

## 'LEE TERRACE' 6-18 AVOCA STREET, SOUTH YARRA HO641

Prepared by: Context

Survey Date: June 2020

Place Type: Residential

Architect: Wilkinson and Permewan

Significance level: Significant

Builder: -

Extent of overlay: To title boundaries

Construction Date: 1889



Figure 1. 6-18 Avoca Street, South Yarra. (Source: Context, May 2020)

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The City of Stonnington is the traditional country of the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung peoples. They belonged to a larger affiliation of five central Victorian tribes known as the Kulin Nation. Archaeologists believe that Aboriginal people have been in Victoria for more than 30,000 years. Throughout this long history their relationship with the landscape (where and how they lived) has changed according to factors such as climate change, resource availability, and cultural change. It is possible, however, to assume that the land of the Kulin has been occupied for many thousands of years (Context 2006:10).

The study area is identified in *Stonnington's Indigenous History* as one of the important Aboriginal sites in the municipality. The gully near the junction of Toorak Road and Chapel Street was an Aboriginal camp site set in tea-tree scrub which was used by Aboriginal people visiting from Gippsland. Within the study area, sites of importance include the campsite of Derrimut in the banks of the swamp at Yarra Street, now the site of Melbourne High school, alongside the South Yarra Railway Bridge (Clark and Tostanski 2006:32). Derrimut was a Yalukit-willam clan-head who belonged to the Boonwurrung language group. Specific sites in the Yalukit-willam estate personally associated with Derrimut included the south bank of the Yarra River, from the punt at South Yarra to the Yarra wharf, where steamers moored (Clark and Tostanski 2006:6). A member of the Native Police Corp, Beruke's (or Gellibrand's) site of burial is also within the study area, at the former South Yarra Depot site near the south end of Clara Street along the railway. Beruke was buried there on 14 January 1852 (Clark and Tostanski 2006:32).

At the time of the area's first Crown land sales in 1840, South Yarra fell within what was then known as the Parish of Prahran, comprising today's South Yarra and parts of Prahran and Windsor. Crown land sales signalled the end of the area's brief pastoral history, as its situation at Melbourne's eastern fringe and advantageous position alongside the Yarra River made it an attractive location for settlement (Context 2006:30; *Australasian Chronicle* 20 March 1841:4).

Development of the Parish began in the west, gradually moving east as metropolitan Melbourne continued to expand. In 1854 the Prahran Road District, an early form of local government in Victoria, was proclaimed and road boundaries were redefined from those established by Government Surveyor Robert Hoddle in 1837 (Context 2016:1). At this time Toorak Road was known as Gardiners Creek Road, an early east-west route to Dandenong (Context 2006:47). Although Gardiners Creek Road was commonly referred to as Toorak Road from the 1850s, use of the old name continued up until 1898 (Lay 2003:150-1).

The Prahran Road District became the Municipality of Prahran in April of 1855 (*Banner* 26 May 1854:8). Prahran was among the earliest local government authorities created in Melbourne (Cooper 1924:55-84). Prahran was declared a Town in 1870, a City in 1879 and its population almost doubled in the decade to 1891 (Cooper 1935:212). Proximity to the rail services was a major selling point used by estate agents in all parts of Melbourne, and residential subdivisions closest to the stations generally sold first (Context 2016:5).

Development of the study area was stimulated with the construction of bridges over the Yarra River and Gardiners Creek. In 1857, the first bridge leading directly into the Municipality of Prahran was built across the Yarra to link Chapel Street with Church Street, Richmond. Chapel Street became the main thoroughfare for the municipality as soon as the bridge was constructed (Context 2006:53). In 1860 a timber bridge was constructed over Gardiners Creek at Toorak Road (Context 2016:3). Toorak Road also became an increasingly more important thoroughfare with the construction of grand estates overlooking the Yarra River, such as Avoca at 8 Gordon Grove, built c.1848 (HO45) which survives today. Toorak Road's western end was also the first road in the Parish to be graded and surfaced, after the Governor of Victoria took up residence in Toorak House at 21 St Georges Road in 1854 (HO99; Malone 1982:10).

South Yarra Railway Station opened in 1860, located on the north side of Toorak Road between Darling and Yarra Streets, which substantially improved access to the area and adjoining localities (Context 2006:46-7). The railway played an essential role for the municipality, encouraging residential and commercial development by allowing people to settle in the area within an easy commute to work in other parts of Melbourne. Public transport also provided an influx of shoppers to South Yarra, stimulating economic activity especially for streets in the station's immediate vicinity. The 1865 municipal rate book shows a dramatic increase in commercial and retail occupation at the Punt Road end of Toorak Road, with development of brickworks, market gardens and other industries focussed in the east to take advantage of the new railway (S&McD).

