

HERITAGE CITATION:

Row at 105-119 Toorong Road, Malvern



Figures 1 & 2. Toorong Road, Malvern (GJM Heritage, November 2020).

DATE: June 2021

ROW OF VICTORIAN HOUSES, 105-119 TOORONGA ROAD, MALVERN

Place type: Residential Precinct	Architect: Various
Construction Date: 1889-1890	Builder: Various
Recommendation: Include in the Heritage Overlay	Extent of Overlay: See Figure 6

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.

Precinct History

Located between High Street to the north and Wattletree Road to the south in what is now known as the suburb of Malvern, this section of Tooronga Road is situated on land first sold in the 1850s in the Township of Gardiner, Parish of Prahran (Figure 3). Tooronga Road was originally called Nash's Road; its name was changed in 1872 at the request of Gardiner Shire councillors (*Argus*, 18 May 1872:2).

In the 1880s, Malvern experienced a burst of suburban development as land developers busily subdivided and auctioned choice building sites on housing estates, and builders rapidly covered them with houses. Most of the residential streets running into Glenferrie Road and High Street were created at that time, along with the main high-street commercial development. In 1885, during the height of the Victorian land boom, the Stanhope Estate was subdivided, with allotments sold off in sections by auctioneers Staples, Wise & Co to owner-occupiers, investors and speculative builders (*Herald*, 16 July 1885:4). The estate was bound by High Street to the north, Tooronga Road to the east, Wattletree Road to the south, and Thanet and Stanhope streets to the west, and created Emily (now Dalny), Harvey, Fraser, Grace (the north end), Thanet, 'Dixson', Jordan, Horace and (part of) Stanhope streets (Figure 3). It was described as being 'close to three railway stations, [with] magnificent situations, splendid views' and comprised approximately 600 sites (*Lorgnette*, 10 February 1885: 2). 15 allotments, across Sections H, N and Q, had frontages to Tooronga Road.

The row of houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road comprised Lots 1 to 5 within Section Q of the Stanhope Estate and were the first houses within the estate to be constructed on Tooronga Road. These lots were sold to various owners in 1888. The following year, brick and timber houses, ranging from three to five rooms, had been constructed on the lots at nos. 107-113 and 117. A further two houses were in course of erection at nos. 105 and 117 (Malvern Valuation Book Central Riding 1889). Development of the row was complete by 1890 with the construction of a five-roomed brick house at no.119 (Malvern Valuation Book Central Riding 1890). The houses were variously occupied by owners or let to tenants. Early occupants included Mr David White (105), Mr George Fickner (107), Mrs Eliza Ward (111), Mr John Saunders (113), Mr John Smith (115) and Mr Frank Thomas (117) (S&M).

The severe economic downturn that impacted Victoria in the 1890s halted development within the Stanhope Estate and the remainder of Tooronga Road remained largely vacant at the turn of the century (Malvern Rate Books). Possession of a number of the extant houses was transferred to building societies and insurance companies at this time (Malvern Rate Books). The extent of development in Tooronga Road can be seen in the 1901 Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plan of the area (Figure 4), which shows the row of houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road. No. 105 comprises a large house 'Woollamai' with projecting bay window and stables to the rear while houses at 107-117 are consistent in scale and form, comprising simple rectangular forms with front verandahs and closets to the rear of the properties. The house at 119 Tooronga Road comprises a square building form with closet and stables to the rear. The land directly north of the row comprised a large market garden and orchard, which extended two and a half blocks from Tooronga Road towards Dixon Street to the west.

Development of Tooronga Road resumed in the early-to-mid twentieth century, as evidenced by a 1945 aerial photograph of the area which shows houses lining both the east and west sides of Tooronga Road by this date (Figure 5). The houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road, comprising the earliest development of Tooronga Road in the vicinity, remain extant.

