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# OSWALDENE



Burke Road, 544  
OSWALDENE.jpg

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## Location

544 Burke Road CAMBERWELL, BOROONDARA CITY

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO711

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 30, 2019

What is Significant?

The two-storey rendered brick Italianate villa, called Oswaldene, at 544 Burke Road, Camberwell, is significant. It was built in 1889-90 for owner Richard Betheras and his wife Christina Oswald Betheras.

The house is significant the extent of its 1889-90 fabric. The rear extension of 1968, the garage of 1985, and the front brick fence are not significant.

How is it significant?

Oswaldene is of local architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Oswaldene is a fine and intact example of a substantial late Victorian Italianate villa. Typical features include the rendered masonry walls, slate-clad M-profile hipped roof, corniced chimneys, bracketed eaves, asymmetrical plan with a projecting canted bay to the facade, and a return verandah decorated with extensive cast-ironwork. It retains intact typical late Victorian elements such as the front door with fielded panels and bolection mouldings, and tessellated tiles to the verandah floor. (Criterion D)

Oswaldene is distinguished by the retention of a high level of ornamental detail, particularly to the render and verandah. Render detail includes panelling, brackets and cast wythes to the chimneys, panelling below windows and to the eaves, moulded architraves and keystones to the round and segmentally arched windows, and bold stringcourses and beltcourses to the walls below the windows and at impost (springing) level. The verandah is distinguished both by its intactness and by the unusual ground-floor frieze featuring a woman's head in bas-relief and elaborate panels to the first-floor balustrade. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study: Vol. 2 Camberwell, Context, 2018;
Construction dates	1889,
Hermes Number	202223
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

'Oswaldene' stands mid-block on the east side of Burke Road near the crest of the hill just south of Camberwell Junction. It stands behind a modern high brick wall and a densely grown front garden, with a wide side setback on the north side.

The house is a large two-storey Italianate villa with ruled rendered walls. In its form and detail, it displays many classic characteristics of its type. This includes the slate-clad M-profile hipped roof, corniced chimneys, bracketed eaves, and a return verandah complete with slender columns and extensive cast-iron ornament. The two main elevations - front and north side - are asymmetrical with a projecting window bay to one side and the return verandah between them. The bay to the front faced is semi-hexagonal in form with a separate roof form, while the side bay is rectangular in plan.

Windows are all single double-hung sashes, in three forms. The ground-floor openings to the verandah have segmentally arched heads, as do all the first-floor windows on the north projecting bay. Windows and door to the first-floor verandah are rectangular. The first-floor windows of the front projecting bay have round-arched heads. The windows of the projecting bays as well as those to the ground floor have deeply moulded imposts that continue as a stringcourse around the walls (and to the rest of the ground floor), and moulded architraves above the impost with projecting keystones.

There is further moulded cement render detail, including stringcourses and panels below windows and a heavy moulded beltcourse between floor to the front projecting bay, panelling to the eaves alternating with single curved brackets with turned droppers, and panelling, brackets and decorative cast wythes to the four chimneys.

The return verandah also retains a high level of detail. This includes bluestone front steps and a tessellated tile floor. The two-storey superstructure has separate cast-iron frieze framed in timber, with brackets and fringe

below. The ground-floor frieze is proportionately larger and more complex, with a running floral design alternating with a woman's face in bas-relief. The first-floor frieze is a standard running design. The first floor retains elaborate cast-iron balustrade panels, and a moulded timber railing that intersects with a boss at the centre of the posts. Many of the verandah posts at both levels have lost their cast-iron Corinthian capitals. The front door has fielded panels with bolection mouldings, sidelights and a highlight window in a segmentally arched opening.

No external alterations are visible to the house, apart from a very recessive rear extension, which is slightly narrower than the original house. In addition, the timber framing to the verandah frieze has been replaced with a simpler (not stop-chamfered) horizontal element in the southern bay of the first floor.

*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/>*