

CHAPEL STREET NORTH COMMERCIAL PRECINCT HO642

Prepared by: Context	Survey Date: June 2020
Place Type: Commercial	Architect: -
Significance level: Significant	Builder: Various
Extent of overlay: See precinct map	Construction Date: 1890-1925, 1993



**HO642 - Chapel Street North Precinct
SOUTH YARRA**

- GRADING**
- Significant
 - Contributory
 - Non-contributory
 - Precinct boundary



Figure 1. Chapel Street & Toorak Road Commercial Precinct (Source: Google)

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The City of Stonnington is the traditional country of the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung peoples. They belonged to a larger affiliation of five central Victorian tribes known as the Kulin Nation. Archaeologists believe that Aboriginal people have been in Victoria for more than 30,000 years. Throughout this long history their relationship with the landscape (where and how they lived) has changed according to factors such as climate change, resource availability, and cultural change. It is possible, however, to assume that the land of the Kulin has been occupied for many thousands of years (Context 2006:10).

The study area is identified in *Stonnington's Indigenous History* as one of the important Aboriginal sites in the municipality. The gully near the junction of Toorak Road and Chapel Street was an Aboriginal camp site set in tea-tree scrub which was used by Aboriginal people visiting from Gippsland. Within the study area, sites of importance include the campsite of Derrimut in the banks of the swamp at Yarra Street, now the site of Melbourne High school, alongside the South Yarra Railway Bridge (Clark and Tostanski 2006:32). Derrimut was a Yalukit-willam clan-head who belonged to the Boonwurrung language group. Specific sites in the Yalukit-willam estate personally associated with Derrimut included the south bank of the Yarra River, from the punt at South Yarra to the Yarra wharf, where steamers moored (Clark and Tostanski 2006:6). A member of the Native Police Corp, Beruke's (or Gellibrand's) site of burial is also within the study area, at the former South Yarra Depot site near the south end of Clara Street along the railway. Beruke was buried there on 14 January 1852 (Clark and Tostanski 2006:32).

At the time of the area's first Crown land sales in 1840, South Yarra fell within what was then known as the Parish of Prahran, comprising today's South Yarra and parts of Prahran and Windsor. Crown land sales signalled the end of the area's brief pastoral history, as its situation at Melbourne's eastern fringe and advantageous position alongside the Yarra River made it an attractive location for settlement (Context 2006:30; *Australasian Chronicle* 20 March 1841:4).

Development of the Parish began in the west, gradually moving east as metropolitan Melbourne continued to expand. In 1854 the Prahran Road District, an early form of local government in Victoria, was proclaimed and road boundaries were redefined from those established by Government Surveyor Robert Hoddle in 1837 (Context 2016:1). At this time Toorak Road was known as Gardiners Creek Road, an early east-west route to Dandenong (Context 2006:47). Although Gardiners Creek Road was commonly referred to as Toorak Road from the 1850s, use of the old name continued up until 1898 (Lay 2003:150-1).

The Prahran Road District became the Municipality of Prahran in April of 1855 (*Banner* 26 May 1854:8). Prahran was among the earliest local government authorities created in Melbourne (Cooper 1924:55-84). Prahran was declared a Town in 1870, a City in 1879 and its population almost doubled in the decade to 1891 (Cooper 1935:212). Proximity to the rail services was a major selling point used by estate agents in all parts of Melbourne, and residential subdivisions closest to the stations generally sold first (Context 2016:5).

Development of the study area was stimulated with the construction of bridges over the Yarra River and Gardiners Creek. In 1857, the first bridge leading directly into the Municipality of Prahran was built across the Yarra to link Chapel Street with Church Street, Richmond. Chapel Street became the main thoroughfare for the municipality as soon as the bridge was constructed (Context 2006:53). In 1860 a timber bridge was constructed over Gardiners Creek at Toorak Road (Context 2016:3). Toorak Road also became an increasingly more important thoroughfare with the construction of grand estates overlooking the Yarra River, such as Avoca at 8 Gordon Grove, built c.1848 (HO45) which survives

today. Toorak Road's western end was also the first road in the Parish to be graded and surfaced, after the Governor of Victoria took up residence in Toorak House at 21 St Georges Road, in 1854 (HO99; Malone 1982:10).

South Yarra Railway Station opened in 1860, located on the north side of Toorak Road between Darling and Yarra Streets, which substantially improved access to the area and adjoining localities (Context 2006:46-7). The railway played an essential role for the municipality, encouraging residential and commercial development by allowing people to settle in the area within an easy commute to work in other parts of Melbourne. Public transport also provided an influx of shoppers to South Yarra, stimulating economic activity especially for streets in the station's immediate vicinity. The 1865 municipal rate book shows a dramatic increase in commercial and retail occupation at the Punt Road end of Toorak Road, with development of brick manufacturers, market gardens and other industries focussed in the east to take advantage of the new railway (S&McD).

The introduction of special workingmen's fares in 1882 also encouraged workers to settle in suburbs along rail routes, enabling people to move out from the inner areas where they worked (Priestley 1984:152). The development of large parts of the eastern end of the municipality stalled as a result of the 1890s' economic depression and it was not until the early years of the twentieth century that the promised patronage for the new railway lines eventuated. The current South Yarra Station complex that was altered in 1883, 1915-16 and again in 1918 to accommodate the growth of the railway system (Context 2016:4).