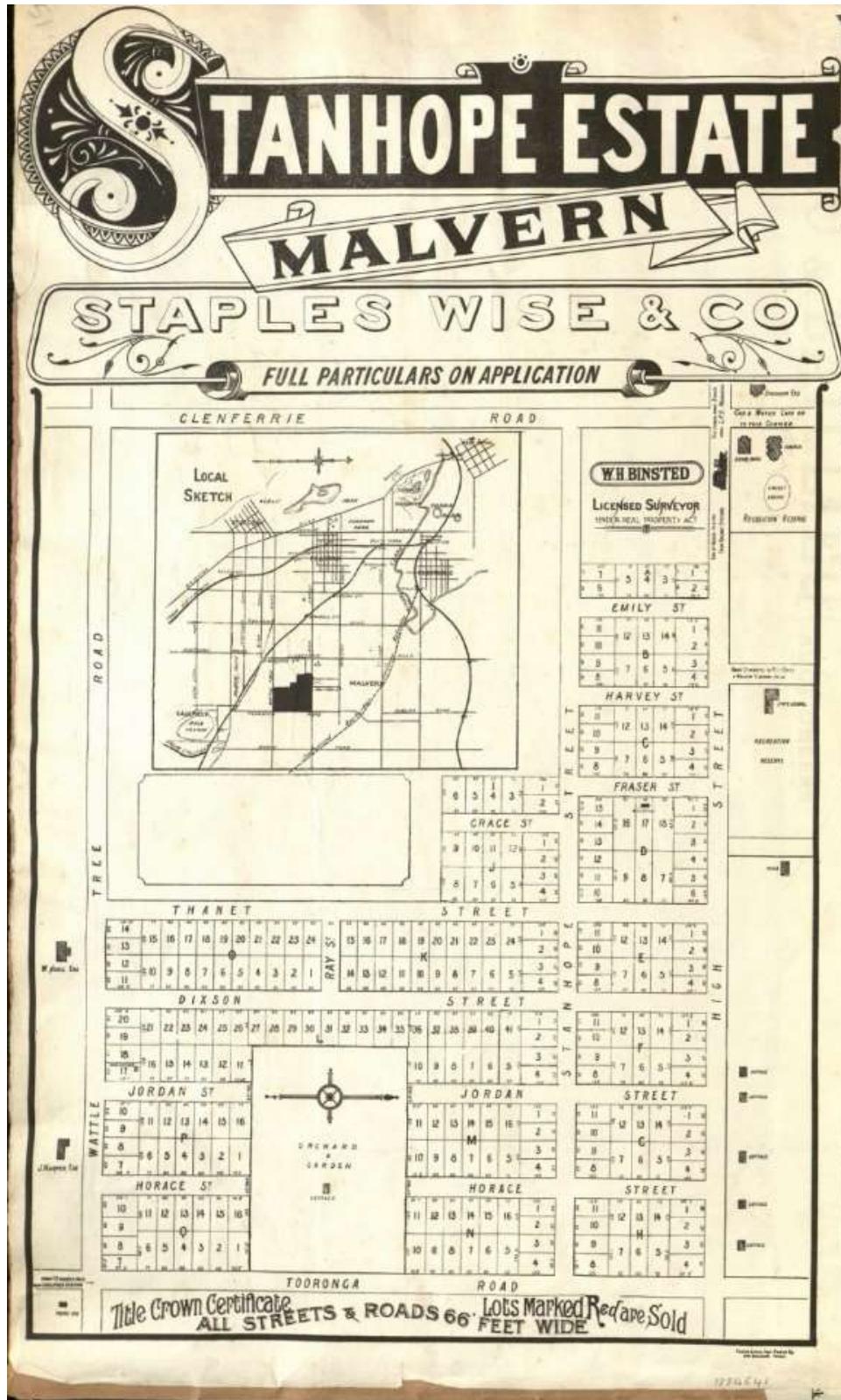


Figure 3. Auction notice for the subdivision of the Stanhope Estate, 1885 (SLV)



