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## Ripponlea Commercial 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

#### 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

### 2.0 History

The Ripponlea Commercial Precinct formed parts of Crown portions 238 (on the north side of Glen Eira Road) and 255 (on the south side of Glen Eira Road) which were sold in the early 1850s (PP).

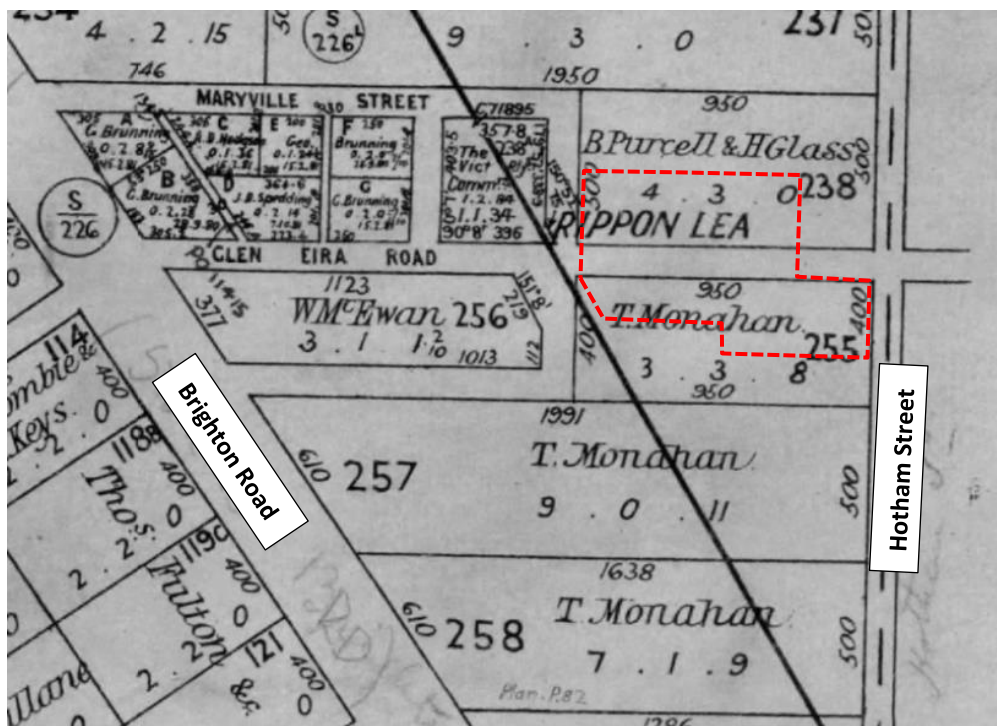


Figure 1 - Extract from Parish Plan (at Elwood Parish of Prahran P81(13)) showing Crown portions. The approximate boundaries of the subject precinct in relation to Crown portions 238 and 255 are indicated. (Source: Landata)

Allotment 255 was purchased by Thomas Monahan, along with the adjoining allotments to the south, 257 and 258, which together totalled about 20 acres (PP). In 1854-55, Monahan, an Irish immigrant who made his fortune in Melbourne as a property owner, and his wife Mary had their substantial residence *Erindale* constructed facing Brighton Road (outside the precinct) (*Argus* 18 Oct 1854 p1).

By 1856, Monahan had also acquired allotment 238, another almost 5 acres, which had originally been purchased jointly by wealthy speculator Hugh Glass and auctioneer Brabazon Purcell.

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In 1859, the railway to Brighton was opened, bisecting Monahan's land. Evidently a station at 'Glen Eira Road' was originally proposed, with reference to it featuring in advertisements for nearby land sales of that year (Age 7 Sep 1859 p7), however it did not eventuate at that time.

The 1864 Cox plan (Figure 2) shows the Brighton railway line and *Erindale*. The area of the subject precinct was undeveloped except for one small building on the north side of Glen Eira Road (the later Vardy Plan of 1873 suggests this was a timber outbuilding).

