
Greville Street Residential Precinct

Location

Greville Street PRAHRAN, STONNINGTON CITY

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO456

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Greville Street Residential Precinct comprises a number of streetscapes of predominantly late-nineteenth century dwellings. A range of single-storey Victorian and Edwardian middle-class dwellings and shops survive from this period as do contemporary two-storey terraces and a hotel. Together they form a valued environment of high local significance. The Prahran Railway Station, which stimulated development of the area and the College Lawn Hotel, constructed to service it, are both significant elements. A small number of, often more substantial, buildings were constructed in the early decades of the twentieth century. Some of these such as the former Villa Maria at 1-5 Donald Street and flats at No 1 and 38-40 Greville Street are buildings of some individual significance. Francis Xavier's church/school at 25 High Street and a Modern church on the same site are also significant buildings in their own rights. Other twentieth century developments, most notably, the commercial and manufacturing buildings near the intersection of Charles and Greville Streets are of lower significance.

Elements which contribute to the significance of the precinct 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. There are few visible

upper level additions within the precinct;

The consistent, single-storey height and modest scale of the residential built form particularly in Donald Street and western sections of Greville Street, largely derived from the prevalence of the freestanding villas, semi-detached pairs and terrace rows in garden settings.

The consistent face brick, timber or render materiality and roofscapes with chimneys and pitched roofs in slate or terracotta tiles or plain galvanised corrugated metal;

The landscaped character of the area arising from mature street plantings in conjunction with deep, landscaped front setbacks - particularly in Donald Street and Greville Street to the west of the hotel - and generous side setbacks to individual properties;

Low and/or permeable front fences in most sections of the precinct;

Road alignments and allotment patterns resulting from nineteenth century subdivisions;

The general absence of vehicle accommodation in front setbacks;

Notable twentieth century buildings such as the former villa Maria at 1-5 Donald Street, The church group at 25 High Street, interwar flats at No 1 and 38-40 Greville Street and the western buildings of the Prahran Railway Station are atypical elements within this precinct but remain significant buildings in their own rights.

Consistent and ongoing single household residential use.

How is it significant?

The Greville Street Residential Area is of local historical and aesthetic significance.

Why is it significant?

The precinct is of aesthetic significance for the quality of its varied late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century built form and its intactness, integrity and legibility to its c1930 state. The greater part of the building stock shares a Victorian architectural expression. Polite Victorian villas with generous front gardens to wide streets reflect the middle-class aspirations of the area's first residents although more substantial Victorian developments, such as terrace rows and the hotel, also contribute to the character and significance of the area. Edwardian residential buildings typically extend and enhance this character and significance. As noted above, some larger, twentieth century buildings have been realised to a high design standard and contribute to the architectural quality of the area. The aesthetic significance of the Greville Street Residential Precinct is elevated by public and private landscaping.

The Greville Street Residential Precinct is of historical significance for the manner in which it illustrates the early development of the Municipality. Greville and Donald Streets date from the earliest phases of local development (*3.3.1 Crown Land Sales 1840-1850*). Built form in Donald Street typically predates the land boom of the 1880s (*3.3.3 Speculation and land boomers*) although the precinct did not reach its mature state until some decades later. Broader development, stimulated by the construction of the railway (*4.4.1 Early private railways, 4.4.2 Developing state railway systems*) established the boom period environment which largely survives today. Development halted for almost two decades during the recession of the 1890s. resurgent Edwardian built form alongside boom period designs, with no built form to explain the transition between the two illustrates this hiatus (*3.3.4. Infill development*). Some individually significant interwar and later buildings illustrate the twentieth century development of the area.

The 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 Prahran Railway Station, local shops (few are extant) and the College Lawn Hotel were essential to this new form of habitation.

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| Heritage Study/Consultant | Stonnington - HO456 Greville Street Residential Precinct Citation Review, John Statham, 2012; Stonnington - Prahran Conservation Study Identification of Buildings & Areas of Major Significance, Nigel Lewis & Associates, 1983; Stonnington - Conservation Review City of Prahran Volume 3: Urban Conservation Areas, Context Pty Ltd, 1993; Stonnington - Prahran Character and Conservation Study 1992, Nigel Lewis & Graeme Butler & Associates, 1992; |
| Hermes Number | 196508 |
| Property Number | |

Physical Description 1

Description from Citation Review 2012.

