
Carlisle Street Commercial and Public Precinct

Places of individual significance within the precinct that have a separate citation in the Port Phillip Heritage Review with additional descriptive and historical information are indicated in **bold**.

1.0 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

7. Governing Victorians: 7.1 Developing institutions of self-government and democracy, 7.3 Maintaining law and order

8. Building Community Life: 8.1 Maintaining spiritual life, 8.2 Educating people

Port Phillip thematic environmental history

5. Buildings and cultural landscapes: 5.2 Shaping the suburbs

6. Commerce, trade and work: 6.2 Markets, shops and retail

7. Governing: 7.1 Governing Society (7.1.2 Formation of local government), 7.2 Maintaining law and order (7.2.1 Institutions of law and order)

8. Community Life: 8.1 Spiritual life, 8.2 Educating (8.2.1 Schools, 8.2.2 Kindergartens and community education)

2.0 History

The history has been separated into two sections relating firstly to the commercial area and subsequently to the public triangle.

2.1 Commercial Area

Land in this area – the Balaclava flat – was marshy and was traversed by creeks, which were diverted into a large city drain that initially extended across the public triangle (JCI, p40). The topography and the resultant poor drainage initially attracted a poorer class, such that the local inhabitants came to be known as the 'Flattites', as compared to the 'Hillites', that is those living on the higher ground (PPP).

Early Land Sales and Subdivision

The land west of Chapel Street on the north side of Carlisle Street was sold in 1850 (*Argus* 16 May 1850 p2). Lot 71B was acquired by F McDonnell and 71C by J Plerins.

East of Chapel Street, there was a regular grid of land parcels with four-acre allotments to the north side of Carlisle Street and five-acre allotments to the south side (PP). The land sales in the area were undertaken in phases during the 1850s. As was common, multiple lots were acquired by one person/company such as Charles Cock (nos 136 A + B) and James Cook (lots 216 A, 217 A + B).

Most of these lots are known to have been offered at two sales. One was held in November 1853 offering lots 136A, 147A, 153A, 216A + 217A (*Argus* 25 Nov 1853 p5) and another was held in September 1857 - lots 136B and 147B (*Argus* 29 Sept 1857 p5).

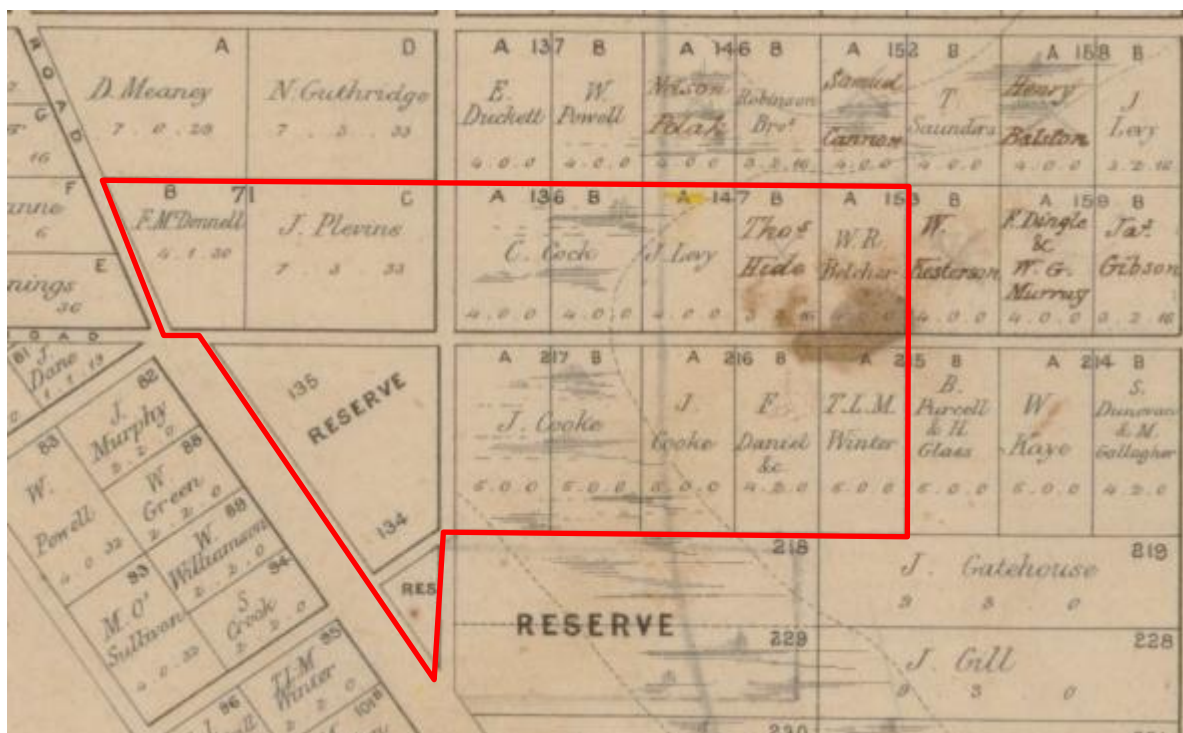


Figure 1 – 1857 Parish Plan - Prahran at Elwood, P81, showing approximate extent of the precinct

The 1855 Kearney plan (Figure 2) shows that only minimal subdivision and construction had occurred in the precinct area, with half of the few buildings then extant being located near Brighton Road, on the north side of Carlisle Street.

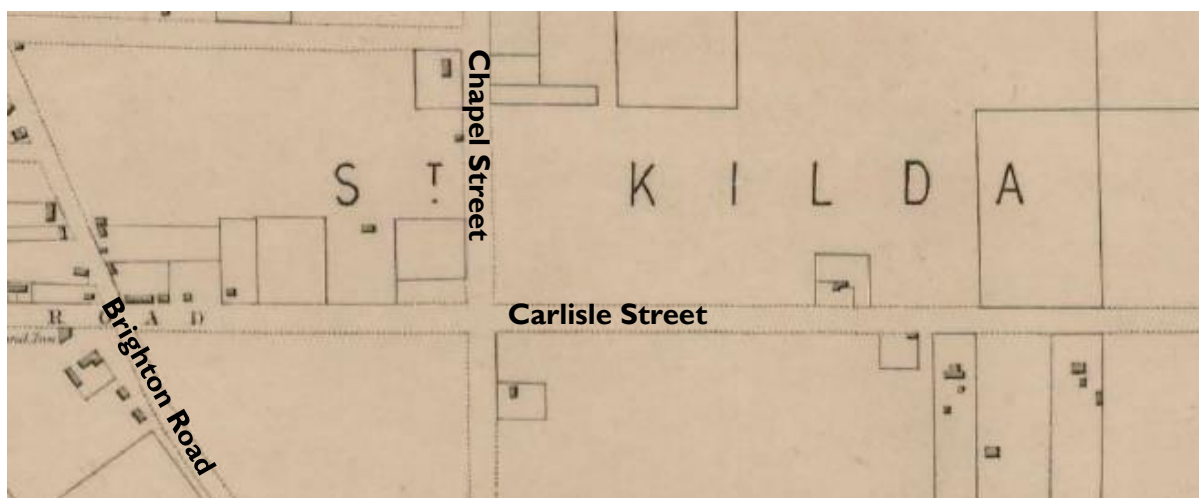


Figure 2 - Kearney Plan 1855 (Source: SLV)

Shortly after, at the end of 1857, the construction of the railway was authorised by the St Kilda and Brighton Railway Company and the first train ran two years later on 3 December 1859. The establishment of train services however did little initially to facilitate development for about another two decades (not until the line was duplicated). In the 1859 Sands & Kenny directory, the first edition with listings for St Kilda, only one resident was noted in Carlisle Street between Brighton Road and William Street.

The following circa 1862 image captures the lack of development near the station. There was a large paddock between Camden and Nelson streets and a timber cottage with a gable roof on the east corner of Nelson Street.

