

# CLIFTON HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL



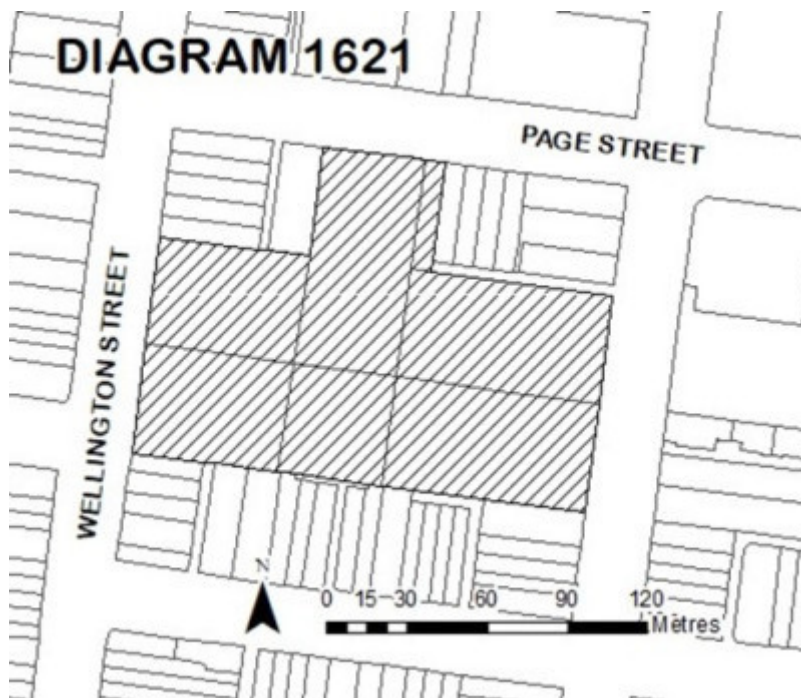
PRIMARY SCHOOL NO.  
1360 SOHE 2008



1 primary school number  
1360 gold street clifton hill  
view of yard



aerial extent of registration



Clifton Hill Primary

## Location

185 GOLD STREET CLIFTON HILL, YARRA CITY

## Municipality

YARRA CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## **Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number**

H1621

## **Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO86

## **VHR Registration**

August 20, 1982

## **Amendment to Registration**

February 8, 2024

## **Heritage Listing**

Victorian Heritage Register

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## **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on - September 23, 2025

# **What is significant?**

Clifton Hill Primary School, including the 1874 school building designed by William Henry Ellerker.

# **How is it significant?**

Clifton Hill Primary School is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

### **Criterion A**

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

### **Criterion D**

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects

# **Why is it significant?**

Clifton Hill Primary School is historically significant as a demonstration of the development of state schooling in Victoria. The 1874 building is based on a standard design, one of several produced as part of an 1873 competition held by the new Department of Education. It therefore has a direct association with the extensive

school building program across the colony in the 1870s. Constructed to provide for 1000 students, its substantial size demonstrates the dramatic effect of the *Education Act 1872* on school enrolments and the demands made on the Education Department.

(Criterion A)

Clifton Hill Primary School is architecturally significant as a pivotal example of a 'competition school' produced as part of an 1873 competition held by the newly formed Department of Education. The design reveals the philosophy of education at the time. The large classroom spaces indicate the size of classes, and the rather limited fenestration reveals the priority given to the isolation of children during the education process over the provision of natural light.

(Criterion D)

## 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:

## Specific Exemptions

The works and activities below are not considered to cause harm to the cultural heritage significance of the Place or object namesubject to the following guidelines and conditions:

### Guidelines

1. Where there is an inconsistency between permit exemptions specific to the registered place or object ('specific exemptions') established in accordance with either section 49(3) or section 92(3) of the Act and general exemptions established in accordance with section 92(1) of the Act specific exemptions will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency.

2. In specific exemptions, words have the same meaning as in the Act, unless otherwise indicated. Where there is an inconsistency between specific exemptions and the Act, the Act will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency.
3. Nothing in specific exemptions obviates the responsibility of a proponent to obtain the consent of the owner of the registered place or object, or if the registered place or object is situated on Crown Land the land manager as defined in the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*, prior to undertaking works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions.
4. If a Cultural Heritage Management Plan in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* is required for works covered by specific exemptions, specific exemptions will apply only if the Cultural Heritage Management Plan has been approved prior to works or activities commencing. Where there is an inconsistency between specific exemptions and a Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the relevant works and activities, Heritage Victoria must be contacted for advice on the appropriate approval pathway.
5. Specific exemptions do not constitute approvals, authorisations or exemptions under any other legislation, Local Government, State Government or Commonwealth Government requirements, including but not limited to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth). Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to obtain relevant planning, building or environmental approvals from the responsible authority where applicable.
6. Care should be taken when working with heritage buildings and objects, as historic fabric may contain dangerous and poisonous materials (for example lead paint and asbestos). Appropriate personal protective equipment should be worn at all times. If you are unsure, seek advice from a qualified heritage architect, heritage consultant or local Council heritage advisor.
7. The presence of unsafe materials (for example asbestos, lead paint etc) at a registered place or object does not automatically exempt remedial works or activities in accordance with this category. Approvals under Part 5 of the Act must be obtained to undertake works or activities that are not expressly exempted by the below specific exemptions.
8. All works should be informed by a Conservation Management Plan prepared for the place or object. The Executive Director is not bound by any Conservation Management Plan and permits still must be obtained for works suggested in any Conservation Management Plan.

