
53-61 Toorak Road, South Yarra

Location

53-61 TOORAK ROAD SOUTH YARRA, MELBOURNE CITY

Municipality

MELBOURNE CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO area not sig

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO150

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 12, 2023

What is significant?

The Toorak Road Precinct (HO150), South Yarra, comprising 1-111, 153-189 & 2-180 Toorak Road, 2 & 3 Avoca Street, 1A, 1B & 1C Murphy Street, 52-54, 69-81 & 85 Davis Avenue, 9 & 48 MacFarlan Place and 41-45 Ralston Street is significant. The commercial buildings in the precinct consist of largely single and double storey Victorian, Edwardian and interwar shops built in a range of architectural styles.

Contributory and Non-contributory places are listed in the Precinct Grading Schedule below.

The following places are significant within the precinct:

- 163-165 Toorak Road, South Yarra, Former South Yarra Railway Station (HO106, VHR H1068).
- 162 Toorak Road, South Yarra, Former South Yarra Post Office (HO107, VHR H210).
- 167 Toorak Road, new South Yarra Railway Station, including all buildings and other structures such as ramps and covered canopies over the ramps and platforms, and the brick boundary wall on Yarra Street. The canopy over the entry to Toorak Road is not significant.
- 189 Toorak Road, three-level Hotel Claremont, formerly the South Yarra Coffee House.

- 72-74 Toorak Road, pair of shops of early construction date, c.1860.
- 19-21 Toorak Road, pair of shops of early construction date, 1858

The following places are notable within the precinct:

- 172-174 Toorak Road, South Yarra, Metropolitan Garage.
- 168-170 Toorak Road, three-level Victorian former Savings Bank.
- 155-157 Toorak Road, Gothic revival former Williams & Co estate agents building.
- 169-175 Toorak Road, row of four Tudor Revival shops.
- 50-52 Toorak Road, pair of late Victorian face brick shops.
- 172-174 Toorak Road, Metropolitan Garage.
- 2-4 Punt Road, former South Yarra Hotel.
- 16 Toorak Road, former hotel (cnr Ralston Street).

How is it significant?

The Toorak Road precinct is of local historic, aesthetic and social significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

Historic Significance (Criterion A)

Toorak Road between Punt Road and Claremont Avenue is one of four major commercial streets within Stonnington, with a predominant urban character developed between the late 1850s and 1940s. Toorak Road is a highly representative commercial streetscape, illustrative of development in the inner ring of Melbourne's suburbs, where the initial subdivision of large landholdings proceeds through to smaller subdivisions and the later provision of major transport infrastructure. The historic significance is attributed to the Toorak Road precinct as a whole.

Toorak Road, formerly Gardiner's Creek Road, is significant as one of the roads set out by the Prahran Roads District, following Robert Hoddle's 1837 survey. Gardiner's Creek Road served to connect a number of grand estates developed with frontages to the Yarra River. The western end of the precinct serves as an important entry point to Toorak Road which was an early track connecting St Kilda Road in the east with Gardiners Creek in the west, and an early east-west route to Dandenong.

Toorak Road is significant for its demonstration of development that commenced at its western end and spread in an easterly direction from Punt Road towards Chapel Street. Attributes of this early phase of development include:

- Toorak Road alignment.
- 19-21 Toorak Road (former Oggs Pharmacy c.1858)
- 68-72 Toorak Road (c.1860).

The Toorak Road precinct demonstrates the development of the Melbourne and Suburban Railway Company's line from Richmond to Windsor, with the former South Yarra Railway Station one of only two surviving stations built by private railway companies in the metropolitan area. 25 Several premises in Toorak Road provide evidence of former and continuing business uses and business operators. This is illustrated by building signage including at:

- 155-157 Toorak Road, Real Estate agents Williams & Co.
- 189 Toorak Road, Oggs Pharmacy, ground floor.

- 172-174 Toorak Road, Metropolitan Garage.
- 134-146 Toorak Road, Her Majesty's Hall.
- Lovers Walk Entrance and signage set into the footpath along Toorak Road adjacent to No. 166 Toorak Road.

The former South Yarra Railway Station, 163-165 Toorak Road, South Yarra, and the new South Yarra Station, 167 Toorak Road are historically significant for their demonstration of successive phases of the development of the metropolitan railway network, including the development of the South Yarra to Oakleigh Line in 1879 and the Gippsland line, all of which converge at South Yarra Station. The new South Yarra Station building, including the covered ramps leading to cantilevered covered platforms and the red face brick wall on the western side of Yarra Street which forms an integral part of the station, is historically significant for their demonstration of further railway developments in 1913 when the service to Caulfield was duplicated.

Aesthetic significance (Criterion E)

Toorak Road is significant as a traditional shopping street originally developed with some commercial buildings in the mid nineteenth century, and added to in subsequent decades until it has become an eclectic mix of periods and styles within the one street. Particular blocks such as that from Avoca to Murphy streets (north side), Powell to Caroline streets (south side) and Punt Road to Caroline Street (north side) are rich in architectural variety, retaining small frontages to Toorak Road and a predominantly two storey scale. Notable individual places that contribute to the aesthetic significance of the precinct include rare surviving examples of earlier Victorian development at its western end between Punt Road and Caroline Street (north side) and Myrtle and Macfarlane streets (south side).

Toorak Road is significant for its Victorian, Edwardian and interwar buildings that provide landmarks at certain points along the street. These include:

- 162 Toorak Road, South Yarra, HO107 (Former South Yarra Post Office). (VHR H210)
- 172-174 Toorak Road, South Yarra, Metropolitan Garage.
- 167 Toorak Road, New South Yarra Railway Station.
- 168-170 Toorak Road, three level Victorian former Savings Bank.
- 155-157 Toorak Road, Gothic revival former Williams & Co estate agents.
- 169-175 Toorak Road, row of four Tudor Revival shops.
- 50-52 Toorak Road, pair of late Victoria face brick shops.
- 189 Toorak Road, three level Hotel Claremont, formerly the South Yarra Coffee House.
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- 16 Toorak Road (cnr. Ralston Street), former hotel.

The post-war buildings at 177 and 185-187 Toorak Road, South Yarra do not contribute to the Precinct's aesthetic significance.

Social significance (Criterion G)

The Toorak Road Precinct as a whole is also valued by the local community, through its provision of a post office

and other essential services, shopping and eating opportunities along Toorak Road. Toorak Road has played an important role in the commercial and residential development of South Yarra, servicing a changing and diverse population throughout its history. Toorak Road is known as one of the locality's foremost commercial strips and is valued by the local community as a shopping, recreation and entertainment area.

Local community attachment to the Toorak Road Precinct stems from its continuity of use as a primary commercial centre of South Yarra for over 160 years. The form of the attachment is the interrelationship between its provision of essential services, including public transport, commercial opportunities and public and social space, with its convenient location and accessibility when considered in the context of surrounding residential areas.

South Yarra Railway Station has social significance for the strong community attachment developed through long-standing use and the prominent and continuous nature of the association. The Station performs an essential function for the visitor community and local community in particular, through its provision of public transport, which has been utilised continuously as South Yarra's primary railway station since it was established in the 1860s up to the present.

Hermes Number 210128

Property Number

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/>