

# Riversdale Reserve Precinct



10 Illawarra Road.jpg



26 & 28 Illawarra Road.jpg



6 Illawarra Road.jpg



Riversdale Reserve Precinct Map

## Location

Robinson Road and Illawarra Road HAWTHORN, BOROONDARA CITY

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO776

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 26, 2021

What is Significant?

The Riversdale Reserve Precinct comprising 8-30 Robinson Road and 2-28 & 7-21 Illawarra Road, largely developed between 1884 and 1904 is significant.

How is it significant?

The Riversdale Reserve Precinct is of local historic, architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

The Riversdale Reserve Precinct is historically significant as a demonstration of the expansion of Hawthorn during the 1880s when middle-class residents took advantage of the subdivision of the earlier large mansion estates into smaller lots. The Riversdale Reserve Precinct is historically significant as one of many land releases in Hawthorn during the 1880s, at a peak time for development in the area. The area covered by the precinct corresponds to the entire Riversdale Reserve subdivision of 1884, and part of the adjacent Ashburton Estate of 1888, the slightly curved alignment of Illawarra Road indicating the former location of Ashburton house and garden. (Criterion A)

Comprising parts of two streets (Robinson and Illawarra Roads) and a small cross street (Montague Street), the Riversdale Reserve Precinct is a representative Victorian-era precinct with many fine Victorian and several Victorian/ Federation (transitional) villas that demonstrate the peak development of Hawthorn. Situated on the rising ground south of Riversdale Road, the area was marketed at the middle classes who could afford allotments of medium size and houses that were smaller versions of the mansion houses they emulated. Like Lyndhurst Crescent (HO155) and Leslie Street (HO164) and the less flamboyant parts of Manningtree Road, the Riversdale Reserve Precinct displays a cohesiveness of scale, period and architectural style. (Criterion D)

Riversdale Reserve Precinct is aesthetically significant for its grouping and sequence of houses in garden settings. Building materials of polychrome brick, stucco and timber with corrugated iron and slate for roofing are used. The houses, although all different, relate closely to each other in period and style, using a combination of timber and cast iron verandahs, hipped and gabled roof forms and Victorian-style windows. Aesthetically, the precinct is enhanced by the predominantly low and lightweight fencing that allows views of the houses in their garden settings. Individual houses display particular elements common to the Victorian period including canted bay windows (18 & 20 Robinson Road, 17 & 19 Illawarra Road); polychrome brickwork (20 Robinson Road); decorative glass (24 & 26 Robinson Road); rendered quoins and window mouldings (7 & 10 Illawarra Road); fine cast iron verandahs (24 Robinson Road and 6 Illawarra Road). The aesthetic value of the precinct lies in its broader scale of similar size allotments, garden settings, house forms and Victorian architectural elements. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study Volume 3: Hawthorn, Context, 2018;
Hermes Number	202198
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

### Description & Integrity

The Riversdale Reserve Precinct is located south of Riversdale Road and on the elevated side of the road. The precinct extends from Riversdale Road, south to the crossroad of Montague Street that connects Robinson Road with Illawarra Road. Elevated ground and larger allotments have provided the opportunity for larger Victorian era villas to be constructed. Comparison with adjacent Kooyongkoot Road indicates an allotment size that is smaller than provided in that salubrious street and other streets further west.

### Robinson Road

The west side of Robinson Road is more intact than the east side and has a good run of late Victorian / early Federation (transitional) villas from No. 18 to No. 30 Robinson Road. Representative Italianate Victorian villas with canted bay windows are found at 18 and 20 Robinson Road, with 20 Robinson Road featuring polychrome brickwork with diaper patterns under the eaves, quoining and alternate red and cream voussoirs. Nos. 24 and 26 Robinson Road feature decorative glass windows and Federation-style gables with timber strapping overlaid on a typical Victorian style house. 28 Robinson Road continues this theme but now has a second storey addition, whilst 30 Robinson Road is a fine red brick and render house like 18 and 20 Robinson Road in form. More modest houses are found towards Riversdale Road. Nos. 8, 10 and 12 Robinson Road are symmetrical double fronted Victorian houses with 8 Robinson Road previously a C-graded building although it now has a second storey addition (Gould, 1993). A Victorian villa converted into a 1930s duplex at 16-16A Robinson Road and a contemporary house at 14 Robinson Road are different in character from most of the area.

A greater variety in the allotment sizes on the east side of Robinson Road has resulted in the properties being more varied in size and quality. Today the street is more altered, particularly towards Riversdale Road.

### Montague Street

There is a fine bluestone paved laneway leading off Montague Street. Two attached 1930s houses front Montague Street were built at the rear of 21 Illawarra Road, however these have a relatively low integrity and are outside the period of significance for which the Riversdale Reserve Precinct has been identified.

### Illawarra Road

Illawarra Road has a curved alignment resulting from its layout around the large garden of Ashburton House (now demolished). No.7 Illawarra Road is a fine late Victorian asymmetrical house with projecting hip and gable. Rendered quoins and window mouldings are particular features. 9 and 11 Illawarra Road are a pair of single fronted houses on smaller allotments. The weatherboard house at 13 Illawarra Road was a C-graded building and is still in good condition although now concealed by a high timber fence (Gould, 1993). Near Montague Street, 17 and 19 Illawarra Road are fine Victorian houses with No.19 as an elaborate Italianate house with canted bay window like several examples in Robinson Road. Adjacent to Montague Street, 21 Illawarra Road is a far more altered Victorian house stripped of much of its detail.

Not in the precinct, but adjacent, is 27 Illawarra Road (HO453) *Frederick House*, a two-storey double-fronted Victorian villa. Built with local polychrome bricks, the house comprises a hipped slate roof and a pair of tall chimneys with mould caps. Facade is screened by a double-height verandah. The main entrance is set in the south elevation and the ground floor facade has a blind opening flanked by two pairs of tall windows. All windows contain timber-framed double-hung sashes.

The west side of Illawarra Road comprises timber Victorian houses apart from No.10 which is similar to No.7 in its brick and render detail and projecting box bay window with paired sash windows. No.12 is a double fronted Victorian house with alterations and additions to the front, but could be restored with their removal. Single and double fronted timber Victorian residences are at 16 and 18 Illawarra Road and the precinct finishes with 26 and 28 Illawarra Road. No.26 Illawarra Road is a well detailed block fronted symmetrical Victorian house with a gabled to the verandah roof and tall paired sash windows.

The Riversdale Reserve Precinct comprises representative examples of Victorian, late Victorian / Federation (transitional) styles in timber, brick and stucco. There is a mixture of small single fronted and larger double fronted varieties and a low percentage of second floor extensions. Robinson Road (particularly the west side) has a higher percentage of high quality houses in brick and stucco, whilst Illawarra Street has more variety in scale and materials. Several Victorian houses have significant alterations to the front but their roof form and chimneys are evident and their restoration is possible. They have been scheduled as non-contributory given the extent of their alterations, however careful removal of alterations could reveal significant Victorian features.

*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/>*