
Balaclava Flats Residential 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

4. Transforming and managing land and natural resources: 4.7 Transforming the land and waterways
6. Building towns, cities and the garden state: 6.3 Shaping the suburbs, 6.7 Making homes for Victorians

Port Phillip thematic environmental history

2. Land transformation: 2.2 Altering the land (2.2.1 Water)
5. Buildings and cultural landscapes: 5.2 Shaping the suburbs (5.2.2 Private development)

2.0 History

The precinct is comprised of two parts as shown in Figure 1:

- The north section comprises parts of Crown lots 71C and 71D the north of Carlisle Street west side of Chapel Street.
- The south section comprises parts or all of Crown lots 216A, 217B, 219, 228, 230, 230A & 231 to the south of Carlisle Street and west of Chapel Street.

The Government Land Sales offering Crown lots in the precinct were held in 1850, 1853, and 1863.

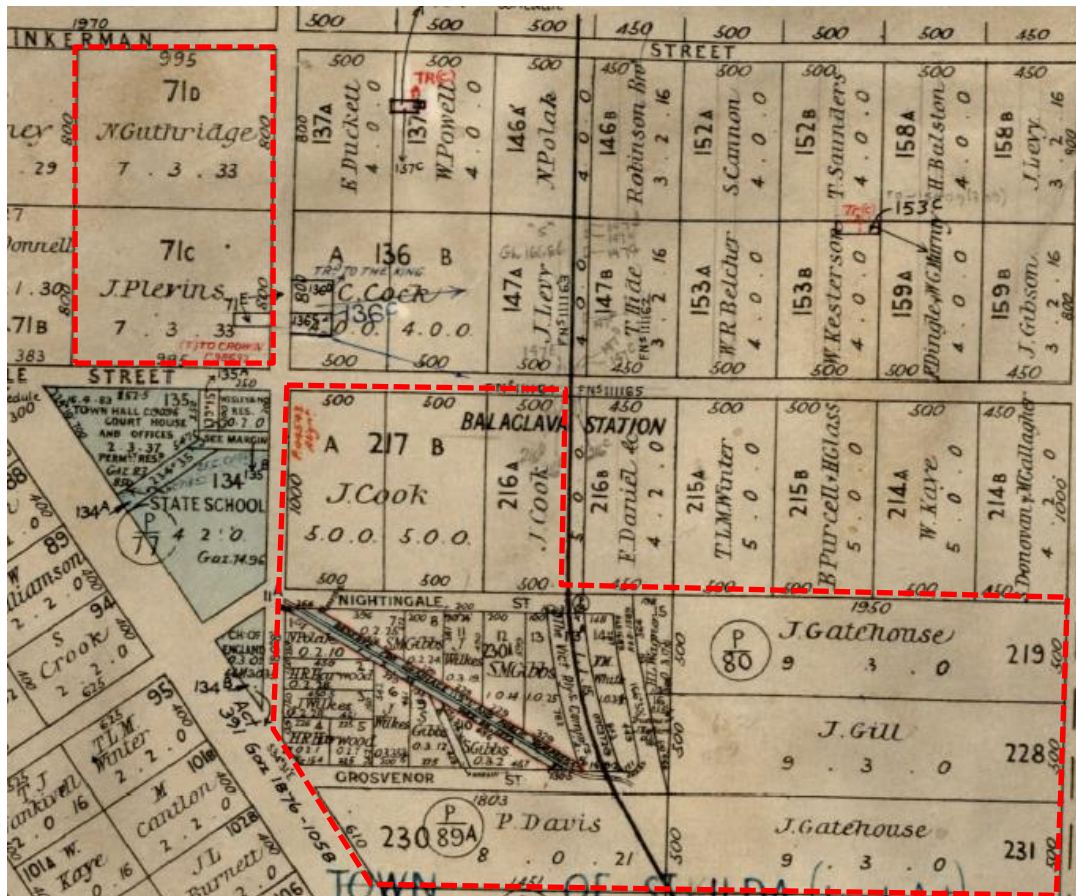


Figure 1 - Parish Plan - P81(13) At Elwood Parish of Prahran. Lots that are partly or wholly within the precinct area are highlighted (Source: Landata)

Development in the precinct was limited initially due to the risk of flooding. In 1857, a councillor 'presented a petition signed by 69 residents and owners of property near the Balaclava and Inkerman roads praying the (St Kilda) Council to take steps for the drainage of that locality'. (*Argus* 16 May 1857 p.5).

The impetus for subdivision however was likely the impending railway, which was being discussed in public meetings from at least early 1856 (*Argus* 2 February 1856 p5), however its location was not identified on the Blenheim Estate plan. Construction of the railway line between the terminus at St Kilda and Bay Street, Brighton was authorised on 24 November 1857 for the St Kilda and Brighton Railway Co., with the first service operating on 3 December 1859. The Grosvenor Street Bridge was one of 11 bridges constructed probably in timber bridge initially. The Melbourne and Hobson's Bay United Railway Co. purchased the line in 1865 and subsequently the company's assets were sold to the Government in 1878 (PPHR 2109).

From late 1857, St Kilda Council sought to address the issue of flooding in the area with the construction of the first drain. Plans for the first section running westwards from Chapel Street were prepared and the location of the proposed watercourse marked out (JBC1, p213). The current location corresponds with the description being about equidistant between Inkerman Street to the north and Carlisle Street to the south.

The situation had not been sufficiently resolved by 1860 when:

storm waters from outlying districts swept into St. Kilda, and flooded the lower lands lying between Barkly Street, and the eastern boundary. Residents of the flat had to leave their

houses, and seek shelter in the higher parts of the town. Along the line of the main drain much damage was done by the overflowing waters (JBCI, p146).

In the following year, Council entered into contracts for enlarging, and for making the main drain to the sea (channelling run-off that emanated in Caulfield). These contracts presumably included the section covered by the reserve in Bothwell Street, then extended across the original market reserve (now the town hall and state school) and linked into the drain between Duke and Pakington streets. Although works were hampered by the reduction in government grants to the Council, the drain was completed by 1865 (JBCI, pp145-146, 214).

Nineteenth century development in the north section

The first allotments to be sold in the precinct were the two to the north of Carlisle Street in May 1850 (*Argus*, 16 May 1850, p.2). It was recorded in the *Argus* that R(ichard) Guthridge had bought both allotments but on the Parish Plan, different names are noted on the Parish Plan (as did occur) – N(ehmiah) Guthridge for lot 71D – (Pakington Street) and J(abez) Plevins for lot 71C (Duke Street area). These allotments were both relatively large at nearly 8 acres.

The land in Portion C of lot 71 was subdivided soon after in early 1853 (Figure 2) creating the east end of Duke Street (*Argus*, 5 January 1853, p1). The allotments were larger than the extant blocks being between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ acre (SLV va200055). The initial subdivision of Pakington Street also probably occurred about this time (SLV va001220; *Argus* 22 April 1852 p1)

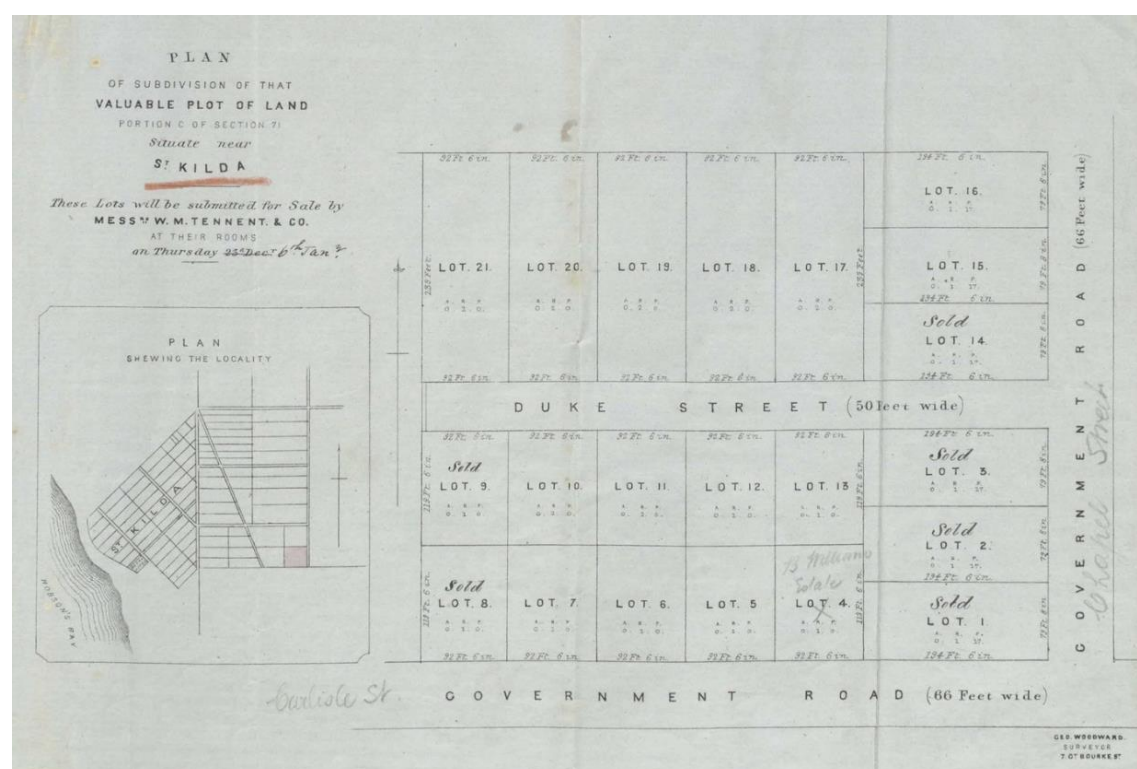


Figure 2 – 1853, Subdivision of Portion C of Section 71 St Kilda (Source: SLV, va200055)

The first plan recording development in the area dates to 1855 shows that only Pakington Street had been created and possibly one building existed on what would be the south side of Duke Street. A similar situation is evident on the 1866 Cox plan (see Figure 8).

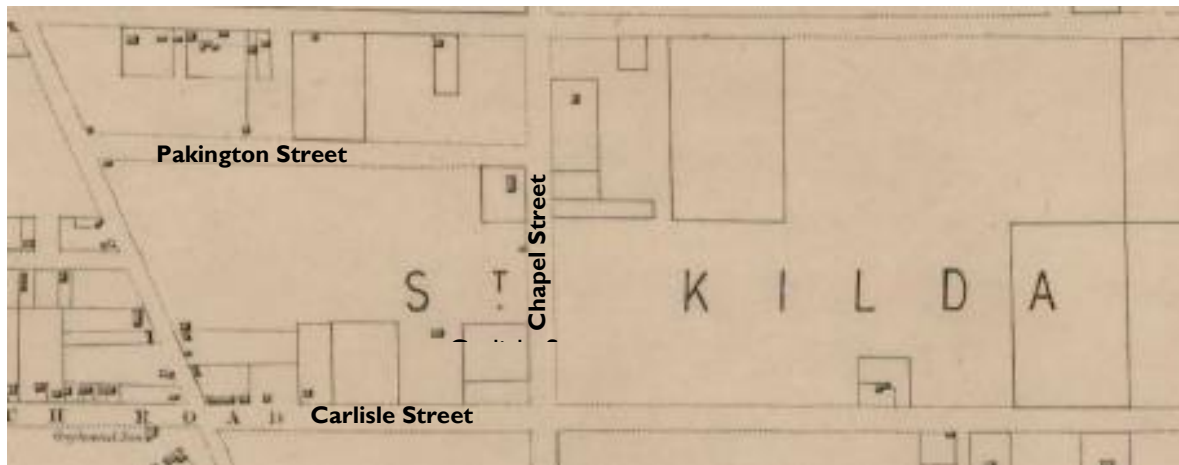


Figure 3 – 1855 James Kearney 'Melbourne + its Suburbs' plan (Source: SLV)

The Vardy Plans of 1873 (Figure 4) shows that there was some development on the south side of Duke Street near Chapel Street, but it does not correspond to the extant houses. The north side was undeveloped and neither Lynott Street nor Glenmark Avenue had been laid out. There were some timber houses in the mid-part of Pakington Street and possibly one or two on the south side survive (from the group of nos 49-53).