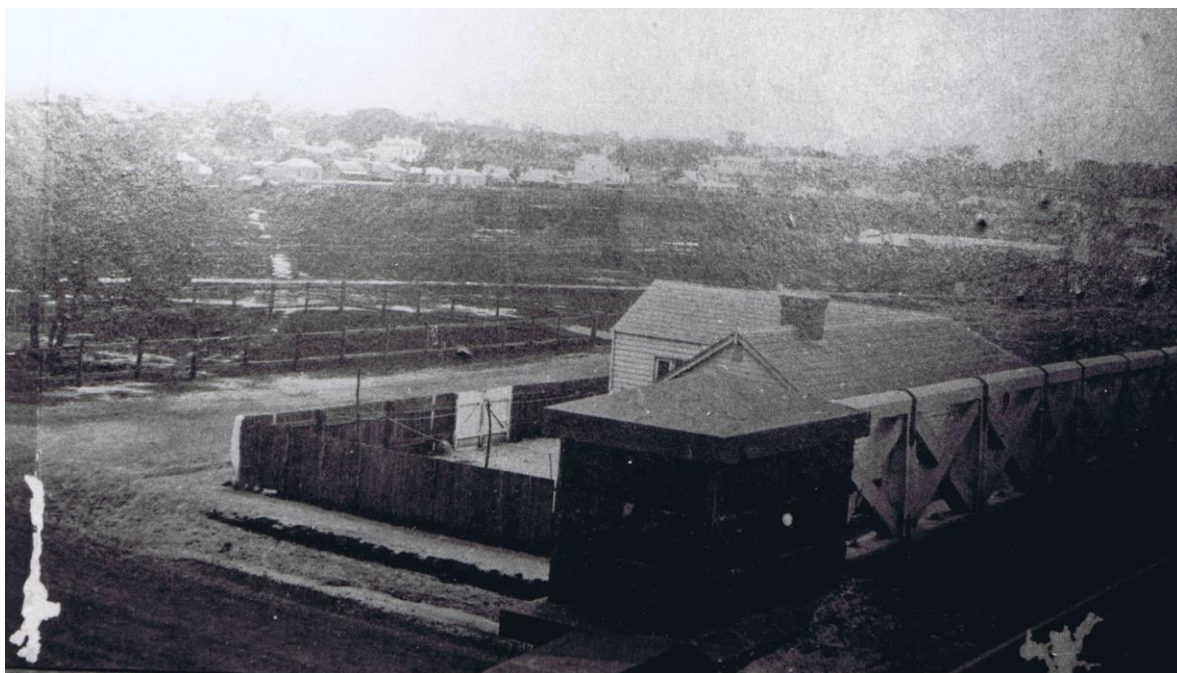


Figure 3 - Circa 1862, Carlisle Street looking west from railway bridge Balaclava station, Nelson Street in foreground (Source: St Kilda Historical Society)

In the 1865 directory (SM), several people were listed in this section of Carlisle Street. By 1870 the number had more than doubled with the Balaclava Hotel being noted as well as a grocer (near Brighton Road) and a general dealer (near the station). The hotel license was established in 1869 (PPP).

The early shops were likely constructed in timber, as described in a tender for one designed by Sydney W. Smith in 1869 (AAI, no. 41077).

Early commercial development (1870s to 1890s)

The Vardy plans of 1873 (Figures 4 and 5) provide considerable detail of the buildings constructed by that time, none of which survives. The central part – between Chapel Street and the railway - had been subdivided into narrow allotments, broadly consistent with the existing circumstance. On the north side, only a few were developed (near the station) whereas more, about half, had been developed on the south side. Most of these buildings, generally residential, probably did not stand for long but the house on the west corner of Blenheim Street, survived until the extant block of four shops (nos 300-306) was erected during the late 1920s.

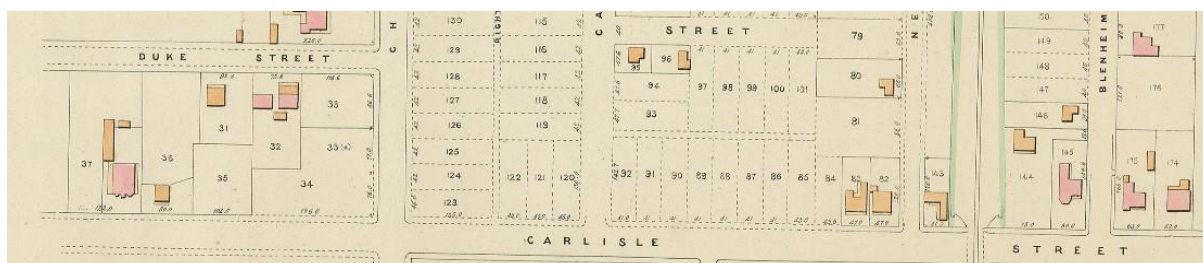


Figure 4 - 1873 Vardy Plan no. 2 south ward, north side of Carlisle Street (Source: St Kilda Historical Society) Note pink denotes brick (masonry) construction and yellow denotes timber-framed

In 1875 (SM), the hotel had changed its name to the Carlisle Hotel and whilst there were more residents, there similarly was only a limited number of shops. By 1880 (SM), the number of residences increased considerably on the south side between Chapel Street and the railway.

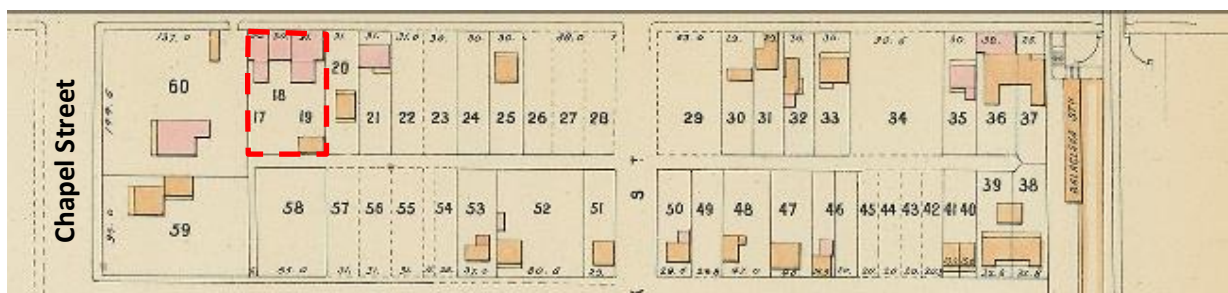


Figure 5 - 1873 Vardy Plan no. 6 south ward, south side of Carlisle Street (top) between Chapel Street and the railway. Hotel site indicated. (Source: SKHS)

In 1878 the State government acquired the St Kilda and Brighton Railway Company's assets, and four years later in 1882 the line was duplicated, with the improvement in services facilitating further development.

The major shift to commercial usage in Carlisle Street began between 1885 and 1890 (SM), likely encouraged by the opening of the town hall on the public reserve, initially in the section between Chapel Street (at the west end) extending eastwards past the railway line to Blenheim Street (north side) and William Street (south side). In 1890, there were 30 business premises to the north side and 35 to the south side, as well as three vacancies. By this time, the name of the hotel had reverted back to the Balaclava Hotel and the Carlisle Hall had been constructed just west of Woodstock Street. The extant **Balaclava Hotel** of 1887 was designed by John Frederick Gibbins and the contemporary publican's name - E Allen – is noted on the façade, though a license had been established in 1869 (PPP).

Several architects are known to have designed shops in Carlisle Street during the 1880s indicating that high end buildings were being commissioned. Whilst there is limited information by which to connect an architect with a particular building, much of the remaining stock that does survive from this time is of a high standard. The architect of one place has been confirmed - the elaborately detailed two-storeyed offices and auction rooms at no. 242, which was designed by Arthur Lewis in 1887 for the local estate agent G V Linton (AAI, no. 33680). Linton occupied the site briefly however subsequently it was employed by other estate agents/auctioneers - E Webb & Co in 1889 (RB 1888-9, entry no. 2852) and Carney & Kelly by 1895 (SM). In 1890, the grand building at no. 292 was also erected for an estate agent, W H Creed. Other tender notices included two shops by C E Connop in 1884 (AAI, no. 4107), three shops by T J Crouch in 1887 and another by Crouch in 1888 (AAI, nos. 41073, 41074).

The growth was also in part due to the development of the tramway system as in 1888, the St Kilda tramway opened as a cable line along St Kilda/Brighton Road between Flinders Street and Milton Street, Elwood. Route 78 along Chapel Street was also established in the same year. Both routes were electrified in 1926, when Route 78 was extended from Carlisle Street to Brighton Road (MT).

The MMBW plans (Figures 6, 7 & 8) show that at the end of the 19th century there were few vacant lots on Carlisle Street with most of the development in the central part (between Chapel and William streets) being commercial in a manner that survives, whereas it was mostly residential west of Chapel Street and east of about William/Blenheim Street (MMBW 1438), none of which survives.

At this time, the mix of materials was very different as about half the buildings were constructed of timber. Some of the brick buildings survive however all of the timber buildings have been replaced including a large tram shed, which was located on the north-east corner of Chapel Street. Opposite on the south side of Carlisle was a substantial vacant allotment.

