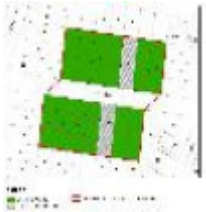


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# WAR SERVICE HOMES PRECINCT



WAR SERVICE HOMES  
PRECINCT map.jpg



WAR SERVICE HOMES  
PRECINCT street.jpg



1 Acacia Street (contributory  
place).jpg

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## Location

1-13 Acacia Street and 2A-12 Acacia Street CAMBERWELL, BOROONDARA CITY

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO749

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - November 21, 2018

What is Significant?

The War Service Homes Precinct, 1-13, 2A-12 Acacia Street, Camberwell is significant. Part of the Highfield estate subdivided in stages from 1886, Acacia Street was formed in the latter stages of the land releases during the 1920s and the houses reflect the War Service Homes Commission requirements for new homes. Nos 8 and 9 are non-contributory (9 as a result of a large second storey addition), but all other places within the precinct are

contributory.

How is it significant?

The War Service Homes Precinct is of local historic, architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Acacia Street is historically significant as part of a group of 100 houses built as Group 29 under the *Housing and Reclamation Act 1920* and the *War Services Home Act 1918-20*. The War Service Homes Commission was an important part of the social welfare net in Australia, being responsible for the construction of over 20,000 homes throughout Australia by 1929, and continuing in several different formats until well into the 1960s. Historically, the War Service Homes precinct in Acacia Street Camberwell forms part of the Highfield Estate subdivided in a number of different land releases from 1886- 1927. The precinct is associated with the War Service Homes Commission established in 1918 that enabled ex-service men and women to secure loans for the purchase of homes at concessional rates. Acacia Street is significant for its association with the first phase of the scheme whereby the homes were built by the State Savings Bank but owned by the Commission. Houses in Acacia Street are from the period before 1927 when all War Service Commission Homes were under the ownership of the State Savings Bank and illustrates a number of the house designs published in catalogues by the State Savings Bank in the 1920s and 30s. (Criterion A)

The timber residences constructed in Acacia Street represent a range of house designs selected from the State Savings Bank catalogues in the 1920s and 30s, and built within the £800 limit imposed by the *Housing and Reclamation Act* loans. These include a number of the popular designs including the 'cottage' and the 'bungalow', described as having five rooms (kitchen, dining or breakfast room, lounge room and two bedrooms) with a wide central passageway, and an internal bathroom and external toilet. The War Service Homes Precinct is notable for its representative house designs including the T7, T10, and T9. (Criterion D)

The War Service Homes Precinct Street is aesthetically significant for its notable consistency in the dwellings' size, scale, style and materials, with varying combinations of transverse gabled roofs and hipped roofs, projecting gabled wings or entry porches; and with a mixture of both asymmetrical and symmetrical designs. There is a rhythm and pattern to the street that is evident through the same architectural vocabulary adapted in different combinations. The timber weatherboard walls and terra cotta tile roof combination is highly consistent and decorative interest is provided through the use of overhanging eaves with exposed rafter ends, pillars to the porch, timber framed windows with multi-paned top sashes, eaves brackets and the sparing use of timber shingles as cladding to specific elements. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study: Vol. 2 Camberwell, Context, 2018;
Construction dates	1924,
Architect/Designer	Leith, GB,
Hermes Number	202118
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

This small but intact precinct covers the whole of Acacia Street - a quiet residential street running between Highfield Rd and Lynden St. The street is lined with trees of varying species and maturity, these not however forming a consistent treed avenue. Houses are generally set behind low timber fences with front gardens. Houses

on the northern side of the street are elevated from the street level, while houses on the southern side of the street are set slightly below street level. There are a range of low fence designs, including a woven wire example, rock walls and low timber fences. Some houses do not have fences.

As most of the houses were constructed around the same time and using the standard designs published in the State Savings Bank catalogues, there is a notable consistency to dwellings size, scale, style and materials. All houses are timber and most roofs are clad in terracotta tiles. Feature brick is used for chimneys and sometimes for half pillars supporting timber verandah posts.

The houses are typically small bungalows with varying combinations of transverse gabled roofs and hipped roofs, projecting gabled wings or entry porches, with a mixture of both asymmetrical and symmetrical designs. Most houses have an entry porch or front verandah with either a separate roof or enclosed within a main roof.

The plans vary according to the standard design chosen, but most are small two bedroom houses with separate kitchen and living room, an internal bathroom, a washroom accessed from a back porch and no internal toilet. Some houses in the precinct are slightly larger with an additional 'breakfast' room and an attached toilet.

Generally, the houses are devoid of ornate decoration, with visual interest coming from the simple and practical use of standard materials such as brick and timber. Typical features of the State Savings Bank house designs include timber sash windows with small paned windows to the upper sash, timber front doors with a glass panel to the upper section and sidelights, exposed timber eaves brackets, timber verandahs and entry steps, and sturdy timber verandah posts or half posts on brick pillars. Sometimes there are shingles to the gable. Number 4 is the only house to have some leadlight to the upper sections of the front windows. It also has a woven wire fence set between timber posts.

Number 3 is an intact example of one of the smaller State Savings Bank designs built in the precinct. Built to State Savings Bank 'Type No. 7', the house has a transverse gabled roof with projecting gabled wing to one side. The entry porch is enclosed by an extension of the main roof and has an opening to the front. The design has been adapted to sit on the elevated site, with timber stairs leading to the entry porch. Windows vary from those shown in the State Bank design so may be a later alteration. The plan shows a two-bedroom house with separate kitchen and living room, with a washroom towards the rear of the house. Toilet facilities would have been located separate from the house.

Number 12 is an intact example of one of the larger State Savings Bank designs built in the precinct. Built to State Savings Bank 'Type No. 10', the dwelling has a transverse gabled roof is clad in terracotta tiles and a covered gable entry porch projects centrally. Sturdy timber posts sit atop brick pillars. The gabled end of the verandah is clad in timber shingles. It is likely that this house was modelled on State Savings Bank 'Type No 9' as shown below. The plan of Type No 10 shows a central entry hall, two bedrooms, a lounge and breakfast room and kitchen and utilities (including attached toilet) to the rear.

Number 2A was built later than other houses in the street (1937) and varies in form and styling to surrounding houses. It appears to be built to 'Design No. T9' in a later State Savings Bank catalogue, although an additional gable is present over the entry porch. While still simple in its materials and detailing, the design shows an influence of the 'Old English' style that became popular in the interwar years, with the steeply pitched gables and stepped brick chimney. In plan, 'Design No. T9' is still a small house, but has features such as a stepped living room and adjoining breakfast room, and a more modern laundry and toilet arrangement accessed from the rear porch.

Generally the precinct has a high level of intactness with few two storey extensions. Notable alterations include rear extensions to numbers 1, 2, 5 and 7 and 9. These are mostly recessive although on number 9 the extensive overwhelms the original house. Front doors and windows have been altered on some houses including number 2 and 3. On number 6, brick posts have replaced timber posts and a low brick fence runs along the front boundary. Number 13 has a pair of dormer windows added to the roofline.

*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/>