from the 19th century through to the 1920s (i.e. The Richmond RSL Hall); and
- . For its significant architecture such as the William Wardell designed St. Ignatius Roman Catholic Church as a well known and prominent landmark across the metropolitan area.

The heritage character of the precinct is also supported by the commercial development extending up Church St from the Swan St and Bridge Road shopping areas with shops dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as part of the cultural context of Victorian and Edwardian-era life on the hill.

References

28 J U White. Early Residents and Property Owners in Richmond. 1979. p 13.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Yarra - Richmond Conservation Study, John & Thurley O'Connor, Ros Coleman & Heather Wright, 1985; Yarra - City of Yarra Heritage Review, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1998; Yarra - City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas, Graeme Butler & Associates, 2007;
Construction dates	1934,
Architect/Designer	Lawson, Howard,
Hermes Number	101528
Property Number	

---

## Physical Description 2

A distinctive two-storey stuccoed block of ten flat in an exotic Mediterranean Villa style, with hipped and tiled main roof, cantilevered concrete balcony, unusual saltire cross cement balustrade and coupled spiralled columns. It was developed by Howard Lawson who created the significant Beverley Hills Flats & Stratton Heights developments, South Yarra and the Mt Martha Gardens of the Moon development.

## Integrity

Good

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*