The introduction of special workingmen's fares in 1882 also encouraged workers to settle in suburbs along rail routes, enabling people to move out from the inner areas where they worked (Priestley 1984:152). The development of large parts of the eastern end of the municipality stalled as a result of the 1890s' economic depression and it was not until the early years of the twentieth century that the promised patronage for the new railway lines eventuated. The current South Yarra Station complex was altered in 1883, 1915-16, and again in 1918 to accommodate the growth of the railway system (Context 2016:4).

In 1878 the Victorian Government purchased the existing railways that ran through Richmond to South Yarra, Prahran and Windsor, as part of a plan to build a line through Oakleigh to Gippsland. The new Oakleigh line, which was opened in 1879, ran through Malvern, Armadale, Toorak and Hawksburn to join the existing line at South Yarra. The opening of the Oakleigh line coincided with the land boom that saw huge urban growth in Prahran generally, and the route of the line from Gippsland was the subject of considerable political lobbying as land developers sought to have it run through their proposed estates (Context 2006:53).

The new link from South Yarra to Oakleigh, completing the line to Gippsland, was opened in April 1879 (Harrigan 1962) and this would have necessitated the construction of more platforms at South Yarra. Substantial cutting also took place at South Yarra to accommodate the line, where over 50,000 cubic yards [sic] of earth were removed for its construction (*Argus* 9 January 1879:6). The sheer amount of earthworks and engineering that went into installing it demonstrates the importance of the railway network not only to Melbourne, but also to Victoria (Context 2016:7). In the study area, the cutting of land for new railway platform is evidenced by the irregular shape of the block of land on the south side of Palermo Street.

Melbourne's first cable tram commenced between Spencer Street and Richmond in 1885. After the new Princes Bridge was opened in 1888 cable tram routes extended from Swanston Street along St Kilda Road to Windsor and along Toorak Road to South Yarra, turning into Chapel Street towards Prahran. The Toorak Road line was extended to Irving Road in 1889, and the Windsor line was extended to the St Kilda Esplanade in 1891. An engine house for the cable winding machinery was built on the corner of Chapel Street and Toorak Road (Context 2006:68-69).

After the interruption caused by the 1890s' depression, the Federation of Australia ushered in a new period of growth and optimism. Perhaps the most significant event during this period was the Cities of Malvern and Prahran cooperating on a venture that would have a profound effect on the development of Toorak Road and beyond; the creation of the Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust (Context 2006:171). Increasing prosperity and improvements to public transport meant that working-class people could afford suburban homes. As was the case when the railway at South Yarra opened, establishment of the Tramways Trust in 1910 brought new patronage to the commercial precinct along Toorak Road (Context 2016:8).

From the mid-nineteenth century, residential development in the study area was also accelerated by the expansion of industries of the municipality. With the natural deposits of alluvial clay in the municipality, brick and tile making became the chief industry of the municipality. From at least the early 1840s, low-lying parts of the municipality were established with small operators, and the northern end of Chapel Street from Toorak Road to the river became the major centre of brick production. Robert 'Daddy' Davis quarried clay from the northeast corner of Chapel Street and Toorak Road for three decades. His brickworks were the forerunner of the Australian Gas Retort and Firebrick Manufactory, later known as the South Yarra Firebrick Company, which continued operations into the 1970s (Context 2006:95).

Another industry that played an important role in the municipality was food production. The Victoria Brewery company was established in 1858 in Chapel Street and lasted nearly two decades. In 1876, the Victorian Jam Company took over and operated from the building for a century. The Jam Factory became Prahran's largest employer, with up to 1000 workers, many of them women, employed in the busy season. The factory was closed in the 1970s, moving closer to suppliers in the Shepparton district and Dandenong Ranges (Context 2006:97).

South Yarra was also one of the centres for clothing factories, knitting mills and milliners from the 1870s well into the second half of the twentieth century. Enterprises ranged from small dressmakers to larger-scale factories. In the 1920s, nearly 20 garment factories were operating in Prahran, which would have provided employment of up to thirty people (Context 2006:98).

