



<b>Number</b>	<b>Street</b>	<b>Grading</b>
12	Darling Road	Contributory
15	Darling Road	Contributory
16	Darling Road	Contributory
18	Darling Road	Contributory
19	Darling Road	Contributory
21	Darling Road	Contributory
44	Donalda Avenue	Contributory
27	Kerferd Avenue	Contributory
827	Melbourne Road	Individual HO509
849	Melbourne Road	Individual HO510
855-865	Melbourne Road	Individual HO511
858	Melbourne Road	Contributory
871	Melbourne Road	Contributory
873	Melbourne Road	Contributory
875	Melbourne Road	Contributory
877	Melbourne Road	Contributory
879	Melbourne Road	Contributory
881	Melbourne Road	Individual HO512
885	Melbourne Road	Contributory
165	Ocean Beach Road	Individual HO520
178	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
183	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
186	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
187	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
188	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
191	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
194	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
197	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
198	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
200	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
202	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
206	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
208	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
210	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
212	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
214	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
216	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
218	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
222	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
228	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
229	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
230	Ocean Beach Road	Contributory
235	Ocean Beach Road	Individual HO521
23	Ossett Street	Contributory

Number	Street	Grading
34-36	Ossett Street	Individual HO522

**Description:**

The Residential Area of the Sorrento Historic Precinct is a non-contiguous precinct with three distinct areas that are to be listed and mapped as a serial precinct HO1D. This Area has been the centre of Sorrento's tourist development since the 1870s, has a concentration of historic buildings and is subject to development pressures. The area is covered by HO1, Sorrento Historic Precinct and subject to Clause 22.17 Sorrento Historic Precinct Policy.

The Residential Area of the Sorrento Historic Precinct comprises residential properties on Ocean Beach Road, Melbourne Road, Kerferd Avenue, Darling Road, Ossett Street and Donalda Avenue. On Ocean Beach Road properties extend from the Melbourne Road intersection to the open space and sand dunes at Sorrento Back Beach on both sides of the road. Two properties on Ossett Street are included in this section of the precinct.

From the intersection of Melbourne Road and Ossett Street extending northwards along Melbourne Road to Normanby Road the overlay includes significant properties constructed on the high rise overlooking the recreation reserve opposite where a single house at 858 Melbourne Road is also included. On Donalda Avenue the single house at number 44 is included in this section of the precinct.

East of the commercial area of Ocean Beach Road, on Kerferd Avenue and Darling Road is a non-contiguous group of seven properties to be included in the precinct.

On Ocean Beach Road small, single storey dwellings from the Late Victorian, Federation and Inter-War period predominate. The streetscape has retained an interesting character with good quality buildings in a variety of materials and styles, with generous setbacks and gardens. The limit of residential development on Ocean Beach Road is marked by Whitehall (1904), at 237 Ocean Beach Road, a large, two storey former guest house and the largest building in the precinct. The only public building in the precinct is the former Sorrento Mechanics Institute (1877), now a museum and archives at 827 Melbourne Road, beside Watts Cottage (1870) on the corner of Ocean Beach Road and Melbourne Road.

A number of newer developments exist along the south side of Ocean Beach Road from 199 Ocean Beach Road to 225 Ocean Beach Road, these have no heritage significance. On the north side of Ocean Beach Road, there are a few new developments constructed as infill between significant buildings which have no significance.

On Melbourne Road the significant residences are confined to the higher ground on the west side of the road except for the Inter-War dwelling at 858 next to the recreation reserve. On the west side of the road, the allotments are large, deep and originally extended through to Donalda Avenue at the rear. Many of these lots have now been subdivided and these new buildings on Donalda Avenue have no significance excepting 44 Donalda Avenue. On Melbourne Road the purpose, form and character of the dwellings is different to Ocean Beach Road. Here the primary building material is limestone and the houses have a Victorian grandeur and solidity which reflects the aspirations of the builders.

