

Balwyn Road Residential Precinct  
Place Citation

16 Balwyn Road, Canterbury

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Name	<i>Shrublands</i>		
Place	Residential		
Type			
Date	1861	Survey Date	Dec 2005
Architect	John Flannagan	Previous Grading	A
Builder	Not known	Grading	A

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Intactness  Good  Fair  Poor

Heritage  HV  AHC  NT  BPS Heritage Overlay

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**History**

Ernst Carter, dentist and later vigneron, was one of the first to buy land within Elgar's Special Survey. *Shrublands* was first rated by the Boroondara District Road Board in 1861-2, by which time a house had been built on the site. The house was designed by the Melbourne architect, John Flannagan.<sup>1</sup> It is thought that Carter established a vineyard on the site soon after as the first meeting of the Victorian Winegrowers Association was held at the site in 1861.<sup>2</sup> Carter was the first of the local gentry to join the Boroondara District Road Board, doing so in 1862.<sup>3</sup>

In an 1876 advertisement for the sale of *Shrublands*, the site was described as having 16 acres of garden, vineyard and orchard.<sup>4</sup> The estate was not sold and in 1879, Carter acquired an additional 27

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- 1 G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991, vol 4, p19
  - 2 Personal communication with R Da Costa-Adams, Feb 2006
  - 3 D MacLean, *Balwyn 1841-1941*, p14
  - 4 G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991, vol 4, p20

## Balwyn Road Residential Precinct Place Citation

acres to increase his holdings to about 87 acres.<sup>5</sup> The boundaries of the estate at its greatest were Balwyn Road (west), Mont Albert Road (north), Chatham Road (east), and Canterbury Road (south).

Carter subdivided the estate in September 1883.<sup>6</sup> Some details of the original estate are outlined on the 1883 subdivision plan including the location of the driveway which began at the north-east corner of Canterbury and Balwyn Roads. There were orchards and a vineyard, one of a few in the area, to the north and east of the house and an orangery to the south-west.

John, a merchant, and Alice Hindson purchased the mansion and surrounding land in 1883 (allotments 24-26 in Balwyn Rd & the abutting allotments on Rochester Rd, nos 7-10). Over the next few years, he bought some adjoining allotments (nos 13, 22-3). In 1889, Hindson commissioned the architect William Wolf to extend the house and the valuation was nearly doubled the following year, when the house was described as consisting of 18 rooms. With the economic depression of the 1890s, Hindson was forced to sell some land.<sup>7</sup>

John Hindson died in 1921 and subsequently Alice subdivided the remaining seven acres.<sup>8</sup> Alice donated the allotment with the house (no. 5), to the Anglican Church after the family's long association with St Barnabas Church in Balwyn Road. The Church subsequently purchased allotments 3 and 4 (now 18-20 Balwyn Road).<sup>9</sup>

In 1926, the site became St John's Home for Boys when the St Martin's Home for Boys in Auburn was relocated there. A further two storey extension to the north, consisting of dining room, hospital accommodation and staff quarters, was constructed in 1934 in a similar architectural style. Additional buildings, constructed during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been designed in a contemporary mode. The cellar rooms, where Carter's *Shrublands* labelled wines were reportedly stored, were converted to a chapel.<sup>10</sup>

In 1959, the brick veneer building at the south-west corner of the site was constructed. The adjacent brick veneer building to the north along Balwyn Road was constructed in 1965 for administrative purposes.<sup>11</sup>

In 2003, the site was sold to the current owners who are undertaking extensive refurbishment works. In 2004, Heritage Victoria issued a permit for a range of alterations and additions to the 1930s wing.<sup>12</sup>

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5 R Da Costa-Adams, 'Notes of Balwyn Road, Canterbury Heritage Precinct'

6 Subdivision plan LP609

7 G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991, vol 4, p20; R Da Costa Adams, 'Notes of Balwyn Road, Canterbury Heritage Precinct'

