

2.4 Wonthaggi – Graham Street Residential Precinct (HO 148)

2.4.1 Location and Curtilage

This precinct extends along both sides of Graham Street between McKenzie and Loch Streets, along the north side of Watt Street between McKenzie and Loch Streets, and along the west side of McLeod Street, between Graham and Bent Streets. It covers all of the intersections of Graham Street with McLeod and Quarry Streets.



Figure 7 Map showing the extent of the Graham Street Residential Precinct.

2.4.2 History

Development of the area between Bent, Loch, McKenzie and Watt Streets dates from the earliest period of the town's history. These streets had all been named after prominent state political figures in the initial town survey of 1910. Sir Thomas Bent was the State Premier 1904-1909, Loch Street was presumably named in reference to Sir Henry Brougham Loch, Governor of Victoria 1884-85, Hugh McKenzie was President of the Board of Land and Works and Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey in 1910, and William Watt was State Treasurer in 1910.¹¹ The curved form of Bent Street paralleled that of the railway line immediately to the north.

Allotments in the area bounded by these streets were conveniently close to the commercial centre of the town and the Railway Station. They were mainly sold during the late 1910s, and

quickly used for residential construction, with Rate Books listings weatherboard dwellings on virtually all of these allotments by 1925-26.¹²

The railway ceased operating in Wonthaggi in 1978, the land along the railway reserve to the north was converted into a public park.

2.4.3 Description

Pattern of Subdivision

The Graham Street Residential Precinct consists of a series of six town blocks laid out in the original Wonthaggi Township subdivision, comprising Sections 27, 27A, 28, 29, 30 and 31. These township blocks are each intersected by narrow laneways, which originally provided rear access to every allotment.

The roads within the precinct are of varying sizes, with Graham Street the widest at 150 links (30 metres), McLeod and Quarry Streets measuring 100 links (20 metres) and service laneways running behind the allotments all 25 links (5 metres) wide. The allotments within these township blocks are also of varying shapes and sizes. In Section 27A they typically measure 250 by 83 links (50 metres by 16.6 metres) and in Section 29 250 by 100 links (50 metres by 20 metres). In Sections 29 and 30 they are mostly 100 by 250 links (20 by 50 metres). In Section 27A allotments are generally 230 to 250 links deep (46-50 metres) and either 50, 73 or 83.3 links (10, 12.6 or 16.66 metres) wide. Reflecting their irregular shape, the most variance in allotment sizes occurs in Sections 28 and 31, where site widths vary from 60 to 225 links (12 to 45 metres) and depths from 178 to 385 links (35.6 to 77 metres).

Building Stock

This precinct contains a number of Victorian and Edwardian style and inter-War weatherboard houses which are demonstrative of the formative years of Wonthaggi.

The Victorian-style residences typically have hipped roofs, clad in galvanized corrugated steel, are double-fronted with a central door flanked on either side by a timber-framed double-hung sash window, and have attached verandahs. Most retain their chimneys. The Edwardian style residences, are comparable to those in the Coal Mine Residential Precinct. They are variously broadly of the Queen Anne style with gambrel or hipped roofs, projecting gabled wings, verandahs, casement and/or timber-framed double hung sash windows, some containing leadlight. Most retain their corbelled chimneys. There are several variations of both these types of houses. Some are quite intact and often in need of maintenance whereas others have been well-maintained, restored or renovated. Many have variously been reclad, probably over the original weatherboards, and have had the timber windows replaced with metal and either lack or have replaced verandahs in a variety of styles. Some may have been relocated from elsewhere and some have been added onto at the side or rear. Gardens range from sparse to more leafy and fences are typically wire, timber and also some brick and other materials. Distinctive trees include a Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix Canariensis*) and eucalypts and the precinct is further enhanced by a wide grassed naturestrip. The Precinct is aesthetically significant in its range of extant examples of these houses which form a distinct visually cohesive group within the residential areas of Wonthaggi. Interspersed throughout the precinct are a number of post World War II houses in a variety of styles, including in brick, weatherboard, aluminium and cement sheet cladding and other materials. These are not considered to be significant.



Graham Street



Graham Street



Graham Street



Graham Street

Figure 8 Examples of houses in the Graham Street Residential Precinct

2.4.5 Assessment of Significance

Statement of Significance

Built during the initial establishment of Wonthaggi, the Graham Street Residential Precinct is of local historic and social significance. Unlike the Coal Mine Residential Precinct which was instigated by the Mines Department to house the mine workers, this precinct was developed privately. The Graham Street Residential Precinct is of local aesthetic significance containing a range of housing types and styles constructed during the formative years of Wonthaggi and which visually form a distinct group within the town.

2.4.6 Recommendations

Owners of heritage places within the precinct should be encouraged to do the following:

- Repaint buildings in original colours, as appropriate, to the different period styles of the individual buildings.
- Remove intrusive accretions, such as modern verandahs and carports, aluminium windows, non-original doors, non-original cladding and replace with appropriate elements/materials of the original style.

- Retain or reconstruct original front fences (timber pickets, woven wire etc.) and maintain heritage gardens, such as they are. Large, visually impermeable front fences which obstruct views of front gardens and houses from the street should be discouraged.
- Front fences should be no higher than 1.4 metres in height.
- Street trees should be assessed on a 1 to 2 year basis by a qualified arborist. Any replanting programme should have regard to their heritage value to the extent of what was there originally and what is there now, and to their amenity value with regard to species and how they may relate to the existing and/or original. A compatible range should be aimed for.
- To only alter and add to buildings in a manner which ensures that the new work is not visible from the street. Upper storey additions should fall within an 'envelope' created by projecting a sight line from 1.6 metres above the ground level (average eye-height) from a point where the footpath meets the property line directly opposite the site and taken to the line of the roof ridge.
- Locate roof-mounted air conditioning and solar units so where they are not visible from the street.
- To set back new carports and garages behind the façade by at least the depth of one room.