
Chapel Street Urban Conservation Area [Area 2.4] - Extension to include 53 Barry Street

Extent

Single building, 53 Barry Street, as extension to Chapel Street Urban Conservation Area.

History

The earliest history of the two-storeyed brick building at 53 Barry Street is linked with that of the adjacent row of brick cottages. All this land on the north side of Barry Street was originally part of Peter Davis' extensive South Yarra property comprising Crown Portions 36, 37 and 38.³⁰ By 1872, Charles James Cottrell, a Chapel Street accountant, owned this land which included a Chapel Street corner block.³¹ However, he didn't develop it until the early 1880s.

Cottrell's 1881 subdivision created a laneway running beside the 53 Barry Street site and another at the rear of eight building allotments. These laneways separated the allotments from the Chapel Street block, which Cottrell retained.³² The new allotments were all purchased in 1881 and rated as vacant land in that year. Walter Evans owned the site of no. 53.³³ The following year, three six-roomed brick cottages had been built for one of the purchasers, Arthur Hobday, who owned the lot next to Evans. Constructed as investments, the new houses were occupied by Paulo Dattari (architect), William Wright and Maurice Brodzky (journalist).³⁴ Brodzky founded the Victorian journal Table Talk, in 1885 which became notorious, uncovering many of the land scandals of the boom years.³⁵ Walter Evans' Barry Street allotment and Cottrell's Chapel Street block were recorded still as vacant land.³⁶

The first building on 53 Barry Street dates from the middle-1880s when brick buildings began to be recorded on Evans' land. A pair of brick houses were listed next to the Hobday properties, shown adjacent to Evans' land in the Cottrell Subdivisional Plan.³⁷ However, it is possible that by this date Evans had sold off some of the land he purchased from Cottrell.³⁸

Certainly, by 1895, the building at no. 53 and adjacent brick cottages at 41-51 Barry Street are shown on an MMBW drainage plan. By this time, no. 53 faced Barry Street and had a large verandah at the rear and substantial stables onto a right-of-way separating it from no. 51. The South Yarra Ward Rate Book of that year listed a

30. RGO Subdivisional Plans

31. Title Vol. 542, fol. 208.

32. Cottrell Subdivisional Plan, 23 March 1881 in Title Vol. 542, fol. 208 Shows names of purchasers.

33. Prahran Rate Book 1881, Vol. 1, Nos. 1207-1210.

34. Prahran Rate Book 1882-83, Vol. 1, Nos. 1396-1398.

35. M. Cannon, *The Land Boomers*, pp. 55-60.

36. Prahran Rate Book 1882-83, Vol. 1, Nos. 1399-1400.

37. Prahran Rate Book 1884-85, Nos. 1560, 1561; Title Vol. 542. Fol. 208.

38. Title vol. 1259 Fol. 251700 needs to be searched.

brick and wood workshop on the site of no. 53 associated with Robert and John Linay, carpenters.³⁹ The MMBW House Cover drawing suggests the facade was brick and the rear timber.

MMBW records show substantial changes carried out to no. 53 between 1902 and 1907. In 1902, when Robert and John Linay were listed as owners, the two stables at the rear were regraded and the manure pit made watertight.⁴⁰ A new owner, A. Preece of Chapel Street, was responsible for extensions or more probably the complete rebuilding of the main building into the present two storey shop between 1903 and 1905, and the removal of the rear verandah, stables and manure pit. Other changes were the reduction in the size of the right-of-way on the west side.⁴¹ Only internal changes appear to have been made between 1907 and 1971.⁴²

Based on the available historical evidence, the present building is considered to date from 1903, and to have replaced the earlier workshop of carpenters R. and J. Linay.

Today, 43-51 Barry Street are described as six-roomed brick houses and no. 53 as a two-storeyed, eight-roomed brick house on land 28 x 127.⁴³ They have survived as a group of buildings associated with Cottrell's 1881 subdivision, and so have common links with the nineteenth century history of this area behind the Chapel Street commercial centre.

Description

This building at 53 Barry Street is a two storey shop and residence on the corner of a bluestone laneway that extends behind the shops fronting Chapel Street. The building is angled to the laneway corner. It is built in tuckpointed brickwork, with contrasting bands as string courses and window heads at both ground and first floor levels. The parapet has a pediment over the offset corner and over the centre of the main facade. Only some of the decorative mouldings remain.

There are two window openings on the ground floor. A timber shop window remains, set on the angle to the corner with the highlight windows painted over. This may have once been the entry. Another opening, a pair of windows, has elaborate columns on the architraves to the side and between the pair.

