
Thornfield



17 Brookville Road, Toorak



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Location

17 Brookville Road TOORAK, STONNINGTON CITY

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO567

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 16, 2016

What is significant?

'Thornfield', at 17 Brookville Road, Toorak, is significant. The house was built in 1888-89 for owner-occupier Edmund Denbigh.

It is a two-storey polychrome brick house with an asymmetrical facade and cast-iron detail to the double-storey verandah. Walls are primarily of brown Hawthorn brick with red, cream and black brick accents.

The restoration front palisade fence is not significant.

How is it significant?

'Thornfield' is of local architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

Architecturally, it is a highly intact example of a polychrome brick villa that demonstrates the transition from Victorian Italianate to Queen Anne Revival. The low M-profile hipped roof, clad in slate, is typical of the Italianate, as is the asymmetrical composition of the facade with a projecting bay beside a two-storey verandah. The verandah detail, with cast-iron posts and a framed cast-iron frieze with brackets, is also typical of the Italianate. A medieval influence and transition toward the Federation Queen Anne, common after 1900, is seen in the use of a gable to the projecting bay, as well as the use of a lobed bargeboard with a decorative truss and pendant-finial. (Criterion D)

Aesthetically, it is notable for the lively polychromy of the brickwork, particularly the relieving arch over the first-floor windows filled with an unusual chequerboard pattern of red, cream and black headers, as well as the incorporation of cast-stone blocks into door and window lintels. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - City of Stonnington Victorian Houses Study, City of Stonnington, 2016;
Construction dates	1888,
Hermes Number	200122
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

'Thornfield', at 17 Brookville Road, Toorak, stands on a somewhat elevated site on the north side of the street, behind an unusually deep garden setback. On the front boundary is a sympathetic metal palisade fence on a rendered plinth which appears to have been installed c1970s.

The house is two-storeys in height with an asymmetrical facade. It is constructed of polychrome bricks with slate cladding to the roof. The roof takes an M-hip form, typical of the Victorian Italianate, with a central valley, and bracketed eaves. This is combined with a projecting gable to the facade. Set beside this gable is a two-storey verandah. The house has four chimneys which are of Hawthorn brown bricks with vertical cream-brick bands, a run cement cornice and paired terracotta chimney pots.

The polychromatic brickwork is in a Flemish bond with the remnants of a white tuckpointing ribbon. Most of the wall comprises brown Hawthorn bricks with cream, red and black brick accents. The cream and red bricks are used as narrow bands across each level and also as banded voussoirs in the segmental and flat arches to the windows and doors. These arches also incorporate stone or concrete blocks, including keystones with an incised curvilinear design. Window sills appear to be bluestone. Above the pair of double-hung sash windows, with flat arches in cream and red bricks, is a blind segmental arch with a cream and red brick border and tympanum filled with black, cream and red headers in a chequer-board pattern. The gable above these windows has a decorative bargeboard with an incised quatrefoil on each lobe, notched edges, and a pendant-finial and decorative cross-brace. There are also run cement-render beltcourses corresponding to the top of the front door and between the two floors.

The front entrance retains its front door with four fielded panels, bolection mouldings and hardware. Around it are elaborate leadlights in the sidelights and highlights. It sits below the verandah, adjacent to the projecting gabled bay. The verandah has a hipped roof and is reached via a short flight of bluestone steps (possibly renewed). The

verandah beams are dentilated and are supported on paired fluted cast-iron columns. The verandah is ornamented with a cast-iron rinceaux frieze in a stop-chamfered timber frame with separate cast-iron brackets. The brackets are an uncommon concave design. Where paired between the pairs of columns they create a Moorish arched motif. At the first floor level, the verandah retains cast-iron balustrade panels with a flower bouquet motif.

Externally the house appears to be highly intact, with no alterations visible from the street.

Local Historical Themes

This place illustrates the following themes, as identified in the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context Pty Ltd, rev. 2009):

8.2 Middle-class suburbs and the suburban ideal

8.4.1 Houses as a symbol of wealth, status and fashion

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/>