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# Armadaale Precinct



Victorian Villas, Densham Road

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## Location

High Street ARMADALE, Stonnington City

## Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO130

HO130

## Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

Constructed on land purchased at the Crown Land sales of May 1850, the Armadaale Precinct developed as part of the broad surge of development through Prahran, Malvern and the inner suburbs more generally through the 1880s. The earliest development dates from the 1860s and 1870s and a number of key buildings from this period

survive. The construction of the railway through Armadale to Oakley disrupted the original subdivision to create an irregular group of streets, subsequently developed with polite villas and cottages through the 1880s and with more substantial dwellings through the early twentieth century to produce a handsome and expansive suburban environment. The Toorak Railway Station, which stimulated development of the area and the retail group in Beatty Avenue, constructed to service it, are significant elements. The flats Clendon and Clendon Corner are not typical of built form in the area but are important buildings in their own rights.

Elements which contribute to the significance of the precinct vary from street to street but include:

- . The high degree of intactness of the area to its c1930 state arising from the low proportion of later infill;
- . The intactness of individual buildings to their original states. Dwellings typically survive with their presentation to the street largely unaltered retaining facades, verandahs and decorative detailing intact;
- . The consistent single-storey height and modest scale of the residential built form; largely derived from the prevalence of the freestanding single-storey villas and modest semi-detached pairs on generous allotments.
- . The consistent face brick, timber or render materiality and gabled or hipped roofscapes with chimneys and roofs in slate or terracotta tiles;
- . The landscaped character of the area arising from mature street plantings in conjunction with open, landscaped front and side setbacks to individual properties;
- . Low and permeable front fences in most sections of the precinct;
- . Road alignments and allotment patterns resulting from nineteenth and early twentieth century subdivisions;
- . The general absence of vehicle accommodation in front setbacks, particularly in some areas to the east of the Armadale Primary School such as Glassford Street and in more modest streets such as Watson and Eileen Streets;
- . The Railway Station and shops in Beatty Avenue and their relationship to nearby residential stock.
- . Early stables to the rear of dwellings at 28 Northcote Road and 64 Rose Street.
- . Mid-twentieth century flats, *Clendon* and *Clendon Corner* in Clendon Road are atypical elements within this precinct but remain significant buildings in their own rights.

#### *How is it significant?*

The Armadale Precinct, Armadale is of local, social, historical and aesthetic significance.

#### *Why is it significant?*

The Armadale Precinct is aesthetically significant as an unusual surviving urban landscape. It is architecturally significant as an intact collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings. Buildings adopt a range of architectural expressions at a variety of scales ranging from cottages or other modest forms of housing on small blocks to polite suburban villas to very grand buildings such as the station and retail groups in Beatty Avenue. A small number of, primarily Edwardian, dwellings are of a scale and architectural distinction usually associated with Mansions. The area is highly intact to its c.1930 state with few modern interventions and the greater part of its building stock demonstrates a high level of integrity to its original form. Areas of this intactness and integrity are becoming increasingly rare.

The Armadale Precinct is of historical significance for the manner in which it illustrates the early development of the Municipality. It retains associations with Landboomer, and later Premier, James Munro and with local developers such as Robert Sutherland and Michael Glassford (3.3.3 *Speculators and Landboomers*). The area developed in two distinct and legible phases which allow the boom of the 1880s (8.2.1 *Middle-class suburbs and the suburban ideal*) the recession of the early 1890s and the recovery in the early twentieth century (3.3.5 *Recovery and infill 1900-1940*) to be understood. In addition, its varied street layouts and relationship with the railway illustrates the *ad hoc* nature of nineteenth century planning (3.3.4 *Uncontrolled and unplanned development*). The area survives as a snapshot of local development to c.1930.

