
55 PERCY STREET PORTLAND

Location

55 PERCY STREET PORTLAND, GLENELG SHIRE

Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7221-0306

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - November 11, 2021

What is significant?

Lot 1 55, Portland played an important role as businesses, a logistics hub for the commercial precinct of downtown Portland, with these sites active from the mid-1800s until at least the 1930s. The physical remains of structures and associated artefacts have the potential to provide important information on the technological and cultural development of Portland.

The partial subsurface remains of a commercial wooden structure, likely built during the latter half of the 1800s may be present across 55 Percy Street, Portland. In association with this structure are potentially a range of discarded historic artefacts associated with the operations of this structure. This place has the potential to provide evidence on the early structures, material culture and the technological development of Portland from the 1800s until at least the mid-20th century.

How is it significant?

Why is it significant?

Interpretation of Site	Lot 1 55 Percy Street had a wooden structure built across the majority of its extent at some point in the latter half of the 1800s. This structure was likely to have provided a range of services over its time of use, with its original historic purpose a drapery (Figure 3 – 5). This structure is no longer extant, however, subsurface elements of this structure, such as wooden stumps, are likely found across 55 Percy Street. There is also the strong likelihood that discarded artefacts from across the period of this structures use will be found across the address. A macadamized track is also found in a shallow subsurface context today at 55 Percy Street with this track likely visible in historic photographs from 1925 (Figure 3 – 4, 7). It is likely the macadamized cart track located at 55 Percy Street provided access to Lot 2 57 Percy Street, with a possible well located here serving as a water source for workers and horses involved in the transport of merchandise from Campbells store across the greater Portland district. There also remains the possibility of subsurface structural features across the sites from the 1800s to 1900s such as sheds and other utilitarian structures given the site was utilised for commercial purposes for an extended period over the nineteenth and twentieth century. There is also the strong likelihood that discarded historic artefacts from the mid-1800s until at least the 1930s will be found across the address.
Hermes Number	208298
Property Number	

History

The place comprises two addresses, Lot 1 55 and Lot 2 57 Percy Street, Portland. The place is located within the historic township of Portland, both addresses were likely in use from the earliest period of settlement. The first official survey of Portland occurred in 1840 by Charles J Tyers. Tyers reported a town population of 203 at that time. The first land sales for Portland occurred in Melbourne in October 1840 (Learmonth 1960). Portland vied with Melbourne for the status of major settlement of south west Victoria. A building boom followed the land sales, and from 1840-42 four hotels and four churches were established followed by the first banks in 1846 and 1847 (Tout-Smith 2003).

An 1855 Portland parish maps records that at this time 55 – 57 Percy Street, Portland was the property of Mr James Blair (1813? – 1880) (Figure 1). Blair, a police magistrate, arrived at Sydney from Ireland in February 1835. In 1840 Blair was the first police magistrate at Portland Bay, six years after Edward Henty had settled there: the first local licensing court comprised Blair and Edward and Stephen Henty. In 1843 Blair and Charles Tyers, who had surveyed the first town blocks in 1840, chose two acres (.8 ha) for a Presbyterian church. In 1844 he had bought Clunie, near Harrow, and he also owned property at Trewalla, Narrawang, and Portland itself – this historic reference to Portland likely includes Lot 1 55 Percy Street (Figure 1). Blair moved in 1867 to Melbourne where he built Greenmount in Toorak Road. In 1868 - 78 he was a director of the Bank of Victoria and its deputy-chairman from 1875. On 11 June 1880 he died at his home, Greenmount, Toorak. A surveyors map from 1853 records the presence of two small structures across Lot 1 55 Percy Street at this time (Figure 2).

A Proposed Glenelg Shire Council Planning Scheme Amendment Investigation Report (2016) records that Lot 1 55 Percy Street, Portland in 1925 had a commercial structure built on it, with this business, as per the photographs, titled John Campbell's Drapery (Figure 3 – 4. Glenelg Shire Council Planning Scheme Amendment Investigation Report 2016). Records do not indicate when this building was constructed. The structure appears to be a one storey timber construction, likely with a floor based on wooden stumps, with a prominent facade that faced onto Percy Street. It is also unclear when this structure was demolished, but Lot 1 55 Percy Street is currently open land at present (Figure 6). It is unlikely any other structures were built here following the demolition of this structure. A macadamized cart track is also located at 55 Percy Street, and this may have served as horse and logistics purposes for 55 and 57 Percy Street (Figure 7).

The rear of Lot 2 57 Percy Street, Portland is closely associated with Lot 1 of the same address. At Lot 1 the 1853 Portland surveyors map records the presence of a number of small structures (Figure 2). A 1981 Portland

Urban Conservation Study states that: 'The single-storey bluestone store, dwelling and outbuildings at (Lot 1) 57 Percy Street were originally erected in 1868 for Joseph Marriott. The store has operated continuously in this role for more than 100 years and the gable facade of fine axed bluestone is a distinctive feature. The extensive side elevation with interesting fenestration and veranda, the outbuildings, well and pump are also notable' Glenelg Shire Council Planning Scheme Amendment Investigation Report 2016: 2). A series of 1925 photographs provide the earliest photographic record of both lots, which show a likely well located at the rear of Lot 2 57 Percy Street, Portland (Figure 3 – 5). The building at Lot 1 57 Percy Street, Portland is still extant today and registered as HO59 Campbell's store, residence and stables (former) on the Glenelg Heritage Overlay. Today Lot 2 57 Percy Street, Portland currently consists of an area of open grass, with no structures or infrastructure visible (Figure 6).

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/>