

---

# Camberwell Tram Substation

---

## Location

30 Station Street CAMBERWELL, BOROONDARA CITY

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Incl in HO area indiv sig

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO622

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant

The Camberwell Substation is an externally intact face brick, render and concrete utility building constructed in c1924 for the MMTB as a rotary converter substation. It is a substantial building which has great presence in its island location.

How is it Significant

Camberwell MMTB Substation is aesthetically and historically significant to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it Significant

Camberwell Substation is of local aesthetic significance as a substantial face brick, render and concrete utility building, with Baroque Revival touches, constructed for the MMTB following the electrification of the tramway system in Boroondara. The Substation is of local historical significance and regional interest as a rare surviving example as one of the two earliest rotary converter substations in the Melbourne metropolitan area. Its construction is associated with the electrification of the tramway system, which was an event of major importance to the history of the area, impacting on the growth and accessibility of the expanding suburbs to the east.

Heritage Study/Consultant Boroondara - Camberwell Junction Heritage Study, Lovell Chen, 2012;  
Other Names MMTB Substation,  
Hermes Number 192677  
Property Number

---

## Physical Conditions

The building resembles a similar substation built in Maribyrnong Road, Ascot Vale for the MMTB from plans dated 1925.4 These plans show a single entry level storey set below an equipment room of 2.5 times the ground floor level's height. The Ascot Vale substation is built on brick and concrete footings, is divided at its upper level by a switch platform, has a projecting cable tower one bay square, and is topped by three large square ridge ventilators. The main volume is then lit from behind and above by three square clerestory windows. The Camberwell substation appears similar to that at Ascot Vale: load-bearing red brick walls, stiffened with integral piers and detailed with cement-rendered dressing, capped by a roof clad in corrugated galvanised iron and supported on a paired Fink truss of angled steel. The three-bay gabled composition is shifted off symmetry: no two front windows or openings are the same. The northern aisle- developing the cable tower space as at Ascot Vale- reads as part of the original design. The Liverpool brick bond used here differs from the English bond favoured by the railways. The steel-framed windows were common in industrial and utility buildings by the time this substation was built. The building is now disconnected from its overhead feeder lines. It is not clear if its original equipment- rotary converters- remain inside.

*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/>*