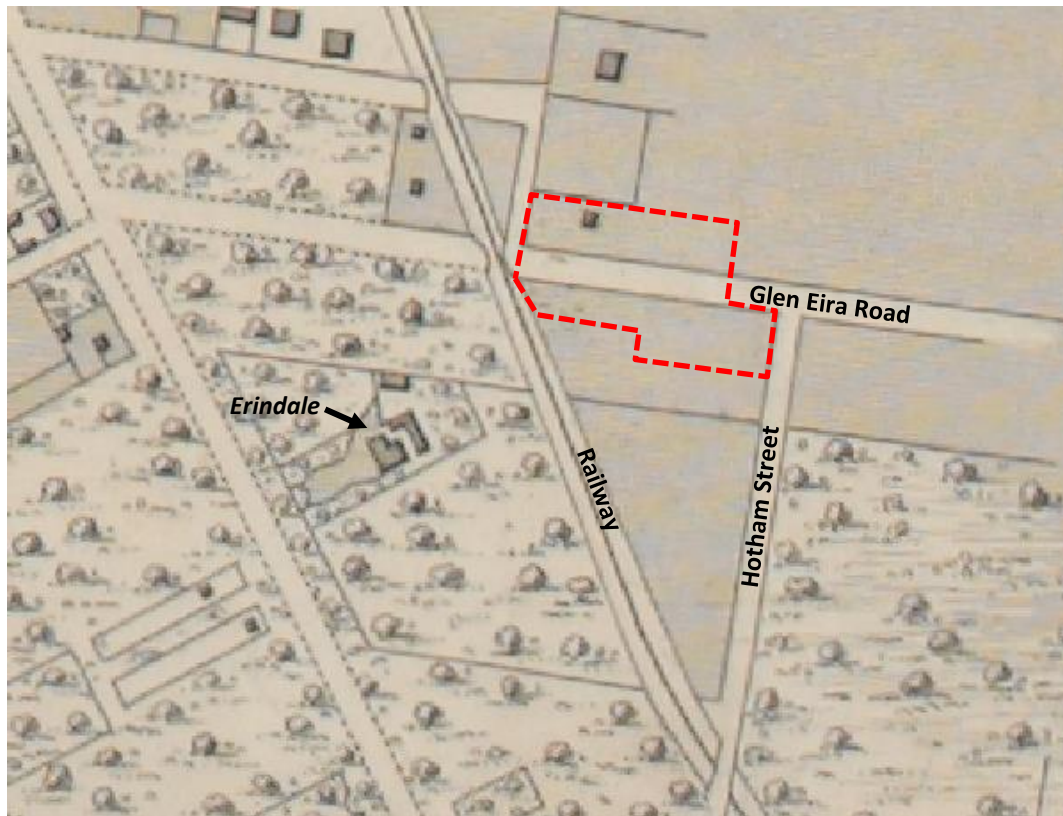


Figure 2 - Extract from 1864 plan of Melbourne, surveyed by H L Cox. The approximate boundaries of the subject precinct are indicated. (Source: State Library of Victoria)

In the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, seemingly spurred by the enduring hope of a station, some residential development occurred in Ripponlea (outside the precinct) predominantly on the west side of the railway line to north and south of the Erindale estate (Herald 31 Oct 1912 p3).

In 1890, following Monahan's death, his daughter Betsy Keogh had the substantial residence *Quat Quatta* built in the grounds of the Erindale estate on the east side of the railway line and fronting Glen Eira Road (outside the precinct) (PPHR citation no. 368).

The 1901 MMBW plan (Figure 3) shows the area of the Ripponlea Commercial Precinct yet undeveloped, except for some outbuildings and gardens associated with *Quat Quatta*.

