

Carter Avenue Precinct Werribee

Proposal in regard to Heritage Overlay or Character Precinct



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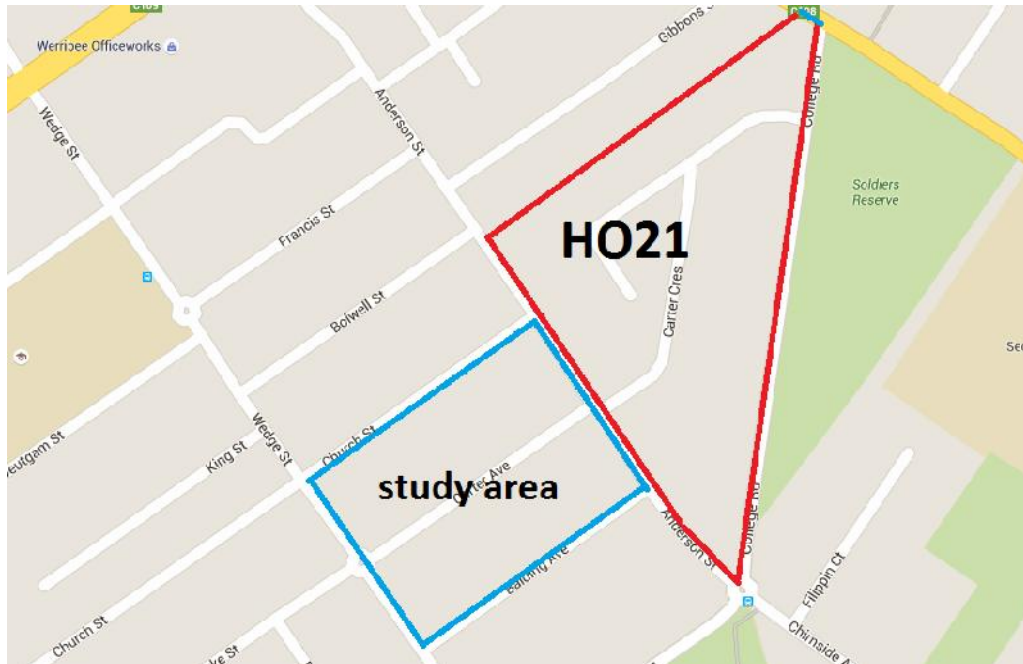


Fig. 1: Carter Avenue precinct (centre of map) – with the existing Carter Estate area in heritage overlay HO21 to the north east.

Introduction:

The Carter Avenue precinct Werribee (as distinct from the existing Carter Crescent heritage precinct), is within the historic boundaries of the Township of Werribee (once Wyndham) and appears to have been first developed just prior to World War Two. A small number of allotments and parts of the surrounding area were developed later and the variation in architecture is testament to the differing periods of development. Although there is no conclusive evidence of this, it appears that the War put a halt to development from the period around 1940 to 1955 and the infilling of house sites in the study area slowly progressed through the mid 1950s and 1960s and into the 1970s. Aerial photographs and maps of the area suggest that at least until 1938 there was barely any development in this area which had been held as an oddly shaped piece of farm land since settlement. Only a few houses had been built in this general area and an aerial of 1938 by Charles Daniel Pratt shows many of the then recent houses being of the mid 1920s in timber and metal roofs. One house in the aerial is unusual for its brick construction – a house at the corner of Bolwell and Wedge Street which is now a heritage place HO117 in the Wyndham Planning Scheme. It is unusual because it is brick whereas every other visible house in 1938 is timber.

Historical Background:

In May 1850 the Government Gazette (NSW) ¹announced that the site of a Village of Wyndham in Port Phillip District had been fixed by a plan lodged at the office of the Surveyor In Charge, Melbourne.

¹ GG (NSW) 1850 p. 417 (May 1850)

In February 1861, the Government Gazette (Victoria)² announced that the site of the Township of Wyndham had been fixed with measurements given based on land sections which had already been surveyed for sale (and sold in the 1850s).

Land around the study area was being auctioned in 1864, 1867 and the 1870s but a large tract including land containing the future Bolwell Street, Church Street, Carter Avenue and Balding Avenue were locked up in a large tract divided up in the 1883 into odd shaped parcels each over 4 acres. (See parish Map in appendices). A number of the town's streets had already been fixed such as Wedge, Synnot and Bridge Street although Bridge Street was truncated and was later extended to become Anderson Street once it passed through the residual farm-land in the late 1930s.

These odd parcels must have been consolidated by the Carter Brothers and then subdivided into house blocks sometime after the Pratt aerial photograph as Carter Estate houses are reported to be in development by 1941.