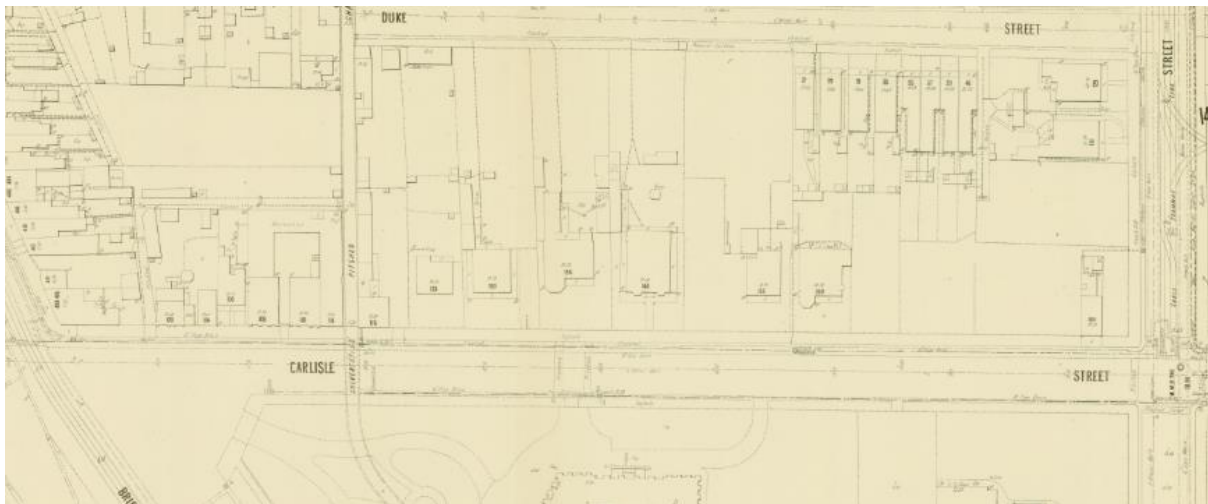


Figure 6 - MMBW no. 1383 (1897) showing the original residential nature of the section between Brighton Road [left] and Chapel Street [right]. No buildings depicted on the north side of Carlisle Street survive (Source: SLV)

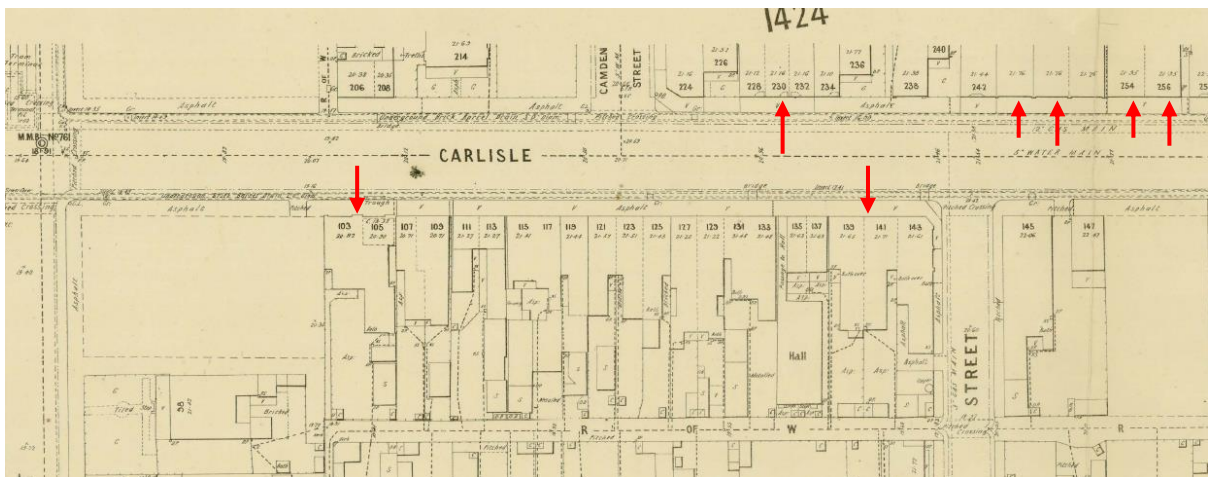


Figure 7 - MMBW no. 1439 (1898) showing Carlisle Street between Chapel Street (left) to about Woodstock Street (right). Surviving buildings are highlighted (Source: SLV)

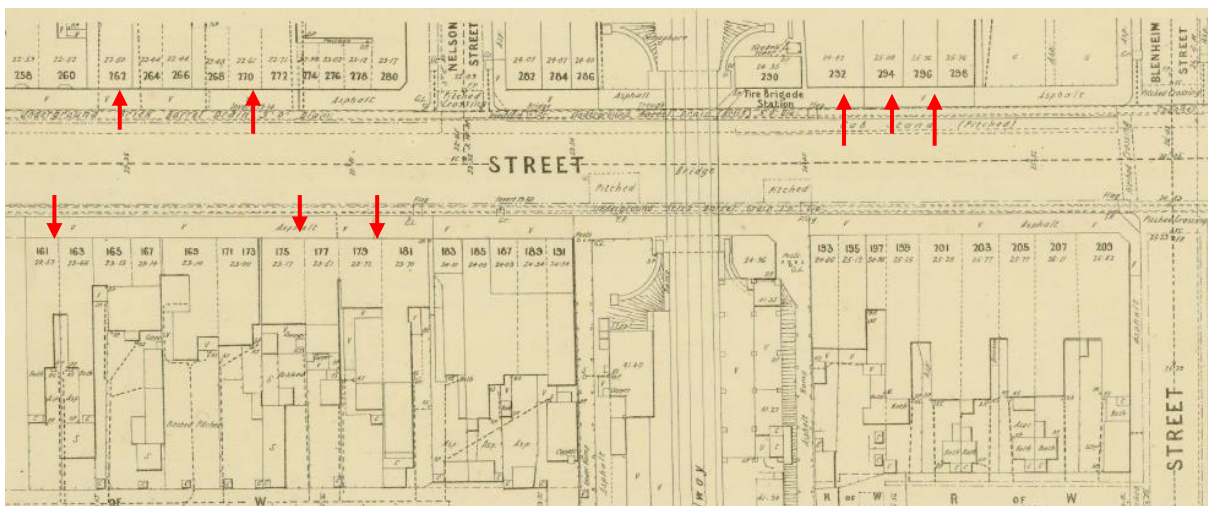


Figure 8 - MMBW no. 1439 (1898) showing Carlisle Street between about Woodstock Street (left) and William Street (right). Surviving buildings are highlighted (Source: SLV)



Figure 9 - Circa 1905-10, 'Main Street, Balaclava' (Source: PPHC and SLV) – Balaclava Hotel on right (Dunphy was the publican) and 153-157 Carlisle Street evident at corner of Woodstock Street (indicated). Many of the single storey buildings in between were timber-framed.

The western section of the precinct – between Brighton Road and Chapel Street (on the north side) – evolved more gradually as a commercial zone. In 1900, there were 13 identified properties, six of which served as a commercial purpose, one was vacant, and six were residential.

Consolidation and expansion during the early 20th Century (1900-1940)

The early 20th century saw the consolidation and expansion of the commercial character of Carlisle Street. This activity was facilitated by the opening of the electric tramway in April 1913 by the PMTT, from Hawthorn Road to St Kilda Esplanade via Carlisle Street, as in the decade following construction of several larger shop rows, up to seven premises, was undertaken.

Many of the extant buildings in the middle section were constructed on previously vacant land or replaced earlier timber buildings, such as the Carlisle Hall (no. 149). The extant rendered building was erected by 1905 (SM). Tenders included a group of five brick shops in 1911 (AAI, no. 49896). In 1913, two shops designed by W. Percy Elsdon were erected by R. Sloane at nos 258-260, (BP 1893). They were two and single storey respectively, though the original single storey component at no.260 has been replaced.

Several buildings were erected in 1914, including the pair of shops at nos 290-290A east of railway. In the same year, the western part of the large building at the north-east corner of Chapel Street, nos. 192-200, was designed by Harry Gibbs & Finlay for the builders Swanson Bros. (BP 2314). The eastern section of three shops was added in 1927 (BP 6809) in a similar mode though no architect was identified. Also in 1914, the first branch of the SSBV by Grainger & Little (BP 2440) on the east side of Camden Street was constructed (replaced in 1965 by extant building). The three single-storey shops at nos 274-280 (west side of Nelson Street) were built in 1917 by Clements Langford (BP 3168).

The Interwar period saw expansion of the commercial zone especially to the east of the railway but also west of Chapel Street. The increased development in Carlisle Street coincided with the beginning of the decline of the nearby High Street shopping centre, which hitherto had been the main shopping district in St Kilda.

There was a phase of rapid development in Carlisle Street just after the end of WWI, including:

- in 1918, the single storey row at nos. 165-169 were built by F G Farr (BP 3478)
- in 1919, the row of six, two storey shops at nos. 109-121 were built by L Whitehill (BP 3905). (Figure 10).
- in 1919, the pair of single storey shops at nos. 147-149 were designed by J F Gibbins & Son (BP 3889).
- in 1920, group of five shops at nos. 229-237, designed by Thomas Watts & Son with large billiard hall to the upper level, was constructed by L. Whitehall. (BP 4117).
- in 1921, the group of four single storey shops at nos. 139-143 were constructed by Duncan M Smith (BP 4516).
- in 1921, the shop at no. 179 was constructed by James Brown (BP 4482), which is similar to that at no. 184.
- in 1921, 'Harrops Corner' comprising the group at the north-west corner with Chapel Street (186-190 Carlisle St and 153-159 Chapel St) was constructed for B. Harrop. Designed by architect Hugh Philp, the development incorporated an existing two storey shop and residence at 186 Carlisle Street.
- in 1921, Carelton & Carelton designed the (now demolished) Commercial Bank of Australia branch at no. 224 (BP 4456).
- in 1921, a pair of two storey shops on the east corner of Woodstock Street (nos. 159-163) were designed by Joseph Plottel (BP 4489), however they have been considerably modified.



