PLUMMER RESIDENCE (former)

ADDRESS: 25 Watson Street, Wodonga

STUDY NUMBER: 2C HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

DATE: circa 1931

CONDITION: Good

INTEGRITY: Good



(RBA, June 2024)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is significant?

The *Plummer Residence (former)* at 25 Watson Street, Wodonga constructed circa 1931 for William Henry Plummer is significant. The significant elements are the form; gable roof clad in corrugated sheet metal, chimney, brickwork, masonry porch with piers and squat columns (part rendered), timber door entry and sidelight and toplights, double hung sash windows, those to the front with geometric leadlight to the upper sashes, concrete lintels. Other significant elements include the front fence with red brick piers and geometric metal panels and gable roofed garage with paired, timber board doors.

The non-significant elements are the infill section to the northern verandah.

How is it significant?

The *Plummer Residence (former)* at 25 Watson Street, Wodonga is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Wodonga.

Why is it significant?

The *Plummer Residence (former)* is of historical significance as demonstrating a key development phase in the township during the interwar period due to the construction/expansion of the Hume Weir. As a commodious example it suggests the relative prosperity of the township. It also has associations with the prominent Plummer family for whom it was built and members of whom resided there for at least two decades. (Criterion A)

The *Plummer Residence (former)* is of aesthetic significance as a fine and intact example of a substantial interwar period bungalow. Characteristic of that type, it has a prominent broad gable roof with a banded articulation of the major gable end to further emphasise the horizontality. It is distinguished by porch detailing with its tall piers and squat columns, geometric leadlight to the front upper sashes and complementary fence with chevron detailing to the metalwork. (Criterion E)

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The residence at 25 Watson Street, Wodonga is located at the corner of Lawerence Street and is widely visible. The front section has an original low fence comprised of red brick piers with intermediate metal panels with a chevron pattern, including a pedestrian gate at the south end and vehicular gates at the north end. There is an early/original curved concrete pedestrian path and a driveway, which extends to the gable roof red brick garage to the rear, which retains original paired timber board doors.

The bungalow has a gable roof, with a major and minor gable end to the front and clad in corrugated sheet metal with traditional overlapping sheets and painted a traditional Indian red. There is a chimney with a narrow cap to the Lawerence Street side and an air-conditioning unit to the other face. The gable ends have timber-lined soffits and battened sheeting with the larger one including louvres to the apex.



North-east corner (RBA, June 2024)

The red brick walls largely displays stretcher bond with some sections with headers. A porch extends across the façade, mostly rendered (roughcast with smooth curved cap/rail of the balustrade) with some face brick sections (base of the piers), with squat Tuscan order columns surmounting the piers. It has a concrete deck and sheeting to the ceiling. The northern verandah has been enclosed with matching/similar red brick to the lower part and boards to the upper part.

The front door is two panelled (high waisted) with a glass pane, sidelight and toplights. The visible windows are timber-framed double hung sashes with those to the front being in units of three with geometric leadlight to upper sashes. Concrete lintels are visible to the front door and windows including those to the south/Lawerence Street elevation. There is a non-original window to the front of the enclosed northern verandah.