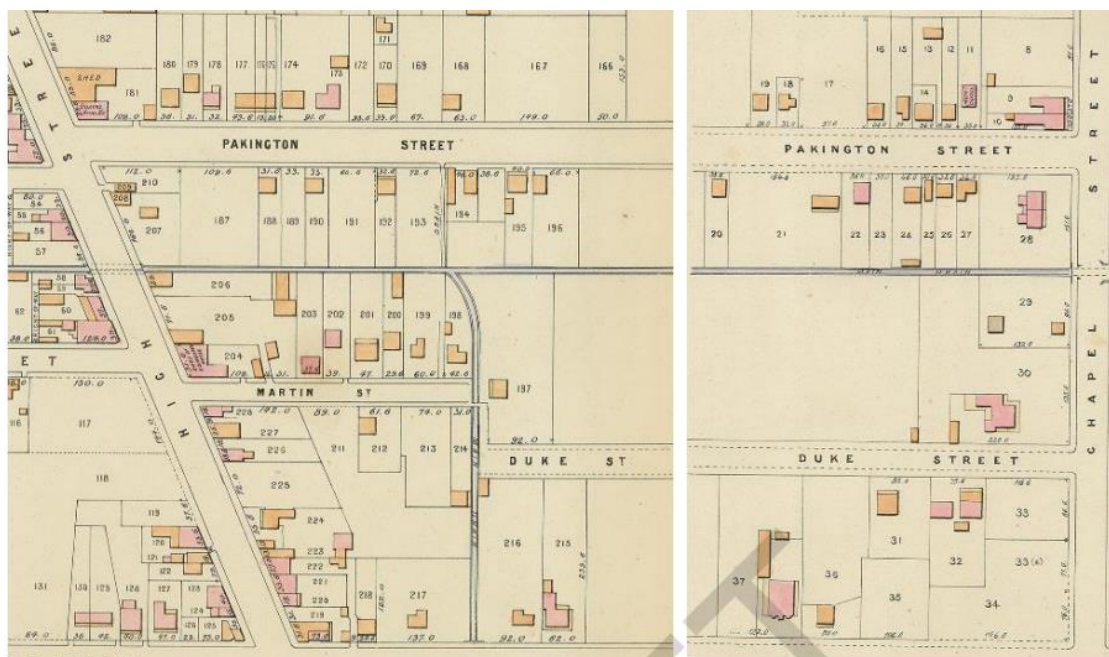


Figure 4 - 1873 Vardy Plans SW1 + SW2 (Source: SKHS)

By the end of the 19th century according to the MMBW plans (Figure 5), much of the northern section had been developed and a considerable proportion of that building stock survives. Pakington Street was largely as it is, however Duke Street was less developed (MMBW 1371 +1383, 1897). The group on south side of the street had been constructed (nos. 27-41), most of Lynott Street and adjacent part on north side of Duke Street (nos. 2-12/14) but Glenmark Avenue had not been created yet. The confluence of two arms of the drainage system is also evident.

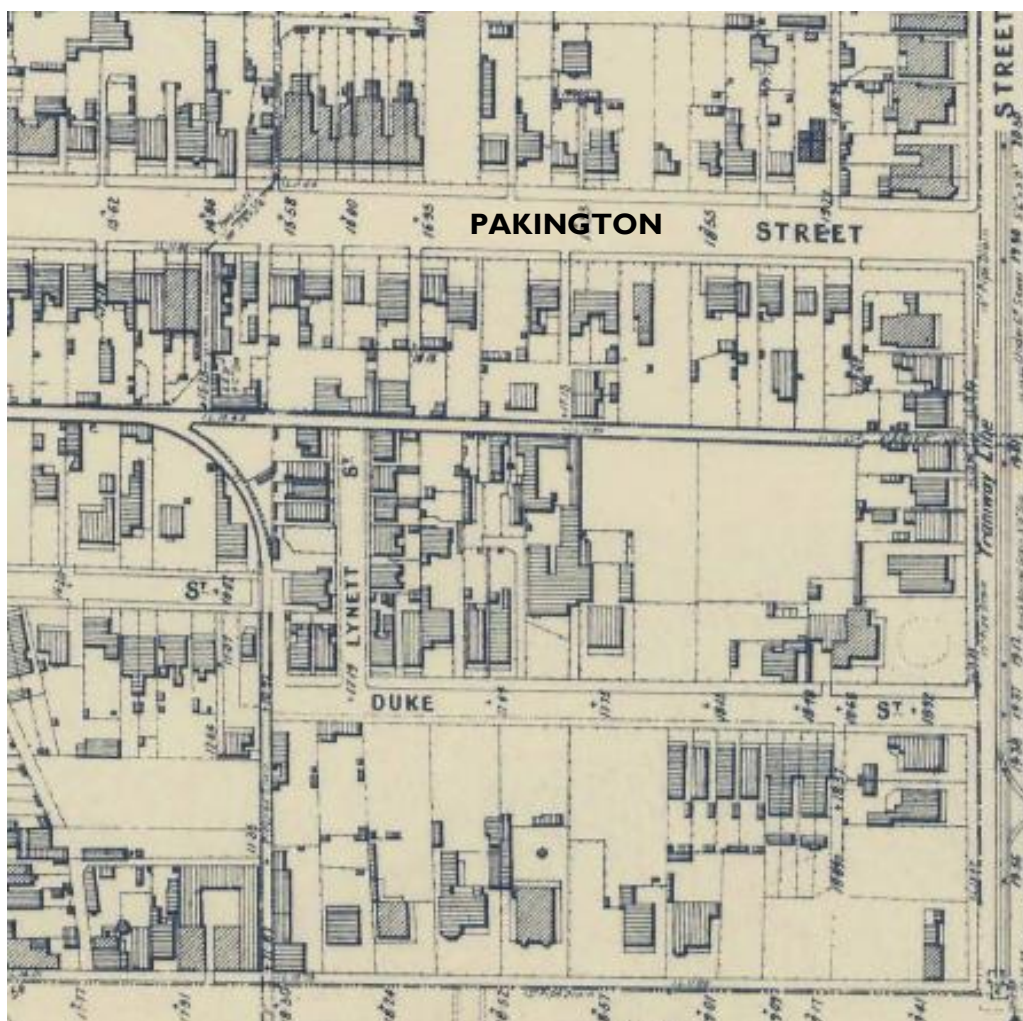


Figure 5 – 1896 MMBW no. 45 (Source: SLV)

Nineteenth century development in the south section

The section west of the railway between Carlisle Street (to the north) and Nightingale Street (to the south) was all acquired by John Cooke, relating to three, five-acre allotments - 216A and 217 A + B. Two are known to have been offered for sale in November 1853 and it is likely the other Crown lot was sold about this time (*Argus* 25 November 1853 p5). Part of the land east of the railway in the precinct was also sold in November 1853, being lot 228 (J Gill). The two other large allotments – no. 219 and no. 230 – were respectively acquired by J Gatehouse and Peter Davis, auctioneer and one-time mayor of Melbourne (1856-57). The land between Nightingale and Grosvenor streets was initially set aside as a reserve and subdivided in 1863.

Regardless of the flooding issue, which had not been resolved by 1857, a major subdivision was undertaken between Carlisle and Nightingale streets and named the Blenheim Park Estate (Figure 6). In the auction notice of the agents Symon and Perry, the estate was advertised as follows (Age 2 October 1857 p7):

The above magnificent estate, the most valuable unsold large portion of land in the municipality of St Kilda. This splendid property has been subdivided into 178 allotments The auctioneers deem it unnecessary to expatiate upon the value of the above described property, as it must be patent to every one that a more valuable and choice spot could not be selected.

The name of the estate references one of England's most famous and grandest country houses built for the Duke of Marlborough. The width of the original allotments varied between 29 feet (8.84m) and 31 feet (9.45m).

Within a year, houses were being constructed, including, according to a contemporary advertisement, a four-roomed brick cottage with a slate roof in Marlborough Street (Argus 28 Sept 1858 p2). Unfortunately, the early editions of the directories do not record the early phase of occupation in the smaller streets in the precinct area (not until 1872).

