

City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Place name: Shop residences
Other names: -

Citation No:
2433

INSERT MAP



Address: 93 & 95 Chapel Street, St Kilda

Heritage Precinct: Not applicable

Category: Commercial: Shops, Residential

Heritage Overlay: TBC

Style: Interwar

Graded as: Significant

Constructed: 1927

Victorian Heritage Register: No

Designer: Richardson & Wood

Amendment: TBC

Comment: New citation

Significance

What is significant?

The shop residences, designed by Richardson & Wood and constructed in 1927 for Frederick George Hart, at 93 & 95 Chapel Street, St Kilda are significant.

It is comprised of three red brick sections: the main front section with a tile clad hipped roof, the middle section with a sheet metal clad gable roof, and a single storey rear wing with a skillion roof. Particular features include the symmetrical façade design, expressed tile clad hipped roof to the front, centrally placed brick chimneys including one with terracotta pots, quoining-like projecting brickwork, recessed balconies with arched openings, negative dentilation, original openings with concrete lintels, bracketed timber hoods and sills to the front windows, multi-framed upper window sashes, clerestory windows above the canopy, and largely intact shopfronts and tiling.

Alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

The shop residences at 93 & 95 Chapel Street, St Kilda are of local historic and representative significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

It is historically significant as a pair of shop residences of the Interwar period, a time when this traditional arrangement of shop owners living above and/or behind their shop was becoming less common. The shops have been used continuously for various commercial purposes since their construction in 1927. It is also representative of the intensive development that occurred in this part of St Kilda during the Interwar

period in the context of local population expansion, increasing affluence and the electrification of the cable tram route along Chapel Street, which was completed in late 1926. (Criterion A)

It is of representative significance as a highly intact Interwar period example of the traditional shop residence typology. It is reflective of the shift during the Interwar period towards more domestic designs for shop residences and greater expression, even dominance, of the residential components. This shift is demonstrated at 93 & 95 Chapel Street in the unusually wide frontages, the expressed roof, recessed balconies to the upper floor and the commodious residences. It is amongst the later works of the well-established architects Richardson & Wood, who were also responsible for several other buildings in St Kilda. The façade design suggests a Georgian Revival influence, with a symmetrical composition to Chapel Street, arched openings to the recessed balconies, and quoining-like projecting brickwork. It is comparable with other similar developments in St Kilda of the period and is one of the few with mostly intact shopfronts. It occupies a prominent corner location which allows for views of the equally intact rear sections from Inkerman Street. (Criterion D)

Thematic context

Victoria's framework of historical themes

- 5. Building Victoria's industries and workforce: 5.3 Marketing and retailing
- 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: 5.2 Shaping the suburbs (5.2.2 Private development)
 - 6. Commerce, trade and work: 6.2 Markets, shops and retail
-

History

Contextual history

The early twentieth century saw a marked decline in the viability of large mansions across Melbourne's suburbs in general, but it was particularly felt in the more affluent inner southern suburbs such as St Kilda and Brighton, where land was highly sought-after by a new generation of homebuilders seeking smaller detached dwellings, duplexes or flats (PPHR, Vol. I, p.34). The trend toward higher-density living in St Kilda began with the conversion of mansions and terrace houses into boarding houses in the early 1900s and continued with the first purpose-built flats that appeared at the beginning of World War I. A 1919 newspaper article noted:

It was held to be no longer necessary to labour with a house and all the domestic drudgery that entailed when by borrowing Continental ideas, people who could afford it could live in flats... Land has become so valuable the villa of the Victorian days, in a crowded thoroughfare, no longer shows anything like an adequate return of interest on the land's present capital value. It is more profitable to pull the house erected thereon down, and to erect flats. When the flat became popular in England the experiment was made in St Kilda, and it did not take long to discover there was a genuine demand for flats (Prahlan Telegraph, 18 October 1919, p.4)

Higher-density housing in the form of boarding houses paved the way to flat development. Flats first appeared in Melbourne around 1906 and slowly spread to the suburbs. They followed a strong pattern of development, appearing close to transport routes, particularly along or within walking distance of tram routes, to allow easy travel to the city. With their proximity to the beach and parklands, good public transport networks and seaside character, the suburbs of St Kilda and Elwood were especially popular locations for flats. Flats became a dominant characteristic of St Kilda and Elwood, and still make up a high

percentage of dwellings in those areas. They include some of the earliest surviving flats in Melbourne, some of the best examples of architectural styles and types of flats, and as a group demonstrate the increasing popularity of the lifestyle of flat living from the early twentieth century (TEH).

