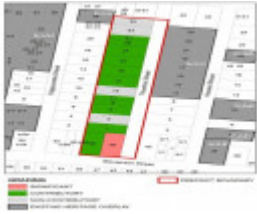

Thornton Estate Residential Precinct



Thornton Estate Residential Precinct Map



5 Alma Street.jpg



57a Droop Street.jpg

Location

Thornton Street and Stevenson Street KEW, BOROONDARA CITY

Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO806

Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 2, 2019

What is Significant?

The Thornton Estate Precinct, which comprises 1-35 Thornton Street and 46-48 Stevenson Street, Kew, is significant. The Thornton Estate was subdivided in 1918. The houses were largely built between c.1920 and 1930, with the exception of 48 Stevenson Street, which may have been built c.1935-38.

The street plantings of uniformly spaced and pruned mature plane trees on the west side, and dense mature plantings on the east side. The lawn nature strip and concrete footpaths in the public domain contribute to the Precinct's significance.

The house, front fence, gateway, and garden paths at 46 Stevenson Street is individually Significant. Intact original front fences at 19 Thornton Street are contributory.

Non-original alterations and additions to the houses in the Precinct are not significant, including the second storey additions, garages, high brick front fences. Some of the front fences are sympathetic to the architectural style of the houses, but are not significant.

High brick front fences at 5 Thornton Street and lightweight modern palisade fences at 1 and 33 Thornton Street are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Thornton Estate is of local historic and architectural significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

The Thornton Estate Precinct is significant for its ability to demonstrate the continuing pattern of subdivision of large Victorian-era estates built along the south side of Studley Park Road, Kew, during the early interwar years. The Thornton Estate comprised 15 allotments subdivided from the former substantial home named Thornton. The subdivision remains legible because of the consistent streetscape character along its extent, created by the uniform and evenly planted street trees, lawn nature strips and early concrete footpath, and the consistency in architectural style of the houses (diverse forms of the interwar California Bungalow), set behind generally medium-height front fences in garden settings. (Criterion A)

Architecturally, the Thornton Estate Precinct is significant for the consistency of the architectural style of the houses, interwar California Bungalow. This is because the houses in the Thornton Estate were largely all built over a five-year time span, from c.1925-30; the exception may be 48 Stevenson, built c.1935-38. This distinguishes the Thornton Estate Precinct from other interwar precincts which were generally built over longer time spans and thus represent a greater diversity of architectural styles. Even though each house is built to very distinctive designs, they display features typical of the California Bungalow idiom, including visually prominent roofs, many with visually prominent street facing gables, flat top chimneys, some houses with shingling (19 Thornton and 48 Stevenson streets), heavy masonry verandah piers and balustrading, and projecting timber window frames, and geometric pattern leadlight glazing. (Criterion D)

Architecturally, 46 Stevenson Street is significant as an interwar Bungalow that exhibits many features typical of the interwar brick Bungalow style, a popular idiom for domestic architecture in the suburbs during the 1920s. Its significance is enhanced by the high degree of intactness of the house and its grounds (front fence, garden paths, gateway and gate) and the high quality of the detailing evident in these original features. The intactness of 46 Stevenson Street, and the integrity of the site as a whole, compares favourably with some of the best-known interwar landmark corner houses in Melbourne. (Criterion D)

The architectural significance of the Precinct is enhanced by the architectural quality and integrity of some of the contributory places. Some of the houses retain early and original front fences (46 and 48 Stevenson Street and 19 Thornton Street). (Criterion D)

Grading and Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme as a precinct.

Heritage Study/Consultant Boroondara - Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study Volume 4: Kew, Context, 2018;

Hermes Number 202258

Physical Description 1

The Thornton Estate Precinct comprises a group of brick and timber interwar Bungalows of unusual and distinctive designs. With few exceptions, the houses were built over a relatively short five-year time span, which lends the Precinct striking visual cohesion, in spite of the diverse designs of the houses and some alterations.