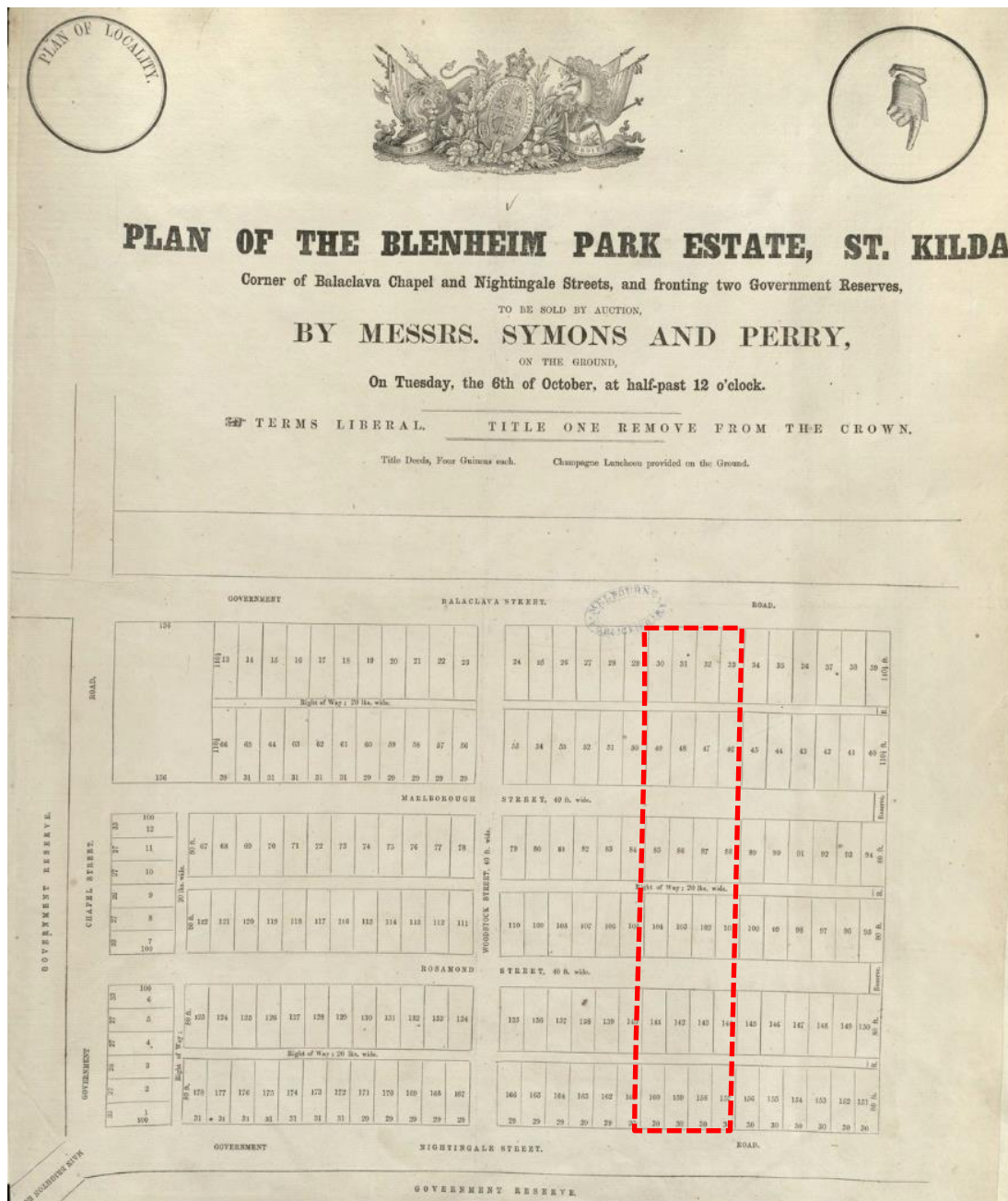


Figure 6 – Blenheim Park Estate, approximate location of railway highlighted. Note that ‘Balaclava Street’ is now Carlisle Street (Source: SLV, ge000112)

The last phase of government subdivision and sale occurred from late 1863, when the land about the main drain (between Nightingale and Grosvenor streets) was surveyed by B M Goldinet. H. Leopold Wagner acquired the east side of William Street in 1864 and the architect F M White purchased the west side in 1865. S M Gibbs, who was involved with mining companies at Ballarat, acquired about a

third of the allotments on the west side of the railway in November 1865, including where Gibbs Street is now located.

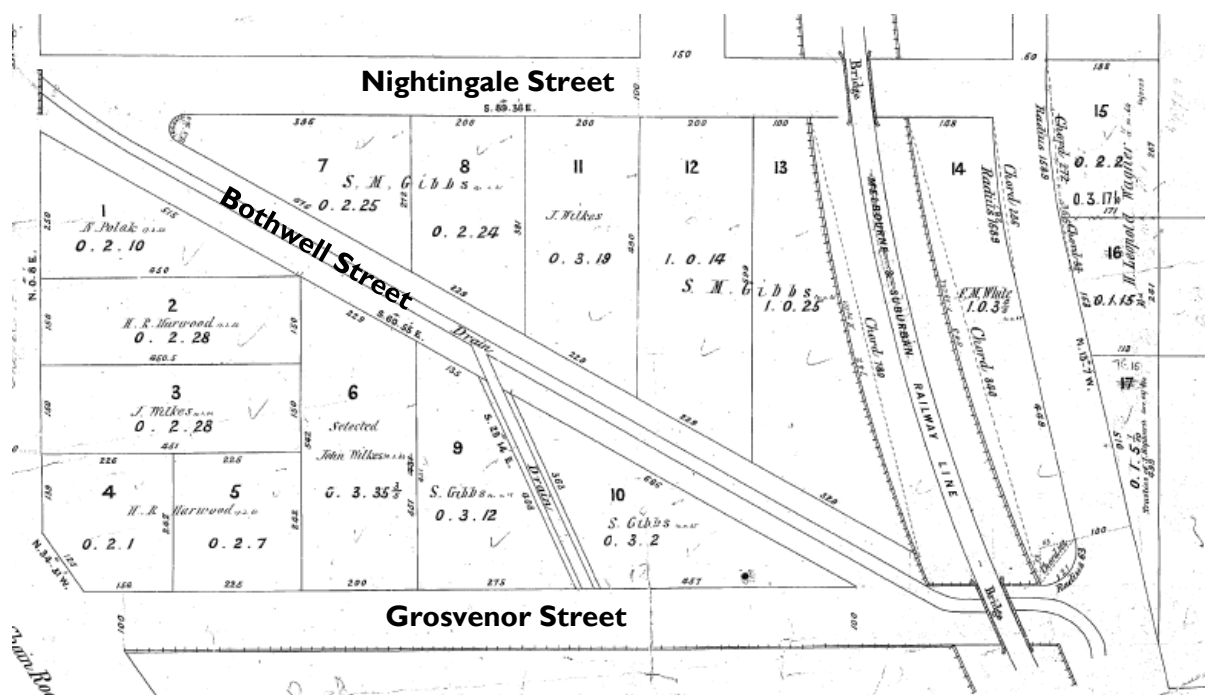


Figure 7 – 1863 subdivision plan (Source: Landata, Put away plan P89A-1)

The Cox Plan of 1866 (Figure 8) shows some development in the Blenheim Park Estate area and in William Street, though not all the streets that had been laid out in the precinct area by that time. The railway and main drain are evident. The pattern of development contrasted with that in other parts of the municipality in that the allotments were generally smaller, especially between Marlborough and Nightingale streets. Further to the north and west in the centre of St Kilda, those who ruled Victoria (judges, magnates and legislators) lived in elegant estates in what was considered to be the best address in Melbourne at this time (AL, pix).

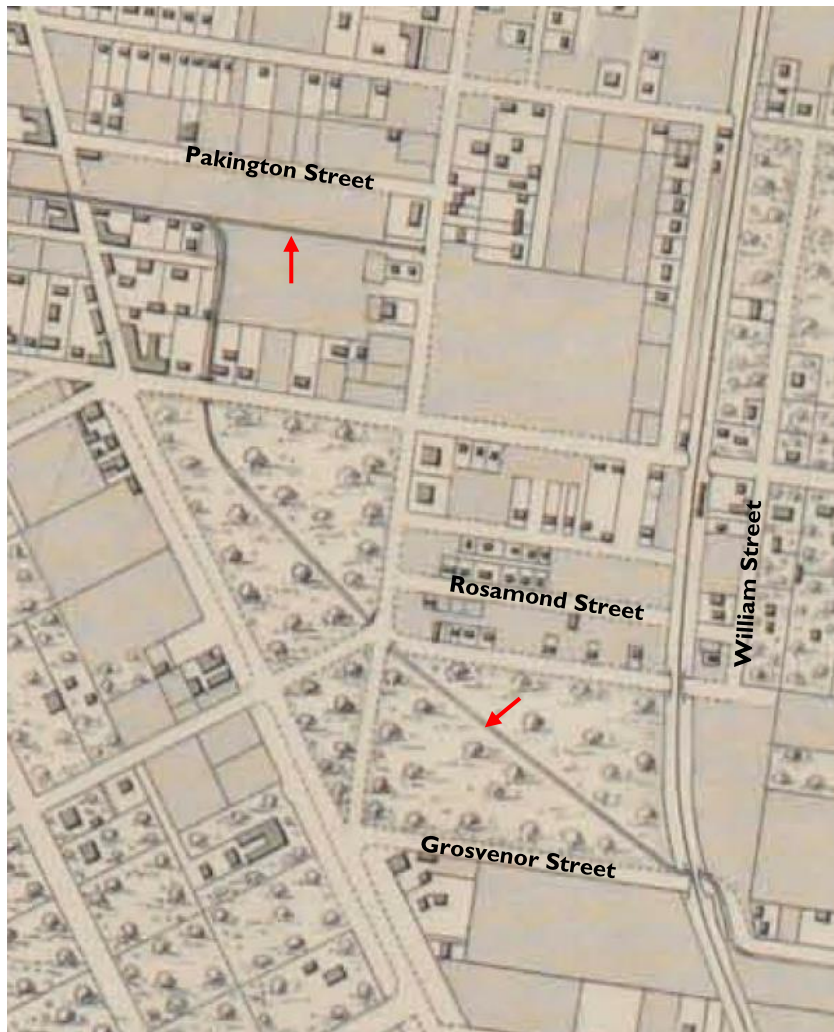


Figure 8 - Cox plan (1866) showing drains (arrows), railway and some development in the Blenheim Park Estate (Source: SLV)

Not all the land was sold in the Blenheim Park Estate during the late 1850s, and in 1871 a second phase of offerings in the Estate was undertaken in January and July (Figure 9). Nine lots in Marlborough and Rosamond streets were available in January (*Argus* 14 January 1871 p2) and 35 in July (*Argus* 14 July 1871 p2). According to the contemporary plans, about 2/3rds of the lots had been sold. The lot configuration and sizes changed from the original subdivision as they are generally smaller. Most of the lots were 20 feet (6m) wide but varied between 17 feet (5.2) and 31 feet (9.45m).

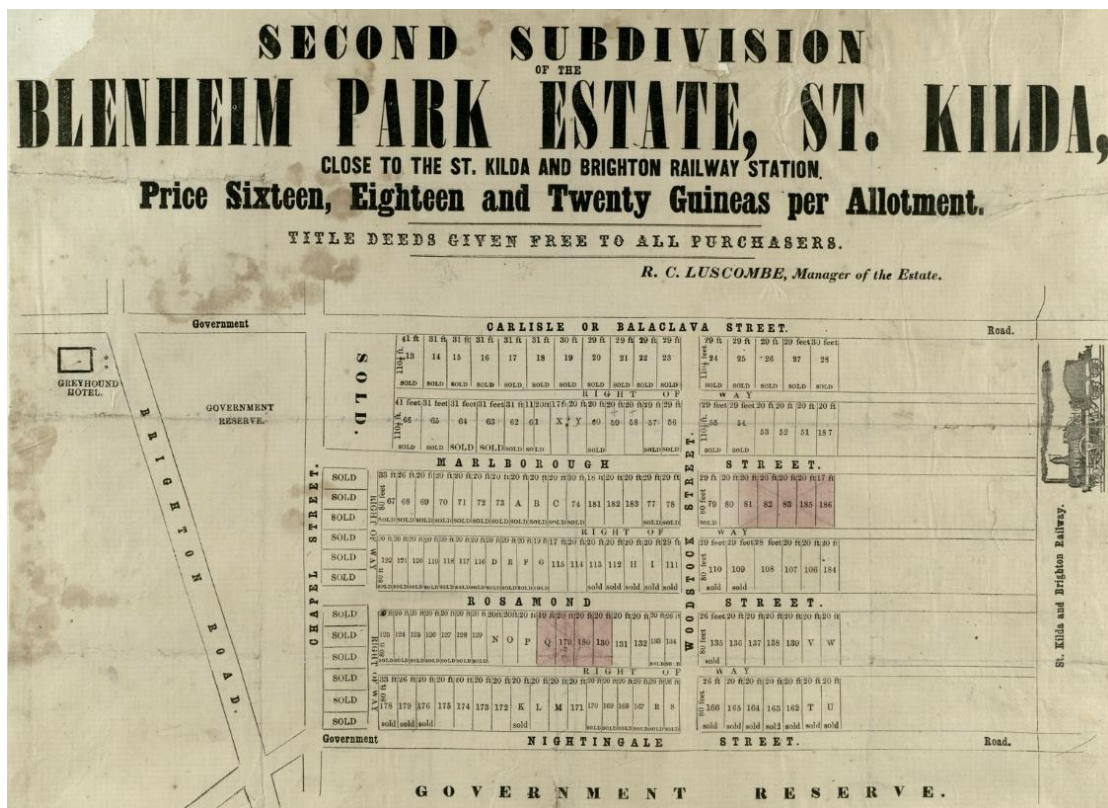


Figure 9 - 1870, second subdivision of Blenheim Park Estate. The lots marked red were offered January 1871 (Source: SLV, va002617)

