

HERITAGE CITATION

Maisonettes, 79 Stanhope Street, Malvern



Figure 1. 79 Stanhope Street, Malvern (eastern elevation) (GJM Heritage, December 2020).

DATE: June 2021

MAISONNETTES, 79 STANHOPE STREET, MALVERN

Place type: Residential Flats/Maisonettes	Architect: I G Anderson
Construction Date: 1936	Builder: Not known
Recommendation: Remove from HO375 and include in a site-specific 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

The maisonettes at 79 Stanhope Street were built in 1936 to designs by architect, I G Anderson. The land on which the maisonettes are located originally formed part of the Stanhope Estate, which comprised a portion of the block bounded by High Street to the north, Glenferrie Road to the west, Wattletree Road to the south and Tooronga Road to the east. The Stanhope Estate was subdivided in 1885 and advertised for sale as being ‘close to three railway stations, magnificent situations, splendid views, about six hundred sites to choose from and unequalled terms’ (*Lorgnette*, 12 February 1885:2). The subject property formed Lot 8 of Section C (Stanhope Estate Subdivision Plan, see Figure 2) and by 1890, a large brick villa, called ‘Braeside’, had been constructed on the site. The original occupant was Thomas S Robertson (S&M; MMBW Detail Plan No.1744, see Figure 3).

‘Braeside’ was owned by tile manufacturer, Robert Gerrand from c.1920 who resided at the property until it was sold to Edwin and Annie Lynch of Manning Road, East Malvern in 1935 (S&M; *Argus*, 11 August 1925:13). At the time of the sale, the villa was described as a brick house with 10 rooms (Malvern Rate Books).

The following year, four maisonettes, each with five rooms, had been constructed on the site, replacing the earlier residence. The new building, designed by prominent architect, I G Anderson, featured in the *Age* in December 1936 (Figure 4). Described as ‘a striking example of this new type of home architecture’ and ‘the first of its type to be approved by the Malvern City Council’, the article noted that:

The block strikes a new and pleasing note in the locality. Although there are four separate units contained, the appearance is as one. No exterior stair cases are to be seen, and the garden plots give a strong suggestion of a modern home, possessing more than the usual number of entrances. To provide this attractive outlook the depth of the land along Fraser-street has been converted into frontage, so that the lines are broad rather than squat. Each maisonette has its own front door, no matter which way the block is viewed ((Age, 1 December 1936:18).

The accompanying architect’s drawing shows the building’s Moderne architectural character as it presents to Fraser Street.

Early tenants of the four maisonettes included Ella Kathleen Scott and Marjorie Helen Strong, Francis Gilfedder, Victor Spener Bailey, and Mary Adams (Malvern Rate Books). The property remained in the Lynch family until 1964, when the ‘two storey block with 4 flats’ was sold (Malvern Valuation Field Cards). The building was again sold in 1973 and 1974, until it was transferred to a strata title in 1976, after which the flats were sold as separate dwellings (Malvern Valuation Field Cards).

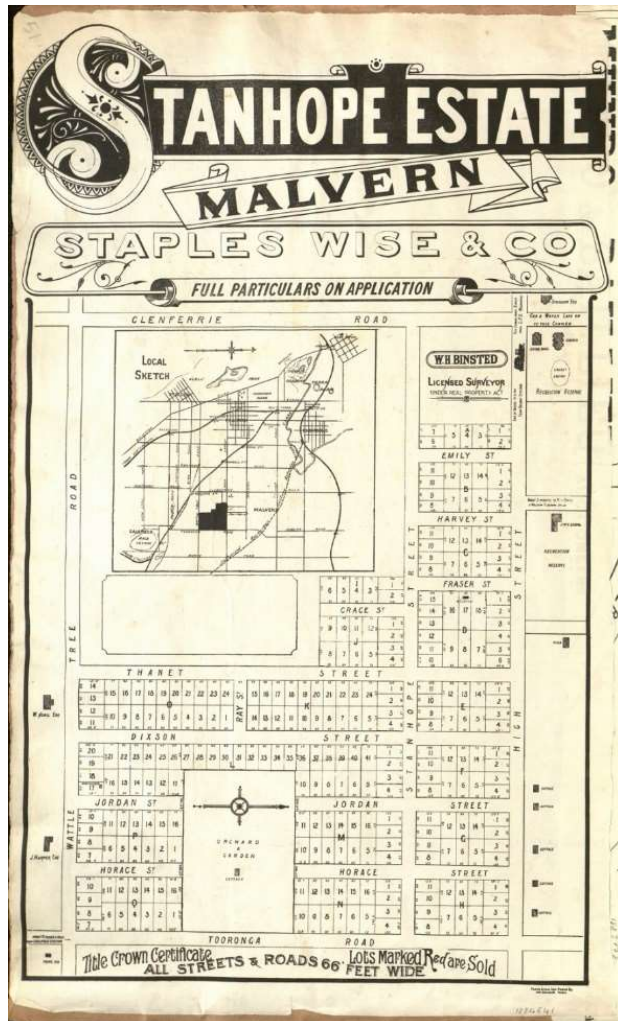


Figure 2. Stanhope Estate subdivision, 1885 (SLV)