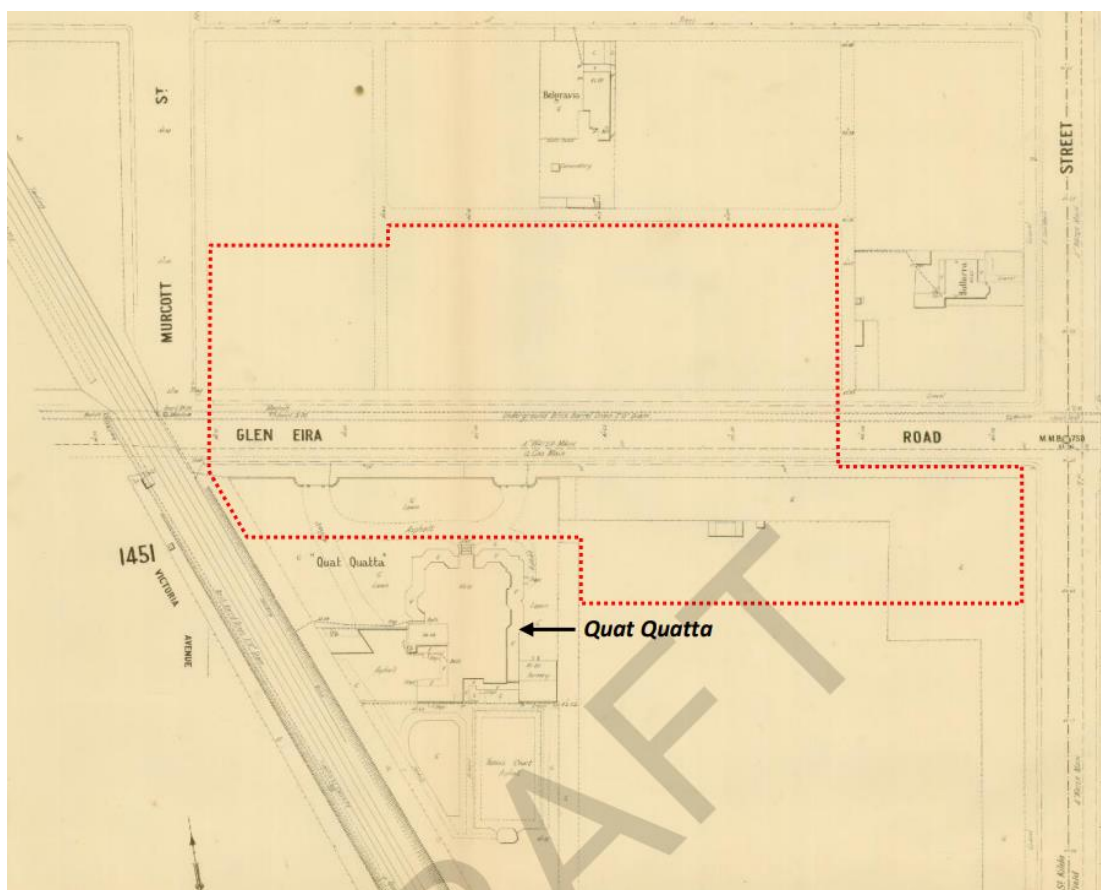


Figure 3 - MMBW detail plan no. 1452, dated 1901. Approximate boundaries of the subject precinct are indicated. (Source: State Library of Victoria)

In 1911, the decision was finally made to provide the long-awaited station at Ripponlea. The news of the station coincided with the October 1911 subdivisional sale of the Erindale and Quat Quatta estates (Figure 4) and naturally generated much interest, with the majority of the over 60 allotments offered sold including five (allotments 43 to 47) which comprise part of the Ripponlea Commercial Precinct on the south side of Glen Eira Road between Quat Quatta Avenue and Hotham Street (*Herald* 31 Oct 1912 p3). However, apart from no.66 which was constructed in 1913/14, this section of Glen Eira Road remained otherwise undeveloped until after World War One (SM).



Figure 4 - Subdivision notice for the Erindale and Quat Quatta estates. Allotments 43 to 47 which form part of the south side of the precinct are indicated in red. (Source: State Library of Victoria)

In May 1912 the new railway station opened for passengers (although the station buildings were not completed until the following year). The impact of the new station was immediate, with the consequent surge of commercial and residential development rapidly solidifying the suburb.

