

## MONT ALBERT SHOPPING CENTRE PRECINCT

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### CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

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#### Whitehorse City Council

To determine whether your house is included in the Heritage Overlay or whether you need a planning permit contact:

**City of Whitehorse Planning Department**  
**379-397 Whitehorse Rd, Nunawading**  
**Tel. (03) 9262 – 6303**

Further technical information and advice specifically related to how your property can be altered while retaining its heritage significance can be obtained from the Heritage Advisor at the Council. Speak to a planner at the Council to make an appointment.

#### Other Contacts

As well as being able to inform you as to whether your dwelling is listed with them, the following organisations are good sources of information regarding a range of heritage matters.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Heritage Victoria</b> ph: 8644 8800 <a href="http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au">www.heritage.vic.gov.au</a></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage &amp; the Arts</b> ph: (02) 6274 1111 <a href="http://www.environment.gov.au">www.environment.gov.au</a></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>National Trust of Australia (Victoria)</b> ph: 9654 4711 <a href="http://www.nattrust.com.au">www.nattrust.com.au</a></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Aboriginal Affairs Victoria</b> ph: 9208 3333 <a href="http://www.aboriginalaffairs.vic.gov.au">www.aboriginalaffairs.vic.gov.au</a></li></ul>

#### Relevant Documents and Resources for assistance

Associated Planning documents available from Council:

1. The former City of Box Hill Heritage & Conservation Study, Andrew Ward & Associates, 1990.
2. Nunawading Heritage Awareness Study, Context, 1994.
3. City of Whitehorse Heritage Review, Allom Lovell & Associates, April 1999.
4. City of Whitehorse Heritage Review, Andrew Ward and Associates, 2001.
5. The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999.
6. Clause 22.11 of the Whitehorse Planning Scheme "Heritage Buildings and Precincts".

#### Sources of local historical information:

1. History section of your local library; and
2. Historical Societies:
  - **Box Hill Historical Society Inc.**  
Heritage Centre, Box Hill Town Hall  
PO Box 268, Box Hill 3128  
Ph. 9897 4167
  - **Burwood History Group**  
Old Burwood Primary School  
172 Burwood Highway, Burwood 3125  
Ph. 9808 5482
  - **Whitehorse Historical Society Inc.**  
Local History Room, Schwerkolt Cottage  
& Museum Complex  
Deep Creek Road, Mitcham  
PO Box 271, Mitcham 3132  
Ph. 9873 4946
  - **Surrey Hills Historical Society Inc.**  
Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre  
157 Union Road, Surrey Hills 3127  
Ph. 9849 1161

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**MONT ALBERT SHOPPING CENTRE PRECINCT, MONT ALBERT, HO. 103**

**Purpose of these Guidelines**

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that new work undertaken to places in the Mont Albert Shopping Precinct retain the overall qualities, which contribute to the precinct’s cultural heritage significance and character.

The key objective is to protect the significant views of the streetscape and character of the area as viewed by the local community and general public.

Council will use these guidelines, as well as the advice of its Heritage Advisor, when assessing town-planning applications for development proposals within the heritage area. These Guidelines are used in conjunction with the Council’s Heritage Policy (Clause 22.11 of the Whitehorse Planning Scheme) and the State Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01 of the Whitehorse Planning Scheme).

These guidelines are also to assist owners of heritage places in determining what may be acceptable in the development of their place.

**Properties included in the Mont Albert Shopping Centre Precinct**

- 2 – 14A Churchill Street
- 9 – 19, 4 – 48 Hamilton Street
- Mont Albert Railway Station

