
Eleazer Lesser Edwardian Duplexes



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Location

62-68 APPLETON STREET, 114-120 BURNLEY STREET, 389-391 HIGHETT STREET, and 158-160 SOMERSET STREET, RICHMOND, YARRA CITY

Municipality

YARRA CITY

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO461

Heritage Listing

Yarra City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The group of houses comprising 62-68 Appleton Street, 114-120 Burnley Street, 389-391 Highett Street and 158-160 Somerset Street, Richmond. All of them are double-fronted, asymmetrical Edwardian duplexes of tuckpointed red brick, with high hipped roofs. They were all constructed between 1913 and 1915 for prolific local developer Eleazer (Elly) Lesser.

How it is significant?

The houses are of local architectural and historical significance to the City of Yarra.

Why it is significant?

Architecturally, the houses exhibit distinctive aesthetic characteristics. The houses at 114-116 Burnley Street and 389-391 Highett Street exhibit an Asian influence in the flared eaves resting on timber brackets, set below a floating gable. The timber verandah brackets have the sinuous lines and irregular organic form associated with Art Nouveau. The houses at 118-120 Burnley Street and 158-160 Somerset Street are distinguished by complex fretwork to the verandah and window hood, unified by a sunburst motif. (Criterion E)

Historically, the houses illustrate the better class of workers' housing of the Edwardian period, which was Richmond's second major phase of development. In particular, they illustrate some of the high-quality and attractive development by investors in Richmond during this period. (Criterion A)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Yarra - Heritage Gaps Study: Review of remaining 17 heritage precincts from the 2009 Gaps report, Context Pty Ltd, 2013;
Construction dates	1913,
Other Names	Precinct,
Hermes Number	197537
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The duplexes constructed for Elly Lesser in the early 1910s are of two basic facade types, with other minor variations between those on Appleton Street and the Burnley Street group (including those on Somerset and Highett streets). All are double-fronted, tuckpointed red-brick Edwardian house, with a band of rough-cast render below the eaves. All have a high, almost pyramidal hipped roof with a projecting gabled or hipped-roof bay to the front. The projecting bays sit at the centre of each pair, and are divided by high party walls with a vermiculated face. Verandahs sit to the outside of the projecting bays, and have a roof continuous with the main one. Doors have three panels with bolection mouldings beneath glazing.

The Appleton Street houses have paired sash windows with coloured glass highlights, while the Burnley Street group houses have banks of three casement windows with clear or green-glass highlights. The chimneys also differ between the two geographic groups, with red-brick chimneys with a corbelled detail (two horizontal bands intersected by a vertical band on each face) and a smooth rendered cap on the Appleton Street house. The Burnley Street group all have red-brick chimneys with a projecting cap five courses high.

The two facade types are the following. The Appleton Street houses and those at 114-116 Burnley Street and 389-391 Highett Street are of a striking, Asian-influenced design. The roof to the projecting front gable has a small, half-timbered floating gable above flared eaves supported on decorative timber brackets. The timber verandah posts of these houses are quite simple with bands of incised lines at one and two-thirds up, below the sinuous, Art-Nouveau influenced timber brackets.

The second type is more typical of the Edwardian era, but is highly decorated with timber fretwork. They include the houses at 118-120 Burnley Street and 158-160 Somerset Street. These houses have a simple projecting half-timbered gable set above an ornate timber window hood. The window hood incorporates a complex timber ladder frieze (alternating one wide and two narrow slats) and sunburst brackets supporting it. The same sunburst motif is used for the verandah brackets. The house at 160 Somerset Street has a very intricate front fence incorporating all of these details, which appears to be a modern interpretation though a very sympathetic one.

Alterations to the duplexes include: over-painting of face brick (64-68 Appleton St, 389-391 Highett St), replacement of front door (64 & 68 Appleton St), replacement of front windows within original openings (66 Appleton St), change of window format from vertical to horizontal (68 Appleton St), removal of chimneys (62-64 Appleton St), replacement of corrugated roofing iron with another cladding material (62 Appleton), and construction of a two-storey, rendered rear extension (114 Burnley St). All retain their timber verandah details and the second type houses retain their timber window hoods.

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/>