*Development has come down on East St Kilda since the opening of the railway station at Rippon Lea, with something like the suddenness of a thunder clap. Values rose in a few weeks by several hundred per cent., and the realisation of the subdued hopes of 26 years loosened a great volume of building energy. Where open paddocks abounded a year ago a compact suburb stands, with several streets lined by modern villas and terraces of shops. (Herald 31 Oct 1912 p3)*

Beginning in 1912, the commercial development in Ripponlea was centred on Glen Eira Road. The first building to be erected was the group of shops near the station at the corner of Glen Eira Avenue (15-27 Glen Eira Rd and 4 Glen Eira Ave) designed by Billing, Peck & Kemter (Figure 5). The north side of Glen Eira Road was generally developed earlier than the south side and contains mostly late Federation era buildings, with the only Interwar period shops being nos 57-67. Many of the buildings can be attributed to local builder/developer, J R Daley, who purchased much of the land on the north side, including nos 31-37 (1917), nos 39-43 (1916, demolished), nos 45-55 (1914) and nos 57-67 (1922). Remarkably, no. 53 has operated continuously as a fruit and vegetable shop since 1914/15 when it was established by first owner Louis Virgona (ME). Another shop that had a long-standing use is the former Brinsmead's Pharmacy at no. 73 (designed by Sydney Smith & Ogg) which operated continuously as a chemist for almost 90 years until into the 2000s.





Figure 5 - Photograph of the group of shops at 15-27 Glen Eira Road and 4 Glen Eira Avenue (built 1912) taken within a few years of its erection. (Source: Hawthorn, Kew, Camberwell Citizen, 19 February 1915, p5)

On the south side, development largely occurred during the early Interwar period, with the only Federation period buildings on the south side being no. 60 (1918), a distinctive corner building designed by architect Arthur Plaisted, and no. 66 (1913/14). In October 1920, further subdivision in front of *Quat Quatta* created 12 shop sites fronting Glen Eira Road (between the railway line and Quat Quatta Avenue) which were all developed within the next two years (*Argus* 20 Oct 1920 p2). By 1923, the centre was almost fully developed.



Figure 6 - Glen Eira Road Ripponlea in the late 1920s, looking west. Note the single storey shop/s at 74 Glen Eira Road (left foreground) prior to its 1930 remodelling for the Bank of Australasia. (Source: PROV, VPRS 12800/P0003, ADV 0466)

Amongst the last buildings to erected were three adjacent and distinctively designed bank buildings, being the State Savings Bank designed by Sydney Smith & Ogg and built in 1922 (no. 78), the English Scottish and Australian Bank designed by Twentyman & Askew and built in 1927/28 (no. 76), and the Bank of Australasia designed by A & K Henderson and built in 1930 (no. 74). All three banks had previously occupied other premises in Ripponlea (SM).

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The 1931 aerial photograph shows the precinct had been fully developed by this time. In 1935, it was reported that shop sites in Glen Eira Road were valued at £30 a foot (*Herald* 22 May 1935 p12).



Figure 7 - Aerial Photograph (dated Nov. 1931) showing the precinct fully developed. (Source: Landata, Proj No 1931, Run 15, Frame 2750)

## References

Eidelson, Meyer, *Ripponlea: The Village*, 2010 (ME)

Newspaper Articles (various)

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

*Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History* (TEH), February 2021

Sands and McDougall's Street Directories (SM)

St Kilda Council Building Permits Register (BP)

## 3.0 Description

The Ripponlea Commercial Precinct extends along Glen Eira Road from the railway line at the west end to Hotham Street at the east end, fully including the south side and part of the north side. It also includes a short section on the east side of Glen Eira Avenue.

Buildings which contribute to the significance of the precinct date from the late Federation and early Interwar periods, that is, between 1912 and 1930. The only non-contributory building in the precinct is the c.1960s replacement building at nos. 39-43 (this site was first developed with shops in c.1916) which nonetheless adopts the format of the surrounding earlier commercial buildings.

The buildings are mostly two-storey (commercial to the ground floor and residential to the upper floor) with some single storey examples from the 1920s. Many buildings consist of multiple premises (up to ten) though there are also individual buildings.

