

# City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

**Place name:** Houses

**Other names:**

**Citation No:**

**2332**

**INSERT MAP**



**Address:** 7, 9 and 10 Hotham Grove,  
Ripponlea

**Heritage Precinct:** Not applicable

**Category:** Residential: House

**Heritage Overlay:** HO419

**Style:** Victorian: Italianate

**Graded as:** Significant

**Constructed:** 1888

**Victorian Heritage Register:** No

**Designer:** Unknown

**Amendment:** TBC

**Comment:** Updated citation

---

## Significance

### *What is significant?*

The houses at 7, 9 and 10 Hotham Grove, Ripponlea, built 1888 by Patrick John Murphy for the Premier Permanent Building Land and Investment Association, are significant.

Detached, single-storey, double-fronted timber houses with asymmetrical façades. Hipped roofs with bracketed eaves, pairs of rendered chimneys, and hip roofed verandahs. Nos 7 and 10 retain a slate roof, while no. 9 has been reclad with metal sheeting. Walls are clad in shiplapped boards to the façades and weatherboards to the sides. Verandah detailing, including cast iron friezes, differs to each (unclear what elements may be original). Front windows are in a tripartite arrangement and are timber framed double hung sashes (single pane) with moulded timber architraves. The front doors are timber panelled surrounded by highlights and sidelights. The rear skillion parts survive to no. 10.

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

### *How is it significant?*

The houses at 7, 9 and 10 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 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 development in Hotham Grove was a rare exception and likely arose due to its proximity to the station in the neighbouring suburb of Elsternwick. The three houses are remnants of an original group of ten identical timber houses

which were built to both sides of Hotham Grove for the Premier Permanent Building Land and Investment Association, one of the largest building societies operating in Melbourne at the time. (Criterion A)

The three houses are of representative significance as largely intact examples of modest late Victorian timber housing in Ripponlea, which, typical of the 1880s, have double-fronted asymmetrical compositions, hipped roofs, rendered chimneys and front verandahs. Originally built to the same design, they demonstrate the recurring use of standard designs in speculative Boom-era subdivisions such as these. While not an uncommon building type elsewhere in the municipality, there are few comparable examples in Ripponlea and adjacent suburb Elwood which saw limited development until the early 20th century. They are part of a small proximate group of surviving 1880s timber houses which also include 2 and 12 Hotham Grove and 1-5 Bell Street. (Criterion D)

---

## 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)

---

## 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 boom period 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.

### 7, 9 and 10 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 (the only brick house was no. 23, built in 1887 and set on a larger allotment).

In August 1887, a residential subdivision was gazetted comprising much of the land in Hotham Grove, which at the time was owned by timber merchant John Perry of Russell Street Melbourne (LP 1622; CT v.1765 f.955). Rate books show that, by the end of 1887, six allotments on the north side of the street (numbered 5-10) and four allotments on the south side (numbered 29-32), each 40ft wide, were owned by P J Murphy (presumably Patrick John Murphy), each valued at £9 (RB 1887 Dec. nos 3257-3262, 3274-3277). Patrick John Murphy was a building contractor associated with (or financially backed by) the Premier Permanent Building Land and Investment Association who were the officially recorded owners on the Certificate of Title (Argus 24 Jun 1890 p9).

The Premier Permanent Building Land and Investment Association was one of the largest building societies during Melbourne's land boom of the 1880s, and one of the first to collapse in March 1890 when it was liquidated having accumulated large debts. Subsequently, the society was the subject of a court case in response to alleged fraudulent activity and general mismanagement, in which Murphy was implicated and numbered amongst the defendants (*Kerang Times* 2 May 1890 p3).