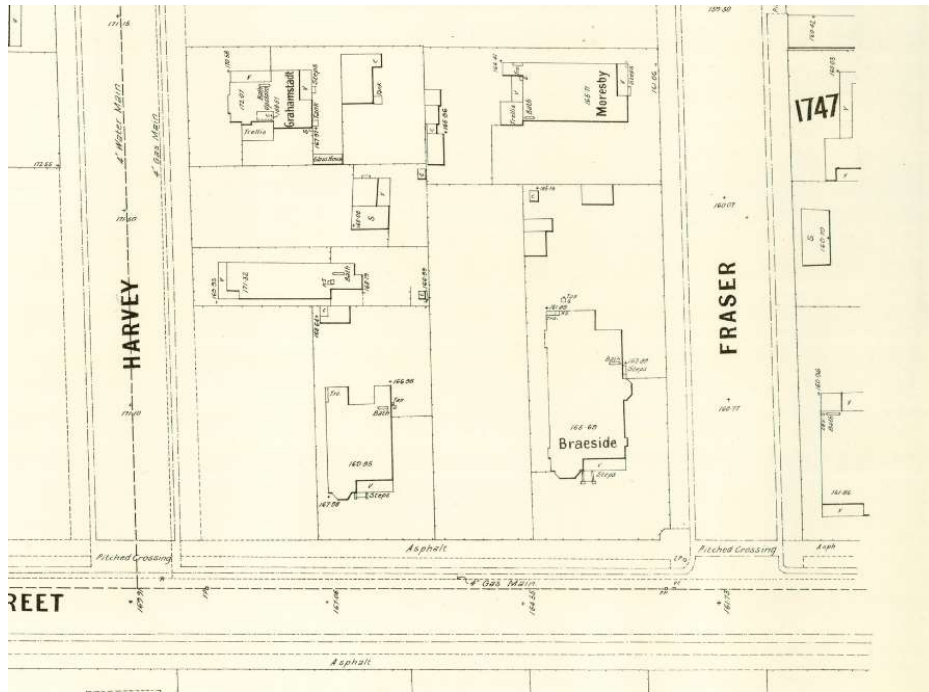


Figure 3. Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan No 1744 of Malvern showing the villa, Braeside, at the corner of Stanhope and Fraser streets, 1902 (SLV)

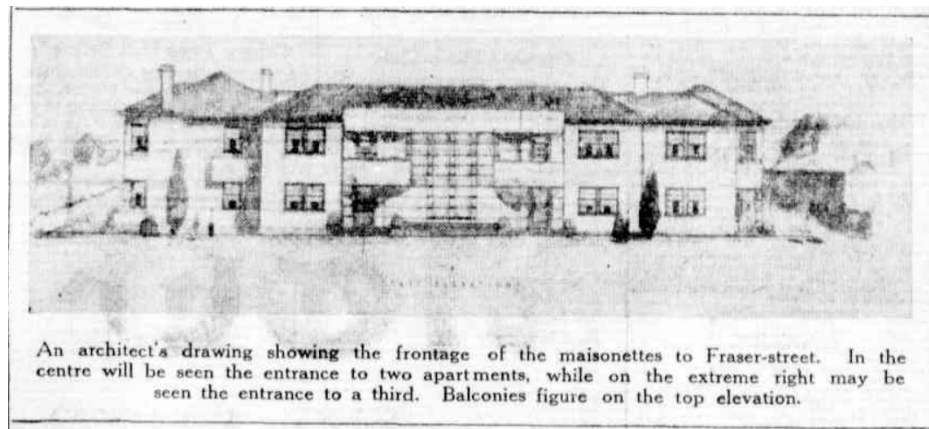


Figure 4. Architect's drawing of the residential flats at 79 Stanhope Street, 1936 (Age, 1 December 1936:18)

I G Anderson, architect

The following biography includes information contained in the *City of Greater Geelong Newtown Heritage Study Review Report Volume 3, 2009* and the *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture, 2012*.