Figure 10 - Balaclava Hotel, 10 April 1922 - A Becky, Pots, Punks and Punters, p9. The eastern two of the group of recently constructed six shops at 109-117 Carlisle Street are evident

The 1920s were the main time of change in the section west of Chapel Street (north side) – in 1920 there were seven businesses which had tripled by 1930. The middle part however remained residential – where the library was later constructed. A notable premises in this section is the former Damyon Brothers carriage works at no 116-118 (Figure 11). The company were established at the site by 1890 (SM) but the extant building probably dates to the early 20th century.



Figure 11 - Damyon Brothers Motor Body Works and Carriage Builders 116-118 Carlisle Street Circa 1920, (Source: University of Melbourne Archives, UMA/114472)

The circa 1925 aerial photograph (Figure 12) depicts the initial commercial expansion of the precinct east of the railway (evident on the south side).



Figure 12 - Circa 1925 aerial – the portico of the Town Hall had been added (Source: SLV, 1920-30s 'ST Kilda TH -W R Garrett, H98.129-21)

During the mid to late 1920s, further development occurred with known examples being:

- In 1924, the former Balaclava Post Office at 114a Westbury Street under the direction of the Works Director of the Commonwealth Department of Works and Railways, J J Mackennal, to a standard design.
- Circa 1925 (SM), two storey shops and flats at nos 132-134. Probably designed by H Lawson for V E Anderson (BP 6074). Known as Bilston Flats by 1929 (Age). Owner in 1934 was R L Philpot (BP 8543).
- In 1925, the two brick shops at 162 Carlisle Street were constructed at the front of an earlier residence.
- In 1927 the architect Lewis Levy designed the garage built at no. 126 for W. Wright (PPHR citation 455).

- In 1928, the pair of brick shops and dwelling at nos 181-183 were constructed by E Jennings & Sons (BP 7347).
- In 1928, the four brick shops at nos 300-306 on the west corner of Blenheim Street were built by A W Richardson (BP 7076), who was a builder/developer known to be associated with several other shops in Carlisle Street during the 1920s. Building permits were issued to Richardson in 1924 (3 shops & dwellings), 1925 (three separate permits each for 'brick shop & dwelling'), and 1926 (two permits; one for four brick shops & dwelling and the other two brick shops and dwelling).
- In 1929, the group of three, single storey shops at nos 211-215 were constructed by H Ryall (BP 7532).

By 1931, the density of commercial development in the precinct is apparent on the following aerial photograph (Figure 13) including the recent expansion on the north side, east of the railway line - 300-306 Carlisle Street at the west corner of Blenheim Street.



Figure 13 - 1931 Nov (Source: Landata, Proj No 1931, Maldon Prison, Run 15, Frame 2750)

The former Metropolitan Gas Co. building at 114 Carlisle Street was redeveloped during the 1930s, though the company had been at the site from about 1920 (SM). The work was possibly to the design of the noted architects Tompkins Bros, who responsible for several other contemporary buildings for this company, for example at Caulfield South (1930).

The ongoing building activity in the area was outlined in a 1936 article about the nine shops at 322-330 Carlisle Street, east of Westbury Street, being constructed (Figure 14). This substantial building, which bookends the east end of the precinct on the north side, was designed by the noted architect Leslie M Perrot.

An increase is taking place in the population of many of the nearer residential suburbs due to the building of flats, maisonettes, and villas on the sites of old large homes which are being demolished. This is having its effect in the business centres, and is causing an increase in the demand for shops to rent.

Carlisle street Balaclava is a shopping centre which is feeling the effect of this movement and new shops are being erected.

NINE NEW SHOPS AT BALACLAVA

Comfortable Living Quarters for Occupants



Figure 14 - Sketch of the Leslie Perrot designed building at 322-330 Carlisle Street (Source: Argus, 02.07.1936, p14)

Around this time, new branch offices were constructed for two banks which had been established in the precinct for some time. The new Commonwealth Bank building on the east side of Nelson Street (no. 284) in 1939 was part of a contemporary building program for the bank that included the branch at 204 Barkly Street, St Kilda (Argus 16 February 1940 p7). The building at the west corner of Camden Street (no. 220) was altered in 1940 for the National Bank (BP 10435).

The only fully residential building remaining in the precinct was constructed at the end of the Interwar period – the Ilfracombe flats (SM) at no. 160. They were built in 1940 by the owner-builder H G Grigg (BP 10485).

Postwar Change (1945 onwards)

By the end of the interwar period, the centre was almost fully developed and further change occurred as a result of redevelopment (e.g. the bank at no. 224) and replacement of residential properties with shops (e.g. at no. 320). From the Post-World War II period, there are a few generic shops however of note is the substantial office building at 147 Chapel Street designed by the Office of Harry Norris for Semak Electrics and erected c.1954 incorporating an existing building used as a shop and factory (SM; BP U.1943).

Subsequently during the late 20th century a few notable buildings were also erected including the block at 320 Carlisle Street on the west corner of Westbury Street designed by Bridge, Hayden & Associates from 1963 to 1966 (HA), replacing two houses. The current **Commonwealth Bank** at no. 224 by Eggleston, McDonald & Secomb dates to 1965. Initially it was a SSBV branch and replaced the original 1913 bank building (**PPHR citation 2298**).

During the 1970s, the extant six premises building at the south-east corner of Chapel Street (nos 107) replaced an earlier group of single-storey shops by Philip B. Hudson (BP 3905).

2.2 Public triangle and nearby public buildings

The triangle was formerly a camp place for the Boon Wurrung, conveniently located to take advantage of the creek, which emanated from Caulfield, that ran across the triangle.

Nineteenth century development

The creek was converted to the main drain during the early 1860s but has subsequently been barrel-drained (ME). Its path across the public triangle is evident on the 1864 Cox Plan (Figure 15).

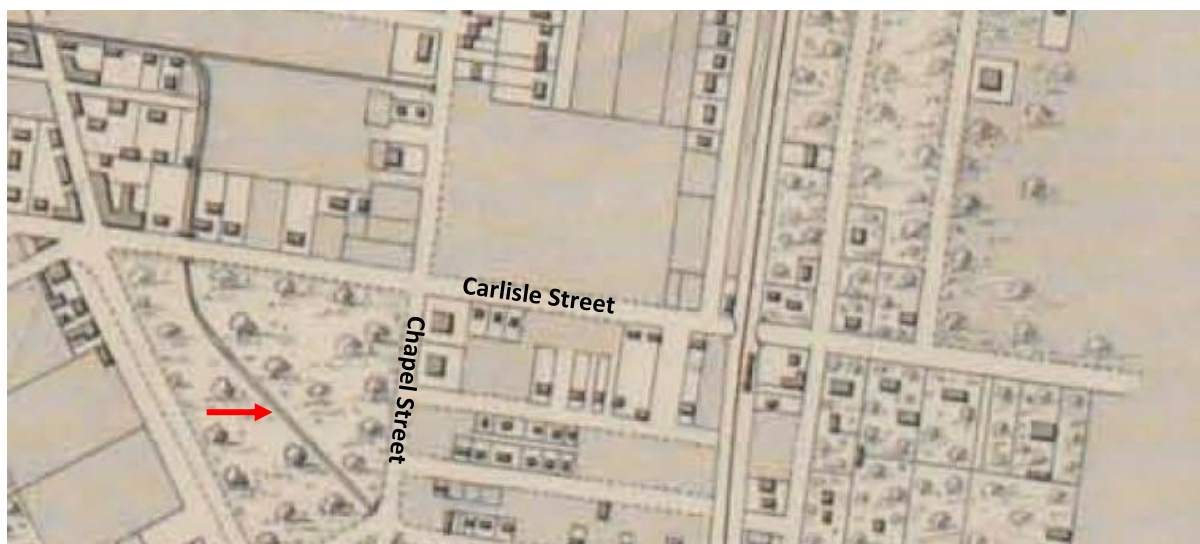


Figure 15 - Cox Plan 1864, showing location of main drain (Source: SLV)

From 1870, land in the triangle bound by Carlisle Street (north), Chapel Street (east) and Brighton Road (south and west) began to be utilised for public purposes, commencing at the southern end with the construction of the first timber Holy Trinity Anglican church designed by F M White (PPHR). It was later used a hall (and demolished during the 1920s when the extant brick hall was erected).

The land for **State School No. 1479** was gazetted in January 1874 (VGG). Initially single storey, it was designed by Henry Bastow of the Public Works Department, with the upper level being added in 1887 (Figure 16). The original paired gables to the middle were a result of the doubling of the capacity from 320 to 640 (VS).



