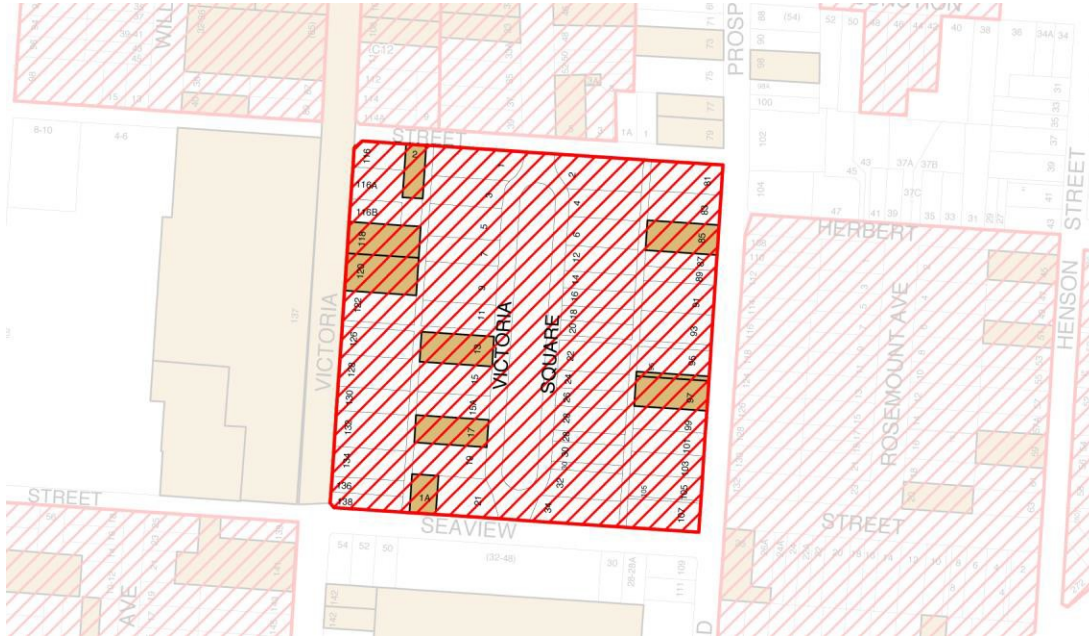


C23 Victoria Square, Ashfield & Summer Hill

Heritage Conservation Area



KEY PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1876 to 1940s

HCA TYPE 3: Mixed residential Statement of Significance

The Victoria Square Heritage Conservation Area is of *local* heritage significance.

The Victoria Square Heritage Conservation Area is of *historical* significance as a representative upmarket late 19th century model subdivision with large residential lots centred around a central reserve and featuring north-south oriented main street and rear laneways and an east-west pedestrian pathway. Victoria Square remains illustrative of the original 1876 subdivision concept, retaining the central reserve, the laneways, and many of the original large allotments, along with fourteen late 19th century houses, which now sit in a context of Federation, Inter-war period, 1940s and some later buildings. The area remained incompletely developed at the end of the 19th century (particularly at the southern end), and its development reflects re-subdivision or redevelopment of early sites in the period 1900-1940s.

Victoria Square has *historical associations* as the place of residence of prominent late 19th century citizens including : Sir Alexander Stuart (1824-1886), merchant and politician (resident of "Arundel", 2 Victoria Square in 1886); James T. Allan (1831-1912) explorer and pastoralist (a resident in 1890 on the west side of Victoria Square); and Gustave Mario Ramciotti (1861-1927) law clerk, theatrical manager and soldier, a resident of "Arden" on the western side of Victoria Square in 1890).

The subdivision has *historical associations* with prominent local residents including Alderman William Henson, alderman on the first Ashfield Borough Council and land owner at the time of the 1876 subdivision; and with architects Thomas Rowe (architect of the houses at Nos. 83 and 85 Prospect Road built in 1877); Alexander Leckie Elpinstone Junior (architect of the villas at Nos. 118 Victoria Street and 120 Victoria Street constructed in 1880); and Charles Slatyer (possibly the architect of the house at 17 Victoria Square).

