



CITY OF VINCENT

# HERITAGE ASSESSMENT



<b>Address:</b> No. 40 Albert Street, North Perth				
<b>Precinct:</b> Smith's Lake (6)			<b>Place Name:</b> N/A	
<b>Folio:</b> 59	<b>Lot:</b> 94 & 95	<b>D/P:</b> 1823	<b>Vol.</b> 718	<b>Land Use:</b> Residential

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The place has some *aesthetic value*, as it forms a cultural environment with the former residence of Robert Irwin Browne at No. 306 Charles Street and the former Brownes milk factory on the corner of Charles and Albert Streets, North Perth.

The place has some *historic value* for its association with three generations of the Browne family and Brownes Ltd. The alterations undertaken to the house by Walter Theodore Browne in 1962 are significant in themselves as it reflects the adaptation and modernisation of a family home over a period of years.

The place has some *social value* for its association with a Western Australian family whose business and products have become a household name.

### OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

The place, which was built in 1910, has *moderate cultural heritage value* to warrant entry onto the City of Vincent's Municipal Heritage Inventory, as a Management Category B – Conservation Recommended.

## 1.0 ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Policy '*Heritage Management – Assessment*', adopted by the Council at its Ordinary Meeting held on 17 January 2006 and amended on 10 July 2012, has been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

### 1.1 PRINCIPAL HISTORIC THEMES

- Population and settlement - 1920-1947; Residential expansion
- What people did for a living - Food manufacture
- Famous people and events

#### HISTORIC SUB THEMES

- Residential Development

### 1.2 AESTHETIC VALUE

The place has some aesthetic value, as it forms a cultural environment with the former residence of Robert Irwin Browne at No. 306 Charles Street and the former Brownes milk factory on the corner of Charles and Albert Streets, North Perth.

### 1.3 HISTORIC VALUE

The place has some *historic value* for its association with three generations of the Browne family and Brownes Ltd. The alterations undertaken to the house

by Walter Theodore Browne in 1962 are significant in themselves as it reflects the adaptation and modernisation of a family home over a period of years.

#### **1.4 SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

The place has *little scientific value*.

#### **1.5 SOCIAL VALUE**

The place has some *social value* for its association with a Western Australian family whose business and products have become a household name.

### **2.0 DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

#### **2.1 RARITY**

The place is not rare and does not represent any aspect of cultural heritage of the City of Vincent that may be endangered.

#### **2.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

The place is an example of the Federation Bungalow style of architecture.

#### **2.3 CONDITION**

The place appears to be in good condition.

#### **2.4 INTEGRITY**

The place has a high degree of integrity, remaining its original residential use.

#### **2.5 AUTHENTICITY**

The place has a low degree of authenticity as much of the original fabric of the place has been altered. Original window openings and some door openings have been altered to accommodate wider windows and doors and the original roofing material and verandah posts have been removed and replaced. Part of the central western wall of the central hallway has been removed to increase the size of the living room and the rooms to the rear of the house have been altered and extended. Cornices, ceiling ornaments, architraves and skirtings have been replaced in some of the rooms of the house.

### **3.0 SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

#### **3.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

The subject place is situated on Lots 94 and 95 of Swan Location 653. Both lots were first purchased by Charles Nunn Kidman of Perth in 1898. Ownership of the two lots was transferred to Kenneth McKenzie of Fremantle in 1899 and then to plumber, George Champ, in 1902.<sup>1</sup> No.40 Albert Street, (near the corner of Charles Street) first appears in Wise's Post Office Directories in 1910. There is a strong presumption that George Champ constructed the house that is situated on Lots 94 and 95 that year. In 1919, ownership of the lots was transferred to dairyman, Edward Browne. Edward Browne appears in the City of Perth rates books for 1920 as the owner of the house and garden on Lots 94 and 95 Albert Street. The value of the property that year was recorded as being £525, which was an average value for a brick home at that time.

Edward Browne was born in 1860 in Northern Ireland. In 1875, he travelled by ship to New Zealand and then in 1885, he travelled to Western Australia following the discovery of gold in the Kimberley region. In 1887, Edward

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<sup>1</sup> Certificate of Title Vol CLIII, Fol 53, 20 July 1898.

