HERITAGE CITATION

Arden, 298 Glenferrie Road, Malvern

Figure 1. 298 Glenferrie Road, Malvern (GJM Heritage, September 2020).

DATE: June 2021

ARDEN, 298 GLENFERRIE ROAD, MALVERN

Place type: Residential Flats	**Architect:** Lewis Levy
Construction Date: 1935	**Builder:** Lewis Levy
Recommendation: Include in the Heritage Overlay	**Extent of Overlay:** To the extent of the property boundary

Locality History

The City of Stonnington stands on the Traditional Lands of the Woi wurrung and Boon Wurrung Peoples of the East Kulin Nations. 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 live) has changed according to factors such as climate change, resource availability, and cultural change (Context 2006:10).

The first European settler in the Malvern district was John Gardiner in 1835, a pastoralist from New South Wales who was one of the first overlanders to Port Phillip. He pastured his stock near the junction of Gardiner's Creek and the Yarra River and is the namesake of Gardiner's Creek, Gardiner's Creek Road (now Toorak Road) and both the locality and the Shire of Gardiner (before they were re-named Malvern). The first recorded use of the name Malvern was in January 1854, when barrister Charles B. G. Skinner named his hotel on the corner of Malvern and Glenferrie roads the 'Malvern Hill' after a district in England. The name for the Shire of Malvern was derived from Malvern Hill Estate, a private subdivision in the area dating to 1856 (City of Stonnington [CoS]; Context 2006:34).

The first land sales in the area were held in 1854 and most original Crown grantees subdivided their allotments for resale (Context 2006:41; 2009:4). Gardiner's Road District was proclaimed in 1856 before Gardiner Shire was formed in 1871, which was renamed Malvern Shire in 1878 (CoS). The municipal boundary comprised the current localities of Malvern (previously Gardiner), Malvern East, Glen Iris (south of Gardiners Creek), Kooyong, Armadale (east of Kooyong Road), Toorak (east of Kooyong Road) and Chadstone (west of Warrigal Road). Early directories listed Malvern and Malvern East as the one locality, until 1910.

The former Malvern Shire saw slow population growth to 1881, by which time it totalled just under 2,000 people (Victorian Places). In 1879, the Oakleigh Railway Line was opened along the southern extent of the municipality, through Malvern, Armadale, Toorak and Hawksburn to join the existing line at South Yarra. The arrival of the Oakleigh railway coincided with the start of the land boom, which resulted in considerable urban growth. In the 1880s the district comprised substantial residences on large allotments, as well as pastoral and agricultural holdings (including market gardens and orchards) and commercial development (Context 2006:41, 65-6). During the 1880s boom period, the municipality saw a dramatic increase in population, quadrupling to approximately 8,000 by 1891, and steadily increasing to 10,000 by 1901 (Victorian Places). In the 1890s a number of timber houses were built in Malvern as an economy measure, but some residents complained that wooden houses would degenerate into slums. Concern about this development led to a slum abolition movement and subsequently, c1912, Malvern Council began to declare brick areas, where timber houses were not permitted. By 1916 the Council had also fixed a minimum area for individual housing allotments at 6000 square feet, with minimum frontages of fifty feet (Context 2006:128).

The railway line along the northern extent of the municipality was established in 1890 through the Glen Iris Valley from Burnley. Stations were established at Heyington, Kooyong, Tooronga, Gardiner, Glen Iris and Darling, however, expected residential development in their vicinity stalled during the 1890s following the economic collapse (Context 2006:66). The 1893 *Australian Handbook* (as cited in Victorian Places) described

Malvern as 'an elevated residential suburb', served by a line of omnibuses from Prahran, with many leading merchants and professional men living in the area in pleasantly situated 'dwellings of a superior class'. The entry noted that a number of notable mansions had been erected by this date, and that the market gardens and orchards were 'steadily being reduced, and cut up into building allotments, on which [were] being erected many handsome villas and business establishments' (Victorian Places). The municipality saw rapid development and urbanisation from 1900 and it was declared a Borough and then a Town in 1901. In 1911 the municipality was declared a City, with a residential population of 16,000 (Context 2006:86; Victorian Places).

The Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust was established in 1908, with electric tramlines opening along High Street in 1910-14, Glenferrie Road in 1910-13, to the south along Wattletree Road in 1910-12, and Malvern Road in 1915. The arrival of the tramlines further drove the development of commercial centres in the immediate vicinity and residential development beyond. New train stations were built at Armadale, Hawksburn, Malvern and Toorak between 1908 and 1918, and at Malvern East in 1929 (Context 2006:70-2, 113; Victorian Places).

