

Alterations and Additions to  
**7 Sumner Avenue, North Fitzroy**  
Heritage Impact Statement

28<sup>th</sup> July 2020

The subject property is included as part of the Old Colonists' Homes  
VHR: HO218

**Prepared by:**

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**Prepared for:**

Old Colonists' Association of Victoria

**Existing condition of the registered place**

External:

The building style is predominately Bungalow drawing elements from the Arts and Crafts movement with an overall simple and rustic form. External brick walls are finished with roughcast, cream coloured render including large pillars supporting the exposed timber framed porches to the front and rear. The roof is dual pitched with unglazed terracotta tiles and heritage red to fascia's and quad gutters.

Evidence of ornamentation are apparent in the window styles. There are small fixed windows featuring diamond patterned stained glass in arched frames and large windows designed in bay shaped projections. Double hung windows are comprised of six pane upper sashes, glazing bars painted white and frames heritage red. The use of blue-green to the external door panels and frames complement the red highlights.

The adjoining dwelling (No. 6) has been altered in 2019. The Porch facing Sumner Avenue is internalised with sliding glass doors. The Porch facing Rushall Crescent is also internalised for a relocated Bathroom, finished with vertical timber cladding.



Figure 1. View from North, towards No. 7 Sumner Avenue Porch



Figure 2. View of No. 7 Bedroom bay windows, with adjacent Porch



Figure 3. View from North, looking at No. 7 North-West façade.



Figure 4. View from South, looking at the recently internalised Porch to No. 6.

Internal:

The plan layout comprises a Porch facing Sumner Avenue with access to a Laundry. A small Foyer leads into the Bathroom, WC and Kitchen and continues through to the Living and second Foyer which opens to the rear Porch facing Rushall Crescent. Access to the Bedroom is from this second foyer. Internally there has been previous refurbishment work to surfaces (walls, floors), fixtures and fittings (Bathroom & Kitchen).



Figure 5. Views of Kitchen and Bathroom with non-original fit-out.

**Current use of the registered place:**

The residence at 7 Sumner Avenue is currently vacant, but has and intends to continue providing independent living accommodation to aged care residents of the Old Colonists' Association of Victoria.

**The proposed works**

The works proposed in this application are a direct mirror of those to No.6 Sumner Avenue, whereby Heritage approval was granted on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018 (Permit Application P29443).

The works include:

- Demolish internal Bathroom, WC and Kitchen walls to create a larger Kitchen and maximise natural light.
- New concrete slab and external lightweight walls to Rushall Crescent Porch for relocated Bathroom and reduced Porch for rear access.
- Reconfigure Bedroom doors from Living to improve circulation.
- Install new glazed sliding doors to Sumner Avenue Porch to internalise Laundry access.

**The cultural heritage significance of the place, including setting and any archaeological values or potential:**

The VHR Area Classification Statement of Significance:

*The Old Colonists Homes complex of 142 self-contained homes and ancillary buildings was established by actor, philanthropist and entrepreneur George Coppin in 1870 to provide accommodation for elderly colonists who, through no fault of their own, had fallen on hard times. A neighbouring development of two houses for Coppin's Old Actors Association was taken over by the Old Colonists Association in 1906. The Old Colonists Association was concerned to record and commemorate the efforts of Victoria's earliest colonists, as well as to 'assist necessitous old colonists' and promote the advancement of 'native-born (European) Victorians', and originally residence in the Homes was restricted to those who had arrived in the colony before 1851. Except for two cottages funded by the Association itself, all the houses in the Old Colonists Homes village were built with funds donated by prominent Victorian citizens, and each building is marked by a memorial stone showing the date and donor. The houses are sited in delightful gardens and cottages were erected in every decade from the 1870s to the present. The Homes continue to be managed for their original purpose by the Old Colonists Association, and the complex remains a remarkable example of 19th century charitable provision of housing for the elderly.*

*The Old Colonists Homes are of architectural significance for their associations with a number of important Victorian architects. The first stone cottages were designed by George Johnson, possibly the most prolific designer of municipal buildings in late 19th century Victoria, as well as of many theatres and opera houses in Melbourne and other Australian cities and the annexes to the Royal Exhibition Building in Carlton. Joseph Crook, who was responsible for a large number of buildings around Prahran, Windsor, St Kilda and Malvern, designed the Jubilee Cottages, Sumner Hall, the caretaker's residence and a number of other components of the complex. Other significant architects to have left their mark on the Homes include George Wharton and James Wood.*

## What physical and/or visual impacts will result from the proposed works?

### Physical impact:

The proposed works will improve the living arrangements for future residents by maximising useable space with more generous spaces, while keeping within the existing building footprint. Demolishing the Bathroom will provide the Kitchen with more direct sunlight, creating a space large enough to fit a dining table. A large opening from the Kitchen will provide the Living with additional, secondary light, while keeping the room intact.

The new Bathroom is now conveniently accessed from the Bedroom, making use of a foyer which is no longer practical. Rear access however, is maintained with a smaller foyer.

### Visual impact:

Externally, there will be minimal disturbance to building elements such as roof, walls, pillars and windows. The infill work to front and rear porches will have minimal visual impact on the overall form and will not detract from the predominant Bungalow style. Proposed colours will reflect the existing palette and new materials will complement the existing.

Further, the proposal works which mirror that of No. 6, will visually complete the overall building form with symmetry.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed works externally are considered minimal with no demolition proposed. The architectural significance of the cottage is maintained within the broader heritage precinct.

Internally, the proposed works significantly improves the residential amenity. The open plan arrangement offers a contemporary and sustainable living solution, desirable to the changing category of elderly Victorians.

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Alterations and Additions to  
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Proposed Material Schedule  
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CL – Vertical grooved timber panel, paint finish.  
Colour: Blue-green to match existing.



**New door** - to Porch facing  
Rushall Cres – reuse existing



**New glass sliding doors** - to Kitchen.  
Painted timber frame to match existing