There was huge growth in flat development in St Kilda and Elwood in the 1920 and 1930s, attracting migrants, single people, and people of diverse sexuality. 370 In 1920 there were 527 purpose-built flats in 92 blocks in St Kilda municipality. By 1925 this had increased to 884 flats in 164 blocks, including large complexes such as the Ardoch flats in Dandenong Road. By 1935, despite a slowing of development due to the Great Depression, there were more than 2,800 flats in over 500 blocks. A further 2,000 flats were added by 1940; however, the onset of World War II slowed development. Nonetheless, by 1947 St Kilda contained 5,500 purpose-built flats, a quarter of all flats in Melbourne (TEH).

The electrification of the cable tram route along Chapel Street in 1926 encouraged the building of flats and between 1930 and 1940 fifteen blocks were erected along its length. Flat development continued in the post-war era.

Shops and flats, 93 & 95 Chapel Street

The subject site formed part of Crown portion 70D, parish of Prahran at East St Kilda. The 10-acre allotment was purchased in the 1850s (pre-1857) by Peter Davis, auctioneer and mayor of Melbourne 1856-57.

The subject site, on the corner of Chapel and Inkerman streets, remained undeveloped into the 20th century (as shown on the 1897 MMBW plan in Figure 1) and was in the same ownership as the Victorian period house to the north (no. 91).

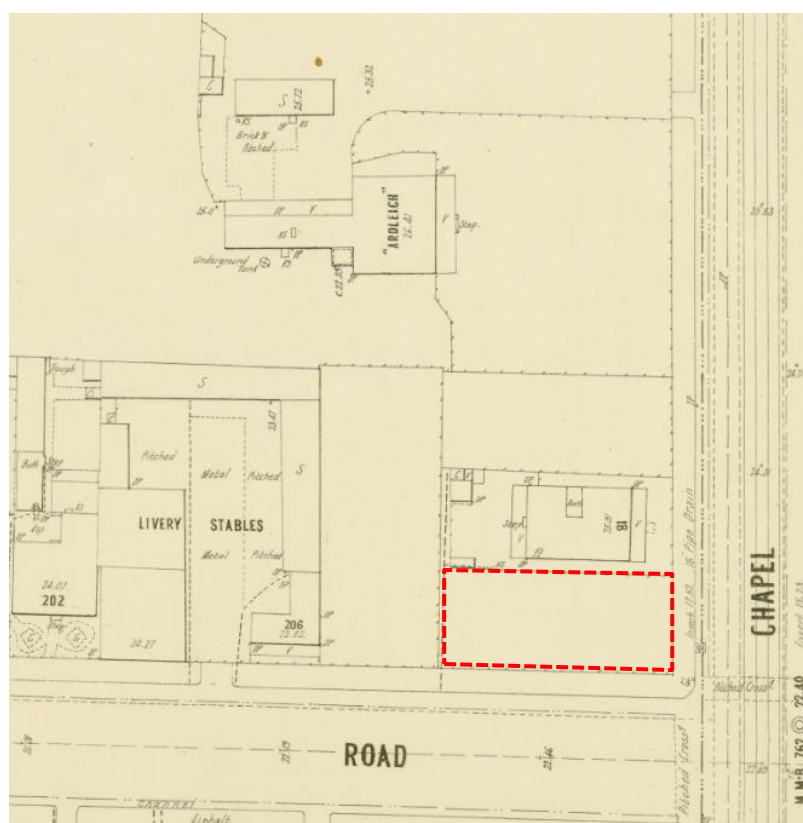


Figure 1 - MMBW Detail Plan No. 1362 (dated 1897) showing approximate boundaries of the subject site. (Source: State Library of Victoria)