Thornton Street is long and straight, and slopes down gently from north (Studley Park Road) to south (Stevenson Street). The street is lined with mature Plane trees on the west side (canopies uniformly U-shape pruned for powerlines), with mown lawn nature strip, and concrete footpath. The east side comprises densely planted mature gardens, which include mature Bhutan Cypress (*Cupressus torulosa*) near the substation, pepper trees (*Schinus molle*), lilly pillly (*Syzygium smithii*), and other woody shrub and understorey plantings. The canopies of these street plantings meet overhead forming a 'tunnel' effect along the entire length of the street. The consistent set-back of the houses along the west side of the street, front garden settings, and relatively consistent medium-height front fences add to the visual cohesion of the precinct.

Mostly built over a short time-span of approximately five years, the architectural style of the houses is consistently interwar California Bungalow, with individual house designs representing variations on a theme of the style.

A simplified version of the California Bungalow, with the less complex but still visually prominent transverse gable roof, is at 1 Thornton Street. The window and door openings have been modified and windows and doors replaced, but the roof form and fabric (terracotta tile) and gable ends (visible from the street in oblique views), and medium height front fence still make a positive, if modest, contribution to the mid- to late-twenties' streetscape.

5 Thornton Street includes many features characteristic of the California Bungalow style, including roughcast rendered walls, wide eaves with exposed roof timbers, prominent hip roof (tiles not original), buttressed foundations on south east corner, original windows to side (south) elevation. In spite of a second storey addition and modifications to the front windows the house continues to be legible as representative of the California Bungalow style.

The houses at 9 to 11 and 29 to 31 Thornton Street are distinctive in the street as asymmetrical pairs of attached Bungalows. The southern or lower dwelling of each pair (9 and 29) is considerably more decorative than the dwelling on the northern side. The walls of 9-11 are brick to window head height, with contrasting roughcast render above and contrasting smooth render to window sills. The windows are timber sash with four-paned upper sash. 9 has a bay window with horizontal awning. Typical features of the California Bungalow idiom at 9-11 are the conspicuous transverse gable roof with large projecting asymmetrical gable with room contained in the roof space. The gable end is filled with roughcast render with weather board and windows in the apex. The entry porch to 9 is contained in the space below the projecting gable, with brick arched entry, and original timber and glazed door with side light. Tall, flat top, roughcast rendered chimneys, with smooth render at the top, complement the large roof. The entry to 11 is in the north elevation. The projecting gable at 11 contains an internal room.

True to type, the Bungalows at 17 and 19 Thornton Street feature visually prominent, terracotta tile, low to medium-pitch roof forms (double street facing gable at 17, and hip roof with Dutch gables at 19), flat topped chimneys, prominent street-facing gable, and original projecting timber window frames and windows. The gable ends at 17 are weatherboard with roughcast panel at apex, at 19 shingles. No. 19 is built of brick to mid-window height with contrasting roughcast render above and brick quoining to wall junctions. 17 is weatherboard to window head height, with roughcast render panel above. The projecting gables shade deep front verandahs, each with heavy masonry balustrades of different designs, and heavy masonry piers supporting the verandah roof (rendered with tapered tops at 17, contrasting render to buttressed arched opening defined by striking decorative brick pattern at 19). The front fence at 19 is designed to match the verandah balustrade and is original or early. A garage has been added to 17, designed in keeping with the house.

The asymmetrical pair at 29 and 31 Thornton Street has a terracotta tile transverse gable and hip roof with projecting gable to 29 only. The walls are of red brick, with contrasting smooth and roughcast render to gable ends and sills. A prominent round bay with a row of five timber sash leadlight windows and horizontal awning sits beneath the roughcast rendered gable end with three vertical rectangular vents. There is another bay window (square) to the side (south) elevation of 29, also with a horizontal awning. An entry porch to 29 is at the junction of the L-shaped dwelling, with conspicuous timber fretwork and brick piers to porch. Brick gable ends are filled with roughcast render and. Both dwellings retain original grouped projecting timber framed windows. 29 retains its original double door, glazed and half-timbered.

