
MCCRACKEN STREET



McCracken Street, Essendon



McCracken St 27.JPG



McCracken St 47-43.JPG

Location

30-50 & 27-49 MCCRACKEN STREET, ESSENDON, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO456

Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 31, 2021

What is Significant?

The McCracken Street precinct, at 30-50 and 27-49 McCracken Street, Essendon, a residential area comprising a group of interwar bungalows built in c.1927-35 on the Mar Lodge Estate subdivision (1921), is significant.

The following features contribute to the significance of the precinct:

- . The pattern of development, which comprises a 1921 subdivision of a Victorian mansion estate which was rapidly developed in the interwar years.
- . The relatively intact group of interwar bungalows, and the original form, materials, setback, and detailing that are characteristic of interwar timber bungalows.
- . The well-maintained garden setting.
- . Original or early front fences at 29 and 37 McCracken Street.
- . The mature Canary Island palm trees and lych gate at 27 McCracken Street.
- . The wide nature strips.
- . The visual cohesion enhanced by the street trees (*Lophostemon confertus*).

The houses at 27, 29, 31, 33, 37, 39, 43, 45, 47, 49 and 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 46, 48, 50 McCracken Street are Contributory. The house at 27 McCracken, situated on a prominent corner, is distinguished by two mature Canary Island Palms and a lych gate at the corner.

Non-original alterations and additions to the Contributory houses are not significant.

The houses at 35, 41 and 44 McCracken Street are Non-contributory.

How is it significant?

30-50 and 27-49 McCracken Street, Essendon, is of local historic and representative (architectural) significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

Historically, the McCracken Street Precinct, Essendon, is significant as an illustration of what was a typical pattern in the suburbs of Moonee Valley in the interwar period, when large Victorian-era mansion estates were subdivided for suburban development as they became too expensive to maintain, and then were almost completely developed during the intensive period of suburban expansion that followed World War I. This pattern of development demonstrates the accelerated suburban growth of Essendon and of the municipality during the interwar years, encouraged by improved transport connections and other important services such as being sewered and having made roads. (Criterion A)

Architecturally, the McCracken Street precinct is significant as a relatively intact group of interwar timber bungalows. The houses were built over a relatively short time span, between c.1928 and 1935, and share similar features typical of the interwar Bungalow style, including form, materials, setback and well-maintained garden settings, some with original or early front fences. The aesthetic qualities and visual cohesion of the precinct are enhanced by the good integrity of most of the houses, several of which (for example, 29, 36 and 37) retain original or early front fences. The aesthetic qualities are further enhanced by the two Canary Island palm trees in the front garden of 27 McCracken Street. These trees were popular garden plants in the interwar period and are of a maturity that suggests they may have been an early part of the garden. The aesthetic qualities and cohesive character of the McCracken Street precinct is also enhanced by the generous landscape treatment of the streetscape comprising wide lawn nature strips and mature Brush Box trees (*Lophostemon confertus*). (Criterion D)

Theme

6. Building towns cities and the garden state

Heritage Study/Consultant	Moonee Valley - City of Moonee Valley Stage 1 Heritage Gap Study, Context PL, 2013; Moonee Valley - Moonee Valley 2017 Heritage Study, Context, 2019;
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Construction dates	1927,
Other Names	Precinct,
Hermes Number	196401
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

30-50 and 27-49 McCracken Street, Essendon, is a residential area comprising a group of interwar bungalows built from the late 1920s to mid-1930s on the Mar Lodge Estate subdivision (1921), mostly of timber construction.

McCracken Street is oriented north-south and extends between Keilor Road at the north and to Buckley Street at the south end. The subject area comprises the section of McCracken Street from Mountain to Jacka streets. The precinct area slopes subtly downward from north to south, falling 10m over approximately 260m.

McCracken Street is a relatively narrow road with concrete kerbs and guttering. It has very wide nature strips on both sides with large spans of lawn planted with mature Brush Box trees (*Lophostemon confertus*), which probably date from the c.1960s. Concrete footpaths run adjacent to the property boundaries. There are driveway crossovers to most properties. There is a bluestone roundabout and traffic islands at the Woolley Street intersection, which are more recent additions.