In June 1924, the subject parcel of land was purchased by Frederick George Hart, newsagent of 174 High Street St Kilda. A few years later, in March 1927 a building permit was issued for a brick building containing

a pair of shop residences, designed by architects Richardson & Wood (BP no. 6751). The builder was M Gibson of Surrey Hills, and the estimated cost was £3,000. The residences had two bedrooms and there was direct internal access to the shops. The development coincided with, and may have been prompted by, the electrification of the cable tram route along Chapel Street, which was completed in late 1926.



Figure 2 - Original drawing, front/east elevation (Source: Council Building File)



Figure 3 - Original drawing, side/south elevation (Source: Council Building File)

Both of the shop residences were leased to tenants. To begin with, no. 93 was a cake shop, before being taken over in the early 1950s by tailor Benjamin Rosenberg who, together with wife Malka, purchased the building in 1963 following the death of Hart. In about 1978, no. 93 became a coin laundrette and some internal alterations were undertaken to the shop. Over the years, no. 95 has been occupied by a dry produce store, a grocer shop, and confectioner/corner store.



Figure 4 - Aerial photograph dated 1945, subject site indicated. (Source: Landata, Proj No 5, Melbourne and Metropolitan Area Project, Run 17E, Frame 58012)

Richardson & Wood - Architects

The partnership of Richardson & Wood was formed in 1912. They held offices in the city in Collins Street and later in Queen Street.

Frank G. Richardson had been in practice since before 1894 and in 1911 he was involved with several joint projects with the larger firm of Twentyman & Askew. Herbert Wood, who was raised and educated in London, arrived in Melbourne in 1887 and entered into practice with George McMullen. He later became manager of the architectural department of Roche and Company.

Richardson & Wood appear to have had a practice of a general rather than specialised nature, although they were involved in the design of about twenty picture theatres and three town halls. They also undertook many residential commissions. The practice came to an end in 1929 with Wood's death. Richardson continued in practice alone, but little is known of his work in this period apart from his 1937 design for a funeral parlour in St Kilda Road, South Melbourne.

References

Certificates of title (CT): Vol. 2978 Fol. 433; Vol. 4864 Fol. 659

Council Building File (including original plans permit no. 6751 issued 19 March 1927, and later permit documentation)

Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken P/L, *City of Malvern Heritage Study Appendix 1: Architects of Malvern*, June 1992, p78 (entry for Richardson & Wood)

O'Hanlon, Seamus, 'Home together, Home apart: Boarding house, hostel and flat life in Melbourne c.1900-1940', PhD Thesis, History Department, Monash University

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

Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History (TEH), February 2021

St Kilda Council building permit (BP) no. 6751 issued 19 March 1927

Sands & McDougall's street directories (SM)

Sawyer, Terry, (1982) 'Residential flats in Melbourne: the development of a building type to 1950', Honours thesis, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, The University of Melbourne

Description

The subject site is rectangular and located at the corner of Chapel and Inkerman streets.

The two-storey pair of shop residences are highly intact. The building is comprised of three red brick sections: the main front section with a tile clad hipped roof, the middle section with a sheet metal clad gable roof, and a single storey rear wing with a skillion roof. The eaves to the front section have timber lined soffits. There are two centrally placed brick chimneys, and the rear chimney has terracotta pots.

The expressly symmetrical façade design, with quoining-like projecting brickwork to the corners and centrally, suggests some Georgian Revival influence. The recessed balconies have arched openings and the balustrade walls are detailed with negative dentilation. The wing wall on the north side has a rendered console bracket.

The sizes of the openings across all sections of the building vary, but all have concrete lintels and all windows are timber framed double-hung sashes. To the main front section, the windows have bracketed hoods, timber architraves, timber sills supported by corbelled brick brackets, and multi-framed upper sashes. There are also clerestory windows above the canopy.