To the south of the commercial area of Ocean Beach Road is a section of the precinct over seven properties on Darling Road and includes 27 Kerferd Avenue. This small area contains contributory properties which have thematic associations with the rest of the residential area. These Federation and Inter-War cottages have a character very similar to those along Ocean Beach Road and were built for rental to holiday makers.

**Statement of Significance:**

What is significant?

The Sorrento Historic Precinct Residential Area, part of existing HO1, Sorrento Historic Precinct, includes properties in Ocean Beach Road extending from Melbourne Road to Sorrento Back Beach and along the west side of Melbourne Road from number 849 to Normanby Road, 44 Donalda Avenue and includes non-contiguous sections in Darling Road and on the east side of Melbourne Road.

The Residential Area retains the early alignment and arrangement of Ocean Beach Road, Melbourne Road, Ossett Street and Darling Road and contains significant residential buildings from the earliest period of development of the township to the present day.

The buildings and streetscapes contribute to the significance of the precinct.

How is it significant?

The Sorrento Historic Precinct Residential Area, is of local historical, social, aesthetic and architectural significance to the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Sorrento Historic Precinct Residential Area is of historical significance for the role it played in the early development of housing for holiday makers and locals as well as the establishment of Sorrento as a tourist resort. The intactness of the precinct and its ability to demonstrate these two key themes through its early buildings, streetscape and setting, is rare on the Mornington Peninsula and demonstrates a continuity of development from the 1870s until today that is highly valued by the community. (Criteria A, B & G)

The Sorrento Historic Precinct Residential Area demonstrates the principal characteristics of the Late Victorian, Federation and Inter-War periods of development, including the low scale of a seaside village, following the natural topography. It retains single storey residential buildings which demonstrate typical Victorian, Federation and Inter-War forms, siting and features, the landmark former guest house Whitehall and the former Mechanics Institute. (Criterion D)

The Sorrento Historic Precinct Residential Area is of aesthetic significance for its large collection of intact limestone timber and brick buildings dating from 1870 to 1926. Some of these buildings are constructed from locally sourced limestone and brick and form a vernacular building tradition on the Peninsula which is unique and highly significant. Others are excellent examples of their period and have design features which collectively contribute to the streetscape and character of the precinct. (Criteria B & E)

The Sorrento Historic Precinct Residential Area is of aesthetic significance for the combination of historic buildings, distant views of the vegetated sand dunes on the Back Beach, natural topography and streetscape qualities. The seaside village character of Ocean Beach Road and Darling Road is enhanced by the landscape setting and topography, low scale historic residences with gardens and views toward the vegetated dunes of the Back Beach. The entrance to Ocean Beach Road Residential Area is particularly distinctive with the limestone Mechanics Institute, Watts Cottage and Burgunyah on the prominent intersection of five streets. The collection of intact, quality buildings in the precinct from the late Victorian, Federation and Inter-War period contribute to this aesthetic value. The limestone residences of Melbourne Road create a more solid and conservative character, with deep setbacks, a service road and large allotments on a prominent rise. The streetscape qualities include the street alignments, gardens, setbacks and scale of development. (Criterion E)

The Sorrento Historic Precinct Residential Area is of social significance as a focus for recreational activity for both residents and tourists since the establishment of the township. Historically, many of the houses along Ocean Beach Road between Melbourne Road and the Back Beach were rented to holiday makers, or belonged to families who used them as holiday houses. Houses on Melbourne Road were built by prominent local families and many have been occupied by these families for generations. The Ocean Beach Road Residential Area has qualities which are highly valued by the local community. (Criterion G)

Sorrento Historic Precinct Residential Area is of significance for its associations with a number of people who played an important role in the development of Sorrento and/or had strong associations with shaping the fabric and character of the area, including: George Coppin, George Morce, William Skelton, the Tayton and Carbuhn families, John Spinner, James D. Allen, Ralph Marsden and William Joseph Croad. (Criterion H)