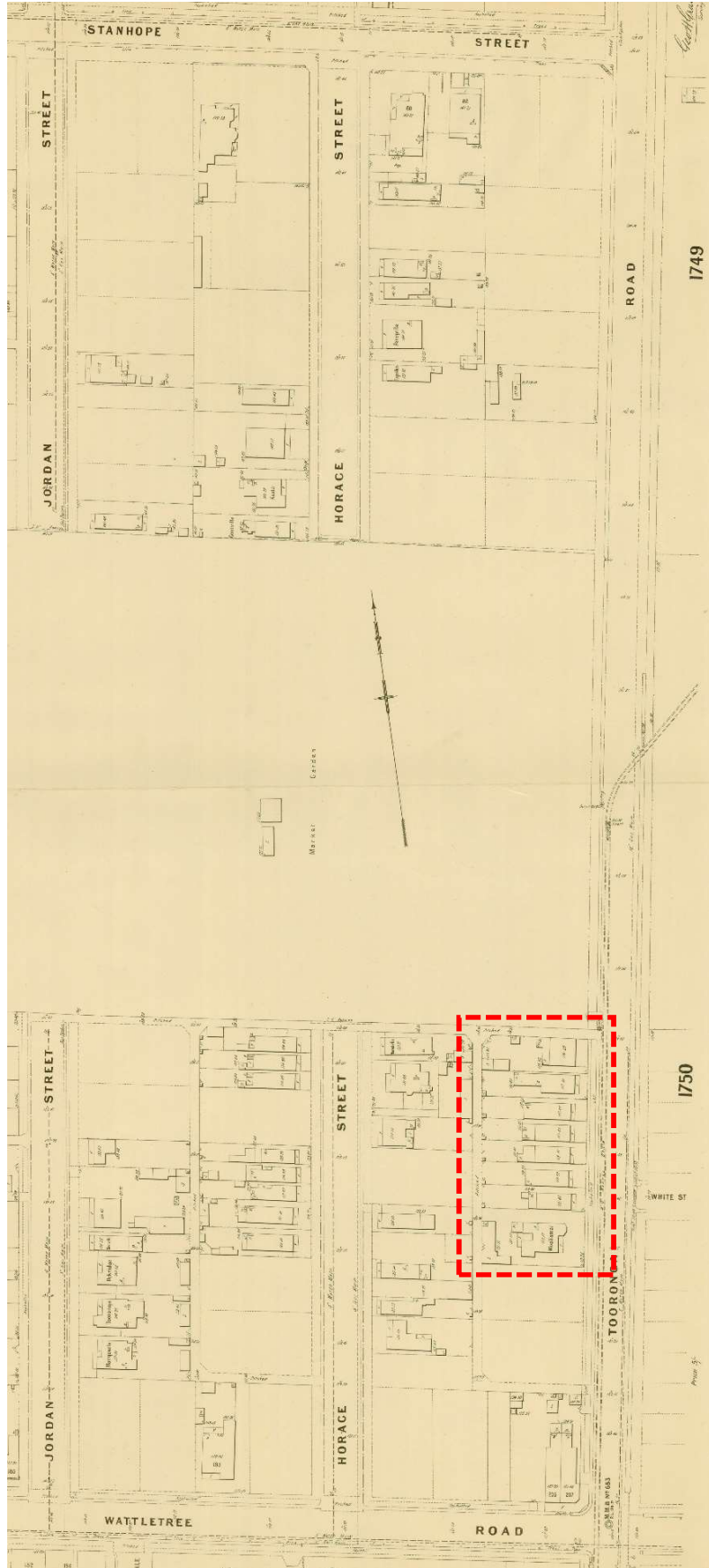


Figure 4. MMBW Detail Plan No 1748 showing development on the west side of Toorong Road to the north of Wattletree Road, 1901. The row of houses at 105-119 Toorong Road is indicated (SLV)





Figure 5. Detail of 1945 aerial showing development along Toorong Road. The approximate outline of the houses at 105-119 Toorong Road is indicated (Landata Victoria)

Description

The houses at 105-119 Toorong Road, Malvern are situated on the west side of Toorong Road to the north of Wattletree Road. The row includes eight houses – six single-fronted houses on narrow allotments and two double-fronted houses on broader allotments at either end. The houses are all modest single-storey Italianate dwellings which display typical characteristics of the Victorian period. The houses display similar detailing and have relatively consistent setbacks from the street, resulting in a consistency within the streetscape.