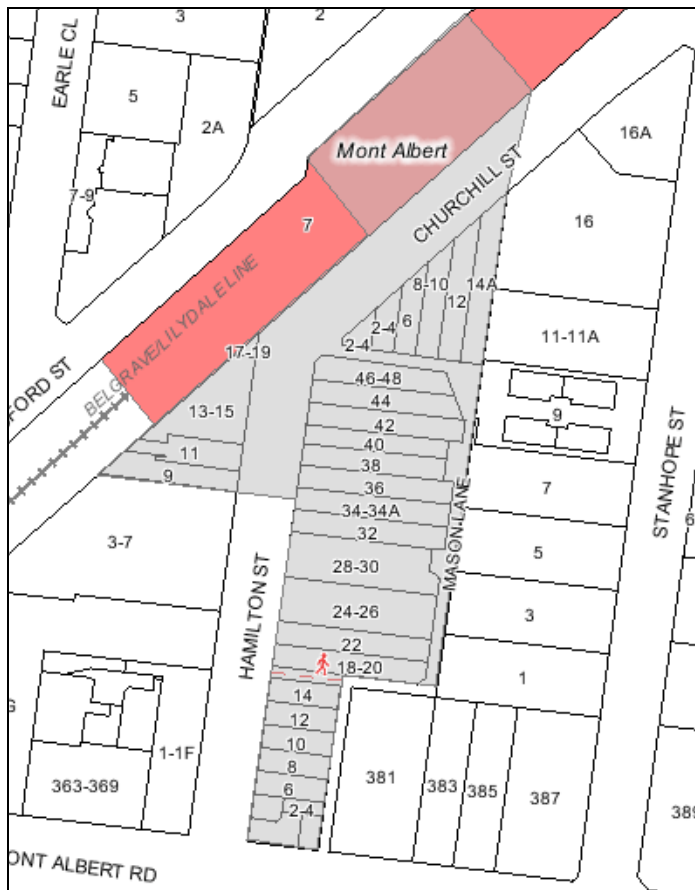


Figure 1: Boundaries of the Mont Albert Shopping Centre Precinct

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### Precincts

In Whitehorse precincts have been identified for protection in the Heritage Overlay because they typically:

- retain historically important street layouts and subdivisions;
- display consistency of scale, height and materials;
- display a stylistic consistency; and
- contain mainly historically or architecturally significant buildings which are substantially intact.

In a precinct the relationship between the buildings is just as important as the individual buildings themselves. Therefore retention of the streetscape appearance and views to enable an understanding of this relationship by the public is of prime importance.

### Mont Albert Shopping Centre Precinct Statement of Significance

The Mont Albert Shopping Centre is of considerable aesthetic significance. The precinct is the most intact inter – War shopping centre in the City of Whitehorse. Although several shopping centres in the municipality were developed adjacent to railway stations in the inter – War period, Mont Albert retains the greatest number of relatively intact shops, which display typical inter – War architectural details, particularly at parapet level. Historically, the stylistic homogeneity of the precinct's building stock reflects the large amount of residential development, which occurred in the Mont Albert area in the first three decades of the twentieth century.



Figure 2. Hamilton Street shops



Figure 3. Churchill Street Shops

### Characteristics of the precinct

- Mont Albert Shopping Centre comprises a continuous strip of shops along the east side of Hamilton Street and in Churchill Street, opposite the Railway Station, and a shorter strip of shops at the north end of the west side of Hamilton Street.
- A mix of single storey and double storey shop buildings.
- Predominantly masonry buildings.
- The shops in the precinct were predominantly built between the mid - 1910s and 1930.
- Typical characteristics displayed by many of the shops include plain parapets comprising red or clinker brick piers flanking rendered panels, sometimes with raised central sections.
- Some of the shops in Hamilton Street have skillion-roofed verandahs with timber posts. Not all of these are original or suitable to the style of building.
- In common with most shopping centres, several of the shopfronts have been considerably altered, although some retain original or early shopfront elements.
- Some of the shops have cantilever verandahs, the scale of which matches the posted verandahs. Some cantilever verandahs may be original.

## **ALTERATIONS**

### **Site and Building Analysis**

Before commencing a design for alterations you need to gain an understanding of the significance of your individual property, the elements which contribute to this significance, and its contribution to the streetscape value of the area. Understanding this can also assist in identifying areas of the site and building that can undergo alterations.

One of the key considerations in making alterations to a building within a Heritage Overlay precinct is the effect the alteration will have on the streetscape. It is the streetscape view that is often the most important element to retain and alterations should aim to minimise visual intrusion on the streetscape. Alterations should not obscure the understanding and character of a heritage area. This includes the front view of your dwelling as well as setbacks, fences and kerbs.

Consider historic features and viewlines, which need to be protected to ensure the contributory elements of the place and adjoining properties, are not obscured.

The aim should be to retain the character of the streetscape.