The Vardy Plans of 1873 (Figure 10) show that some development had occurred in the part of the Blenheim Park Estate within the precinct (mainly east of Woodstock Street), however it is unlikely that any of pre-1873 buildings survive. Three houses in Nightingale Street have probably been replaced (definitely nos 32 and 56, though possibly no. 44 is original). Similarly, the three timber cottages at 24-28 Rosamond Street replaced an earlier brick house. The double-fronted timber house at 41 Rosamond Street might be the only pre-1873 residence. Much of the east end of the estate (near the railway line) was in large holdings owned by R Byrne and J Robinson (VI)

The allotments in the section about the drain remained unsubdivided and undeveloped in the precinct area with Gibbs retaining his holdings (SW6, nos 149-156). A villa had been erected on what is now the William Street Reserve, adjacent to the railway. The east side of William Street and Gourlay Street were undeveloped. original Crown Allotment (no. 228) was unsubdivided and owned by W Young with a house at the east end (Hotham Street).

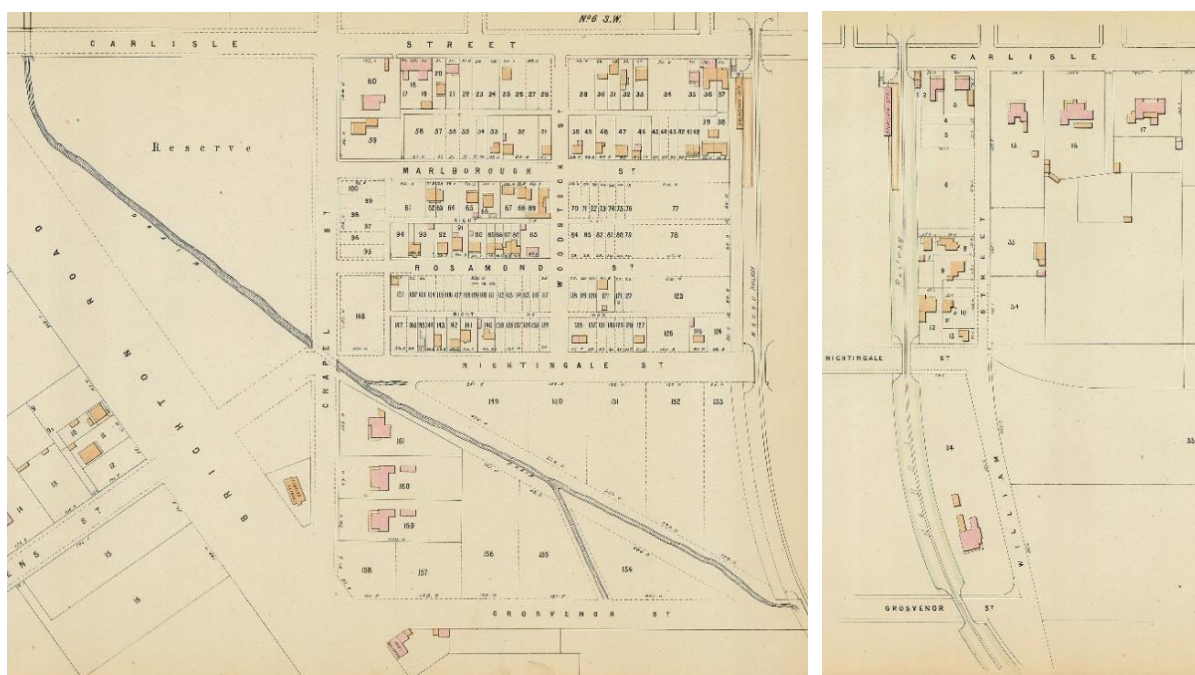


Figure 10 – 1873 Vardy plans SW6 + SW7 (Source: SKHS)

The land that had been owned by R B Gibbs was subdivided by his executors as the Grosvenor Estate (LP151; Age 11 October 1873 p.8) (Figure 11). 61 allotments were auctioned in October 1873 - on the south side of Nightingale Street, all of Gibbs Street, Woodstock Street (southern end), and Grosvenor Street (north-east section). The advertising was directed at the working classes as follows:

This block of ground has been subdivided especially with a view to serve the requirements and pockets of tile working classes, and to place within the reach of all the opportunity of acquiring a freehold residence plot of ground, The position is advantageous, asl most accessible. the Balaclava Station being distant exactly 220 yards from the north-east corner of the land to be sold.

The central reserve of St. Kilda is in close proximity on the west, and as the borough rapidly fills up on the south, tins situation will not only be a geographical but likewise a commercial centre.

The sea beach is half-a-mile distant, allowing that splendid tonic and health-restorer (a bath in the sea) to be accessible to residents without great loss of time.

Every provision has been made to ensure good and efficient drainage, the reserve for this purpose being sufficiently wide to allow a belt of trees to be planted on each side.

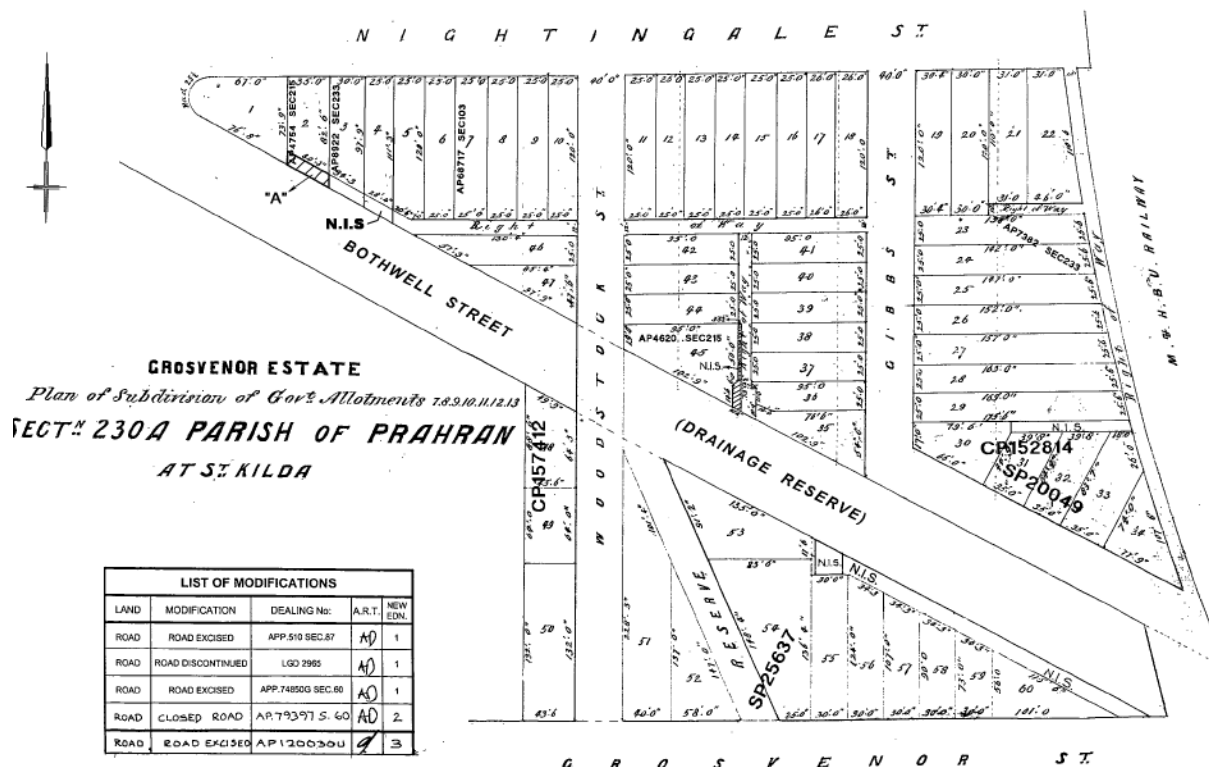


Figure 11 – Grosvenor Estate, 1873 (Source: Landata, LP15)

During the mid to late 1880s, there was further subdivisional activity relating to the Grosvenor Gardens Estate, the Gourlay Street area, and in Duke and Lynott streets.

In September 1885, the Grosvenor Gardens Estate, consisting of 55 'villa and mansion sites fronting Grosvenor, Brunnings, Woodstock and Gibbs streets', was auctioned (*Herald* 14 September 1885 p4) (Figure 12). The various advantageous of the subdivision were described as follows and clearly differentiated from the land immediately to its north:

GAS and WATER LAID ON. Principal Streets all Formed and Metalled. Best position in St. Kilda "Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite beyond it."

Surrounded by the Mansions and Villas of our well to do citizens, enclosed by "a Brotherhood of Venerable trees."

SPLENDID GARDEN SOIL. Most Complete Subsoil Drainage, perfected by Mr Brunning at hundreds of pounds expense.

