
Myers Street Heritage Area

Location

Myers Street Heritage Area

Municipality

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO2017

Heritage Listing

Greater Geelong City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - December 6, 2018

What is Significant?

The Myers Street Heritage Area predominantly relates to residences (though they are now currently used for commercial purposes) primarily dating to the Victorian period, but also with representation from the Federation and Interwar periods. In addition, there is a modest school building (no. 26) dating to the turn of the 20th century. The character of the precinct is defined by wide, sizeable allotments (reflecting the original subdivision pattern) and generally single storey buildings with consistent setbacks to the front and side boundaries.

The significant and contributory buildings in the precinct are relatively intact examples of their type. Their general quality, and so the desirability of the location, on the high ground close to the centre of the city, is attested by the predominant use of masonry to the walls and slate or tiled roofs (some removed). Many retain a complementary garden setting.

How is it Significant?

The Myers Street Heritage Area is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Greater Geelong.

Why is it Significant?

The Myers Street Heritage Area is historically significant as a formerly prestigious residential area in central Geelong but whose former dwellings are being employed for commercial purposes. As the population has

increased it has become an enclave for professional suites for medical and legal businesses. The precinct was primarily developed during the Victorian period though it includes some buildings dating from the early 20th century (Federation and Interwar periods). Unusually the development within the precinct has conformed to the original pattern of Crown allotments and the location on the high ground proved attractive for substantial houses, some of which were constructed for, or occupied by, notable residents of Geelong. (Criterion A)

Myers Street Heritage Area is of aesthetic significance for the high standard of design/construction. It is characterised by distinctive buildings, primarily residences, from the Victorian period as well as some from the Federation and Interwar periods, several of which were designed by local architects. Unusually the varied coloured original face brickwork, or contrasting brick and render, mostly remains visible and most buildings retain their original tiled roofs. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Geelong City Fringe Heritage Area Review, RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, 2018;
Other Names	Previously part of the City Fringe Heritage Area,
Hermes Number	202172
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The precinct extends along the south side of Myers Street, including most of the land between Latrobe Terrace (to the west) and Gheringhap Street (to the east). Topographically, this part of Myers Street extends east-west along a ridge and is one of the original wide streets within the early extent of the township.

The width of the allotments is generous and largely reflects the original subdivision pattern, which is an unusual circumstance in much of central Geelong. The primary exceptions are the pair of houses at nos 38-40 (though as a pair they relate to an original allotment) and the consolidated land at nos 22-26, now part of the Matthew Flinders Secondary College. The buildings are generally well set back and some retain considerable areas of garden.

All buildings date to the Victorian, Federation or Interwar period except for the infill, late 20th century building at no. 34. Facades have regular fenestration patterns with high solid to void ratios typical of buildings from these periods. Original windows (generally double-hung sashes, some with decorative glass) and doors are timber-framed though some have been altered or replaced.

The buildings were mostly designed as residences, except for the school building at no. 26, though they are all being employed for commercial purposes, several as medical facilities.

The principal buildings, nine in total (though one is non-contributory), are either single or two storey and all masonry except for the timber-framed house at no. 28. Of the masonry buildings, most are brick except for the stone house at no. 16 (according to early rate book entries), which has been rendered. Unusually the face brick is evident to all of the buildings, except for the pair at nos 38-40, which have been painted. The brick is usually bi-chrome (brown and cream to nos 12, 22-26; red and cream to nos 18; red and clinker to no. 12; and likely nos 38-40) and the brown brick of that to no. 32 contrasts with rendered quoining.

Roofs are pitched (hipped and/or gabled) and are visible, though that of no. 16 has been partly obscured by a later parapet. Most of the earlier buildings retain slate cladding (nos 16, 22-26, 28, and 38-40), except for no. 32, which has been replaced with corrugated sheet metal, and the later buildings retain terracotta tiles (nos 12+18). The anomaly is no. 18 which is clad in corrugated sheet metal, though it may have initially been clad in tiles.⁴⁰ All retain original chimneys which are either rendered and/or face brickwork.

The buildings were predominantly designed for residential purposes and so retain a verandah to the front. The exception being the St Agnes Ladies School at no. 26, which is probably the most distinctive building in the precinct with its bold use of bi-chrome brickwork and elaborate roofscape, especially the tourelles (circular turrets). Other buildings which are fine examples of their type/period are:

No. 18 - a Queen Anne style building that addresses its corner location and includes a prominent octagonal tower, decorative pediment and unusual chimney detailing (prominent classicising vertical bands). No. 22 - although altered, *Ravenhurst* a villa which dates to 1873 retains some distinctive detailing to the stone surrounds of the front and side bay windows. No. 28 - *Kinleith*, the only timber house in the precinct, with elaborate fascias and bargeboards, and channelled boards to the facade. No. 32 - a late Victorian mansion with fine cast iron detailing to the two levelled verandah.

The buildings are largely intact to their period of construction however the house at no. 16 was remodelled during the mid-20th century - a parapet was introduced and the original verandah was removed and replaced with a columned porch, endowing the building with a Regency style appearance. It is possible the building was rendered at this time also.

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/>