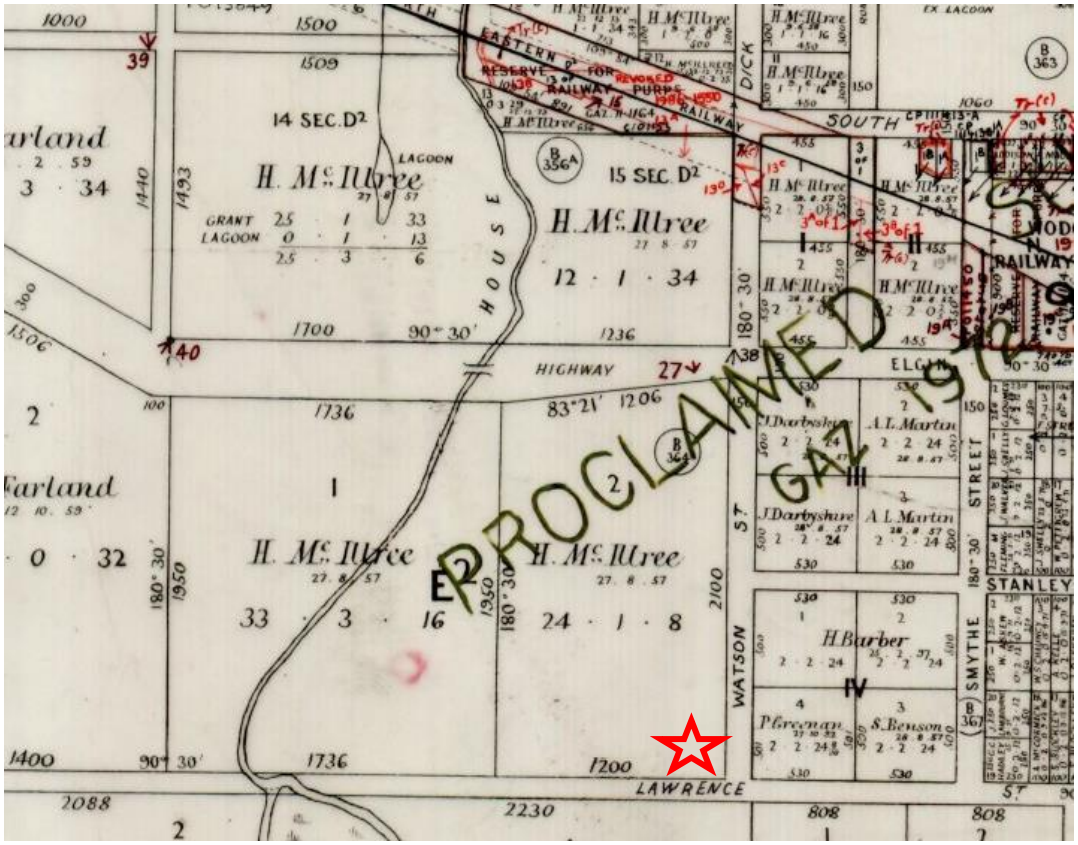
HISTORIC THEMES

6.5 Living in country towns

6.7 Making homes for Victorians

HISTORY

The subject site forms part of Crown Allotment 2, Section E2, which was acquired by Henry McIllree in 1857 (Wodonga Parish Plan). This large farming allotment outside the initial central part of the township was comprised of over 24 acres. McIllree also acquired other allotments to the north and west which he utilised for grazing cattle.



Township of Wodonga plan, with the subject site highlighted (W308, Sheet 4, Landata)

McIlree sold some of his Crown Allotments during the late part of the 19th century including Crown Allotments on Section D.

In March 1926, when the first Torrens title was issued for land which included the subject site, the large holdings, consisting of nearly 82 acres in sections D2 and E2, it was in the name of Trustees Executors (Certificate of Title 1).

In April 1930, William Henry Plummer, grazier of Wagga Wagga (NSW), acquired 3 acres at the southern end, at the corner of Lawrence and Dick (later Watson) streets (Certificate of Title 2).

The extant house had been constructed by June 1931, when Mr W Plummer was noted as being a resident of Lawrence Street (*Wodonga and Towong Sentinel*, 1931).

The house is evident an RAAF map dated 1933 and shows the nearby area had yet to be developed as compared with other areas of outer Wodonga such as the northern section of Beechworth Road.



Extant building circled yellow, 1933 (Great Britain. War Office. General Staff. Australian Section 1933).

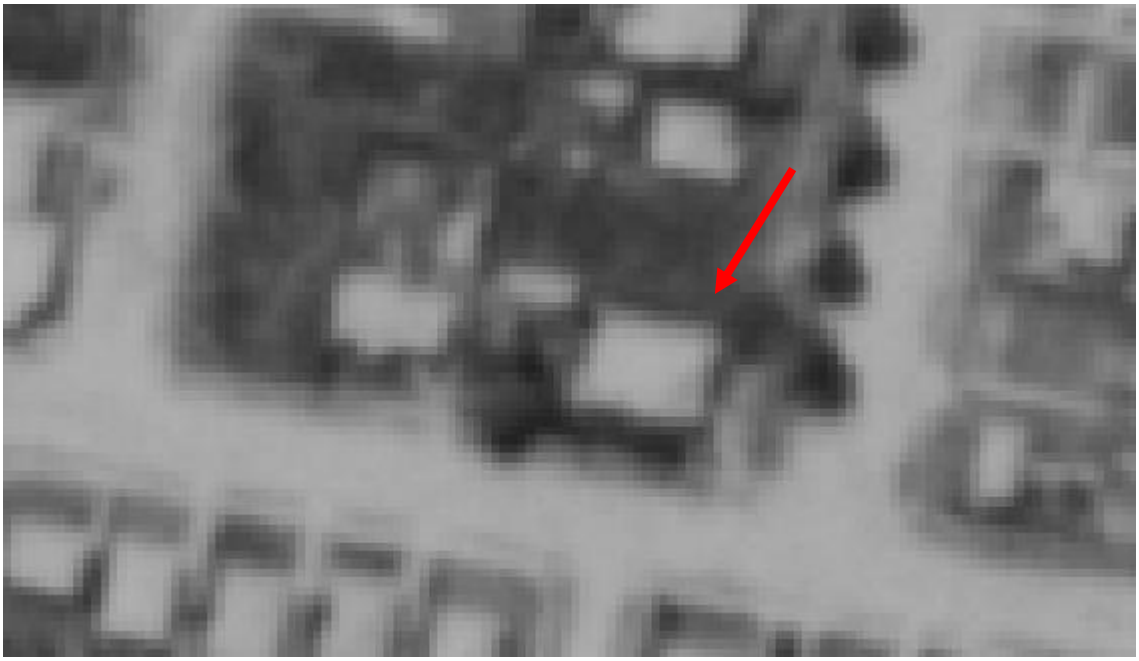
Plummer resided at the subject site for a decade before his passing in February 1941. In an extensive obituary, he was noted as residing in a 'very comfortable home' at the subject site.