In 1878 the Victorian Government purchased the existing railways that ran through Richmond to South Yarra, Prahran and Windsor, as part of a plan to build a line through Oakleigh to Gippsland. The new Oakleigh line, which was opened in 1879, ran through Malvern, Armadale, Toorak and Hawksburn to join the existing line at South Yarra. The opening of the Oakleigh line coincided with the land boom that saw huge urban growth in Prahran generally, and the route of the line from Gippsland was the subject of considerable political lobbying as land developers sought to have it run through their proposed estates (Context 2006:53).

The new link from South Yarra to Oakleigh, completing the line to Gippsland, was opened in April 1879 (Harrigan 1962) and this would have necessitated the construction of more platforms at South Yarra. Substantial cutting also took place at South Yarra to accommodate the line, where over 50,000 cubic yards [sic] of earth were removed for its construction (*Argus* 9 January 1879:6). The sheer amount of earthworks and engineering that went into installing it demonstrates the importance of the railway network not only to Melbourne, but also to Victoria (Context 2016:7). In the study area, the cutting of land for new railway platform is evidenced by the irregular shape of the block of land on the south side of Palermo Street.

Melbourne's first cable tram commenced between Spencer Street and Richmond in 1885. After the new Princes Bridge was opened in 1888 cable tram routes extended from Swanston Street along St Kilda Road to Windsor and along Toorak Road to South Yarra, turning into Chapel Street towards Prahran. The Toorak Road line was extended to Irving Road in 1889, and the Windsor line was extended to the St Kilda Esplanade in 1891. An engine house for the cable winding machinery was built on the corner of Chapel Street and Toorak Road (Context 2006:68-69).

After the interruption caused by the 1890s' depression, the Federation of Australia ushered in a new period of growth and optimism. Perhaps the most significant event during this period was the Cities of Malvern and Prahran cooperating on a venture that would have a profound effect on the development of Toorak Road and beyond; the creation of the Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust (Context 2006:171).

Increasing prosperity and improvements to public transport meant that working-class people could afford suburban homes. As was the case when the railway at South Yarra opened, establishment of the Tramways Trust in 1910 brought new patronage to the commercial precinct along Toorak Road (Context 2016:8).

From the mid-nineteenth century, residential development in the study area was also accelerated by the expansion of industries of the municipality. With the natural deposits of alluvial clay in the municipality, brick and tile making became the chief industry of the municipality. From at least the early 1840s, low-lying parts of the municipality were established with small operators, and the northern end of Chapel Street from Toorak Road to the river became the major centre of brick production. Robert 'Daddy' Davis quarried clay from the northeast corner of Chapel Street and Toorak Road for three decades. His brickworks was the forerunner of the Australian Gas Retort and Firebrick Manufactory, later known as the South Yarra Firebrick Company, which continued operations into the 1970s (Context 2006:95).

Another industry that played an important role in the municipality was food production. The Victoria Brewery company was established in 1858 in Chapel Street and lasted nearly two decades. In 1876, the Victorian Jam Company took over and operated from the building for a century. The Jam Factory became Prahran's largest employer, with up to 1000 workers, many of them women, employed in the busy season. The factory was closed in the 1970s, moving closer to suppliers in the Shepparton district and Dandenong Ranges (Context 2006:97).

South Yarra was also one of the centres for clothing factories, knitting mills and milliners from the 1870s well into the second half of the twentieth century. Enterprises ranged from small dressmakers to larger-scale factories. In the 1920s, nearly 20 garment factories were operating in Prahran, which would have provided employment of up to thirty people (Context 2006:98).

Since the 1980s Chapel Street and Toorak Road have continued to develop intensively with many multi-storey commercial and residential premises being located either on the street or set back behind the traditional shops. High-rise developments are also starting to dominate the South Yarra skyline, particularly towards Chapel Street. While individual buildings along Toorak Road have been modified, often quite substantially, the retention of individual buildings and the impression of a traditional shopping street has largely been maintained more towards the south of the intersection.

PLACE HISTORY

The earliest development in the area bounded by Toorak Road, Williams Road, Malvern Road and Chapel Street, was along the east side of Chapel Street. The Independent Chapel on the corner of Chapel Street and Malvern Road gave the first street its name. By the mid-1850s, two small streets, Garden and Wilson streets, had been formed already running off Chapel Street. Their names appeared on Kearney's 1855 map (Nigel Lewis & Associate 1983:55).

An 1856 survey of the Prahran Municipality shows shops developed around the south side of the intersection of Chapel Street and Toorak Road (then known as Gardiner's Creek Road) ('Melbourne 19 Prahran' 1856, PROV VPRS 8168/ P2 unit 3509). Ayers Arms Hotel (later New Bridge Hotel and South Yarra Club Hotel) was built at the southwest corner of the intersection by this time. Only four buildings existed between Toorak Road and Oxford Street. The area to the north and east of this intersection was generally lightly bushed with swamped area towards Yarra River (Figure 2).