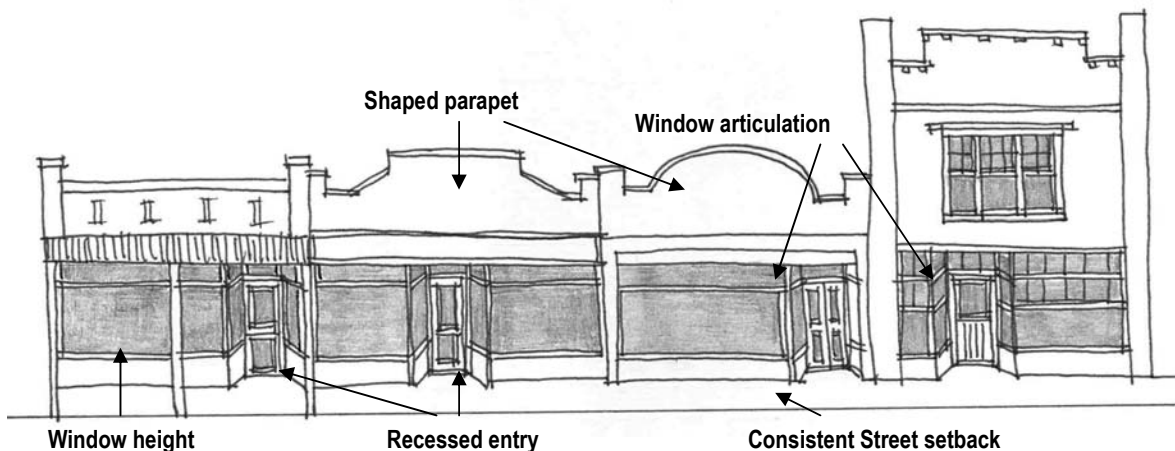


Figure 4. Characteristics of significant buildings contributing to the heritage streetscape

### **Returning Your Building to an earlier appearance**

In some cases it may be possible and desirable to restore a building to its earlier appearance.

Although your proposal may be returning your property to its original significant appearance, these changes are still considered to be an alteration and will require a planning permit.

Original elements or details, such as a verandah, should only be reinstated if there is enough evidence to do so accurately. Old photographs of your property can provide evidence of an earlier detail that has since been removed. The same proportions of elements and quality of materials should be used as the original.

The date of the reinstatement should be discretely placed on the reconstructed element. This will provide evidence for future interpretation of the building to indicate where and when change has occurred.

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### ALTERATIONS

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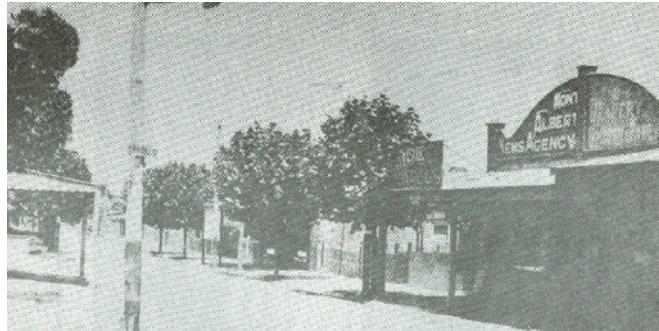
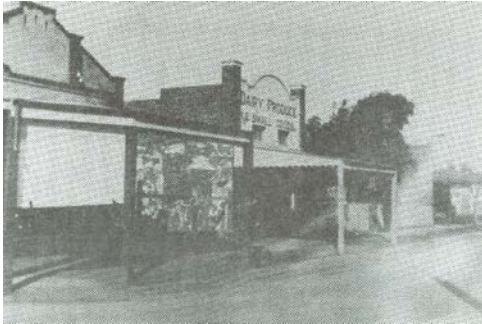


Figure 5. Hamilton Street Shops (west side) 1919      Figure 6. Image of Hamilton Street Shops (east side) c. 1923  
Source: Mona Stuart Webster, The History of the Mont Albert shopping Centre 1887-1985

#### Visibility of alterations

One of the key considerations in making alterations to a property within a Heritage Overlay is the effect the alteration will have on the streetscape or other public views. For a number of the commercial buildings in the Mont Albert Shopping Precinct there are public views to the sides of buildings as well as the front.

It is often difficult to achieve alterations and additions to commercial buildings that minimise impact on the heritage streetscape values. This is due to the fact that the buildings are closer to the street and more of the building is visible to the public.

Generally changes to openings (windows and doors) and detailing that can be viewed from the public are not appropriate unless returning a building to an earlier appearance. For example it is not appropriate to enlarge window or door openings or replace timber window frames with aluminium window frames.