Greville Street dates from the earliest development of the Municipality extending west from Chapel Street to Charles Street before 1855. Beyond Charles Street, the street became a lane passing between a number of small enterprises such as dairies, foundries and wheel wrights. This mid-nineteenth century landscape of smallholdings, light industrial premises and cottages was subsequently overwritten by middle-class residential development and no trace of the earlier character of the area remains. What survives is a polite residential precinct largely dating from the 1870s and 1880s, when larger parcels of land were subdivided for residential use, through to the interwar period. From c1920, a number of these early buildings were demolished and their sites redeveloped to allow notable and often more substantial buildings to be constructed.

Although Donald Street is somewhat younger than Greville Street, it was the first street in the area to reach a mature state. Houses in the area were typically constructed before 1880 and take the form of modest villas in face or rendered brick or, less frequently, in timber. Polite villas with generous front gardens to wide streets reflect the middle class background of the area's first residents. A group of three semi-detached residential pairs at 16-26 Donald Street are a notable departure in a streetscape comprised primarily of straightforward examples of builders' villa designs.

'Kara Kara', a timber residence at 29 Donald Street is of particular note. In 1983, the Prahran Conservation Study, noted, that it '*...was erected c.1879 in a form characteristic of the smaller dwellings erected in the mid-Victorian period. The residence has a hipped slate roof and concave verandah across the facade. This features a cast iron frieze and simple timber brackets, supported on timber columns. The timber picket front fence and gates have scalloped configuration and the posts have elaborate caps*'. In reference to its significance, the Study continued: '*Kara Kara is intact, representing an archetypal example of a mid Victorian residence. The original picket fence is of particular note*'. In 1983, the building was recommended to the Register of Historic Buildings and the Register of the National Estate. It is graded A1. Little change has occurred in the intervening 30 years.

In the southern sections of Donald Street a number of larger buildings have replaced nineteenth century residences¹ and engender a more institutional character. On the western side of the street, the former Villa Maria Hostel constructed by the Catholic Braille Writers' Association dominates the streetscape. St Francis Xavier's church/school opposite is a notable red brick building with classrooms located above a church. A more Modern church to an octagonal plan at the intersection of Donald and High Streets dates from 1964. While none of these buildings dates from the primary period of development, they are notable buildings in their own rights. Two blocks of unremarkable postwar flats at 11 and 32 Donald Street, situated within an otherwise intact sequence of nineteenth century villas, diminishes the character of this, otherwise, distinguished streetscape.

1 Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, *Detail Plan 962*, 1896, shows dwellings on these sites.

2 Sands&McDougall, *Postal Directory*, 1886 refers to the group as Lawn Terrace.

3 Sands&McDougall, *Postal Directories*, 1879 and 1886.

4 Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, *Detail Plan 962*, 1896, shows the original footprint of No 54 Greville Street.

Greville Street is less homogenous. While the oldest surviving buildings such as the College Lawn Hotel date from the 1870s, development more typically dates from the land boom of the 1880s. A range of residences from this period survive. They include cottages, villas and terrace rows to one and two storeys unified by, reasonably generic, Italianate detailing. Doon and Burns Street also date from this time. The handsome two-storey terrace row at Nos 45-55 Greville Street, Lawn Terrace² at Nos 15-27 and the group of double-fronted villas at Nos 12-20 all date from this time.³

The sections of Greville Street between Perth and Charles Streets were a little slower to develop and some of the built form in this area dates from the early twentieth century when sites left vacant at the time of the recession were developed. These include the early pair of flats at Nos 38 & 40. A Victorian villa at No54 was remodelled in an understated Arts Nouveau manner through the introduction of a circular entry in the early decades of the twentieth century.⁴ The alterations are of some significance in their own right. Immediately to the east, in the vicinity of the intersection with Charles Street, the late Victorian character of the street has been substantially overwritten with early residences and shops replaced with commercial premises on the south side of the street and the MECWA aged care centre to the north.

At the western end of the street, Urana Flats at No 1 Greville Street likewise replaced late nineteenth century buildings. It is an important Mod

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