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# Clifton



52 Albion Street, South Yarra



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## Location

52 Albion Street SOUTH YARRA, STONNINGTON CITY

## Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO559

## Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 16, 2016

### What is significant?

'Clifton', at 52 Albion Street, South Yarra, is significant. It was built in 1871-72 as a semi-detached pair of rental houses for carpenter Edwin Litchfield. Litchfield owned a number of properties in the area and may have also been the designer and builder of 'Clifton'. In the late twentieth century it was converted into a single residence.

It is an elegant two-storey Regency style building, massed and detailed to resemble a single grand home. 'Clifton' has sheer walls to the two sides and an enclosed entrance porch at the centre of the facade. The walls are of

rendered brick and feature classically inspired detailing, also in cement render. At the rear is a single-storey service wing.

The non-original single-storey extension to the west side elevation is not of significance, nor is the extension to the east side of the rear wing.

### **How is it significant?**

'Clifton' is of local architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

### **Why is it significant?**

Architecturally, 'Clifton' is a largely intact example of one of South Yarra's rich collection of Victorian Georgian and Regency houses, which are rare in the eastern parts of Stonnington and metropolitan Melbourne more generally. It is a handsome two-storey pair of semi-detached dwellings built to resemble a single villa. Typical of the sophisticated Regency variant of the Georgian style, it has hipped roofs hidden behind a continuous corniced parapet, the masonry walls are finished with ruled render and quoins, and the six-over-six sash windows sit within moulded render architraves. (Criteria B & D)

Aesthetically, it is particularly distinguished within the City of Stonnington by its formality and elegant classical detail exemplified by the entrance porch at the centre of the facade, instead of the typical verandah. The porch has a corniced parapet, round-arched openings with moulded architraves, and Doric pilasters at the corners. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - City of Stonnington Victorian Houses Study, City of Stonnington, 2016;
Construction dates	1871,
Hermes Number	200116
Property Number	

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## **Physical Description 1**

'Clifton' (or 'Clifton House') is a semi-detached pair of dwellings built to resemble a single grand home (since 1985 it has been converted to a single residence). It stands on the corner of Albion and Tyrone streets, with modest garden setbacks to the front and east side. The two Pencil Pines (*Cupressus sempervirens*) located to the east appear to date from the interwar period, and may have formed part of a longer border row along the Tyrone Street boundary. At the corner is a large, but much later Lemon Scented Gum (*Corymbia citriodora*), which is an attractive and fine example of its species.

'Clifton' is a two-storey building with sheer walls to the east and west sides, and a single-storey wing to the rear (originally the conjoined service wings of the two dwellings). The front facade is distinguished by the enclosed porch at its centre, which once served as the entrance to both dwellings.

The semi-detached origins of the house are indicated by the separate hip roofs to the two-storey section, though this is entirely hidden from view by a simple parapet with a moulded cornice, wrapping around the front and side elevations. The walls are of rendered masonry, ruled to resemble fine ashlar, with classical details of render including a simple beltcourse above each floor, run architraves resting on modillions, expressed quoins to the corners, a corniced parapet to the entrance porch, and Tuscan pilasters to its corners. The building retains two chimneys to the two-storey section, and a very tall shared chimney to the rear wing. The visible front chimney (on the east side) is very simple with a rectangular form and two slightly corbelled bands near the top. The tall rear chimney was doubled in height in the late nineteenth century, with a second top featuring moulded brick modillions.

The windows to the facade are symmetrically arranged with rectangular six-over-six single-hung sashes to the body of the house, and two round-arched windows to the front of the porch. There are larger round-headed openings on the two sides of the porch, which allowed access to the two dwellings. There is only one window on the east elevation of the two-storey section, at the rear of the ground floor.

The two-storey main section of the house is highly intact, apart from a single-storey addition on the east side set just back from the facade. It mimics the ruled render, parapet and window architrave of the original house (but with a different window format). To the rear, the single-storey wing on the east side has been widened to sit slightly proud of the main mass of the house, again with ruled render to the walls. It also appears that the rear half of both single-storey wings have been demolished.

## **Local Historical Themes**

This place illustrates the following themes, as identified in the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context rev. 2009):

3.3.3 Speculators and land boomers

8.3.2 Gardens

*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/>*