Figure 16 - St Kilda State School no. 1472, circa 1870s (Source: L Burchell, *Victorian Schools*, p108)

Over the next decade, the two extant churches on the public triangle were erected commencing with the **Wesleyan Church** on Chapel Street during 1877-78 (AAI, no. 10979). Designed by the noted architects Crouch & Wilson, it was also constructed in stages as the west end (transept, chancel and vestries) was added in 1885. By that time (in 1882), the **Holy Trinity Anglican Church** had been erected at the south-western corner of the triangle to the design of eminent architects Reeds & Barnes, though without the tower and spire. About this time (in 1883), the land at the north-west corner was permanently reserved for a town hall, court house and offices (VGG2).

The land on which the town hall stands had been temporarily reserved for market purposes but was being used in other ways before it was constructed in 1890 as noted in Cooper:

Householders, after the custom of their kind, in the vicinity of vacant land, with a no-man's land appearance, found it convenient as a dump for domestic, and garden rubbish. At one time, it was clearly swampy creek land, sweepingly described by some of the scoffing St. Kilda residents, as of "no use now, whatsoever, and it never will be." Later, the low lying land was utilised as an authorised municipal rubbish tip, the ultimate purpose of which was to reclaim the land. When the work of reclamation had advanced sufficiently the Council made use of it as a municipal storage yard. The creek, to become eventually one of the main drains of St. Kilda, threaded the land, and the difficulties that the creek, or drain, presented, were such that the early residents did not foresee that it was possible that the land, some day, might be reclaimed (JBC2, p51).

The **St Kilda Town Hall** was opened in 1890 in a scaled-back format, that is without the ornamentation designed by its architect William Pitt (Figure 18). It replaced an earlier 1859 building at corner of Grey and Barkly streets. Within six years of the earlier buildings' completion and the growth of the municipality, more expansive facilities were being called for from among the councillors and more affluent residents living on the hill. Subsequently in 1883, the extant site, was reserved permanently for a town hall though other options were also considered, which lead to much debate and for the matter to be settled by two polls of ratepayers held in 1887 (JBC2, pp40-53).

This was part of a program to relocate civic buildings from the site at the corner of Barkly & Grey streets to this part of St Kilda during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the police station following some 40 years later.

The MMBW plan (Figure 17) shows that at the end of the 19th century the public triangle with the four key sites established – town hall, state school, Anglican and Wesleyan churches.

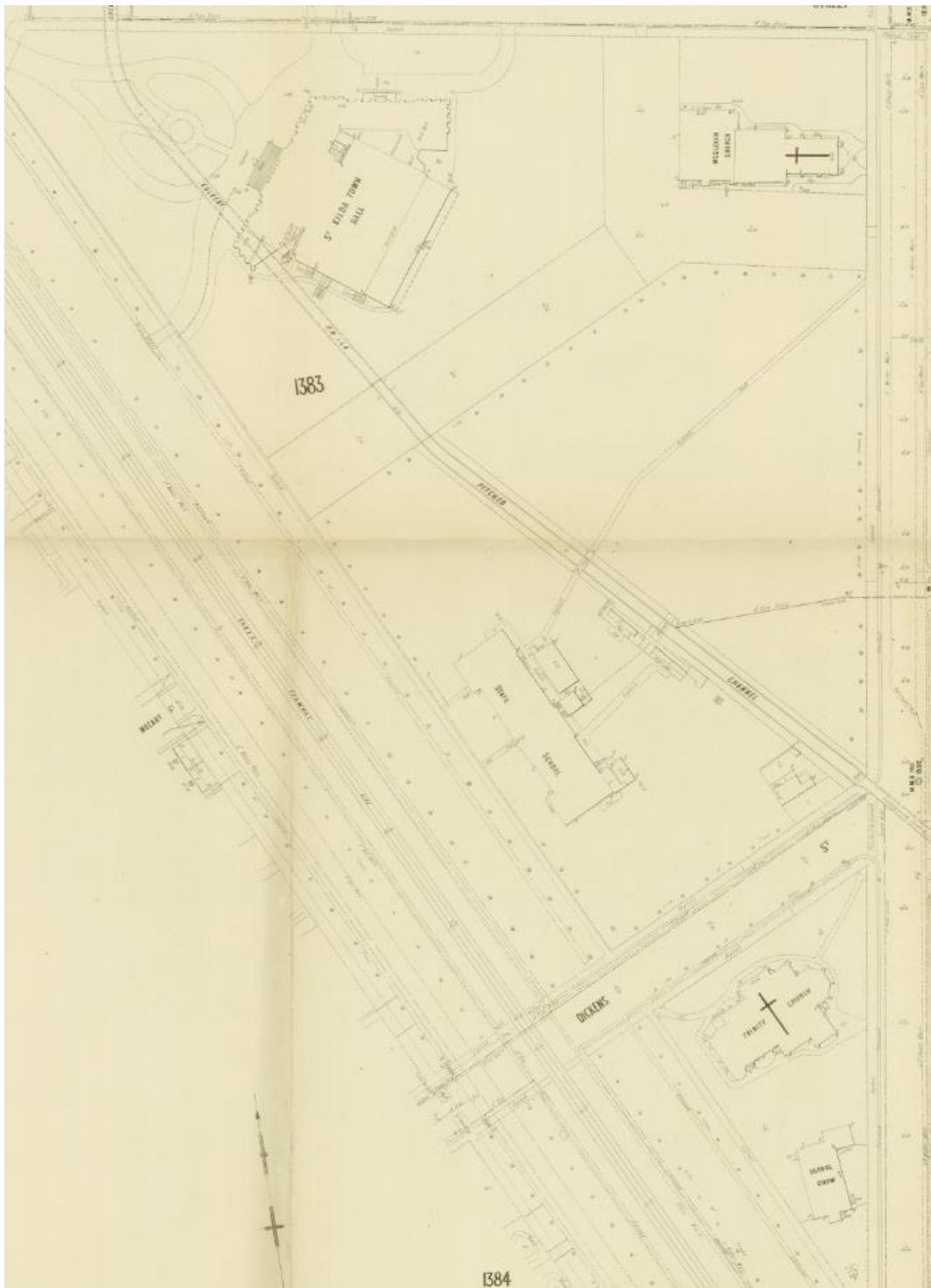


Figure 17 - MMBW no. 1383 (1897) showing the public triangle (Source: SLV)

Twentieth Century development

By 1914, the need for additional infant accommodation at the State School 'had become acute' but under financial pressures, the scale and detailing of the standard design was reduced with the building in Dickens Street being the outcome (HFL).

The sub-station on Chapel Street, immediately south of the Uniting Church, was likely built c.1915-1920 and associated with increasing electrical demands in the area from the early 20th century development.

A creeper was grown over the façade of the town hall presumably in order to conceal its unfinished state (refer image). The extant portico was added in 1925 by Sale & Keage but the exterior was not rendered at that time (refer earlier 1925 aerial).



Figure 18 - St Kilda Town Hall, early 20th century but before the portico was added in 1925 and the façade was rendered (Source: SLV H84.346/75)

A new police station was established just outside the triangle on the extant site in Chapel Street in 1928 and occupied by 1929 (*Prahran Telegraph* 7 September 1928 p4) (Figure 19). In 1930, a courthouse was built alongside (subsequently demolished). The first local police station and courthouse were originally established c.1854 near St Kilda Junction, and later moved to the site at the corner of Barkly and Grey streets. The old complex at the corner of Barkly & Grey streets was then demolished and replaced by flats.



Figure 19 - Circa 1930 image of former Police Station and Court House on Chapel Street (Source: PPHC, sk0426)

New church halls were built to serve the growing congregations. In 1924 the Trinity Hall replaced the old timber Church of England at the intersection of Chapel Street and Brighton Road. The last key building in the triangle was the Methodist school hall at the south-west corner with Chapel Street. It was designed in 1939 by the architect James H Wardrop, who was responsible for other notable buildings the municipality.



Figure 20 - Methodist Church Hall (Source: Herald, 3 May 1939, p20)

By the end of World War II, the main remaining surviving section of residential buildings in the precinct was that where the library now stands (to both Carlisle and Duke streets) (Figure 21).



Figure 21 - 1945 aerial photograph, west end, houses where library now stands are highlighted, and Methodist hall (Source: Landata, Proj No 5, Melbourne and Metropolitan Area Project, Run 17E, Frame 58012)

In the post-World War II period two new significant public buildings were added to the civic precinct. The first was the **St Kilda Library** opposite the town hall, which extended the civic functions into the otherwise commercial zone. Surprisingly St Kilda did not have a library for 60 years, after the original subscription library, established during the 1860s ceased operation in 1912. Whilst there were overtures to in the interim, it was not until 1967 that Council resolved to rectify the situation and appointed noted architect Enrico Taglietti in April 1970. Construction commenced

in February 1972 and the library was opened in May 1973 (**PPHR citation 456**). It was later extended by ARM (Ashton, Raggart & McDougall) in 1994 along with offices at the rear of the town hall, after the latter had been lost to fire in 1991.