Changes such as these will mean that important information about how the building was originally designed/constructed will be lost. Alterations to less significant elevations or where change has already occurred may be possible.

#### Exterior Painting

Colour schemes for heritage buildings should relate to the period and style of construction and the character of the streetscape and heritage area.

It is not the colour that is necessarily the most important consideration, but the placement of the colours. For example Victorian the walls to weatherboard buildings were often painted in a light stone colour to simulate stone. Joinery was painted in creams and rich stone and Indian red and gutters and downpipes were often painted in dark shades also used on doors and windows.

When choosing colours, always obtain paint samples so you can look at the colours together and against your building under natural daylight. Colour schemes for additions can be similar to the existing building. They should be chosen to ensure the existing significant building remains the dominant element in streetscape views.

## MONT ALBERT SHOPPING CENTRE PRECINCT

### ALTERATIONS

#### Verandahs

Construction of verandahs on significant buildings should respect the height and form of existing heritage verandahs and the style of the significant building. In the Mont Albert Precinct both cantilever and post verandahs have been used historically. If the building has not previously had a verandah or the previous style of verandah is unknown the new verandah should be sympathetic and contemporary and not replicate a historic verandah. The use of Victorian/Edwardian style posts and cast iron detailing or timber brackets is not suitable for this precinct which dates from the 1920s. Simple skillion roofed verandah with plain square timber posts or cantilever (similar to 2-4 Hamilton Street) would be an appropriate contemporary verandah.

Restoration and repair of an existing historical verandah is preferable to demolition and construction of a new verandah. In some cases a significant building may have had its original verandah removed. An original verandah should only be reinstated where there is sufficient evidence to reconstruct it accurately. Accurate reconstruction involves constructing the new verandah to the same details and materials as the original. If there is not sufficient evidence for accurate reconstruction a contemporary sympathetic verandah would be more appropriate.

#### Glazing and Openings

Large areas of glazing at the shop front are common for commercial heritage buildings. The glazing however was traditionally divided by glazing bars and was not constructed from floor to ceiling. Alterations to existing glazing on the ground floor of commercial buildings should retain the window heights and articulation of the original windows.

Replacement of existing timber frames to windows and doors with aluminium frames is inappropriate and will not be supported. The historical configuration of a recessed entry to a commercial building should be retained. The plinth to the windows should also be retained.

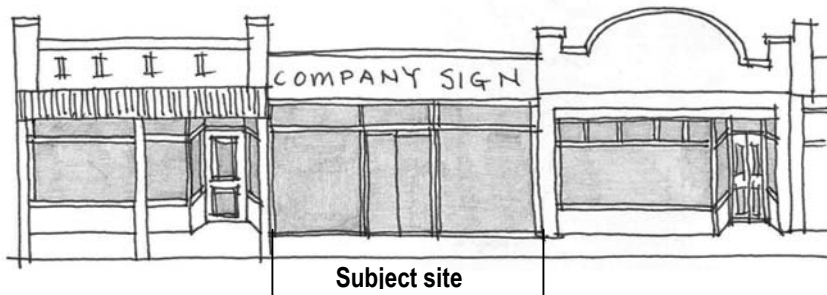


Figure 7. Bad example of alteration to shopfront

The above diagram shows a bad example of alterations to a commercial shopfront. The floor to ceiling glazing does not reflect the existing patterning and therefore dominates the streetscape. The large area of signage, loss of the recessed entry and use of double glazed doors compound the dominance of this building in the streetscape.

#### Detailing

Commercial franchise businesses, which use a standard building design, should not be used in heritage precincts as they are not designed with specific localities in mind and their aim is often to dominate the streetscape. If a commercial franchise business is proposed, modifications to the standard design are essential in the Mont Albert Shopping Precinct to respect the significance of the streetscape.

Standard corporate colours may also be inappropriate in a heritage area. Carefully placed corporate signage can be used to distinguish a particular corporation in a heritage area.

Replication of historic detailing from adjacent heritage commercial buildings should not be used in designs for additions and alteration. Contemporary details that are sympathetic with the heritage buildings should be used. Parapets can be shaped, but should be done so in a contemporary and simplified manner.