Browne arrived in Perth and purchased a small piece of land from Sir Ernest Shenton in the area that is now known as Shenton Park. Here he established a small dairy and orchard and as a pioneer dairy farmer, he supplied milk to many of the prominent people of Perth. Every day he would deliver milk to the township of Perth, passing through Kings Park on his way.<sup>2</sup>

In 1889, Edward Browne married Mary Gamble at Cannington and their first two sons, Robert and Frank were born at their farm in Shenton Park. In 1896, Edward Browne purchased 50 acres of land on Coode Street in Bayswater and it was here that he established a new dairy farm. In 1907, Edward and Mary Browne gave birth to another son, Walter Theodore, at their farm in Bayswater. In 1915, Edward bought the bankrupt Dairy Farmers Cooperative Ltd in Charles Street, North Perth and shortly after this, the Browne family came to live in North Perth.<sup>3</sup>

In 1926, Edward Browne passed away and upon his death, his nineteen year old son, Walter Theodore Browne, travelled to New South Wales where he attended Hawkesbury College. Walter Browne completed a two year dairy diploma at the college during the years 1927 to 1928. Upon completing his diploma, Walter Browne returned to Perth and became a joint managing director of Brownes Ltd with his brother, Robert Irwin Browne.<sup>4</sup> Robert had formed his father's dairy business into a Limited Liability Company in 1927.<sup>5</sup> By this time, the business consisted of the Charles Street milk factory, the Bayswater cattle farm and a milk depot at Brunswick Junction.<sup>6</sup>

Brownes Ltd continued to expand and develop during the 1930s, even through the years of the depression. Walter Browne attributed much of the success of the business to consumer patronage and skilful marketing of their products.<sup>7</sup> The 1934 National Handbook of Australia's Industries reported that Brownes Ltd was the largest wholesale Milk Treatment Depot in Western Australia, with a yearly turnover of one million gallons of treated milk. In comparison, the Dairy Farmers Cooperative Ltd that had previously occupied the Charles Street dairy had a yearly turnover of only forty gallons of milk. The National Handbook of Australia's Industries also reported that:

Brownes Limited is a firm that built up a very large business on the basis of the quality of its products and hygienic method of treatment and manufacture... never having a prosecution taken out against it in its twenty years of trading for any breach of the Health Regulations relative to the quality and standard of milk.<sup>8</sup>

In 1934, Brownes Ltd introduced the first chocolate milk (Dairy Choc) to Western Australia and by this time, they were also manufacturing butter, cheese and ice-cream. In 1949, Brownes Ltd established a pasteurisation plant, despite the fact that the process of pasteurisation had been introduced to Western Australia more than twenty years earlier in 1926. People were slow to embrace pasteurised milk and it wasn't until the late 1940s that chilled milk in bottles became widely accepted in preference to the traditional fresh milk

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<sup>2</sup> *Walter, Theodore Browne, Oral History*, JS Battye Library of Western Australia, 1990.

<sup>3</sup> *Walter, Theodore Browne, Oral History*, JS Battye Library of Western Australia, 1990.

<sup>4</sup> *Walter, Theodore Browne, Oral History*, JS Battye Library of Western Australia, 1990.

<sup>5</sup> Pratt, A ed, *National Handbook of Australia's Industries*. Melbourne: The Specialty Press, 1934: p.574.

<sup>6</sup> *Walter, Theodore Browne, Oral History*, JS Battye Library of Western Australia, 1990.

<sup>7</sup> *Walter, Theodore Browne, Oral History*, JS Battye Library of Western Australia, 1990.

