

# CAMBRIDGE STREET HERITAGE AREA DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

These Guidelines have been prepared by Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd for The City of Stonnington to assist in the implementation of the heritage policy and heritage planning controls contained in Council's Planning Scheme. They provide more site-specific information than is provided in the *City of Stonnington Heritage Guidelines* which provide broad guidance for the range of heritage places found throughout the Municipality. This notwithstanding, The *City of Stonnington Heritage Guidelines* contain useful background material relating to Council's broader heritage policies much of which has not been reiterated here.

### 1.1 Purpose of these Guidelines

The aim of these Guidelines is to ensure the retention of those qualities of the Cambridge Street Heritage Area, which embody or contribute to its cultural heritage significance and character. They will assist property owners, residents and designers who are intending to conserve, restore, renovate, alter or extend existing buildings, or to construct new buildings, to achieve their aims while retaining and reinforcing the architectural integrity and character of the area. These Guidelines provide general design advice for the works to the typical architectural forms found in the Cambridge Street Heritage Area. They set design parameters, principles and techniques for achieving appropriate heritage conservation objectives.

Council Planners will use these Guidelines, as well as the advice of its Heritage Advisor, when assessing town planning applications for development proposals within the heritage area.

### 1.2 Further technical advice

This notwithstanding, the Cambridge Street Heritage Guidelines are general in their scope and form an initial step in the design approach. Council recognises that further, more detailed design advice may be needed and therefore provides a Heritage Advisory Service offering architectural and conservation advice as part of the pre-application process. Obviously, these Guidelines cannot provide solutions to every individual design issue, which might arise but Council's Heritage Advisor is available for consultation on both general design principles and matters of detail. The Advisor may recommend Council waive parts of the Guidelines in specific circumstances, where it is considered that a proposal, while not fully complying, is likely to achieve a reasonable and acceptable design outcome.

## 2.0 CURRENT HERITAGE LISTINGS AND CONTROLS

### 2.1 The City of Stonnington

The buildings at 1-32 Cambridge Street comprise a group of, more or less, identical decorated timber cottages. Each was graded A2 as part of the City of Prahran Conservation Study. A2 Buildings are defined as being, of *Regional or Metropolitan significance*, and standing as *important milestones in the architectural development of the Metropolis*. These buildings are significant but not to a degree sufficient to warrant inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register. They are, nonetheless relatively rare or distinctive within their own regional or local context and are seen to be important buildings within the City of Stonnington and the wider Metropolitan area. The group of 32 buildings is protected under a Local Government Heritage Overlay (HO120).

The history and significance of the Cambridge Street Area is described as follows in the Prahran Conservation Study,

*The four allotments bounded by Dandenong Road, Kooyong Road, High Street and Orrong Road were sold at the Crown land Sale of 15 May 1850. Allotment 66 (part of which now forms Cambridge Street) was purchased by James Jackson. This allotment was resubdivided several times starting with a sale on 15 October 1881 with allotments becoming successively smaller until the tight layout of Cambridge Street was established. The thirty-two allotments were all developed simultaneously by the erection in 1887-88 of identical single storey detached timber cottages. The street, known at this stage as Oxford Street, thus achieved a degree of architectural unity not found elsewhere in the municipality. Oxford Street was renamed Cambridge Street in 1892, presumably to avoid confusion with Oxford Street, South Yarra. The cottages were all designed with low pitched gable roofs having a strongly expressed gable end, circular louvred vents and uniform detailing. Today the street is significant for the repetition of such details as the gables, circular vents, chimneys and building forms. Restoration of uniform timber picket fences and colour schemes would dramatically enhance this significance.*



Figure 1 HO 125 The Cambridge Street Precinct  
Figure 2 Typical cottages, Cambridge Street, Armadale

### 2.2 Australian Heritage Commission

Cambridge Street is included on the Register of the National Estate (RNE Place File No 2/11/042/0025, Place ID 5376). The citation for the place notes that,

*The thirty two houses are small, single fronted, identical timber cottages and represent a particular era in development and style, are in a relatively unspoilt condition, and they form a harmonious streetscape free of any intrusions and Modern development.*

### 2.3 Heritage Victoria

None of the dwellings at 1-32 Cambridge Street, Armadale are included on the Victorian Heritage Register.