## MONT ALBERT SHOPPING CENTRE PRECINCT

### ADDITIONS

It is not always possible to add to a significant/contributory building in a way that will not be seen from the public view. The design of an addition, which is visible within a heritage area, is very important. It must retain the visual dominance of the significant elements of the property and the significant aspects of the heritage area.

Demolition of a section of the building that has no significance to make way for an addition may be possible for some buildings.

An addition to a contributory building should not overwhelm the form of the existing building and it should not dominate the streetscape.

Alterations should be recessive to the significant building and to the streetscape.

#### Upper Storey Additions

A second floor addition must not dominate the existing building. The building is significant because of its existing character and this should not be overwhelmed. There are opportunities for upper storey additions to some commercial buildings if well sited back from the front parapet. If there is no parapet an upper storey addition should be set behind the ridgeline of the main roof form of the existing building.

There is no specific height recommended for upper storey additions to heritage buildings, the main concern being minimal visibility from the street. Each case is individual and should take into consideration the following:

- The height and number of storeys of adjacent buildings. The addition should be similar in scale to adjacent buildings in the street.
- Achieve minimal visibility of the addition from the street by designing within the building envelope determined by the sight lines from the street.
- Retention of the roof form of the significant building.

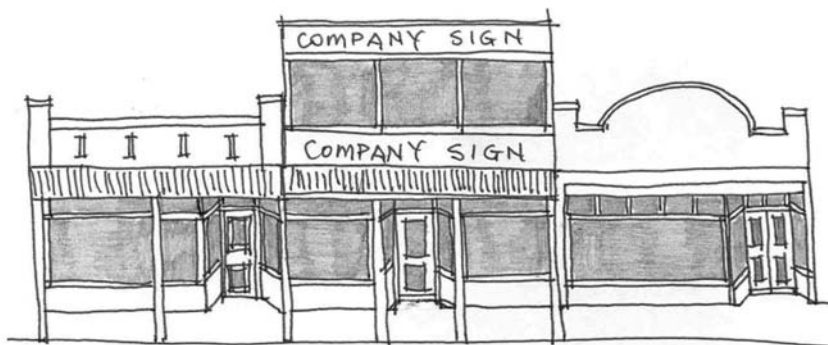


Figure 9. New signage and upper storey addition

The above diagram shows a bad example of an upper storey addition to a commercial building. The central building is a bad example for the following reasons:

- The upper storey has an inappropriate band of windows, which will dominate the streetscape;
- The addition does not retain the roof form/parapet of the existing building;
- The addition is not set back from the street; and
- The roof or parapet to the addition is not pitched or shaped.

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### ADDITIONS

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#### Distinguishing Old from New

It is important to distinguish the new work from the existing building. In altering a heritage building, you are adding a chapter to its history. Always avoid replication of heritage elements. Reproduced elements are often incorrect in proportion and materials. They obscure the understanding of the history and age of the place and its later alterations.

Simple detailing of the addition is encouraged so the addition does not detract from the significant elements of the existing building.

#### Openings

The window openings for additions visible from the street should have similar proportions to the existing significant windows. They should suit the style of the building. The detailing of new windows should be simpler to distinguish them from the originals. The use of reflective or tinted glass should be avoided.

Large areas of glazing do not usually fit well on upper levels of buildings, as this is not characteristic of commercial heritage buildings and furthermore large areas of glazing dominate the streetscape. Bands of windows are also inappropriate, as they will commonly not reflect the patterning of the heritage buildings.

Tinted or reflective glass is not appropriate for additions to commercial and public buildings as they dominate the streetscape.

#### Materials

Materials and finishes for additions should be sympathetic to the existing building. It is not always necessary to copy the existing materials. Tinted or painted render over a lightweight construction is often a good alternative for additions to masonry buildings. Timber additions are usually the most appropriate for weatherboard buildings.

The traditional roofs are generally clad in corrugated galvanised iron. The closest modern equivalent to this is corrugated galvanised steel. Colorbond, which has a pre-finished colour, is also a suitable alternative, where the selected colour has a muted tone and does not dominate or have a high degree of reflectivity.

A zincalume finish is not suitable for heritage areas because of its high degree of reflectivity.

Previously unpainted finishes such as face brickwork or stone should not be painted.

#### Design Excellence

All of the considerations listed above should not result in boring design. It is important to strive for excellence and to remember that the new alteration or addition may be considered significant in the future.