> It is with more than ordinary regret that we have to record the death of Mr William Henry Plummer, of Dick street, Wodonga, which occurred on Friday. Deceased was born at Albury 79 years ago and spent the early part of his career in that centre, where his family was and still is very well known. ...
>
> After having property interests in various parts he migrated to the Wagga district, the value of which he held the highest opinion. He was one of the original settlers on the "Gobbagumbalin" Estate where he carried on farming pursuits with successful results. Towards the end of 1929 he sold his property known as "Riverview" and decided on living in retirement in Wagga. Later, he decided on transferring to Wodonga, where he built a very comfortable home on the corner of Lawrence and Dick Streets (*Wodonga and Towong Sentinel*, 1941).

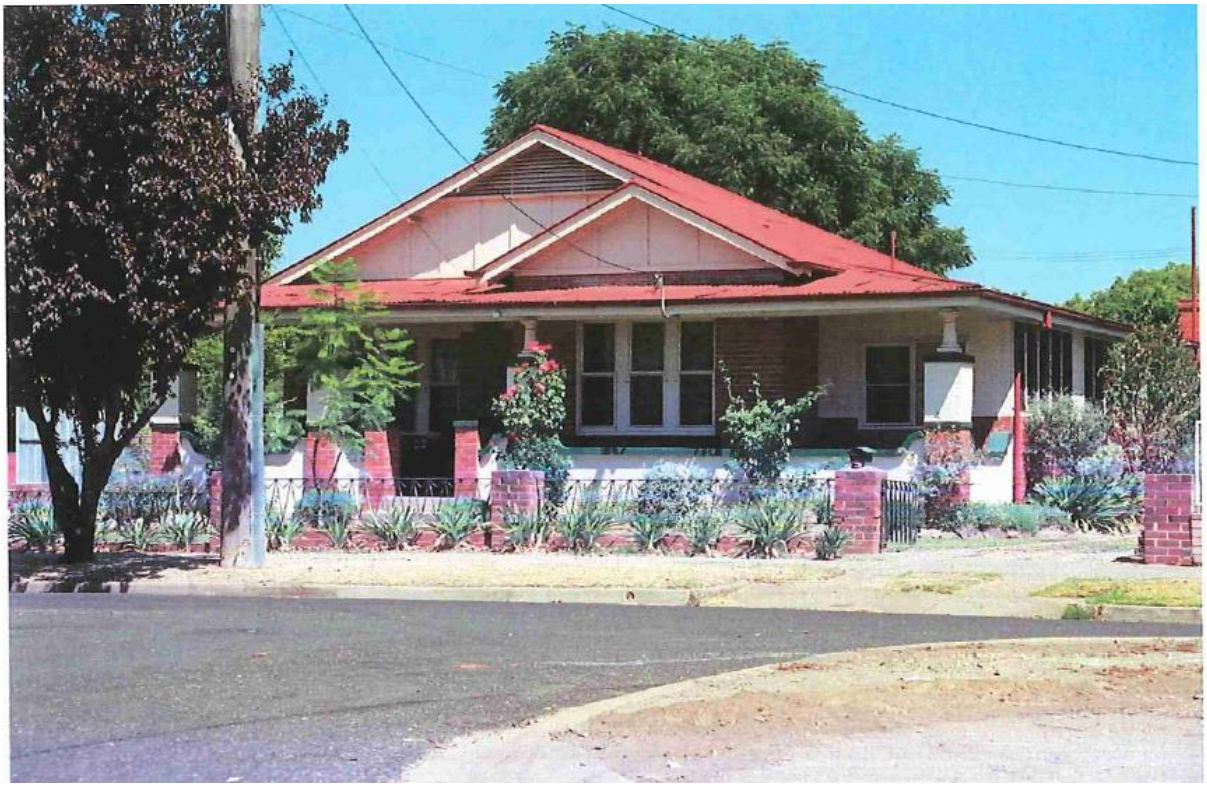
Subsequently the site was transferred to Thomas Albert Plummer of Gordon, NSW in August 1951. It was transferred to Alice Maud and Muriel Grace Plummer, spinsters of Wodonga, on the same day (Certificate of Title 2. When Muriel passed in April 1952, she was reported as residing at 25 Dick Street (*Border Morning Mail,* 1952).