<sup>8</sup> Pratt, A ed, *National Handbook of Australia's Industries*. Melbourne: The Specialty Press, 1934: p.574.

supply.<sup>9</sup> After the introduction of pasteurised milk, Brownes Ltd became the first Western Australian company to introduce milk cartons, stirring much controversy.<sup>10</sup>

During World War II, the Brownes dairy at Bayswater was shut down and closed and during the 1950s, Peters Ltd began investing money in the Brownes Ltd milk depot at Brunswick. In 1962, Peters Ltd purchased the entire company.<sup>11</sup> According to Walter Browne, the approach by Peters Ltd to take over Browne's Ltd was accepted by the Brownes shareholders and brought about a very efficient merger in the food industries.<sup>12</sup> Walter and Robert Browne remained managing directors of the newly formed company until their retirements in the late 1960s.<sup>13</sup>

When Edward Browne passed away in 1926, ownership of his house at No.40 Albert Street, North Perth was transferred to the Western Australian Trustees as the executors of his will.<sup>14</sup> His wife, Mary Browne resided at the house until her death, however, during this time ownership of the house remained with the Western Australian Trustees.<sup>15</sup> It wasn't until after her death in 1961 that ownership of the house was returned to the Browne family. In 1961, Robert and Walter Browne became tenants in common in equal shares of the property.<sup>16</sup>

In 1962, Walter Browne became the sole owner of the property and took up residence there.<sup>17</sup> Robert Browne was residing at his own family home at No.306 (Lots 98, 99 and 100) Charles Street, North Perth. Robert Browne built this house in 1930, after acquiring the land in 1929.<sup>18</sup> The rear of No.306 Charles Street abuts the side of No.40 Albert Street, North Perth and both properties were situated directly across the road from the Browne's milk factory on Charles Street.

In 1962, Walter Browne undertook additions and alterations to the house at No.40 Albert Street, North Perth. Comparing the City of Perth Building archive plans for this work to the footprint of the house shown on the 1924 MWSSDD survey field book of Albert Street, North Perth, it is evident that additions were undertaken to extend and re-configure the kitchen, verandah and bathroom at the rear of the house. The additions facilitated the creation of a new kitchen, bathroom and sunroom. The rear eastern room of the house was also extended into the eastern side verandah. All doors and windows were removed and the openings were all altered to accommodate new, wider doors and windows. The original verandah posts were replaced with new steel posts and the roof was reclad with concrete tiles.<sup>19</sup>

In 1968, ownership of the property was transferred to Ava Alberta Browne and shortly after her death in January 2000, ownership of the property was

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<sup>9</sup> *Walter, Theodore Browne, Oral History*, JS Battye Library of Western Australia, 1990.

<sup>10</sup> *Household Name in Dairy Products*, Obituary, Walter T. Browne, 1907-2000. Sunday Times, 31 Dec 2000: p 42.

<sup>11</sup> *Household Name in Dairy Products*, Obituary, Walter T. Browne, 1907-2000. Sunday Times, 31 Dec 2000: p 42.

<sup>12</sup> *Walter, Theodore Browne, Oral History*, JS Battye Library of Western Australia, 1990.

<sup>13</sup> *Household Name in Dairy Products*, Obituary, Walter T. Browne, 1907-2000. Sunday Times, 31 Dec 2000: p 42.

<sup>14</sup> Certificate of Title Vol 718, Fol 59, 4 September, 1919.

<sup>15</sup> Russell Walter Browne, 2001.

<sup>16</sup> Certificate of Title Vol 718, Fol 59, 4 September, 1919.

<sup>17</sup> Certificate of Title Vol 718, Fol 59, 4 September, 1919.

<sup>18</sup> City of Perth, Building Archive Cards, Albert Street, 1930.

<sup>19</sup> Perth City Council Building Archives, 1276/64.

transferred to Russell Walter Browne, the son of Walter Theodore Browne.<sup>20</sup> Walter Browne passed away in December 2000.<sup>21</sup> The house is presently still occupied by Russell Browne and his family with an intention to sell.

## 3.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

### The Place

The place is a rendered brick and concrete tile house with a large hipped roof and wide verandahs along the front and side elevations. At the apex of the hipped roof are two gablet vents, facing east and west. The verandah roofs are continuous with the main roof line and are supported by steel posts. The verandah floors are concrete.

The place has a double room frontage and a central front entry with double glass doors and flyscreen doors. On either side of the front entry are two large, square casement windows comprising several rectangular panels. All of the windows along the front and side elevations match this description. The windows and front doors were installed during the alterations that were undertaken to the place in 1962 and their style is typical to this era.

