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## ROBB STREET



Robb Street



Robb St south end.JPG



Robb Street north end.JPG

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### Location

15-25 ROBB STREET, ESSENDON, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

### Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO458

### Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 1, 2019

What is Significant?

15-25 Robb Street, Essendon, a small residential area comprising a short row of Victorian-era detached terrace houses built in c1890 on Locke's Paddock Estate subdivision (1885), is significant.

The following features contribute to the significance of the precinct:

. The houses constructed c1890, as shown on the precinct map.

. The overall consistency of housing form (single-storey, detached terrace dwellings), materials and detailing (masonry walls, corrugated iron-clad roofs, brick chimneys with Italianate-style cement-rendered cornices), and siting (elevated siting, consistent front and side (south) setbacks).

. Streetscape materials such as bluestone kerb and channelling.

The houses at 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25 Robb Street are Contributory.

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

How is it significant?

15-25 Robb Street, Essendon, is of local historical, representative (architectural), and aesthetic significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

Historically, the Robb Street Precinct, Essendon, is significant as it demonstrates the former location and subdivision pattern of Locke's Paddock Essendon, established in 1885 and intensely developed until the economic depression of the 1890s halted development until the early twentieth-century. The construction of the subject residences in a single building campaign evidences the increased demand for housing in the area, facilitated as a result of the newly expanded railway, when a number of large estates were subdivided and developed in Essendon in the 1880s during Melbourne's land boom. (Criterion A)

The houses in the Robb Street Precinct, Essendon, are a relatively rare example of Victorian-era detached single-fronted houses in terrace form, most of which exhibit a high level of intactness. They demonstrate the principal characteristics of the Italianate style as applied to the terrace typology, including the narrow allotment width of each house, modest front setbacks and repetitive forms. Other typical details include high ornate parapets, intricate cast-iron detailing to the verandahs and chimneys with Italianate-style cement-rendered cornice. (Criterion D)

Aesthetically, the Robb Street precinct is significant thanks to its picturesque streetscape, afforded by the shared stylistic details, elevated siting and the consistency of the modest front and (south) side setbacks. The short row of free-standing Victorian-era detached terrace houses, erected in the Italianate style, presents a highly visually unified streetscape, distinguishing the Robb Street Precinct with a high level of visual cohesiveness. The high level of intact detailing across most of the dwellings, particularly to the high ornate parapets, cast-iron verandahs and door and window joinery, enhances the precinct's picturesque quality and overall visual unity. (Criterion E)

## 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;
Construction dates	1890,
Other Names	Precinct,
Hermes Number	196423
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

This small residential precinct comprises an intact and consistent streetscape of Victorian-era detached terrace houses on the east side of Robb Street, at numbers 15 to 25. The properties back onto Court Street, a wide service road with planted median strip. Erected in the Italianate style in a single building campaign, the dwellings cover a short section of Robb Street, between Buckley and Leven Streets. Robb Street is a relatively narrow road with narrow nature strips and concrete footpaths, and basalt kerb and channelling.

The elevated siting, high ornate parapet and modest front setback of each dwelling unify the precinct visually. Each house is raised on bluestone foundations and retains a side garden to their immediate south; the side garden space to number 21 is screened by a high brick wall. Front fences are mostly iron palisade with either heavy cast-iron posts or plain, rendered or painted brick piers. Number 17 has a cast-iron palisade fence atop dressed bluestone laid in four even courses, number 25 has a low timber picket fence. While none of the fences are original, they are either sympathetic or neutral in style and scale.

Each residence is of brick construction with a hipped roof of corrugated iron (replaced with a tiled roof at number 17), truncated and gabled to the principal facade and concealed with a high ornate parapet. The parapets to each building front are rendered and consist of a decorative frieze with moulded panelling and dentilled cornice, supporting a row of balusters either side of a panel with floral garland motif. Above this sits a raised, arched pediment housing a stylised crimped shell, flanked with scrolls and surmounted with a decorative acroterion. Number 15 retains its full parapet detail, including a precast urn sitting atop each parapet coping. The parapet to number 17 has lost its balustrade and arched pediment, retaining the shell and garland motifs. Dwellings at numbers 15, 19, 23 and 25 retain an original chimney with Italianate-style cornice.

The principal facade to each residence is arranged uniformly, and fenestration is largely intact. Number 21 retains an original facade of bichrome brickwork, while the rest have been rendered. Some retain unpainted face brick to their side walls. Each dwelling has a raised verandah, most on an exposed basalt plinth and accessed by basalt steps. The tiling to the verandah at number 21 is a later alteration, as is the altered configuration of the front steps to number 15. It is likely that the verandah lacework and timber posts to numbers 15, 17, 25 have been replaced, though sympathetically, while the verandah to number 19 has a brick balustrade, and that to number 23 has lost both its lacework and post. The party walls to each house retain blind arches.

The Robb Street precinct is of high integrity, with very few changes visible to original or early elements of the houses. Overall, the visual cohesion is very high, with most dwellings retaining key details characteristic of the Italianate style and their original fabric. Although each of the dwellings have been altered, to different extents, in detail (overpainting or rendering of brickwork, replacement of windows and verandah detail, loss of some parapet details), most retain sufficient integrity to enable future restoration. Most of the houses retain their original roof material and chimney, and side gardens at the immediate south of each building. Some retain their original timber door and window treatments. Rear additions to each property are either completely concealed from the street or well set back. The small though consistent front and side setbacks to each property provides visual uniformity across the dwellings, and the elevated siting and high ornate parapets enhance the aesthetic quality 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/>*