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# Glenferrie Road / High Street Precinct

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## Location

Glenferrie Road MALVERN, Stonnington City

## Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO349

## Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The major stages of development in the Glenferrie Road area can be seen today in the architecture of the buildings. From the boom years of the 1880s through to the inter-war years, the periods of development and prosperity are reflected in the architectural styles. The importance placed by the early residents and traders in this commercial area can be seen in many of the ornate buildings erected prior to the turn of the century. This trend continued into the Federation era with many buildings featuring elaborate details. In some cases earlier buildings have been replaced, but Glenferrie Road, Station Street, Claremont Avenue and east end of High Street remain substantially intact.

The area is of metropolitan significance as one of the major strip shopping centres to have retained its role into the late twentieth century, and for the quality and integrity of its Victorian, Federation and Interwar building stock, which contribute substantially to its historic character.

Other Names	Centred on Glenferrie Road, Malvern,
Hermes Number	31530
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

Glenferrie Road is a major suburban thoroughfare. It links Dandenong Road in Malvern with Cotham Road in Kew, six kilometres to the north. The proposed conservation area consists primarily of the southernmost section of Glenferrie Road between Dandenong Road and High Street. It also includes small sections of a number of east-west streets which spring from Glenferrie Road, most notably, Station Street and Claremont Avenue near Dandenong Road and a short section of High Street. The area consists of approximately 130 sites.

Glenferrie Road and High Street both provide tram tracks, bitumen wearing surfaces for automotive traffic and parking within the relatively narrow confines of the road. Bluestone kerbs from an earlier roadway survive in some sections of these streets although modern, concrete gutters have generally replaced the earlier bluestone varieties. Decorative bluestone works, including pedestrian crossings, have been introduced in recent years and these have served to reinforce the earlier character of the area. Cross streets such as Station Street have been reconstructed with modern, concrete kerb and channel guttering.

Overhead, the profusion of wires associated with the supply of electricity for domestic, commercial and electric motor traction forms a visually-intrusive canopy above the street. High Street and to a lesser degree Glenferrie Road have been the subject of plantings of small decorative trees in recent years and although these provide some relief for pedestrians, their small scale produces little real impact on these busy suburban streets and the character of the area remains hard, noisy and grey.

Despite the long evolution of the area, its architectural character is derived principally from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the district is distinguished by the range and integrity of its late Victorian and Edwardian building stock. This consists primarily of commercial properties which range from small shops to large terraces in which a variety of tenancies are grouped together in a single, often lavish, development. However, the area is also notable for the sole remnant of its theatres, its banking chambers and for the substantial town hall building located on the corner of Glenferrie Road and High Street.

The standard of retail development in the area is often very high with even the smallest premises demonstrating the architectural craft, wit and imagination of their designers. Typically, smaller premises fall into one of two major groups. Those from the nineteenth century adopt a polite Italianate style with arched windows, a decorative pediment and ornamental details realised in applied render. Two areas on the west side of Glenferrie Road feature long, uninterrupted sections in this style. Buildings from the early years of this century often adopt the bay windows and sinuous curves of the Art Nouveau and the precinct immediately to the north of the Malvern Station is rich in buildings of this type. Others defy easy categorisation. The building constructed for H.G. Appleford in 1891 (109 Glenferrie) presents a distinctive facade of arched windows, encaustic tiles and rendered ornament to Glenferrie Road. By contrast, the gabled facade of 115 Glenferrie Road recalls Greek precedents with intricate plaster dentils around a circular ventilator. A more novel design dating from Australia's federation employs a statue of a kangaroo atop a large circular form in an *homage* to the new nationalism (198 Glenferrie). However, the most impressive structures in the area are undoubtedly the larger developments. These include the Turners Buildings (60-64 Glenferrie) with their elaborate parapet treatment over its plain brick facade, the larger Pepperells Buildings (13-27 Glenferrie) with arched windows and a parapet of festoons and balls and the substantial Town Hall Buildings (285-289 Glenferrie) with their balustraded parapet (triangular pediments visible in early photographs have since been removed). An unusual feature of Glenferrie Road is the presence of a number of corner towers in a variety of styles. The simple group of shops at the corner of Union Street is distinguished by its corner tower surmounted by a balustraded lookout, while the similar group at the corner of Station Street has a turret decorated with the sinuous motifs of the Art Nouveau and a third group at 24-28 Glenferrie Road features an octagonal belvedere.

In addition to its retail premises the area was once noteworthy for its high concentrations of banks and theatres. With the exception of the Victory theatre which has been refurbished as a retail outlet, the theatres no longer exist. However, Glenferrie Road still contains seven present or former banking chambers which draw inspiration from a wide range of sources. These include the National Bank building, which was built in 1914 to designs by Gibbs & Finlay. It is a two-part, Italianate composition in which bold penetrations and rusticated surfaces at the ground floor yield to a more subdued approach above. The former E.S.&A. bank, designed by Oakley and Parkes in 1925, employs a severe form of Greek Classicism. Its massive symmetrical facade is dominated by two ionic columns supporting an elaborate cornice in a style recalling Beaux-Arts precedents. At the intersection of Glenferrie Road and Edsall Street, the Commonwealth Bank operates from stylish, Moderne premises while at the northern end of the review area, the former E.S.&A. bank of 1959, is an unusual, modern composition of horizontal, floating planes designed by the bank's architectural department in conjunction with W.L. Irwin and Associates and Prentice Builders.

The Glenferrie Road / High Street area has endured as a successful commercial strip for over one hundred years. In that time, it has experienced extensive redevelopment and refurbishment. Nonetheless, new development has generally respected the scale and massing of the original, Victorian and Federation commercial properties and few buildings exceed the general two storey character of the area (the modern fitness centre at 1220 High Street is a notable exception). However, in a small number of instances, the area has fallen prey to the trend towards building exteriors that reflect the retail identity of their occupants. This approach has produced building exteriors such as the large Coles store, which serve primarily as billboards.

Finally, the area is noteworthy as a repository for the work of some of Melbourne's most distinguished Architects. These include Leslie Reed, Bates & Smart, H.W. & F.B. Thomkins, A. & K. Henderson, and Harry & Frank Norris

## **Local Historical Themes**

7.3 Creating Melbourne's leading shopping centres 5.4.2 The municipality of Malvern

*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/>*