

## Identification and location

**Name of place:** **Seddon Residential and Commercial Precinct**

**Other Name**

**Address**

bounded by Bayview, Station, Hobbs, Charles, Albert, railway, Dane, Nicholson, Berry and Stephen Streets (parts), part Melbourne to Williamstown Railway reserve  
Yarraville

**Place Identifier**

22166

**Heritage Overlay Number 2000**

HA10

**Heritage Significance**

Regional

**Creation date(s)**

1880s-1920s

**Map (Melway)**

42A-D6-7

**Boundary description**

Land and structures bounded by Somerville Rd, Bayview, Station, Hobbs, Charles, Albert, railway, Dane, Nicholson, Berry and Stephen streets, with emphasis on all original Edwardian-era and Victorian-era elements, including basalt pitched paving, asphalt footpaths, lot sizes and street patterns.

**Local Government Area**

City of Maribyrnong

**Ownership Type**

Private & Public

## Description

**Site Type:** Housing estate

### Physical Description

The general character of the Seddon Residential and Commercial Precinct is of small Edwardian and Victorian period single-storey detached and some attached housing, with a dominance of weatherboard walling and corrugated iron and unglazed Marseilles pattern terra-cotta tile roofing. Gable and hip roof form combination is inherent in Edwardian housing. Properties are generally of small lot frontages, originally with timber picket front fences; and some use of red imperial sized bricks and stucco wall cladding. Footpaths are originally of asphalt and roads with basalt stone kerb and channel, with some surviving in this precinct. Originally there was no provision for on-site vehicle parking for most of the identified housing in the precinct. The surviving rear right-of-ways are valuable elements associated with the 19th century night soil collection.

There is a related strip commercial development aligned along the major transport routes such as the railway and Williamstown Road, the latter development group with zero lot lines, parapeted one and sometimes two storey masonry construction. Of the 1124 places in the Seddon Residential and Commercial Precinct, 999 are contributory.

As far as specific character, building in streets such as Seddon (100% of identified sites), Tennyson (90%), Browning (88%), O'Farrell (82%), Lawrence and Webster, are overwhelmingly of the Edwardian period: the first three of these streets evoke the subdivision period particularly well. Grace, Gamon and Bayview, as streets created in the 19th Century, show some Victorian-era character but it is probable that Edwardian renovations may disguise more widespread 19th Century building stock. The area's Edwardian character remains strong, apart from the visible blight adjacent to Somerville and Williamstown Roads (area excluded from the precinct).

The street pattern is irregular and a visible result of the various private subdivisions which were, by necessity, distributed in a north-south grid pattern around the Williamstown- Geelong railway reserve carved diagonally through the area by 1859. The street patterns show the sequential development more than the buildings. Seddon Street east is not aligned with Seddon Street west. In fact, few east-west streets align and some are dead-ends. This aspect presumably has protected the area from the blight associated with heavy through-traffic, such as in the bordering Somerville Road. The lot subdivision is however fairly regular in terms of frontage width and depth. There are some rear right-of-ways.

Among the more intact residential streets in the area are Pole, Perry, Princess, Fairlie and Bellairs. Except for Perry, they are dominantly Edwardian in period expression. Other streets such as William, Tongue, Mackay and Pentland Parade (former Railway Place) also possess dominantly Edwardian era housing, making apparent the influence of the Seddon Station which opened in 1906.

Commercial streetscapes include Pentland Parade and Bellairs Avenue, being also contemporary with the development of Seddon Station. Many of these shops contain valuable shopfront and verandah details and are a faithful witness to the passing trade once generated by the railways. Streets east of the railway possess Edwardian-era buildings plus a sprinkling of 1920-30s and 1930-40s housing, intermixed with the often visually incompatible post-Second War flat development.

In conclusion, the above description has not changed markedly since the 1989 study while considerable enhancement (paint colours, general maintenance, related fences, related planting) is evident within the existing urban conservation area which makes up the core of the precinct. The distillation of the 1989 identified area into these core streets to form urban conservation areas was in response to a metropolitan-wide comparison and did not account for locally significant areas which existed between these regionally significant precincts. Considered within a city context the continuity of these 1989 areas, as revised, is significant and provides a more meaningful and protective setting for the existing urban conservation areas while at the same time

physically linking them with their origin in the form of the railway.

### **Condition**

good (partially disturbed, well preserved)

### **Integrity**

substantially intact/some intrusions

### **Context**

Clearly shaped by the major transport routes and centres which helped demarcate residential enclaves at differing times of the City's history.

### **Threats:**

Unrelated development, changes to original fabric

### **History**

It is apparent from an examination of the development of the Maribyrnong study area, that the transport routes that were opened up during the 1850s seem to have been an incentive for private developers to market estates or private villages.