The shop fronts are largely intact, including much of the metal framing, toplights, and the small-tiled piers and stallboards (overpainted). The central doors have been replaced.

Comparative analysis

The subject building is a highly intact Interwar period example of the traditional shop residence typology, whereby shop owners lived above and/or behind their shop. During the early Interwar period there was a shift towards more domestic designs for shop residences and greater expression, even dominance, of the residential components. This shift is reflected at 93 & 95 Chapel Street in the unusually wide frontages, the expressed roof, recessed balconies to the upper floor and commodious residences. Access to the residences is provided both internally and from the rear. Some other examples (of many) illustrating this more domestic expression include:

- Bilston Flats at 132-134 Carlisle Street c.1925 (Contributory within the Carlisle Street Commercial & Public Precinct). Probably designed by H Lawson. Double shop residence. Upper floor has an expressed roof and a large projecting gable component.
- 121 Ormond Road, Elwood (PPHR citation 364). Single shop residence. Designed by architect W H Smith in 1915. Residence has a recessed balcony, gable front, and oriel windows along the side elevation.

A related typology that emerged during the Interwar period, which was particularly popular in the St Kilda area, was that of mixed-use developments comprising shops and/or cafes on the ground floor with flats above (which were accessed via a separate entrance and not necessarily occupied by the shop owners). Some examples which are stylistically similar to the subject building, or adopt a similar format, are listed

below. Most of these examples have symmetrical façade compositions and a similar degree of external intactness, albeit most do not retain original shopfronts.

- Summerland Mansions, 17-27 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda (VHR H1808). Built 1920 and designed by Christopher A. Cowper. Whilst much larger, it also has a symmetrical composition, expressed tiled hipped roof forms, recessed balconies, quoining-like rustication, and clerestory windows above canopy. One of the shop fronts appears original, others non-original.
- Waverley, 115-119 Grey Street, St Kilda (Citation 2003, HO5 precinct). Built 1920 and designed by Joseph Plottel. Similarly has a symmetrical composition, expressed tiled hipped roof, three-paned upper sashes. Also two storeys and located on a corner with rear wings visible. Non-original shopfronts.
- Shops & flats, 58-60 Acland Street, St Kilda (Citation 392, HO5 precinct). Built 1921 and designed by Gynge Bros. Arts and Crafts aesthetic, with asymmetrical façade. Similarly has an expressed tiled hipped roof (though with small gable end at front), red brick walls, hoods to windows and corbelled brick brackets to sills, and clerestory windows above canopy. Also two storeys and located on a corner with rear wings visible. Non-original shopfronts.
- Shops & flats, 81-81A Wellington Street, St Kilda (Citation 2380, HO493). Built 1930. Similarly has a symmetrical composition, expressed tiled hipped roof, multipaned windows, quoining-like rustication, recessed balconies, and rendered lintels. Also two storeys and located on corner with rear wings visible. Non-original shopfronts.
- Strathmore, 89 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda (Contributory within HO5). Built 1931 and designed by J H Johnson. Similarly has a symmetrical composition, arched openings to recessed balconies and multipaned windows. Intact shopfronts.

The subject building is one of several examples designed by Richardson & Wood in the municipality - mostly houses and flats in St Kilda and Elwood in the 1910s and 1920s typically in an Arts and Crafts mode, as well as the Parish Hall for Christ Church in Acland Street, St Kilda. The subject pair of shop residences were amongst the later commissions and the only one in the with a commercial component. Like the subject building, the duplex at 245-245A Barkly Street (1914, Citation 192) and the Belmont Flats at 86 Alma Road, St Kilda (1923, Citation 290) both have symmetrical compositions.

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

Add to the Heritage Overlay as an individual place. Specific controls are not required.

Primary source

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

Other studies

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



Other images



From Chapel Street (left) and from Inkerman Street (right)



Shopfronts at no. 93 (left) and no. 95 (right)

Area to be included in HO