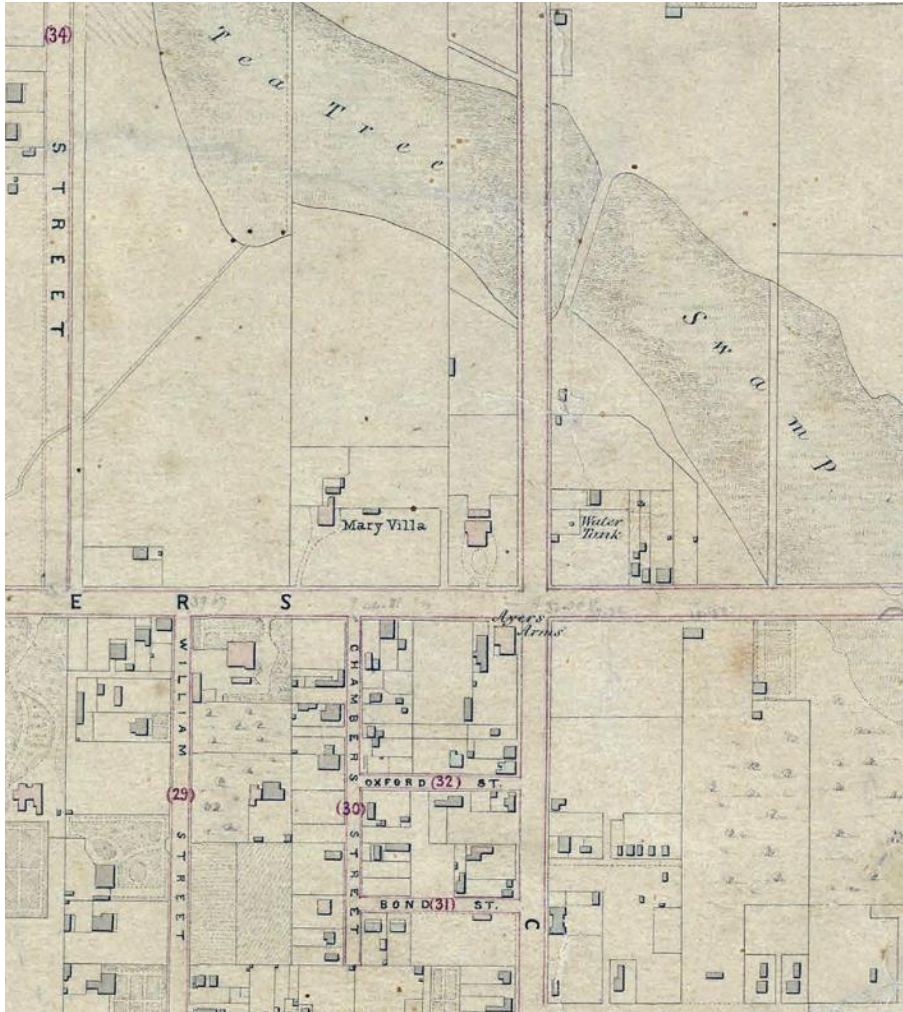


Figure 2. Intersection of Chapel Street and Toorak Road (then known as Gardiners Creek Road). (Source: 'Melbourne 19 Prahran' 1856, PROV VPRS 8168/ P2 unit 3509)

Chapel Street

In 1870, there were still four commercial buildings on the west side of Chapel Street between Toorak Road and Oxford Street. On the east side, four commercial and four residential buildings existed, and Mrs. Needham's school was also on this side of the street (S&McD 1870). None of these early buildings survive today.

The land on the east side of Chapel Street fronting Chapel Street, Oxford Street, Clara Street, Palermo Street and Toorak Road was subdivided and sold in 1874 as part of the large auction sale of Palermo Estate, former estate of late John Cunningham McLaren who died in 1852 (*South Australian Register* 24 December 1852:4).

The block bound by Chapel Street, Oxford Street, Forster Street and Toorak Road was subdivided into eight allotments, northern half of which was already developed with buildings (Figure 3).