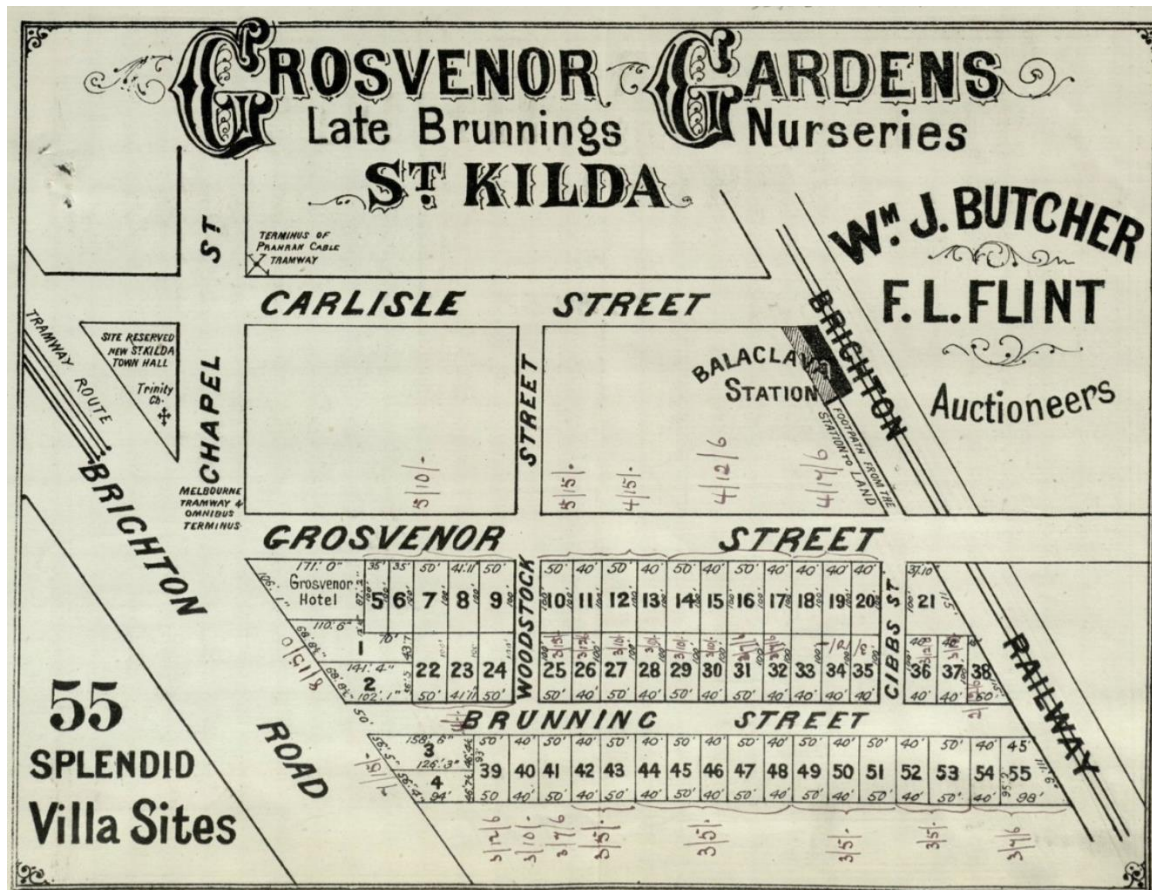


Figure 12 – Grosvenor Gardens 1885 (Source: SLV)

Two years later, land and houses in the southernmost part of the precinct - Grosvenor and Brunning streets - were being sold (Age 29 January 1887 p2). In the same year, subdivision was also underway in the eastern part of the precinct as the original Crown Allotment 228 was subdivided to create Gourlay Street and the adjoining part of William Street (Figure 13). The allotment sizes were generally larger than those in the subdivisions to the west side of the railway.

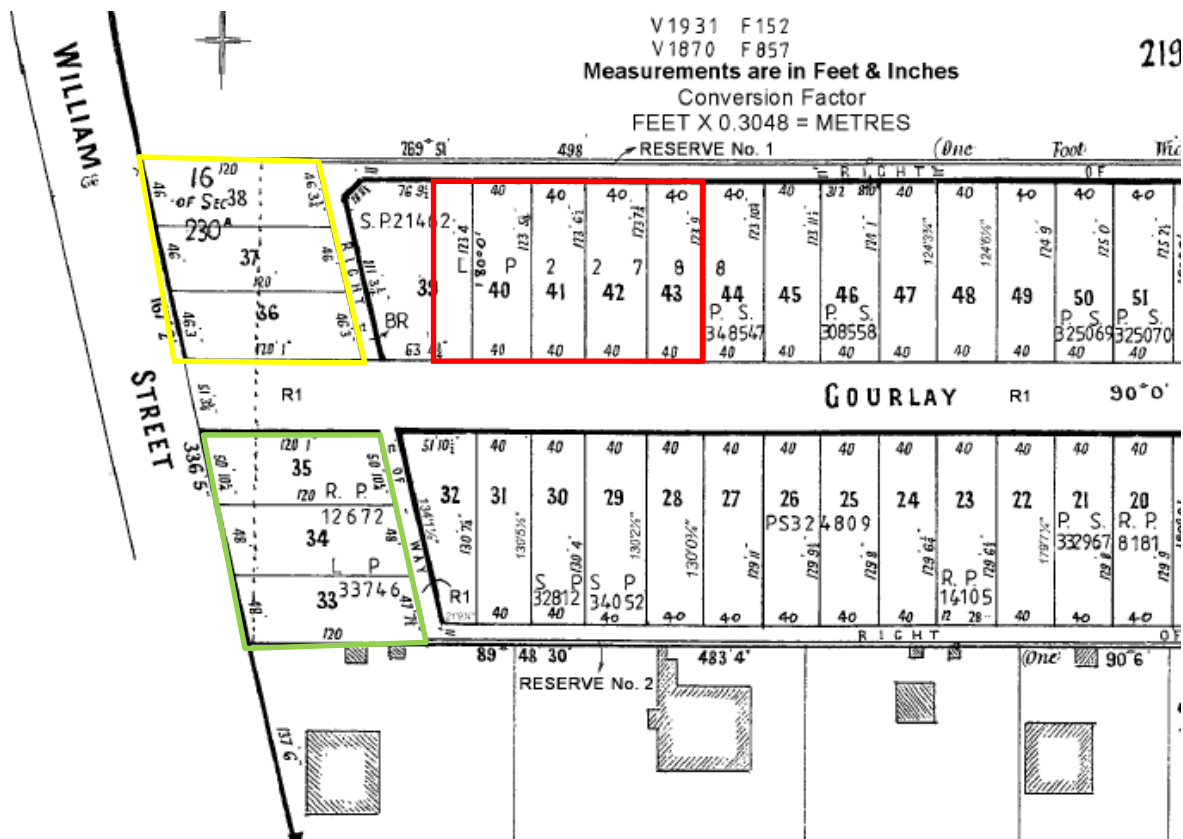


Figure 13 – 1887 subdivision of Gourlay and adjoining part of William streets, showing approximate location of Aberdeen terrace (yellow, 58-72 William St), Roseberry Terrace (red, 4-22 Gourlay St) and Chusan Terrace (later Grosvenor Mansions) (green, 74-80 William St). (Source: LPI 630)

The last two subdivisions in the precinct area during the 19th century were undertaken in 1888. The section including 46-50 William Street and the adjoining section of the Avenue (nos 1-3, 2-6) were part of a 60 lot subdivision which extended to Hotham Street (LPI 833; 21 Mar 1888). Houses were being constructed in the Avenue by April of that year when plasterers were being sought (Age 30 April 1888 p7). The other subdivision related to 13 blocks in Lynott Street and the adjacent part of Duke Street. This subdivision was advertised to 'builders, speculators and others' and related to land 'lately occupied by Charles Lynott, Esq' and his 'comfortable weatherboard villa, containing eight rooms and all conveniences' (Age 26 Sept 1888 p7).

During the late 1880s, construction activity in the south and eastern portions of the precinct was high, including infrastructure. For instance, during 1887 the Borough of St Kilda were seeking tenders for formation, channelling, etc. in Gourlay Street (Age 26 Sept 1887 p7) and in 1889 water mains were being laid in various streets by the MMBW - Brunning, Grosvenor, Gibbs, Gourlay (Age 15 March 1889 p3).

Some tender notices of this time include two from local builder/plumber Henry French for works to properties in Brunning Street: for plastering six cottages in late 1888 (Age 14 Nov 1888 p10) and asphaltting in early 1889 (Age 13 Feb 1889 p7). Later that year, the architect William Rain called for tenders for internal decoration (paper hanging, painting, distemping) for 10 two-storey houses in Gourlay Street, relating to Roseberry Terrace at nos 4-22 (Age 12 Nov 1889 p8).

Review of the contemporary directories also emphasises the rate of construction in this part of the precinct. For instance, in 1885 there were seven listings in Gibbs Street, which nearly doubled by 1890. Similarly at the east end of Rosamond Street, between Woodstock Street and the railway,

there were 18 listings in 1885 and 26 in 1890, however there was little change in Nightingale Street (SM).

In 1885, most of existing houses on the north side of Grosvenor Street between Woodstock Street and Brighton Road had been constructed, whereas the land on the south side and Brunning Street was only subdivided in that year. Five years later, 17 houses had been erected on the south side of Grosvenor Street between Gibbs and Woodstock streets including a block of eight being vacant (half survive at nos. 47-53, with a 1950s block of flats at no 39 replacing the other four). Similarly, rapid development had taken place in Brunning Street as on the north side between Woodstock and Gibbs streets, 17 residences had been completed, and 17 on the south side (SM).

The two shops in the precinct area were constructed at this time. The corner site at 41 Nightingale Street was listed from 1885, though the shop may not have been constructed until 1890, when a grocer George Walker was listed at the site. In 1903, a carpenter William Nichols was probably employing the shop; in 1905, a ladies nurse, Mrs Ellen Sanders, though it may not have been used from about 1907 (SM).

The corner shop at 31 Marlborough Street had been constructed by 1892 for Mrs Ryan, a greengrocer. Subsequently it continued to be employed as a greengrocer or a fruiterer for a few years (SM), later changing to a grocer (1920s) and boot repair (1974).

By the end of the 19th century, much of the precinct area had been developed, as outlined on a series of MMBW plans (Figure 14), and a considerable proportion of that building stock survives.

