

Glenferrie and Riversdale Roads Commercial Precinct Statement of Significance, August 2020

Heritage Place: Glenferrie and Riversdale Roads Commercial Precinct, Hawthorn	PS ref no: HO775
--	-------------------------



GRADINGS

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

What is significant?

The Glenferrie and Riversdale Roads Commercial Precinct, located at the intersection of Glenferrie and Riversdale roads, at nos. 87-95A and 97-1/105 Riversdale Road, and 524-544 and 529-549 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. The precinct consists of single and double-storey Edwardian and Interwar shops built in a range of architectural styles on both corners of the intersection, built from c.1915 to c.1942. Although land in the precinct was advertised for sale from the late nineteenth century, development of the area remained largely residential until at least 1917. Its development as a commercial/retail shopping centre commenced around 1920. Two main historical events provided the

impetus for development of the commercial/retail hub, improved transport services and the post-WWI boom that saw a massive population expansion in the area and new subdivisions on the sites of older villas that had been demolished.

How is it significant?

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

Why is it significant?

Historically, the group of shops at the intersection of Glenferrie and Riversdale roads is significant for its ability to demonstrate a major development phase of commercial/retail centres in Hawthorn. It demonstrates the influence of improved transport connections by the second decade of twentieth century and the massive expansion of the population in the post-WWI period on this part of Hawthorn. Before the turn of the century the main local shopping strip was along Burwood Road, which was serviced by a horse tram between 1890 and 1916. In 1913, a tramline was opened along Glenferrie Road, which stimulated the building of a second shopping strip, which ultimately overtook Burwood Road. Further development by the Hawthorn Tramways Trust of an electric tramline along Riversdale Road in 1916 combined with post-war boom conditions in the 1920s, were the stimulus for the development of the commercial precinct at the intersection of Glenferrie and Riversdale roads. The predominance of Edwardian and interwar architectural styles, and absence of Victorian architectural styles common in other precincts in Hawthorn, are indicative of the precinct's relatively late development in response to improvements in transport services and population growth after WWI. (Criterion A)

Architecturally, the shops in the precinct are important as high quality and largely intact (above ground floor level) and partially intact (at ground floor level) representative examples of Edwardian and interwar suburban commercial/retail buildings prior to WWII. Most of the single-storey and double-storey shops have been built in rows, which enhances their visual presence and contributes to the cohesion and aesthetic quality of the precinct. The precinct is further enhanced by the presence of striking landmark buildings of high quality, most evidently the curved Edwardian corner building at nos. 524-532 Glenferrie Road, but also the group of interwar Old English style shops at 529-539 Glenferrie Road, and the large Edwardian corner building at 541-545 Glenferrie Road. The roofscape of the single-storey shops (nos. 534-544) which step down the eastern side of Glenferrie Road from the intersection is also a distinctive element within the precinct. (Criterion D)

Architecturally, some of the buildings in the precinct are notable examples of their type. The upper storey façade and parapets of the corner building at 524-532 Glenferrie Road, built in the Federation Free Style is a notable example of its type and it is a prominent landmark within the precinct. The building exhibits unusual and distinctive façade decoration, especially in its extensive use of heavy rockfaced masonry in dramatic contrast to smooth rendered surfaces elsewhere. While unusual, the eclectic and idiosyncratic use of decorative motifs and contrasting materials is what makes it typical of the Federation Free Style architectural style. (Criterion D)

Use of the interwar Old English architectural style on commercial buildings is uncommon in Hawthorn. A smaller comparable example to nos. 529-539 Glenferrie Road exists in Camberwell, in the Burke Road North Commercial and Transport Precinct (HO505); it has three shops instead of the six shops at Glenferrie Road. The upper storey façades of both examples are of equally high quality and integrity. However, the three ground floor shopfronts of the Burke Road example appear to have experienced less unsympathetic change. (Criterion D)

Aesthetically the precinct is significant for its striking landmark corner buildings, specifically the curved Federation Free Style corner building at nos. 524-532 Glenferrie Road, the large Edwardian corner building at 541-545 Glenferrie Road, and the distinctive roofscape of the single-storey shops (nos. 534-544) which steps down the eastern side of Glenferrie Road from the intersection. (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
	86	Riversdale Road	Non-contributory	
Glendale Buildings (part)	87-95A	Riversdale Road (now part of 541-545 Glenferrie Road)	Contributory	c.1920
	97	Riversdale Road	Contributory	c.1920
	99	Riversdale Road	Contributory	c.1920
	101-103	Riversdale Road	Contributory	c.1920
W.E. McDowell. Butcher	1/105	Riversdale Road	Contributory	c.1920
House	2/105	Riversdale Road	Non-contributory	c.1880s
	524-532	Glenferrie Road	Contributory	1920-25
	534-544	Glenferrie Road	Contributory	c.1920
	529-539	Glenferrie Road	Contributory	1938-42
Glendale Buildings	541-545	Glenferrie Road	Contributory	c.1920
	547-549	Glenferrie Road	Contributory	c.1925