The front entry opens onto a wide central hallway and there are two rooms projecting off either side of the hallway. The hallway ends with a set of double glass doors opening onto the living room. The end of the hallway now was once the centre of the hallway. The original rear half of the hallway no longer exists as its western wall was demolished in order to expand the living room. Evidence of the original location of this wall can be seen on the northern and southern walls of the living room.

The original skirtings and architraves are in place in the hallway and the two front rooms and the internal doors to the front rooms are also original. The ceilings of both rooms appear to have been replaced and the front eastern room contains a 1930s style ceiling ornament. The double glass doors at the end of the hallway were installed during the 1962 alterations and the original door opening had to be widened to accommodate the new doors.

The living room is a large room, expanded in size by the removal of the rear half of the hallway. There is a fireplace on the southern wall of the living room. The original firebreast is in place, but the fireplace itself is a square, brick 'fake' fireplace. The ceiling bears a large square 1960s style ceiling ornament. The walls of the living room are covered in wallpaper depicting images of Japanese bonsais. There is a window along the western wall, looking onto the western side verandah. On the northern wall is a set of double glass doors that open onto the kitchen. These doors are situated where the original central hallway would have ended.

Along the eastern wall of the living room are entrances onto two rooms. Entry to these rooms would have originally been off the central hallway. The original architraves to these rooms and the skirtings along the eastern wall of the living room are still in place. The door to the southern-most of these rooms is original, however, the ceilings in this room appear to have been replaced. There is a window along the eastern wall of this room, looking onto the eastern side verandah. The other room to the north has been extended east, claiming what was once part of the eastern side verandah. There is a skillion roof over this

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<sup>20</sup> Certificate of Title Vol 718, Fol 59, 4 September, 1919.

<sup>21</sup> Certificate of Title Vol 718, Fol 59, 4 September, 1919.

small extension. There are irregular ceiling heights in this room, with the ceiling of the extension being lower than the ceiling of the original part of the room. The original ceilings and cornices of this room appear to have been replaced. There is a window on the eastern wall of this room and a set of double doors on the southern wall, which open onto the eastern side verandah. On the northern wall is a sliding door opening onto what the 1962 plans of the house refer to as the 'sun room'.

The 'sun room' was added to the house in 1962 and is situated where the original bathroom of the house once was. There are windows along the northern and eastern walls of the room. Along the western wall is an entry onto a hallway. Off this hallway is an entry onto the bathroom, which was newly created during the 1962 alterations to the house, and a pantry. The end of the hallway opens onto the kitchen. The kitchen contains a 1930s Metter's stove and c.1960 kitchen fittings. Along the northern wall is a wide casement window and a door onto the back verandah. The kitchen, bathroom, sunroom and back verandah are all housed under one skillion roof. The rear elevation of the house is the only elevation where the brickwork has not been rendered.

There is a large backyard with a well kept lawn and small and medium size plantings. Along the western boundary are external toilet and laundry buildings that are constructed from brick and iron. The rear boundary of the property is delineated by a visually permeable timber picket fence. The western and rear boundaries and part of the eastern boundary of the property are flanked by right-of-ways.

### **Streetscape**

The subject place is located near the corner of Albert and Charles Streets, North Perth. To its west is a corner shop (with attached house) that addresses the corner of Charles and Albert Streets. The next property along Charles Street heading north is the former residence of Robert Irwin Browne - the rear of this property abuts the side of the subject property at No.40 Albert Street. On the opposite side of Charles Street, directly across from these properties, is the former Brownes milk factory.

Along Albert Street, the subject place is surrounded by mostly brick and tile and brick and iron houses from the early twentieth century. There are also some late twentieth century brick and tile houses. Architecturally, the houses along Albert Street are all varied, however, they maintain a sense of continuity in terms of setbacks and scale.

