

# 1) ELTHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE, 2) PEPPERCORN TREE, 3) MATURE EXOTIC PLANTING AND 4) WHEEL RIM (TYRING) TOOL IN THE GROUNDS



203 - Eltham Community Centre Main Rd Eltham - The Blacksmith's shop which was in main road opposite Pitt Street - Blacksmith Sid Brown is to the right (ELHPC NO.753) - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



203 - Eltham Community Centre Main Rd Eltham 02 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



203 - Eltham Community Centre Main Rd Eltham 03 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



203 - Eltham Community Centre Main Rd Eltham 04 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



203 - Eltham Community Centre Main Rd Eltham 05 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



203 - Eltham Community Centre Main Rd Eltham 06 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



Eltham Community Centre trees



Eltham Community Centre Main Rd Eltham Colour 1 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



Eltham Community Centre Main Rd Eltham Colour 2 - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study 1992



Eltham Community Centre  
Main Rd Eltham Colour 3 -  
Shire of Eltham Heritage  
Study 1992



Eltham Community Centre  
Main Rd Eltham Colour 4 -  
Shire of Eltham Heritage  
Study 1992



Eltham Community Centre  
Main Rd Eltham Colour 5 -  
Shire of Eltham Heritage  
Study 1992

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## Location

801 MAIN ROAD ELTHAM, NILLUMBIK SHIRE

## Municipality

NILLUMBIK SHIRE

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO117

## Heritage Listing

Nillumbik Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 7, 2010

REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, CONTEXT, 2010

### What is significant?

The 1977/78 community centre and all the mature exotic planting, including the c1920 Peppercorn tree (*schinus molle*) and the wheel rim tool and the site to a radius of 30 metres.

### How is it significant?

The community centre is architecturally, technically and socially significant to the Shire of Nillumbik.

The mature planting and the Peppercorn tree are aesthetically and historically significant to the Shire of Nillumbik.

The wheel rim tool is historically and technically significant to the Shire of Nillumbik.

### Why is it significant?

The community centre is architecturally significant because it is one of the Shire's finest public adobe buildings

and a good illustration of the creative adaptation of the 'Eltham style' of architecture, employing mud brick and exposed timber framing (Criterion F). The community centre is technically significant because it features an uncommon adobe cavity wall which was the result of union members refusing to construct the building using solid mud brick because of its weight (Criteria A & F). The community centre is socially significant because it has played, and continues to play, an important role in the life of Eltham (Criterion G).

The mature plantings, including the Peppercorn tree is historically significant as a reminder of earlier land use patterns in the area (Criterion A). It is aesthetically significant as a good specimen of the species (Criterion E).

The wooden-spoked wheel rim tool is historically significant because it was originally housed in a nearby blacksmith's shop and is a reminder of earlier land uses in the area (Criterion A). The wheel rim tool is historically and technically significant because it is a reminder of the importance of horse-drawn transport in the early development of the Shire (Criteria A & F).

Heritage Study/Consultant	Nillumbik - Shire of Eltham Heritage Study, David Bick, 1992; Nillumbik - Nillumbik Shire Heritage Study 2001, Graeme Butler & Assoc, 2001;
Construction dates	1977, 1920,
Architect/Designer	Whitford & Peck,
Other Names	MAIN RD, ELTHAM, PEPPERCORN TREE - Schinus molle,
Hermes Number	63614
Property Number	

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## Historical Australian Themes

DISTINCTIVE ELTHAM BUILDING STYLES

SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT

PRIVATE/PUBLIC PLANTING

3.14.2 Using Australian materials in construction

8.5.3 Associating for mutual aid

8.10.4 Designing and building fine buildings

8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements

## Physical Description 1

Building

Style Eltham Style.

Design unique.

Plan polygonal.

Single storeyed.

Walls cavity adobe, timber? framed?

Roof pitched.

Features are the design of the building, construction using using exposed timber framing and solid walls, various roof shapes and the diagonally glazed western end.

Trees

300MM of the trunk of a tall Bhutan Cypress (*Cupressus*

*torulosa*). The Peppercorn is quite large, being 10-12 Metres in height and having a trunk diameter of 700-800MM approximately. It is in good condition and has only a small amount of dead wood in the canopy.

ELTHAM STUDY DESCRIPTON:

Building Style Eltham Style.

Design unique.

Plan polygonal.

Single storeyed.

Walls cavity adobe,timber? framed? Roof pitched.

Features are the design of the building, construction using exposed timber framing and solid walls, various roof shapes and the diagonally glazed western end.

The Community Centre is arguably the Shire's finest adobe public building in the Eltham style. The use of the combination of mud brick exposed feature timber framing and creative design is characteristic of the innovative buildings and the social movement behind them that exemplifies Eltham in the period from the 1940s to the 1910s and is termed by this Study (Eltham Heritage Study) the Eltham style. The very unusual, if not unique, cavity adobe wall construction was the result of the building unions not being prepared to construct the building using the traditional single thickness mud brick, due to its weight { Marshall}.

Peppercorn tree (located on Main Road verge, approx 50 m north). This tree is located amongst other trees, including other Peppercorns, in a grassed area at the front of the site. It has two co-joined trunks growing from the one base which is within 300MM of the trunk of a tall Bhutan Cypress ('*Gupressus torulosa*'). The Peppercorn is quite large, being 10-12 Metres in height and having a trunk diameter of 700-800MM approximately. It is in good condition and has only a small amount of dead wood in the canopy.

REVISED OR EXTENDED DESCRIPTON:

The trees (intertwined pepper and cypress trees) described in the Eltham Heritage Study are well removed from this site, being to the north on the Main Road verge. It is likely that the cypress was planted and the pepper tree has absorbed it at a later date.

The trees on and nearer the site include a group (3) of mature pepper trees close to Main Road near the wheel rim. There are others along the frontage of the public land which were presumably part of the former farmland. There is another group near the current library close to Shillinglaw's Cottage. There are immature pepper trees (2) on the north and east side of the centre, close to the walls. Between them is a "*Cupressus*, sp.' ('*C. lusitanica*'?). Nearby is the significant oak row next to the rugby field. A mature '*Cedrus deodara*' is in a planting bed near the car park (c1920s-30s?).

'*Schinus molle*' var. '*areira*' 'This fast-growing tree with graceful, drooping leaves and branchlets develops an attractive, gnarled trunk as it ages to a height of 30-50 ft (9-15 m). The dark green, shiny leaves are 6 in (15 em) long, composed of 10 to 18 pairs of small pointed leaflets; they are resinous and aromatic when crushed.

Pendulous clusters of tiny cream flowers appear from late spring to early summer. Decorative sprays of tiny rose-pink berries follow- these have a peppery taste and have been used like pepper, but are somewhat toxic. In hot dry climates it naturalizes readily and may become a weed' { Botanica}.

## **Usage/Former Usage**

Original and Continuing Use: Community Centre

## **Integrity**

Externally substantially intact/some intrusions

## **Physical Conditions**

Externally good (partially disturbed, well preserved)

*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/>*