### 2.4 National Trust of Australia (Vic)

The cottages at 1-32 Cambridge Street are not Classified by the National Trust although a file was opened on the place some years ago (FN4586) with a view to the future classification of the group. No further action has been undertaken.



*Figure 3* Identical cottages, Cambridge Street, Armadale, John T Collins, 28 December 1973  
Original held by State Library of Victoria, Accession Number H90.100/379 Image No jc000377

*Figure 4* Identical cottages, Cambridge Street, Armadale, John T Collins, 28 December 1973  
Original held by State Library of Victoria, Accession Number H90.100/379 Image No jc000378

#### 4.0 HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

*The following brief history is drawn from the citation for the area prepared for the Prahran Conservation Study, Nigel Lewis and Associates and Timber Cottage, 19 Cambridge Street Armadale 3143, Submission to the VCAT prepared by Allan Willingham.*

The Certificate of Title Volume 1309 Folio 793 records Francis Edis Beaver as the registered proprietor of Crown Portion 66 in the Parish of Prahran in November 1881. The holding of almost 31 acres was subdivided by Beaver into large blocks and progressively sold off over the following two decades. By July 1886, the Victorian Permanent Building Society had acquired a large parcel of land described as Lots 11-14 and 23-26 of in the southern sections of Beaver's Subdivision. At the time of the acquisition, no roads or rights of way had been created over the parcel. However, when a one and a half acre tract was sold to Francis Sims in August 1887, a road running east-west across the lot had been laid out and named 'Oxford or Cambridge Street' on the plan of title.

Francis Henry Sims was born in Bristol, England in 1846, son of Henry Sims and his wife Henrietta. The family emigrated to Australia in 1850. On 19 August 1887, when Sims purchased the Cambridge Street parcel, he was described as a carpenter and contractor of Wangaratta Street, Richmond. On the same day, Sims mortgaged the land to the Victorian Permanent Property Investment and Building Society. Beaver died in 1887 but the development and eventual subdivision of the land was continued by his wife Emily and subsequently by their children George, Emily and Marion.

Sands and McDougall Melbourne Directories first record Cambridge Street in 1888. At that time, most of the extant dwellings had been constructed. Nos 2-32 on the north side of the street were described as being vacant while 7-27 were vacant on the south side. In the following year most of the cottages were occupied.

No architect for the works had been identified but it is likely that the near-identical dwellings were modeled on a standard design promoted by the Victorian Permanent Property Investment and Building Society. Noted architect WH Ellerker had enjoyed a long association with the Building Society after designing its Collins Street headquarters in 1869 and it is likely that he was involved in the preparation of this standard design for use by investors, home owners and builders subscribing to the institution. The only substantial differences between the individual dwellings derive from the range of cast iron decorative elements used for the street verandahs and slightly larger building footprints to the four corner dwellings. It is likely that Francis Sims, as builder, contractor and the owner of the site, undertook the project as a speculative development.

The land and cottages subsequently passed to William Alison Blair and eventually to John Gull Johnson who arranged to subdivide the parcel of land into 32 individual residential lots in 1900. The timber cottages were then offered for sale on freehold title. In the period between July 1902 to April 1908 twenty-seven of the thirty-two cottages were sold. Johnson died on 2nd February 1909 and the remaining properties were sold by his beneficiaries.

It is of note that an open brick sewer was constructed around the time of the original development. It is shown on the MMBW Plan of 1896 between 19 and 21 on the north side of the street passing under the street to emerge between 20 and 22. This easement was subsequently used as a right of way before being consolidated into the allotments at 19 and 22 in 1994. This accounts for the atypical sizes of these two allotments.

The street largely retains its original, uniform appearance with cottages adopting a single storey, single fronted expression to the street. Buildings have low pitched gable roofs and weatherboard cladding to their exteriors. The sides are finished in plain square edged boards while the facade was clad in deep ashlar planks. Detailing to the cottages is unusually ornate with many buildings retaining circular louvred gable vents, timber eaves detailing and front verandahs with ornamented columns and cast iron lacework. Most houses retain a single polychrome brick chimney and have a low timber front fence (although these are typically of modern construction).



Figure 5 Cottages, Cambridge Street, Armadale.

Figure 6 Cottages, Cambridge Street, Armadale.



