

PLACE IDENTIFICATION FORM

ADDRESS

106 Church Street

TYPE

- Single Residence
- Shop
- Office
- Landscape feature
- View
- Multiple Unit Res.
- Outbuildings
- Industrial Building
- Public building
- Other

TITLE

"Huntingtower"

EXISTING DESIGNATION

HBR [ ] GBR [ ] AHC [ ] NT [ ] VAS [ ]

STREETSCAPE LEVEL

1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [x]  
SIGNIFICANT [ ] SIGNIFICANT [ ]  
STREET TREES KERB & GUTTERS

GRADING

A [x] B [ ] C [ ] D [ ] E [ ]  
KEYNOTE BUILDING [ ]

RECOMMENDED FOR

HBR/GBR [x] AHC [x] URBAN CONSERVATION AREA [ ]  
VAS [ ] PLANNING SCHEME PROTECTION [x]  
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE [ ] OTHER [ ]

SURVEY DATE Nov. 91.  
NEG FILE 56.11, 12  
Title  
Vol.  
Fol.

THEME

- Early Settlement
- Mansions
- Victorian Garden Suburb
- Municipal dev.
- 1870s growth
- Garden villas
- Working enclaves
- Commercial Centres
- Edwardian Prosperity
- Interwar Housing
- Flats and Offices

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Date 1890-1891  
Architect J. Beswicke?  
Builder  
Elements -  
Mansion house and garden



- Contributing garden
- Landmark tree
- Original or early hard landscape layout
- Original or early fence (remnants only)

NOTABLE FEATURES/SIGNIFICANCE

See attached

INTEGRITY Good [x]  
Fair [ ]  
Poor [ ]

CONDITION Good [x]  
Fair [ ]  
Poor [ ]

CROSS REFERENCED INFORMATION

Associated significant garden [ ]



106 Church Street

## 106 CHURCH STREET

### "HUNTINGTOWER"

#### History

The former "Huntingtower" on the corner of Church and Mason Streets was built as a gentleman's residence in the early 1890s and, later that decade, became the home of a grazier and his family. The splendid towered house may have been designed by the distinguished Hawthorn architect, John Beswicke.<sup>12</sup> The first owner, William Morton, gentleman, was rated in 1890-91 for a seven-roomed house in Mason Street.<sup>13</sup> By 1892, Morton's residence was described as a nine-roomed brick house and outhouse, NAV 136 pounds.<sup>14</sup> Morton was owner/occupier still in the early depression years.<sup>15</sup>

The property also had associations with Herbert Booth of the Salvation Army, who lived there briefly in 1896-97,<sup>16</sup> after it was purchased by William Manson, a grazier.<sup>17</sup> John and William Manson arrived in Melbourne in 1853 on the "Eagle" from Scotland. John, a successful draper, set up business in Melbourne, later establishing 15 branches of the firm throughout north-eastern Victoria and New South Wales. "Huntingtower" was the home of the Manson family over a long period. After Williams death in 1901, his widow lived in the house until her death in 1939.<sup>18</sup>

The turn of the century MMBW drainage plan shows "Huntingtower" (then numbered 43 Church Street) with its carriage drive to the entrance on the corner of Church and Mason Streets with extensive garden areas at the front and sides, and lawns at the rear. Stables were located beyond large areas of brick paving at the back of the property. Front and side verandahs lead to a large conservatory.<sup>19</sup> An early photograph shows the original front and side fences, impressive entrance gates and an elegant gas lamp standing on the corner pavement.<sup>20</sup>

Today, the front fence, outhouses and stables have been demolished. However, there have been no alterations to the building's grant facade, still a local landmark, and the rear brick paving remains.

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12. National Trust of Australia (Vic.), File no. 4965.
  13. Hawthorn RB 1890-91 Western Division No. 1225.
  14. Ibid. 1892 Yarra Ward No. 912.
  15. Ibid. 1894-95 Auburn Ward No. 930. (NAV 80 pounds).
  16. Melbourne Directories.
  17. National Trust File No. 4965.
  18. Ibid.
  19. Copy held by National Trust.
  20. Copy held by National Trust.

## 106 Church Street continued

### Description

A red brick and render, French second empire design for a mansion on a particularly tight mansion site. Although small, the site is prominently located on Church Street Hill, and highly visible on its corner allotment. The design features the central tower, placed over the entrance and flanked by a gabled projecting wing and a recessed return wing with two storey cast iron verandah. At the termination of the verandah return is a conservatory at ground level.

The roof is slated, with projecting oculi matching the tower openings to the top level. On the gable end, the fascia is formed into a decorative truss. Below, paired windows imply access to a balcony, encrusted with render embellishment, which forms the roof to the ground floor bay projections. The tower is elaborately decorated with rendered quoins, pilasters, arches and architraves. At the top the parapet is formed by a heavy rendered balustrade surrounding a viewing platform. Chimney stacks are also elaborately detailed in render.

In contrast the main body of the house has quite plain walls of red brick. The cast iron verandah incorporates the then dated timber frieze frame, but utilizes cast iron "straight" panels of varying size linking the verandah and the original elaborate fence.

The building is remarkably intact, including the front garden hard landscape and paving to the rear. The once extensive outbuildings have been demolished.

### Assessment

Huntingtower is thought to be possibly a Beswicke design by the National Trust. Further investigation is recommended to confirm this. Beswicke executed many mansions in Hawthorn. His early style, is not associated with red brick. These shops in Auburn Village of the late 1880s and early 1890s are polychrome designs. It is not until Talana of 1899 that red brick is used extensively. If this is a Beswicke design, it is an early and influential use of a then avant-garde material, and probably an important precursor to Talana.