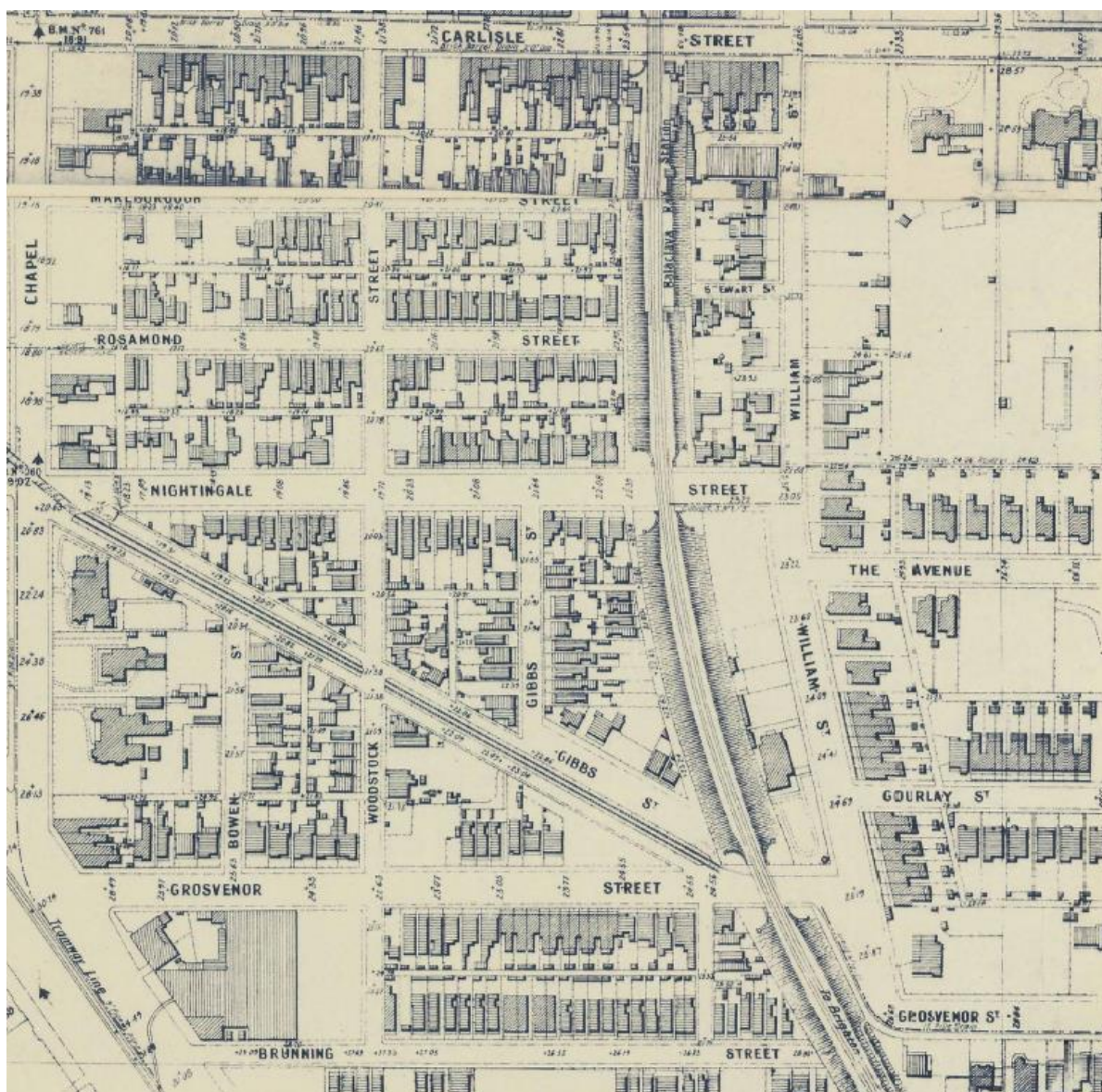


Figure 14 – 1896 MMBW no. 45 (Source: SLV)

South of Carlisle Street and west of the railway line, the Blenheim Park Estate area (Marlborough to north side Nightingale streets) was fully developed, as was most of the Grosvenor Estate (south side Nightingale to north side of Grosvenor streets), and much of the Grosvenor Gardens Estate to south side of Grosvenor to south side of Brunning streets).

East of the railway line, the three surviving villas at 46-50 William Street had been built however the narrow lot of no. 44 was vacant (MMBW 1438, 1898). Further to the south, the three large terrace groups had been constructed. South of Gourlay Street was Chusan Terrace (SM 1890), initially comprised of eight houses however converted to 16 flats by H R Lawson in about 1919 and now known as Grosvenor Mansions (**PPHR 910**). 58-72 William Street, initially known as Aberdeen Terrace, consisted of eight premises (SM 1892). Roseberry Terrace at 4-22 Gourlay Street had been completed in 1889. Each of these three terrace groups were owned by one entity in 1891 – Carney + Kelly for Roseberry Terrace and the Victorian Permanent Building Society for the two in William Street (RB). The nearby timber villa at 26 Gourlay Street is one of only a few in a street that originally was fully developed with similar housing except for Roseberry Terrace (MMBW 1441, 1898).

On the west side of William Street, there was a large villa occupied by the architect F M White and his family where the William Street Reserve has been established. The two villas to the north near the corner of Nightingale Street were constructed by Mrs Harriet White after her husband's death and are among the few known buildings to be designed by architects in the precinct area. Her son Alfred White designed Honiton at 29-31 William Street in 1896 and Kempson & Conolly designed Kergunyah (no.33) in 1898. A third villa also constructed in 1898 was demolished to make way for the William Street Reserve (**PPHR 2449**).

Infill development in the twentieth century

The turn of the century heralded an upturn in Victoria's fortunes after the 1890s economic depression. As an indication of the recovery during the early 20th century, the population of St Kilda almost doubled between 1901 and 1921, rising from 20,500 to 38,500.

Construction in the precinct area during the Federation period, circa 1900 to World War I, however, was limited and mostly occurred in discrete areas of undeveloped land or vacant lots subdivided in the late nineteenth century.

In the north section, Glenmark Avenue and adjacent land in Chapel and Duke streets was developed between 1910 and 1915, replacing earlier houses evident on the MMBW plan, as follows:

- 22-26 Duke Street. In 1911, a group of three houses - two semi-detached and one detached villa – were constructed by A Rasmus (BP 1213). They were not listed in 1910 but were in 1912 (SM).
- Glenmark Avenue. From 1913 to 1915, the Malvern East based builder J C Tainash constructed all 15 houses (BP 2057, 2067, 2102, 2119, 2195, 2392, SM).
- 28-32 Duke Street. In 1915, three brick cottages were probably constructed by G Simpson for Miss Mitchell (AAI, registration no. 2766).
- 133-139 Chapel Street. Also in 1915, another four brick cottages were constructed by G Simpson for Miss Mitchell (AAI, registration no. 2689).

Two houses on the south side of Duke Street – nos. 5 and 25 – were also constructed at this time (SM). The development within this area prompted St Kilda Council to form and improve the local streets. In 1914, Council accepted the tender for public works of Messers McLeod and Co., presumably for the surfacing and/or channelling of Glenmark Avenue (PC, 8 August 1914, p4).

In the south section below Carlisle Street, there was limited development on the few remaining vacant lots:

- The two brick houses at 22 and 24 Grosvenor Street were erected by the builder Samuel Brooks in 1906 (BP, 363), who resided at no. 24 (SM).
- The brick house opposite at no. 19 at the corner of Woodstock Street was constructed in 1907 by the Leonard Brothers (BP 489).
- In 1912, two weatherboard cottages were built by J Toomath, likely the pair at 35-37 Brunning Street (BP 1780).

In 1911, what had been Drain Street was renamed Bothwell Street (MS, 2 December 1911, p2).

The development during the Interwar period was largely replacement or renewal, often with/to blocks of flats. The remodelling by Howard R. Lawson of the former eight house Chusan Terrace into the 16 flats of the Arts & Crafts style Grosvenor Mansions in 1919 was an early example. In 1925, Wild Court at 66 Pakington Street, named after its owner E. Wild, was constructed by E Jennings & Sons, who were responsible for other buildings in the municipality (BP, 6207).

There were however two sites in Brunning Street which remained vacant until this time - no. 39 constructed in 1918 (BP 3782) and no. 14 in 1924 for George Stuart (BP 5908). Curiously the house at 20 Grosvenor Street, was not listed until about 1930 although the house is indicative of the earlier Federation period (SM).

Other minor changes that occurred about this time included the likely widening of the house (western part) at 49 Marlborough Street (definitely evident on the 1945 aerial). The drain along Bothwell Street may have remained open extended into the southern edge of the school site (other side of Chapel Street) and had an established canopy of trees. Small tree specimens were evident in only a few streets – the east end of Duke, west end of Grosvenor, and Pakington (1931A).

Two blocks of flats were erected in the precinct area during the late 1930s, with those at 45 Rosamond Street during 1936 by the builder E & G Gallagher (BP 9526). Alma Court at 18 Duke Street was constructed in the following year by the Gyngell Brothers, who were responsible for other significant buildings in the municipality (BP 9635).

The 1945 aerial photographs (Figures 15-17) show the precinct area essentially as it remains. No more street planting had been undertaken since 1931, however the trees along Bothwell Street had been replaced and a grassy reserve had been established to the centre. The palm trees at 18 Duke and 45 Rosamond streets are evident on these aerials.



Figure 15 - 1945 aerial photograph – North section, flats at 18 Duke Street evident (Source: Landata, Project no. 5, Run 17E, Frame 58012)



Figure 16 - 1945 aerial, middle section, flats at 45 Rosamond Street highlighted. The main drain along Bothwell Street had been enclosed by this time (Source Landata, Project No. 5, Run 17E, Frame 58013)



Figure 17 - 1945 aerial, southern end of precinct (Source: Landata, Project No. 5, Run 16, Frame 57848)

Since World War II, one further block of flats was erected at 20 Duke Street in 1959 (BP 57/628), replacing the Alma Hall built during the 19th century.

References

- Aerial photographs (Landata + SLV), various
- Aerial Project No 1931, Run 15, Frame 2750 (A1931)
- Cooper, John Butler (1931) 'The History of St Kilda 1840-1930', vol.I, Melbourne, pp140-141 (JBC)
- Cox, Henry L (1864) 'Hobson Bay and River Yarra leading to Melbourne', London (C)
- Kearney, James (1855) 'Melbourne + its Suburbs' (no.4, Prahran & St Kilda), Melbourne
- Landata (subdivision plans), LPI51, LPI630
- Longmire, Anne, 'St Kilda: The show goes on', Melbourne 1989 (AL)
- Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Plan No 45 (1896) and Detail Plans nos. 1371+1383 (1897), 1438 -1441 (1898)
- Newspapers: *Age*, *Argus*, *Herald*, *Leader*, *Malvern Standard* (MS), *Prahran Chronicle* (PC)
- Parish Plan - at Elwood, Parish of Prahran, P81-13 (P)
- Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History* (TEH), February 2021
- Reeves, Simon (Heritage Alliance) *Nightingale Precinct Heritage Assessment*, 20 July 2005. Revised 4th September 2008
- St Kilda Council building permit records, various (BP)
- St Kilda Council Rate books (RB)
- Sands and McDougall Directory (SM)
- Vale Collection, SLV
- Vardy, John (1873) 'Plan of the Borough of St Kilda' [maps], SW2, SW6, SW7; Vardy index SW 2-9 (VI).

3.0 Description

The precinct consists of the residential areas north and south of Carlisle Street in the vicinity of the main drain, with the former being smaller than the latter. The north section is located in St Kilda and extends between Pakington and Duke streets. The larger southern section pivots about the railway between Marlborough Street (north) and Brunning Street (south) on the west side and incorporates a smaller area to the east side in William and Gourlay streets.

The topography is essentially flat throughout the precinct area with a typically regular grid of streets. The railway line cuts through the eastern part of the precinct and the early bluestone drain (Figures 18 and 19) is a distinctive part of the northern section. The drain is open nearly the whole length between Brighton Road and Chapel Street. The drain has a coping of large basalt blocks, rock-faced with a margin. The side walls have been rendered over but the underlying basalt is evident, where the latter has failed. The floor of the drain is also lined with basalt blocks. The larger southern drain along Bothwell Street, etc. where it disrupts the traditional grid pattern of streets has been enclosed and joins behind 12-18 Martin Street (outside the precinct).



Figures 18 & 19 – section of early bluestone drain west of Lynott Street (left) and east of Lynott Street (right)

A high proportion of the housing stock dates to the Victorian period, with a few pockets from the Federation period, as well as scattered examples from the Interwar period, typically flats. There is also limited number of later 20th or early 21st century buildings. The buildings are predominantly single storey except for a few terrace groups and blocks of flats.

There are basalt lined laneways throughout the precinct area (Figure 21). Kerbing and channelling is also basalt and crossovers are concrete, though there are few of the latter. The footpaths are generally asphalt. The street planting varies, including native and exotic species, and mostly dates to the second half of the 20th century, though the trees to the grassy reserve over the enclosed drain along Bothwell Street, mostly Ash, date to circa 1940 (Figure 20).