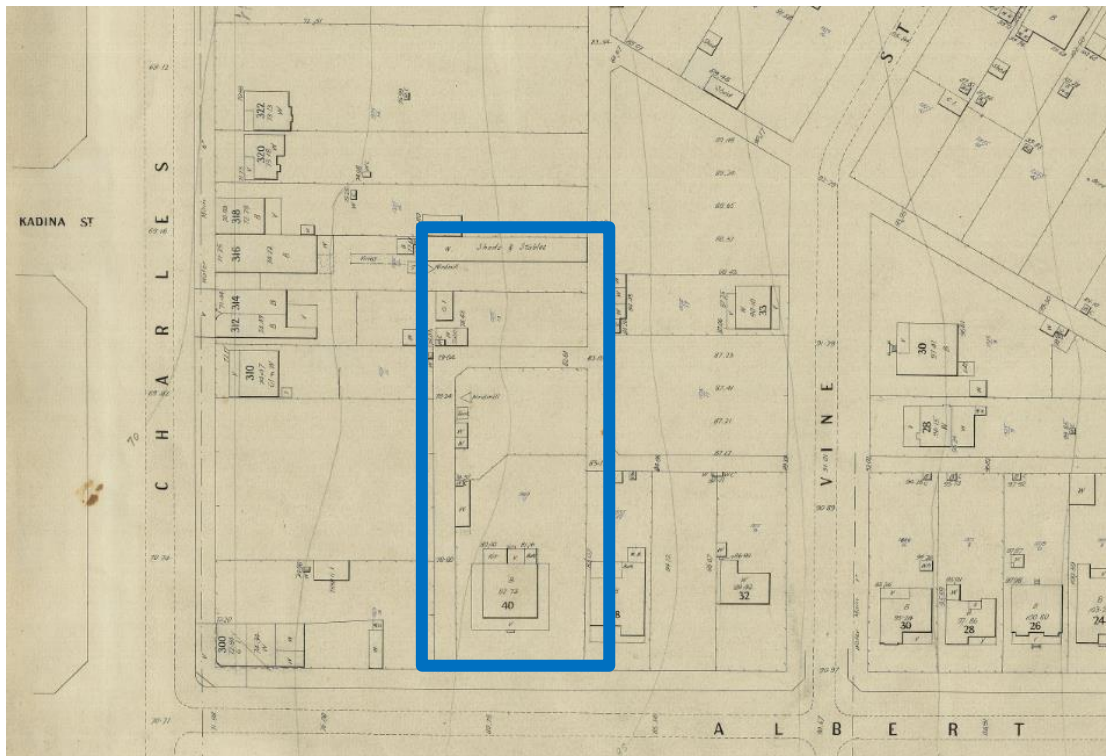
## **3.4 REFERENCES**

Certificate of Title  
City of Perth Building Licence Cards  
City of Perth, Building Archive Cards, Albert Street, 1930.  
H. Pierssené & H. Wise & Co., The Western Australian Post Office Directories.  
Household Name in Dairy Products, Obituary.  
Perth City Council Building Archives, 1276/64.  
Pratt, A ed, *National Handbook of Australia's Industries*. Melbourne: The Specialty Press.  
The Metropolitan Water Supply Sewerage & Drainage Department (MWSS&DD) plans.  
Walter, Theodore Browne, Oral History, JS Battye Library of Western Australia, 1990.

