
Norman Avenue Precinct



7 Norman Avenue



1 Norman Avenue



3 Norman Avenue

Location

Norman Avenue South Yarra, STONNINGTON CITY

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO383

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The Norman Avenue Precinct, South Yarra, comprises eleven unusual early-Edwardian brick villas, which were developed as a subdivision of the nineteenth-century Bonnington mansion estate.

Elements which contribute to the significance of the precinct include:

- High degree of intactness of the streetscape to its c.1904 stage of development.

- Generally consistent asymmetrical villa form of early dwellings and their appearance as a single, unified programme of work.
- The consistent single-storey scale of built form.
- The combination of Victorian and Edwardian elements in the design of individual dwellings with unusual polychrome brickwork.
- The detached form of the early dwellings with generally uniform street orientation and front and side setbacks.
- Intactness of built form and extent to which original cast iron and timber detailing survives.
- Absence of prominent modern additions and alterations.
- Face brick materiality and hipped and gabled roofscapes with slate tile cladding and original chimneys.
- The cul de sac form of Norman Avenue and allotment pattern resulting from the original subdivision.
- Bluestone kerbs, channels and laneways.

How is it Significant?

The Norman Avenue Precinct is of local historical and aesthetic significance.

Why is it Significant?

The Norman Avenue Precinct is of local historical significance as a comparatively early illustration of the resurgence of development in the 1900s after the economic recession of the 1890s. The precinct is also of historical significance as a demonstration of early twentieth century middle class housing development resulting from the subdivision of a Victorian era mansion estate (*Historic Theme: 8.2.1 Mansion Estates and the Higher Ground - Middle Class Estates in Prahran*).

The Norman Avenue Precinct is of aesthetic significance as a rare and highly intact streetscape of villa housing which illustrates the transition between late nineteenth and early twentieth century forms of domestic building expression (*Historic Theme: 8.4.2 Functional, eccentric and theatrical - experimentation and innovation in architecture*). The precinct is also of aesthetic significance for the consistency of its building stock and the manner in which it presents as a single, unified, programme of work. The aesthetic significance of the precinct is further enhanced by the unusual polychromatic brickwork displayed by some of the villas.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - City of Stonnington Heritage Overlay Gap Study - Heritage Overlay Precincts Final Report, Bryce Raworth P/L, 2009;
Hermes Number	63974
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Norman Avenue is a small cul de sac comprising eleven, early Edwardian residences. It is characterised by single-storey villas of note for their uncommon and generally high standards of architectural elaboration.

As constructed, it appears that each of the villas adopted a bichrome brickwork expression to the street with slate roofs above. Although face brick to some buildings has been overpainted, the early polychromy of the area remains legible and is a prominent feature of the streetscape exemplified in dwellings such as Nos 7 & 10. The

development commenced shortly after the death of Queen Victoria. However, the polychromatic expression found in Norman Avenue is fundamentally different in terms of its brickwork arrangements and colour combinations to that of Victorian dwellings constructed before the recession of the early 1890s. Slate roofs, verandah elements and the broad expression of the individual buildings have generally survived throughout.

The polychromy, and the architectural expression more generally, illustrate the evolution of the asymmetrical villa of the 1880s into something more Edwardian. Some buildings utilise Edwardian timber detailing to gables and verandahs while others persist with a more Victorian aesthetic. Others combine elements with some freedom. This notwithstanding, the effect is one of consistency with only subtle variations of form and materiality on the broadly consistent asymmetrical villa theme.

The quality and consistency of the result suggests the involvement of an architect or other designer of note. Some examples such as No 7 are particularly distinguished. This residence combines Federation era gables and finials with bichrome brickwork and arcuated windows with hood molding to produce the most formal, and the only symmetrical, villa in the street. On the opposite side of the street, three villas at 2, 4 & 6 make subtle gestures to medieval influences that would become more explicit and more commonplace over the following decade. However, it is the consistency of the street, rather than the quality of any individual building, that is responsible for the character and significance of the place.

The cul de sac is remarkable for its intactness and the extent to which the development remains legible as a single, unified, programme of work. A number of planning permits are currently in force that would permit some change to the buildings in the Avenue. However the works are typically modest additions, situated some distance to the rear of the principal built form which will have a modest impact on the host dwellings and the broader streetscape.

Historical Australian Themes

The following themes are drawn from the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context Pty Ltd, 2006, Addendum March 2009).

8.2.1 Mansion Estates and the Higher Ground - Middle Class Estates in Prahran

8.4.2 Functional, eccentric and theatrical - experimentation and innovation in architecture

Local Historical Themes

8.1.3 The end of an era - mansion estate subdivisions in the twentieth century 8.4.2 Functional, eccentric and theatrical - experimentation and innovation in architecture

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/>