The **St Kilda Police Station** at 92-98 Chapel Street, designed in 1988-89 by Rob Miles of the PWD (PPHR no. 461) replaced the 1930 police station complex, which was subsequently demolished and replaced by the present car park (PPCC, sk0426).

References

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Eidelson, Meyer, *Yalukit, Willam – The River People of Port Phillip*, 2014, pp52-53 (ME)

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Landata, various aerials

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Plan No 45 (1896) and Detail Plans nos. 1383 (1897), 1424 (1897), 1424 (1898), 1439 (1898)

Miles Lewis, Australian Architectural Index, various record numbers (AAI, no.)

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

Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History (TEH), February 2021

Port Phillip History Collection (PPHC)

Sands and McDougall's street directories (SM)

St Kilda Council building permits (BP), accessed by Australian Architectural Index (AAI)

St Kilda Historical Society (SKHS)

State Library of Victoria (SLV), images various

University of Melbourne Archives

Victoria Government Gazette (VGG1)- 1874, p96; (VGG2) 1883, p850

3.0 Description

The description has been separated into two sections relating firstly to the commercial area and subsequently to the public triangle.

General

Straddling two suburbs – St Kilda and Balaclava (with the divide being Chapel Street) - the elongated precinct extends along Carlisle Street from Brighton Road at the west end to east of Westbury

Street (north side) and Westbury Close (south side) at the east end. It also extends southwards along Brighton Road to include the public triangle that accommodates the town hall, state school, and Anglican and Wesleyan (Uniting) church complexes.

It includes buildings which contribute to the significance of the precinct from the Victorian (19th century), Federation (early 20th century), Interwar (1920s + 1930s), Post-World War II (1940s+1950s) and Late 20th century periods.

The kerbing and channelling are concrete throughout and the paving varies between being asphalt, basalt pavers and concrete, all of which are 20th/21st century in origin.

Commercial Area



Figure 22 - Carlisle Street (north side, west of Blenheim Street) showing buildings from Victorian period (background, nos 292-298) and Interwar period (foreground, nos 300-306)

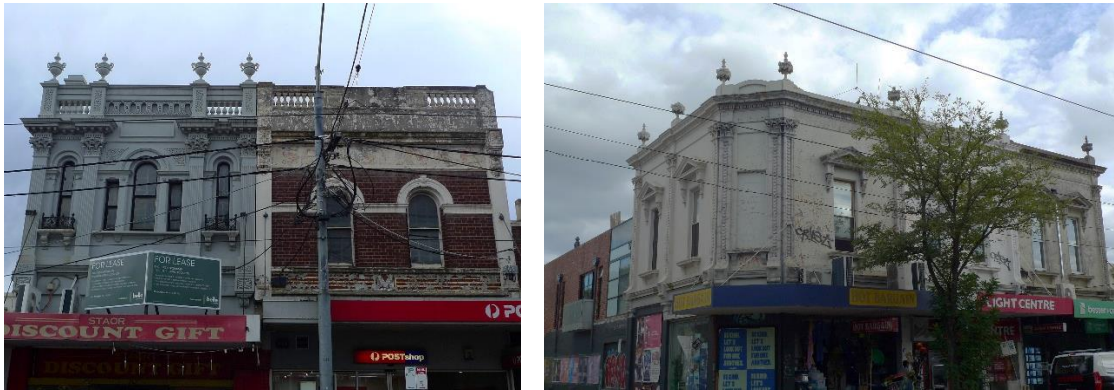
Victorian Period

The 19th century buildings are concentrated in the central part of the commercial area - between Chapel Street (west) and Blenheim/William streets (east).

Two key Victorian period examples in the commercial zone are the **Balaclava Hotel** at no. 123 and the **shops** at no. 292. Both have particularly ornate façades. The hotel features a central pedimented bay and a parapet with bottled balustrade, urns or the like, and acroteria to the pediment. No. 292 has three aedicules with alternating pediment forms (arched and triangular) to the first-floor windows and is distinguished by a slate clad, Mansard roof with cast iron railing. To the rear is a billiard hall with arched metal trusses.

A few of the commercial buildings are dated for instance nos 262 (1886) and nos 173-175 (1889). Most of those that survive are two storeys with a rendered façade embellished with an array of mouldings in a classicising mode typical of the late 19th century (nominally indicative of the Italianate style). The roofs are predominantly concealed behind a parapet though a few chimneys are visible with moulded caps. The parapets usually include a central pediment, some with a date/name plate, some with scrolls and terminate in a pier surmounted by urns or the like, though some have been removed. A few have a bottled balustrade. Windows are universally double-hung sashes, and defined by rendered moulding and several set in an aedicule with curved or triangular pediments.

Separate premises were usually defined by pilasters, some fluted (e.g. nos 228-232), and often with a Corinthian order capital or similar. Cornices are typically articulated with dentillations or brackets and other elements (festoons, rosettes, etc.). Other embellishments evident in the precinct include panels of vermiculation (no. 246), quoining (nos 268-272, Tomasetti's buildings), and pilasters with scale-like decoration (nos 153-157). A particularly ebullient example is at no. 246 which has a Serlian window motif and cast iron balconettes to the narrow lateral/side windows (Figure 23).



Figures 23 & 24 - Nos 246 and 248 (left) and Nos 153-157 (corner Woodstock St) (right)

A few less ornate examples survive being pairs at nos 187-189, 191-193, and 254-256, and the single premises at no. 294. Whilst most extant buildings from the Victorian period are two storey, there is a remnant single storey pair at nos 217-219 (on the south side, east of the station), whose parapets have been altered.

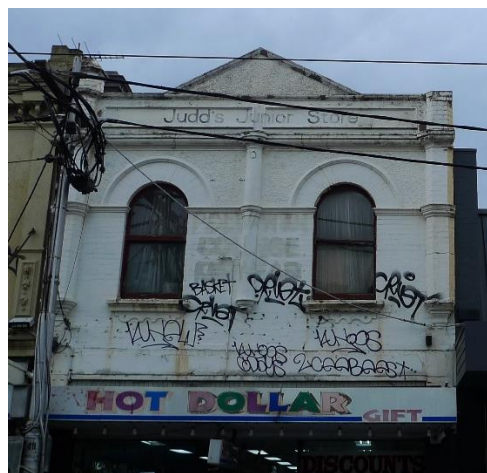
A few likely end/turn of the century examples have face brickwork – brown at no 248 or red at no. 296) – contrasting with rendered decorative elements.

The **rail-over road bridge** at the east end of the precinct has finely tooled basalt abutments and riveted metal girder bridge.

Federation Period

There are several Federation period buildings in the precinct being either single or two storey. While buildings from this period may have the same general form or appearance as those of the preceding late Victorian era, their parapets are usually plainer and if ornamented, invariably include orbs. The profile of the parapet, especially to single-storey buildings, is often curvilinear (including scalloped sections). Some of these examples are indicative of the Free style at an unpretentious or modest level. The Free style was an eclectic urban design approach that incorporated, to varying degrees, elements from several contemporary architectural currents - namely an often impure, or sometimes exaggerated, adaptation of the classical tradition, but often incorporating elements of other styles such the Art Nouveau, Romanesque, Queen Anne revival, and the Arts and Crafts.

Walls are usually a combination of red brick and cement sections (frieze and parapet) but are often overpainted. The influence of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic is also evident, as characterised by the use of roughcast render. Window types are typically double-hung sashes in the precinct, though casements were popular at this time. Queen Anne sills were a common decorative element (evident on nos 234-236).



Figures 25 & 26 – Nos 234-236, with Queen Anne sills (left) and No. 258, with faceted piers (right)

Two storey examples within the precinct include nos 192-202, which have multi-paned upper sashes, paired, and some limited classicising detailing by way of the render rusticated piers (Figure 29). Other two storey examples – nos 234-226 (paired) and no. 258 - both have faceted piers, indicative of the Free style.



Figures 27 & 28 - No. 147 and no. 149 (Carlisle Hall) (left) and No. 156 (right)

There are multiple single storey examples from this period in the precinct. On the north side, among this group are nos 116 -118 (prominent cornice and console brackets), no. 156 (elaborate with orbs), no. 184, no. 236, no. 242, no. 288, and nos 290-290A (1914). On the south side, examples include no. 147 (a wide pediment over two premises), no. 149 (Carlisle Hall, in a more overtly Classical mode with broken bed pediment), nos 165-169, no. 171, no. 185, and nos 211-215. Nos 179 and 184 have the same parapet design, consisting of central, squared pediment-like element with attenuated column shafts to the side piers. The shops either side of the railway on the south side (no. 207) have hipped roofs and may date to this period.



Figure 29 - 192-202 Carlisle Street

Interwar Period

The Interwar period is well-represented in the commercial area especially at the western and eastern ends. Most of the examples are two storey, are largely intact including their parapets, and incorporated (owner's) residences above, although one building, at no. 132, was developed with flats above. In addition, there is one block of flats at no. 160, the only remnant of what had been a residential section.

