

Statement of Significance: St Catherine's School including Sherren House, Campbell House and Elaine Haxton Mural, 17-21 Heyington Place, Toorak (March 2022)

Heritage Place: St Catherine's School including Sherren House, Campbell House and Elaine Haxton Mural, Toorak

PS ref no: HO50



(Source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021 (left); Saint Catherine's Girls School. Photograph. Elaine Haxton. A Comprehensive Guide (website), Accessed July 2021, <https://elainehaxton.com/mural3.html> (right)).

What is significant?

St Catherine's School at 17-21 Heyington Place, Toorak is significant. Specifically the form, scale, setback and detailing of Sherren House and Campbell House are of local significance, along with the Elaine Haxton Mural (foyer of the Senior School Building), several remnant eucalypt plantings (red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldensis*) and sugar gum (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*)), a mature kauri pine (*Agathis robusta*), and the original wrought iron gates and fencing with granite pillars at Sherren House. The remaining structures and landscaping across the site, as well as the front boundary wall of Campbell House, are not significant.

How is it significant?

St Catherine's School is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington. The school also has associative significance, first for a mural attributed to renowned artist Elaine Haxton and second for its association with architect Eric C. Beedham who designed Campbell House.

Why is it significant?

Sherren House at St Catherine's School is historically important in demonstrating the development of late Victorian mansions and estates by Melbourne's wealthiest citizens during the late 19th century gold rush era. Sherren House is also historically important for its use as St Catherine's School since 1922. Campbell House is of historical importance in demonstrating the development of early 20th century mansions and houses within the Toorak and its use as part of St Catherine's School since 1958. As a whole, the school is also historically significant for producing notable social figures, including Dame Elizabeth Murdoch, the former Lieutenant Governor Marigold Southey, and the Governor of Victoria Linda Dessau. (Criterion A)

Sherren House is of aesthetic significance as an intact and high-quality late 19th century boom era mansion. The scale of the building combined with features such as the highly detailed chimneys with stucco strapwork, corbels, dentils and cornice mouldings, polygonal bays, decorative bracketing under the eaves, timber joinery, Doric columns, Corinthian columns, arcaded loggia and dentilled cornice are some of the elements which contribute to the setting of the place and signify the original stature and status of the mansion. The deep setback and the original wrought iron gates and fencing with polished granite piers accentuate this character. Campbell House is also of aesthetic significance

as an intact early 20th century interwar Georgian Revival mansion with pillared portico, harling render, terracotta tiled roofing, and a decorative Palladian window over the portico. Of other notable aesthetic significance are the remnant plantings, including the kauri pine (*Agathis robusta*) and several remnant eucalypt plantings, red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldelensis*) and sugar gum (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*). (Criterion E)

St Catherine's School has associative significance with notable artist Elain Haxton who painted a mural in the foyer of the Senior School Building. (Criterion H)

Primary source

St Catherine's School including Sherren House, Campbell House and Elaine Haxton Mural, 17-21 Heyington Place Toorak, Citation Report, Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, November 2021.