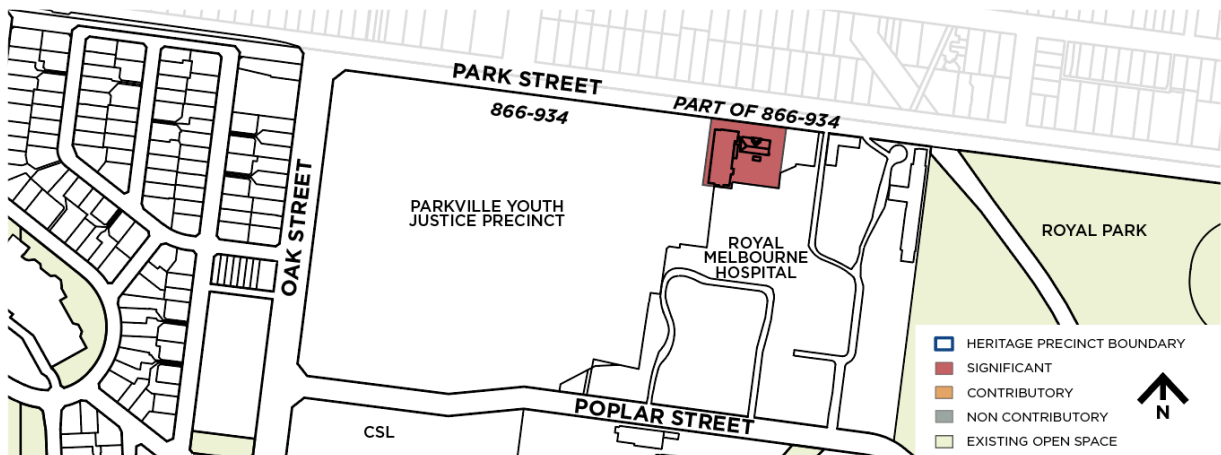


Former Royal Park Depot buildings, 866–934 (part) Park Street, Parkville Statement of Significance (GML Heritage, September 2025)

Heritage Place:	Former Royal Park Depot buildings, 866–934 (part) Park Street, Parkville	PS ref no:	HO1441
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What is significant?

The former Royal Park Depot buildings at 866–934 (part) Park Street, Parkville, including the 1925 nurses' quarters and 1940 junior girls' and toddlers' building, are significant. While the historical values of the place relate to the broader site as a whole, the significant built form is restricted to the two interwar buildings fronting Park Street.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include the:

- original siting, built form and scale of the two-storey interwar buildings; and
- exposed brick construction, and the decorative use of contrasting cream and red brick in the 1940 junior girls' and toddlers' building; and
- original design and detail of the 1925 nurses' quarters, including the rough-cast render and face brick contrasts, and the projecting bay with a faceted bay window; and
- pattern and size of the original fenestration.

This document is an incorporated document in the Melbourne Planning Scheme pursuant to section 6(2)(j) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

Security windows added to both buildings in 1961, and timber-framed windows that enclosed the ground-floor balconies in the 1925 building, are not detrimental to the significance of the place, as these are evidence of the buildings' later uses as a remand and administrative building (the 1925 building) and the classification centre (the 1940 building).

More recent alterations and additions are not significant. Although the contemporary buildings contribute to the significance of the place, they are not significant.

How is it significant?

The former Royal Park Depot buildings at 866–934 (part) Park Street, Parkville, are of local historical, representative and social significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

The overall site of the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct at 866–934 Park Street, Parkville, is of historical significance for the evidence it provides of the development of state-run institutional welfare and remand facilities in the City of Melbourne. Together with the 1875 Royal Park Industrial School buildings on the neighbouring site at 34–36 Poplar Road, Parkville (VHR H1725; HO315), it contributes to our understanding of the earliest examples of a children welfare institution in the State of Victoria, dating from the time of establishment of the Royal Park Industrial School in 1866. The place has been in continued use since this time. The site at 866–934 Park Street, Parkville, was integral to the operation of the industrial school and housed consequent generations of facilities developed by the Victorian Government including the Department for Neglected Children (1887–1924), and Children's Welfare Department (1924–60). (Criterion A)

The former Royal Park Depot buildings within part of 866–934 (part) Park Street, Parkville, are historically significant for their continued use by the government, and changes of uses from accommodation and education to administration and remand. The two extant Depot buildings include the former nurses' quarters and a former junior girls' and toddlers' building. The former nurses' quarters is a two-storey interwar building constructed in 1925 as an on-site staff accommodation and training facility for 'problem girls'. Its secondary wing, built in 1944, was demolished in c1990s. The former junior girls' and toddlers' building was developed in 1940, as part of an effort to improve the conditions of girls' quarters and to separate children who were wards of the state from those in remand. The two buildings provide evidence of the changing approaches to the care of neglected children and young offenders, and welfare services for children, throughout the twentieth century. They are a historical landmark, serving as the public-facing component of the site since their construction. (Criterion A)

The former Royal Park Depot buildings demonstrate the development of government welfare services in the City of Melbourne and Victoria more broadly. The care of children became a significant public issue in the 1920s and 1930s, and the Royal Park Depot facilities were particularly prominent in public debate regarding this issue, prompting expansion, facility improvement and development of the site in the 1920s and late 1930s onwards. These buildings date from this period of expansion, and the original fabric and later modifications are representative of the development and evolution of welfare facilities throughout the twentieth century. Their overall form and design are typically interwar, with the restrained use of materials and ornamentation common to government facilities designed by the Public Works Department in the period. The 1925 nurses' quarters building features more restrained detailing, including balconies (now enclosed) and a faceted bay window, reflecting domestic influences. The primary elevation of the 1940 building exhibits Functionalist style influences of the interwar period. This is demonstrated in its juxtaposing horizontal and vertical lines, and the simple asymmetrical forms that provide compositional interest. (Criterion D)

The former Royal Park Depot buildings are of social significance for their powerful and difficult associations for many Victorians as a place of incarceration and punishment, including a disproportionate number of Aboriginal children. As a whole, the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct site provided welfare services to children in need of care from 1866 onwards. From 1880 to 1961, the site operated as the sole reception centre for children committed to state care. At Turana, more than

3000 children were held annually into the 1980s. During the Turana years, the two interwar buildings served as administration and remand (the 1925 building) and classification and accommodation (the 1940 building). Housing the primary operations of the Turana Boys' Home facility by the late 1950s, all of the children and young people who passed through the place during this time would have been familiar with these two prominently sited interwar buildings. Both buildings are demonstrative of the place's complicated past, being the site of difficult experiences such as child abuse and the separation of Aboriginal children from their families. For Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as well as other Aboriginal people from across Victoria, this is a place associated with additional trauma and sadness because of its role in the administration of policies of child removal, which happened from the period of the industrial school up until c1970. The strong and complex associations between the site and the 'care leavers' is demonstrated through the stories and submissions of individuals shared as part of the 'Stolen Generations' testimonies and Royal Commission's public hearing in Melbourne in 2015 to enquire into the sexual abuse of former child residents. (Criterion G)

Primary source

Parkville Heritage Review (GML Heritage, October 2023)