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# St Vincent Place And St Vincent Gardens

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## Location

St Vincent Place, SOUTH MELBOURNE VIC 3206 - Property No G13034

## Municipality

PORT PHILLIP CITY

## Level of significance

National

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 23, 2004

St Vincent Place, planned from 1854-57, developed during 1864-70, the gardens rejuvenated during 1903-10, and the whole precinct maintained with respect to the landscape and urban character since that period, is of national cultural significance:

- as the best example in Australia of a residential square, remarkable for its surviving nineteenth and early twentieth century attributes which provide the essential character of the precinct; it has a sophisticated urban form planned in the mid-1850s during an early phase of Melbourne's suburban development, its plan was without precedent in Australia and was probably based on the design of Tyburnia on the Paddington Estate, London (1838), it reflects the confidence that gold discoveries inspired in the new colony, and is still almost unaltered in basic form;

- for the building stock, composed principally of complementary nineteenth and early twentieth century residences [and shops in Bridport Street]; distinguishing features are the sense of enclosure which the buildings and urban form provide for the gardens, the visual consistency of the urban form coupled with the diversity of the building stock within this strict urban plan which represents a wide social spectrum of occupants, the lack of intrusions, the retention of buildings by an interesting range of architects; and for the distinctive character of the buildings, many of which are somewhat grander or more distinguished than the norm;

- for the historical significance of the residents, including the largest land purchaser, real estate agent, auctioneer and speculator W P Buckhurst (who built Rochester Terrace in 1869), his colleague Buxton; John Danks (manufacturer, at No.52); James Clarke (of Clarke & Bradley);

T B Guest (biscuit manufacturer, at The Elms); Henry Byron Moore (founder of the Melbourne Electric Light Co. and Melbourne Telephone Exchange Co.); Dr R H Sparrow (successor to Buckhurst at Kent Villa); John Stead (a

mayor of South Melbourne) and W E Wells (architect).

- as a very early example of social planning in Australia, in that allotments for large houses were provided specifically because of political pressures aimed at alleviating the overwhelmingly working class character of Emerald Hill;

- for the links between the urban form, built form and garden reserves; the reserves retain echoes of the original plans by Clarke, Bateman, and especially Hodgkinson, all significant figures in the history of Victoria's parks, gardens and town planning; Clarke's input is characterised by the overall conception, whilst Hodgkinson's input is characterised by overall plan of the reserves, the older tree plantings located according to his garden plan of 1869, the path system at the western end and the circular theme of the paths design at the eastern end;

- for the horticultural and design attributes of the garden reserves, including the mature tree plantings, the traditional floricultural displays, the consistent use of materials (e.g. basalt edging), early structures (especially the drinking fountain, shelter and tennis pavilion), and the formal street tree plantings that complement the planting in the garden reserves;

- for the strong links between the gardens and recreation of local residents; this is exemplified by the long tradition of lawn bowls and tennis in the gardens;

- for the aesthetic qualities derived from vistas within the gardens and to neighbouring houses, vistas from the houses to the gardens, and vistas along the flanking streets.

Hermes Number 70245

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

Railway reserve, and all streets contained by this land

*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/>*