Fig. 2: The land known as Murphy's farm with the line of Bolwell Street in the foreground running left from a new brick house with Wedge Street (the well-made wide road) running lower left to right. In the middle ground is the approximate location of Carter Avenue as yet unformed and occupied by agricultural land. In the rear left is College Road joining Russell Street at the gates to the rear of Werribee Park. (At the time transformed into Corpus Christie College). Source Charles Pratt aerial, State Library of Victoria.

Houses in the study area:

Apart from 1 allotment on Balding Avenue (an engineering workshop in brick), the remainder of the area is residential although Church Street and Balding Avenue are not homogenous in style or material with Balding Avenue having the most mixed form of house of the three streets. Balding Avenue has houses in brick, render and timber finish with one house at No 19 appearing to have been brought from another location as the style of house is 1900s. At Balding and Wedge is a house with American influences in its flat roofed design. The housing stock is also less intact. A similar situation occurs on Church Street where there is a similar mix of house styles in brick and timber and one house is clearly a post 1955 house in asbestos and timber to a published design type. This is No 6 Church Street. No 14 Church Street is the highest house in the area. A number of houses retain their tiled roofs but not all with many being changes to metal.

This is contrasted with Carter Avenue which is entirely single storey, face brick and tiled roof. The only recent loss is No 33-35 Anderson Street on the corner of Carter Avenue with Anderson Street.

Many of the houses (14 of 21 that directly address Carter Avenue) are in the Carter Estate design while the remaining 6 on Carter Avenue and 1 on Anderson Street (no 37) are in other post 1955 styles albeit still in brick and tile and all to a consistent setback. It is as if there was a covenant on the design and

² GG 1861, p. 410 (Feb 1861)

materials of all houses built along Carter Avenue but the singular design arrangement disappeared after 1955 when post war restrictions on building materials ended.

The main form of the Carter Estate style house is the use of coloured brick, the Marseilles tiled pyramidal roof and the common design by the architect William J Bliss of Kew.³ These houses all have timber window and door joinery and many still have their low brick fence.



Fig 3: Carter Avenue House (in Carter Estate format with brick walls and pyramidal tiled roof) and low brick fence.



Fig. 4: Alignment of similar Carter Estate styled houses in brick at Carter Avenue.

³ As reported in Heritage in the City of Wyndham Vol II, p 226. Context Pty Ltd 1997.



Fig. 5: Houses on south east side of Carter Avenue in a post war format (possibly 1960s) yet retaining face brick appearance and tiled roof.

Trees

There appears to be no consistent street tree feature in the nature strip but one native tree at the Anderson Street – Carter Avenue intersection is a standout for its height. There is no other vegetation in the area of any significance.

Significance of the Area

The standard significance test is found in the Practice Notes of the Victorian Planning Provisions and are applied in relation to inclusion of a heritage place within a Municipal Planning Scheme viz:

What are recognised heritage criteria?

The following recognised heritage criteria shall be used for the assessment of the heritage values of the heritage place. These model criteria have been broadly adopted by heritage jurisdictions across Australia and should be used for all new heritage assessment work. The following criteria where addressed are in shaded boxes.

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).

Historically the group of houses on Carter Avenue have historically much in common with those in Carter Crescent being of the same design, of the same developmental period and on land held as farm land.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity). n/a

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential). n/a

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

The Carter Avenue houses (nos 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38 & 40 and Nos 35, 37, 39 & 41) are of the same design characteristic (shape, materials, placement and setbacks) as other houses on the Carter Estate heritage overlay. These houses were all architect designed to a limited number of patterns and as a group form a distinct collection of small scale dwellings unusual in this part of Victoria. While there are other estates (the most notable of which is Garden City, Port Melbourne), there are almost none on the western portion of the Greater Metropolitan area of country towns. As a collection the group has a distinct architectural aesthetic in an urban context defined by their shape, siting and colour texture.

The remaining houses 27, 29, 31 & 33 Carter Avenue are all in face brick and tiled roof to a post 1955 design but all are on a common alignment. The one exception is No 42 which is recent and misaligned although completed in brick and tile.

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance). n/a

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

The houses of the Carter estate captured in HO21 and those in Carter Avenue – (although incomplete in number) are all part of a plan by the Carter family (particularly Rowland, Jack and Walter Carter) to develop an estate of worker housing to service the labour requirements of the large scale poultry industry they had developed in the south east corner of the Werribee township during the 1930s. Although relatively little is known of the Carters, they played a large part in the development of the industry and subsequently the urban development of Werribee not only through these houses but their own substantial properties at Shirwal Court and the battleship moderne house at Lock and Russell Streets.

