

## EAST MELBOURNE SYNAGOGUE



EAST MELBOURNE  
SYNAGOGUE SOHE 2008



1 east melbourne synagogue  
albert street east melbourne  
front view sep1978



east melbourne synagogue  
albert street east melbourne  
entrance view oct1999



east melbourne synagogue  
albert street east melbourne  
front view oct1999



Upper west facade of school  
Aug2014



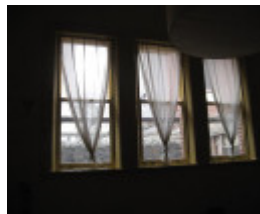
View from choir gallery (now  
library) aug2014



Basalt wall of coursed rubble,  
west boundary



Repaired slatework to east  
dome Aug2014



west windows of schoolroom



East end of Succah building  
of 1915 Aug2014



View from north-east of site  
towards Albert Street



Interior towards Ark

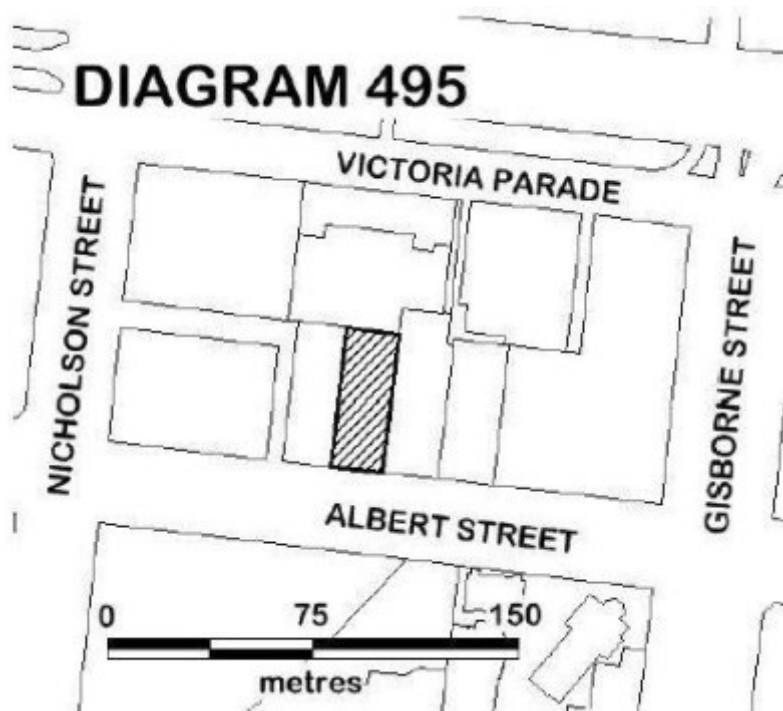


Diagram 495.JPG

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**Location**

494-500 ALBERT STREET EAST MELBOURNE, MELBOURNE CITY

**Municipality**

MELBOURNE CITY

**Level of significance**

Registered

**Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number**

H0495

**Heritage Overlay Numbers**

HO124

**VHR Registration**

November 4, 1981

**Amendment to Registration**

August 9, 2018

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 19, 2000

What is significant?

The East Melbourne Synagogue (Mickva Yisrael) was consecrated in September 1877. The first Synagogue in Melbourne was established in 1847 in Bourke Street, but its Rabbi, Moses Rintel, with thirty predominantly German-Jewish followers, split away in 1857 to establish the Mickya Yisrael. The two-storeyed building designed by noted Melbourne architects Crouch and Wilson in 1877 is of rendered brick with a slate roof. The facade was completed in 1883 in the style of the Renaissance Revival. The facade comprises five bays, with the central three bays treated as a slightly projecting pedimented temple front. Tuscan pilasters divide the bays of the lower floor, and Corinthian pilasters divide the upper floor bays. The Star of David is set in bas-relief within the tympanum. A continuous parapet is carried over the tympanum and the dentillated cornice. Twin steeply-raking octagonal domes flank the central pediment. The internal space is organised by a gallery on three sides carried by cast iron columns. The balustrade of the gallery is of swag-bellied cast iron. The main ceiling is panelled with a dentillated and modillionated cornice. A Bema and Tabernacle and the interior in general remain in an intact state.

How is it significant?

The East Melbourne Synagogue is of historical, social and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The East Melbourne Synagogue is historically significant as the oldest and largest functioning Synagogue in Victoria. It is a replica (internally) of Melbourne's first (since demolished) synagogue in Bourke Street.

The East Melbourne Synagogue is socially significant for its associations with the Jewish community in East Melbourne, and particularly as an early focal point for religious worship in East Melbourne. The Synagogue is of social significance to the Mikvah Yisrael congregation, who split away from the Melbourne congregation in Bourke Street in 1857. They were without a permanent meeting place for twenty years until the consecration of the new building on 5th September 1877.

The East Melbourne Synagogue is architecturally significant for being representative of the fine work of noted Melbourne architects Crouch and Wilson. It is also significant for its conventional but imposing Renaissance Revival facade with the unusual addition of the two octagonal domes flanking the central pediment; the survival of an intact bema and tabernacle, and the unusual arrangement of impost blocks over the cast iron columns of the gallery.

### 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](#).

Construction dates	1877,
Architect/Designer	Crouch & Wilson,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	353
Property Number	

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## History

### Contextual History:

The Jewish Congregational Society was formed in 1841, and in 1844 it obtained a grant of land in Bourke Street. Melbourne's first synagogue was established in Bourke Street in 1847 and was consecrated in 1848. The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation replaced this structure with a more permanent building in the classical style in 1855. It was sold and demolished in 1929. This congregation moved to the a new synagogue, designed in 1930 by Nahum Barnet, in Toorak Road, South Yarra.

In 1857 the second congregation had formed in East Melbourne, composed largely of recently arrived German Jews. They split from the Melbourne Congregation after a doctrinal disagreement with the synagogue committee. They met in hired premises until the construction of a small synagogue was complete in 1860 on the corner of Little Lonsdale and Stephen Streets (now City Free Kindergarten, Exhibition St.) The East Melbourne Congregation moved to new premises in Albert Street in 1877.

(M Lewis, Victorian Churches, National Trust 1991)

History of Place: The site was bought for 2261 pounds and the foundation stone was laid on 20th March 1877 by Henri J Hart, brother in law of Rabbi Rintel. The building was consecrated on 5th September 1877 but the facade was not finally finished until 1883. The building was finished at a cost of 5000 pounds by the firm of Delbridge and Thomas.

## Extent of Registration

### 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 the place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H0495

Category: Registered Place

Place: East Melbourne Synagogue

Location: 494-500 Albert Street, East Melbourne

Municipality: Melbourne City

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 495 encompassing all of Lot 1 on Title Plan 81025.

Dated 9 August 2018

STEVEN AVERY  
Executive Director

[Victoria Government Gazette G 32 9 August 2018 1757]

*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/>*