

# City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

**Place name:** Arden and Woodside  
**Other names:** -

**Citation No:**  
2331

**INSERT MAP**



**Address:** 2 and 12 Hotham Grove,  
Ripponlea

**Heritage Precinct:** Not applicable

**Category:** Residential: House

**Heritage Overlay:** HO418

**Style:** Victorian

**Graded as:** Significant

**Constructed:** 1886, 1889

**Victorian Heritage Register:** No

**Designer:** Unknown

**Amendment:** TBC

**Comment:** Updated citation

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## Significance

### *What is significant?*

The houses Arden and Woodside at 2 and 12 Hotham Grove, Ripponlea, are significant. No. 2 was built in 1889 by Joseph William Wild for himself and no. 12 was built in 1886 by John Reynolds and George Davidson Wright.

The detached, single-storey weatherboard houses, although of different designs, are both double-fronted and have with symmetrical compositions.

No. 2 has a T-shaped footprint enveloped on three sides by a double return verandah (supported on timber posts on roughcast rendered piers and likely rebuilt during the Interwar period) with projecting gabled wings to each side. The slate-clad hipped roof has three rendered chimneys with moulded caps. The doorway has highlight and sidelight windows, flanked by rectangular windows with timber-framed double-hung sashes. The projecting side wings have a pierced timber bargeboard to the gable ends with a finial, a quatrefoil vent (missing cover/register), and each has two. To the rear is a skillion roofed section with an angled side in response to the triangular site.

No. 12 has a slate-clad hipped roof with paired brackets to the eaves and a pair of rendered chimneys. The rectangular windows are timber-framed, double hung sashes (single pane). The doorway has highlight and sidelight windows, flanked by rectangular windows with timber-framed double-hung sashes. To the rear are skillion sections that can be seen from the laneway. The full width skillion verandah has been altered, probably during the Interwar period.

Alterations and additions are not significant. The current paint colour schemes are not significant.

### *How is it significant?*

The houses at 2 and 12 Hotham Grove, Ripponlea are of local historical and representative significance to the City of Port Phillip.

## Why is it significant?

The houses are historically significant for their association with an early phase of development in Ripponlea during the prosperous peak of Melbourne's boom period of the 1880s which saw subdivision and land speculation intensify across the suburbs in areas such as Elwood, Balaclava, Ripponlea, and St Kilda East, although this did not always eventuate in development. In Ripponlea, despite intensified interest, the absence of a station stalled widespread development until into the 20<sup>th</sup> century - the small pocket of mid-late 1880s subdivisional development in Hotham Grove was a rare exception and likely arose due to its proximity to the station in the neighbouring suburb of Elsternwick. (Criterion A)

They are of representative significance as largely intact examples of modest late Victorian timber housing in Ripponlea. They have a double-fronted symmetrical composition, a less common format for this period when asymmetrical compositions were favoured, but are otherwise typical with hipped roofs, rendered chimneys and front verandahs. No. 2 is a somewhat unusual and distinctive example notable for its atypical plan form comprising a T-shaped footprint with a double return verandah to three sides of the building. While 1880s timber houses are not uncommon elsewhere in the municipality, there are few comparable examples in Ripponlea and adjacent suburb Elwood which saw limited development until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. They are part of a small proximate group of surviving 1880s timber houses which also include 7, 9 and 10 Hotham Grove and 1-5 Bell Street. (Criterion D)

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## Thematic context

### Victoria's framework of historical themes

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state: 6.3 Shaping the suburbs, 6.7 Making homes for Victorians

### Port Phillip thematic environmental history

5. Buildings and cultural landscapes: 5.1 Early dwellings, 5.2 Shaping the suburbs (5.2.2 Private development), 5.3 Diverse Housing (5.3.2 Workers and artisan housing)

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## History

### Contextual history

The development of St Kilda began following the first land sales in 1842 and by 1854 there were over two hundred houses. The plan compiled in 1855 by James Kearney shows that most of these were situated to the west of Brighton Road (later High Street and now St Kilda Road). By comparison, the land east of Brighton Road was largely undeveloped.

In 1859, the railway to Brighton was opened and the establishment of the Balaclava station spurred subdivision and development in the St Kilda East and Balaclava areas. While a station was also evidently proposed at Ripponlea at this time (on Glen Eira Road) (Age 7 Sep 1859 p7) it did not eventuate until 1912. Consequently, the Ripponlea area remained dominated by larger estates such as *Erindale* and *Quat Quatta* and development was limited until into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

During the peak of Melbourne's building boom in the 1880s, prosperity saw land speculation intensify across the suburbs in areas such as Elwood, Balaclava, Ripponlea, and St Kilda East. Despite the eager subdivision of land however, the actual building of homes in these more remote subdivisions was often slow. For instance, the 1888 subdivision of the East St Kilda Estate in the northern part of Ripponlea created 100 allotments between Glen Eira Road and Grosvenor Street, but relatively few of these were developed during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century pocket of development in the southern part of Ripponlea, in the vicinity of Hotham Grove, was supported by the nearby station at Elsternwick (established in 1859) which is situated just outside the municipality's boundaries.