Places of significance for historical, aesthetic and associative reasons

Planning is about managing the environment and changes to it. An appropriate test for a potential heritage place to pass in order to apply the Heritage Overlay is that it has 'something' to be managed. This 'something' is usually tangible but it may, for example, be an absence of built form or the presence of some other special characteristic. If such things are present, there will be something to manage and the Heritage Overlay may be applied.

If not, a commemorative plaque is an appropriate way of signifying the importance of the place to the local community.

In this case this area meets three criteria at the local level and this is sufficient to see inclusion in the planning scheme. It is unclear why this did not previously occur.

The City of Wyndham should ascertain if this area was previously proposed for inclusion in the planning scheme and if so why it did not proceed.

A proposed Statement of Significance:

What is of Significance?

Carter Avenue, an offshoot of the main Carter estate based around Mary Avenue was developed from 1940s and into the 1960s due to war time influences on constructional activities. All houses in the precinct use face brick and tile with some 14 houses to the Carter's chosen designs by the architect WJ Bliss of Kew. (House nos 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36,

38 & 40 and Nos 35, 37, 39 & 41). The remaining houses are in a late 1950s and 1960s styling but still single storey and to the same alignment. A further house at 37 Anderson Street continues the brick and tile roof arrangement although is not of the Bliss format.

How is the place of significance?

The Carter Avenue precinct is of significance for historical, aesthetic and associative reasons to the City of Wyndham

Why is the place of significance?

The Carter Avenue Precinct is of significance for its development in conjunction with Heritage Overlay HO21 (based on Carter Crescent) where-in houses were being built as part of a development of worker housing for the Carter's poultry industry employees who worked at their vast poultry farm just further south of the housing precinct. The Carter family developed a large scale industry which was unique to Werribee although there is almost nothing left of the poultry industry in Werribee today. Criterion A

The Carter Avenue precinct is of significance for the development (and subsequent decline) of a particular small house type developed by Kew architect WJ Bliss for the Carter family. The aesthetic character of these places came from the substantial number of these houses completed, their cottage scale, their alignment and the use of brick walls and tiled roofs. These latter two elements combined to create a colourful tapestry effect on the exteriors. Although some houses in the precinct are not of the Bliss design, all houses in Carter Avenue are face brick with tiled roofs and to a common alignment. Criterion E

The Carter Avenue precinct is of significance for its association with the activities of the Carter family who for some decades left their mark on Werribee through the buildings (houses, factories and ancillary structures) they had built and the industry they developed as a major employer in the then small township of Werribee. Two family members also developed their own singularly substantive homes in Werribee both of which are included as heritage places in the planning scheme. Criterion H

Recommendations:

After considering all houses in the area from Francis Street to Balding Avenue and more fully surveying the Church Street to Balding Avenue group of houses I cannot recommend a Character overlay be applied to any of the areas surveyed. Outside Carter Avenue the area character is too diverse.

I do recommend the introduction as soon as possible of a Heritage Overlay as an adjunct to the existing HO21 to houses facing Carter Avenue.

This area does have potential to be a HO for its consistency of

- Single storey height
- Unified design mostly by the Architect W Bliss of Kew for 2/3rds of the building stock
- Tiled (often hipped) roofs
- Brick exteriors with every house having a brick face to the street
- Chimneys as an architectural feature
- Original surviving low height fencing
- One standard set back for all properties
- Standard Timber joinery for windows and doors

Recommended area of Control:



Fig 6 Control area on Carter Avenue including 25- 41 & 22-40 Carter Avenue.

Houses of primary significance to the overlay are: 22 to 40 & 35 to 41 all inclusive. The other sites on Carter Avenue should be retained in the proposed HO area so that any development will be in keeping with the 14 significant houses. No 33-35 is currently a site in development and is not included nor is 37 Anderson Street.

Paint Controls should apply.

Demolition controls should apply.

No tree controls should apply.

Character which should be preserved in the Carter Avenue precinct

As a character area application; this proposal would affect 21 existing houses and 1 existing cleared land block all sited on Carter Avenue with two of the sites on Anderson Street.

The area would be affected by the following controls:

- No demolition of significant houses unless there is an appropriate reason to do so (eg substantial destruction by fire). Demolition of outbuildings, carports and sheds would be uncontrolled.
- Setback – maintain the existing setback on both sides of the road.