Figure 7 Cottages, Cambridge Street, Armadale

Figure 8 Cottage, 8 Cambridge Street, Armadale with visible addition

## 6.0 DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

It is the aim of the Heritage Overlay to minimise the impact of external alterations on the significance and character of existing buildings, and to encourage restoration and reconstruction works to buildings under the Heritage Overlay. The following represents Council's likely view of the various classes of work considered below. It is based on precedent and does not represent formal policy or mandate future decisions by Council. Each application will be judged on its merits after consideration of the intactness and integrity of the host building and the local streetscape.

### 6.1 Demolition

*Demolition of external fabric falls under the definition of works under the Heritage Overlay and therefore requires a Planning Permit. Before deciding an application for demolition, Council will consider the potential impact of demolition on the heritage values of the site and the broader Heritage Overlay area.*

#### 6.1.1 Total demolition

It is the aim of the City of Stonnington to retain those existing buildings that contribute to its built heritage. This includes all graded buildings within Heritage Overlay areas. Total demolition of a graded building subject to a Heritage Overlay will not generally be supported by Council.

In Cambridge Street where the uniformity of the built form underpins the character and significance of the place, demolition would not be permitted unless extraordinary circumstances could be

demonstrated. Demolition may be supported where a building could be shown to have been extensively and irreparably damaged, possibly through fire or subsidence or the like. However, this would need to be confirmed to Council's satisfaction by a suitably qualified and experienced Structural Engineer.

In the event that demolition could be supported, Council will also be required to determine whether the location, bulk, form or appearance of the proposed replacement building is in keeping with the character and single storey scale of the heritage place or whether it would adversely affect its significance. It is likely that a new built form would be required to substantially adopt a single-storey hip-roofed form of a scale and materiality consistent with that of the valued building stock in the Heritage Overlay Area.

#### 6.1.2 Partial demolition

Partial demolition may be acceptable in some circumstances. Removal of part of a graded property may be approved where:

- the section of the building to be demolished does not contribute to the heritage value of the building and/or place;
- the section of the building to be demolished is not visible from the street or;
- the works are limited to the removal of a later addition, of limited or no significance; or
- the works are very minor in terms of their impact on the character or significance of the place and are seen as being essential to the construction of an extension or alteration which will enhance the long-term viability and utility of the particular dwelling.

It is unlikely that Council could support substantial alterations to the external appearance of the front two rooms of any of the buildings in Cambridge Street. Demolition of fabric to the rear of this area, particularly fabric which is not visible from the street, is likely to be of less concern. Support for the demolition of visible fabric towards the rear of a building would depend to some extent on the form and materiality of any associated additions or alterations as discussed below.

#### 6.1.3 Internal demolition

No controls over internal works apply in Cambridge Street and a permit is not required for the removal of internal fabric. Naturally, internal works which would produce a consequential change in the external appearance of a dwelling (such as the demolition of a fireplace resulting in the loss of the associated chimney) would require a permit. Works to chimneys are addressed in Sections 6.3 below.

## 6.2 Subdivision or consolidation

*Before deciding an application for subdivision or consolidation, Council will consider whether the works would adversely affect the significance or character of the heritage place.*

The City of Stonnington seeks to reinforce the various patterns of subdivision found in areas of significance. In Cambridge Street, an area of note for its homogeneous subdivision pattern, allotment size and built form, the retention of existing parcels of land is preferred to their subdivision or consolidation and substantial changes to the existing arrangement of titles is unlikely to receive Council support.

## 6.3 Alterations

*When considering applications for alterations in Cambridge Street, Council shall consider potential impact of the works on the heritage values of the building and that of the broader Heritage Overlay Area, and whether the works would adversely affect the appearance or significance of the heritage building. External alterations of any type will require a planning permit.*

Highly visible alterations (other than restoration as discussed in 6.5 below) are unlikely to be supported by Council. Changes to sections of the building that are not visible from the street, are less likely to raise heritage issues. Original joinery to front doors and windows should be retained as should original cladding or decorative elements such as ventilators, brackets or moldings. Early fabric to verandahs should be conserved. If retention of early fabric is not possible due to irreparable deterioration or damage, a sympathetic replacement in similar, modern materials may be approved. The materials or profile of prominent sections of the roof line should not be altered. Removal of the principal or front chimney to a dwelling in Cambridge Street will not generally be supported by Council. Removal of rear chimneys is discouraged.