## **History:**

### **Sorrento**

The land of which Sorrento is a part is Boon wurrung/Bunurong country. The Boon wurrung/Bunurong are a predominantly coastal people whose traditional lands encompass some 7,800 square kilometres of territory around Western Port Bay and the Mornington Peninsula. The Boon wurrung/Bunurong are members of the Kulin nation who have lived in and managed their country for thousands of years. The Boon wurrung/Bunurong traditional way of life was interrupted at the turn of the nineteenth century when they made contact with sealers from Van Diemens Land and then in 1802, British sailors on board the *Lady Nelson* who were exploring Port Phillip Bay. [Butler & Context, 2012:14-19]

In September 1836, under pressure from the number of illegal occupations and squatting which had occurred, the Port Phillip land district was proclaimed open for settlement, allowing for the sale of Boon wurrung / Bunurong lands, claimed by the Crown, to be sold at auction to Europeans. Sorrento was occupied by European settlers quarrying and burning lime, fishing and practising limited agriculture. The lime burning industry was vital to the development of the Peninsula and Melbourne. In 1803 the settlers of Sullivan Bay used local lime to construct chimneys. In June 1839 John Fawkner was advertising Nepean lime for sale in Melbourne. [Port Phillip Patriot and Advertiser 22 July 1839.] Lime was transported on small lighters to boats moored out in the Channel between Sorrento Pier and the Baths. Later it became common to build kilns on the foreshore where bagged processed lime could be run out on small jetties to boats. [Hollinshed, 1982:51]

Limestone was not only an important industry on the Peninsula it has also had a lasting impact on the heritage of the area with small cottages, large public buildings, schools, hotels and mansions built from the local limestone. Nepean limestone is a vernacular tradition on the Peninsula with two distinct styles of limestone construction with early buildings being built entirely of limestone and later ones built with red brick quoining. Limestone is the dominant fabric of the northern end of Ocean Beach Road.

By the 1860s Point Nepean was recognized as not only a sublimely beautiful landscape with easy access to the Bay and the Ocean, but as a place for holidaying and respite from Melbourne. As early as 1868 George Selth Coppin(1819-1906) was planning to develop the town as a place for tourists. He purchased 225 acres and subdivided it into small allotments for shops and houses. By 1874 he had his own steamship company and then built the Continental Hotel in 1875 to accommodate them. Another influential developer of Sorrento was Charles Gavan Duffy MLA(1816-1903), who developed his 600 acres for gentleman's cliff-top villas which still line the edge of the Bay. It also laid out the alignment of Point Nepean and Hotham Roads and reserved Sorrento Park overlooking the jetty and Bay. [Butler & Context, 2012:22]

By the 1890s the township and the commercial precinct had developed further with new civic facilities such as a post office and a mechanics institute. Shops had developed on the west side of Ocean Beach Road, including Stringers Stores, the Athenaeum Theatre, the Oriental Coffee Palace and a small building (now occupied by Sportsgirl) at 54 Ocean Beach Road constructed in 1894. It was at the turn of the century that the great majority of commercial and residential buildings were constructed on both sides of Ocean Beach Road and many of these still exist. Between 1900 and 1910 a large number of buildings were constructed along Ocean Beach Road, to accommodate tourists. Many permanent and holiday homes were constructed in this period, as were schools and businesses. [Lardner, 2015:21]

The 20<sup>th</sup> century development of Sorrento has been marked by an increase in private home ownership accompanied by increasing densification and subdivision. The wealth of Melbourne's middle class after WW1 and increasing car ownership resulted in more holiday makers visiting the Peninsula, and investing in their own piece of seaside paradise. In later decades, there has been an increase in permanent residents retiring to the seaside and seeking a sea change. In recent years the increasing ease of renting properties on the internet, has led to a boom in the holiday rental market and two and three lot subdivision of existing properties.