The area is of *aesthetic* significance for its distinctive 1876 subdivision pattern with its central reserve, generous original allotments and north-south street and laneway pattern, for the original late 19th century houses of various Victorian period architectural styles and for the houses constructed in the Federation to 1940s period in various architectural



styles illustrating the later development of the subdivision.

Victoria Square is *rare* as a late 19th century upmarket subdivision.

Key Character Elements

Subdivision and public domain elements:

- Distinctive subdivision pattern with central reserve, large rectangular allotments and rear laneways
- The central reserve includes remnant native vegetation and 1889 plantings donated by the Royal Botanic Gardens. Management of the central reserve was taken over by Council in 1889.
- Rear lane access to stables and coach houses (later garages).
- Wide carriageway in Victoria Square, with grassed verges and Canary Island date palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) plantings at edge of carriageway
- Relatively narrow carriageways in Clissold Street, Prospect Road and Seaview Street with narrow grassed verges
- Ficus plantings on grass verges one side of Seaview Street
- Narrow north-south rear laneways
- East-west pedestrian laneways

Elements that contribute to the consistency of the streetscape (visible from the public domain)

- Detached rendered brick Victorian period and face brick (Federation, Inter-war periods) one and two storey housing in Victorian Filigree, Victorian Italianate, Victorian Rustic Gothic, Victorian Regency, Victorian Georgian, Federation Queen Anne, Inter-war California Bungalow and Inter-war Mediterranean styles within garden settings
- Variety of detached houses from modest single storey to substantial two storey houses
- The substantial late 19th century houses within the area include houses attributed to well known architects of the period (some of these heritage listed), such as: 83 Prospect Road (a Victorian Filigree style villa) and 85 Prospect Road (a Victorian Regency style villa), both built in 1877 to designs by architect Thomas Rowe; 118 & 120 Victoria Street, a pair of Victorian Italianate style villas designed by architect Alexander Leckie Elpinstone Junior; and
- Inter-war Art Deco style residential flat buildings (examples the 2-storey flats at 122 Victoria Street and 136 Victoria Street)
- Original details such as:
 - Front verandahs with original detailing
 - Original roof forms with original cladding of slate or corrugated steel (Victorian period); slate or unglazed terracotta tiles (Federation period); unglazed terracotta tiles (Inter war period); and original chimneys
 - Gable ends facing the street with original detailing: decorative timber barge boards (Victorian period); timber shingled, roughcast stucco or imitation half-timbered finishes (Federation period Inter-war period)
 - Face brickwork (Federation period, Inter-war period except for Inter-war Mediterranean style houses)



- Original timber-framed windows and timber panelled doors consistent with the periods and styles of houses
- Original front fences – cast iron palisade, timber picket (Victorian period); timber picket, low brick, brick & timber picket for Federation and Inter-war period houses
- Garages to the rear of houses

NON-CONTRIBUTORY ELEMENTS

- Recent or heavily altered houses with difficult to reverse uncharacteristic alterations (examples 95 Prospect Road, 15A Victoria Square, 138 Victoria Street)
- 1960s to 1970s residential flat buildings (example 116A Victoria Street, 132 Victoria Street)
- Changes to materials: Cement rendering of face brickwork to Federation or Inter war period houses (example 16 Victoria Square); modern roof cladding (eg concrete tiles) and loss of chimneys
- Front verandah enclosures (example 20 Victoria Square)
- Modern front fences of unsympathetic design and materials, particularly high solid masonry front fences.

Historical Development

The land comprising this Conservation Area was a twelve-acre parcel of land purchased from Sophia Campbell by William Henson in 1867. Nine years later, in 1876, the Sydney Permanent Freehold Land and Building Society auctioned the land on behalf of William Henson, one of the aldermen on the first Ashfield Borough Council.

The allotments were generous in size - the antithesis of the crowded terraces in which most residents of Sydney lived at the time. Victoria Square displays the attributes of a residential London Square of the period - symmetrical in design with central reserve owned initially by the residents for their enjoyment, and accessed by residents facing Victoria Street and Prospect Road by central pathways. It was obviously pitched at the upper end of the real estate market in Ashfield. The idea was used by the same Building Society in Albert Parade, Ashfield, and appears to have influenced other residential developments such as at Graham Reserve (Palace Street), South Ashfield, The Parade in Enfield, and Prince Edward Parade in Woolwich.