The houses have consistent front setbacks with garden settings, some of which retain early plantings (the Canary Island palms at number 27, the paired shrubs at the gateway of 29, and the patchwork hedge at 37 McCracken). A number of the properties have original or early front fences and gates (29 and 37), or fences in keeping with the period in which the house was built (34, 43, 47, 49). There are three keynote corner houses (27, 37, 39 McCracken), which anchor the precinct.

The houses comprise variations on the theme of the interwar Bungalow and feature different combinations of characteristic elements of the style. The houses are relatively modest, single-storey, and mostly timber houses (29 and 43 McCracken are the only brick bungalows), asymmetrical in plan, and original had both terracotta tile and corrugated iron-clad roofs.

The roof forms vary, but all are typical of the interwar Bungalow. Some have prominent street facing gables (27, 31, 39, 34, 40 McCracken), others have a transverse gable roof with a small gable protruding through the roof plane or projecting to contain the verandah (33, 45, 49, 30, 32, 38, 42 McCracken), and others have hip roofs with the verandah contained beneath an extension of the roof plane (37, 43, and 30, 36, 46, and 48 McCracken). 29 and 47 McCracken have hip roofs with corner verandah and corner porch, respectively.

The treatment of gable ends varies. Some combine weatherboard with timber strap work and panels (at 34). The gable end at 42 is in-filled with shingles, and at 46 with moulded weatherboard to simulate shingles.

A number of the houses feature projecting windows of different kinds: there are bow windows at 27, 39, 49, 30 and 46; bay windows at 37 (side), 43, 49 and 50; and a square bay at 39. The bow windows at 27 McCracken are relatively elaborate, with a shingled treatment to the bow above and below window sill and head height.

Windows are timber framed and generally double-hung sash, some with a projecting box frame. Some houses have front windows with stylised geometric leadlight glazing to the upper or both panes, seen at 27, 31, 33, 39, 30, 34, 36, 38, and 50 (replaced at 29 and 46). The houses at 45 and 48 also have double-hung timber sash windows but with a four paned upper sash.

Verandahs mostly have brick balustrades with different column treatments, which is typical of the interwar bungalow. The precinct includes grouped timber posts at 33, 32, 38 and 42 and, single moulded columns or in groups of up to three at 45, 30, 34 and 46, and tapered masonry piers on a brick or rendered balustrade, some with clinker brick detail (at 31, 37, 39, 45 and 36, with buttresses at 27).

The later bungalows of the 1930s are asymmetrical in plan with hipped tile roofs plus hipped projecting bay with a small corner porch (47 McCracken) or balanced by a verandah along the front of the house contained with an extension of the roof plane (29, 30 and 43 McCracken).

From recent aerial photography it is apparent that most houses have rear extensions or modifications. Some extensions or modifications are visible from the street (38, 46 and 50 McCracken), but are sufficiently set back so as not to intrude into views of the house from the street, or on the character of the precinct as a whole. 32 and 43 McCracken have prominent second storey additions that protrude into and above the main ridgeline. In addition, a half-timbered gable has been added to the projecting front bay. At 29 McCracken Street, neo-Federation alterations have been made, including a bay window and verandah details. The houses still make a contribution to the precinct as a whole, however, because the characteristic features of the principal facade of each house, as viewed from the street, remain largely intact, retaining aesthetic qualities that contribute to the character of the precinct.

Three of the contributory properties have recent carport or garage additions (27, 38, 40 and 50 McCracken). These are set to the side of the houses, leaving the principal facades of each house and their characteristic features, intact and clearly visible in views from the street.

Overall, the visual cohesion of the precinct is strong, on both sides of the street. Visual consistency is provided by the uniform setbacks, garden settings, and the large number of houses built in a similar style (interwar Bungalow) with similar forms, materials, and details, and over a relatively short time span, from c.1927 to 1935. The exception in terms of materials are the two brick bungalows at 29 and 43 McCracken, which share other stylistic features. The visual cohesion and integrity are strengthened by keynote houses that anchor the precinct at 27, 37 and 39 McCracken, and the high integrity of most of the houses, several of which retain original or early front fences.

The garden settings (particularly intact at 37 McCracken and mature Canary Island Palms at 27 McCracken), mature street trees and distinctive wide nature strips enhance the visual cohesion and aesthetic qualities of the precinct.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>