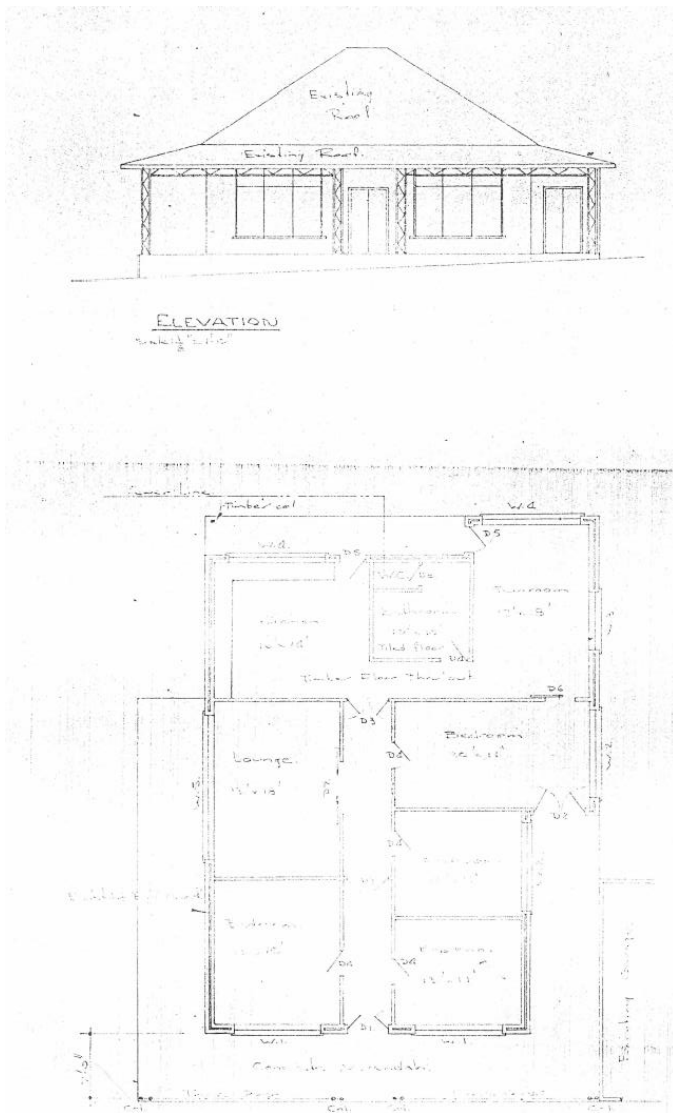
## Appendix – Photographs & Plans



City of Vincent Aerial Photograph 2017.



The Metropolitan Water Supply Sewerage & Drainage Department (MWSS&DD) plans dated 1924.

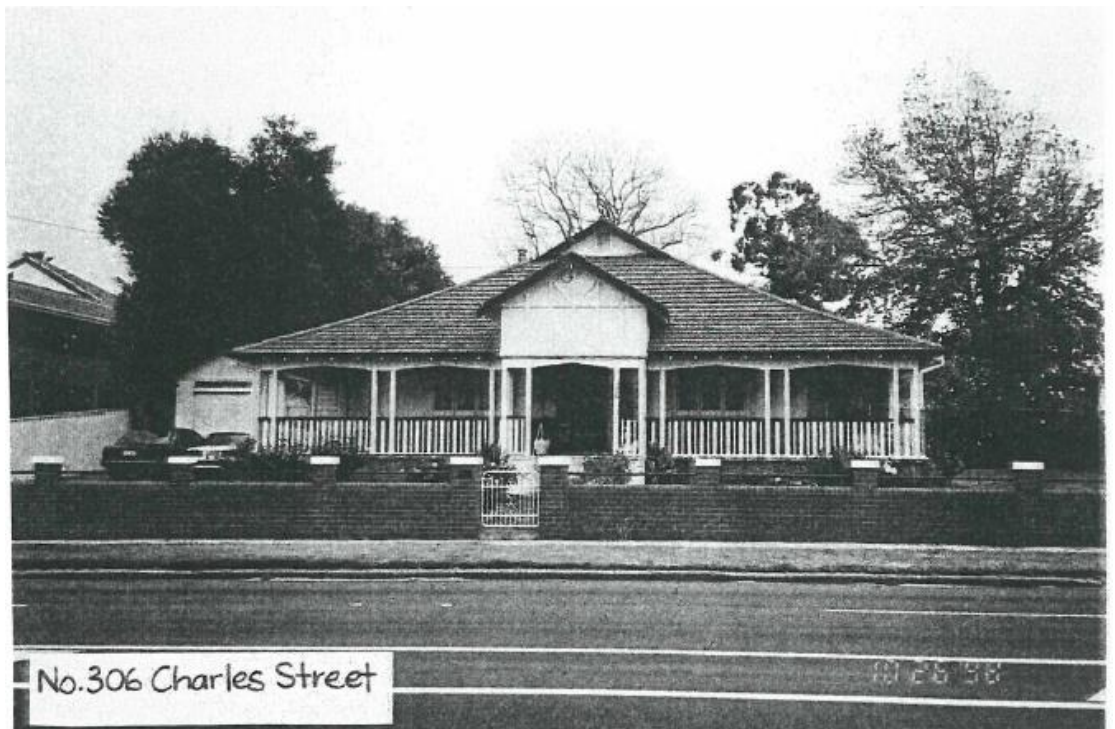


Plan dated 1962





Photograph dated 1998



Photograph dated 1998



Front elevation



Streetscape



1961 Addition

