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# O'BRIEN HOUSE



richmond charles street  
richmond charles street 47

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## Location

47 CHARLES STREET,, RICHMOND VIC 3121 - Property No 196220

## Municipality

YARRA CITY

## Level of significance

Incl in HO area indiv sig

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO319

## Heritage Listing

Yarra City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 2014

O'Brien house, 47 Charles 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 O'Brien house at 47 Charles Street, Richmond was created in 1938 for John Patrick O'Brien, librarian. The place has a good integrity to its creation date.

Fabric from the creation date at the O'Brien house is locally significant within the City of Yarra, compared to other similar places from a similar era.

### How is it significant?

The O'Brien house at 47 Charles Street, Richmond is architecturally significant to the locality of Richmond and the City of Yarra.

### Why is it significant?

The O'Brien house is significant as a highly distinctive gabled and hipped roof Moderne style stuccoed and tiled house, as expressed by unusual brick window hood details and the curved entry porch form, all set on a corner site

## Precinct statement of significance

### Component streets include:

Brougham Street, Charles Street, Charlotte Street, Church Street, Elm Grove, George Street, Lyndhurst Street, Malleson Street, Mary Street, McGrath Court, Parker Street, Wall Street,

## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

Elm Grove (originally known as Catherine Street), was created by a subdivision of auctioneer Charles William's Crown Allotment 20 in 1852. By 1855 it contained about 20 houses. The street held a number of distinguished Victorian-era architects, such as James Robertson and William Salway and noted builders like James Bonham and Richard Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald's house (3 Elm Grove, c.1868) is in the Gothic Revival style (48) and was reputedly designed by the celebrated architect William Wardell. The majority of this part of the portion was developed by the early 20th century.

By the late 19th century the street had a semi-mature avenue of elm trees, stone street channels and extensive timber picket fencing and picket tree guards protecting the street trees. The elms, which were planted for Fitzgerald, are said to have been the first suburban street avenue planted. They were replaced by plane trees in the 20th century.

The MMBW Detail Plan 1065 (1896) shows the Heritage Overlay Area as near fully developed with a mixture of masonry and timber, mainly detached houses with front verandahs. The street patterns are irregular, reflecting the many private subdivision that created them, and rear right-of-ways have been provided for service access. The Church Street perimeter (see Church Street Heritage Overlay Area) was lined with large houses that have since, in some cases, been redeveloped and their large land holdings subdivided (see McGrath Court, added onto the west end of Parker St). The Templeman Hotel (4A Charlotte St) was one of the few commercial buildings in the area (now a car park). Houses were set close to the street but are shown with fenced front gardens, footpaths were typically asphalt paved, street crossings were pitched with blue stone, but only Elm Grove was shown with street trees (planted in the footpath). Development in the area today is about 80% from the Victorian-era or Edwardian-eras, with a little over one third of those being from the Edwardian-era.

Later development evident in the Heritage Overlay Area includes an inter-war factory in Mary Street. Its good state of preservation allows expression of Richmond's rebirth as an industrial suburb in the 20th century, one of the key themes in the City.

## Main development era

The main development period evident in the heritage overlay is that of the Victorian era with a substantial contribution from the Edwardian-period. There is also a contribution from some well preserved inter-war buildings and individually significant places of all eras.

#### Contributory elements

The Elm Grove Heritage Overlay Area includes contributory buildings as generally (but not exclusively) detached Victorian-era and Edwardian-era mainly one-storey houses having typically:

- . Pitched gabled or hipped roofs, with few facade parapets;
- . Mainly one storey wall heights but with isolated two storey houses;
- . Weatherboard, face brick (red, bichrome and polychrome), or stucco walls;
- . Corrugated iron roof cladding, some Marseilles pattern terra-cotta tiles, and some slate roofing;
- . Chimneys of either stucco finish (with moulded caps) or of matching face brickwork with corbelled capping courses;
- . Post-supported verandah or porch elements facing the street, with cast-iron (Victorian-era ) or timber (Edwardian-era) detailing;
- . Less than 40% of the street wall face comprised with openings such as windows and doors;
- . Front gardens, originally bordered by timber picket front fences of around 1m height; also
- . Corner shops and residences with display windows and zero boundary setbacks.

Contributory elements also include:

- . Well preserved buildings, including one storey houses and a one storey industrial building, from the pre Second War era;
- . Hilly terrain and an irregular street pattern;
- . Mature street tree plantings (plane trees, as symbolic of the original elm plantings) in Elm Grove;
- . Public infrastructure, expressive of the Victorian and Edwardian-eras such as bluestone pitched road paving, crossings, stone kerbs, and channels, and asphalt paved footpaths

How is it significant?

HO319 Elm Grove 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 Elm Grove Heritage Overlay area is significant:

- . For its range of 19th and early 20th century housing, particularly a number of large Edwardian residences on elevated sites in the west of the Heritage Overlay Area, and smaller housing on flatter land to the east. Collectively they stand out from the surrounding area as a cohesive group of residential buildings which are of aesthetic and historical significance within the municipality;
- . For the elevated siting of parts of the precinct on Richmond Hill, providing commanding views, access to sea breezes and an ideal siting for residences of influential persons until well into the 20thcentury. These included architects James Miller Robertson and William Salway and the Richmond builder and timber merchant Richard Fitzgerald;
- . For the contribution from some well preserved inter-war buildings such as the factory in Mary Street as a significant reminder of the mix of industrial and residential development that was so common in Richmond by World War Two, and the individually significant places of all eras; and

. For the bluestone street elements as an enhancement to the historic character of the Heritage Overlay Area, as aided by mature street plantings (planes) in Elm Grove.

## References

48 National Trust. File No. 2398.

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	1938,
Hermes Number	104018
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 2

Highly distinctive gabled and hipped roof Moderne style stuccoed and tiled house, as expressed by unusual brick window hood details & the curved entry porch form, all set on a corner site

## 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/>*