Since the 1980s Chapel Street and Toorak Road have continued to develop intensively with many multi-storey commercial and residential premises being located either on the street or set back behind the traditional shops. High-rise developments are also starting to dominate the South Yarra skyline, particularly towards Chapel Street. While individual buildings along Toorak Road have been modified, often quite substantially, the retention of individual buildings and the impression of a traditional shopping street has largely been maintained more towards the south of the intersection.

## PLACE HISTORY

6-18 Avoca Street, South Yarra, a row of seven terraced two- and three-storey brick residences, was built in late 1889 for the owner David Lee, first city organist of Melbourne.

By early 1887, David Lee had moved to a villa named 'Lee Villa' in Avoca Street (*Argus* 26 March 1887:6). During his 6-month trip to Europe that year, the house was rented to J. Harris M.L.A. (*Melbourne Punch* 8 December 1887:9). Lee Villa located was at the west side of Avoca Street near Station Street (formerly known as Railway Place) (S&McD 1890).

Lee owned land with a 100-foot frontage to Avoca Street with a depth of 150 feet along Station Street, opposite Lee Villa (RB1888-89). In September 1889, Wilkinson and Permewan, architects and surveyors, invited tenders for 'seven large brick houses, two- and three-storey, in Avoca Street, South Yarra' (*Age* 18 September 1889:9).

The row of seven brick houses known as 'Lee Terrace' was completed by 1890, each with eight rooms, and the corner house at the intersection of Avoca and Station streets with ten rooms. In 1890, the houses were occupied by William E. Corcoran, agent (no. 18), William Phelps, surgeon (no. 16), Matilda Bullock (no. 14), Emily Harcourt (no. 12), John Blackie, mining manager (no. 10), and Laura Crawford (no. 8). The corner house at 6 Avoca Street, 'Waterloo', was occupied by David Lee and his wife Mary, until Mary's death in 1891 (*Herald* 28 July 1891:2; S&McD 1892).

Lee left 'Waterloo' c.1892, and his professional career was ended following injuries to his right arm from a railway accident at South Yarra Railway Station in 1894. In 1897 Lee died at a boarding house in William Street, South Yarra, from chronic kidney disease. His estate was valued at only £50 (*Daily Telegraph* 7 July 1897:5).

Today, all seven houses of Lee Terrace survive at 6-18 Avoca Street, South Yarra.

### *Wilkinson and Permewan, architects and surveyors*

The partnership of John Wilkinson and Herbert J. Permewan was formed as early as 1888 and continued to 1906 (*Age* 7 May 1888:8). Permewan had become a member of the firm of Craven, Brown and Permewan, civil engineers, architects and licenced surveyors in 1887, but by 1888 exclusively practised as Wilkinson and Permewan (*Argus* 9 June 1887:12).

In 1889, the firm was responsible for designs of several buildings in South Yarra, including David Lee's mansion and a row of terraces (known as Lee Terrace) in Avoca Street, and additions of two-storey brick shops and alterations to Her Majesty's Hotel in Toorak Road, for the latter of which they collaborated with C. B. Abbott, architect (*Table Talk* 15 November 1889:20; *Argus* 30 January 1889:3). Wilkinson and



Permewan designed residential and community buildings in metropolitan Melbourne and rural regions, including the North Melbourne Fire Station complex in Curzon Street, North Melbourne. (*Herald* 13 September 1893:2). The firm is best known for its design of the Eaglehawk Town Hall (1901).

*David Lee (1837-1897), owner of Lee Terrace*

The following has been excerpted from the article in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*:

*David Lee (1837-1897), organist and conductor, was born on 20 March 1837 at Armagh, Ireland, son of James Lee, professor of music, and his wife Mary, née Scarlet. At 4 he entered the Armagh Cathedral School, at 7 became a chorister and at 12 was made deputy-organist of Armagh Cathedral. On leaving school he joined the Provincial Bank of Ireland as a clerk.*

*Lee arrived at Melbourne in the Morning Light on 26 July 1864...He opened organs in many city and suburban churches, notably St Patrick's Cathedral on 14 March 1880 and Chalmers Presbyterian Church, East Melbourne, on 30 April 1885. He was honorary organist of the Melbourne Philharmonic Society in 1866...In 1877 he was appointed first city organist of Melbourne by the City Council...*

