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# SPURLING HOUSE



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2008



spurling house black street  
brighton front gates sept1999



spurling house black street  
brighton front view sept1999



spurling house black street  
brighton side view sept1999

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## Location

38 BLACK STREET BRIGHTON, BAYSIDE CITY

## Municipality

BAYSIDE CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0126

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO78

## VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 11, 2008

#### What is significant?

Spurling House, Brighton was built in 1889 for Phillis Spurling to a highly innovative design by Canadian-born, Sydney architect, John Horbury Hunt. It is the only known example of his work in Victoria. Originally known as Purno, Spurling House was built on a large block of land in the popular seaside village of Brighton, in close proximity to the Middle Brighton railway station which was constructed from 1882-87.

Hunt's design of the comparatively small Spurling House introduced the Shingle style to Melbourne. This Arts and Crafts-inspired North American domestic architectural style used organic materials in a way which heightened their natural qualities, eschewed any applied decoration, used contrasting vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines to achieve compositional balance, and grouped functional elements for aesthetic effect. At the height of the boom in Melbourne, when the majority of houses were designed in a highly decorative Italianate style, the surprising design of Spurling House was exceptional.

In his design of Spurling House, Hunt used simple, open planning and externally incorporated expanses of black stained shingles, bold timber bracketting and strongly modelled brick chimneys. The composition of the front facade is highly asymmetrical, with contrasting horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines providing balance. An off centre gable; a dominant plain brick chimney shaft which is offset from the gable apex; an offset recessed verandah and varying window opening sizes provide both contrast and balance to the composition. The stained shingles of the upper facade, corbelling of the chimneys and the projection of the upper floor beyond the lower floor add to the picturesque nature of the composition.

#### How is it significant?

Spurling House, Brighton is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

#### Why is it significant?

Spurling House, Brighton is of architectural significance as the only known house designed by John Horbury Hunt in Victoria. It is one of twenty-two designed by this highly influential, Sydney-based architect.

Spurling House, Brighton is of architectural significance as the first, and one of the most innovative, domestic buildings constructed in the later nineteenth century in Victoria in the Shingle style. As the first of seven houses designed by Hunt in the North American Shingle style, it introduced this picturesque style to Victoria. At a time when the often heavily ornamented, rendered architecture of the domestic boom style was popular in Victoria, Spurling House was highly innovative and unique.

Spurling House, Brighton is of architectural significance as an influential design in the overall oeuvre of the Arts and Crafts style. Many concepts introduced at this house were integrated in the design of houses by architects from the 1890s and into the early twentieth century.

Spurling House, Brighton is of historical significance as a large house built in the popular bayside suburb of Brighton, at a time when the suburb was expanding, aided by the advent of the Sandringham rail line through the suburb from 1878.

[Online Data Upgrade Project 2008]

### Permit Exemptions

## General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

**Places of worship:** In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

**Subdivision/consolidation:** Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

## Specific Exemptions:

**General Conditions:** 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. **General Conditions:** 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. **Note:** All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component.

**General Conditions:** 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. **Note:** A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan.

**General Conditions:** 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. **General Conditions:** 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. **Minor Works :** **Note:** Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works must submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates	1888,
Architect/Designer	Hunt, John Horbury,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,

## History

Spurling House, Brighton was built in 1888 for Phillis Spurling to a highly innovative design by Canadian-born, Sydney architect, John Horbury Hunt. It is the only known example of his work in Victoria. Originally known as Purno, Spurling House was built on a large block of land in the popular seaside village of Brighton, in close proximity to the Middle Brighton railway station which was constructed from 1882-87.

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**The draft statement of significance and the above history were produced as part of an Online Data Upgrade Project 2008. Sources were as follows:**

J. M. Freeland. *Architect Extraordinary. The Life and Work of John Horbury Hunt, 1838-1904*. Melbourne 1970  
D. L. Johnson. *Australian Architecture 1901-1951. Sources of Modernism*. Sydney 1980  
J. M. Freeland, John Horbury Hunt 1838-1904 in H. Tanner (ed). *Architects of Australia*. South Melbourne 1981  
W. Bate. *A History of Brighton*. Melbourne 1962  
P. Goad. *Melbourne Architecture*. Sydney 1999  
MMBW Detail Plan 2135, Town of Brighton, 1906

## Extent of Registration

*City of Brighton*. No. 126. Spurling House, 38 Black Street Brighton.  
[*Victoria Government Gazette* No 100 Wednesday, October 9 1974 p.3648]

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*