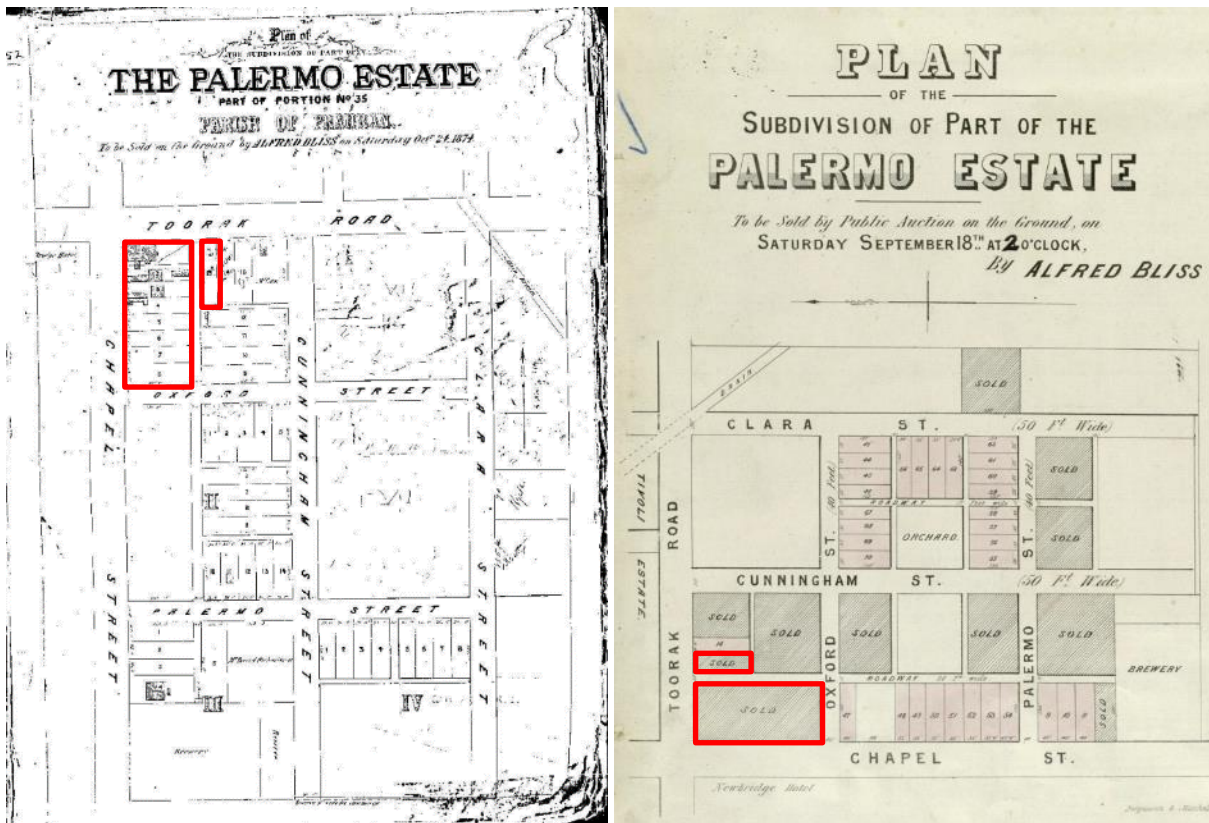


Figure 3. An 1874 subdivision plan for the first sale of the Palermo Estate (left) and an 1875 subdivision plan for the third sale. The affected sections of the study area are shown with red outlines. (Source: 'Land subdivision - Palermo Estate', 1874, Stonnington History Centre; 'Palermo Estate', 1875, State Library Victoria)

The empty allotments 5, 6, 7 and 8 were purchased by S. L. Woolcott (RB 1875). By 1877, the land was transferred to Thomas Kilpatrick, who gradually developed rows of shops on that land. Five four-roomed brick shops were built on allotments 5 and 6 by 1879. These shops at 576-584 Chapel Street were replaced with modern commercial buildings in more recent times. Erected in 1892 on allotments 7 and 8 (today known as 568-574A Chapel Street), a row of five six-room two-storey brick shops was occupied by businesses such as grocer, hairdresser, tobacconist, painter, dentist, and butcher during the first years of opening (RB 1892, 1893-94; S&McD 1893).

On the allotments 3 and 4 (today known as 586-592 Chapel Street), a row of four six-room two-storey brick shops was erected in 1890, replacing former brick and timber shop and storage that had been owned and occupied by painter Thomas Ellis since the 1870s. The northernmost shop was owned and occupied by Mary A. Huston, fruiterer, and three other shops were owned by James W. Hunt and leased to businesses including tinsmith, watchmaker and upholsterer (RB 1891).

By 1891, on the west side of Chapel Street, a row of four four- and five-room two-storey brick shops were built on vacant land owned by Dennis B. Daly, estate agent. Daly operated his agency from no. 591 from the mid-1890s (S&McD 1896).

Around this time, the land to the north of this row was occupied by the New Bridge Hotel and its stables, then managed by Benjamin Bloomfield. To the further south, older brick and timber shops were still existent at the corner of Chapel and Oxford streets (RB 1891). No further development happened in this section of Chapel Street until the 1910s.

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plans from 1895 (Figure 4) show some vacant allotments fronting Chapel Street and Toorak Road near the intersection, which left little space for new development. The late Victorian era built character of this area largely remains today, with few examples from the Federation and Edwardian eras, such as 594-602 Chapel Street and 254-264 Toorak Road at the intersection. Both Chapel Street and Toorak Road hold a collection of Inter-war buildings that either took up vacant allotments, or replaced earlier buildings as new developments.

