
Gardner Street Precinct



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Location

BUCKINGHAM ST, COPPIN ST, DAVISON ST, GARDNER ST, HIGHETT ST, JOHNSON ST, KENT ST, MURPHY ST, and SOMERSET ST, RICHMOND, YARRA CITY

Municipality

YARRA CITY

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO456

Heritage Listing

Yarra City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Gardner Street Precinct is significant, comprising: 95-121 & 100-126 Buckingham Street, 1-15 Coppin Street, 78-80 & 83-91 Davison Street, 6-88 & 21-85 Gardner Street, 308-384 & 321-369 Highett Street, 39-41 Johnson Street, 70-156, 67-131 & 137-143 Kent Street, 1-45 & 12-48 Murphy Street, and 95-157 & 104-156 Somerset Street, Richmond.

There was a very small amount of development in the precinct in 1855, on Kent Street and Somerset Street, but it did not begin to develop in earnest until the 1880s. Development stalled with the 1890s depression, leaving more than half of the eastern part of the precinct vacant. Construction began again in the early 20th century, leaving a large legacy of Edwardian houses, as well as a few that show a transition to the interwar bungalow styles, and some fully fledged examples. Among them are a few corner stores (Victorian and interwar), as was common in residential areas before widespread car ownership.

Contributory elements have typically:

- Pitched gabled (mainly Edwardian-era) or hipped (mainly Victorian-era) roofs,
- One storey wall heights,
- Weatherboard, some brick or stucco walls;
- Corrugated iron, with some slate roofing;
- Chimneys of either stucco finish (with moulded caps) or of matching face brickwork with corbelled capping courses;
- Post-supported verandah elements facing the street;
- Less than 40% of the street wall face comprised with openings such as windows and doors.

Contributory elements also include:

- Small front gardens, bordered by low front fences, typically of timber picket.
- Public infrastructure, expressive of the Victorian and Edwardian-eras such as stone pitched lane paving, kerbs and channels, and asphalt paved footpaths.

The following buildings are Individually Significant to the precinct: 53, 59-85 & 82 Gardner Street, 97 Kent Street, 361 Highett Street, 28 Murphy Street, 150 & 154 Somerset Street; also HO243 - 13 Coppin Street, HO265 - 345 Highett Street, HO278 - 15 Murphy Street, HO270 - 72 Kent Street, and HO271 - 86 Kent Street.

How it is significant?

The Gardner Street Precinct is of local aesthetic and historical significant to the City of Yarra.

Why it is significant?

The precinct is of aesthetic significance as an enclave of late Victorian, Edwardian and early interwar housing in Richmond. Its well-preserved housing stock demonstrates the principal characteristics of late Victorian housing, ranging from small timber cottages and rendered terraces, to double-fronted asymmetrical and block-fronted houses, and Boom-style houses with idiosyncratic parapets. It also illustrates the range of modest to middle-class Edwardian houses, including gable-fronted cottages, brick duplexes, and substantial timber and brick villas with intact timber fretwork. (Criterion D)

The precinct is historically significant as a tangible illustration of the final major phases of Richmond's development. As development began from the west, near Melbourne and transportation routes, leaving the northeast part of the city the last to be built up. As such, the precinct contains many intact and well-detailed examples of late Victorian and Edwardian architecture, as well as a smaller number of interwar houses. (Criterion A)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Yarra - Heritage Gaps Study: Review of remaining 17 heritage precincts from the 2009 Gaps report, Context Pty Ltd, 2013;
Construction dates	1875,
Hermes Number	197532
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The Gardner Street Precinct is centred on the north-south axis of Gardner Street, stretching from Buckingham Street at the north almost to Palmer Street at the south. Other north-south streets in the precinct are Coppin and Davison, and other east-west streets are Kent, Somerset, Highett and Murphy.

As with most other heritage precincts in Richmond the development themes revolve around strong a Victorian-era residential core matched here by Edwardian-era development and with inter-war as visually related infill, allowing the area to be largely built-up by the start of the Second War.

Victorian era housing is almost all timber, and much of it is rows of identical single-fronted cottages, plus some double-fronted examples - both block-fronted and asymmetrical - and a distinctive row of duplexes along the south end of Gardner Street (Individually Significant). Many of the duplexes lack an expressed party wall or fire-wall divisions between houses and house roofs, as Richmond lay beyond the control of the Melbourne Building Act. There are also several small groupings of single-storey rendered terraces, and a few double-fronted rendered Victorian houses with decorative parapets, many of them Individually Significant. Of particular interest are two early houses with narrow, parallel roof forms, at 333 Highett Street and 27 Gardner Street, terraces with high transverse gabled roofs, and a group of single-fronted timber cottages with unusual faceted and sawtooth detailing to the doors and windows (119-121 Buckingham Street, 6-18 Gardner Street). There are also two early corner shops which face each other on the corner of Kent and Gardner streets, one of timber, the other rendered.

The early Edwardian houses carry on the block-fronted form of the Victorian houses, with a transition to turned timber verandah posts and red-brick chimneys. Later Edwardian houses in the precinct are a mix of timber and face brick. They include a number of duplexes, large and small, gable-fronted cottages, and double-fronted, asymmetrical houses of a substantial size. Gables are decorated with scalloped weatherboards, half-timbering or ornamental trusswork.

There is a smaller number of interwar buildings in the precinct, mainly Arts & Crafts and California Bungalows. The California Bungalows at 150, 154-156 Kent Street are similar to those seen in the adjacent development in the Johnson Street Precinct. Beside them is an interwar shop at No. 148. Further south, the Arts & Crafts Bungalow at 38 Murphy Street is finished in roughcast render and retains an attractive brick front fence with a chain detail. There is also a late Edwardian duplex and a handsome corner villa at 5-7 and 15 Coppin Street, which integrate a standard Edwardian form with California Bungalow verandah supports, illustrating the transition between the two styles.

Some of the Individually Significant places within the precinct include the house 'Mornington', at 361 Highett Street, that sets the character for Victorian-era villas in the area, while 'Portarlington Villa' at 150 Somerset Street presents as an uncommon villa type for this part of Richmond. The double-fronted Victorian house at 86 Kent Street has an unusual Dutch gabled roof. The former Richmond Metropolitan Fire Station at 154 Somerset Street, although altered, is a key former utility building, now residential. The Metropolitan Fire Brigade used Richmond station as their first training ground outside of Eastern Hill in the post Second War period.

The house or 'Bijou Residence' at 53 Gardner Street has strong Edwardian-era stylish that is reminiscent of the architects, Ussher & Kemp (Henry Kemp designed and developed many row houses in Burnley St, Richmond in the Edwardian-era). The house at 82 Gardner Street is another distinctive Edwardian-era design, with deeply arched fretted verandah frieze work. A later Individually Significant example is the inter-war 28 Murphy Street that was recognised in the 1980s and 1990s heritage studies for its distinctive detailing.

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/>