## 2 and 12 Hotham Grove

The subject sites formed part of Crown portions 259 (5½ acres) and 268 (3¾ acres), Parish of Prahran at Elsternwick, County of Bourke, purchased at an unknown date (presumably 1850s) by J M Holloway, who also purchased a third adjoining allotment, 269, to the south (PP). Holloway, of Northampton Buildings in Acland Street, subsequently had the area surveyed for subdivision by surveyor, Sydney W Smith (SP). Hotham Grove at the time was named Susan Street. John Reynolds, a gentleman of Windsor, purchased the allotments associated with Susan Street.

The 1873 Vardy plan shows that Susan Street was not yet formed and there was no development in its vicinity. By the following year however Susan Street was listed in the rate book (RB 1874 Nov. no. 1918), although the street remained undeveloped. In 1887 the street was renamed Hotham Grove (RB). Hotham Grove was fully developed during the second half of the 1880s, mostly with timber houses, including a group of ten built in 1888 (of which only nos 7, 9 and 10 survive). The only brick house was no. 23, built in 1887 and set on a larger allotment.

### No. 12

By 1877, a 2 roomed timber house with a NAV of £12 had been erected on the then combined site of nos 12 and 14 for owner occupier James Gerald Bailey, a painter (RB 1877 Dec. no. 2061; CT v.1353 f. 423). In 1884, the allotment comprising nos 12 and 14 was transferred to William Murray, gentleman of Caulfield, and the following year, in 1885, was transferred again to John Reynolds and George Davidson Wright, both builders of Windsor and Prahran respectively (CT v.1766 f.149). By the end of 1886, the earlier house had been replaced with a pair of five-roomed timber houses at nos.12 and 14 (presumably built by Reynolds and Wright) each with a NAV of £40 (RB 1886 Dec. nos 2810, 2811). No. 12 was initially tenanted by Kate Broom, a tailorress. In 1889, nos 12 and 14 were transferred to Thomas Cragg, gentleman of East Brighton (CT v.2141 f.141). By the end of the 1890s, Cragg was residing at no. 12 which he named 'Woodside' (SM). In 1919, the property was subdivided and thereafter nos. 12 and 14 were in different ownership (CT v.4093 f.559).

### No. 2

Much of the other land in Hotham Grove, which at the time was owned by timber merchant John Perry of Russell Street Melbourne, formed part of a residential subdivision that was gazetted in August 1887 (LP 1622; CT v.1765 f.955). In May 1888, the site of no. 2 was purchased by the builders John Reynolds and George Davidson Wright, as were some other allotments on the north side of the street. Two months later in July 1888, it was transferred to Joseph William Wild who in rate books was variously described as a builder or carpenter (CT v. 2028 f.596). The November 1888 rate book records Wild as the owner of a still vacant lot, while the 1890 rate book records Wild as the owner occupier of a four-roomed timber house with a NAV of £36. Unlike no. 12, Wild seems to have been responsible for the house's construction rather than Reynolds and Wright.

Subsequent occupants included James Miller, plumber (1893), Miss Constance Giles, costumier (1894-95) and Alfred Brett (1897-98), Roger Cleghorn (1900-03), John Loller (1904) and F C R Spottiswood (1905). During this period, the house was listed in directories as 6 Hotham Grove and, in the first few years of the twentieth century, was also identified as 'Arden' (SM). By 1910, the street address had been renumbered as no. 2.

## General

The 1905 MMBW plan shows the footprints of the two subject houses. No. 2 (then numbered 5) is shown with a front verandah that returns on both sides, while no. 12 is shown with a front verandah that extends the full width of the façade. Freestanding water closets were located to the rear boundaries.



Figure 1- MMBW Detail Plan No. 1465 (dated 1905). The two subject sites are indicated with stars. (Source: State Library of Victoria)

The 1945 aerial photograph shows a similar situation to the earlier MMBW plan. Many of the houses in Hotham Grove were subsequently replaced.



Figure 2 - Aerial photograph dated 1945, showing the subject sites. (Source: Landata, Proj No 5, Run 16, Frame 57847)

## References

Certificates of Title (CT)

Newspapers, various

Parish Plan - at Elwood, Parish of Prahran, P81-13 (PP)

Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History (TEH), February 2021

Sands and McDougall's street directories (SM)

St Kilda Rate Books (RB) 1859-1900 viewed at Ancestry.com

Subdivision Plan (SP): 'Plan of subdivision of portions 259, 268 and 269, parish of Prahran, forming part of St. Kilda'. Held in Vale Collection, State Library of Victoria. Undated, but estimated to be 1860s.

