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## Terrace Row



9 Kensington rd South Yarra



3, 5, 7 & 9 Kensington Rd Sth Yarra



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### Location

3, 5, 7 & 9 Kensington Road SOUTH YARRA, STONNINGTON CITY

### Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO561

### Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 16, 2016

#### What is significant?

The row of four freestanding terrace houses at 3-9 Kensington Road, South Yarra, is significant. They were built for property developer Robert G. Benson in 1888, and sold on to four different owners who then leased them out.

They are two-storey masonry Italianate houses of bichrome face brick (no. 5, overpainted) and rendered brick (nos. 3, 7 & 9), with wing walls bracketing the two-storey verandahs with cast-iron frieze, brackets and

balustrades. They have slated hipped roofs with bracketed eaves on three sides, and typical Italianate corniced chimneys. They are a bit wider than usual, with three sash windows to the first floor, above a canted bay window to the ground floor. The four-panel front doors have elegant arched upper panels.

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

The houses at 3-9 Kensington Road are of local architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

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

Architecturally, they are largely intact representative examples of the substantial houses built for the middle-class residents of South Yarra during the boom years of the 1880s and early 1890s. The terrace house form, with blind boundary walls, designed to fit on a narrow building block, was most commonly built in rows in the densely packed inner suburbs. In the better part of Stonnington, particularly South Yarra, there were many free-standing houses that followed the terrace typology on more spacious sites. The houses at 3-7 Kensington Road exhibit typical features of this type, including the blind boundary walls and verandah wing walls creating a focus on the front facade. (Criterion D)

Aesthetically, they are distinguished by their large size and details such as the canted bay windows, the Italianate label mouldings to no. 7, and verandah detail. The ground-floor verandah beams have a large applied scallop detail and a sawtooth detail along the edge. The cast-iron to nos. 3 & 5 is a set of three patterns with Aesthetic Movement motifs including a sunflower in a vase, a stylised sun, and foliage draped over a bamboo screen. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - City of Stonnington Victorian Houses Study, City of Stonnington, 2016;
Construction dates	1880,
Hermes Number	200118
Property Number	

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## **Physical Description 1**

The four houses at 3-9 Kensington Road, South Yarra, are freestanding Italianate terrace houses, with blank side walls and wing walls enclosing the front verandahs, but with setbacks between them. The houses were built at the same time with minor variations between them, but all share the same overall form.

All are set behind a medium-sized garden setback. They are two-storey and are wider than usual, with three bays. Each has a simple hipped roof with bracketed eaves to the front and side elevations, and a narrower hipped wing to the rear. All have chimneys with a moulded rendered cornice at the top. All are constructed of brick; with nos. 3, 7 and 9 rendered (which may be a later alteration for nos. 3 and 7, judging by the texture of the render), and the bichrome face brick of no. 5 overpainted (but remains visible on the north side wall).

All have a canted bay with full-length sash windows to the ground floor and three long double-hung sash windows to the first floor. The front doors have four fielded panels, with arched panels at the top, and heavy timber mouldings including corbels and a dentilated cornice around it. Ground floor openings have segmental arches, while the first-floor windows have square heads.

The two pairs differ in their verandah cast-iron. The verandah beam above the ground floor has a large applied scallop detail and a sawtooth detail along the edge, while that above the first-floor just has the sawtooth detail. The cast-iron to nos. 3 & 5 is of three patterns clearly produced as a set, as they share a range of Aesthetic Movement motifs including a sunflower in a vase, a stylised sun, and foliage on a backdrop of a bamboo screen.

The cast-iron panels used for the balustrade are particularly interesting.

The houses at nos. 7 & 9 have different verandah iron, but the intricate detail to the verandah beams is the same. The cast-iron patterns differ for the two houses, though they both have first-floor balustrades of particularly attractive patterns. The cast-iron frieze and brackets to no. 7 may have been replaced, as they use a very typical rinceaux pattern that is frequently reproduced, and this is the only house in the row with a cast-iron column to the ground floor verandah. It is also the only house in the row with label moulds to the canted bay window, making it an interesting variation.

All four of the houses sit behind a high brick fence. In 1999, at no. 3 a side carport was built and alterations made to the rear wing, installing folding doors along the south elevation and demolishing an earlier ground floor extension, bricking up three windows on the north side of the rear wing (Building Permit P500/99, City of Stonnington, 1999). These changes were part of works converting it back to a single-family residence (from three apartments). None of the changes, apart from the recessive carport, are visible from the public domain.

## **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

8.2 Middle-class suburbs and the suburban ideal

*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.*

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