
Portland Place Precinct



View along the Portland Place walkway.



Portland Place looking south from Arthur Street.



Victorian terrace row at 21-25 Portland Place.



Victorian villa at 26 Portland Place.



Victorian villas at 9 and 11 Grosvenor Street.



Victorian double-storey terrace house at 12 Portland Place.



Edwardian semi-detached pair at 13/14 Portland Place.

Location

Portland Place, Grosvenor Street SOUTH YARRA, STONNINGTON CITY

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO145

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Portland Place Precinct is a residential area in South Yarra that sits alongside the Sandringham railway line cutting. The area was subdivided and developed in a piecemeal fashion during the 1880s land boom. This brought about an unusual planning outcome whereby housing at the southern end of Portland Place addresses a narrow pedestrian walkway with no street frontage.

Elements which contribute to the significance of the precinct include (but are not limited to):

- the area's high degree of intactness to its c.1888 period of development;
- the road and laneway alignments and allotment patterns resulting from nineteenth century subdivisions;
- the generally uniform pattern of small front and side setbacks;
- the intactness of individual buildings to their original states. Dwellings typically survive with their presentation to the street largely unaltered retaining verandahs and decorative detailing;
- the absence of modern infill development and prominent additions;
- the consistent low front fence height in most sections of the precinct;
- face brick, timber or render materiality and hipped or gabled roofscapes with chimneys and slate tile or plain galvanised corrugated metal cladding; and,
- the almost total absence of vehicle accommodation including car parking areas in front setbacks.

How is it significant?

The Portland Place Precinct is of local historical and aesthetic significance.

Why is it significant?

The Portland Place Precinct is of historical significance for its ability to illustrate unusual planning outcomes arising from ad hoc subdivision and development during the economic boom of the 1880s. (*Historic Theme: 3.3.4 Uncontrolled and Unplanned Development*). The precinct also provides an illustration of the way in which rapid and unplanned speculative development in the 1880s produced tightly packed streetscapes with modest cottage housing in close proximity to more substantial villas and terraces. (*Historic Theme: 3.3.3 Speculation and land boomers - Subdivision from 1880 onwards*).

The Portland Place precinct is of aesthetic significance for the quality of its varied late-nineteenth century built form and the intactness, integrity and legibility to its c1888 state. While dwellings in the precinct are reasonably typical of the period, the diversity and intactness of the housing stock and unusual street layout makes this a distinct late-nineteenth century urban environment.

The small number of Edwardian dwellings in the precinct post-date the key Victorian period of development but nonetheless make a valuable contribution to the early character of the area.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - City of Stonnington Heritage Overlay Gap Study - Heritage Overlay Precincts Final Report, Bryce Raworth P/L, 2009;
Hermes Number	119135
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Portland Place is a short street in South Yarra. The Sandringham Railway Line runs through a deep cutting along the west side of the street with dwellings to the eastern side. Built form in the area typically dates from the mid-1880s. The area was developed quickly by a number of parties and contains a selection of Victorian speculative builders' designs. Larger blocks contain two-storey terrace houses (11&12 Portland Place) or ornate villas. Elsewhere less ambitious villas or single storey terrace rows (21-25 Portland Place) were constructed. To the north, around the intersection with Arthur Street, modest cottages survive. At the southern end of the street, still more modest cottages, in this case without street frontages, were erected at the height of the boom (2-6 Portland Place). Two later buildings, a semi-detached pair at 13/14 Portland Place and a handsome villa at 15 Portland Place, both dating from c.1910, completed the development of the street.

The area is of interest for the intactness of its varied built form and the unusual arrangement of its street layout rather than the significance of any individual buildings. Built form in this area is typical of construction during the boom period. However, few changes have occurred in this area since 1888. No infill buildings have been constructed in the street (apart from the two Edwardian buildings noted above) and only three buildings have been altered to any substantial degree. New facade treatments have been implemented at 2 Arthur Street and 7 and 11 Portland Place, however these works have not substantially undermined the character of the streetscape. Beyond this, the area is highly intact to early state.

Historical Australian Themes

The following themes are drawn from the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context Pty Ltd, 2006, Addendum March 2009):

3.3.3 Speculation and land boomers - Subdivision from 1880 onwards

3.3.4 Uncontrolled and Unplanned Development

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/>