

# PREFABRICATED COTTAGE



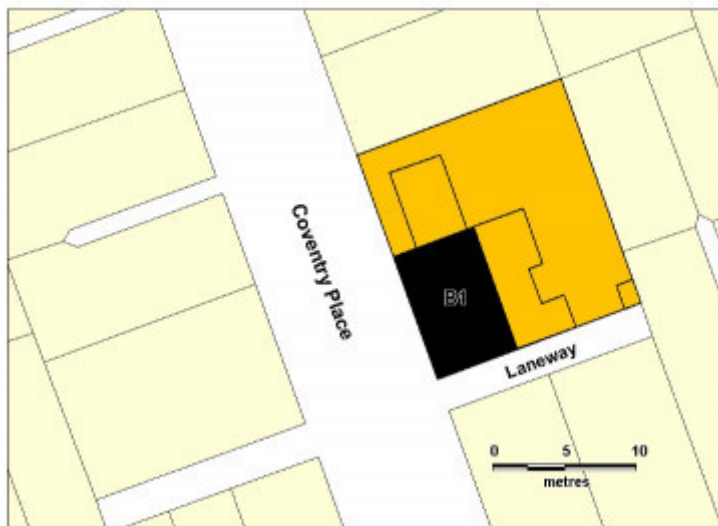
PREFABRICATED  
COTTAGE SOHE 2008



1 prefabricated cottage  
coventry street facade june01



Prefabricated Cottage Post  
Detail June 2001



prefabricated cottage plan

## Location

17 COVENTRY PLACE SOUTH MELBOURNE, PORT PHILLIP CITY

## Municipality

PORT PHILLIP CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1958

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO367

## VHR Registration

October 15, 2001

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 11, 2001

What is significant?

'Portable' or prefabricated buildings from a variety of overseas were imported to Victoria during the gold rush period to satisfy the great demand for housing and other buildings. The variety known as 'Singapore cottages' were probably prefabricated by Malay carpenters from tropical timbers for Chinese traders in Singapore, and were commonly available for sale in Melbourne from as early as 1853.

The allotment covering 17 Coventry Street was part of block 4 of the Emerald Hill sales of Crown land commenced in 1852. This subdivision was set up to enable the construction of cheap buildings outside the limitations of the Melbourne Building Act. A larger than usual proportion of the buildings erected there were either prefabricated or portable types, mostly from Britain with a lesser number from Singapore. From a handful of houses in 1853, there were around 660 rateable dwellings there by 1854. In that year the buildings on the 17 Coventry Place site were described in the rate book as a four-room weatherboard house and stable. The skillion to the rear may have been added c 1859 when rate book entries describe the dwelling as having five rooms and a zinc roof.

Of the several Singapore houses known to have been erected in South Melbourne in this period, this is the only known standing example. It is also likely that the house is standing on its original site. The three other known Singapore houses of similar type in Victoria have all been dismantled and moved in the last few years.

The four roomed cottage with central corridor of 6 x 9 metres has a skillion extension to the rear divided into two rooms. The most intact component is the frame of heavy timbers, although the external bottom plates and the lower sections of main upright frame members at and below ground level are heavily rotted. The joinery in the roof space is the most intact and illustrates characteristic features of Malay carpentry such as the row of king posts, a sub ridge beam, and painted markings on various frame members. The exterior has been rendered with resulting deterioration of timber cladding beneath. No original windows, window openings or doors remain. There is an early brick fireplace in the south-east room. Scattered sections of early internal cladding and wallpapers, some of which may be original, remain.

How is it significant?

The Prefabricated Cottage, South Melbourne is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Singapore Cottage at Coventry Place is of historical significance as a rare surviving prefabricated 'Singapore' house which demonstrates the unusual economic and cultural conditions of gold rush Victoria.

The Singapore Cottage at Coventry Place is of historical significance as a rare surviving prefabricated 'Singapore' house which demonstrates the wider phenomenon of the international pre-fabricated building trade in the mid nineteenth century.

The Singapore Cottage at Coventry Place is of historical significance as a rare surviving prefabricated 'Singapore' house which demonstrates the accelerated development of this part of South Melbourne during the gold rushes.

The Singapore Cottage at Coventry Place is of scientific significance as a rare surviving prefabricated 'Singapore' house which displays unusual framing and jointing design based on traditional Malay building techniques. The frame of the building also demonstrates the use of timbers from the Malay Peninsula such as dedaru and meranti.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

**Places of worship:** In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

**Subdivision/consolidation:** Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### Specific Exemptions:

**General Conditions:** 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of alterations that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

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|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Construction dates      | 1854,              |
| Heritage Act Categories | Registered place,  |
| Other Names             | Singapore Cottage, |
| Hermes Number           | 12258              |

Property Number

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## Extent of Registration

1. All the building B1 as shown on diagram 1958 held by the Executive Director
2. All the land shown on diagram 1958 held by the Executive Director, being part of the land described in Certificat of Title Volume S207 Folio 179

*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/>*