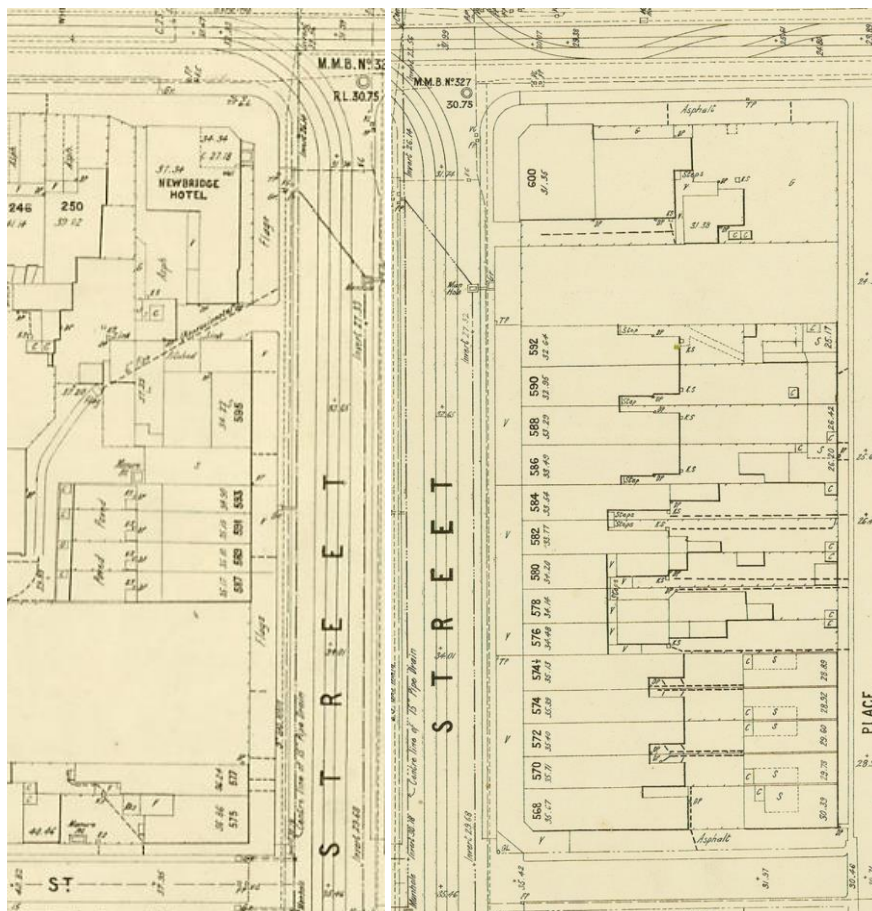


Figure 4. The west (left) and east (right) side of Chapel Street between Toorak Road and Oxford Street in 1895. (Source: MMBW Detailed Plan no. 950 (left) & no. 951 (right), 1895)

The row of five two-storey commercial buildings at the southeast corner of Chapel Street and Toorak Road was erected and opened by 1913, replacing an 1870s former Oriental Bank building formerly known as 600 Chapel Street (*Table Talk* 7 August 1913:21). In 1915, Misses E. H. M. & Z. Norquay's tearoom (no. 596) and Miss M. Whitiam's millinery (no. 602) operated from the building at 594-602 Chapel Street, and three other shops were still vacant (S&McD 1915). A row of shops at the rear (at 256-266 Toorak Road) was built shortly after and opened by mid-1914 (*Woman Voter* 14 July 1914:3).

The vacant land between 579 and 585 Chapel Street became developed in the interwar period. 579 Chapel Street (now demolished) was built by 1923 (S&McD 1923). In 1924, three two-storey brick shops and residences at 581-585 Chapel Street were listed in the postal directory as 'being built' (S&McD 1924). Further two brick shop and residence buildings were added to the row at 575-577 Chapel Street in the following year, appearing in the 1925 postal directory as 'being built'. Replacing a pair of mid-Victorian period shops, this pair was built with a matching design to the three shops built in the earlier

year (S&McD 1925). By 1927, new shops were occupied by various businesses including Hartshorn & Co., surgical appliances sellers (no. 575), Mrs E. Venville, dressmaker (no. 577), Paton Tollner & Co., grocers (no.579), J. Myers, dairy producer (no.581), J. Thompson, news agent (no.583), F. Dickson, butcher (no.585), and Mrs M. Roberts, dressmaker (no.587) (S&McD 1928).

Toorak Road

The section of Toorak Road in the study area was still largely residential up until the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1900, a row of terrace houses known as Chambers Terrace existed near the southwest corner of the intersection of Toorak Road and Chapel Street, next the New Bridge Hotel. On southeast corner, two houses and a dairy existed between the Oriental Bank and Cunningham Street (S&McD 1900).

In 1914, a row of six single-storey shops at 256-266 Toorak Road was built on part of allotments 1 and 2 of the Palermo Estate initially occupied by the former Oriental bank building. Built in a matching design, 594-602 Chapel Street had been completed by 1913 (S&McD 1914, 1915). These shops were completed by mid-1914 (*Woman Voter* 14 July 1914:3). In 1915, the shops were occupied by Barratt & Clark, furriers (no.256), Mrs Jane E. Smith, draper (no.258), Miss Esther & May Bosher, news agents (no.260), Edmund F. Foley, fishmonger (no. 262) and M. Koodan, Greengrocer (no.264). No. 264 was vacant (S&McD 1915).

In 1915, a pair of two-storey shop and residence buildings were listed in the postal directory as 'being built' at 248-250 Toorak Road (S&McD 1915). By 1920, the shops were occupied by N. Frederick Neild, confectioner (no. 248) and J. Dennis Abbo, hair specialist (no. 250) (S&McD 1920).

The hotel building, by this time known as South Yarra Club Hotel, at the southwest corner of Toorak Road and Chapel Street was demolished in early 1993 to make way for development of a new two-storey shop building. The Country Road building at 252 Toorak Road was completed by October 1993. The \$6 million project, managed by Lend Lease, builders, added 1200 square meters of retail space to the vicinity's existing 130,000 square meters (*Age* 14 March 1993:35; City of Prahran, 'Record of Building Inspections', Approval No. 8767).

