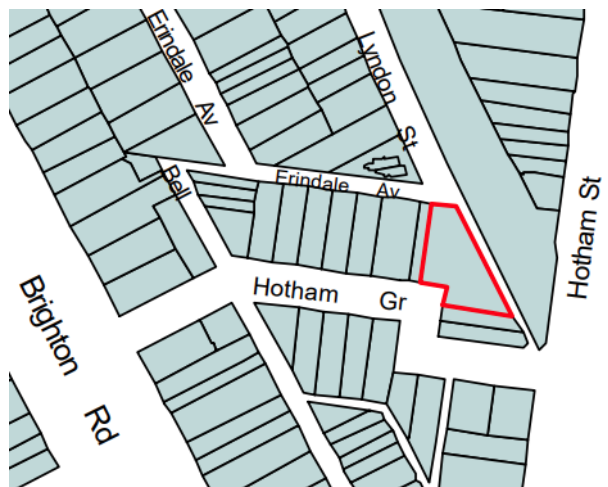


# City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

**Place name:** Ulverston  
**Other names:** House

**Citation No:**  
**31**



**Address:** 23 Hotham Grove, Ripponlea

**Heritage Precinct:** Not applicable

**Category:** Residential: House

**Heritage Overlay:** HO149

**Style:** Victorian: Italianate

**Graded as:** Significant

**Constructed:** 1887

**Victorian Heritage Register:** No

**Designer:** Unknown

**Amendment:** TBA

**Comment:** Revised citation

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## Significance

### *What is significant?*

Ulverston, the rendered brick, double storey, Italianate-style villa built in 1887 for Alfred Ramsden at 23 Hotham Grove, Ripponlea is significant.

Alterations and additions are not significant.

### *How is it significant?*

Ulverston at 23 Hotham Grove, Ripponlea is of local historical significance to the City of Port Phillip.

### *Why is it significant?*

Ulverston is of historical significance as an example of the speculative housing development that occurred during the Land Boom in Melbourne in the late nineteenth century. In contrast to many other parts of Port Phillip, this speculative development was relatively limited in Ripponlea and Ulverston is one of the few surviving examples. (Criteria A & B)

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## Thematic context

### Victoria's framework of historical themes

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state: 6.3 Shaping the suburbs, 6.7 Making homes for Victorians

## Port Phillip thematic environmental history

5. Buildings and cultural landscapes: 5.2 Shaping the suburbs (5.2.2 Private development), 5.3 Diverse Housing (5.3.1 Mansions and grand villas)

## History

### Contextual history

Private development in the City of Port Phillip began from the time of the first sales of Crown land in the 1840s and 1850s. The gradual development of infrastructure, including roads, public transport networks and utilities, paved the way for increasing development of private land. Private subdivision within the broad framework set out by Hoddle's survey saw neighbourhoods in the City of Port Phillip grow into populated, thriving communities (TEH).

Mansion estates – large, detached homes on generous allotments – defined early, permanent housing in Elwood and St Kilda, in the mid-nineteenth century. Although the oldest surviving houses in Elwood – such as Vautier House, built in the mid-1850s – are terrace houses, it was mansions on large allotments that came to characterise the neighbourhood in its early years. The estates were located in four distinct clusters: St Kilda Hill; the semi-rural estates occupying the high ground on the south side of Dandenong Road from the Nepean Road (now St Kilda Road) to Orrong Road; those surrounding the St Kilda Botanical Gardens and along Brighton Road; and the remote 'sea-side' estates along Ormond Esplanade. Kearney's 1855 map of the area shows the contrast between dense residential development in St Kilda, and the large mansion estates to the east of the Nepean Road including Charnwood and Marlton, south of Carlisle Street (then known as Beach Road), and on both sides of Brighton Road, including Erindale and Chiverton, and Bramshaw, Osborne House and Wiltonia further south (TEH).

Apart from the mansion estates, most of the development in Port Phillip prior to 1880 was confined to the early township reserves. However, the boom era of the 1880s saw intense land speculation across Melbourne, with large estates and the original crown allotments carved up into much smaller allotments for residential development that filled in the gaps shown on that plan (TEH).