Red brick is associated with the "Modern Italian", best represented by Raheen at Kew of 1884 by Salway before its adoption by the Queen Anne. There, as here the tower is an integral part of the design and the render decoration is equally heavy. However the whole effect has been lightened by the cast iron verandah and the timber joinery to the conservatory.

The design is flamboyant and clearly intended to catch the eye on this prominent location. The tower has been very successfully incorporated into its central location, the juxtaposition of gable roof and tower is successfully handled and the scheme has cleverly converted a villa allotment into a site appropriate for a mansion design. Overall it illustrates the strong desire to make a statement of wealth on the main thoroughfare of what had become one of Melbourne's most prestigious garden suburbs.

106 Church Street continued

Significance

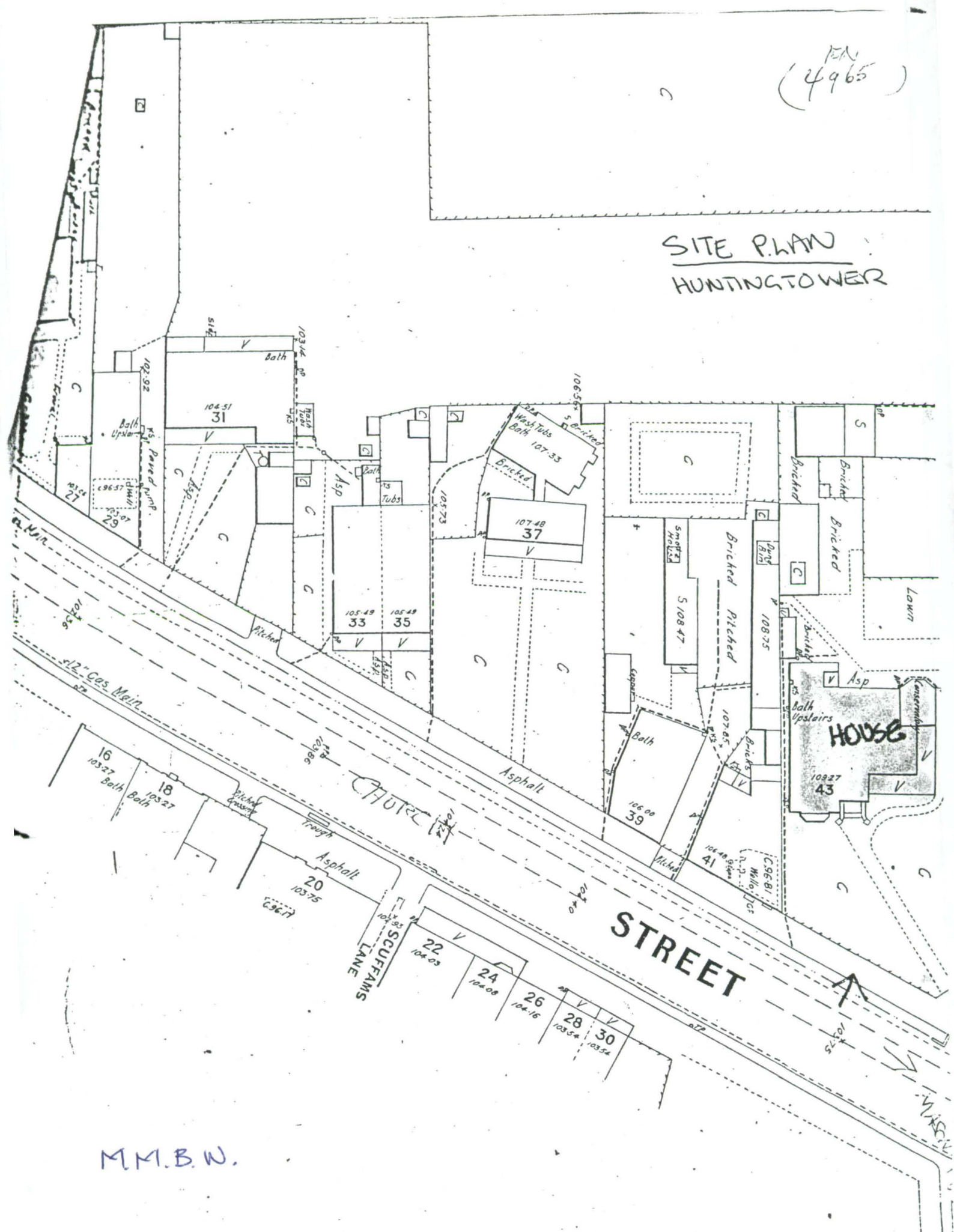
State

Note further research is recommended to enable comparative assessment for the architect.

1. A most unusual composition of central tower, gable and return verandah executed in the materials favoured by the officionardos of the "Modern Italian", but here interpreted in the French second empire style. A rare example of this material/style combination.
2. One of the best illustrations of the boom period, mansion house development at Hawthorn, when mansion houses were required to achieve maximum impact by their careful placement and design, even on small allotments, and continuing Hawthorn's established 1860 and 1870s mansion house character into a suburban setting.
4. A landmark in Church Street.

EN  
(4965)

# SITE PLAN HUNTINGTOWER



M.M.B.W.

"Huntingtower"  
106 Church Street.

(FN4960)



(early  
photo)