Residential development during the early twentieth century generally occurred on newly subdivided estates or on nineteenth century subdivisions that had remained partly or wholly undeveloped during the 1890s depression (Context 2009:5). In 1912 it was reported that 800 houses a year were being built in the (by then) City of Malvern, which boasted 'a progress unprecedented by any other suburb' (Context 2009:128). In the decade between 1911 and 1921 the population in the City of Malvern doubled, from 16,000 to 32,000 residents, and then increased steadily to 43,000 by 1933 (Victorian Places). This population growth saw development spread to the Glen Iris Valley and the outer reaches of the City, in Malvern East. The housing stock in this eastern part of the municipality was more characteristically uniform and unadorned in comparison to housing in Malvern. Kooyong's development was substantially completed by the end of the 1920s (Context 2006:128, 131).

By 1946 the *Australian Blue Book* (as cited in Victorian Places) stated that Malvern was one of the 'leading residential suburbs of the Metropolis'. It comprised the substantial homes of many of Melbourne's leading citizens, in what was termed 'The Garden City' due to the number of parks and public gardens. Development in the City of Malvern steadied from the 1930s, with the population averaging 45,000 until the 1990s (Victorian Places). The City of Malvern amalgamated with the City of Prahran in 1994, to form the City of Stonnington.

Place History

Arden at 298 Glenferrie Road was built in 1935 to designs by architect and master builder, Lewis Levy. The block of flats is located within Crown Portion 19 in the Gardiner District of the Parish of Prahran, to the north of the Malvern Town Hall and St George's Church of England. Glenferrie Road was created by Robert Hoddle's survey of the suburbs of Melbourne and was the address for many affluent residents in the Malvern area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Lewis 1992).

A 1902 Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plan shows that the land on which the subject property is located originally formed part of a larger allotment at the corner of Glenferrie Road and Sorrett Avenue (see Figure 2). In 1934-35, the owner of 300 Glenferrie Road subdivided and sold the southern portion of the land to Dorothea Jessica Levy of 29 Hampden Road, Armadale (Malvern Rate Books). The following year a block of four flats was constructed on the site. The flats, called Arden, were designed by architect Lewis Levy, likely the husband of Ms Levy who had purchased the land the previous year. By November 1935, the new five-roomed flats were being advertised for sale (*Argus,* 16 November 1935:30). The flats, originally addressed as 290 Glenferrie Road, included all the modern conveniences, including a hot water system and garages (*Argus,* 25 January 1936:14). Architectural drawings show the standard floor plan for the flats, each comprising two bedrooms, a lounge, kitchen and dinette and a porch (see Figure 3).

By 1937, the building had been purchased by Gilbert Newton Hendy of Balaclava Road, Caulfield, who leased the flats to various tenants (Malvern Rate Books). In December 1969, the flats were purchased by Brian Griffiths and Ronda Copley of the neighbouring property at 300 Glenferrie Road for $45,000. Responsibility for leasing the flats was passed to estate agents A J Weller and Son three months later in April 1970 (Malvern Rate Books).

In 1981 the building was transferred from single ownership to a strata title and the flats were offered for sale as separate apartments for the first time. The first owners of the individual flats were Annie Eliza Hamilton (No.1), Ronald Lee Cameron (No.2), Evelyn Ruth Batiste (No.3) and Joyce Isobel Legge (No.4). The building continues to be used as residential apartments.
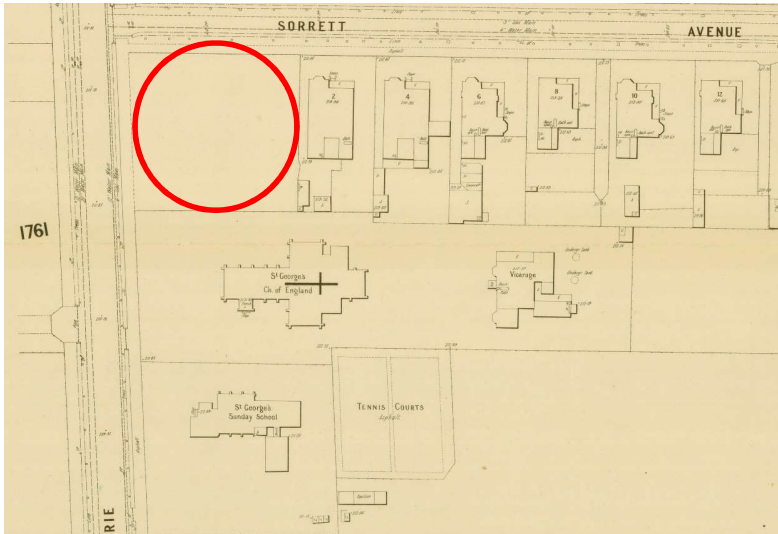