The addition itself needs to be successfully designed, aesthetically and functionally. As an objective, consider that in 50 years, your contemporary design may be conserved as an example of good twenty first century design.



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### INFILL

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New infill buildings can occur in the Mont Albert Shopping Precinct where there are empty sites or where non contributory building have been demolished.

#### **Setback & Orientation**

The commercial buildings in Mont Albert Shopping Centre Precinct are mostly erected to the footpath line.

New infill buildings should retain the existing building line, paying close attention to methods of entry. On many early commercial buildings the entry to the building is recessed. If this is the case, infill buildings should also retain this.

#### **Heights**

The height and proportions of the infill building should reflect the dominant roof height of heritage buildings in the street. The commercial buildings are a mixture of single storey and two storey buildings. The predominant feel should be of single storey to the street with upper storeys set back from the street frontage.

Two storey infill buildings are allowable but a mixture of single storey and double storey buildings should be retained in the streetscape.

#### **Form, Scale and Massing**

Consideration should be given to the continuity of the existing proportion and rhythm of architectural elements such as verandahs, parapets, windows and doors.

Infill buildings in commercial areas which are larger than the surrounding buildings can have their bulk reduced by breaking long walls into bays or by arranging the openings in the wall so that their size and shape reflect the structure and the openings of its neighbours.

Breaking up the roof forms is another way to reduce the mass of larger developments. It is preferable that the main roof form be concealed behind a shaped parapet.

#### **Detailing**

Commercial franchise businesses, which use a standard building design, should not be used in heritage precincts as they are not designed with specific localities in mind and their aim is often to dominate the streetscape.

If a commercial franchise business is proposed, modifications to the standard design are essential in the precinct to respect the significance of the heritage streetscape. This may include changes to signage to make it more appropriate or exclusion of the need to use corporate colours.

Replication of historic detail from adjacent heritage commercial buildings or other earlier styles of buildings should not be used in the design of infill buildings. Contemporary detailing that is sympathetic to the heritage buildings should be used.

Parapets can be shaped, but should be done so in a contemporary and simplified manner.

#### **Glazing**

Glazing on the ground floor of infill commercial buildings should retain the window heights and reflect the articulation of the heritage examples. Infill buildings should have a solid plinth with glazing above. Refer to Figures 4 and 7.

## MONT ALBERT SHOPPING CENTRE PRECINCT

Large areas of glazing do not usually fit well on upper levels of buildings, as this is not characteristic of heritage commercial buildings and large areas of glazing dominate the streetscape. Bands of windows are also not appropriate, as they will commonly not reflect the patterning of the heritage buildings. Hence glazing should be restricted to rectangular windows.

Tinted or reflective glass is not appropriate for infill commercial buildings in heritage areas as they dominate the streetscape.

Large areas of unrelieved solid walls should also be avoided as they are generally out of character with heritage streetscapes and as a result stand out and dominate the streetscape.

## SIGNAGE

Signage on or near commercial buildings is often required as a method of advertising the commercial business. The signage should not detract from the significance of the streetscape or individual buildings or obstruct views from the street to the buildings. Size, placement and colour are important design considerations for signage as these aspects contribute to the impact on new signage will have on the building and/or streetscape.

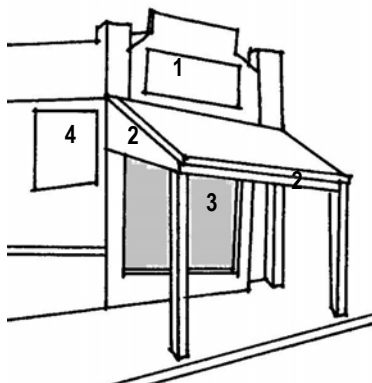
The signage on commercial buildings should be designed to highlight the architectural features of the building. It should reflect qualities such as symmetry and proportion and not overwhelm the facade detail.

Animated or illuminated signs are not appropriate in heritage areas and will not be supported.

Any signage to or around significant places:

- Should not detract from the significance of the place;
- Should not obstruct views to or within the site;
- Should not dominate the streetscape; and
- Should not obscure significant features on the building.

Appropriate locations to consider for sign location are outlined in the list and diagram below:



1. Parapet (not extending beyond the lines of the parapet)
2. Front and side fascias of the verandah
3. Window glazing (not taking up the whole area)
4. Side walls of the building

Figure 9. Appropriate signage locations