## 6.4 Additions

*When reviewing applications for new built form in Cambridge Street, Council will consider the extent to which additions would be visible from the street and the potential impact of the works on the character of the dwelling and heritage values of the area. Additions of any type, irrespective of their impact on the street will require a planning permit.*

### 6.4.1 Ground floor additions

It is preferred that ground floor additions are located to the rear of existing dwellings. Where this can not be achieved, additional envelope to the ground floor should be set substantially back from the facade in order to allow the facade to retain its primacy and integrity in terms of views from the street and the cottage form to remain legible. In the past, Council has typically sought a setback of 8m from the front facade to ground floor additions as this is generally sufficient to achieve this objective. It may also be appropriate to consider introduction of a fence, lattice screen or specimen plant between the side of the house and the side boundary fence to screen views from the street to the addition and further reduce the visibility and impact of such additions. Ground floor additions should not exceed the height of the ground floor of the existing building. Additions at ground floor level should adopt an understated form, colour and materiality.

New building elements such as, dormers, porticos or side verandahs should be avoided unless situated in a location where they would be concealed from the street or their impact on the character or significance of the building would be exceedingly modest.

### 6.4.2 First floor additions

Generally speaking, additions at first floor level in Cambridge Street will, to varying extents be visible from the street particularly through oblique view corridors. As such, they should adopt a very large setback from the street and a respectful design approach, relating in massing and roof form to early sections of the building, but presenting minimal bulk to views from the street. Very few large additions have been undertaken in Cambridge Street. Rear additions at No 6 and No 17 Cambridge Street represent an appropriate level of visibility for this street. It is unlikely that more prominent rear additions could be supported. A very small number of larger additions do exist within the street. These predate the Heritage Overlay and do not form an appropriate model for new development this the area.

It is inevitable that rear additions to properties on corner blocks at 1&2 and 31&32 Cambridge Street will be prominent in views from Sutherland Road and Armadale Street respectively. For practical reasons, a greater degree of visibility may be permitted on these sites than could be countenanced elsewhere in the street. However, it would still be expected that additions on these sites would be more or less concealed from vantagepoints within Cambridge Street.

## 6.5 Restoration

*Works which restore or reconstruct an original or early appearance to significant or contributory fabric, particularly as seen from the street, are encouraged. Remnant original fabric should be retained in its original state*

*or restored to the appearance of its original state. This notwithstanding, restoration works will, in most instances require planning permit.*

Where possible, reconstruction or restoration works should be based upon historic documentation such as early drawings or photographs, or upon physical evidence found on site. In Cambridge Street, information about the original or early appearance of a building can often be gained from an examination of the detailing and appearance of neighbouring buildings of a similar design. Information provided in Appendix A may also assist.

Although verandahs demonstrate a small degree of variety they were typically convex in profile with plain galvanized steel cladding and stormwater goods and lead flashings. Gutters adopted an ogee profile. Verandah ends were often clad in vertical lining boards. Today Zinalume is the most readily available galvanised steel roofing. However, corrugated plain galvanised steel roofing is more authentic and is available at reasonable cost. Two of the suppliers who access high tensile galvanised sheet from BHP and roll corrugated roofing are:

- JH Stephenson & Son Pty Ltd, 5278 7044
- Metroll Pty Ltd, 9480 3744

Columns to verandahs were typically of timber with a zinc capital fixed to the upper sections below cast iron lacework. The columns are tapered and are only available as a custom-made item. Capitals of a very similar design to those found in Cambridge Street are available through:

- Victorian Cast Iron Restoration Co, 9376 7631
- Perry Bird Pickets, 9387 8422
- Anderson & Ritchie, 9302 1011.

No supplier of the decorative timber elements to the gable ends or verandah is known. It is likely that these would need to be custom-made by a suitably qualified carpenter. Ashlar planks of the type found on front facades of the buildings in Cambridge Street are available from a number of suppliers locally although their quality is variable and it is often more satisfactory to have a carpenter machine these to exact dimensions from larger timber sections.

## **6.6 Painted surfaces**

*Council does not maintain paint controls over properties within Cambridge Street. No permits are required to repaint or change the colour of any exterior surface that is currently painted. A permit is required to paint unpainted surfaces.*

Painted surfaces may be repainted without a permit. However, Council encourages the use of colours in keeping with the character and significance of heritage places, and discourages the use of bright modern colour schemes which can detract from the character of such places. A number of publications such *Colour Schemes for Old Australian Homes* by Ian Evans, Clive Lucas and Ian Stapleton may assist in the selection of an appropriate colour scheme.