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All the buildings are brick and the roofs are mostly clad in sheet metal (presumably corrugated) though some are clad in tiles. The roofs are generally concealed by a parapet though a couple of the tiled examples are expressed (nos. 71-73 and 84) or partly expressed (no. 60).

Stylistically, the influence of the Arts and Crafts from the 1910s and 1920s is the most prevalent, with examples of classical styles represented by the three former banks.

There are laneways on the north side which are basalt paved. The footpaths are asphalt and the kerbing is concrete. There are a few street trees and some small garden beds.


There are a few largely intact shopfronts (Figures 8 and 9) dating to the late Federation and Interwar periods, noted in the table below. They usually retain a recessed entry, stallboard (some with tiling, but may be over painted or rendered) and framing with highlights. In some instances, they bear the badge of the manufacturer. Some shopfronts partly survive (e.g. the configuration, some framing) while other shopfronts are early but not original. Also, some canopies survive.



Figures 8 & 9 - Intact original shopfronts at 23 Glen Eira Road (left) and 70 Glen Eira Road (right)


### Late Federation Period (1912-1918)


The influence of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic is evident in the red brick and render (smooth and roughcast) material palette, which in some cases been overpainted or rendered over. Projecting piers tend to define the edge of the building/shop at least to the parapet. Windows are typically double-hung sashes, often with toplight windows, resulting in a longer opening.

Address	Image	Details
<b>North Side</b>		
<b>8 Glen Eira Ave</b>		<p>Built 1912 (BP 1672, 24 July 1912)</p> <p>Single storey rendered parapet with projecting piers and large dentillations. Built in front of a surviving Federation period house. Shopfronts replaced.</p> <p>Builder: Dunlop &amp; Hunt</p>
<b>15-27 Glen Eira Rd and 4 Glen Eira Ave</b>	 	<p>Built 1912 (BP 1600, 28 May 1912)</p> <p>Two storey corner building comprised of ten shops. Red brick with render (although most now overpainted or rendered), corner turret, chamfered corner, tripartite windows at first floor with small upper sashes. Some original shopfronts survive or partly survive at 4 Glen Eira Ave and 15 and 23 Glen Eira Rd. There is a 1950s chrome finish shopfront at no. 21.</p> <p>Architects: Billing, Peck &amp; Kemter</p> <p>Builder: Dunlop &amp; Hunt</p> <p>Original owner: Lane and Morgan</p>
<b>29 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built c.1917</p> <p>Two storey, red brick with rendered details including scalloped panel to parapet.</p> <p>Shopfront replaced.</p>




Address	Image	Details
<b>31-37 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built c.1917 (Likely BP 3254, 6 June 1917) Two storey building comprised of four premises. Red brick with rendered lintel/frieze, machicolation motif to parapet, paired windows with highlights, unusual chimneys and terracotta chimney pots integrated into parapets. Shopfronts replaced, but no. 35 retains a 1950s shopfront. Builder/owner: J R Daley</p>
<b>45-55 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built 1914 (BP 2383, 9 July 1914) Two storey building consisting of six premises. Red brick with render, distinctive, part scalloped profile to parapet incorporating chimneys and terracotta chimney pots. Shopfront of no. 55 partly intact, others replaced. Builder/owner: J R Daley</p>
<b>69 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built c.1916 Two storey, smooth rendered finish, moulded diamond shaped detail, curved parapet, tripartite windows. Intact shopfront.</p>