#### Thematic History:

Sorrento was associated with early attempts to develop the Peninsula as a resort centre. As early as 1868, George Coppin, actor, philanthropist and land developer, tried to attract businessmen and others to the area. He formed the Ocean Amphitheatre Co Ltd and purchased 95 ha at Sorrento to sub-divide into smaller allotments for shops and houses. He built the Sorrento Baths and Ocean Amphitheatre Road to the Back Beach. He formed the Sorrento and Queenscliff Steam Navigation Co. Ltd (1874) to encourage tourists to the area with lower fares and the Sorrento Continental Hotel Co Ltd (1875) to build the Continental Hotel to accommodate the holiday makers. After the Sorrento jetty was built in 1870, other coastal townships benefitted when steamers, on their way to Portsea and Sorrento could also call at Rye, Rosebud, Dromana and Mornington. [Butler & Context, 2012:90, 91]

The Sorrento guesthouse, Whitehall at 231-237 Ocean Beach Road was built in 1904 for James D Allen who ran it with his daughter from 1904 to 1949. [Butler & Context, 2012:103]

#### History of the Place:

By c.1900, according to a National Library of Australia map held by the Nepean Historical Society, most of the small allotments along Ocean Amphitheatre Road and Melbourne Road had been sold to local families like the Marsden, Croad, Spinner, Carbuhn, Tayton, Walsh, Shelton, Hutchison and Wilson families as well as Melbourne investors such as Clements Langford and George Coppin.

Many local families developed holiday accommodation on Ocean Amphitheatre Road encouraged by Coppin's developments at the Back Beach and the steam tramway which trundled down the road with tourists. At the end of Ocean Amphitheatre Road where the steam tram stopped, were a number of facilities for tourists that are no longer extant. Whitehall is one of the last surviving guest houses built on the Peninsula, in 1949 it was converted to a home for the families of Royal Naval personnel and then a Migrant Workers' Hostel, before being converted back to a guest house and now a private residence. [NAA 569/201/2250]

Some families such as the Tayton, Hutchison and Marsden families constructed three or four houses in the precinct to live in one and rent the others to tourists. The history of the Carbuhn family is fairly typical and illustrative of the history of this precinct with multiple properties in one family name, much inter-marriage between families and a great deal of speculative real estate being built to service the growing tourist industry. Hans and Mary Carbuhn, emigrees from Germany, owned the boarding house known as Somerset House at 197 Ocean Beach Road. They took in their nieces, Gertrude and Doris after their father died and they opened a dressmaking business in Sorrento before Gertrude married James Tayton. Gertrude's mother Catharina built 34 Ossett Street, and the Taytons built 148, 154, and 200 Ocean Beach Road, which they lived in, as well as building holiday rentals at 23 Ossett

Street and three other houses which are no longer extant, on Lot 48. [NHS file on Carbuhn and Tayton families] Other significant houses were built by families from Melbourne who holidayed at Sorrento, such as Windy Peak, Tamar, Halcyon, Louisville and Rai Rai. Of the houses listed as contributory on Ocean Beach Road, 12 were built as holiday houses.

On Melbourne Road the housing is very different. Here the more substantial limestone houses were built by prominent local families, such as the Morce, Spinner, Croad, Hughes, Skelton and Thompson families as their permanent homes and these reflect more aspirational and conservative designs. It is interesting to speculate on why many of the local builders lived here, but the attraction of the site with large allotments, deep setbacks and prominent siting is probably part of the reason they all congregated here. The lots extended through to Donalda Avenue where rear access and outbuildings were located such as 44 Donalda Avenue.