DESCRIPTION

The Chapel Street North Commercial Precinct commences at the intersection of Chapel Street and Toorak Road and runs south along Chapel Street and east and west along Toorak Road. It includes shops on the south side of Toorak Road (nos. 268-248) and on the eastern side (nos. 600-566) and western side (nos. 572-593) of Chapel Street. It is located on the north-west side of HO128 Cunningham and Oxford Precinct, a residential area developed in the 1870s through to 1919 which was part of the same subdivision, The Palermo Estate, as the shops along the southern side of Toorak Road (east of Chapel Street) and along the eastern side of Chapel Street between Toorak Road and Oxford Palermo Street. Toorak Road is a primary State arterial road that links St Kilda Road, Melbourne to the outer eastern suburbs. Chapel Street runs for over 4.14 kilometres along an approximate north-south alignment connecting Richmond in the north through to St Kilda East in the south. At the intersection of Toorak Road and Chapel Street both streets are lined with commercial buildings, with extant residential streets extending from them. The precinct consists of mostly two storey shops built in the 1890s with a second and third wave of development in 1913-15 and 1923-25. There has been some contemporary development, most notable at nos. 576-584 Toorak Road and 252 Chapel Street, however these developments have been respectful of the scale, form and materiality of the adjoining buildings and do not adversely impact the integrity of the precinct.

All the shops are built to the front and side boundaries forming a continuous street wall. The earlier are built in the Victorian Italianate style whilst the latter shops display characteristics of the Federation Free Classical Style some with Art Nouveau influences and the Interwar Free Classical style. The precinct is enhanced by several sets of shops built to the same or similar design.

Victorian Shops

The earliest shops in the precinct date from 1890. Located at 586-592 Chapel Street these two-storey rendered brick shops are built in the Victorian Italianate style. Designed to be read as a single unit, these shops reflect the Victorian taste for ornamentation derived from classical architecture. This is evident in the building's use of decorative elements above street level that include engaged pilasters (to demarcate the individual shops), cornices, large (over-sized) pediment, decorative scrolls, decorative label moulds and ball finials.



Figure 5. Victorian Italianate shops at 586-592 Chapel Street, South Yarra, built c.1890. (Source: Context, February 2020)

These shops were closely followed by a second group of four two storey rendered brick shops built opposite on the western side of Chapel Street at nos. 587-593 in 1891. These shops are unusual for the time and are more indicative of earlier modest mid-nineteenth century shops and office buildings with their fine but restrained use of the Victorian Free Classical style. This is evidenced by their very restrained use of classical detailing, single first floor windows without any architrave and simple large triangular pediments that span the width of each shop.



Figure 6. Row of four shops at 587-593 Chapel street, South Yarra, built c.1891. (Source: Context, February 2020)

In contrast the shops at 566-574A Chapel Street, built in 1892, all demonstrate key characteristics of the Victorian Italianate style with their use of applied ornamentation derived from classical architecture. In this instance, above ground level, the individual shops are divided by engaged pilasters that rise to support a panelled parapet. Between the pilaster, paired round arched windows are joined by a minor cornice at the spring line that continues over the windows to meet at a key stone which at No. 566 are faces. The shops at the corner of Oxford Street have splayed corners, a typical treatment at the time, creating a distinctive entry to the street.



Figure 7. Row of five Victorian Italianate shops at 568-574A Chapel Street, South Yarra, built c.1891. (Source: Context, February 2020)

Edwardian Shops

After the demolition of an earlier bank a substantial group of five two storey brick Edwardian shops (600 Chapel Street) were constructed on the south east corner of Toorak Road and Chapel Street in 1913. These shops were added to in 1914 by a row of six single storey brick shops (256-266 Toorak Road) designed in similar style. Demonstrating characteristics of the Federation Free style, the corner two storey building displays a regular rhythm of alternating square and Diocletian windows set between flat engaged pilasters that rise through the parapet and are capped with embossed Art Nouveau motifs. The parapet rises and falls between raised and inverted half round elements, a detailed that is repeated across the modest single storey shops along Toorak Road as are the art Nouveau motif to the group's pilaster caps.



Figure 8. Group of five two storey brick Edwardian shops at 594-602 Chapel Street designed in the Federation Freestyle in c.1913. (Source: Context, February 2020)

The last of the Edwardian shops in the precinct were built in 1915 at 248-250 Toorak Road. Designed in the Federation Free style this two-storey pair of shops feature slender engaged pilasters that rise above the straight parapet that is set with a projecting oversized triangular pediment. At the first-floor level each shop has a large bow oriel window. No.250 retains the original timber joinery and leadlight.



Figure 9. 248-250 Toorak Road, South Yarra, built c.1915. (Source: Context, February 2020)

Interwar Shops

The last shops to be built in the precinct were 575-585 Chapel Street. The three two storey shops at 581-585 were built in 1924 with a matching pair of shops built at 575-577 in 1925. These originally sat either side of an earlier shop at No. 579 built in 1923 but which has been demolished and rebuilt, although remnant face brick party walls remain. Above street level this row of 1920s shops display characteristics of the Interwar Free Classical style with an eclectic mix of simplified classical motifs including engaged pilaster, bracketed eaves and parapets with vestigial pediments. The earlier shops at 575-585 Chapel Street have been overpainted however they retain cantilevered first floor balconies that hover above the street level awning. The brown clinker brick work at 575-577 Chapel Street remains unpainted and is framed by the smooth rendered pilaster and parapet above. The pilasters and parapet at No. 577 remain unpainted. Cantilevered concrete balconies sit above the awning level and feature crossed balustrade detailing that matches the diamond patterned mullions to the upper sashes of the first-floor windows. The façade along Oxford Street is highly intact and retains original fenestration, timber double hung sash windows with diamond patterned mullions to the upper sashes and an oriel window set into the original splayed entry below.