*Lee's influence in the Philharmonic Society was later described by George Peake who claimed that Lee's 'keen business instinct possibly affected his musical judgement, while his bonhomie and personal popularity probably disarmed criticism, much to his own disadvantage as a public musician. His musical enterprise appeared to be influenced by a desire to please the public and win popularity, rather than promote the educational and progressive advance of musical art'. Lee's limitations as conductor of the society affected the musical life of Melbourne for many years; he was finally forced out of the society in 1888 after years of constant friction, especially because of his fruitless requests for payment of his salary. On 23 April 1877 at Christ Church, St Kilda, he had married Mary Mackenzie, eldest daughter of Archibald Johnson of Toorak House. She predeceased him without issue. Lee died of kidney disease at South Yarra on 12 May 1897 and was buried in the Anglican section of the Melbourne general cemetery (O'Neill 1974).*



Figure 2. Portrait of late David Lee. (Source: *Weekly Times* 15 May 1897:13)

## DESCRIPTION

Lee Terrace at 6-18 Avoca Street, South Yarra is a group of seven two- and three-storey brick terraces in the Victorian Italianate style. Set back behind narrow front gardens that are separated by distinctive serpentine garden walls, this substantial terrace row is positioned on the east side of Avoca Street, commencing on the corner of Station Street (no.6) running north. A narrow service lane runs along the rear eastern boundary of the terrace group. Due to the fall of the land from north to south, the ground floor line of no.18 is at street level whilst at no. 6 a full basement level is provided.

The front façade (facing Avoca Street) and side façade (facing Station Street) are smooth rendered rising from footings of rock faced bluestone. The front section of each terrace sits beneath its own hipped roof

which would have originally been covered in slate but are now corrugated iron. The rear section of each terrace narrows creating setbacks from the side boundaries. Sitting beneath skillion roofs separated by party walls rising above the roof line, the walls of the rear section of each terrace would have originally been of face brickwork but are now overpainted and display a variety of contemporary single storey additions and garaging. Whilst several window openings have been altered across the rear façade of the terrace the overall original two storey form of the row remains clearly legible.

Divided into seven equal bays, the terrace is symmetrically arranged with the end terraces (no.6 and no. 18) set forward towards the street line. Sitting behind a palisade cast iron fence set between substantial rendered piers with Italianate caps, each terrace has a fine two-level cast-iron verandah. Finely detailed, the verandah is an exceptionally intact example of its type with ultra-thin classical columns, balustrades, friezes and brackets. Due to the fall of the land the ground floor verandahs of nos 8-14 are accessed by flights of sawn bluestone steps with cast iron balustrades.

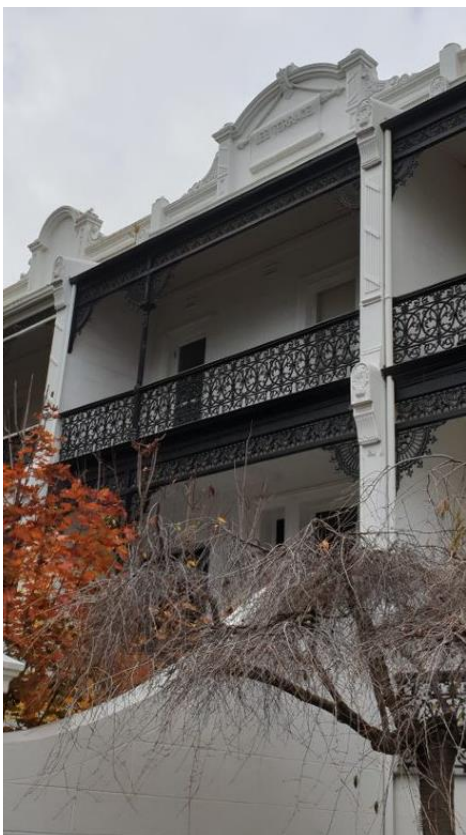


Figure 3. Terrace at 12 Avoca street, South Yarra with large pediment embossed with 'Lee Terrace'. (Source: Context, May 2020)



Figure 4. Italianate fence pier and palisade fence detail. Note: serpentine garden dividing wall. (Source: Context, May 2020)

Prominently sited on the corner of Station Street, the terrace group is distinguished by the façade treatment of no.6. This terrace rises three storeys above street level and is distinctive for its corner oriel bay window and curved cast iron verandah with balustraded cast iron staircase. With the main floor of the terrace sitting above a full basement level, its position on the corner of two streets provides an unusually picturesque three-dimensional quality to the composition of the terrace group.



