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# Government House, Melbourne Garden

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## Location

Government House Drive, MELBOURNE VIC 3004 - Property No G13004

## Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

## Level of significance

National

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 25, 2008

Government House, Melbourne, constructed 1872-76 with complementary landscaping, is of National cultural significance:

- historically, the Government House complex and its grounds provide an outstanding institutional/residential precinct that on account of its style, scale, substantial intactness and social function is without equal in Australia. It is primarily significant as residence of Victoria's colonial Governors (1876-1900) and as inaugural residence of Australia's Governors-General (1901-30) prior to a period which saw the curtailment of the grounds and general refurbishment.
- as one of the grandest surviving residential gardens in Victoria; this is enhanced by the diverse range of components and characteristics including grand driveways, naturalised landscapes with sub-tropical rain forest characteristics, temperate woodlands, fern gullies, private formal terraces and substantial service areas;
- due to its relationship with the Royal Botanic Gardens (through proximity and similarity of design concept);
- as an outstanding example of Guilfoyle's landscape design;
- due to its relatively high degree of intactness with respect to structure and early planting (Guilfoyle's concept remained almost totally intact until the end of the Commonwealth occupancy in 1930);
- for a number of trees and other plants which are individually significant specimens, including some surviving from Mueller's planting of the Domain;

This significance is enhanced by the wealth of detailed documentary evidence relating to its original design and

subsequent use.

The architectural significance of Government House, Melbourne, has not been reassessed as part of this classification report and the existing citation (itself adopted from the AHC citation in the absence of any other statement) reads as follows:

Government House was erected in 1871-76 by Martin and Peacock for the Public Works Department. The extensive rendered brick was designed and documented by W.W. Wardell, J.J. Clark and P. Kerr. It is comprised of the State, Private, Ballroom and Kitchen wings which are carefully expressed in a grand composition and grouped around the belvedere tower. Since 1876 it has served as Victoria's and for a brief period Australia's Vice-Regal residence.

This is the grandest and largest residence in Australia and one of the finest examples of nineteenth century residential architecture in the world. Designed in the conservative classical style, the superb Italianate composition reflects Queen Victoria's Osborne House. The great variety of fine mouldings and motifs culminate in the belvedere where the concentration of ornament gives an outstanding overall effect. The interiors are among the grandest in Melbourne. The tower is a prominent landmark.

Government House, Melbourne, is maintained in immaculate condition and is intact.

See also: B0201

Hermes Number 70251

Property Number

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*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/>*