Address	Image	Details
<p><b>71-73 Glen Eira Rd</b></p>		<p>Built 1918 (BP 3640, 21 June 1918) Two storey building comprised of two shops. Asymmetrical composition with gable end to eastern half only. Roughcast render walls with projecting red brick window surrounds. Exposed transverse gable roof clad in terracotta tiles with central roughcast chimney and exposed rafter ends. Stepped parapets to side gable ends. Particularly fine intact shopfronts (also internal fittings and display furniture) manufactured by Thomas Duff &amp; Brothers. Original canopy with pressed metal lining.</p> <p>Architects: Sydney Smith &amp; Ogg</p> <p>Builder: Queever</p> <p>Original owner: Frederick Damyon</p> <p><b>PPHR citation 332</b></p>
<p><b>South Side</b></p>		
<p><b>60 Glen Eira Rd</b></p>		<p>Built 1918 (BP 3670, 29 July 1918)) Two storey corner shop. Red brick, wide rendered frieze with bracketed cornice, port hole openings with multi-paned glazing, recessed porch. Arched entry porch to Quat Quatta Ave has been bricked-in, amongst other alterations. Shopfront replaced. Architect: Arthur Plaisted</p>

Address	Image	Details
<b>66 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built c.1913/14 (BP 2025)</p> <p>Two storey, red brick and render to sill band and upper part of façade (parapet panel and projecting piers). Mostly intact shopfront (overpainted). Builder: J Hughes</p>




### Early Interwar Period (c.1921-1930)




The influence of the Arts and Crafts style endured into the 1920s with red brick and render combinations common. There was however a shift with the inclusion of some clinker brick detailing. Other buildings are fully rendered with some simplified classicising detailing and two elaborate examples (former banks). Windows are usually double hung sashes often with a multi-paned upper sash. There are both single and double storey buildings.




Address	Image	Details
<b>North side</b>		
<b>57-67 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built 1921/1922 (BP 4620, 3 October 1921)</p> <p>Two storey building consisting of six premises. Red brick with rendered frieze, paired windows with highlights, unusual chimneys and terracotta chimney pots integrated into parapets. Some early (but not original) shopfronts survive at 57-63 dating to 1946 manufactured by Silverwood &amp; Beck (BP U185-U188) - although these shopfronts are later, they follow an Interwar format, albeit with a brighter palette. Owner/builder: J R Daley</p>
<b>South side</b>		


Address	Image	Details
<b>32 Glen Eira Rd</b>		Built c.1921 (BP 4469, 22 March 1921) Single storey, rendered, arched window opening. Shopfront altered.
<b>36 Glen Eira Road</b>		Built 1922 (BP 4975, 7 September 1922) Single storey, rendered stepped parapet. Shopfront replaced. Builder: N J Brook
<b>38 Glen Eira Road</b>		Built c.1921 Single storey, simple face brick parapet (overpainted). Shopfront replaced.
<b>40 Glen Eira Rd</b>		Built c.1921 Single storey, simple rendered parapet. Shopfront replaced.



Address	Image	Details
<b>42-54 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built 1922</p> <p>(Possibly either BP 4815 or 4860)</p> <p>Group of seven single storey shops with simple rendered parapets and projecting piers. Organised into two groups – three and four premises - about the low curvature of the parapet profile. Parapet profile same as nos 56-58.</p> <p>Shopfronts replaced.</p> <p>Builder/owner: Possibly George Symons (given similarities with nos 56-58)</p>
<b>56-58 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built 1922</p> <p>(Likely either BP 4815 or 4860)</p> <p>Two storey corner building with chamfered corner. Face brick and rendered frieze. Paired windows with multi-paned upper sashes. Parapet profile same as nos 42-54. Shopfronts replaced.</p> <p>Builder/owner: George Symons</p>
<b>62 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built c.1920</p> <p>Two storey shop. Roughcast render with brick detailing to the piers, crenulations, and framing of the semicircular window.</p> <p>Shopfront replaced.</p>