Figures 20 & 21 – Bothwell Street reserve (left) and typical laneway (right)

Victorian period

The Victorian period buildings tend to be timber, especially those in the Blenheim Park Estate and to the south in the Grosvenor Estate/Gibbs Street and the Grosvenor Gardens Estate (Brunning, and south side of Grosvenor, streets). Alternately most of the buildings west of the railway line, in Gourlay and William streets, are masonry, as well as some in Brunning Street.

The timber residences are more commonly modest cottages than double-fronted examples, though only a few of the latter type are substantial enough to be classified as villas. Walls are clad in weatherboards though ashlar boards to the façade were popular from the 1880s (for example 27-31 Rosamond Street, 34 Nightingale Street).

The larger timber houses mostly have symmetrical facades with a verandah extending the length of the façade, but some have an asymmetric frontage with an offset verandah, recessed behind a projecting bay. Distinctive examples of the later include 18 Grosvenor Street which has a broken

bed pediment/gable roof to the bay. The associated window frame complements the roof form and is relatively ornamental. Further west in the same street at no. 2 is a rendered brick house with decorative mouldings to the paired windows of the projecting bay.

Only a few Victorian period houses retain slate clad roofs (for example 29 Marlborough, 46-50 Pakington streets), though many from that period were also likely clad in slate (as suggested on historic aerials). In most instances, the slate has been replaced with corrugated sheet metal or in some cases the 'faux tiled' metal sheeting. Roof forms are more commonly hipped than gabled, with concentrations of the latter in Gibbs and Rosamond streets, as well as the south side of Brunning Street. Gable ends feature either bargeboards (for example scalloped at 5 Gibbs Street) or a cast iron fringe (15 and 16 Gibbs Street, 24-28 Rosamond Street, 4 and 6 Lynott Street), though several have a broken bed pediment format featuring console brackets with drop ornaments (for example, 23 Brunning Street as shown in Figure 22, as well as 37-41 Duke Street). Some double fronted houses have a transverse gable roof, that is the ridge is parallel to the street (for instance in Gibbs, Nightingale, Pakington streets, and a continuous group at 1-5 Lynott Street). Only a few of the hipped roof type include a parapet.



Figures 22 & 23 - 23 Brunning Street (left), broken bed gable with cast iron fringe, 19 Nightingale Street (right), typical Victorian period rendered chimney

Many chimneys are rendered with moulded caps, 29 Nightingale Street featuring panels of vermiculation, but some are polychrome brick (especially the 1880s examples) with corbelled caps and banding, some of the latter including dogtooth brickwork. Cornices are articulated with alternating brackets, often paired, and panelling (in timber or brick). Verandahs are a standard feature predominantly with timber posts, rather than cast iron, though the friezes are usually cast iron. Some friezes are set within a timber frame with cast iron brackets - for example 4-8 Lynott Street. Also, there is a rare timber frieze at 41 Pakington Street (Figure 24). Verandah roof forms are generally hipped or skillion, and profiles range from bullnose, straight, to concave. There are also some rare gentle 'ogee' profiles, such as at 27 and 33 Duke Street.

Original front doors are typically panelled, and windows are timber-framed double-hung sashes often in a tripartite configuration. 41 Pakington Street is a rare example which retains early two-paned sashes. Few examples have/retain any decorative glass but 34 Nightingale (Figure 25) has leadlight and stained glass to the narrow side sashes.



Figures 24 & 25 - 41 Pakington Street (left) and 34 Nightingale Street (right)

There are several surviving Italianate style villas east of the railway in an area which was extensively developed with that type. The only timber example at 26 Gourlay Street has a faceted bay with a window to each of the three faces.

Adjacent to each other in William Street (nos 46-50) and The Avenue (nos 1, 3, 4 & 6), is a group of mostly intact, rendered masonry villas. Those at 46 and 50 William Street have vermiculation to the quoining, sill of the window below the verandah, and keystone of the windows to the faceted bay. Decorative cast iron cresting survives to the faceted bay of no. 50, whereas the villa at no. 48 has a squared bay and less ornamentation (possibly altered as it followed the alternating pattern of squared and faceted bays on north side of the Avenue and remains at no. 6). Three of those in The Avenue (nos 1, 3, 4) retain slate clad roofs. Nos 1 + 3 have vermiculated quoining similar to 46 William Street however with paired windows below the verandah rather than a tripartite window.

On the west side of William Street are some of the most distinctive houses in the precinct at nos **29-31 and 33** which feature diamond quoining brickwork to their symmetrical façades. Elaborate detailing, in particular the timber screen to nos 29-31, defines the three gable ends (outer major and inner minor).



Figures 26 & 27 – 46 (left) and 33(right) William Street

The masonry houses from the Victorian period typically have bichrome, cream and brown (some featuring Flemish bond and diamond patterning), where they have not been painted. There is a rare group of row houses with a continuous gable roof at 33-37 Grosvenor Street, and a similar group nearby which are freestanding with hip roofs at nos 21-25. On the north side of Nightingale Street, there are two small groups of row houses both with a continuous hip roof at nos 38-42 and 56-58. On the north side of Pakington Street, there is a co-joined group of paired row houses with individual hipped roofs: nos 46-48 (polychrome, and both retaining slate cladding), nos 50-52 (brown brick), and nos 54-60 (paired windows with fluted central muntin). Only a few examples in the

precinct are polychrome, that is also include red brick. A pair nearby on the south side of the street at nos 29+ 31 feature ornate rendered parapets.



Figures 28 & 29 – 46 & 48 (left) and 29 & 31 (right) Pakington Street

Other terrace groups survive, all masonry and with parapets:

- Aberdeen Terrace, 58-72 William Street – bi-chrome brick, parapet with circular openings and shell in pediment, varying cast iron detailing.
- Roseberry Terrace, 4-22 Gourlay Street – similar to Aberdeen terrace. (Figure 30)
- 47-53 Grosvenor Street – displaying an Anglo-Dutch style influence to the parapet with Dutch gables, orbs. (Figure 31)
- 40-44 Blenheim Street – parapet decoration has been removed and the balustrade replaced. No. 44 is different to 40-42 and likely was bi/polychrome (suggested by the quoining).



Figures 30 & 31 - Roseberry Terrace, Gourlay Street (left) and 47-51 Grosvenor Street (right)

Two residences also include a former corner shop, both altered to varying degrees – a timber example at 31 Marlborough Street (Figure 32) and a masonry example at 41 Nightingale Street (Figure 33). Interestingly the associated house at the latter site has a brick façade with timber behind.



Figures 32 & 33 - 31 Marlborough Street (left) and 41 Nightingale Street (right)

A few Victorian period houses have been altered with an Interwar period verandah, that is, one that includes some masonry elements – for example 45 Nightingale and 13 Brunning streets.

Federation period

Generally, houses from the Federation period in the precinct are modest versions of the Queen Anne style. Characteristically they feature picturesque roofs with a front gable end and are clad in terracotta tiles, some with decorative crestings and/or finials to the main ridge. Whilst gambrel roofs were popular at this time, they tended to be on larger houses than those evident in the precinct. Chimneys are red brick with corbelled caps and possibly a band of roughcast render and terracotta chimney pots. Walls are either red brick with rendered band (at sill level) or timber-framed clad in weatherboards and might include a band of shingled/notched boards, though ashlar boards continued to be employed. Gable ends usually are battened with roughcast finish (sheeting or render) and verandahs are supported by turned timber posts and decorated with timber fretwork or sometimes with cast iron frieze. Doors are panelled some with glazing to the upper panel and casement windows with highlights (some with leadlight and/or stained glass) are favoured to the façade/front of the building.

The largest cluster of Federation period housing is in the north section of the precinct and includes Glenmark Avenue in conjunction with the adjacent parts of Duke and Chapel streets. Glenmark Avenue is a cul-de-sac with 15 houses all dating to the early 1910s. This Federation period group is very distinctive and would probably qualify as a precinct on its own right. Whilst all constructed by the same builder, there are three different types – nos 1-9 are unusual row-like houses (two pairs and one freestanding) with transverse gable roofs; nos 2-12 are narrow mirrored pairs and nos 11-17 are wide, mirrored pairs. All have exposed rafter ends, paired casement window with highlights, typically retain a timber verandah frieze, and the houses with the gable ends feature either shingles or a roughcast render. Undoubtedly, they all are red brick to the façade, though about half have been overpainted.



Figures 34 & 35 – 6+8 Glenmark Avenue (left) and 28 Duke Street (right)

The abutting group of seven at 28-32 Duke and 133-139 Chapel streets have consistent detailing (and were erected by another builder) including vermiculated bands, faceted or square bays, tulip motifs to some of the timber friezes with low balustrade wall, and stained glass to some highlights with floral motifs. Also dating to the Federation period in Duke Street are a group of 3 brick houses at nos 22-26 and timber examples at nos 5-7 with a lower band of shingled/notched boards and no. 25 with a vermiculated render panel to the brick wing wall.

There is a group of three Federation period houses at 20-24 Grosvenor Street. No. 20 has a gambrel roof, is timber-framed with dado, and more unusually for the period has a symmetric façade. No. 22 is (painted) brick with roughcast render to gable end and battens over, and no. 24 is red brick with a curved timber frieze to the verandah. Opposite at no. 19 is another brick example to a corner. There are few timber examples to the south side of Brunning Street including a free-standing pair at nos 35 and 37 (Figure 37) with battens and roughcast sheeting to the gable end.



Figures 36 & 37 – 37 Pakington Street (left) and 37 Brunning Street (right)

Whilst the Queen Anne style was the dominant residential design mode during the Federation period, the classicising, Italianate mode of the late 19th century continued to be employed. This is referred to as the Victorian Survival style, however they are readily identified by the tell-tale, tall corbelled, red brick chimneys indicative of the Federation period (for example 32 Nightingale Street (Figure 38), this is an unusual example of where an earlier house was replaced at this time) and often have paired longer double-hung sash windows, for instance at 19 Brunning Street (Figure 39).



Figures

38 & 39 – 32 Nightingale Street (left) and 19 Brunning Street (right)

Interwar period and later

The residential buildings from the Interwar period are a mixture of small houses and larger blocks of flats. Nearly all the buildings are masonry and have tile clad roofs. During the 1920s gable roofs were favoured, especially examples of the Bungalow style, whereas during the 1930s, hip roofs were typically employed, possibly in combination with a gable end.

There are four bungalows from the 1920s characterised by red brick and render to the walls, boxed frame windows (multi-paned upper sashes), and a side entry (recessed or in a small porch). The example at 44 William Street retains white, tuck-pointed clinker brick banding of soldier coursing. There are also two brick bungalows in Brunning Street at nos 14 + 39 and a timber-framed example at 54 Nightingale Street (Figure 40) with squat columns above a lower walled balustrade.



Figures 40 & 41 – 54 Nightingale Street (left) and 14 Brunning Street (right)

One block of flats from the 1920s is indicative of the Arts and Crafts style. The block at 66 Pakington Street (Wild Court, Figure 42) is mostly roughcast rendered on a clinker brick base and has a central first floor porch with curved timber brackets and paired posts to the corner piers. The stairs are a prominent feature to the front.