## **6.7 Car parking**

*Vehicle accommodation and access should not detract from the historic character of the street. Alteration to fences to allow vehicle access will require a permit.*

Vehicle accommodation does not contribute to the early character of Cambridge Street. Given the modest sizes of blocks within Cambridge Street vehicle accommodation can not be constructed without inappropriate impacts on the setting and context of the dwellings and the historic character of the broader heritage place. Council has not supported the paving of front gardens for vehicle accommodation in the past and this is unlikely to alter.



## 6.8 Front fences

*Fences should be based upon an original design, or should follow the significant character of the area and its built form. Alteration to fences will require a permit*

New fences should be consistent with the character of the heritage place and of early or original neighbouring fences. It is extremely likely that the original fences in this area were all of a timber picket design and Council would strongly encourage the demolition of the small number of modern fences in favour of simple timber arrangements. Generally speaking, fences in this area should be largely permeable and less than 1.5 metres in height. They should conform to the range of materials and detailing typical to the area and the period of the associated dwelling.

Further detail on historic fences can be gained from the National Trust Technical bulletin, *Fences & Gates*, available in most libraries or from the National Trust.

## 6.9 Maintenance

*Routine repairs and maintenance that do not result in a change to the expression of the building to the street do not require a planning permit*

Works generally regarded as maintenance, such as cleaning, repainting of painted surfaces, minor repairs or replacement of rotted weatherboards or rusted gutters do not require Council approval under the Heritage Overlay.

## 6.10 Modern Services

*Modern services should be concealed*

The introduction of modern services should be undertaken with sensitivity for the character and significance of the heritage place. Garbage bins, water meters and washing lines should be generally be concealed from public view. Wall-mounted heaters and air conditioners should be located close to the ground. Solar heating systems, satellite dishes, airconditioning units, photovoltaic cells and other elements should not be mounted on sections of the roof which would allow them to be viewed from the street.

### Appendix A Properties within the area

The following table provides brief notes on the individual buildings in Cambridge Street, Armadale. The assessments of significance consider only that part of each building that is visible from the street.

South Side	North Side
No 1 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Visible side additions. Some verandah elements missing.	No 2 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Visible additions at substantial setback. Verandah altered.
No 3 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Rebuilt and partly enclosed verandah retains original posts.	No 4 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Largely intact to its early state.
No 5 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah in largely original condition.	No 6 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Modest upper storey additions at a substantial setback. Verandah rebuilt to different profile.
No 7 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah rebuilt. Modern doorway. Shingles introduced to gable end.	No 8 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Visible additions at substantial setback. Verandah altered.
No 9 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Some decorative elements removed from verandah and gable end.	No 10 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Building is substantially intact to its early state.
No 11 Single storey weatherboard. Verandah rebuilt to skillion form	No 12 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah appears to have been altered.
No 13 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Decorative elements to gable end removed.	No 14 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Largely intact to its early state. Verandah appears to retain original leaf flashings. Visible additions at substantial setback.
No 15 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah altered. Decorative elements to gable end removed.	No 16 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah and gable end altered.
No 17 Single storey weatherboard cottage with large rear addition and modest side addition. Otherwise largely intact to original state.	No 18 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah altered. Capping to chimney missing.
No 19 Single storey weatherboard cottage on slightly larger block. Verandah rebuilt to skillion form without lacework.	No 20 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah altered
No 21 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Largely intact to its early state.	No 22 Single storey weatherboard cottage with parking area in front setback. Visible side additions. Otherwise largely intact to original state.
No 23 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah altered.	No 24 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah roof profile altered
No 25 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah altered.	No 26 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah substantially rebuilt. Decorative brackets to gable end removed
No 27 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Largely intact to its early state.	No 28 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Verandah appears to have been altered with new posts introduced.
No 29 Single storey weatherboard cottage largely intact to its early state.	No 30 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Lacework to verandah missing
No 31 Single storey weatherboard cottage decorative details to gable end removed	No 32 Single storey weatherboard cottage. Decorative brackets to gable end removed. Extensive alterations to verandah

Table 1