Figure 10. 575-577 Chapel Street, South Yarra, built c.1925.
(Source: Context, February 2020)



Figure 11. 581-585 Chapel Street, South Yarra, built c.1924.
(Source: Context, February 2020)

Whilst a number of shops within the precinct have partially intact early shopfronts, 577, 581 and 583 Chapel Street stand out as retaining their interwar shop fronts. This includes the ingo (recessed entry) with early floor tiles, original metal framed window, highlight window with leaded glass and tiled stall boards. Of particular note is the Art Nouveau pressed metal soffit lining to the awning at nos. 581-585 which appears original.



Figure 12. Intact Interwar shop front at 581 Chapel Street, South Yarra with tiled ingo, original metal framed window, highlight window with leaded glass and tiled stall boards. Of particular note is the Art Nouveau pressed metal soffit lining to the awning. (Source: Context, February 2020)



Figure 13. Intact interwar shop front at 577 Chapel Street, South Yarra with tiled ingo, original metal framed window, highlight window with leaded glass and tiled stall boards. (Source: Context, February 2020).

INTEGRITY

There are two Non-contributory properties in the precinct. This includes the contemporary building at 576-584 Chapel Street which was built after the demolition of a row of 1879 Victorian shops and the recent shop at 579 Chapel Street. Amongst the Contributory properties, many either only partially retain or have lost their original shopfronts, and some have had face brick work overpainted (Nos.581-585 Chapel Street). Some first-floor windows have been replaced (see 248 Toorak Road) and some parapets boarded over (258 Toorak Road). Visible second storey extensions can be seen from street level at Nos. 256 and 260 Toorak Road.

The large retail building at 252 Toorak Road is considered Contributory. Built in 1993 to a design by prominent Melbourne architects Metier3, this building is a sophisticated example of infill design that responds sensitively to the neighbouring two-storey Victorian and Edwardian shops. Maintaining the two storey built form of the streetscape the building responds to the modular rhythm of the neighbouring shops and is divided into seven equal bays along Chapel Street and three bays along Toorak Road that are separated by a modern interpretation of engaged pilasters supporting an entablature above.



Figure 14. 252 Toorak Road South Yarra. Although built in 1993 this building is Contributory to the precinct. It is a sophisticated example of infill design that responds sensitively to its neighbours by maintaining the two-storey built form of the streetscape and responding to the modular rhythm of the neighbouring shops. (Source: Context, February 2020)

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

There are a number of commercial precincts already in the Stonnington Heritage Overlay. This section considers those that have a mix of Victorian, Edwardian and interwar commercial buildings.

HO126 Chapel Street Precinct – Located further south along Chapel Street, this precinct is a remarkably intact strip comprised principally of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century shops. Whilst distinguished by a large number of substantial earlier twentieth century shopping emporia, particularly around Malvern Road and High Street, the precinct contains long sequences of shops and retail groups with ornate Victorian Italianate shops alongside Edwardian and interwar development.

HO142 Hawksburn Retail Precinct – this precinct comprises a range of single and double-storey retail and commercial buildings dating from the late-Victorian, Edwardian and interwar periods. The northern side of Malvern Road is characterised by Late-Victorian Italianate one and two storey shops. There are a number of Edwardian shops along Williams Road and north side of Malvern Road that are interspersed among Victorian building stock. The south side of Malvern Road has an entirely different character resulting from subdivisions in the 1930s resulting in a series of two storey interwar Moderne shops.

HO349 Glenferrie Road / High Street Precinct – this precinct is of local significance to the City of Stonnington for the quality and integrity of its Victorian, Federation and Interwar building stock, which contributes substantially to its historic character. Buildings within the precinct fall into two major groups. Those from the nineteenth century that display characteristics of the Italianate style and those from the early years of the twentieth century displaying eclectic influences from the Edwardian era such as Art Nouveau and the Beaux-arts and later interwar styles such as Greek Classicism, and the Moderne.

HO400 High Street rail and retail Precinct – the retail buildings in this precinct are typically two-storey and generally date from the late nineteenth century, although substantial infill development occurred during the 1910s and 1920s. The precinct's Victorian buildings adopt Italianate detailing with façade incorporating rendered string courses, window moulds and pediments. The Edwardian era buildings are more elaborate and incorporate oriel window, large semi-circular windows and sinuous Art Nouveau mouldings whilst the later interwar shops tend to be modest, with an honest use of materials popularised by the arts and Crafts movement.

The Chapel Street North Road Commercial Precinct is most comparable to HO142 Hawksburn Retail Precinct. This precinct is of a similar size and scale to the subject precinct and displays a similar mix of architectural style and intactness. Both precincts followed a similar development pattern and catered for residents in newly formed housing estates that filled with terrace houses associated with a major period of suburban growth in the area.

