

---

# 17 Spensley Street



clifton hill spensley street  
clifton hill spensley street 17

---

## Location

17 Spensley Street, CLIFTON HILL VIC 3068 - Property No 132955

## Municipality

YARRA CITY

## Level of significance

Incl in HO area contributory

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO316

## Heritage Listing

Yarra City

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 2014

Precinct statement of significance

Component streets include:

Abbott Grove, Aitken Street, Alexandra Parade, Berry Street, Brockenshire Street, Caroline Street, Clifton Avenue, Clifton Street, Dally Street, Dwyer Street, Edmund Street, Fenwick Street, Ford Street, George Street, Gordon Street, Grant Street, Gray Street, Groom Street, Hall Street, Heidelberg Road, Hoddle Street, Horne

Street, John Street, Kiewa Street, Lilly Street, Little Walker Street, Marshall Place, Myrtle Street, Noone Street, Ogrady Street, Parslow Street, Ramsden Street, Reeves Street, Rose Street, Roseneath Street, Rutland Street, Spensley Street, The Esplanade, Walker Street, Wright Street, Yambla Street,

## Statement of Significance

What is significant?

Clifton Hill was part of the new municipality of East Collingwood, formed in 1855, when Collingwood's businessmen sought to improve the district's reputation and set up their own council independent of the City of Melbourne. (29) East Collingwood Council became the only major municipal council outside of the municipality of Melbourne which still included Fitzroy and Richmond. (30)

East Collingwood Council extended its major streets northwards to take advantage of the country trade from the Heidelberg area and provide access to the Melbourne Corporation basalt quarries in Clifton Hill for building stone. The oldest remaining buildings in the Clifton Hill East Heritage Overlay Area include the pre-1853 bluestone houses at 27 and 29 Clifton Avenue, 2 Ford Street and 3 Horne Street, built by quarry owners. The quarries, located along and west of the Merri Creek near the end of Ramsden and Noone Streets, were long-term fixtures of the area, with the Melbourne City Council quarry in Wright Street (31) closing in 1939 and the Collingwood Council quarry in 1963.

Unlike Fitzroy, Richmond and Collingwood, Clifton Hill was laid by the Colonial Government, rather than as an accumulation of localised private developments. Distinguished naturalist and engineer, Clement Hodgkinson, as Victorian Assistant-Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey 1861-74, was responsible for the government subdivisions of Carlton (south of Princes St, 1860), North Carlton, North Fitzroy and Clifton Hill (1865-9), Hotham Hill (1866), South and North Parkville (1868-9). Under his supervision, suburban planning employed the cost-efficient grid system used by Hoddle, Hodgkinson's predecessor.

A c1864 survey plan by government surveyor for the Melbourne district, Thomas Samuel Parrott (32), shows the area south of Roseneath Street divided into 50 or 60 foot frontage allotments. The land north of Roseneath Street had also been sold and was fenced.

In contrast to the generous provision of the Darling Gardens and other reserves in West Clifton Hill, East Clifton Hill allotments were all sold between 1871 and 1874 with no provision for public or ecclesiastical reserves. This was probably a result of the continuing quarry activity and night soil deposits in the area, being no place for mainstream residential development when surveyed.

A plan by government surveyor Michael Callanan and titled 'Allotments in the Boroughs of Brunswick, Fitzroy and East Collingwood' showed suburban allotments (most sold in 1871) set within the radial arms of Ramsden and Spensley Streets. These streets emanated from the railway station site in John Street and terminated on the Esplanade and the old Manure Depot (c1861-, now parklands next to the Merri Creek). The Melbourne Quarry Site adjoined the Depot in Wright Street, and, to the west of the quarry, an 'old road' meandered from the Heidelberg Road, south along the Merri Creek, towards the Municipal Abattoirs, sited south of the east end of Ramsden St (33).

In 1888 the Royal Park Junction to Clifton Hill Railway (the Inner Circle), along with the Clifton Hill station in John Street, was opened. In 1901, the railway circle was completed with the extension south from Clifton Hill through Collingwood and Richmond to Princes Bridge Station, boosting residential development in the area.

Old quarry holes were progressively filled up from the 1880s and all of the streets had been laid out with most of the development being concentrated towards the western and northern sections of the precinct, near to transport routes such as the railway, Hoddle Street and Heidelberg Road.

Larger quarry reserves and creek-side areas, such as the Manure Depot off the Esplanade, were eventually redeveloped as parkland reserves, each providing a marker of the former history of the area and a vehicle for mature landscape development that enhances the adjoining urban character (34). Street trees however are not typically shown on MMBW Detail Plans from c1900.

Industrial development

As with Clifton Hill West, industrial complexes with impressive Edwardian and Victorian-era brick factory buildings continued to be located in the south of the area fronting Alexandra Parade and Hoddle Street, and adjacent to the former Reilly Street drain that was essential for effluent disposal. These complexes are significant markers of the area's industrial past, including Schotts Emporium (the former Clifton Shoe Company) Hoddle Street, Pitman Shoe Company in Groom St, the Stockport Hat Mills and the Puttifoote and Bloom shoe factory in Noone Street, the Commonwealth Harness Saddlery and Leather Accoutrements Factory and the Trueform Shoe Company Pty. Ltd. In Roseneath Street as important landmarks in the area. This collection of factory buildings reflects the intense industrial activity in the area, particularly the boot and shoe and clothing industries, from c1900.