The Armadale Precinct is of social significance for the extent to which it illustrates the introduction of new subdivisional typologies which added to the range of choices for family living. The development of suburbs around transport nodes (8.2.1 *Middle-class suburbs and the suburban ideal*) fundamentally altered living and working patterns. The Railway Station in Beatty Avenue (4.4.2. *Developing state railway systems in the late nineteenth century*) and the local shopping strip (7.1 *Serving local communities*) were essential to this new form of habitation.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - Prahran Conservation Study Identification of Buildings & Areas of Major Significance, Nigel Lewis & Associates, 1983;
Construction dates	1880, 1910,
Hermes Number	30731
Property Number	

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## Local Historical Themes

7.2 Creating specialised shopping centres (Beatty Avenue/Rose Street). 4.4.2 Developing state railway systems in the late nineteenth century 3.3.3 Speculators and land boomers - subdivision from 1880s onwards 7.1 Serving local communities (Beatty Avenue Railway Station and Shops). 8.6.3 Architect-designed flats (Clendon, Clendon Corner) 3.3.5 Recovery and infill 1900-1940. 'Country in the City' - Suburban development before WWI.

## Physical Description 1

### Description

The Armadale Precinct occupies an island site bounded by the major thoroughfares of Malvern and Kooyong Roads and the railway of 1879. The railway line cut obliquely across the early orthogonal network of streets to produce the unusual triangular arrangement form of the precinct and its *ad hoc* arrangement of streets. Away from the street frontages, the area is notable for the absence of through traffic and its quiet residential character. The higher ground in the northeast of the precinct near the main roads attracted substantial middle class housing through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Much of this early development survives. In the lower sections of the Precinct, particularly those areas along the railway, polite, and occasionally modest, Victorian built form predominates. The two schools (St David's School, formerly *Armadale House* at 117 Kooyong Road and Armadale Primary School at 9-23 Densham Road) form the architectural highlights of the area. These are both protected under individual heritage controls.

### Victorian developments

Intact Victorian Streetscapes survive in Royal Crescent and on the north sides of Rose Street, Northcote Road and Elm Grove. These are generally comprised of polite Victorian middle class villas with Italianate detailing. More modest Victorian development, in the form of single-fronted cottages, survives along the south side of Northcote Road and in small pockets such as Watson and Eileen Streets. A number of outstanding individual Victorian buildings also survive. These include villas at 760 Malvern Road, 103 Kooyong Road, 28 Northcote Road and *Ashbourne* at 133 Kooyong Road along with early shops at 736 Malvern Road and 18 Beatty Avenue.

The Prahran Conservation Study discussed the Italianate villa at 28 Northcote Road at length noting:

... it appears to have been erected c.1888, with the contractor John Carter being the original owner and occupier. The single storey timber residence is typically Italianate in style with a protruding polygonal bay creating an asymmetrical front facade. Eaves are exposed and terminate on paired timber consoles and the slate roof features decorated chimneys. The front verandah features fine timberwork and the front fence is constructed in

glazed white bricks.

In relation to its significance, the Study noted.

This is a highly intact timber residence typical of the high Victorian period of Melbourne's boom years. It displays a fine use of timberwork. The front fence, contrasted with white glazed bricks is most unusual and therefore of great significance.

The building also retains one of a handful of significant early stables to survive within the Municipality.[1]

In addition to this and other fine villas of high individual significance, a number of notable Victorian terrace rows and semi-detached pairs also survive throughout the area.

#### Edwardian developments

The high quality of nineteenth century development engendered an architectural cachet which underpinned later, Edwardian development. The quantity and high quality of the Edwardian built form in this area is rare within the former City of Prahran. Intact streetscapes of these buildings survive in the streets to the east of the Primary School with extended sequences of notable Edwardian buildings in Rose, Glassford and Munro Streets and in Kooyong Road. The group at 109-123 Kooyong Road is of particular note with towered villas at Nos 121 and 123 flanking the entry to Glassford Street. Other Edwardian buildings of individual significance include those at Nos 6/6A and 17 Munro Street and 'Afton' at 53 Rose Street.