The architect Thomas Rowe designed and built Nos. 83 and 85 Prospect Road in 1877 (these are possibly the earliest houses in the subdivision).

The architect Alexander Leckie Elpinstone Junior purchased 10 allotments of the original subdivision, designing and constructing large houses including the mirror image 2-storey Victorian Italianate style villas at Nos. 118 Victoria Street and 120 Victoria Street (both listed heritage items).

The substantial 2-storey Federation Arts & Crafts style house at 17 Victoria Square, is likely to have been designed by the architect Charles H. Slatyer, as he advertised a Tender notice in 1891 calling for builders for "Cottage Residence, Victoria-Square, Ashfield".¹

By the 1890s Victoria Square was substantially developed as shown on Sheet 26 of the Ashfield Water Board Plan, however with some substantial houses built on double blocks and some blocks particularly at the southern end of the subdivision, still undeveloped. Prominent residents of the subdivision (Sands Directory, 1890) included Sir Alexander Stuart (1824-1886), merchant and politician (resident of "Arundel", 2 Victoria Square in 1886); James T. Allan (1831-1912) explorer and pastoralist (a resident in 1890 on the west side of Victoria Square); and Gustave Mario Ramciotti (1861-1927) law clerk, theatrical manager and soldier, a resident of "Arden" on the western side of Victoria Square in 1890).

During the 20th century a number of the original 37 generous allotments of uniform size were re-subdivided along their

¹ Sydney Morning Herald Tender notice, 22 October 1891, page 7 Accessed via National Library of Australia Trove online



length to create extra lots for smaller houses. This process continued into the 1940s and is obvious in the current allotment layout and the current mix of houses, which includes houses built after 1900 up to the 1940s. Also in the early 20th century some earlier houses were demolished and replaced with new houses on the same sites (so the original allotment size did not alter) – this appears to have occurred at Nos. 4 & 6 Victoria Square which both contain 1940s houses.

Also some re-subdivisions involved demolition of earlier houses – an example of this process is Nos. 136 and 138 Victoria Street, the allotments of which are each half the size of the original allotment, and which are now occupied by two 2-storey Inter-war residential flat buildings, which replaced an earlier single house in this location shown on the 1890s Water Board Plan.

On the western side of Victoria Square of the six houses shown on the 1890s Water Board Plan, only four remain (Nos. 2, 12, 22 and 28). On the eastern side of Victoria Square, of the five houses shown on the 1890s Water Board plan, only two remain (Nos. 9 and 13). In Prospect Road, on the western side, of the nine houses shown on the 1890s plan, five remain (Nos. 83, 85, 91, 93 and 97 Prospect Road). In Victoria Street, on the eastern side, of the seven houses shown on the 1890s Water Board Plan, only three remain (Nos. 118, 120 and 128). In total there are 14 remaining late 19th century houses of various styles within the Victoria Square subdivision, which sit within a context of one and two storey Federation Queen Anne and Federation Arts & Crafts style houses, single storey Inter-war California Bungalow, one Inter-war Mediterranean style single storey house (No. 30 Victoria Square), 2-storey Inter-war residential flat buildings (for example Nos. 122, 136 and 138 Victoria Street), some 1930s and 1940s houses (for example No. 126 Victoria Street, Nos. 24 and 26 Victoria Square).

With the one exception of a pair of Federation Queen Anne style semi-detached houses at Nos. 87-89 Prospect Road, all buildings within the Heritage Conservation Area are detached.

