
MERCY TEACHERS' COLLEGE (FORMER)



233-251 Mt Alexander
Road.JPG

Location

251 Mt Alexander Road ASCOT VALE, Moonee Valley City

Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO294

Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

Criteria for assessment of cultural heritage significance (Criteria adopted by the Heritage Council on 6 March 1997 pursuant to Sections 8(c) and 8(2) of the Heritage Act 1995, refer attachment D)

The land on which Mercy Teachers' College stands has local importance as for being the site of one of the area's earliest mansions, 'Bellvue' established by Captain William Buckley in the 1840s. The site is more significant for its associations with successful brewer, Robert McCracken, who renamed the mansion 'Ailsa' when he purchased

the thirteen acre property in 1865. A keen promoter of Australian Rules Football, Robert was the first president of the Essendon Football Club, which was formed at Ailsa in 1871, with McCracken's Paddock being the Club's first playing field. (Criterion A)

The surrounding houses reflect periods when the property was subdivided in 1907 and 1933, with street names perpetuating the memory of the McCracken ownership. The former coachman's quarters standing within the grounds of the college is historically significant as the only building to remain from the McCracken ownership 1865-1907. Elms on the Mt Alexander Road boundary may be remnants of the estate's extensive gardens. (Criteria A, C & G)

The original Mercy Teachers' College building of 1909 is historically significant for its association with the establishment of the first Catholic teacher training facility in the State, following the introduction of the Victorian Registration of Teachers and Schools Act in 1905, requiring secular and non-secular schools to meet strict government standards. (Criteria A, C & G)

The Mercy Convent of 1909 is of architectural significance as a local landmark and as a reasonably intact convent building designed in an adapted gothic style. (Criteria D & G) The Mercy Teacher's College including the 1909 Convent, 1957 dormitory and library and 1965 and 1970s additions are of historic and architectural interest for their capacity to demonstrate the site's development between 1909 & 2000. (Criteria A, D & G)

Hermes Number 27254

Property Number

Physical Description 1

MISSING PAGE2 & 3DETAILS

the villa "Ailsa". It is composed is an "L" shaped plan and with the original building frames up a notional courtyard entry area and draws on traditions of monastic and ecclesiastical design.

The two storey building is designed in a style to complement the original building with pitched tile roof and cement stucco to the external walls. The linking covered walk way continues the pointed gothic reference with a zigzag or running chevron fascia.

Coach House

The small single storey building known as the coach house or coachman's house is located to the rear of the convent with its rear wall facing Ayr Street. The building has a square floor plan and a pyramidal slate roof which appears to have originally incorporated a vent or lantern. The building is constructed from polychrome brickwork with the front facade composed with a central door flanked by identical arched windows to either side.

The building's scale and detail are reminiscent to Public Works Department buildings of the 1870's. Local history suggests that the building was one of the original villa's coachman's house, however the original purpose has not been confirmed by this investigation.

1965 Additions to Convent

The original building includes a three storey addition where it was extended toward Mt Alexander Road. The administrative building, believed to have been constructed in 1965, is designed in a complementary to the original building with pitched gable roof red brick dressings to the first floor windows and stucco finish to the external walls. The addition's smaller scale and makes it a clearly legible addition.

1967 Science Building

The Science wing is located west or to the rear of the original convent. It is a well designed and crisp two storey block with concrete brick walls, flat roof and large strips of continuous timber framed windows to the classrooms. The building's design is influenced of the then of modern architecture, particularly the work of Mies van der Rohe, and is similar to much of the local educational and domestic architecture of the day.

1970s, Auditorium, Canteen and Link Building

The three buildings form a continuous entity to the north of the main building and occupy most of the site's north corner and one third of the site. The Auditorium is believed to have been constructed in the early 1970s, the linking building between the original convent and the auditorium & canteen in 1976. All of the buildings are in a functionalist/brutalist style being formed as bulky sculptural items designed from the inside spaces out rather than being designed to decorate the street.

The buildings are constructed uniformly from red (ish) clay brick walls, flat steel deck roofs and timber framed windows.

House, 231 Mt Alexander Road

The house is a brick attic storey bungalow with large tiled gable roof. The building draws upon an eclectic array of domestic idioms, without any one style prevailing. The site includes a brick garage to the rear

Trees

The site retains some large and early trees including an Elm to the site fronting Mt Alexander Road, and possibly a Californian Redwood to the south boundary. Further assessment of the trees is to be carried out by Council staff.

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/>