#### Main development era

The main development period evident in the Clifton Hill East Heritage Overlay Area is that of the Victorian and Edwardian-period, with a contribution from some well preserved inter-war buildings and inter-war building groups, and individually significant places of all eras.

#### Contributory elements

Contributory buildings include (but not exclusively) generally detached and attached Victorian-era and Edwardian-era mainly one-storey houses having typically:

- . Exposed pitched gabled or hipped roofs, with some facade parapets;
- . Mainly one storey but with some two storey wall heights;
- . Weatherboard, face brick (red, bichrome and polychrome), or stucco wall cladding;
- . Corrugated iron roof cladding, Marseilles pattern terra-cotta tiles, with some slate roofing;
- . Chimneys of either stucco finish (with moulded caps) or of matching face brickwork with corbelled capping courses;
- . Post-supported verandah elements facing the street;
- . Less than 40% of the street wall face comprised with openings such as windows and doors; and
- . Front gardens, originally bordered by typically timber picket front fences of around 1m height.

Contributory buildings also include:

- . Corner shops and residences with display windows and zero boundary setbacks;
- . One street of inter-war or Bungalow-style houses (Brockenshire St), with detached siting, one-storey scale, gabled roof forms, exposed chimneys, weatherboard cladding, and corrugated iron roofing;
- . Well preserved buildings including one storey houses and one and two storey industrial buildings from the pre Second War era;
- . Public infrastructure, expressive of the Victorian and Edwardian-eras such as bluestone pitched road paving, crossings, stone kerbs, and channels, storm water grates, iron guard railings and asphalt paved footpaths; and
- . Quarry faces and sites.

#### How is it significant?

HO316 Clifton Hill Eastern Heritage Overlay Area is **aesthetically and historically** significant to the City of Yarra (National Estate Register [NER] Criteria E1, A4)

#### Why is it significant?

The Clifton Hill Eastern Heritage Overlay Area is significant.

- . As a substantially intact and discrete precinct within the City of Yarra, surrounded by major transport routes and the Merri Creek, and containing a number of well preserved Victorian and Edwardian-era residential

streetscapes;

. For its distinctive village-like commercial centre, at the junction of Spensley and Berry Streets and near the railway station, with the Royal Hotel as an important focal point, being unusual among Melbourne's Victorian and Edwardian-era suburbs because of its location central to the residential area rather than on its perimeter, as was typical in the 19th and early 20th centuries along main thoroughfares;

. For the distinctive but well planned layout of the area formed by the angled intersection of two planning grids, one based on the alignment of Heidelberg Road and the other based on that of Hoddle Street, producing fine streetscapes and vistas that are atypical to other contemporary suburbs. The relatively uniform planning of the streets and allotments relates well to the adjoining government surveyed North Fitzroy area and contrasts with the more haphazard private subdivisions in Collingwood and Richmond;

. For the contribution of the area's comprehensive network of rear laneways to expression of the main development era, with most retaining their original bluestone construction, original kerbs and channels;

. For individual pockets of distinctive development such as the fine group of timber bungalows in the Bungalow Court formed by Brockenshire Street, as well as other well preserved inter-war examples scattered through the area, and the small but distinguished group of interwar semi-detached villas in Grant Street;

. For the grouping of industrial buildings in the south part of the heritage overlay, with impressive Edwardian and Victorian-era brick factory buildings as significant markers of the precincts industrial past, including Schotts Emporium (the former Clifton Shoe Company) Hoddle Street which is an important landmark in the area. This collection of factory buildings reflects the significant industrial activity in the area, particularly the boot and shoe and clothing industries, from the turn of the last century;

. As, formerly, an important source of Melbourne's bluestone, with the early bluestone buildings in Ford Street and Clifton Avenue, the remaining quarry faces on the Merri Creek, and the adjoining Quarry Park owing their existence to the important Melbourne and Collingwood Council's quarries in the area; and

. For the special urban landscape character (particularly that of The Esplanade) enhanced by the large areas of adjoining creek-side parkland, many of which were developed on former quarry sites.

## References

29 B Barrett, *The Inner Suburbs*, pp. 9-10.

30 B Barrett, *The Civic Frontier*, p. 156.

31 See MMBW Record Plan 38

32 See *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry for Parrott, Thomas Samuel (1842 - 1917)

33 Callanan 'Allotments in the Boroughs of Brunswick, Fitzroy and East Collinwood' (Land Victoria)

34 Callanan 'Allotments in the Boroughs of Brunswick, Fitzroy and East Collinwood' (Land Victoria)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Yarra - City of Collingwood Conservation Study, Andrew Ward & Associates, 1989; Yarra - City of Collingwood Conservation Study, Andrew Ward & Associates, 1995; Yarra - City of Yarra Heritage Review, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1998; Yarra - City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas, Graeme Butler & Associates, 2007;
Construction dates	1880,
Other Names	Shop & Residence,
Hermes Number	94547
Property Number	

---

## Physical Description 2

original or early shopfront changed

## Integrity

Fair

*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/>*