**Figure 5. Basement and ground floor façade detail at 6 Avoca Street, South Yarra showing cast iron stair and corner Oriel window (Source: Context, May 2020)**

At roof level, a panelled parapet set with urns at each corner sits above an ornate cornice line with masonry brackets and rosettes. Three substantial Italianate chimneys rise above the cornice line along Station Street and are set between decorative scroll brackets. The terrace boundary wall along Station Street is smooth rendered and broken up by moulded cornice lines demarcating each floor level. At the top two levels the rendered finish to the wall is ruled with lines to imitate ashlar blockwork whilst at the ground level the walls are rusticated. The wall is punctuated by a number of vertically proportioned openings with masonry architraves and rendered projecting sills. Windows are typically timber framed double hung sash windows. Towards the rear of the terrace detailing is simpler with the principal cornice line unbracketed and no architraves around the windows. The single storey brick boundary wall towards the rear of the building including the garage doors are not original.

Facing Avoca Street, vertically proportioned openings with masonry architraves and sills are similarly fitted with timber framed double hung sash windows. At the first and second floor levels a blind window is positioned next to the corner oriel window. The oriel window is supported on a large fluted masonry wall bracket and features decorative panel moulds, corner pediment details and cast-iron balustrade panels to the upper windows. At the ground and basement level entry doors are fitted with moulded six panelled cricket bat doors set within typical Victorian door frames with glazed side and over lites at ground level but with no side lites at basement level. The main entrance door side lites are fitted with leaded glass that may or may not be original. At basement level a single vertically proportioned opening with timber framed sash window with moulded architrave is also provided.

Each of the five terraces of the central recessed section (nos. 8-16) are set between projecting masonry party walls. Each party wall features narrow vertical end panels with fluted details, decorative scrolls and embossed floriated motifs. At roof level, each terrace has a centrally placed semi-circular pediment between engaged columns set within a simple panelled parapet, with the exception of no. 12 where the pediment is wider and curved and features a moulded banner with the words 'Lee Terrace' embossed. The cornice line above the verandah roof features sophisticated curved fluted detailing which stops below each pediment. This treatment is reversed for the central terrace (no.12) where the cornice line is fluted below the pediment with masonry eave brackets and rosettes either side.



**Figure 6. Pediment at 12 Avoca Street, South Yarra featuring a moulded banner with the words 'Lee Terrace' embossed. (Source: Context, May 2020)**

At the ground floor level, a large tripartite opening with masonry mullions and moulded architraves are fitted with timber framed double hung sash windows. The front doors to each terrace are fitted with moulded six panelled cricket bat doors set within typical Victorian door frames with glazed side and over lites that feature etched or leaded glass that may or may not be original. At the first-floor level two vertically proportion openings with moulded masonry architraves are fitted with timber framed double hung sash windows. At the basement level a glazed door with side windows has been added at no.8 and a highlight window added at no.12.





Figure 7. Façade detail at 18 Avoca Street, Note: tripartite window at the upper level South Yarra. (Source: Context, May 2020)



Figure 8. Façade detail at 10 Avoca Street South Yarra showing typical detailing seen at Nos. 8, 10, 14 & 16. (Source: Context, May 2020)

Whilst largely similar to the five central recessed terraces, the northern most projecting end terrace (no. 18) displays subtle differences in its detailing. Whilst the parapet and pediment details are identical to nos.8, 10, 14 and 16 the cornice line is bracketed with rosettes in an identical fashion to no. 6 and no. 12. At the ground floor level the openings are identical to the five recessed terraces, whilst at the first floor level a single vertically proportioned window opening sits above the entry door below with a tripartite window replacing the single window found in the other terraces.

## INTEGRITY

Lee Terrace at 6-18 Avoca Street, South Yarra, is largely intact with very few changes visible to original or early elements. The building retains its original built form as a two and three storey terrace row, original roof form and fenestrations. Original details include, rendered structural brick walls, Italianate chimneys, parapet with pediments, moulded minor and major cornices, masonry eave brackets and rosettes, decorative scrolls and other applied Italianate detailing, cast iron verandah (including frieze, brackets, balustrades and stair at no.6), palisade fence (including bluestone footings, Italianate piers and serpentine garden walls between terraces) and original timber window and door joinery. Changes include the addition of basement windows at nos. 8 and 12, overpainting of brickwork at the rear of each terrace, rear extensions, and changes to original openings. These changes are generally not visible from the street and the original two storey-built form of the terrace row remain legible. Overall, the building has high integrity.

