

Waldaira



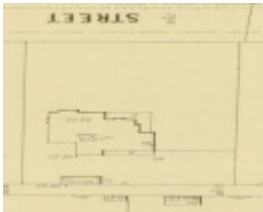
17 Ethel Street Cover Photo.jpg



17 Ethel Street Figure 1 Detail from Plan of Tooronga Station Estate, showing lots 61 and 62 in Ethel Street, [n.d.] c.189-? (SLV).jpg



17 Ethel Street Figure 2 Sketch identifying land (in red) in Ethel Street purchased by James Urquhart in 1891 (C/T Fol. 2398, Vol. 535).jpg



17 Ethel Street Figure 4 Extract from MMBW detail plan no 1777, dated 1907, Town of Malvern (SLV).jpg



17 Ethel Street Figure 5 17 Ethel Street, photographed in 1992 in Lewis Aitken, Malvern Heritage Study (MP 12941 SHC).jpg



17 Ethel Street Figure 6 Detail of the verandah and balustrade. (Source: Context, 2017).jpg



17 Ethel Street Figure 7 Classically inspired cast-cement surrounds to the window and door openings. (Source: Context, 2017) .jpg

Location

17-19 Ethel Street MALVERN, STONNINGTON CITY

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO594

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 1900

Statement of significance

What is significant?

'Waldaira', at 17-19 Ethel Street, Malvern, is significant. This substantial Queen Anne residence was built in 1891-92 for accountant James Urquhart and family. The designer was Irish-born architect Charles Douglas Figgis (1849-95), who practised in Ballarat and Melbourne.

The two-storey brick house stands on its original double allotment behind a large front garden which retains a number of mature specimen trees.

The high brick front fence and the rear addition are not significant.

How is it significant?

'Waldaira' is of local architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

'Waldaira' is architecturally significant as a very fine example of a substantial early Queen Anne residence, with eclectic stylistic influences often seen in early examples of this style. Characteristic elements of the style demonstrated by 'Waldaira' include the use of red facebrick with contrasting cement-render dressings and ornament, picturesque massing, and intricate timber fretwork to the verandah. It retains original features including a slate-clad roof with terracotta finials, corbelled brick chimneys, and diaper-patterned brickwork at the top of the entrance tower. (Criterion D)

'Waldaira' is aesthetically significant for its unusual and sophisticated design which juxtaposes three hipped roof forms with steep slopes, suggesting a French Renaissance influence, as does the use of high-quality classical entablatures, engaged columns and reliefs. The use of an entrance tower at the centre of the facade is striking. The verandah fretwork is a more complex version of the ladder-back friezes that were to become common. The presentation of 'Waldaira' is enhanced by its elevated siting behind a large garden on a double-width block. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - City of Stonnington Interwar Houses Study, Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, 2014; Stonnington - Amendment C261 Two Victorian Places, Context Pty Ltd, 2017;
Architect/Designer	Figgis, Charles Douglas,
Hermes Number	201569
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Physical description

'Waldaira' comprises a large double block on the west side of the street. The large residence is set on the rear half of the block, leaving an expansive front lawn which slopes up to the house. All four sides of the block are lined with mature deciduous trees, contributing to the park-like atmosphere. There is a high masonry wall at the front of the property, which is not original, but the house is still visible from the street thanks to its double-storey height and the rise in the land.

The house is an imposing two-storey mansion of face red brickwork with cast-cement ornament around window and door openings. The slate roof has decorative bands of scalloped slates, and terracotta ridgecapping and ram's horn finials. Chimneys are also of red face brick with corbelling at the tops and vertical bands.

The dwelling is massed in a highly picturesque manner, with three main volumes forming the front facade. There is an entrance tower at the centre, with a low pyramidal roof set atop closely spaced brackets and a band of diaper patterning carried out in burnt headers, giving it a medieval character. To the right of the tower is a slightly recessed wing with a steep pyramidal roof, and to the left is a wing that sits entirely behind the tower and a return verandah, with a transverse-ridged hipped roof of a lower pitch.

The verandah is single-storey, with a balustrade to the first-floor level. The ground-floor level has details that would become popular in the Federation era, including turned timber posts with timber fretwork. Here the frieze is in a Chinese manner, with intersecting vertical and horizontal sticks. It is highly detailed with fleur-de-lys and club terminations to the short vertical members. Below the frieze are two types of timber brackets: scrolled where the verandah meets the wall, and long, shaped struts to the posts with an additional scroll in the triangular openings.

The cast-cement ornament to the openings is classically inspired. It is concentrated on the entrance tower and the pyramidal-roofed wing to the right-hand (north) side. Windows to the left-hand wing behind the verandah have long rectangular windows with flat brick arches. All windows of the facade are timber double-hung sash windows. The front entry is via a segmentally arched opening at the base of the tower. The spandrels are decorated with bas-relief foliage (possibly laurel or eucalyptus leaves). At the centre of the arch is a large, scrolled keystone, and above is a dentilated cornice. Set at the back of the tower is the front door, which has heavy bolection mouldings to its panels. The same dentilation is seen on a bay window at the ground floor to the right-hand side. The pair of windows above it has an engage column between them and a scrolled apron below. Similar scrollwork is used above the bay windows below. The first-floor window of the tower has a projecting semi-circular base, like that of an oriel window. At the top is a frieze in the form of metopes (with impressed vertical lines), and atop the narrow cornice (which is continuous with a stringcourse) are small cast-cement Greek Revival decorations (an anthemion, scrolled consoles, and antefixes).

The classical ornament, medieval massing, and Chinese-inspired verandah form an eclectic but successful composition, that might be considered part of the early, experimental development of the Queen Anne Revival style before it solidified into the typical red brick and tile villas with a dominating roof extending over the sheltering verandah which became so popular in the early twentieth century.

The house was described in the City of Malvern Heritage Study (1992) as 'relatively intact apart from the apparent removal of the verandah roof on the upper level' (emphasis added). Insofar as it is possible to see from the black & white photo in that document, no changes to the front facade of the house have been made since then, though some trees have been removed from the front lawn since then.

Comparison between the MMBW plan of 1907 and current aerial photos indicate that a rear extension has been constructed, behind the original extent of the house, but it is not visible from the street. There has also been a coating (paint or cement wash) applied at some point to the brickwork, which has mostly weathered away.

Local Historical Themes

Thematic context

This place illustrates the following themes, as identified in the Stonnington Thematic Environmental History (Context Pty Ltd, rev. 2009):

8.2.1 'Country in the city' - Suburban development in Malvern before WWI

8.3.2 Gardens

8.4.1 Houses as a symbol of wealth, status and fashion

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>