The precinct comprises houses of either block-fronted timber construction (nos 109, 115 and 117) or rendered brick construction. Roofs are generally clad with corrugated steel (except No 105 at the south end which is slate-clad) and some eaves are bracketed. All houses present hipped roofs to the street and the larger double-

fronted house at the south end (No 105) has a projecting polygonal side bay. Most houses display simple chimneys – either rendered or face brickwork – with corniced capping.

All principal elevations have corrugated steel-clad front verandahs of various profiles, some decorated with cast iron frieze and brackets. Front elevations generally contain double hung windows with narrow sidelights and an adjacent entry door, while the polygonal bay at No 105 contains single double hung windows.

Non-original picket fences have been constructed at the front boundaries of all properties except at the north end (No 119 at the north end has a masonry and timber fence and hedge) and rear additions appear to have been made to all properties.

Grassed verges with small trees line Tooronga Road and bluestone kerbs remain.

Key Features:

- Strong Victorian character
- Consistent single-storey scale
- Modest-sized allotments with generally consistent front setbacks within the streetscape
- Detached houses with predominantly single-fronted principal elevations
- Rendered brick or block-fronted timber walls
- Predominantly corrugated steel roofs
- Hipped roof forms
- Asymmetrical front elevations
- Front verandahs
- Decorative cast ironwork to some verandahs
- Prominent chimneys with corniced capping
- Double hung windows with narrow sidelights
- Bluestone kerbs.

Intactness/Integrity

The row of Victorian houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road are highly intact to their original construction in the early-1890s and retain a high degree of integrity to the Victorian period in fabric, form and detail.

Comparative Analysis

The row of Victorian houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road are of note as a highly intact row of eight Victorian houses dating to the 1890s, typical of suburban development that occurred in suburbs such as Malvern, Malvern East, and Armadale in the late nineteenth century. Built within a two-year period from 1889 to 1890, the houses display a consistency of scale and architectural character and together present as a highly consistent row of Victorian houses.

A number of houses dating to the Victorian period remain within the City of Stonnington and numerous examples of these are currently included in heritage precincts throughout the municipality. They demonstrate a range of types, from elaborately detailed single and two-storey terraces designed for the upper and middle classes in the Victorian Italianate style, to more modest single-storey workers' cottages.



There are a number of comparable precincts included in the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme. These precincts contain streets of highly intact houses, generally constructed for the working and middle-classes, that date predominantly to the Victorian period. Examples of these precincts include Bowen Street Precinct, Prahran (HO124), Cambridge Street Precinct, Armadale (HO125), Aberdeen Street Precinct, Prahran (HO121), Tyrone Street Precinct, South Yarra (HO151), Portland Place Precinct, South Yarra (HO131) and the Moore and Hardy Streets Precinct, South Yarra (HO144).

Bowen Street Precinct, Prahran (HO124)

Bowen Street Precinct comprises a highly consistent streetscape of single-storey timber cottages constructed in the late nineteenth century for the working class. The high level of intactness and stylistic consistency of the cottages contributes to the significance of the place as a 'cohesive and characteristic nineteenth century working class street'.

Cambridge Street Precinct, Armadale (HO125)

Cambridge Street comprises 32 allotments that were developed simultaneously in 1887-88 with the construction of rows of identical single-storey detached timber cottages. The precinct is significant for its extremely high level of architectural cohesion, which is uncommon in the municipality, and for its high level of intactness and consistency in fabric, form and detail.

Aberdeen Street Precinct, Prahran (HO121)

The Aberdeen Road Precinct developed rapidly from c.1887, as part of the surge of development through Prahran as a result of the Victorian land boom. The precinct, comprising modest workers' cottages constructed around a narrow cul de sac, is highly intact to its nineteenth century character, with all dwellings from the original development remaining extant. The precinct is significant as a highly intact collection of late nineteenth century houses that are highly consistent in fabric, form, detail, and architectural character, and for its clear association with suburban development in the municipality in the Victorian period.