## Description

The houses at 2 and 12 Hotham Grove are located on the south side of the street. Although of different designs, the houses are both detached single-storey double-fronted late Victorian timber villas with symmetrical compositions. The front fences are not original but are sympathetic low timber types.

### No. 2

Occupying a triangular-shaped corner site, the house has a slate-clad hipped roof penetrated by three rendered chimneys with moulded caps. The walls are clad in weatherboards. The house is of note for its relatively unusual form, with projecting gabled wings to each side, clad in corrugated sheet metal, forming a squat T-shaped footprint, enveloped on three sides by a double return verandah. The verandah, likely rebuilt during the Interwar period, now comprises a low-pitched hipped roof, clad in corrugated metal sheeting and supported on turned timber posts (and one stop-chamfered post) that are surmounted by capped brick piers with a roughcast rendered finish. Otherwise, the symmetrical façade has a central doorway (with highlight and sidelight windows) flanked by rectangular windows with timber-framed double-hung sashes. The projecting side wings have a pierced timber bargeboard to the gable ends with a finial, a quatrefoil vent (missing cover/register), and each has two windows – one of which opens onto the verandah space. To the rear is a skillion roofed section.

### No.12



The house has a slate-clad hipped roof with paired brackets to the eaves and a pair of rendered chimneys.

The walls are clad in weatherboards. The windows to the front are timber-framed, double hung sashes (single pane) with moulded timber architraves. The front door - panelled with upper glazed panel is not original (typical of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century) is surrounded by highlights and sidelights. The rear skillion parts survive and can be seen from the laneway.

The full width verandah has been altered a few times. It has a skillion roof clad in slate, which is unusual and likely an alteration (the minimum pitch for slate is 20 degrees), and projecting rafter ends, which is suggestive of an Interwar period modification. Currently it is supported by square timber posts and has a low screen/balustrade however until recently, there were circa mid-20<sup>th</sup> century decorative metal pilasters.

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## Comparative analysis

The subject group of houses are intact examples of modest late Victorian timber housing in Ripponlea. They were part of the same 1880s subdivision and survive as remnants of a pocket of late 19<sup>th</sup> century housing in the southern tip of the municipality close to the Elsternwick station (which lies outside municipal boundaries). While not an uncommon building type elsewhere in the municipality, there are few examples in the southern most suburbs (that is, Ripponlea and Elwood) which saw limited development until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The houses have double-fronted symmetrical compositions, a less common format for this period when asymmetrical compositions were favoured. They are otherwise typical of the period with hipped roofs, rendered chimneys and front verandahs. While they have undergone some alteration, as almost invariably occurs with early timber cottages, importantly they retain original building formats and chimneys. Where fabric has been replaced it has generally been in a similar manner or in keeping with the original character/period.

Other individually significant late Victorian timber houses in and around Hotham Grove include 7, 9 and 10 Hotham Grove (Citation 2332) which adopt a more typical asymmetrical composition and 1-5 Bell Street (Citation 2346) which are narrow single-fronted gable roofed cottages. Other surviving Victorian houses in Ripponlea tend to be masonry and more substantial. The most pertinent nearby comparisons in terms of building type are in John Street, Elwood, including no. 10 (not in heritage overlay), and the cohesive row at nos 24-30 (Citation 2333) which have bay windows to one side lending a suggestion of asymmetry. There are two examples at 1 and 17 Clarke Street, Elwood, neither of which are included in the heritage overlay.

None of the above examples however are truly comparable to 2 Hotham Street, which is of particular interest for its unusual plan form: namely, a T-shaped plan with a return verandah on three sides of the building. The MMBW map of Elwood (c.1897) shows that there were once a number of such villas in the area, albeit invariably of masonry rather than timber construction. Most of these, however, have been demolished. By far the most comparable example was the double-fronted symmetrical timber villa Ivica at 95 Ormond Road, which had a double return verandah and canted bay windows, however has been demolished.

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## Assessment

This place has been assessed in accordance with the processes and guidelines outlined in the Australia ICOMOS *Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* (The Burra Charter) 2013, using the Hercon criteria.

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## Recommendations

Amend HO418 in the HO schedule and map to include 12 Hotham Grove, Ripponlea.

Apply external paint controls in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (to ensure complementary colour schemes are employed).

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## Primary source

RBA Architects & Conservation Consultants, *HO7 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct heritage review Stage 2*, 2021

## Other studies

Heritage Alliance, *Elwood Heritage Review*, 2005

Andrew Ward & Associates, *Port Phillip Heritage Review*, 1998

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## Other images



12 Hotham Grove

## Area to be included in HO