8 Subdivision plan LP9510, dated 5 September 1923.

9 R Da Costa-Adams, 'Notes of Balwyn Road, Canterbury Heritage Precinct'

10 G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991, vol 4, p20

11 Personal communication, R Da Costa-Adams, 5 May 2006

12 Planning File 40/408/011696 and building file, 40/409/10615

## Balwyn Road Residential Precinct Place Citation

### Description & Integrity

*Shrublands* is an imposing two storey rendered masonry mansion (c1863) designed in the Italianate style. The original section of the house has a basalt basement/cellar. The 1889 additions to the west end are of a similar style to Flannagan's design and the original form and detailing were also generally employed for the 1934 additions.

Overall, the building's form is asymmetrical with a return verandah and balcony over. The double storey colonnade, of free-standing columns, piers and engaged columns incorporates the Tuscan order to the lower level and Ionic order to the upper level. The entablature projects forward above the engaged columns and the frieze to the parapet is dentillated. The walls of the ground floor show banded rustication and the first floor bay window is framed with broad Tuscan pilasters. The masonry balustrading with urns to both levels and main stair also derive from classical precedents. Similar detailing was used for 1889 additions by Wolf although the decorative elements are surface applied due to no verandah or balcony.

The original house is mostly intact externally, as are the extensive additions. The interior has been altered including the removal of some original features.

Some comparative examples in the City of Boroondara area include: Broughton Hall (Tara), 2 Berwick St, Camberwell (1859); Linda House (formerly) 19 Canterbury Rd, Camberwell (1860-1888); Wanganella, (formerly St John's Wood), 8 Aird St, Camberwell, (1870), and Fairholm, 35 Prospect Hill Rd, Camberwell (1873); and Studley House, 15 Nolan St, Kew (1875 & 1919).<sup>13</sup>

A number of large trees including a Bunya Bunya (*Araucaria bidwillii*) Himalayan Cedar (*Cedrus deodar*) from the original estate still exist on the site and others are evident amongst the surrounding properties.<sup>14</sup>

### Statement of Significance<sup>15</sup>

This site is significant as being the first substantial home in the precinct and thus setting a pattern of development that has continued through to the late twentieth century of architect designed houses. *Shrublands* was one of the four substantial holdings that were subdivided from the mid-1880s.

*Shrublands* is architecturally significant as a fine example of an 1860s asymmetric Italianate mansion with restrained classical detailing. The building's form of a return verandah and balcony with bay window becomes common around the 1880s in both larger houses and cottages.

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13 Victorian Heritage Register, citation for H2037; G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991, vol 4, p20

14 Victorian Heritage Register, citation for H2037

15 This part has been mostly reproduced from the Victorian Heritage Register citation for H2037

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*Shrublands* is of historical significance as an example of a wealthy professional man's country house in nineteenth century Victoria and as such is an example of expression of wealth and influence and the associated lifestyle. It is of historical significance due to its prominent position on top of a hill as it is clearly visible from the original Canterbury village in Maling Road. The visibility of the house expresses its relationship to the surrounding area.

*Shrublands* is also of historical significance because of its association with early wine making in Victoria. Ernst Carter was an early vigneron and produced *Shrublands* labelled wine in 1860s and 1870s when the Boroondara area was one of Victoria's leading wine growing regions. The basalt cellar was built by Carter to store his wines and remains as a link to this period.

### Grading and Recommendations

The site is part of the identified Balwyn Road Residential Precinct, which is recommended for inclusion within the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay.

### Identified By

G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991, vol 4, pp19-21

### References

Building File, 40/409/10615  
G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991  
R Da Costa Adams, 'Notes of Balwyn Road, Canterbury Heritage Precinct'  
D MacLean, *Balwyn 1841-1941*  
National Trust of Australia (Victoria) citation B1795  
Planning File 40/408/011696  
Register of the National Estate, place ID - 5634  
Subdivision plans LP609 and LP9510  
Victorian Heritage Inventory, H7922-0306  
Victorian Heritage Register, H2037