Address	Image	Details
<b>64 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built 1923</p> <p>(Likely BP 5190)</p> <p>Two storey shop. Red brick with clinker brick detailing including dentillation, piers and lower lintels (highlight windows above canopy).</p> <p>Shopfront partly intact.</p> <p>Builder: Likely A C Johnston</p>
<b>68-72 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>Built 1923/1924</p> <p>(Likely BP 5418, 9 August 1923)</p> <p>Two storey building comprised of three shops. Red brick with clinker brick detailing (banding lintels, sills) and dentillation. Single windows to each shop.</p> <p>Intact shopfronts manufactured by 'Trevorrow' (R Trevorrow &amp; Co, shop fitters, were active from c.1924 to 1933). Round profile framing, timber doors, terracotta and umber tiling to entry, olive green tiles to stallboards, ribbed glass to hampers, mirrored glass to piers. Canopy has battened sheeting to soffit.</p> <p>Builder: Likely A C Johnston</p>
<b>74 Glen Eira Rd</b>		<p>1930 (remodelled)</p> <p>(BP 7831)</p> <p>Single storey, former Bank of Australasia. Building was originally a pair of mid-1920s shops which were extensively remodelled in 1930. Red brick, including herringbone panels, and rendered band with festoon motif. Multipaned windows.</p> <p>Architect: A &amp; K Henderson</p> <p>Builder: W Machin</p>

Address	Image	Details
76 Glen Eira Rd		<p>1927-28 (BP 7030)</p> <p>Single storey, former ES&amp;A Bank.</p> <p>Free Classical style, rendered, Tuscan order pilasters.</p> <p>Architect: Twentyman &amp; Askew</p> <p>Builder: G Reid</p>
78 Glen Eira Rd		<p>1922 (BP 4818)</p> <p>Two storey, former State Bank. Free Classical style, Ionic order pilasters, rendered, extensively rusticated, prominent keystones, multipaned windows.</p> <p>Architect: Sydney Smith &amp; Ogg</p> <p>Builder: C F Pittard or E H Plaisted (records vary)</p>
80 Glen Eira Rd		<p>Built 1920/1921 (BP 4163)</p> <p>Single storey garage. Stepped rendered parapet.</p> <p>Builder: C Boxall</p>
82 Glen Eira Rd		<p>Built 1921 (BP 4553 and/or 4584)</p> <p>Two storey shop. Roughcast and smooth render. Stepped parapet, projecting piers. Multipaned upper sashes.</p> <p>Builder: J Raymond Robinson</p> <p>Shopfront replaced.</p>

Address	Image	Details
84 Glen Eira Rd		<p>Built c.1921</p> <p>Two storey corner shop. Face brick (overpainted), expressed hipped roof clad in terracotta tiles, with eaves and exposed rafter ends.</p> <p>Shopfront replaced.</p>

## 4.0 Comparative Analysis

The Ripponlea Commercial Precinct is one of three main commercial precincts in the municipality which primarily date to the Federation and Interwar periods. Compared with the other two precincts, the subject precinct is the more intact, containing only one non-contributory building. Many of the buildings are face red brick with some contrasting render (smooth or roughcast) and clinker brick elements, reflecting a prevailing influence of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. Several building groups were developed by the same builder and feature parapets with unusual integrated chimneys. Notably, there are a group of three elaborate adjoining former bank buildings. There are also several distinctive architect-designed buildings.

- Village Belle Commercial Precinct. The largest precinct of the three. Has several buildings dating to the 1930s, with a preponderance of those designed in the Moderne style, whereas the buildings in the other two precincts mainly date to the 1910s and 1920s.
- Glenhuntly and Ormond roads, Elwood (part of HO8, Elwood-Glenhuntly Rd, Ormond Rd). The commercial zone consists of two, separated sections – western and eastern. In the western section, many buildings have a combined palette of red brick and render except for the Free Classical style former bank, which is fully rendered. The unusual street configuration provides a landmark corner building with two oriel bays. In the eastern section (between Docker and Foam streets), several buildings are also indicative of the Free Classical style.

Most other commercial precincts have a core of Victorian period buildings in addition to those dating to the 20th century:

- 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 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 19th century buildings were timber construction as the area, with its poor drainage, initially attracted a lower socio-economic group. These buildings were replaced during the early 20th century. In addition, the commercial zone expanded into former residential areas at the eastern and western ends at this time.
- Fitzroy Street (part of HO5, St Kilda Hill) – mostly larger buildings, often part of larger residential buildings (multi-storey east of Grey Street). Due to the lack of narrow/standard suburban shopping centre allotments, it has a markedly different character. There are a few Victorian period buildings in the vicinity of the Grey Street intersection (including the part of the George Hotel) otherwise most of the graded buildings date to the Interwar period.