## Conditions

1. All works or activities permitted under specific exemptions must be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents harm to the registered place or object. Harm includes moving, removing or damaging any part of the registered place or object that contributes to its cultural heritage significance.
2. If during the carrying out of works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the registered place are revealed relating to its cultural heritage significance, including but not limited to historical archaeological remains, such as features, deposits or artefacts, then works must cease and Heritage Victoria notified as soon as possible.
3. If during the carrying out of works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions any Aboriginal cultural heritage is discovered or exposed at any time, all works must cease and the Secretary (as defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*) must be contacted immediately to ascertain requirements under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.
4. If during the carrying out of works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions any munitions or other potentially explosive artefacts are discovered, Victoria Police is to be immediately alerted and the site is to be immediately cleared of all personnel.
5. If during the carrying out of works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions any suspected human remains are found the works or activities must cease. The remains must be left in place and protected from harm or damage. Victoria Police and the State Coroner's Office must be notified immediately. If there are reasonable grounds to believe that the remains are Aboriginal, the State Emergency Control Centre must be immediately notified on 1300 888 544, and, as required under s.17(3)(b) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, all details about the location and nature of the human remains must be provided to the Secretary (as defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*).

## Exempt works and activities

Buildings constructed or moved to the site post 1990 (this exemption does not apply to buildings which link with or about the 1874 school building)

- All internal works
- Removal or demolition.

Buildings which link with or abut the 1874 school building

- Internal works, provided that there is no change to the external building envelope and that no works intersect with the 1874 school building.

Landscape/ outdoor areas

- Installation and replacement of shade sail fabric and supporting structure
- Replacement of playground equipment and outdoor furniture in the same location
- Pruning of all trees to ensure safety
- Removal, replacement and installation of new ground surfacing treatments (for example, asphalt, safety matting) provided it is not within five metres of significant buildings.

## Theme

### 8. Building community life

Construction dates	1874,
Architect/Designer	Ellerker, William H,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	PRIMARY SCHOOL NO.1360,
Hermes Number	296
Property Number	

## History

Clifton Hill Primary School (formerly Gold Street Primary School, also known as Primary School No. 1360) was designed by the architect William Henry Ellerker. The design had been prepared for a competition held by the new Department of Education in 1873. The design competition produced 13 generic school designs which were adapted for use across the colony. Ellerker's school designs for the Department were very influential, his most important being the design for the school at Buninyong.

Ellerker's design for a school of 500 pupils was originally intended for Gold Street. His design for a 1000-pupil school on two floors was used instead, as it became clear that a much bigger school was needed.

The building was opened in 1874. It was designed to be divided into two equal portions, one half for use of male pupils, and the other for female pupils. There were separate entrances at each wing, so that boys and girls would not interact during school hours. Classrooms were built to accommodate up to 160 students, with tiered seating. The limited windows were situated high off the floor, to prevent students from becoming distracted by the view.

The building was orientated to face south, looking down on Collingwood Flat. In 1977 a new building was constructed near this southern elevation. The southern elevation has also been extensively renovated. Today, the north and east elevations of the 1874 building are most visible.

## Selected bibliography

Blake L J (ed) (1973) *Vision and Realisation: A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria*, The Government Printer, Melbourne.  
Burchell L (1980) *Victorian schools: a study in colonial government architecture, 1837-1900*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.  
Peterson R (1993) *Historic Government Schools: a Comparative Study June 1993*, Department of Planning and Development, Melbourne.  
*The Age* (Melbourne), 14 February 1874, p. 8.

## Plaque Citation

Primary School No. 1360 was designed by WH Ellerker, opening in 1874. The brick and bluestone school was built by the newly created Education Department for 1000 pupils, reflecting the increased demand after the introduction of free, compulsory education in 1873.

## Assessment Against Criteria

### Criterion

Clifton Hill Primary School is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

### Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

### Criterion D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects

## Extent of Registration

Heritage Act 2017

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act 2017, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by modifying a place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H1621

Category: Registered Place

Place: Clifton Hill Primary School

Location: 185 Gold Street, Clifton Hill

Municipality: Yarra City

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 1621 encompassing all of Lot 1 on Title Plan 889775N; and all of Crown Allotment 2 Section 8; Crown Allotment 4 Section 8; Crown Allotment 5 Section 8; Crown Allotment 7 Section 8; Crown Allotment 9 Section 8 and Crown Allotment 10 Section 8, at Clifton Hill City of Collingwood Parish of Jika Jika.

Dated 8 February 2024

STEVEN AVERY

Executive Director

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*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/>*