
Palermo Estate Precinct

Location

1-37& 2-32 CUNNINGHAM STREET AND 1-25 & 2-30 PALERMO STREET AND 11A-13 & 12-16 OXFORD STREET AND 14 FORSTER STREET SOUTH YARRA, STONNINGTON CITY

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO128

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Palermo Estate Precinct, South Yarra comprising 1-37& 2-32 Cunningham Street, 1-25 & 2-30Palermo Street, 11A-13 & 12-16 Oxford Streetand 14 Forster Street, South Yarra is significant. These streets were subdivided in 1877with all houses constructed between 1877and1919.The following properties are Non-contributory to the precinct:2,4, 14,16, 18& 22Cunningham Street and 18 Palermo Street. The rest are contributory. The bluestone pitched kerbs, channels and laneways also contribute to the significance.

How is it significant?

The Palermo Estate Precinct, South Yarra, is of local historic, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

The Palermo Estate Precinct is of historical significance as tangible evidence of the influence of both public transport and employment centres on the construction of housing in South Yarra. Bolstered by the extension of the rail line from South Yarra to Oakleigh in 1879, the introduction of special workingmen's fares in 1882 and the opening of tramway lines along Toorak Road and Chapel Street in 1888, the area saw a rapid expansion in the development of local industries which in turn saw an acceleration of residential development. Halted by the depression of the 1890s the area saw a second wave of residential development after the establishment of the Tramways Trust in 1910 brought easier access and new employment opportunities. (Criterion A)

The precinct is significant for its illustration of popular residential architectural styles of the Victorian, Edwardian, and interwar periods with a relatively high intactness of buildings.

The precinct is of architectural significance for its collection of Victorian Italianate terrace rows, cottages and houses that, although modestly scaled, illustrate the stylish dwellings that were occupied by trade and service-industry workers of South Yarra during the nineteenth century. The modestly scaled dwellings, which comprise a high proportion of terrace rows and single-fronted houses and some semi-detached dwellings on smaller allotments, provide evidence of the more modest finances of the original occupiers. The predominant style in the late nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth century was the Italianate. These houses display characteristic elements such as low-pitched hipped roofs, chimneys with a rendered cornice, bracketed eaves, front verandahs with chamfered posts or Corinthian columns and cast-iron ornament, double-hung sash windows often with sidelights, and four-panelled front doors.

'Albert Terrace', built in 1877 at 23-33 Cunningham Street, stands out within the precinct for both its size and refinement in detail. Simply designed, this two-storey brick terrace row displays a restraint in detail that is more commonly associated with earlier Victorian regency architecture. This is evident in the symmetrical arrangement and rhythm of the principal facade, long narrow proportion of the first-floor windows, lack of applied ornamentation, other than a centrally placed pediment with decorative scrolls and the word Albert Terrace embossed, and the understated use of cast iron brackets to the verandah.

Two properties along Cunningham Street reflect a slightly later period of development. These are the single storey semi-detached pair of Federation Queen Anne houses at Nos. 35-37 built in 1905, and the Interwar duplex at no. 20 built in 1919. 2-18 Palermo Street are representative of a transitional style between earlier Federation architecture and the Californian Bungalow of the 1920s. Simply detailed these houses all display similar design characteristics indicating that they were built by a single builder. (Criterion D)

While most of the houses in the precinct have typical Victorian Italianate forms and details, their rapid construction by a small group of builders has been created by an unusually high level of overall consistency in the streetscapes, as well as a small point of difference. The distinctive streetscape of Palermo Street is characterised by its numerous rows of attached single storey brick cottages. Streetscapes of these terrace rows are becoming increasingly rare within this section of Stonnington due to a significant amount of demolition that occurred in the 1960s for the Housing Commission of Victoria and recent development pressures. The streetscapes themselves are enhanced by the retention of the streets asphalt surface, bluestone kerbing and guttering and asphalt foot paths with no nature strips. (Criterion E)

Hermes Number 210975

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.

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