Analysis

As is revealed in the history, the building would be best considered as part of a group with the adjoining terraces which date from the same development phase. These small houses - five terraces and a detached brick cottage - are located to the west of 53 Barry Street. They are all single storey and regrettably the terraces are all painted. However, three of the terraces in the centre of the group, nos. 41, 43 and 45, have bay windows, an unusual elaboration. Another similar terrace occurs in Palermo Street.

39. Prahran Rate Book 1895-96, South Yarra Ward No, 2561.

40. MMBW House Cover No. 15498.

41. MMBW House Cover No. 15498.

42. MMBW House Cover No. 15498.

43. City of Prahran Valuers Records. Book S. Y. 14.

Heritage characteristics

The Chapel Street Urban Conservation Area is described in detail in the *Prahran Character and Conservation Study 1992*.

Significance

The significance of the Chapel Street Urban Conservation Area is described in the *Prahran Character and Conservation Study 1992*.

Sources

Cannon, M., *The Land Boomers*, pp. 55-60.

Cottrell Subdivisional Plan, 23 March 1881 in Title Vol. 542, fol. 208 Shows names of purchasers

City of Prahran Rate Books 1881, Vol. 1, Nos. 1207-1210; 1882-83, Vol. 1, Nos. 1396-1398; 1399-1400; 1884-85, Nos. 1560, 1561; 1885-86, Vol. 1, Nos. 1670, 1671; 1895-96, South Yarra Ward, Nos. 2558-2562.

City of Prahran Valuers Records. Book S. Y. 14.

RGO Subdivisional Plans.

Title Vol. 542, Fol. 208.

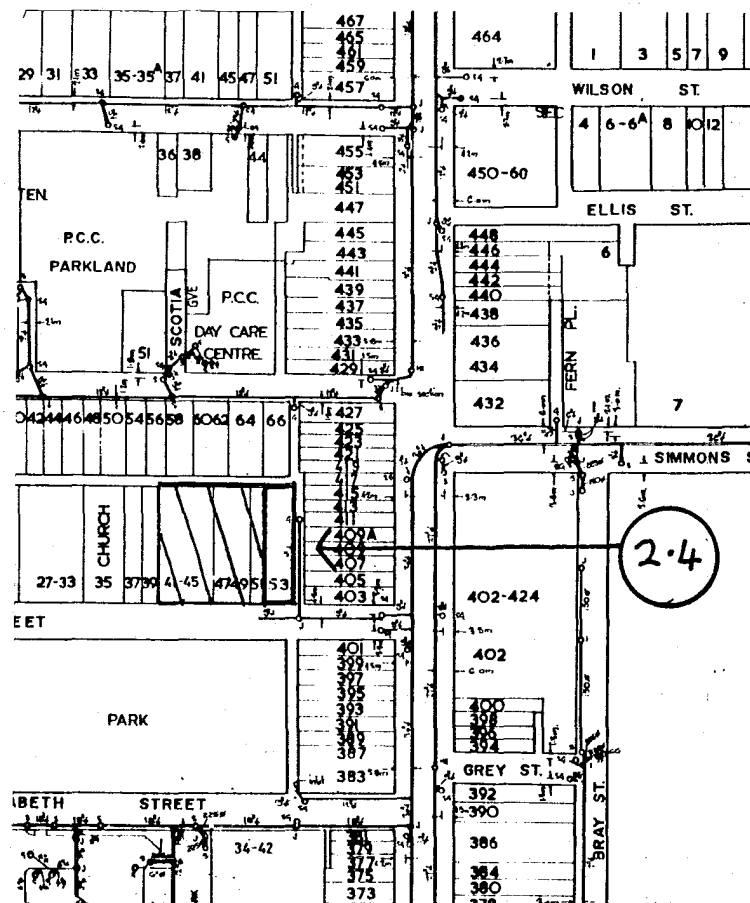
MMBW House Cover No. 15498.

Recommendations

1. Adopt the UC1 Area as an extension to the Chapel Street Urban Conservation Area.
2. Seek a future extension to the UC1 Area to include the terrace and cottage located to the west of 53 Barry Street.

Map

Chapel Street Urban Conservation Area [Area 2.4] - Extension to include 53 Barry Street



Legend

- Recommended UC1 Area
- Remove from UC1 Area proposed in Amendment L24
- Possible future extension

NOTE: Where UC1 Area proposed in Am. L24 coincides with the Recommended UC1 Area, only the latter is shown.