The influence of the Arts and Crafts movement continued during the 1920s with red brick and render wall combinations common, often with an expressed tile clad roof. Windows are usually double hung sashes often with multi-paned upper sash. An unusual example at 132 Carlisle Street can be classified as an urban bungalow with its projecting bay/enclosed balcony with shingles to the gable end. It also features lead lighting to the windows.



Figures 30 & 31 - No 132 (left) and Nos 239-247 (right)

Other examples with an expressed roof are nos 239-247 and nos 271-273 Carlisle Street, the latter groups having recessed balconies (though several have been glazed/infilled); as well as at 151 Chapel Street. Other buildings with recessed balconies (mostly infilled) and which externally have contrasting roughcast and smooth render include nos 253-261, nos 279-281, and nos 300-306.

Other multiple shop rows of the period include nos 109-121 (six premises, three overpainted) which have boxed-framed windows; nos 229-237 + 2-4 William Street has a distinctive indented motif to the rendered band; nos 249-251 red brick with tripartite windows; and nos 271-273 with diamond quarrels (leadlight) and timber struts. Other two storey examples are nos 133-135, 181-183, 263-269 (partly altered), and 277.



Figures 32 & 33 - Nos 109-121 (left) and Nos 229-237 (right)

There are a few single storey Interwar shops at 120, 137-141, 162, 177, 274-280 Carlisle Street and 100 Chapel Street. The parapets to these examples have a rectilinear profile and are relatively plain, though some are stepped and/or have squared piers, reflecting a Free Classical approach. Their material palette is brick or render, or a combination thereof. The former Balaclava Post Office at 114A Westbury Street reflects a restrained approach to classicism typical of the period with its façade divided into regular bays and by its porch detailing (with entablature).

A few intact shopfronts of this period survive with manufacturers noted if the badge remains at nos 120 (Brooks Robinson), 132 (Trevorrow), 156 (Brooks Robinson), 162, 242, 246, 290 (Duff) and 300 on the north side of Carlisle Street, as well as nos 173, (Duff), 181 (Gill), 239 and 253 on the south side (Figures 34 and 35). These shopfronts usually retain a tiled recessed entry with pressed metal to the ceiling, original timber-framed door with large glass pane, stallboard with tiling (some replaced), and metal moulded framing with highlights (some with leadlight and decorative glass).



Figures 34 & 35 - Shopfronts at no. 132 (left) and No. 173 – Duff (right)

The garage at 126 Carlisle Street is indicative of a restrained version of the Spanish Mission style with triple arcading to the blind niches to the upper part and the doorways, the central one of which retains original panelled timber doors.

There are several substantial Moderne style buildings in Carlisle Street from the later part of the Interwar period, which typically are rendered and have a pronounced horizontal emphasis provided by incised lines, glazing bars to the windows, etc. Of this group, no. 114 is in the Art Deco/Jazz variant with fluted pilasters, chevrons to the panels below the windows, and a curvilinear and below the stepped parapet. No. 229, the former National bank, is a restrained example with a strong horizontal emphasis with multiple incised speed lines and fluted pilasters to the splayed corner entrance with a cartouche above. No. 284, the former Commonwealth Bank, has a tower-like curved corner with full height columns/fins defining the entrance and panels below the windows with a weatherboard-like profile (Figure 36).

The Ilfracombe flats at 160 Carlisle Street are clinker brick with soldier coursing to the lintels and panels of tapestry brick to the curved corners (Figure 37).



Figures 36 & 37 - Former Commonwealth Bank no. 284 (left) and Ilfracombe Flats, 160 Carlisle Street (right)

The large brick building at 322-330 Carlisle Street has a horizontal emphasis and is part Moderne, primarily the lateral bays, which contrasts with the treatment of the central gable end in a manner indicative of Tudor Revival style. This stylistic combination was a popular approach in the facades of flats in the area, especially evident in the work of J H Wardrop.

Post-World War II

The key building from the Post-WWII period in the precinct is the three-storey Former Semak Electrics building at 147-149 Chapel Street. This Modernist influenced building has a symmetrical façade of red brick with central spandrels of green tiles and original aluminium windows to the upper level.

Late 20th century

There are a few key buildings from the late 20th century in the precinct.

The **St Kilda Library** (no. 150) is a rugged example of the Brutalist style and has battered concrete walls and features a large, hovering flat roof with a timber lined soffit and wide Western Red Cedar fascia. The open book section of the eastern addition is mainly clad in basalt with two flanking, partly glazed bays.

The **Commonwealth Bank** at no. 224 (east corner of Camden Street) is indicative of the Stripped Classical style as it was executed at that time with a colonnade of fine steel poles (piloti) and a broad flat roof. It is distinguished by the fixed screen to most of the bays.

The two-storey building at 320 Carlisle Street has walls of concrete brick in stacked bond, eight intact shopfronts (four each to Carlisle and Westbury streets), a projecting roof and canopy with raked fascias, and undercroft car parking to the rear. The articulation of the first-floor windows is distinctive with projecting banding and the design reflects the ongoing interest in the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. A contextual approach was adopted in the articulation of the windows of the tan brick exterior of 107 Carlisle Street (corner of Chapel Street).

Two buildings dating to the 1980s reflect a Post-Modern aesthetic in their echoing of historic styles in a restrained manner but in a contemporary manner. The prime example is the St Kilda Police Station at 92-98 Chapel Street with its arcaded loggia and incorporation of traditional materials (basalt cladding and sandstone-coloured concrete blocks). The market building (252-254 Carlisle Street), which has a brown brick parapet punctuated by a large semi-circular opening in which the triangular canopy sits, is also of interest.

Public Triangle

The public buildings are located on large sites and are well setback from their respective boundaries in a garden/landscaped setting.

State School No. 1479 faces Brighton Road is a polychromatic brick building – mainly brown with cream and red accents to the banding and voussoirs of the arched openings – with a slate clad roof. The tower was relocated to the centre when the second storey section was added, below which is an elaborate balcony.

The **Uniting, former Wesleyan, Church** on Chapel Street is a polychromatic brick, Gothic style building. The palette is similar to the school with brown brick, cream brick (plinth, banding, voussoirs), and a few red brick accents (voussoirs to the façade openings). Distinctive features include the tower with bellcast spire roof and the rendered label mouldings terminating in bosses.



Figures 38 and 39 - State School no. 1479 (left) and Holy Trinity Anglican Church (right)

Holy Trinity Anglican Church on Brighton Road is finished in Barrabool sandstone on a basalt plinth with Waurn Ponds limestone dressings to the openings. Stylistically, this fine building is indicative of a French Gothic mode as defined by apsidal baptistery with a conical roof. It has steeply pitched slate-clad roof and the rendered section (north-west corner) indicates where a tower had been planned.

The **St Kilda Town Hall**, an edifice in the Academic Classical style, has a rendered finish. The symmetrical design incorporates giant (double height) colonnades consisting of Tuscan order columns and pilasters to the lateral sections and Corinthian order, fluted columns to the central portico, which is surmounted by a prominent pediment, behind which is squat tower. To the rear are late 20th century offices. To the front of the town hall is parkland with several well-established and notable exotic trees, including the pine to the north side (evident in an early 20th image). The circular driveway was established in the 19th century, however the hard paving (concrete) dates to the 20th century.

The two extant church halls in the public triangle date to the Interwar period. The **Holy Trinity Hall** has a tiled roof with metal flues, red brick exterior, rendered band and with some Tudor Gothic style detailing such as the pointed archivolt to the doorway, label mouldings, quatrefoils and crenulations. The Sunday School/Hall at the Wesleyan church is of clinker brick with contrasting brick panelling in salmon-tone, detailing characteristic of J H Wardrop.



Figures 40 & 41 - Holy Trinity Hall (left) and Uniting/Wesleyan Hall (right)

Two buildings in the public triangle date to the Federation period; the substation and the infant school. The substation on Chapel Street (south of the Uniting Church) has a form typical of the period with roughcast rendered walls and a gambrel roof clad in diamond tiling. The louvred openings to the lantern have been altered. The red brick infant school in Dickens Street has a slate clad roof and its gable ends feature battened panels of roughcast render. Above the large multi-paned windows are rendered lintels surmounted by scrolls.

4.0 Comparative Analysis

The Carlisle Street Commercial and Public Precinct is distinguished from other commercial zones/precincts in the municipality by having an even mix of buildings from the three main periods of development – Victorian, Federation and Interwar – as well as having some key examples from the Post-WWII and Late 20th century periods. There are considerable number of Federation and Interwar period examples as many of the original 19th century buildings were timber construction as the area, with its poor drainage, initially attracted a lower socio-economic group. These original buildings were replaced during the early 20th century with masonry examples. In addition, the commercial zone expanded into former residential areas at the eastern and western ends at this time. The group of public, community and religious buildings (town hall, two churches and their respective halls, and a school) is also distinctive within the City of Port Phillip and is a true public reserve.