Figure 2. MMBW Plan No 59 of Malvern showing the vacant land at the subject site near the corner of Glenferrie Road and Sorrett Avenue (circled in red), 1902 (SLV)

Figure 3. Architectural drawings showing 'block of four flats in Glenferrie Road, Malvern', 19 June 1935 (SHC)

Lewis Levy, architect

Lewis Levy was an architect and master-builder who designed and constructed a number of residential houses and flats in the suburbs of Toorak, South Yarra, Armadale and St Kilda in the 1920s and 1930s. Little is known of his education and training but he had commenced practice from at least the mid-1920s, when he was recorded as the architect of a block of flats at 79 Park Street, St Kilda (Sawyer 1982:106). By 1931, he had established a practice at 26 Hopetoun Road, Toorak (*Herald,* 21 November 1934:24). In the ensuing years he was responsible for the design of 'The Astor' flats at 326 Beaconsfield Parade, St Kilda (1931); the Art Deco flats 'Trawalla Court' at 24 Lascelles Avenue, Toorak (1931), a large block of 28 flats in Toorak Road, South Yarra (1934), and the Kia Ora flats at St Kilda Road (1936). Designed in a Streamline Moderne style, this extensive complex was commissioned by the Dixon family, who owned the Kia-Ora cordial factory, and was described at the time of its erection as 'the largest individual group [of flats] in Melbourne' (*Herald,* 9 May 1936:2). Levy was recorded as both the architect and the builder of the flats.

Historical Themes

The place illustrates the following themes as outlined in *Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes*:

6 Building towns, cities and the garden state

- 6.7 Making homes for Victorians

Description

The following description includes detail contained within 'City of Malvern Heritage Study', Lewis & Aitken, 1992.

Arden is situated on the east side of Glenferrie Road, to the north of St Georges Anglican Church complex and south of Sorrett Avenue. Vehicular access is provided from Sorrett Avenue via a short private laneway.

The building comprises a two-storey masonry structure set back beyond a low brick garden wall (built contemporaneously with the flats) and generous shared front (west) garden. Access is via two decorative metal gates (later) at the north and south extents of the garden wall.

The building is designed in the Old English style and features a series of steeply-pitched hipped roofs clad in terracotta tiles. These hipped roofs are penetrated by two tall chimneys that feature brick corbelling, an exaggerated rendered capping and (modified) tapered terracotta pots. Roof eaves are timber-lined and finished with a shallow fascia.

A flush gable end is a prominent feature of the principal (west) elevation and establishes a symmetry across this bay, however the building itself is asymmetrically massed across its southern elevations, with rear sections of the building stepping back to the southeast corner of the site. The walls are of face brick and feature a variety of decorative brick features, including herringbone and basketweave panels within half-timbered balcony balustrades, soldier courses to windowheads, and string courses, panels and kneelers in a contrasting Roman-style lighter brick. Other decorative elements are rendered, including the curved kneelers at the gable ends and the segmental arches at the lower level of the south elevation. Windows are timber-framed and double hung, with multipaned upper sashes. While the building comprises four separate apartments, the entrances and staircases to these are concealed and recessed and the building is intended to read as a single large house. A rendered scroll nameplate at the centre of the principal (west) elevation includes the building name 'Arden' in Old English script.

Key Features:

- Asymmetrical massing

- Symmetry across the principal (west) elevation

- Series of complex, terracotta tiled, hipped roof forms with prominent flush gable end to principal (west) elevation

- Decorative face brickwork, including panels to half-timbered rooms along the south elevation

- Decorative features, including half-timbering and 'Arden' nameplate

- Multi-pane, timber-framed, double hung windows

- Tall brick chimneys with corbelling, rendered capping and (modified) tapered chimney pots

- Low original brick garden fence and garden setting.

Intactness/Integrity

Arden remains highly intact to its original construction in 1935. Overall, the building retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

Comparative Analysis

Arden at 298 Glenferrie Road is of note as a fine and highly intact example of a residential flat development built in the City of Stonnington. It is one of a substantial number of residential flats/maisonettes that were constructed in the municipality in the interwar period.

The development of residential flats and maisonettes in Melbourne gained in popularity following World War I. This was the result of a number of factors, including a shortage of skilled labour, the high cost of building materials, and the difficulties associated with maintaining large estates (Sawyer 1982:33). The requirement for efficient use of labour and materials led to an increased interest in flat/maisonette development. Shared services and land were considered an attractive prospect for investors.

