

Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and Diamond Valley Learning Centre Statement of Significance

Heritage Place: 1 Diamond Creek Road, Greensborough	PS ref no: HO202
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Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, April 2020)

What is Significant?

Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and Diamond Valley Learning Centre (DVLC) at 1 Diamond Creek Road, Greensborough is significant. It was constructed in 1925 at Greensborough Park, likely to design the City of Heidelberg for use as a tearoom, caretaker's residence and changing facility. The place continued in this role into the late 1960s, operated by a succession of lessees. The building appears to have been officially known as the 'Greensborough Park Tearooms'; however, the lengthy occupancy of the last commercial tenants, William and Olive Lobb, saw the name 'Lobbs' Tearooms' popularly adopted. Since 1974, the building has accommodated the DVLC.

The significant elements are the gabled-roofed structure perpendicular to the main thoroughfare and immediately north of the car park's driveway and the latter's exposed rafters, gable ends (timber lattice and weatherboarding), front-gabled porch (excluding non-original weatherboard enclosure), walls of painted weatherboard, and timber-framed, double-hung sashes.

The pair of mature English elms (both likely *Ulmus procera*) that frame the porch are early plantings associated with the place's former role as a tearoom and complement its setting.

Other elements, including the car park, while illustrative of the DVLC's late 20th-century growth and development, are not significant.

How is it Significant?

Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and DVLC is of local historical, rarity, representative and social significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and DVLC is of historical significance as a reasonably intact example of a purpose-built 1920s tearoom/kiosk. It is illustrative of Greensborough Park's early and continuing role as a centre for leisure, sport and recreation, serving light refreshments for visitors, change room facilities for sporting teams and accommodation for the caretaker. More broadly, the building's role as a tearoom reflects the early-to-mid 20th-century reputation of Greensborough as a pleasing landscape frequented by Melbourne excursionists and day-trippers. Many of the tearooms' operators were women. Their association with the building speaks to a layer of often-overlooked female experience during the interwar and postwar years, that of entrepreneurial women running local businesses. The building is also closely associated with the DVLC, which had set up at the former tearoom within a year of their formation. This non-profit organisation was one of Victoria's first community education centres and an influential pioneer in facilitating adult female vocational education during the 1970s and 1980s. (Criterion A)

Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and DVLC has significance for its rarity as the only known purpose-built tearoom/kiosk remaining in the Greensborough area, where such a typology was once more common. More broadly, the survival of such large interwar timber buildings in the municipality is also uncommon. The pleasant, home-style design of the weatherboard building is also likely representative of the design of outer-suburban tearooms in the Interwar period. (Criterion B and D)

The former tearoom is of social significance for its use by the DVLC. The important, life-changing educational role played by this organisation is valued by a large community of current/former users and is closely tied to the building, out of which the DVLC has operated for over four decades. Such attachment is demonstrated through the continued lively engagement of the diverse array of learners with the place. (Criterion G)

Primary source

Banyule Heritage Study 2020 (RBA Architects & Conservation Consultants)