

HO2016 AUSTIN PARK AND ENVIRONS HERITAGE AREA

This policy applies to land included in the Austin Park and Environs Heritage Area.

Policy Basis

Historically, the Austin Park and Environs Heritage Area is significant as a residential area that consists mostly of Victorian period houses and includes several early examples of modest cottages that were once common but of which there are now relatively few within the Municipality. These cottages are representative of the modest housing that was erected in nearby areas of Geelong, close to the commercial centre during the mid-19th century.

The narrow lanes with small allotments were quickly developed in the mid-19th century following the initial land sales in the late 1840s and early 1950s. Corio Street, McCann Place and Fyfe Place were part of the original 1838 survey of Geelong, whilst other lanes, extending north and south from Corio Street, were laid out as land was further subdivided, providing access to the small residential allotments. The area had largely been developed by circa 1900, with a few infill houses constructed during the Federation and Interwar periods as the population of Geelong grew and the suburbs expanded.

Historically, the land now known as Austin Park is also significant as a site that remained undeveloped and was used in the early Victorian period for the grazing of residents animals and by local footballers. Austin Park was gazetted as a public park in 1885, a time when the Council was expanding the number of public parks and improving those already set aside as a way of beautifying the city.

The Austin Park and Environs Heritage Area is of aesthetic significance as a cohesive area consisting mostly of Victorian residences, with a few later houses from the Federation and Interwar periods which have a similar character to the earlier dwellings. The significant and contributory buildings in the precinct are mostly modest, single storey cottages, with a mix of hipped and transverse gable roof types, all clad in corrugated metal sheeting. Houses are predominantly clad in weatherboards, though there are a couple of notable brick examples and one early rendered residence. The consistent scale, material palette and the limited (if any) setbacks, combined with the relatively narrow width of all streets creates a cohesive character that is distinct from other areas in Geelong. The remaining sections of early basalt kerbing and channelling also contribute to the character.

The precinct is enhanced by Austin Park which slopes down towards the bay, providing views of the harbour from Corio and England streets. Landscaped in the 1880s by John Raddenberry, the park has mature elm trees to its south, east and west boundaries. Unusually relatively modest houses surround the parkland.

Objectives

- To maintain the heritage values of the Austin Park and Environs Heritage Area.
- To retain the prominence of the historically and architecturally significant buildings.
- To maintain intact streetscapes of original building stock, that is the significant or contributory examples - most are from the Victorian period, with a few from the Federation and Interwar periods.
- To maintain the established character of the area which is generally defined by narrow streets with small allotments and residential buildings, generally single storey with consistent setbacks to the front and minimal, if any, to the side boundaries, as well as limited garden settings.
- To encourage the innovative interpretation of traditional building design and/or elements (especially materials) within the area, though avoiding reproductive design.
- To discourage the introduction of garages to the front of the allotments.
- To encourage the use of appropriate fence types and heights.

Policy

Where a permit is required for a proposal, it is policy to:

- Encourage the retention of existing and intact culturally significant places, primarily from the Victorian period, but also the Federation and Interwar periods.
- Encourage the conservation generally of significant and contributory buildings.
- Encourage the reinstatement of removed original elements in an accurate manner, based on historical and/or physical evidence.
- Encourage existing allotment frontages/subdivision pattern to be retained.
- Encourage the location, form and scale of new buildings to relate to those of the adjacent significant or contributory buildings so that the latter are not negatively affected or overwhelmed.
- Encourage front setbacks that are equivalent to those of adjacent significant or contributory buildings. If they vary, the setback should be intermediate.
- Encourage side setbacks to be similar to those of adjacent significant or contributory buildings, which can include buildings constructed boundary to boundary.
- Encourage building heights to complement the adjacent significant or contributory buildings as follows:
 - The ridge height of the roof should be not be greater than that of the highest adjacent significant or contributory building.
 - If in a consistent section of the precinct, the wall height should be similar to that of the neighbouring buildings.
- Promote new buildings that relate to their context and generally incorporate the following features and/or characteristics:
 - Generally attached buildings with a regular form.
 - Gable and/or hipped roofs with a pitch between 20 and 35 degrees.
 - Traditional roof materials: generally corrugated sheet metal (non-zincalume).
 - Minimal, if any, projecting eaves.
 - Traditional wall materials: lightweight cladding (primarily horizontal weatherboards) and masonry (face brick or rendered).
 - Covered front entries, generally verandahs.
 - Timber-framed windows, generally rectangular and vertically orientated.
- Encourage additions to be located to the rear so that they have low visual impact and the principal roof form of the significant or contributory building remains intact.
- Encourage front fences to be consistent with the period/style of the associated building, or if an infill building, be sympathetic to the nearby section of the streetscape. If the original fence type is known or documented, then its reinstatement is encouraged. Generally limit height of fences to 1500mm, or lower for Interwar period examples.
- New garages and/or carports should be located to the rear of existing and/or infill buildings.
- Discourage the introduction of crossovers.
- Have new buildings and works comply with the 'City of Greater Geelong Heritage and Design Guidelines 1997', which is an incorporated document.

References

City of Greater Geelong Heritage and Design Guidelines, prepared by Helen Lardner for the City of Greater Geelong (1997).

Geelong City Urban Conservation Study, Volume 1, prepared by Graeme Butler for the City of Geelong, (1993).

Geelong City Urban Conservation Study, Volumes 2-5, prepared by Graeme Butler for the City of Geelong, (1991).

City Fringe Heritage Area Review Part 1 and Part 2, prepared by RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants for the City of Greater Geelong (May 2017)(updated October 2018).