The Prahran Conservation Study noted that the residence at 17 Munro Street was:

... erected in 1913 and designed by the occupant, architect Arthur W Purnell as a seven roomed house, valued initially at £130. It is a single story red brick building which incorporates diverse forms and materials in a composition influenced by the Federation style which developed in Melbourne from the turn of the century. A profusion of half timbered gables protrude from the high pitched slate roof, one bay being entirely clad in terracotta shingles. A circular terracotta shingle clad balcony with heavy timber decoration crowns a corner bay window. Terracotta cresting lines the roof, terracotta chimney pots crown the tall chimneys and exaggerated timber brackets support the entrance gable either side of the arched porch.

In relation to its significance, the Study noted:

This intact residence incorporates many distinctive features of the Federation period and presents a composition of diversity and interest. The shingles bay and balcony are of particular note.

On the opposite side of Munro Street, another exception Edwardian Building at 6/6A Munro Street survives. The Study noted:

*In 1914, this residence was erected by the owner of this land in Munro Street, builder John Carter. The residence is asymmetrical in form and Federation in style with a high pitched slate roof having gable hips and a protruding front gable. Rough cast porches project through the roofline and are decorated with gum leaf and nut motifs. Chimneys feature broad plates and Art Nouveau derived motifs, the front verandah features Ionic columns and the red brick fence is crowned with curved bricks and spherical elements.*

In relation to its significance, the Study noted:

*This residence is a noteworthy example of Melbourne's Federation style as applied to small domestic works and displays individual motifs of particular interest and originality. Of note are the Australian motifs of cement render decoration.*

Elsewhere in the precinct, infill buildings from the early part of the twentieth century are peppered throughout the Victorian built form. Although the detached villa form defines the area, terrace groups from the early twentieth century, such as those at 32/33/34 Beatty Avenue, 15/17/19/21 Rose Street and elsewhere, provide variety. A large Edwardian stable building survives at 64 Rose Street.[2]

Other elements of note include the retail precinct in Beatty Avenue which presents an intact streetscape of one and two storey facades to the railway station across the street. Although the earliest buildings in the group, most notably, the handsome two storey shop at 18 Beatty Avenue, date from the Victorian period, the area achieved its

current appearance c.1910s. The station group across the road is high individual significance. The central station building adopts a simple, stuccoed form with a tiled hipped roof with terracotta details. An overhead walkway provides access to its three platforms. A lift, constructed for the conveyance of goods to and from the rail platform appears to be unique within Victoria.[3]

The Statement of significance for the Station prepared as part of the Prahran Conservation Study notes

*The three stations at Toorak, Hawksburn and Armadale form an important group of Edwardian station buildings. Of particular note at Toorak is the highly unusual goods yard, which is on two levels and utilises a lift for the conveyance of goods from the platform level.*

Later developments

The area generally predates the vogue for self-contained flats. However, a number of later infill buildings, including some modest Edwardian and interwar flats, such as those at 'Mararoa' and 'Rosmar' at 870 and 872 Malvern Road respectively, and others, contribute in a modest way to the character of the area. A number of postwar flats such as those near the intersection of Densham Road and Munro Street contribute less in heritage terms to the area. The Modernist mid-century flats, *Clendon* and *Clendon Corner*, on the west side of Clendon Road, are not typical of local built form in terms of their scale, form and construction date but are important elements in their own rights. The Statement of Significance for these buildings, prepared a part of Prahran Conservation Study notes that these are:

*The first buildings designed by the prominent architect, Roy Grounds, after his return from working in Europe these two flats are important within the sequence of work of this Melbourne architect. They exemplify the modern movement of architecture in Australia.*

[1] Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, *Former Stables, 28 Northcote Road, Armadale, Heritage Assessment*, September 2011.

[2] Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, *Former Stables, 64 Rose Street, Armadale, Heritage Assessment*, September 2011

[3] Nigel Lewis and Associates, *Prahran Conservation Study*, pg11/5

*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/>*