Like 1 Thornton Street, 23 Thornton Street is a substantially modified brick Bungalow with additions to the rear and an upper storey. It is difficult to discern the original form of the house from later works. The house displays a number of features sympathetic with the California Bungalow style, including the timber framed windows and the curved bay on the principal elevation, and chimneys (some possibly replicas designed to match an original).

The low squat form of 27 Thornton Street, low pitch terracotta tile hip and Dutch gable tile roof, projecting timber windows with geometric leadlight pattern are typical of the California Bungalow style. The Dutch gable end is filled with roughcast render with a lattice work vent in the apex. The walls are brick (overpainted) to sill height with roughcast render above. Asymmetrical in plan, the verandah is not beneath a projecting gable. It is instead uncovered, with brick piers and roughcast rendered balustrade with punched out openings.

The two-storey Bungalow at 33 Thornton Street shows a restrained Georgian influence, with a tiled hipped roof with expressed rafter tails, and a symmetrical front facade. The ground floor is finished with face brick while the first floor, above window sill level, has been finished with roughcast render. The chimneys use this same combination of materials. Typical of the 1920s, the first floor windows (original and later) have box frames and margin glazing, as well as decorative corbelled brick sills. The house is largely intact, though the two first-floor sleepouts have been infilled with windows matching the central one of the front elevation, the balustrades of the hipped front porch have been replaced with new-Victorian cast iron, and a carport has been added to the north side. The front garden is largely brick paved with a modern lightweight palisade fence.

The house at 35 Thornton Street is a double storey brick dwelling, built in 1962, which is Non-contributory.

46 Stevenson Street is an asymmetrically designed Bungalow on the corner of Stevenson and Thornton streets. The house and front fence are designed to address not only Stevenson Street, but the Thornton Street frontage as well. The house is partially obscured behind mature trees in the garden.

The house combines an eclectic and rich combination of styles with an unusually high standard of detailing and integrity of the site, with house, front fence, and garden paths intact.

It has a terracotta tile hip and gable roof with tall square and rectangular brick chimneys with distinctive tops; a wide flat cement layer supported on cement brackets, with squared cement chimney pot with chamfered corners and arched terracotta cover. The walls are brick with contrasting roughcast rendered walls above window head height. Two side windows on either side of a chimney feature distinctive rounded splayed bases, also roughcast rendered. The projecting timber framed sash windows with leadlight are distinctive in that the bottom sash is taller than the top. The gable ends are of note for the distinctive chevron patterned central feature, set in front of roughcast rendered gable ends with timber strapwork.

The verandah has square face brick piers, and a roughcast rendered masonry balustrade which extends in a sweeping curve down the splayed front steps, terminating in a low flat capped rendered square pier.

The front garden contains original concrete pathway with rolled edges and gutters, from the corner gateway to the front verandah steps and side of the house. The brick and timber pergola that define the gateway and the gate are original or early, and in a design in keeping with the period of the house.

The front fence to Stevenson and Thornton streets is original, and consists of square brick piers with smooth rendered chamfered tops (unpainted grey cement) and roughcast rendered foundations/retaining wall (unpainted grey cement) and timber lattice infill.

A contemporary double garage which imitates the cladding materials and details has been built at the rear, facing Thornton Street.

48 Stevenson Street may have been the last house to be constructed in the subdivision, in c.1935-38. Like the other houses it is a brick California Bungalow. The walls are rendered (non-original) with distinctive buttressed corners and a curved corner bay with shingles above (southeast corner) that links the front and side facades. True to type it has a prominent terracotta tile transverse gable and jerkin-head roof. A distinctive flat-topped roughcast rendered tapered chimney complements the roof. A prominent street facing gable with buttressed pier contains an entry porch and internal room. This buttressed pier is counterbalanced on the opposite side. The projecting gable end is infilled with shingles. The projecting gable contains an internal room (left) with rounded bay and group of four timber sash, half leadlight windows, with shingles below sill and above head height, and entry porch (right) with arched opening. The low front fence and gate piers are early and consistent with fences built in the interwar period, but it has been over-rendered. The concrete and lawn strip driveway is also early or original.

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/>