Clarendon and Park streets, South Melbourne (part of HO440, Emerald Hill Residential Precinct) is the closest comparison with the subject precinct. It has similarly large commercial zone located along a tram route with a nearby railway line (now light rail). It retains a higher proportion of Victorian period buildings, with fewer examples from the Federation and Interwar periods. The public zone is however smaller and located in Bank Street and includes the South Melbourne Town Hall, former Post Office, and Police Station about an open square with much less landscaping. There are also a few (former) churches/religious institutions, which are separately located in some adjacent streets such as Dorcas Street.

Bay Street, Port Melbourne (part of HO1, Port Melbourne) is another large commercial zone with many Victorian period buildings, some examples from the Federation and Interwar periods, as well as some recent redevelopment, including multi-storey (at the south end). It has fewer public buildings and these are located at either end - the Port Melbourne Town Hall (HO41) to the north and a church to the south.

The Village Belle Commercial Precinct (Acland and Barkly streets, St Kilda, part of HO7) has a parallel history to the subject precinct but has a different profile of building stock. Like Carlisle Street it evolved from an essentially residential area as an alternative to High Street (Brighton Road) and became a popular commercial centre as High Street declined. The buildings however mainly date to the early 20th century, with some from the Federation period and much from the Interwar period,

and with limited Victorian period fabric and less contribution from the second half of the 20th century. It also lacks public buildings.

5.0 Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Carlisle Street Commercial and Public Precinct includes:

- Carlisle Street - 114-202, 220-304, 320-330 and 103-281
- Chapel Street - 92-98 and 147-157
- 114a Westbury Street
- All the buildings within the triangle bound by Carlisle Street (north), Chapel Street (east), and Brighton Road (south-west).

The western/St Kilda end of Carlisle Street contains predominantly commercial buildings from the Federation and Interwar periods, which replaced earlier Victorian period buildings (mostly residences). The central/Balaclava section was developed with commercial buildings during the Victorian period, although many of these buildings were replaced during later Federation and Interwar phases of commercial development. The Interwar period commercial development at the eastern/Balaclava end replaced Victorian period residences.

The following features contribute to the significance of the precinct:

- Commercial and public/civic development, mainly from the Victorian, Federation and Interwar periods, and also with key examples from the Post-WWII and Late 20th century periods.
- Single and two-storey masonry buildings,
- Parapets and visible/expressed roofs,
- Wall finishes including render (smooth and/or roughcast) and/or brickwork (often overpainted),
- Decorative rendered/pressed cement elements to cornice, frieze, windows, etc.,
- Timber windows – mostly double hung sashes,
- Shopfronts dating to the Federation and Interwar periods, with recessed entries (often retaining a pressed metal ceiling), metal framing, original decorative glass to toplights, tiling to entry floor and/or stallboards, and timber-framed doors.

The Significant places within the precinct are:

- Rail-over road bridge and abutments over Carlisle Street
- 2A Brighton Road and 175-177 Chapel Street (Holy Trinity Anglican Church and Hall)
- 2B Brighton Road (St Kilda Primary School)
- 99A Carlisle Street (St Kilda Town Hall)
- 101 Carlisle St and 161-169 Chapel St (former Wesleyan Church and Hall)
- 123-127 Carlisle Street (Balaclava Hotel)
- 132-134 Carlisle Street (shops and residences)
- 150 Carlisle Street (St Kilda Library)
- 224 Carlisle Street (Commonwealth Bank/former State Savings Bank)
- 242 Carlisle Street (shop and residence)

-
- 284 Carlisle Street (former Commonwealth Bank)
 - 92-98 Chapel Street (Police Station)
 - 114A Westbury Close (former Balaclava Post Office)

The Non-Contributory properties are:

- 118A, 118B, 145, 162B, 168, 206 – 218, 221, 223, 225 - 227, 260, 264 – 266 and 308 - 314 Carlisle Street
- 48 Blenheim Street

All other properties not listed above are Contributory places within the precinct.

How is it significant?

The Carlisle Street Commercial and Public Precinct is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Phillip.

Why is it significant?

Historically, the Carlisle Street Commercial and Public Precinct is illustrative of the growth and evolution of St Kilda and Balaclava during the 19th and 20th centuries. Initially, the area, with its poor drainage, attracted a lower socio-economic group, and this was reflected in the high proportion of timber buildings, both residential and commercial, constructed between the 1850s and the 1870s, of which none survive. From the 1870s, the establishment of public buildings in the triangle bounded by Brighton Road, Chapel Street and Carlisle Street elevated the status of the area as a local centre.

The public triangle primarily developed over the course of the late 19th century to become the premier public zone in St Kilda firstly with State School no. 1472, then the Holy Trinity Anglican and Wesleyan (now Uniting) churches, and the finally the new home for a larger town hall more befitting the growing municipality, the latter relocated from the corner of Grey and Barkly streets after a protracted process.

The first phase of the shift to commercial along Carlisle Street began between 1885 and 1890, initially in the section between Chapel Street (at the west end) extending eastwards past the railway line to Blenheim Street (north side) and William Street (south side), in part due to the development of nearby tram routes which opened in 1888. Development continued unabated – a combination of greenfields sites and replacement of earlier buildings (houses or shops) - during the Federation and Interwar periods with the commercial zone expanding westwards to Brighton Road and eastwards past Westbury Close/Street so that it become the leading and largest commercial centre in Port Phillip complementing, and later eclipsing, that along High Street. It has continued to thrive due to the flat development in the vicinity supporting ongoing development or renewal of the building stock during the Post WW2 period and late 20th century as represented by several notable public and commercial buildings. (Criterion A)

Aesthetically, the Carlisle Street Commercial and Public Precinct is of significance as a substantial commercial and public centre consisting of building stock from the three main periods of development – Victorian, Federation and Interwar – much of it intact and including good to distinguished examples, as well as having a few individually significant examples from the Post-WWII and Late 20th century periods. Several fine Victorian period public buildings located at the west end form a distinctive group, notably the prominently situated town hall in the Academic Classical style, two Gothic style churches (with their associated halls) and the state school, complemented by some mature landscaping.

The commercial buildings of the Victorian period are generally in a classicising mode, with some particularly ornate and distinctive façades to the Balaclava Hotel at 123 Carlisle Street and the shops

at 153-157, 242 and 292 Carlisle Street, which all feature an array of decorative mouldings/elements about the windows and to their parapets.

The influence of either the Arts and Crafts or Free (Classical) style aesthetic is evident generally in the commercial buildings of the late Federation and early Interwar periods, with the Moderne style being popular during the mid to late 1930s. Many of the two storey examples from this phase are distinguished by recessed balconies (often enclosed).

Of particular note within the precinct are the:

- The freestanding Arts and Crafts building at 132 Carlisle Street adopts an unusual expression in a commercial zone with its projecting gabled bay to the first floor (an enclosed porch for the flat/s).
- The Moderne style former Commonwealth Bank at 284 Carlisle Street with its corner tower-like entry with fin-like columns and pronounced bay treatment along the long, side elevation.
- The Tudor-Moderne style shop group at 322-330 Carlisle Street, a hybrid style popular in the area but less common in a commercial context in bi-chromatic brick (regular red and dark tapestry) about a central gable end.

While buildings dating from the Post-war period and late 20th century are fewer, they represent a broad range of styles; these include:

- the Modernist influenced office building at 147-149 Chapel Street in red brick with central spandrels of green tiles,
- the Brutalist St Kilda Library at 150 Carlisle Street with battered concrete walls beneath a wide hovering flat roof,
- the Stripped Classical Commonwealth Bank (former State Savings Bank) at 224 Carlisle Street with a delicate colonnade of piloti,
- the Organic/Wrightian building at 320 Carlisle Street with textured concrete and wide timber fascia, and
- the Post-Modern police station at 92-98 Chapel Street with an arcaded loggia.

The significance of the precinct is enhanced by the survival of several intact original or early shopfronts, and infrastructure such as the rail-over road bridge featuring basalt abutments and a riveted metal girder bridge. (Criteria D and E)

6.0 Recommendations

Excise from HO7 to create separate precinct heritage overlay.

Retain existing site-specific Heritage Overlays for St Kilda Town Hall complex (HO63), St Kilda Primary School (HO64) and Holy Trinity Church complex (HO65).

Removals recommended (that is, currently part of HO7) include:

- 141 and 145 Chapel Street,
- 6-8 William Street (single storey section), and the areas to the north and south of the railway bridge (HO147).

Extensions recommended (that is, not currently part of HO7):

- 320-330 and 263-281 Carlisle Street.

Transfer the Police Station 92 Chapel Street from individual HO290 to the new precinct HO.

The following places with PPHR citations become Contributory to the precinct:

- Former garage at 126 Carlisle Street (PPHR citation no. 455)
- Shops at 292 Carlisle Street (PPHR citation no. 457)

7.0 Assessment

RBA Architects & Conservation Consultants, *H07 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct Heritage Review Stage 2, 2021*