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- Clarendon and Park streets, South Melbourne (part of HO440, Emerald Hill Residential Precinct) is another large commercial zone along a tram route and near a railway line (now light rail). It consists largely of Victorian, a few Federation and Interwar period examples.
  - Bay Street, Port Melbourne (part of HO1, Port Melbourne) is a large commercial zone with many Victorian, some examples from the Federation and Interwar periods, as well as some recent redevelopment, including multi-storey (south end).
  - Armstrong Street Commercial Precinct, Middle Park (HO445) is a small precinct with Victorian and Federation period buildings dating from circa 1888 to 1910.

## 5.0 Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

The Ripponlea Commercial Precinct comprising 15-73 and 32-84 Glen Eira Road, and 4-8 Glen Eira Avenue (east side only) is significant.

The following features contribute to the significance of the precinct:

- Late Federation period development (1912-1918), including two storey shop residences.
- Early Interwar period development (c.1921-1930), including single storey shops and two storey shop residences.
- Brick walls (red or clinker), typically with some rendered elements (banding, etc.) or fully rendered.
- Timber-framed windows, both double-hung sash and casement.
- Mostly with parapets and a few with expressed roof forms (tile clad).
- Original or early shopfronts (some branded) and canopies.
- Basalt paved laneways.

The Significant places within the precinct are:

- 71-73 Glen Eira Road
- 74, 76 & 78 Glen Eira Road

The Contributory places are:

- 15-37, 45-69 and 32-72, 80-84 Glen Eira Road,
- 4 and 8 Glen Eira Avenue

The Non-contributory properties are:

- 39-43 Glen Eira Road

### How is it significant?

The Ripponlea Commercial Precinct is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Phillip.

### Why is it significant?

Historically, the precinct illustrates the considerable and rapid growth of Ripponlea during the early twentieth century, directly following the opening of the railway station at Ripponlea in 1912. The precinct was developed over a relatively short period of time, eighteen years, between 1912 and 1930. It is in part representative of a typical pattern of land division in the St Kilda area, where large

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Victorian holdings, in this case the Quat Quatta estate, were subdivided during the Federation and Interwar periods. (Criterion A)

Aesthetically, it is of significance as a local commercial centre developed during the late Federation and Interwar periods which is largely intact to its c.1930 state. Many of the buildings are face red brick with some contrasting render (smooth or roughcast) and clinker brick elements, reflecting a prevailing influence of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic, while others are fully rendered with some displaying classicising detailing. Some shops are enhanced by the survival of intact original or early shopfronts with recessed entries, tiling, framing and highlights. Several building groups (31-37, 45-55 and 57-67 Glen Eira Road) were developed by the same builder and feature parapets with unusual integrated chimneys. There are also several distinctive architect-designed buildings, including a group of ten shops with a landmark corner tower at 15-27 Glen Eira Road and 4 Glen Eira Avenue by Billing, Peck & Kemter, 60 Glen Eira Road by Arthur Plaisted, and 71-73 Glen Eira Road by Sydney Smith & Ogg. Notably, there are a group of three elaborate adjoining former bank building at 74, 76 and 78 Glen Eira Road displaying a diversity of architectural styles of the 1920s. (Criterion E)

## 6.0 Recommendations

Excise from HO7 to create separate precinct heritage overlay.

Remove 75-93 Glen Eira Road from the heritage overlay and the precinct

Transfer Adass Israel Synagogue 12-24 Glen Eira Avenue from HO7 to a new separate individual heritage overlay.

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

- 15-27 Glen Eira Road and 4 Glen Eira Avenue (PPHR citation 330)
- 31-37 Glen Eira Road (PPHR citation 1499)
- 45-55 Glen Eira Road (PPHR citation 331)
- 57-67 Glen Eira Road (PPHR citation 1501)
- 60 Glen Eira Road (PPHR citation 1502)

## 7.0 Assessment

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