Tyrone Street Precinct, South Yarra (HO151)

Tyrone Street formed part of one of the earliest subdivisions in the area, though development within the street did not commence until the late-1880s. The street comprises a row of single-storey working class residences that are typical examples of small Victorian cottages within the City of Stonnington. The precinct is primarily significant as a reminder of the types of housing and street patterns that were once common throughout the suburb of Prahran.

Portland Place Precinct, South Yarra (HO131)

Portland Place Precinct is located in South Yarra alongside the Sandringham railway line cutting. Developed during the 1880s land boom, the precinct comprises a varied collection of late-nineteenth century houses that are typical of the Victorian period in which they were constructed. The unusual street layout and diversity of housing stock contributes to the significance of the place.

Moore and Hardy Streets Precinct, South Yarra (HO144)

The Moore and Hardy Streets Precinct is a residential area that developed from the 1850s through to the 1890s. It retains a collection of relatively intact single-storey, single-fronted cottages that were once common throughout the municipality. The consistency in form, scale and setback of the houses within the precinct contributes to the significance of the place.

Conclusion

The above comparative examples all contain streets of generally highly intact houses dating to the Victorian period, which illustrate significant suburban development in the City of Stonnington in the late nineteenth



century. These houses display characteristics typical of the Victorian period. The resulting Victorian streetscapes in these precincts display a high degree of integrity and are generally consistent in both scale and architectural character. The Cambridge Street Precinct, Bowen Street Precinct and Aberdeen Street Precinct are of particular note for their high degree of architectural cohesion.

The row of Victorian houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road is comparable in quality to these precincts. The precinct comprises a grouping of eight highly intact houses which were built in the early 1890s as part of the earliest development of the Stanhope Estate and contribute to a streetscape of high integrity, uniformity of scale and distinctive architectural character.

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

The row of Victorian houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road is illustrative of the suburban development of Malvern during the boom period of the 1880s and early 1890s. In this period, extensive tracts of land in Malvern – and throughout Stonnington more broadly – were subdivided into suburban residential estates, and allotments were purchased for the construction of working and middle-class housing. Constructed as part of the Stanhope Estate subdivision, the houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road clearly illustrate this important phase of development in the City of Stonnington.

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

The row of Victorian houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road form a fine and highly intact row of detached, modest houses built in 1889-90. Together these houses display typical features of the Italianate architectural style popular in Malvern and across Victoria more broadly in the Victorian period, including a consistent use of materials and elements, such as timber block fronted or rendered brick construction, hipped roofs clad in metal sheeting, corrugated steel-clad front verandahs, and simple brick or rendered chimneys with corniced cappings.

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

The houses at 105-119 Tooronga Road form a unified group of residences dating to the Victorian period. Comprising one row of single-storey timber block fronted or rendered brick houses, the consistent application of materials and detailing – such as metal sheet-clad hipped roof forms, post-supported front verandahs, some with decorative cast-iron friezes, simple brick or rendered chimneys with corniced cappings and timber picket fences – in conjunction with their garden settings, presents a highly picturesque grouping of Victorian houses.

Grading and Recommendations

It is recommended that the precinct be included in the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme.

The gradings of properties within the precinct are as follows:

Address	Grading
105 Tooronga Road	Contributory
107 Tooronga Road	Contributory
109 Tooronga Road	Contributory
111 Tooronga Road	Contributory

113 Tooronga Road	Contributory
115 Tooronga Road	Contributory
117 Tooronga Road	Contributory
119 Tooronga Road	Contributory

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?	No
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	No

Extent of the Recommended Heritage Overlay

To the extent of the property boundaries, as shown in Figure 6 below.



Figure 6. Recommended Extent of Heritage Overlay and proposed gradings

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.
- Landata Historical Aerial Photograph Library.
- Malvern Rate Books.
- Malvern Valuation Books.
- Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Detail Plan No 1748, Malvern, 1901.
- N Lewis & Associates, *City of Malvern Heritage Study*, 1992.
- Sands and McDougall Melbourne and Suburban Directories.
- Stanhope Estate Plan of Subdivision, 1885.
- Stonnington History Centre (SHC).
- The Herald*.
- The Lorgnette*.
- Victorian Places, 'Malvern' & 'Malvern East', <http://www.victorianplaces.com.au>.