The (soon to be built) Williamstown railway line was a selling point at Yarraville as was the Ballarat Road at Braybrook and Maidstone. Often developers carved land up into tiny allotments, very few of which were probably actually built upon during the 1850s or soon after. Some remnants of these old street configurations can still be made out at Braybrook and Maidstone, while the township of Yarraville still retains the streets that were laid out in the 1850s { Barnard, 2000}. Another important factor for the development of housing was the dramatic increases in population some parts of the study area experienced.

While some of the speculative estates of the 1880s might have failed to attract large numbers of residents, there was a great increase in population and housing within Footscray itself in the 1870s and 1880s. Footscray's population was 2,473 in 1871. It was 19,149 in 1891. Housing now spilled over from the original township reserve into Upper Footscray and the edges of West Footscray. An 1877 survey of Footscray showed dense pockets of suburban streets extending to the north along Nicholson Street to Newell Street, to the south along Gamon Street to Mackay Street, beginning to fill in the gap between Nicholson Street and Geelong Road and extending to the west between the Bendigo Railway line and Ballarat Road as far as Ashley Street. While John Lack has pointed out that several thousand blocks were filled with 'detached weatherboard workers' cottages at this time, not all of the new streets were filled so quickly. The 1880s subdivision at West Footscray that was bounded by Suffolk, Church, Essex and Dongola Roads, was yet another example of an estate that was carved up, but hardly built upon until the twentieth century {Barnard, 2000}.

One of the earliest estates was Walter Craig's 1856-7 Hobbs' Paddock, on the north east edge of the area, which included Dane, Nicholson and Pole Streets in one sale poster (east of the railway) and Hotham, Hobbs (then Barkly) and Perry Streets in another. It was `...well adapted for villa residences... ' given the quarter-acre lots. Thirty years later, in the 1880s, blocks along Gammon, Grey and Hobbs Street were sold by order of solicitor, John Maddock, as laid out by architect Robert Adamson, in 1883. The largest subdivision, however, was that bounded by Mackay, Princess, Nicholson and Gamon Streets and Somerville Road {Crown Allotment 1-20/C/14; Lodged Subdivision Plans: 146, 443 and 445 (c1882), 468 (1883), 499, 557 (1884), 1639 (1886), 5431 (1911), 65310 (1914)}.

Subdivision plans for the area west of Gamon St divided the twenty 3 to 4 acre suburban Crown allotments (Section 14), which had been acquired by commission agents, J. Robertson & Co., J. Ryan, F. Thompson, C. Chapman and R. Marks. The 1877 Borough Plan shows main streets, Station, O'Farrell, Bay View, Hamilton and Gamon Streets, as an early grid over only a partially divided area. No buildings are shown. Lodged Plan 443 describes some 30 house lots, each approximately 40 x 174 feet, between Bayview and Latrobe (later Hamilton) Streets (east-west), Heales (later O'Farrell) and Grace Streets (north-south), and backing on to a central right-of-way for night soil collection. The plan was lodged in 1882 by solicitor, Michael Kidston, and surveyed by architect/surveyor, John Jenkins. West of this subdivision, LP468 created about 95 lots (about 30 x 105 feet) between O'Farrell, Somerville, Harrison's (Williamstown) and Bayview Roads. This was lodged by Kidston in 1883. Some 36 house lots, between Hamilton and Gamon, Browning and O'Farrell, were located by surveyor, Robert Rowlands, in 1884, and lodged by one George Chapman who was possibly of Bath Place, Williamstown. A civil engineer, Henry Chinn, surveyed and lodged LP1639 in 1886, comprising 78 lots of generally 32 x 100 feet, placed between O'Farrell, Hood, Hamilton and Gamon Streets. An intermediate street, Smith, was changed to Fielding in c1930.

The 1894 MMBW plan shows the realization of some of these subdivisions with a vacant swampy area shown just south of Harold Street. Much of the (timber) housing lay along Montague, Agnes, Bayview (south), Hamilton (south) and Grace Streets. O'Farrell to Station Road was largely empty, between Bayview and Hamilton Streets.

The prolific surveyor, E.P. Muntz, showed literary flare when he filled the void in the north-east corner of the area in 1911. His Tennyson, Browning and Seddon Streets accommodated 125 blocks ranging from 40 to 50 feet frontage and modest 89 to 96 feet depths; each had the traditional rear right-of-way, despite the presence by then of the MMBW sewer. Muntz had already surveyed the adjoining estate north of Station Road, declared in 1883. One of the area's final jig-saw pieces (Lawrence to O'Farrell Streets) was put in place, in 1914, by W.J. Andrews (of Andrews & Cox), obtaining Footscray Council's consent in November. Right-of-ways at the rear of properties for the collection of night soil were not included as a sign of the

times.