In the period 1950s-1970s two residential flat buildings were constructed at Nos. 116A and 132 Victoria Street, replacing earlier buildings on these allotments. No. 116A Victoria Street is part of a 1950s-1960s subdivision at the corner of Victoria Street and Clissold Street, where the subdivision resulted in the demolition of the grand mansion on a very large site shown on the 1890s Water Board Plan and on the 1943 aerial photo², and created four separate allotments (No. 2 Clissold Street and Nos. 116, 116A and 116B Victoria Street, now occupied by 1950s-1960s buildings (3 houses and the residential flat building at No. 116A). In all late 20th century buildings (houses and flats) occupy the sites: 11 Victoria Square; 116, 116A, 116B, 132, 134 Victoria Street; 95 Prospect Road

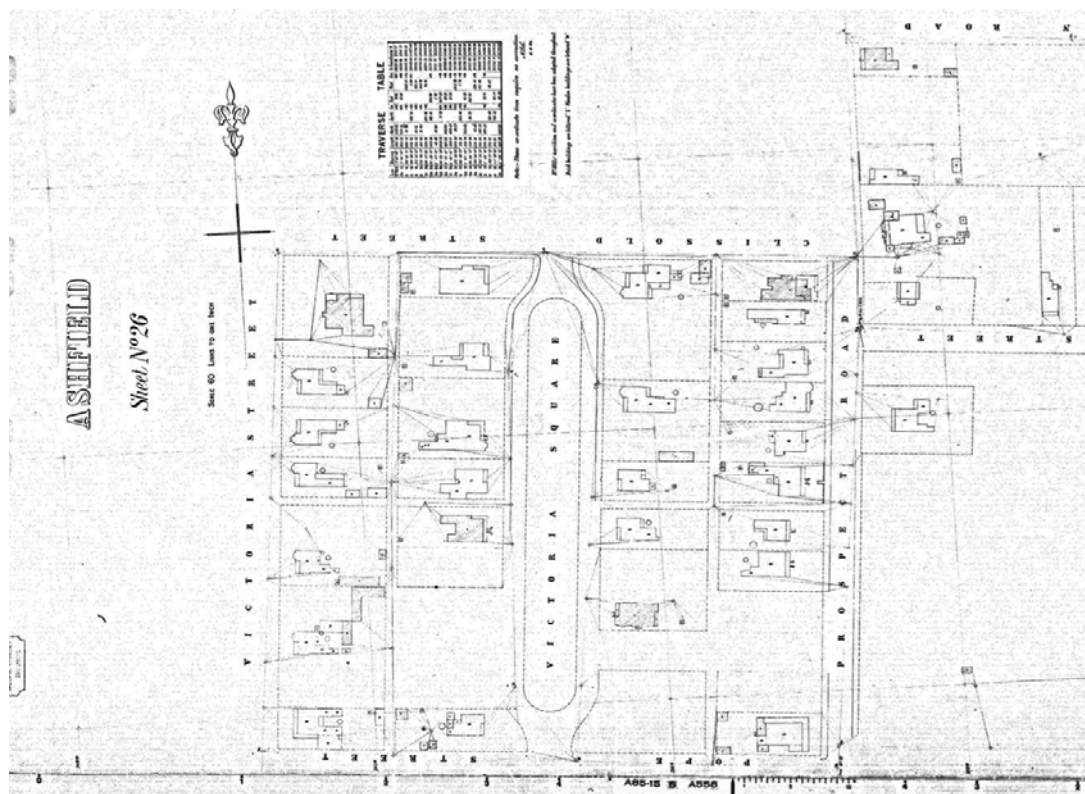
In total, late 20th century houses and residential flat buildings occupy the sites at Nos 5 and. 11 Victoria Square, Nos. 95 Prospect Road, Nos. 116, 116A, 116B, 132 and 134 Victoria Street.

A former church meeting hall (now a residence) at No. 1A Seaview Street (an LEP listed heritage item) is on a site subdivided off the back of No. 21 Victoria Square (which is occupied by a Federation Queen Anne style house) in 1952.

A modern 2-storey house was under construction in 2015 at No. 15A Victoria Square.

² 1943 aerial photo accessed through NSW Land & Property Information Six Maps online





Above: Sheet 26 of the 1890s Ashfield Water Board block plans showing Victoria Square at this time.

