Aberdeen Street Precinct

Location

Aberdeen Street PRAHRAN, Stonnington City

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO121

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Aberdeen Road Heritage Overlay area developed quickly from c.1887, as part of the broad surge of development through Prahran during the economic boom. The small group of modest workers' houses at 70-80 Aberdeen Road (north side) and 73-81 Aberdeen Road (south side), were constructed in an unplanned manner around a narrow cul de sac before 1992. All of the dwellings from the original development survive and the precinct remains remarkably intact to its late nineteenth century state.

How is it significant?

The Aberdeen Road Precinct is of aesthetic, architectural and historical significance at a local level.

Why is it significant?

The Aberdeen Road Precinct is aesthetically significant as an unusual surviving urban landscape. This is a product of the modest scale of its buildings and allotments, the character of its dwellings, in particular the

absence of front setbacks, and the density and irregularity of the planning of the narrow cul de sac. Areas of this form and intactness are becoming increasingly rare as early dwellings are demolished and their blocks consolidated for redevelopment. The area contains no substantial modern interventions and its building stock demonstrates a high level of integrity to its original form.

The Aberdeen Road Precinct is architecturally significant as an intact collection of late nineteenth century buildings. It is comprised consistently of cottages or other modest forms of housing on very small blocks. Some of the buildings in the group, most notably the timber cottages to the south side of the street are of high individual significance for their rarity and their unusual design, in particular, their verandahs and ornamental pediments.

The Aberdeen Road area is historical of significance for the manner in which it illustrates the nature of early development in the Municipality. Through its scale and density, the precinct demonstrates the modest standards of accommodation and amenity enjoyed by early residents of Prahran. The unusual siting of the individual dwellings and their layout around a narrow cul de sac underscores the intense, unplanned and uncontrolled nature of subdivision and development during the economic boom of the 1880s. Areas of this type were once common through this section of the Municipality but many were substantially removed during the slum clearance interventions of the 1960s and 1970s.

Thematic Context
8.5.1 'Struggletown' -working class housing in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Gradings
The following gradings were assigned as part of the City of Prahran Conservation Review in 1993. The descriptions were prepared by the current author in 2008.

North Side
73/75 Aberdeen RoadVictorian semi-detached pairB
77/79 Aberdeen RoadVictorian semi-detached pairB
81 Aberdeen RoadVictorian cottageB

South Side
70 Aberdeen RoadVictorian timber cottageA2
72 Aberdeen RoadVictorian timber cottageA2
74 Aberdeen RoadVictorian timber cottageA2
76 Aberdeen RoadVictorian timber cottageA2
78 Aberdeen RoadVictorian timber cottageA2
80 Aberdeen RoadVictorian timber cottageA2
82 Aberdeen RoadVictorian villaB

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - Aberdeen Road Heritage Overlay Area, John Statham Urban Conservation, 2008; Stonnington - Conservation Review City of Prahran Volume 3: Urban Conservation Areas, Context Pty Ltd, 1993;
Construction dates	1855,
Other Names	Centred on Aberdeen Street, Prahran,
Hermes Number	30699
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

This small group of houses may be unique within the City of Prahran. On the north side of the street are four small brick houses - two double fronted and two single fronted, each in the form of a terrace with a single brick fire wall, but detached.

Several have timber side and rear walls. Their original brickwork comprising red and cream bricks has been painted in three of the four examples although the bichromatic brickwork in the chimneys remains exposed.

On the south side of the street are a series of timber houses each with a small gable in the veranda over the entry. No. 80 has a typical Victorian parapet, but in timber rather than the typical brick rendered construction.

At the eastern end are two houses with only part of their frontage exposed to the street. On the south side no. 82 faces the side wall of its neighbour, while on the north side that house faces west with only half its facade visible from the street.

This form of intense and somewhat unplanned urban development is now rare within the metropolitan area, most of the densely settled precincts having been cleared by the Housing Commission after the Second World War as part of their 'slum clearance programme'.

This group of houses are set on the front property line with the balustrading on their verandas forms their 'front fences'. The eastern end of Aberdeen Street is narrower than the remainder of the street, suggesting the housing relates to the subdivision of a single allotment.

The street remains in an early form with asphalt footpath, bluestone kerb and guttering on the southern side. On the north this has been replaced with concrete.

Local Historical Themes

8.5.1 'Struggletown' - working-class housing in the nineteenth and early twentieth century

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/