East of Gamon Street was shaped by mainly boom-era 1880s subdivisions which remained dormant until after 1900. Except for the older estates to the north, the Victorian era housing was always more sparse than the area's western section. As a consequence, streets such as William, Tongue, Mackay and Pentland Parade (then Railway Place) possess Edwardian era and later housing, making apparent the influence of the Seddon Station opening in 1906. Evident today as a visual barrier, the railway was then a powerful development generator for both sides of the tracks, for both residential and commercial uses {Crown Allotment 1-20/C/14; Lodged Subdivision Plans: 146, 443 and 445 (c1882), 468 (1883), 499, 557 (1884), 1639 (1886), 5431 (1911), 65310 (1914)}.

### Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme	Making suburbs	
PAHT Subtheme	Making suburbs	Local Theme(s)
		Twentieth Century Residential Development

### Cultural Significance

The Seddon Residential & Commercial Precinct is significant to the Western Region of Melbourne because:

- it is one of the best preserved of the city's Edwardian residential enclaves and thus is expressive of this major growth era in the City's history and the parallel development of better railway facilities as expressed by:
  - small Edwardian and Victorian period single-storey detached and some attached housing, with a dominance of weatherboard walling and corrugated iron roofing,
  - gable and hip roof form combination inherent in Edwardian housing,
  - some surviving early asphalt footpaths and stone kerb and channel, and
  - originally no provision for on-site vehicle parking for most of the identified housing, as an expression of the pre motor-age and dependence on railway transport, and
  - related strip commercial development aligned along the major transport routes such as the railway and Williamstown Road, the latter development group with zero lot lines, parapeted one and sometimes two storey masonry construction (Criterion A4);
- it contains both residential and commercial development clustered around the railway line and station and thus is evocative of residential patterns related to transport options (Criterion A3, A4); and
- of the irregular street patterns created mainly in the 19th century are evocative of the failure of the 1880s boom period as well as the role of the small speculator in shaping the City (Criterion A4).

### Comparative Examples:

Edwardian-era housing is clustered around other major railway stations in the city, such as at Footscray and Yarraville. Each has a differing percentage of Victorian-era and Edwardian-era content which in turn qualifies their historical expression. Each was (and is) a separate community made so by major transport routes which divided residential areas and created foci for development in the form of railway stations which, because of their differing creation dates, inspired a different development mix. Other similar enclaves can be seen in the region around Newport and Spotswood Railway Stations.

### Recommendations

- Heritage Victoria Register
- Register of the National Estate:
- National Trust Register:
- Other Heritage Listings
- Planning Scheme Protection
- External Paint Controls Apply?:
- Internal Alteration Controls Apply?:
- Tree Controls Apply?:
- Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Act:
- Are there Outbuildings or Fences not Exempt?:
- Prohibited Uses may be Permitted

### Recommendations:

The boundaries of the existing Heritage Overlays HA10-13 and HA15 in the City of Maribyrnong Planning Scheme should be adjusted to the revised boundaries for one combined Heritage Overlay HA10 (refer map).

The following objectives have been drawn from the Statement of Significance where contributory places or elements are generally those which largely derive from the Edwardian era including:

- Edwardian and Victorian period single-storey detached and some attached housing, with a dominance of weatherboard walling and corrugated iron roofing,
- gable and hip roof form combination inherent in Edwardian housing;
- originally with fairly uniform narrow lot frontages and rear right-of-ways;
- originally with timber picket front fences;
- originally with asphalt footpaths and stone kerb and channel, with some surviving;
- originally with no provision for on-site vehicle parking for most of the identified housing;

- related strip commercial development aligned along the major transport routes such as the railway and Williamstown Road, the latter development group with zero lot lines, parapeted one and sometimes two storey masonry construction.

It is recommended:

- to conserve and enhance the elements in the precinct which derive from the Edwardian & Victorian-era, as an expression of this growth era in the City and the relationship it had with the railway line and its stations, where elements include buildings, objects, landscape, land and street works and enhancement includes the reinstatement of missing original elements;
- to conserve and enhance the visual relationship between Edwardian & Victorian-era elements in the precinct;
- to conserve and enhance the public view of these Edwardian & Victorian-era elements;
- to conserve and enhance the inter-relationship of the residential, commercial and transport uses arising from the Edwardian & Victorian-era;
- to conserve and enhance the amenity of the precinct to aid in its heritage conservation;
- to ensure that new elements within the precinct are recessive and related to the precinct's Edwardian & Victorian-era derived elements in roof and plan form, external materials, front and side setbacks from property boundaries, and building bulk as viewed from public areas (excluding rear right-of-ways);
- to encourage retention of the subdivision pattern as at c1920; and
- that Council investigate preparation of an incorporated plan for the precinct which will embody the above objectives.

## Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

*A3 Importance in exhibiting unusual richness or diversity of flora, fauna, landscape or cultural features.*

The precinct contains both residential and commercial development clustered around the railway line and station and thus is evocative of residential patterns related to transport options and the resulting lifestyle of the era

*A4 Importance for their association with events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation, state, region or community.*

The precinct is one of the best preserved of the city's Edwardian residential enclaves and thus is expressive of this growth era in the City's history; it contains both residential and commercial development clustered around the railway line and station and thus is evocative of residential patterns related to transport options; the irregular street patterns created mainly in the 19th century are evocative of the failure of the 1880s boom period as well as the role of the small speculator in shaping the City

historical significanc  architectural significan  social significance  scientific significanc

## Documentation

### References

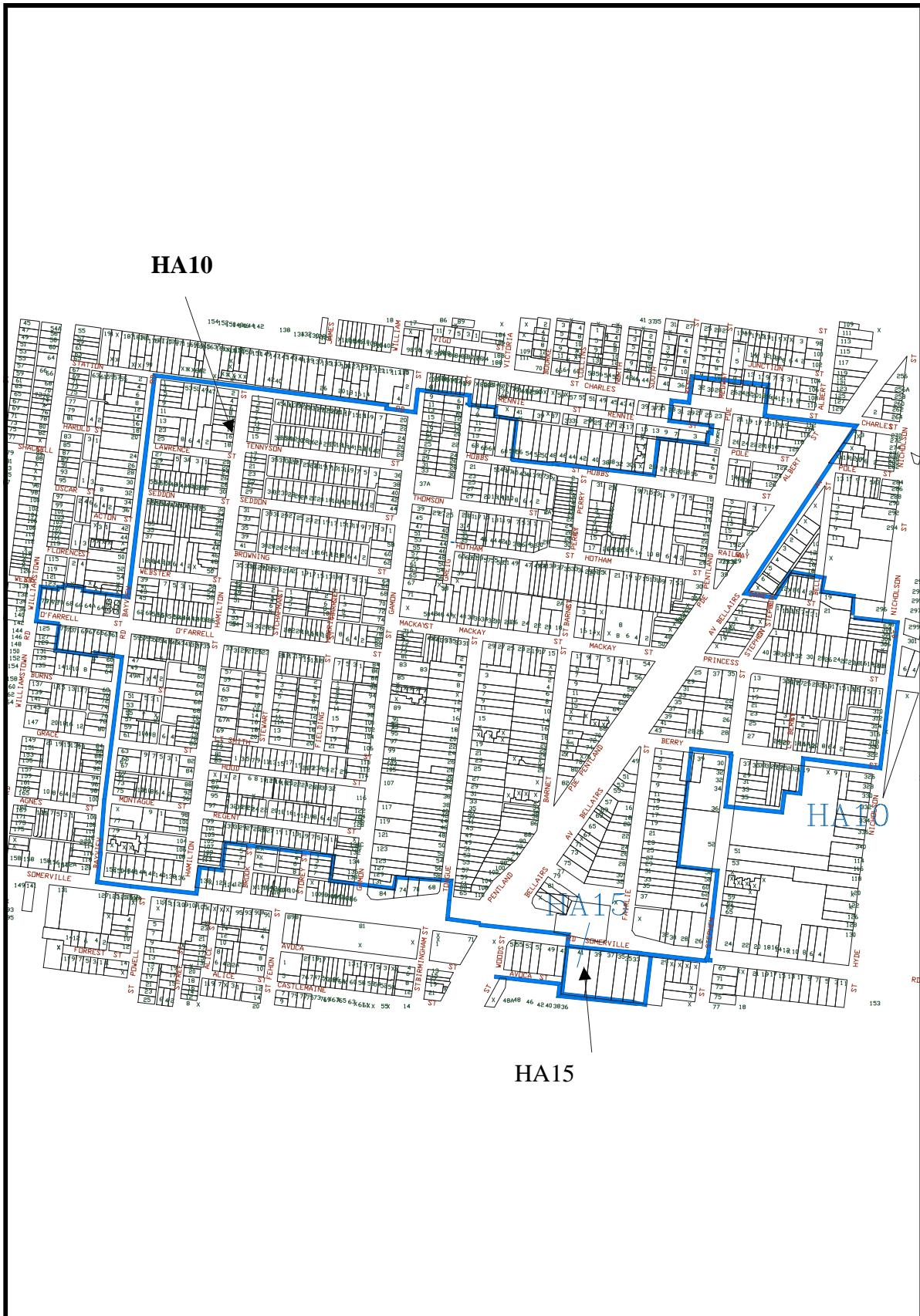
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## Data recording

Assessed By:

Assessed Date:





HA10: Seddon Residential & Commercial Precinct