During the peak of Melbourne's building boom in the 1880s, almost all the remaining land in Port Phillip (except for the Elwood Swamp and the Fishermans Bend area) was subdivided and offered for sale. Prosperity saw land speculation intensify across the suburbs during that period in areas such as Elwood, Balaclava, Ripponlea, and St Kilda East that were remote from transport and services. When one of Elwood's oldest estates, Chiverton, was subdivided in 1885, it created 85 allotments. Despite the eager subdivision of land and colourful advertising, however, the actual building of homes in these remote subdivisions was slow. With the onset of the 1890s economic depression, many estates failed and remained undeveloped for a decade or more. Maps of Elwood in the late 1890s, for example, show that residential development was still sparse and the beachside estates had failed spectacularly, with only a few houses on the Elwood Esplanade and Elwood Hill estates. Hood Street and Bluff Avenue remained entirely undeveloped at the turn of the century (TEH).

### Ulverston

At Crown land sales, J.M. Holloway purchased portions 259, 268 and 269 which consisted of about 11 acres of the wedge of land where Brighton Road and Hotham Street met. Holloway, of Northampton Buildings in Acland Street, subsequently had the area surveyed for a housing estate by surveyor, Sydney W. Smith. Each allotment had two frontages or the benefit of a magnificent Right-of-Way, 15ft wide. Hotham Grove at the time was named Susan Street. With some amendments, the sale of land later went ahead.

John Reynolds, a gentleman of Windsor, purchased all of Susan Street. On the north side at the point where the street dog legged, Alfred Ramsden bought lots 12 and 13A-F and in 1887, built a six roomed brick house on lot 13C. The house had a Net Annual Value of 65 pounds. In that year, the street name changed to Hotham Grove. Ramsden may have been the bricklayer/developer of Richmond who is known

to have arrived in Melbourne in 1885 and built "villas, stores and cottages in Armadale and Richmond, and many more in the City" (see Sutherland A., "Victoria and its Metropolis Past and Present" (1888), v.2, p.651).

By 1891, the house and land were being leased to Peter Brady, a livery stable keeper. The number and nature of outbuildings (including two stables buildings along the north and west boundaries) shown on early MMBW plans suggest Brady ran his business from the site. Brady, who progressed to the rank of cab proprietor, continued to lease the house in 1900, however by then, ownership had passed to the Victorian Permanent Building Society. The house had been extended to ten rooms and the NAV was 50 pounds. Two lots on the south of the property had by then been sold. The name of the house on the 1905 MMBW plan is 'Ulverston'.

## References

St. Kilda Rate Books: 1887-91, 1889-1900. VPRS 2335, PROV.

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) litho plan no.48, undated, Detail Plan no. 1465, dated 1905

Parish Plan of Prahran, Borough of St. Kilda. SLV, Map Section, 820 bje

J.E.S. Vardy, Plan of the Borough of St. Kilda, c.1873, South/14.

"Plan of Subdivision of Portions 259, 268 and 269 Parish of Prahran", undated. SLV, Map Section, Vale Collection, Book 4A, P.172

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## Description

Ulverston is a substantial late Victorian Italianate asymmetrical stuccoed villa with two storeyed cast iron lace verandah and faceted window bay to the projecting wing. The hipped slate tiled roof has bracketed eaves and there are rendered chimneys with cornices and vermiculated cement spandrels over the lower level arched windows to the bay. The front doorway is arched and has associated stained glass work to the sidelights and highlights.

Ulverston is in good condition and has a relatively high degree of external intactness.

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## Comparative analysis

No information.

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## Assessment

This place has been assessed using with the processes and guidelines outlined in the Australia ICOMOS *Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* (The Burra Charter) 2013, and applying the Hercon criteria in accordance with PPN1: *Applying the heritage overlay*.

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## Recommendations

Retain in the Heritage Overlay with external paint controls.

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## Primary source

City of Port Phillip, *H07 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct heritage review Stage 2: Review of existing heritage citations*, 2022

## Other studies

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

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## Other images