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Large numbers of terraced houses were built in response to the rapid development of the inner suburbs of Melbourne, particularly during the 'Boom' period of the 1880s and it was common for a single

landowner/contractor to build a row or group of houses. Terrace houses were an efficient way of building multiple houses and maximising the use of land at a time when the suburbs were growing rapidly.

Many of these terrace rows were modest single storey dwellings built to be let out as accommodation for working people however, larger more finely detailed examples were built for middle-class households. These latter terrace rows tended to be two or more storeys, designed in the Italianate style and incorporating decorative cast iron balconies.

The Italianate style is a revival in the mid-nineteenth century of earlier Italian architectural forms and details, especially those from the time of the Renaissance, which were in themselves a revival and reappraisal of Greek and most importantly Roman architecture. The Italianate style as applied to domestic architecture in Victoria favoured simple building forms, with sheer wall surfaces in face brick (often bichrome or polychrome) or cement render. Decoration was then applied to these sheer wall surfaces. Decoration in the Italianate style derived from Roman precedents and included elements from classical entablature and architectural orders, including a hierarchy of architraves, friezes and cornices with associated moulding, panels and brackets, applied to eaves, parapets and chimneys. Eclectic touches were often married to the Italianate style, particularly in the prosperous years of the 1880s resulting in excessive ornamentation that characterised the Boom style of the late-nineteenth century.

Italianate style terraces were designed to be appreciated on their own as much as part of a row. Symmetry for the group was often achieved through a centrally placed classically inspired pediment inscribed with the terrace name and build date. Roof elements were frequently deliberately hidden behind decorative parapets above a moulded eave cornice and a frieze, which was either plain or decorated with a row of brackets and rosettes. Chimneys were often tall, visible above the parapet and elaborately Italianate in style with a cornice at the top. Invariably filigree-encrusted cast iron verandahs were added, addressing the street from between the houses' party walls the street

This Italianate style is used in several examples of terrace houses throughout Stonnington that have been assessed as individually significant. These include:

HO155, 286-292 Williams Road, Toorak – this row of four attached two-storey terrace houses are individually significant within HO155. Designed in the Italianate style they display key characteristics of the style including a parapet with pediments and decorative urns that conceal a hipped roof, bracketed eaves, round arched window and door openings, a two-storey cast iron verandah across the front between dividing party walls and a palisade cast iron fence with Italianate piers and serpentine garden dividing walls



Figure 9. 286-292 Williams Road, Toorak. (Source: Google)



HO561, Terrace Row, 3-9 Kensington Road, South Yarra – a row of four freestanding brick terrace houses built in 1888 in the Italianate style. Originally constructed in bichrome face brick, No. 5 is now overpainted, and Nos. 3,7 and 9 rendered. Each terrace features a hipped slate roof with bracketed eaves, typical Italianate corniced chimneys, two-storey verandahs with cast iron frieze, brackets and balustrades



Figure 10. 3-9 Kensington Road, South Yarra. (Source: Google)

HO566, 14 & 16 William Street, South Yarra - The semi-detached pair are massed to look like a single mansion, sharing a very wide two-storey canted bay at the centre of the front facade, which is flanked by return verandahs with cast-iron detail. The projecting bay is finished with cast and run cement render detail, as are the rear wings which sit behind the return verandahs. The walls beneath the verandah, however, are of polychrome brick.



Figure 11. 14 & 16 William Street, South Yarra. (Source: onthehouse.com.au)



HO155, 131-135 Williams Road Prahran – This substantial row of three double-storey bichrome brick terraces are individually significant within HO155. Designed as a pair of two end terraces with distinctive corner turret bays, the central third terrace is recessed and distinguished by an elaborate Italianate parapet and pediment. The terrace group displays an unusual combination of Italianate detailing combined with design features of the Australian Queen Anne style that was popular at the turn of the twentieth century.



Figure 12. 131-135 Williams Road Prahran. (Source: Google)

HO580, 64-68 High Street, Windsor – This row of one two-storey and two single-storey single fronted terrace houses were built in 1891 for a single owner who lived in the two storey dwelling, while the adjacent single-storey houses were rental properties. Built in the Italianate style, with highly decorated and boldly modelled parapets, these parapets conceal hipped roofs and almost double the height of the façade of the single-storey houses.