Illiffe Gordon (I G) Anderson was born in South Yarra, Melbourne in 1890. In 1910 he moved to Geelong and studied architecture at the Gordon Institute of Technology, before later attending the University of Melbourne Architectural Atelier. Anderson was first recorded as a practicing architect in 1916, when he called for tenders for the remodelling of the Grammar School Mansions at the Old Geelong Grammar School. The earliest-recorded house designed by Anderson was located in Gurr Street, East Geelong in 1917 and by 1918 his practice was located at 132 Malop Street, Geelong. In the ensuing years, Anderson completed a range of notable projects in Geelong including the Geelong West Town Hall (1923-24), the 'O'Connell Block' of commercial buildings in Little Malop Street (1923-25) and the CML Insurance building in Malop Street (1925-27). His commercial buildings largely adopted a stripped Classical Renaissance style.

In the 1930s, Anderson expanded his practice to Melbourne. In 1930 he designed the Brunswick Market building in a Spanish Mission style and went on to design a large number of residential flats, largely in the

Streamlined Moderne style, in the inner suburbs. Notable commissions included the Ostend flats in Seacombe Grove, Brighton (1934), the Art Deco 'Park Gate' flats in Albert Road, South Melbourne (1935) and 'Garden Court' in Elwood (1937). He was highly regarded by his clients as he worked quickly and within budget.

During World War II, Anderson served as Chief Architect to the United States Army in Victoria. After the war, he moved to Hobart where he practiced with his son, Leslie Gordon Anderson. He died in Hobart in 1963.

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 maisonettes at 79 Stanhope Street are situated on the north-west corner of the intersection of Stanhope and Fraser streets. The principal elevation addresses Fraser Street.

The two-storey building of rendered (overpainted) masonry construction comprises four maisonettes that are intended to read as a single large dwelling. The boundaries to Stanhope and Fraser Streets are treated with a low brick wall and garden bed with a taller brick privacy wall of more recent construction beyond. Behind the privacy wall the building is set back to provide private outdoor space to the maisonettes. Each maisonette is accessed via a separate private entry. Vehicular access via brick-paved lanes is provided at the eastern and northern boundaries.

The building's principal elevation to Fraser Street presents as a symmetrical tripartite form, with a hipped terracotta tiled roof. Designed in the Moderne style, it has a horizontal emphasis expressed through the inverted string course of bricks that create banding on the walls, and horizontal elements incorporated into the timber-framed double-hung windows. Curvilinear elements, also typical of the Moderne style, are featured on the central projecting bay, and at the cantilevered balcony balustrades and canopies. The central projecting bay also features a flat roof concealed by a parapet. Three unadorned chimneys penetrate the roof.

Key Features:

- Symmetrical principal (Fraser Street) elevation
- Restrained detailing providing horizontal emphasis
- Central bay featuring flat roof with parapet and curvilinear details to corners
- Cantilevered balconies and canopies with curved corners
- Low-pitched tiled hipped roof
- Rendered masonry walls
- Simple rendered brick chimneys with slim cappings
- Timber-framed double-hung windows
- Garden setting with private entry arrangements.

Intactness/Integrity

The building at 79 Stanhope Street remains highly intact to its original construction in 1936. Overall, the building retains a high degree of architectural integrity.



Comparative Analysis

1/4/79 Stanhope Street is of note as a fine and highly intact example of an interwar residential development built in the City of Stonnington. It is one of a substantial number of residential maisonettes/flats 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 at the time, many of the 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 79 Stanhope Street 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, 79 Stanhope Street is a well-designed example of an interwar residential maisonette development and retains a high degree of integrity to clearly demonstrate the characteristics of this building type. Designed by architect, I G Anderson, it is a fine and highly intact example of a residential maisonette development 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

79 Stanhope Street 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 maisonette development at 79 Stanhope Street clearly illustrates 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

79 Stanhope Street is a fine and highly intact representative example of an interwar residential maisonette 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, setbacks to the street frontage to provide open space for residents, tile-clad hipped roofs, and a garden setting. It is notable as a well-resolved example of a residential maisonette 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

79 Stanhope Street is a well-executed and distinctive example of a Moderne-style residential maisonette development built in Malvern in the interwar period. Designed by noted architect I G Anderson, the building – with its strong horizontal massing and emphasis, geometric forms, curved bays, and siting within a garden setting – presents a picturesque composition of this architectural style.

Grading and Recommendations

It is recommended that the place be removed from HO375 (Coonil Estate Precinct) and be included in the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme as a locally significant heritage place on a site-specific basis.

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 boundary as shown in Figure 5 below.



Figure 5. Recommended Extent of Heritage Overlay

References

- City of Greater Geelong, *Newtown Heritage Study Review Volume 3*, 2009.
- 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.
- Land Victoria (LV), *Certificates of Title*, as cited above.
- Malvern Rate Books.
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- Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Detail Plan No. 1744, 1902.
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- The Argus*.
- The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, edited by Philip Goad and Julie Willis, 2012.
- The Lorgnette*.
- 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>.