

City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Place name: Clyde Cottage, Spring Cottage & Kilby Cottage
Other names: Terrace houses

Citation No:
2264



Address: 16 Octavia Street, St Kilda
Category: Residential: Terrace houses
Style: Victorian: Italianate
Constructed: 1890
Designer: Unknown
Amendment: TBA
Comment: Revised citation

Heritage Precinct: None
Heritage Overlay: HO358
Graded as: Significant
Victorian Heritage Register: No

Significance

What is significant?

Clyde Cottage, Spring Cottage & Kilby Cottage, constructed in 1890, at 16 Octavia Street, St Kilda are significant.

Alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

Clyde Cottage, Spring Cottage & Kilby Cottage at 16 Octavia Street, St Kilda are of local aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

Clyde Cottage, Spring Cottage & Kilby Cottage are of aesthetic significance as modest Victorian era cottages embellished with finely detailed stucco decoration in the ornate cemented Renaissance Revival inspired parapets with scrolling, acroteria and panelled entablatures, framed by end walls with prominent consoles with vermiculated panels, cornices and scroll brackets, and moulded architraves with sill brackets. (Criterion E)

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)

7. Governing: 7.4 Health and welfare (7.4.2 Community housing and development)

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.

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.

Apart from the mansion estates, most of the development in Port Phillip prior to 1880 was confined to the 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 between the township reserve.

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.

Clyde Cottage, Spring Cottage & Kilby Cottage

The development of St Kilda began following the first land sales in 1842 and by 1854 there were over two hundred houses. The plan compiled in 1855 by James Kearney shows that most of these were situated to the west of Brighton Road (later High Street and now St Kilda Road). The St Kilda East area, by comparison, was largely undeveloped and most buildings were located within the block bounded by Brighton Road, Wellington Street, Chapel Street, and Alma Road. The prominent situation of this block on the highest point in St Kilda adjacent to an important thoroughfare attracted the attention of leading citizens, such as Octavius Browne who purchased approximately half of the land within this block at the first land sales. He established a small farm and in 1851 commissioned Samuel Jackson to design his grand

residence, Charnwood, which faced toward the corner of Brighton and Alma Roads. He lived there only briefly before selling in 1854 to Matthew Hervey, MLC.

The Kearney plan shows that Octavia Street, named in honour of Mr Browne, had been formed and already contained several houses. In contrast to the grand houses that would be built in the surrounding streets such as Charnwood Road and Crimea Street, Octavia Street contained modest workers cottages.

These houses, each brick and 3 rooms, were built in 1890 for John E. and Jane Ellis by John Newton (RB). John Ellis was the licensee of the nearby Duke of Devonshire Hotel at the south corner of Octavia Street and High Street (now St Kilda Road).

Occupants in Spring Cottage (no.16) included Henry Trewartha a mechanic, and under the ownership of James Mason and later his executors, Grace Cowan was a long term occupier around World War I. Ernest Patton of Barkly Street St Kilda was the owner when Fred Austin (metalworker), Sarah Curtayne, Keith Grant (storeman) and Charles Watt an engineer, occupied the house during the inter-war period. Henry Wishart, Joseph Ryan, and Robert Duncan were early occupiers of no. 14 while Fred Ball, Frank Martin and Albert Illman were in no. 18 during the 1890s. John Edwin Ellis himself was named as the owner and occupier of no. 18 around 1900 when it is assumed the house may have been empty, with a default rated person listed (RB).

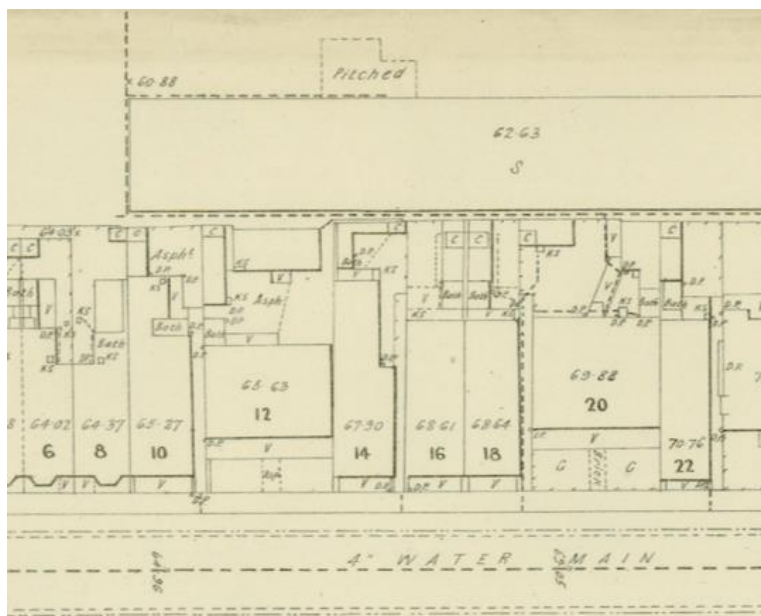


Figure 1: Extract MMBW Detail Plan No.1358 showing the houses in 1898

In the 1980s the three cottages were acquired by the Ministry of Housing and converted to a rooming house comprising nine rooms with shared facilities. From 1987 the buildings were managed by St Kilda Community Housing and in 2012 they were upgraded to comprise seven self-contained units (SKCHA).

References

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan No. 1358, dated 1898

Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History (TEH) [Version 1, July 2020](#)

St Kilda Rate Books (RB): September 1889 (no. in rate 357-361); September 1890 (368-370)

St Kilda Community Housing Association (SKCHA) Annual Reports 2012, 2013

Victoria. Surveyor-General (1855) Melbourne and its suburbs [cartographic material] compiled by James Kearney, draughtsman; engraved by David Tulloch and James R. Brown (referred to as the 'Kearney Plan')

Description

Three single storey stuccoed terrace houses, one originally free standing at the lane corner and the others paired. Each house has an ornate cemented Renaissance Revival inspired parapet with scrolling, acroteria and panelled entablatures, which are framed by end walls with prominent consoles with vermiculated panels, cornices and scroll brackets. There are moulded architraves with sill brackets and the panelled front doors have highlights. There is one rendered chimney with a cornice behind the middle cottage.

The houses are in good condition and have relatively good integrity. The cast-iron detail and bull-nose verandah roof are not original, but the simple iron palisade fence and timber post may be early. Windows in the west elevation of Clyde Cottage have been replaced or added and there are alterations and additions at the rear.

Comparative analysis

No information.

Assessment

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

Recommendations

Retain in the Heritage Overlay with external paint controls.

Primary source

City of Port Phillip, *HO7 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct heritage review Stage 2: Review of existing heritage citations (Part 2)*, 2022

Other studies

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

Other images