BUILDING RANKING DEFINITIONS

Building ranking No.	Building Ranking Definition
*	Heritage items: Buildings individually listed as heritage items in the LEP
1	Contributory 1: Buildings that clearly reflect the Key period of Significance for the HCA and are key elements of the character of the HCA
2	Contributory 2: Buildings that have been altered but are still identifiable as dating from the Key period of Significance for the HCA. They retain their overall form from the original date of construction and, even though altered, are contributory to the HCA character
3	Neutral: Buildings that are either heavily altered to an extent where the construction period is uncertain, or are from a construction period which falls outside the Key Period of Significance for the HCA, but which reflect the predominant scale and form of other buildings within the HCA, and therefore do not detract from the character of the HCA
4	Detracting: Buildings from a construction period which falls outside the Key Period of Significance for the HCA that have scale or form that is not consistent with the key characteristics of the area



Victoria Square

Street	Side	No	Rating	Name	Style/Observations
Clissold Street		2	*		Post-war Sydney Bungalow
Prospect Road		107	1		Californian Bungalow
Prospect Road		105	2		Californian Bungalow
Prospect Road		103	1		Inter-war Bungalow
Prospect Road		101	1		Inter-war Bungalow
Prospect Road		99	1		Federation/Inter-war Bungalow
Prospect Road		97	*		Victorian Filigree
Prospect Road		95	3		Late 20th Century Australian Nostalgic
Prospect Road		93	2		Victorian
Prospect Road		91	1		Victorian Italianate Cottage
Prospect Road		89	1		Queen Anne/Arts & Crafts Semi
Prospect Road		87	1		Queen Anne/Arts & Crafts Semi
Prospect Road		85	*		Victorian Gothic
Prospect Road		83	1		Victorian Italianate
Prospect Road		81	1		Federation Bungalow
Seaview Street		1a	*		Post-war Sydney Bungalow
Victoria Square		2	1		Victorian "International"
Victoria Square		4	1		Inter-war/Post-war Sydney Bungalow
Victoria Square		6	1		Inter-war/post-war Sydney Bungalow
Victoria Square		12	1		-
Victoria Square		14	1		Californian Bungalow
Victoria Square		16	1		Californian Bungalow
Victoria Square		18	1		Inter-war/Post-war/Sydney Bungalow
Victoria Square		20	1		Californian Bungalow
Victoria Square		22	1		Victorian Italianate/Rustic
Victoria Square		24	1		Inter-war Bungalow
Victoria Square		26	1		Inter-war Bungalow
Victoria Square		28	1		Victorian Italianate
Victoria Square		30	1		Inter-war Georgian Revival
Victoria Square		32	1		Californian Bungalow

Street	Side	No	Rating	Name	Style/Observations
Victoria Square		34	1		Federation Bungalow
Victoria Square		21	1		Victorian Rustic/Queen Anne
Victoria Square		19	1		Californian Bungalow
Victoria Square		17	*		Arts & Crafts/freestyle
Victoria Square		15a	3		Late 20th Century International
Victoria Square		15	1		Queen Anne/Arts & Crafts
Victoria Square		13	*		Victorian Regency
Victoria Square		11	1		Late 20th Century Australian Nostalgic
Victoria Square		9	2		Bastardised Victorian Italianate
Victoria Square		7	1		Inter-war Mediterranean
Victoria Square		5	3		Late 20th Century Australian Nostalgic
Victoria Square		3	1		Inter-war Mediterranean Bungalow
Victoria Square		1	1		Federation Queen Anne
Victoria Street		116	1		Post-war Bungalow
Victoria Street		116a	1		Post-war Residential Flats
Victoria Street		116b	1		Post-war Bungalow
Victoria Street		118	*		Victorian Italianate
Victoria Street		120	*		Victorian Italianate
Victoria Street		122	1		Inter-war Residential Flats
Victoria Street		126	1		Post-war Bungalow
Victoria Street		128	1		Victorian
Victoria Street		130	1		Post-war Bungalow
Victoria Street		132	1		Post-war Residential Flats
Victoria Street		134	1		Post-war Bungalow
Victoria Street		136	1		Post-war Residential Flats
Victoria Street		138	1		Post-war Residential Flats

