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# Mandalay



Mandalay, Hobsons Bay  
Heritage Study 2006



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## Location

24 The Strand WILLIAMSTOWN, Hobsons Bay City

## Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO287

## Heritage Listing

Hobsons Bay City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

'Mandalay' (formerly Abberton House), including the house designed by William Bull and constructed by Charles Pinckney in 1858-59 with later additions, the mature Canary Island Palm and Pepper Trees and the basalt wall along the side boundary to John Street, at 24 The Strand, Williamstown.

How is it Significant?

'Mandalay' (formerly Abberton House) at 24 The Strand, Williamstown is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Hobson's Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, for a brief period, 'Mandalay' was the residence of Sir George Verdon, later the residence and school of the locally important Charles Steedman; primarily and latterly associated with maritime pursuits, the former with a figure in Williamstown's early role in Melbourne's maritime history. (AHC criteria A4 and H1)

Aesthetically, 'Mandalay' is an altered but distinguishably early residential form, which is greatly enhanced by its related setting, which includes notable mature trees and the early basalt sidewall to John Street. The palm and the magnolia are notable as rare examples of mature specimens in the context of a suburban garden in the City. (AHC criteria B2, E1 and F1)

*Note: Included on the Victorian Heritage Register as VHR H232.*

Heritage Study/Consultant	Hobsons Bay - Hobsons Bay Heritage Study, Hobsons Bay City Council, 2006;
Architect/Designer	Bull, William,
Other Names	formerly 'Abberton' House,
Hermes Number	22270
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

'Mandalay' (Formerly Abberton House) is a two storeyed stuccoed basalt, slated hipped roof house with architraved window openings regularly arranged on the east face but staggered in level and possessing plain reveals on the north. A string mould exists on the east but not the north.

Apparently a portico on the south face marks the original main facade of the building which once faced back towards the port. Construction of The Strand apparently influenced the placement of a verandah and gabled porch of c1905 which aligns in form with the exotic nature of the new name (Mandalay), also acquired in these years (a verandah is shown on this face by 1905). Coincident with the southern main facade are the two corniced chimneys which are placed symmetrically in that elevation. Pepper trees and a Canary Island Date palm provide a period setting for the house, assisted by the municipal stone retaining wall in John Street. (1864) (5).

Added porch and verandah; replacement of club head picket fence and gate with a neutral fence (see Esplanade type).

Significant trees include: a Canary Island palm (13m high) centred in front of house and a large Magnolia grandiflora to one side. (A large pepper tree at the John Street corner (11-12m high) identified by the 1986 Study was removed in 2001). The garden is made more interesting by the 1860s stone enclosing wall along John Street and the exotic Far Eastern character of the timber porch (added in the Edwardian-era). The house once faced toward the Williamstown port but was re-oriented in the Edwardian-era to face the Strand, possibly also resulting in the development of this garden.

Botanica (1997) provides the following descriptions of the trees:

*Phoenix canariensis* (Canary Island palm )

This massive palm from the Canary Islands grows to 50 ft (15 m) tall with a spread of 30 ft (9 m), and has a sturdy trunk up to 3 ft (1 m) across and arching, deep green fronds up to 12 ft (3.5 m) long. Small yellow flowers in drooping clusters in summer are succeeded by inedible, orange-yellow, acorn-like fruit. This palm needs plenty of room to show off its dramatic symmetrical shape

Magnolia grandiflora (Magnolia)

One of the few cultivated evergreen magnolias, this southern USA species forms a dense 60 ft (18 m) dome of deep green leathery leaves, rust-colored underneath. Cupshaped white or cream blooms 10 in (25 cm) across appear during late summer, followed by reddish brown cones. It usually prefers warm, moist conditions, but many cultivars (including the Freeman hybrids with *Magnolia virginiana*) are hardier; others, such as 'Exmouth', have a more conical habit and fragrant flowers from an early age. 'Edith Bogue' is renowned for its cold tolerance. 'Little Gem' is a narrow semi-dwarf selection with smaller flowers produced on young plants; it will reach up to 12 ft (3.5 m) or so in 15 years. 'Russett' was selected due to its compact upright habit and beige suede-like undersides of the leaves; it also has comparatively large flowers to 12 in (30 cm) across. 'St Mary' is another precocious bloomer with large leaves to 12 in (30 cm) long, rust colored underneath' { Botanica}.

## Integrity

External Integrity

*Integrity - Moderate. Condition - Fair.*

## Physical Description 2

Context

One of a small number of surviving Victorian era residences in this part of Melbourne Road.

## Historical Australian Themes

Making Suburbs

## Physical Description 3

*Associations*

George Verdon

*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/>*