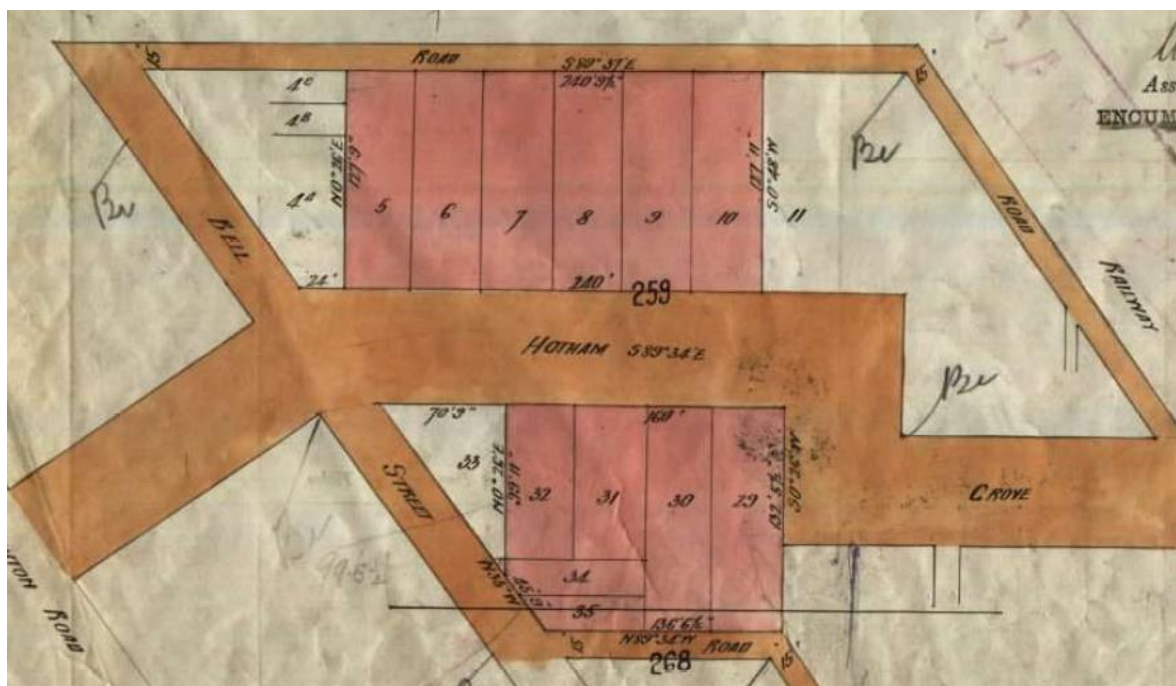


Figure 1 - Diagram showing the 10 allotments (shaded red) developed by the Premier Permanent Building Land and Investment Association (Source: Certificate of Title vol. 2011 fol. 154)

The 1888 rate book records that 10 five-roomed timber houses (including the three subject houses), each valued at £40, had been built on these lots (RB 1888 Nov. nos 3778-3783, 3789-3792). The new houses were either leased or sold. The rate book for 1891 records that all three houses were owner occupied: no. 7 by gardener Jacob Bacon, no. 9 by tanner Peter Cherry, and no. 10 by bookkeeper John Clark (RB 1891 Jan. nos 3943, 3944, 3953).

The 1905 MMBW plan (Figure 2) shows the three subject houses, then numbered 2, 3 and 10. All ten of the houses in the subdivisional development had the same asymmetric footprint at the front with part-width verandahs, although there was variation in the configuration at the rear probably due to later additions/alterations. Water closets and other freestanding outbuildings were located to the rear boundaries.



Figure 2- MMBW Detail Plan No. 1465 (dated 1905). The subject houses are indicated with stars. (Source: State Library of Victoria)

The 1945 aerial photograph (Figure 3) shows a similar situation to the earlier MMBW plan. Subsequently, seven of the ten houses were demolished.



Figure 3 - Aerial photograph dated 1945, showing the subject houses. (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 three sites at 7, 9 and 10 Hotham Grove are rectangular and located on both sides of Hotham Grove. The houses are detached single-storey double-fronted late Victorian timber houses. They are, or were, more or less identical in their form and detailing: hipped U-shaped roofs with bracketed eaves and pairs of rendered chimneys, and asymmetrical facades with hip-roofed verandahs. The houses at nos 7 and 10 retain a slate roof, while no. 9 has been reclad with metal sheeting.

The verandah detailing varies to each, and it is unclear what elements may be original - all have cast iron friezes (different designs), and nos 7 and 9 also have cast iron posts (plain and fluted respectively) while no. 10 has square timber posts.

The walls are clad in horizontally orientated shiplapped boards to the façades and weatherboards to the sides. The windows to the front are in a tripartite arrangement and are all timber framed double hung sashes (single pane) with moulded timber architraves. The front doors are timber panelled surrounded by highlights and sidelights. The windows to the projecting bays have canopies in different formats.

The rear skillion parts survive to no. 10 and are visible from the east side which is exposed. The rear parts to nos 7 and 9 have been replaced.

The front gardens have various plantings including trees and bushes. The front fences are neither original nor early, with nos 7 and 10 being timber and no. 9 being brick.

---

## 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 speculative development 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 are typical of the 1880s, having a double-fronted asymmetrical composition, hipped roof and front verandahs. While they have all 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 2 and 12 Hotham Grove (Citation 2331), which have a symmetrical façade, 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 20-28 Moore Street, Elwood, a group of five late Victorian houses which have a similar asymmetric composition however with ashlar boarding to the façade (Contributory within HO404 precinct).

The subject group of houses also provide evidence of the former extent of a typical Boom-era residential subdivision and, moreover, the repeated use of standard designs in such estates. In this regard, the houses can be compared to a few surviving rows or pairs of Victorian housing across Elwood, including the aforementioned row at 20-28 Moore Street, the row at 24-30 John Street of double-fronted symmetrical timber villas (Citation 2333, HO420), and the two pairs at 54-56 Spray Street (Citation 2343, HO434) and 99-101 Tennyson Street (not in Heritage Overlay) (all double-fronted asymmetrical rendered brick villas, since much altered).

---

## 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.

---

## Recommendations

Amend HO419 in the Heritage Overlay schedule and map to include 10 Hotham Grove, Ripponlea.

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

---

## 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

---

## Other images



No. 7 (left), no. 9 (right)



No. 10

---

## Area to be included in HO