Figures 42 & 43 – Wild Court, 66 Pakington Street (left) and Grosvenor Mansions, 74-80 William Street (right)

There is one example of a remodelled Victorian era terrace house group, in which each house was divided into two flats - **Grosvenor Mansions** at 74-80 William Street (Figure 43), also in the Arts and Crafts style and has roughcast render walls and decorative battening of the gable ends

The fewer residential buildings dating to the 1930s in the precinct are relatively restrained in their detailing. The flats at 18 Duke Street (Alma Court) and 45 Rosamond Street (Figure 45) both display some Moderne style influence in their horizontal emphasis including banding to clinker brick sections. The latter also have glazing bars to the upper window sashes. Both are complemented by mature palms, three Canary Island Date Palms along the side of Alma Court, and one Washingtonia at the front of 45 Rosamond.

The semi-detached pair at 43-45 Blenheim Street are rendered with some brick highlights, concrete hoods, fluted columns to the porches. The semi-detached pair at 39-41 Rosamond Street (Figure 44) includes geometric decorative glass to the upper sashes and a gable end is suggestive of a Tudor Revival style, another style that was popular at that time. Both semi-detached pairs have hipped roofs clad in concrete pantiles.



Figures 44 & 45 – 39-41 (left) and 45 Rosamond Street (right)

There has been minimal development or replacement of earlier building stock in the precinct since World War II. Examples include the two storey flats at 20 Duke Street, 39-45 Grosvenor Street as well as isolated houses in Brunning, Pakington, Gibbs and Rosamond streets.

4.0 Comparative Analysis

At the core of the Balaclava Flats Residential Precinct, and some of its fringes, there is a concentration of 19th century workers' timber cottages, which represents the most extensive and cohesive surviving remnants of this typology in St Kilda, with the more substantial buildings mainly to the east of the railway line and a few to the southern end.

Within the City of Port Phillip, timber cottages are ubiquitous in Port Melbourne when industrial development in the 1870s and '80s stimulated the need for workers accommodation (HO1, especially the West and East sub-precincts). This housing type had also been common in the Montague area (Gladstone to Thistlethwaite streets in South Melbourne) but little of it remains. Similar housing proliferated in other inner suburbs of Melbourne during the late nineteenth century, such as Richmond, Collingwood and Brunswick.

This type of housing, however, was less common in St Kilda, which, befitting its status as a prestige residential address, developed with larger villas and mansions of brick, stone and timber construction, especially on the higher ground. The less affluent inevitably converged on the cheaper, poorly drain Balaclava Flats in the vicinity of the railway line.

By the end of the 19th century, the pattern of intense timber cottage development on the flats extended from about Argyle Street in the north to the main drain (Bothwell Street) in the south, mostly west of the railway line, though there were some sections east of the railway near Inkerman Street (such as Sebastopol to Prentice streets). Often the street widths in these areas were narrower than those in the upmarket areas. West of Chapel Street, there were also less extensive clusters in Duke and Lynnot streets.

Patches of this development survive in other streets such as Camden Street, Leslie Street, Linton Avenue and Queen Street, however the Victorian phase (and latter Federation and Interwar period phases) have been largely overwhelmed by development from the late 20th and early 21st centuries of usually of a markedly different character.

A small enclave does however survive in Chusan Street Precinct, East St Kilda (HO385). This precinct consists almost entirely of modest single-fronted weatherboard cottages which were erected between 1885 and 1888. The exceptions amongst the significant buildings include two double-fronted Victorian villas and one brick cottage from the Federation period house.

The narrow streets at the south-west end of the St Kilda Hill Precinct (HO5), mainly Clyde to Havelock, are comprised of smaller residences - timber cottages from the Victorian and Federation periods, as well as paired brick houses from the Federation period. This precinct otherwise is generally comprised of larger residences, including some mansions, and blocks of flats, which are located on the wider streets further north.

East of the railway, the precinct character varies as there is more substantial, mostly brick housing. This section compares with the smaller HO317 Hotham Street precinct, nearby in Balaclava. HO317 consists of only a row of four, two-storeyed terraces and three asymmetrical villas built in 1888. The comparative part of the subject precinct is however distinguished by the three villas at 29-33 William Street and the Arts and Crafts style Grosvenor Mansions.

South of Bothwell Street and at the north-west corner, the subject precinct consists of a mixture of timber and brick housing dating from the Victorian and Federation periods. Part of other precincts, such as the Railway Reserves sub-precinct of HO1 has a similar character but these parts of the subject precinct form highly intact streetscapes.

Also, the Federation period group in Glenmark Avenue and surrounds is very distinctive and compares with similar enclaves such as Moodie Place (and surrounds) and Lambeth Place in HO6 St Kilda East.

5.0 Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Balaclava Flats Residential Precinct comprising two sections north and south of Carlisle Street is significant:

- The north section is in St Kilda between Pakington and Duke streets, and includes Lynott Street and Glenmark Avenue. It also includes the full extent of the exposed network drain between Chapel Street and Brighton Road.
- The south section is in Balaclava between Marlborough Street extending as far south as Brunning Street, generally between Woodstock Street (west) and William Street (east), and some adjoining properties in Gourlay Street and The Avenue.

The following features contribute to the significance of the precinct:

- Victorian period houses including single fronted timber cottages, larger timber and brick villas and brick terraces. Typically have hipped roofs (some retaining slate cladding), rendered chimneys, timber-framed double-hung sashes and verandahs with cast iron friezes. Brick houses are typically bichrome or polychrome.
- Federation period houses including red brick and timber. Typically have gable ends with battening and roughcast finish, terracotta tile roof cladding, red brick chimneys, timber windows with highlights and leadlighting, and verandahs with timber fretwork or cast-iron frieze.
- Interwar period houses (mostly brick) and flats, as well as fences. Typically have gable (1920s) or hipped (1930s) tile clad roofs, porches supported by masonry piers and columns, and multipaned timber windows.
- Former shops (attached to residences) from the late 19th and early 20th century.
- The palms at 18 Duke and 45 Rosamond streets.
- The exposed basalt drain between Chapel Street and Brighton Road.
- Basalt lined laneways and kerbing and channelling.
- Ash trees along Bothwell Street.

The Significant places within the precinct are 29-31, 33, 74-88 William Street

The Non-contributory properties are:

- 9 Brunning Street, Balaclava
- 12 – 14, 20 Duke Street, St Kilda
- 4, 6, 8, 8A, 14 Gibbs Street, Balaclava
- 2, 24, 24A Gourlay Street, Balaclava
- 4A, 4B, 29, 31, 39-45 Grosvenor Street, Balaclava
- 10, 12, 14 Lynott Street, St Kilda
- 35, 53 Marlborough Street, Balaclava
- 20 Martin Street, St Kilda
- 29A, 31A, 33, 35, 37A, 39 Pakington Street, St Kilda
- 35 Rosamond Street, Balaclava

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

How is it significant?

The Balaclava Flats Residential Precinct is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Phillip.

Why is it significant?

Historically, the Balaclava Flats Residential Precinct is significant as a representative and substantially intact example of mainly Victorian period housing, much of it resulting from three key subdivisions – the Blenheim Park Estate (1857), the Grosvenor Estate (1873) and the Grosvenor Gardens Estate (1885). It contains the main remnants in the Balaclava area of the once more extensive zone/s of working-class, timber cottages. This housing is complemented by other areas of late 19th century streetscapes which are more diverse and include brick villas and terrace groups. At its core is the original drainage system part of which remains visible between Duke and Pakington streets. This significant early piece of infrastructure by St Kilda Council was constructed during the early 1860s and allowed for the former reserve (between Nightingale and Brunning streets) to be sold by the government as freehold. (Criteria A & D)

The humble living quarters of the Victorian working class are demonstrated in many of the streetscapes with rows of modest timber cottages, night soil lanes, and unusually two corner shops survive (albeit no longer in operation). Within the City of Port Phillip, this housing type was widespread and ubiquitous in Port Melbourne and South Melbourne, but was much less common in St Kilda. This housing developed on the flats in Balaclava where much of the land was cheap during the 19th century due to the poor drainage, though this hindrance was at least partly resolved with the construction of the main drain between about 1858 and 1865, and conveniently located near the railway line operating from late 1859. The precinct also demonstrates the recovery that occurred during the Federation period with some groups of similarly scaled houses and continued during the Interwar period with a few interspersed buildings, including some blocks of flats, which overall forms cohesive streetscapes. (Criteria A & D)

Aesthetically, the precinct is significant for its many streetscapes of modest 19th century housing of predominantly single-storeyed, single-fronted detached cottages with either a gabled or hipped roof, many retaining their original face brick or rendered chimney/s, but often enlivened by a cornice (if hipped) and a verandah, usually with cast iron detailing but invariably with timber posts. These are complemented by groups of Federation period houses, which are concentrated in, and near, Glenmark Avenue (semi-detached), which is a cohesive enclave of varying but complementary groups, and near the corner of Grosvenor and Woodstock streets (freestanding). These Queen Anne style houses, which are mostly red brick with terracotta clad roofs (usually hipped with prominent gable ends) and timber detailing to porches, add to the consistency of the streetscapes. Additionally, the precinct contains several fine buildings, including most of the Italianate style or Flemish influenced villas and terrace or row groups in William and Gourlay streets and a few in Grosvenor and Pakington streets, the Victorian Survival house at 32 Nightingale Street, and some Interwar period blocks of flats, especially the Arts and Crafts styled Grosvenor Mansions (74-88 William Street) and Wild Court (66 Pakington Street). (Criterion E)

6.0 Recommendations

Excise from HO7 and HO439 to create separate precinct heritage overlay.

Apply the following controls in the schedule to the heritage overlay:

- Tree controls (to 18 Duke Street and 45 Rosamond Street),
- Fence controls (to Interwar period flats).

Extensions recommended (that is, not currently within the HO as part of HO7 or HO439):

- The exposed drain between Chapel Street and Brighton Road.
- 1-3 and 4- 6 The Avenue

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

- 32-44 & 37-47 Blenheim Street. This is a small, physically disassociated group of residences of moderate integrity, despite being consistent with the period of significance for the precinct.
- 3-17 Grosvenor Street, 2-10 Brunning Street and 1A-1F Woodstock Street. These are Non-Contributory places.
- The Sandringham Railway embankment currently included within HO7 between and beside the individual HO147 overlays that apply to the railway bridges at Nightingale and Grosvenor streets and the William Street Reserve at 35-39 William Street. These areas do not contain historic fabric relating to the periods of significance.
- 45 Brunning Street. Non-contributory house at edge of precinct.

Transfers the following individually significant places on Brighton Road from HO7 into new separate individual heritage overlays:

- Grosvenor Hotel, 10 Brighton Road (PPHR 301)
- Former Melbourne Omnibus and Tramways Co. Building, 16 Brighton Road (Citation 2451)
- Yurnga flats, 36 Brighton Road (PPHR 302)

The following place with a PPHR citation becomes Contributory to the precinct:

- 32 Nightingale Street (PPHR citation no. 2353)

7.0 Assessment

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