

Riversdale Village Precinct Statement of Significance, August 2020

Heritage Place: Riversdale Village Precinct, Hawthorn	PS ref no: HO777
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GRADINGS

- CONTRIBUTORY
- NON-CONTRIBUTORY
- EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY
- PRECINCT BOUNDARY

What is significant?

The Riversdale Village Precinct, located at the intersection of Auburn and Riversdale roads, Hawthorn. The precinct has a mixed character created by the range of Victorian, Edwardian, and interwar architectural styles, the single and double-storey built form of the shops, and the one three-storey corner building (the Riversdale Hotel). The precinct consists of nos. 261–305 on the east side of Auburn Road, nos. 282–290 and 324–332 on the west side of Auburn Road, nos.

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201–233 on the north side of Riversdale Road, and nos. 234–242 on the south side of Riversdale Road. The Italianate Riversdale Hotel at 277 Auburn Road and the Federation Free Style W.A. Carr's Butcher Shop at 287–289A Auburn Road are individually significant buildings within the precinct. No. 267 Auburn Road and nos. 205–207 Riversdale Road are identified as non-contributory buildings within the precinct.

The precinct was subdivided for commercial development from larger estates from 1883. It was established and consolidated as a retail and commercial centre over a fifty-year period from the 1880s into the interwar period.

How is it significant?

The Riversdale Village Precinct is of local historic, architectural, and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Historically, the Riversdale Village Precinct is significant for its ability to demonstrate the establishment and consolidation of one of Hawthorn's commercial and retail centres at the intersection of Riversdale and Auburn roads from the late 1880s into the interwar period. The varied architectural styles reflect the precinct's development over an approximately 50-year period. The southeast corner of the intersection was the first to be developed and this is reflected in the predominance of Victorian architectural styles in this part of the precinct. Land for these shops was subdivided and made available for sale in 1883. From this time, the area began its development as a retail and commercial centre in response to the extension of the railway to this area in 1882. Growth continued with the establishment of the horse drawn tram in 1890 along Riversdale Road, which terminated at Auburn Road. While Hawthorn's development, like elsewhere, slowed during the economic depression of the 1890s, the City of Hawthorn experienced a period of economic recovery and suburban resurgence during the first decade of the new century. This is reflected in the precinct's Edwardian-era shops, many of which are elegantly designed and elaborately detailed. The northwest corner consists of predominantly Interwar-era buildings, built in response to a broader intensification of residential development in Hawthorn through the interwar years, when remaining vacant land was taken up during an intensive boom between 1910 and 1940. The greatest changes were seen in the area south of Riversdale Road. (Criterion A)

Architecturally, the buildings in the precinct are representative of typical forms of Victorian, Edwardian, and interwar commercial/retail buildings of suburban shopping strips prior to WWII, built to the front and side boundaries, forming a continuous street wall and sense of cohesion, with roofs hidden behind parapets. Set back from the street and a more domestic-styled building, the single-storey shop at no. 269 Auburn Road is unusual within the precinct. Its original, low face brick fence on the street boundary responds to the building design and helps to integrate the building into the otherwise continuous street wall. The shops and hotel, which represent a range of architectural styles, demonstrate features typical of the eras in which they were designed, including: decorative parapets with pediments and finials, and decorative mouldings and pilasters for Victorian shops; symmetrical and asymmetrical designs and use of contrasting materials for Edwardian shops; use of more restrained detailing for interwar shops; timber-framed and glazed entry doors, metal-framed shop windows with top-lights (some leadlight), recessed entrances, panelled highlight windows above awnings. (Criterion D)

Like other precincts in Boroondara, the precinct is characterised by a range of architectural styles from the Victorian, Edwardian, and interwar periods, and single and double-storey built form of the shops; plus the three-storey Italianate Riversdale Hotel corner building. While the overall precinct is characterized by its diversity, development of some shop buildings as pairs and in larger groupings of up to six shops contributes a sense of cohesion (in addition to that noted above). While some original surfaces have been overpainted, some awnings have been removed or replaced, and some original shopfronts have been removed or altered (some sympathetically), this does not adversely affect the aesthetic character of the precinct. (Criterion D)

Aesthetically, the precinct is distinguished from other precincts in Boroondara by the relatively high proportion of intact high quality upper-storey façades and intact and partially intact shopfronts. (Criterion E)

Aesthetically the precinct is also significant for its fine landmark buildings, specifically the Italianate Riversdale Hotel at 277 Auburn Road and the Federation Free Style W.A. Carr's Butcher Shop at 287–289A Auburn Road, both of which are locally significant places. (Criterion E)

Primary source

City of Boroondara Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study Volume 3: Hawthorn (Context Pty Ltd, 20 July 2020)

PRECINCT GRADINGS SCHEDULE

Name	Number	Street	Grading	Built Date
	261–265	Auburn Road	Contributory	1904-10
	267	Auburn Road	Non-contributory	
	269	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1919-42
	271-275	Auburn Road	Contributory	1904-10
	277 (part of)	Auburn Road	Significant (HO595)	1888-89
	279 (now part of 277) - 281	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1888
	282	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1919-42
	283A	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1919-42
	284-286	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1920s
	285	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1901-18
W.A. Carr's Butcher Shop (former)	287-289A	Auburn Road	Significant (HO596)	1909-10
Coppard's Buildings (part)	288-290	Auburn Road (now part of 217-223 Riversdale Road)	Contributory	1923
	291-293	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1920s

BOROONDARA PLANNING SCHEME

Name	Number	Street	Grading	Built Date
Firmans' Buildings	295-305	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1891
	324-326	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1889
	328-332	Auburn Road	Contributory	c.1890
	201-203	Riversdale Road	Contributory	c.1920s
	205-207	Riversdale Road	Non-contributory	
	211	Riversdale Road	Contributory	c.1920s
	213	Riversdale Road	Contributory	c.1930s
Coppard's Buildings	217-223	Riversdale Road	Contributory	1923
	234-238	Riversdale Road (234 Riversdale Road is now part of 277 Auburn Road)	Contributory	1888-92
	240-242	Riversdale Road	Contributory	c.1897