

---

# Pontville



B2814 Pontville

---

## Location

629 - 657 Blackburn Road, TEMPLESTOWE VIC 3106 - Property No B2814

## Municipality

MANNINGHAM CITY

## Level of significance

State

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1395

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 2, 2005

A homestead of State significance, a rare surviving example from the first decade of Victorian settlement and which displays distinctive architectural characteristics.

Pontville is believed to have been built by Major Charles Newman in the early 1840s, and though it has suffered severe alteration it still exhibits its distinctive Indian bungalow form and contains fabric of great technical interest. The plan comprises a core of three interconnecting rooms surrounded by a broad verandah formed by the continuation of the main hipped roof slope, within which the ends were built in to create further rooms. The principal rooms have been largely resurfaced and partly gutted, the roof has been reconstructed, apparently to the original profile; the built-in rooms have gone, leaving traces of the structural junctions; the verandah has been

built in all around with inferior materials.

Anglo-Indian investors and merchants, ex-Indian military men and retired servants of the Honourable East India Company formed a small but disproportionately influential segment of the wealthier colonists in New South Wales, Tasmania and Western Australia, but with such notable exceptions as Major Alexander Davidson, they were not much heard of in Victoria. At Pontville, however, Newman, who had served with the East India Company, was reported to live in "oriental splendor". Likewise Indian influenced houses are a significant element in Australian colonial architecture, but extremely rare in Victoria. The overall form of the hipped roof, surrounding verandah and built-in ends is one of the standard Indian-influenced bungalow types, whereas the enfilade of interconnecting rooms is more characteristic of early houses in Sydney and Parramatta. The wide central room cum- hall is shared with some Victorian pastoral homesteads such as Reedy Lake, near Kerang.

The relative decrepitude of Pontville has saved some very interesting portions of the fabric from being concealed or destroyed. The ruled lime stucco surviving on the north side is presumed to be original, and is by far the oldest such surface in authentic condition to be identified in Victoria, if not Australia (apart from a small patch of the ex-rear wall of Old Government House, Parramatta). Other distinctive elements include a displaced hearth (now below the floor level) of a stone clearly imported from outside the Port Phillip District, possibly English millstone grit; some unexplained shallow cream bricks, probably of local manufacture; pit-sawn ceiling joists, and a stair opening in the ceiling trimmed with tusk tenon joints.

Hermes Number 66019

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/>*