

## Holmes Street Residential Precinct Statement of Significance, December 2022

<b>Heritage Place:</b>	7,9,11,13,15,17,19 Holmes Street including the adjacent road reserve	<b>PS ref no:</b>	HO231
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— Precinct Boundary

### What is significant?

The Holmes Street Residential Precinct is of significance, comprising 7-19 Holmes Street, Ballarat Central, and the adjacent road reserve.

Holmes Street, Ballarat Central, was created by 1863 as one of Ballarat's earliest residential subdivisions, and was named after its first freehold owner, R. Holmes.

The precinct was developed in two phases. The first was the construction of six timber houses by owner-builder carpenter Jonathan H Thompson in the late 1860s and '70s; Thompson and his family resided in one of them and leased out the others. In the first decade of the twentieth century, two of the Thompson-built houses were renovated, while others were replaced with new dwellings by local timber merchant and carpenter William Coltman, who owned most of the properties and then promptly sold them to individual owners.

The following elements are contributory to the precinct:

- The c1870s houses, constructed by Jonathan Thompson, at 11 and 19 Holmes Street, including elements added in the Edwardian era such as chimneys and verandah detail.
- The Edwardian houses, constructed by William Coltman from 1903-10, at 7, 9, 13, 15 and 17 Holmes Street.
- The bluestone kerbs and spoon drains on both sides of Holmes Street.

Post-1910 additions and alterations to the houses, parking structures and fences are not of heritage significance.

### How is it significant?

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The Holmes Street Residential Precinct is of historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Ballarat.

### Why is it significant?

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Historically, the precinct illustrates the type small-scale speculative residential development that was typical prior to the advent of large-scale private developers in the early post-war years, such as A.V. Jennings or local developer Roy Waller. This involved the purchase of land and the gradual construction of houses. Victorian-era development by JH Thompson was for rental, to a range of working-class tenants such as a cook, labourer, laundress, clerk, wheelwright, bootmaker and post office sorter. The second phase of development was shaped by timber merchant and carpenter William Coltman, who opened his 'W to W' timber yard just south of the precinct in 1902 and thereafter began to purchase existing houses and empty allotments on the street. Two of Thompson's Victorian houses were retained, though renovated and externally remodelled to look suitably up to date. Coltman built another five new houses. The houses which Coltman built or remodelled are readily identifiable by his consistent chimney form, illustrating how designer-builders used chimneys as a "signature" on their work. Instead of retaining and leasing the remodelling and newly built houses, Coltman sold them to individual owner-occupiers. These new owners still had mostly working-class occupations, such as a (house) painter, a railway ganger, and a blacksmith as well as a commercial traveller (travelling salesman), and three women. This stage in the precinct's development illustrates an era of growing ownership of properties by women and the increasing permanent nature of Ballarat's workforce, evidenced by long-term occupancy and the means for home ownership. (Criterion A)

Aesthetically, the precinct is distinguished by its high level of visual intactness to its creation in the Edwardian period, making it a relatively rare grouping in a city mostly characterised by very heterogeneous streetscapes. The care taken to integrate the surviving Victorian houses into the new Edwardian housing stock illustrates both a sensible thrift along with a desire to make the old houses more fashionable. Together the houses form a composition of aesthetic significance due to their pleasing mixture of consistency in scale, materials and decorative detail, contrasted against the visual interest created by a variety of roof forms. For example, the six houses remodelled or built by Coltman are united by the use of a distinctive red brick chimney with special (moulded) cream brick corbelling and curved render parging at the top, and all have turned timber verandah posts and doorways typical of the Edwardian period. The pair of houses at 15 and 17 Holmes Street stand out within this group both as the only pair of identical houses in the row, and as the most highly intact and ornamented examples. Their high hipped roof form, with gablets and pressed-metal ridgecapping and ram's horn finials, are unusual in Ballarat. The retention of bluestone kerbs and spoon drains, dating from its formation in 1866, illustrate the nature of public infrastructure in the nineteenth century and enhance appreciation of the row of houses. (Criterion E).

### Gradings Schedule

Address	Grade	Construction
7 Holmes Street	Contributory	1904-05 (W Coltman)
9 Holmes Street	Contributory	1908-10 (W Coltman)
11 Holmes Street	Contributory	c1870-89 (JH Thompson); remodelled 1906 (W Coltman)
13 Holmes Street	Contributory	1903-04 (W Coltman)

15 Holmes Street	Contributory	1903-05 (attrib. to W Coltman)
17 Holmes Street	Contributory	1903-05 (W Coltman)
19 Holmes Street	Contributory	c1870-89 (JH Thompson); remodelled c1905

### Primary Source

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*Holmes Street Residential Precinct Heritage Citation* (Landmark Heritage Pty Ltd., 2022)