The subject precinct is comparable to each of the above precincts in that they all comprise a mixed character that is created by the range of Victorian, Edwardian, and interwar architectural styles. Compared to these precincts, the varying architectural styles and building heights in the Chapel Street North Commercial Precinct form a tight cohesive group as all the shops are built to the front and side boundaries to form a largely continuous street wall, with roofs hidden behind parapets, as was typical prior to WWII. A greater sense of cohesion in the subject precinct is provided by the construction of shops in discrete identifiable rows.

The Chapel Street North Commercial precinct is distinguished by the large Edwardian group of shops on the south east corner of Toorak Road and Chapel Street. This building frames the entry to the precinct and is clearly visible as you approach the corner along both Chapel Street and Toorak Road. Designed in a restrained Federation Free style the upper storey façade displays similar detailing to the Victoria Building at 1088 High Street, Armadale (HO400) with large semicircular windows and sinuous Art Nouveau mouldings. The precinct is further distinguished by the group of intact interwar shop fronts at 577, 581 and 583 Chapel Street and intact Art Nouveau soffit lining to the awning across nos. 581-585 Chapel Street.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

✓	CRITERION A Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).
	CRITERION B Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).
	CRITERION C Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).
✓	CRITERION D Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).
	CRITERION E Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).
	CRITERION F Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)
	CRITERION G Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).
	CRITERION H Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT

The Chapel Street North Commercial Precinct, comprising 566-600 & 575-593 Chapel Street and 248-266 Toorak Road, is significant. The commercial buildings in the precinct were built between 1890 and 1925 and consist of single and double storey Victorian, Edwardian and Interwar shops built in a range of architectural styles. Shops built between 1890-1925 are contributory, as is the 1993 Building at 252 Toorak Road. The original shopfronts at 577, 581 and 583 Chapel street are contributory as is the awning soffit at 581-585 Chapel Street.

The Contemporary shops at 576-584 and 579 Chapel Street are Non-contributory.

HOW IT IS SIGNIFICANT

The Chapel Street North Commercial Precinct is of local historic and representative significance to the City of Stonnington.

WHY IT IS SIGNIFICANT

The Chapel Street North Commercial Precinct is of historical significance for its ability to demonstrate a major development phase of commercial/retail centres in South Yarra. It demonstrates the influence that

improved transport connections to the area brought about by the expansion of the rail line from South Yarra to Oakleigh in 1879, the introduction of special workingmen's fares in 1882, and the opening of tramway lines along Toorak Road and Chapel Street in 1888. Coupled with a rapid expansion of local industries in the area there was a growing demand for commercial and retail businesses to cater for residents in newly formed housing estates that filled with terrace houses associated with this major period of suburban growth. Halted by the depression of the 1890s the area saw a second wave of development after the establishment of the Tramways Trust in 1910 which brought new patronage to the commercial precinct along Chapel Street and Toorak Road. (Criterion A)

The precinct is significant for its illustration of popular commercial architectural styles of the Victorian, Edwardian, and interwar periods, with a relatively high intactness of buildings, particularly at first floor level. The Victorian shops are representative of the Italianate style of architecture that reflects the Victorian taste for ornamentation derived from classical architecture. This is evident in the buildings use of decorative elements that include engaged pilasters (to demarcate the individual shops), cornices, pediments, decorative scrolls, a moulded stringer course, window moulds and finials. The Edwardian shops are characteristic of the Federation Free style with an eclectic combination of elements and details drawn or adapted from Classical, Romanesque or Art Nouveau styles. This is demonstrated in the use of Diocletian windows, pilaster piers rising above the parapet line and embossed sinuous motifs. The 1920s shops are representative of the Interwar Free Classical style with an eclectic mix of simplified classical motifs including engaged pilaster, bracketed eaves and parapets with vestigial pediments. Arts and Crafts influences are also evident in the use of face brickwork, with unpainted render details.

The precinct is enhanced by the many groups of shops designed as an ensemble, most of them two-storey in height. Most of the buildings in the precinct have been designed as rows of identical shops massed as a single building giving them greater visual prominence and landmark value. This landmark quality is strengthened by the use of corner sites giving a three dimensionality to the facades (at 566, 568, 575 & 600 Chapel Street & 252 Toorak Road). (Criterion D)

GRADING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the City of Stonnington Planning Scheme as a precinct

PRECINCT GRADINGS SCHEDULE

Name	Number	Street	Grading	Built Date
	594-602 (600)	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1913
	592	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1890
	590	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1890
	588	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1890
	586	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1890
	576-584	Chapel Street	Non-contributory	Contemporary
	574A	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1892
	574	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1892
	572	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1892
	568-570 (includes 11A Oxford Street)	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1892/Contemporary

	566	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1892
	575	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1925
	577	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1925
	579	Chapel Street	Non-contributory	Contemporary
	581	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1924
	583	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1924
	585	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1924
	587	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1891
	589	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1891
	591	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1891
	593	Chapel Street	Contributory	c.1891
	248	Toorak Road	Contributory	c.1915
	250	Toorak Road	Contributory	c.1915
	252	Toorak Road	Contributory	c.1993
	256	Toorak Road	Contributory	c.1914
	258	Toorak Road	Contributory	c.1914
	260	Toorak Road	Contributory	c.1914
	262	Toorak Road	Contributory	c.1914
	264-266	Toorak Road	Contributory	c.1914

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the City of Stonnington Planning Scheme:

STONNINGTON PLANNING SCHEME

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	No
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3)	No
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

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