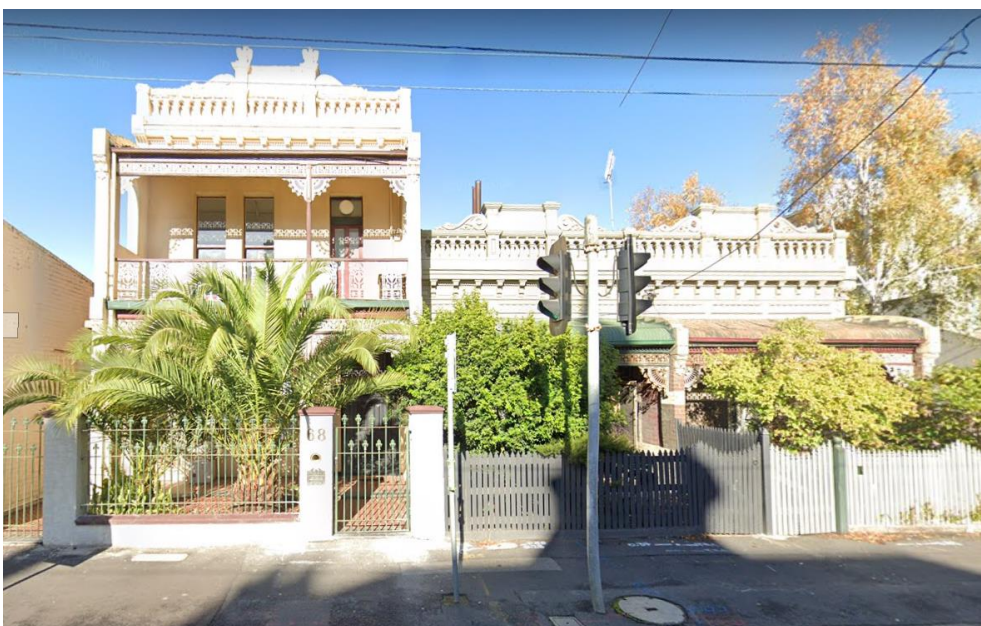


Figure 13. 64-68 High Street, Windsor. (Source: Google)



HO584, 64-74 Upton Road, Windsor – this terrace row of six single-storey attached terrace house was built in 1890 for a single owner as rental properties. All six of the houses have a separate roof form, and the walls are of tuckpointed Hawthorn brick with cream brick dressings in lively quoining and diaper patterns, as well as red bricks to the blind arches of the verandah wing walls. All have the same distinctive chimney form: rendered with a cornice, ornamented by vermiculated panels on each face. Overall, they can be described as Italianate in style with decorative iron verandahs set between dividing party walls.



Figure 14. 64-74 Upton Road, Windsor. (Source: Google)

Lee Terrace at 6-18 Avoca Street, South Yarra, compares favourably against the above individually significant Italianate terrace houses in Stonnington with its details displaying key characteristics of the Italianate style. These features include rendered masonry walls, hip roof elements that are hidden behind a decorative parapet, moulded eave cornice and frieze, eave brackets and rosettes, tall Italianate chimneys, elaborate cast iron verandah set between party walls and an original cast iron palisade front fence. In this way Lee Terrace is most comparable to 286-292 Williams Road, Toorak (individual significant in HO155), and the row of terrace houses at 3-9 Kensington Road, South Yarra (HO561), although in this later example these houses are detached.

What sets Lee Terrace apart from these examples is the sophisticated modelling of the terrace row as a whole rather than the simple stacking together of individually repeated modules. This is evident in its plan form with the end terraces projecting forward towards the street, and also in the subtle variances in detailing across individual terraces seen in parapet details and window treatments particularly that of the corner oriel window that wraps the corner of Station Street, creating a striking three dimensional quality to the façade. This differs dramatically to the often two dimensionality of other terrace groups

This three-dimensional quality is evident at 14 and 16 William Street, South Yarra (HO566), although this pair of houses was designed to read as a single mansion house set in a large garden setting and at 131-135 Williams Road, Prahran (individually significant in HO155) which utilises the technique of projecting end terraces with a recessed central bay but is breaking away from the Italianate style and introducing elements more commonly seen in the Australian Queen Anne style of architecture.

Purer comparable examples of the use of the Italianate style can be seen at 64-68 High Street, Windsor (HO580), and 64-74 Upton Road, Windsor (HO584), although these are more modest examples of terrace houses built by speculative builders as rental accommodation. The unusual terrace combination of one two storey house and two single storey houses at 64-68 High Street were built for a single owner who lived in the two-storey dwelling, while the adjacent single-storey houses were rental properties. This is similar to Lee Terrace where the row was built for David Lee who lived in the largest and most elaborate terrace in the group. Lee Terrace is also distinguished by its size which includes seven terraces

that range from two to three storeys. No other examples of a terrace row of this size has been identified within Stonnington.

## ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

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✓	<b>CRITERION A</b> Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).
	<b>CRITERION B</b> Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).
	<b>CRITERION C</b> Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).
✓	<b>CRITERION D</b> Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).
✓	<b>CRITERION E</b> Importance of exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).
	<b>CRITERION F</b> Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance)
	<b>CRITERION G</b> Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).
	<b>CRITERION H</b> Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT

'Lee Terrace' at 6-18 Avoca Street, South Yarra, built in 1889 for David Lee to a design by Wilkinson and Permewan architects, is significant.

Significant fabrics include the:

- original built form, roof form (including both front hip and rear skillion roof sections) and original fenestrations along both Avoca Street and Station Street;
- rendered brick walls;
- Italianate chimneys;
- parapet with pediments, moulded minor and major cornices, masonry eave brackets and rosettes, decorative scrolls and other applied Italianate detailing;
- original timber window and door joinery;
- cast iron verandah (including frieze, brackets, balustrades and stair at No.6); and

- palisade fence (including bluestone footings, Italianate piers and serpentine garden walls between terraces).

### **HOW IT IS SIGNIFICANT**

Lee Terrace at 6-18 Avoca Street, South Yarra, is of local historic, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

### **WHY IT IS SIGNIFICANT**

'Lee Terrace' is of historic significance for the evidence it provides of the middle-class suburban development of South Yarra in the 1880s prior to the economic depression of the 1890s. Its ornate architectural style and large scale provides evidence of the desirability of the suburb during the economic boom of the period. It is also historically significant for its association with David Lee, first city organist of Melbourne. In October 1866 Lee played the organ at the inaugural ceremony of the Melbourne International Exhibition, with C. E. Horsley conducting. On 8 August 1872 he opened the new Town Hall organ. In 1877 he was appointed first city organist of Melbourne by the City Council. Lee was a controversial figure in Melbourne's musical circles which resulted in him being forced out of the Philharmonic Society in 1888. Lee married Mary McKenzie, daughter of Archibald Johnston of Toorak House, Toorak, in 1877 and commissioned the building of 'Lee Terrace' in 1899 for Mary and himself to live in. (Criterion A)

Architecturally, 'Lee Terrace' is a fine example of a substantial Victorian Italianate terrace row built in 1889 to a design by Wilkinson and Permewan architects. The group of seven two- and three-storey terraces display key design elements representative of the style. These include: rendered structural brick walls, Italianate chimneys, parapets with pediments, moulded minor and major cornices, masonry eave brackets and rosettes, decorative scrolls and other applied Italianate detailing, original timber window and door joinery, cast iron verandah (including frieze, brackets, balustrades and stair at No.6) and cast iron palisade fence (including bluestone footings, Italianate piers and serpentine garden walls between terraces). (Criterion D)

Aesthetically, 'Lee Terrace' is distinguished by its form, size and retention of a high level of ornamental detail of the Victorian Italianate style. Of particular note is the refined detailing to the parapet and cornice frieze, the cast iron stair to No. 6 and the treatment of the corner orientation at the intersection of Avoca Street and Station Street. The sophisticated modelling of the terrace row as a whole is manifest in its planning and detailing evidenced by the end terraces projecting forward towards the street and the subtle variances in detailing found across each individual terrace. Also, of particular note is the use of the double storey oriel window that wraps the corner of Station Street, giving a striking three-dimensional quality to the façade. This differs dramatically to the often two dimensionality of other terrace groups. (Criterion E)

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the City of Stonnington Planning Scheme as an individually significant place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the City of Stonnington Planning Scheme:



## STONNINGTON PLANNING SCHEME

EXTERNAL PAINT CONTROLS	Yes
INTERNAL ALTERATION CONTROLS	No
TREE CONTROLS	No
OUTBUILDINGS OR FENCES (Which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3)	Yes
TO BE INCLUDED ON THE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER	No
PROHIBITED USES MAY BE PERMITTED	No
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE PLACE	No

## OTHER



**H0641 - Lee Terrace, 6-18 Avoca Street  
SOUTH YARRA**

- GRADING**
- Significant
  - Contributory
  - Non-contributory
  - Precinct boundary

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