Wealthy, inner-city suburbs that were infused with character and sited close to public transport and shops were popular locations for flat and maisonette development. Within the City of Stonnington, the highly affluent suburbs of Toorak and South Yarra were particularly sought after for their proximity to the city and a number of substantial flat/maisonette developments were constructed in these suburbs in the 1920s and 1930s. These were often of a grand scale and designed by prominent Melbourne architects.

Flat and maisonette development was popular across the entire municipality in the interwar period, with substantial numbers of these developments also constructed in the suburbs of Prahran, Windsor, Armadale, Kooyong and Malvern. Often of a more modest scale than the 'luxury flats' constructed in Toorak and South Yarra, these developments varied in their scale, layout, planning and architectural design. In keeping with the strong culture of patronage between architects and owners, many flats and maisonettes constructed in Stonnington in this period were designed by well-known Melbourne architects.

Within the City of Stonnington, a number of interwar residential flats/maisonettes remain to demonstrate this historic theme and examples of these are included in the Heritage Overlay on an individual basis. Those that are comparable to Arden include:

- Hillingdon, 383 Glenferrie Road, Malvern (1919), HO436

- Basford Flats, 203 Dandenong Road, Windsor (1919-20), HO433

- Mont Clair, 321 Dandenong Road, Prahran (1921 & 1926), HO434

- Silverton Flats, 698 Orrong Road, Toorak (1927), HO445

- Quantox Flats, 9 Church Street, Toorak (1928-29), HO431

- Koonoona Flats, 754 High Street, Armadale (1933), HO439

- Colywn, 1263 High Street, Malvern (1937), HO440

- Granada Flats, 537 Orrong Road, Armadale (1939), HO444

These properties vary in scale and form and demonstrate a broad range of architectural styles, reflecting the diversity of this building type within the municipality. They are recognised for their high levels of intactness and fine detailing, and as well-designed examples of particular architectural styles.

In a similar manner, Arden is a well-designed example of a residential flat development and retains a high degree of integrity to clearly demonstrate the characteristics of this building type. Designed by architect and master builder, Lewis Levy, it is a fine and highly intact example of a residential flat built in the City of Stonnington in the interwar period.

Assessment against Criteria

Following is an assessment of the place against the recognised heritage criteria set out in *Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay* (August 2018).

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history

Arden is illustrative of the suburban development of Malvern in the interwar period when a number of residential flats/maisonettes were constructed across the suburb. This type of development was largely a result of increased labour and materials costs following World War I. The impetus for the efficient use of labour and materials led to an increased interest in flat/maisonette development, where shared services and land were considered an attractive prospect for investors. The flats known as Arden clearly illustrate this important phase of development of Malvern and the City of Stonnington more broadly.

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments

Arden is a fine and highly intact representative example of an interwar residential flat development in the City of Stonnington. It displays typical features of this building type from this period in Malvern and across Stonnington more broadly, including a substantial two-storey form set on a large site, communal entrance, setbacks to the street frontage to provide a garden setting for the building, face brick walls with fine detailing, and tile-clad hipped roofs. Arden is notable as a well-resolved example of a residential flat development designed to appear as a single residence, which was a particularly desirable characteristic of this building type in the interwar period.

Criterion E: Importance in displaying particular aesthetic characteristics

Arden is a well-considered and carefully detailed example of a residential flat development designed in the Interwar Old English style. Designed and constructed by architect and master builder Lewis Levy, the design – with its complex hipped roof forms and prominent front gable, together with the use of distinctive architectural elements, including half-timbering, herringbone and basketweave brick patterning, clinker brickwork, and multi-pane sash windows, and set within a garden setting – presents a picturesque composition of this architectural style. The matching brick fence contributes to the setting of the place.

Grading and Recommendations

It is recommended that the place be included in the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme as a locally significant heritage place.

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

External Paint Controls?	No
Internal Alteration Controls?	No
Tree Controls?	No
Outbuildings or Fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-3?	Yes – front fence
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	No

Extent of the Recommended Heritage Overlay

To the extent of the property boundary, as shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4. Recommended Extent of Heritage Overlay

References

Context Pty Ltd, Stonnington Thematic Environmental History, 2006 & 2009 addendum.

J B Cooper, *The History of Malvern, From its First Settlement to a City,* Melbourne, 1935.

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T Sawyer, *Residential Flats in Melbourne: the development of a building type to 1950,* 1982.

Victorian Places, 'Malvern' & 'Malvern East', http://www.victorianplaces.com.au.