In May 1955, Alice became the sole surviving proprietor, and she immediately sold it to Ronald Henry Hunt, who probably undertook the nearby subdivision (LP34826) resulting in the current extent of the parcel of land, about 810m^2 (Certificates of Title 2 and 3).

The following 1963 aerial shows the extant footprint of the building.



1963 aerial with arrow indicating location of subject place. (CAD8, Run 2, Frame 269, Geoscience Australia)



Photograph of 25 Watson Street, Wodonga taken in 2004 survey (Randell & Pennay 2004)

COMPARISON

Several interwar period bungalows have been included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay reflecting that this was a major growth phase in Wodonga and municipality generally, associated with the construction of the Hume Weir, which commenced in 1919. The bungalow mode

predominated during the 1920s and remained prevalent throughout the 1930s in the municipality.

The subject house is characteristic of the Californian bungalow type with its fully gabled frontage comprised of major and minor gable ends however is differentiated by its expressed concrete lintels as well as porch with tall piers and full width skillion roof.

Among the existing heritage overlays, there are few clear comparators, although there are several bungalows within the Lawrence Street Precinct (HO48). The bungalows in the precinct however are generally less substantial or elaborate and timber buildings. If masonry, they tend to be later examples with an off-centre gable end combined with a main hipped roof form - e.g., 134, 147, 148, 163 and 165 Lawrence Street.

Regarding the interwar period houses along the Beechworth Road, there is also no clear comparison because although they generally date to the 1930s, they generally have hipped roofs - e.g., no. 185 (HO18), no. 204 (HO20), though it has a small central gabled porch, no. 206 (HO21), no. 208 (HO22) and no. 209 (HO23) – or are indicative other contemporary styles such as the Tudor Revival at no. 322 (HO29) or Moderne at no. 324 (HO30).

RECOMMENDATIONS

EXTENT OF LISTING

It is recommended that the *Plummer Residence (former)* at 25 Watson Street, Wodonga is included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Wodonga Planning Scheme with controls for the front fence.

The extent of the heritage overlay should include the parcel of land (1/TP89136) on which the house is located as outlined below.



(Nearmap, 22 June 2024)

PLANNING SCHEME CONTROLS

Planning Controls	Y/N
External Paint Controls Apply?	N
Internal Alteration Controls Apply?	N
Tree Controls Apply?	N
Solar Energy System Controls?	Y
Outbuildings or Fences Not Exempt Under Clause 43.01-4?	Y (front fence)
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register Under the Heritage Act 2017?	N
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	Y
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	N

REFERENCES

Certificate of Title 1, vol. 5087, folio 210

Certificate of Title 2, vol. 5667, folio 374

Certificate of Title 3, vol. 9523, folio 837

Great Britain. War Office. General Staff. Australian Section 1933. Albury, New South Wales and Victoria, accessed 26 May 2022, https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-777663366/view

J J Gourley, Government Printer, Melbourne 1948. Town of Wodonga, https://mapwarper.prov.vic.gov.au/maps/4016#Show_tab

'Missing Pilot', *Wodonga and Towong Sentinel*, 12 June 1931, p3

'Obituary', *Wodonga and Towong Sentinel*, 14 February 1941, p2

'Thanks', *Border Morning Mail,* 10 April 1952, p2

Randell F & Pennay B 2004. *City of Wodonga Heritage Study Stage 1*, WODONGA CITY COUNCIL