The buildings dating from before 1900, in the Late Victorian period includes:

- Watts cottage (c.1870) 165 Ocean Beach Road
- Hill Holme (1876) 855-865 Melbourne Road
- Mechanics Institute (1877) 827 Melbourne Road
- House (1883) 202 Ocean Beach Road
- Narbeth (1884-5) 879 Melbourne Road
- Mindi (1884) 212 Ocean Beach Road
- House (1885) 871 Melbourne Road
- Annandale (1887) 210 Ocean Beach Road
- Eastcliff (1889-1905) 881 Melbourne Road
- Louisville (1890) 222 Ocean Beach Road
- House (c.1890-1920) 873 Melbourne Road
- House (1890-1910) 198 Ocean Beach Road
- Pretoria (1891) 208 Ocean Beach Road
- Somerset House (1892) 197 Ocean beach Road
- Ellerslie (1896-1899) 187 Ocean Beach Road
- House (1898) 849 Melbourne Road
- Theo Cottage (1898) 875 Melbourne Road
- House (1899) 200 Ocean Beach Road

In the Federation period, there was another surge of activity. A high percentage of significant buildings date from this period including:

- Sunnyhurst (c.1890-1910) 183 Ocean Beach Road
- Prangeville (c.1890-1910) 34 Ossett Street
- House (c.1900-1920) 23 Ossett Street
- Woodstock (c.1900) 186 Ocean Beach Road
- Retrait D'Automne (1901) 218 Ocean Beach Road
- Neuilly (1902) 16 Darling Road
- Marysville (1902) 18 Darling Road
- Halcyon (1902) 229 Ocean Beach Road
- Springville (1903) 885 Melbourne Road
- Rai Rai (1903) 228 Ocean Beach Road
- Windy Peak (1903) 230 Ocean Beach Road
- Whitehall (1904) 235 Ocean Beach Road
- Kiaora (1905) 44 Donalda Avenue
- Pembroke (1908) 877 Melbourne Road
- Waverley (c.1910) 191 Ocean Beach Road
- House (c.1910) 188 Ocean Beach Road
- House (1910-1920) 206 Ocean Beach Road
- Larnoo (1911) 19 Darling Road

In the Inter-War period much of the township remained the same, although there were numerous changes to the arrangement of the streetscape with the rise of the motor car tourist and the removal of the steam tram in 1921. Some of these buildings are significant, including:

- Tamar (1920) 214 Ocean Beach Road
- House (c.1920) 194 Ocean Beach Road



This precinct has representative housing dating to circa 1890-1945. This collection of Federation and Inter-War houses in both timber and masonry is a precinct of comparatively well preserved suburban houses in Somerville. It has some comparisons to Sorrento but was mainly owned and developed by locals rather than Melbourne families.

#### HO318 Crib Point Precinct

This precinct of houses and a single timber church is representative of the development of the town after the Flinders Naval depot was established post WW1. The housing estate was developed by a local fisherman and designed by Saxil Tuxen who also designed Ranelagh Estate. The houses were all built between 1915 and 1929 and mostly were occupied by locals.

#### HO92 Hansens Lane, Beach Houses Precinct, Balnarring Beach

This precinct of small, cheap beach houses developed in the Inter War period and has some comparisons to Sorrento in its informal layout and street character. It is characteristic of the first beachside weekender suburbs in the district. The small informal cottages are set among native vegetation close to the water.

#### HO333 Cook Street Flinders Precinct

This town centre precinct is most comparable to Sorrento Historic Precinct Commercial Area. The precinct contains a mix of church, Post Office, public hall, shopfronts and houses with infill buildings from the twentieth century. It is significant for the important evidence it provides of a pattern of development from the 1860s. Similar to Sorrento it retains evidence of early allotment patterns and demonstrates continuity from the time of first subdivision, and early development of tourism and local services.

#### **Recommendations:**

##### **Extent of curtilage:**

The whole of the precinct

##### **Significant elements or design features:**

The single storey residential character, common setbacks and street alignment.  
The landmark buildings, former Mechanics Institute and Whitehall.

##### **Extent of fabric to be retained:**

All of the Late Victorian, Federation and Inter-War fabric.

#### **Schedule:**

External Paint Controls	Yes
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Fences and Outbuildings	No
Prohibited uses	No
Incorporated plan	-
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No

#### **Other recommendations:**

Recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay as a new precinct with its own HO, to the extent of the whole precinct as defined by the accompanying mapping.