- Single storey – maintenance of a substantive single storey nature of the area. Two storey new buildings are inappropriate except of a small scale and in the very rear of sites using existing materials palettes. Two storey structures should be of very low visibility when viewed from anywhere on the street.
- Tiled roof: all buildings must maintain a variegated terracotta semi glazed Marseilles pattern roof. Marseilles pattern MUST be used on all houses new or old. No dark tiled roofs (eg grey, black etc) are to be used. No metal roofs are to be introduced.
- Simple roofing arrangement. Maintenance of hipped or small gabled ended roofs.
- Chimney as a feature of the building

What the Council will be responsible for as part of their normal management of the area:

- Retention of concrete footpaths
- Maintenance of street trees
- Maintenance of roadways and kerbings

What the Council should do

The Council should consider the area for a heritage precinct control as an adjunct to the existing HO21 under the Planning Scheme and create guidelines for the property owners in terms of the character of the area to be recognised AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

END of REPORT 1 April .2016

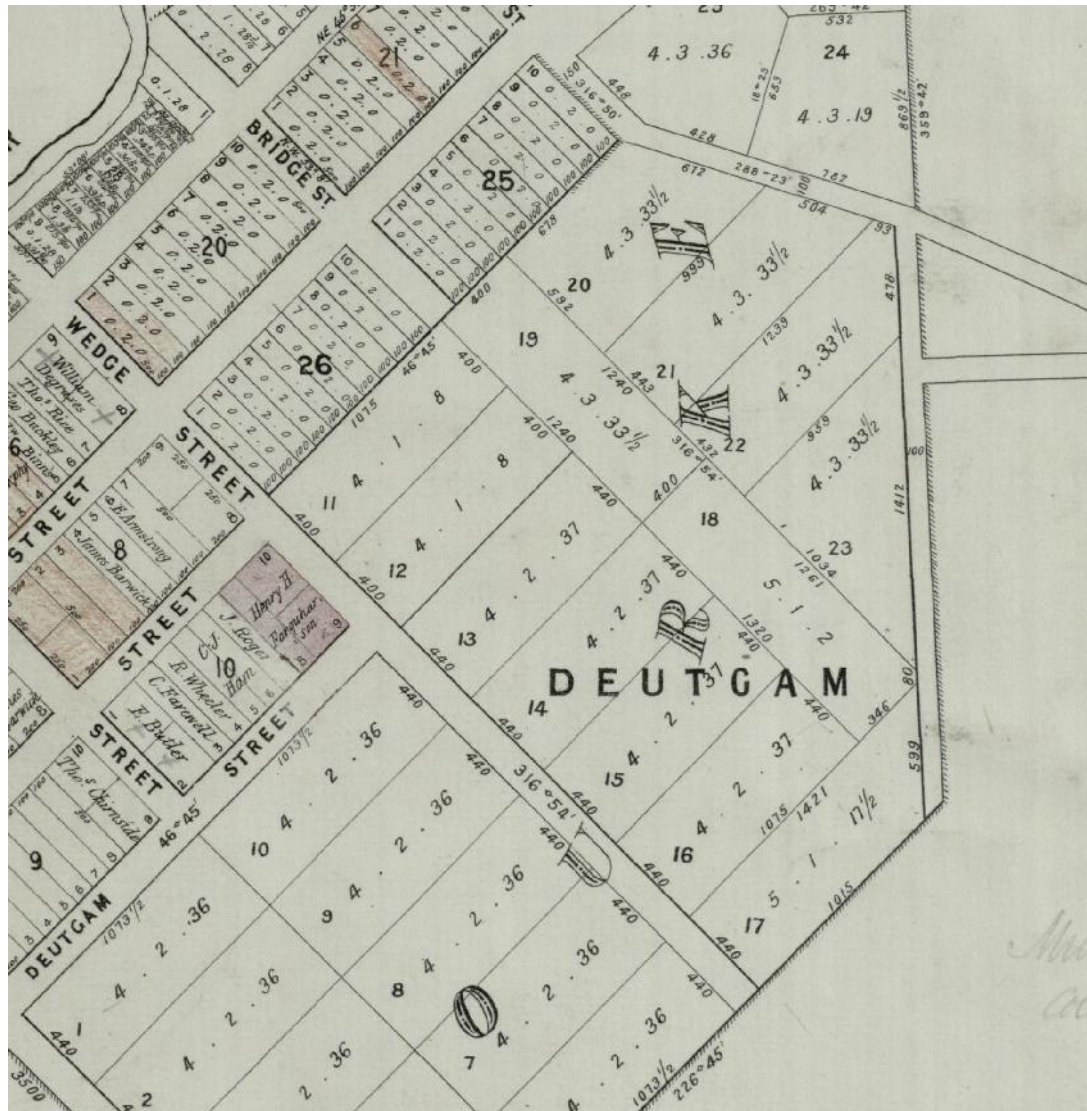
David Wixted

Principal architect

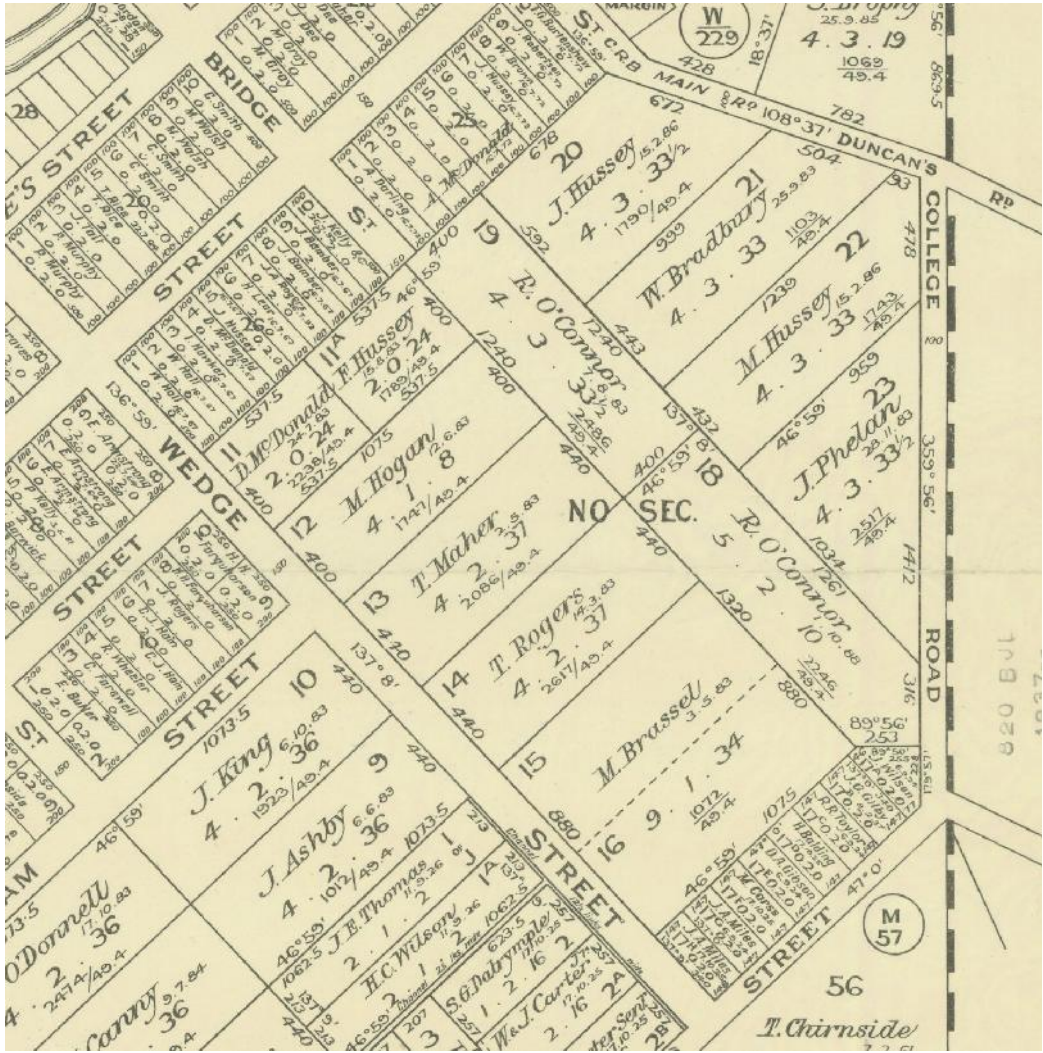
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Historical Information



Map 1: Extract of 1863 Map of Wyndham, showing the area at Wedge Street and the yet to be formed Anderson Street on the south east side of Wyndham township. The land is divided into allotments of just over four acres but no ownership details are yet recorded. Allotments closer to town of approx half acre (2 perch) are being taken up. Office of Lands and Survey Melbourne. Source SLV.



Map 2: Township Map for Werrabee, re-drawn in 1954. Showing a group of land parcels nominated as having no Section (NO SEC). Most of this land was sold in the 1880s while the smaller land blocks surrounding it were sold in the 1860s and 70s. Names on the land parcels are the first owners of the alienated land. Source SLV.