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## Fawkner Street/Davis Avenue Precinct



mixed villas fawkner.JPG

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### Location

Fawkner Street SOUTH YARRA, Stonnington City

### Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO131

### Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

Statement of significance from Precinct Citation Review (2014)

What is significant?

The Fawkner Street/Davis Avenue Precinct, South Yarra, is a residential area of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century buildings developed in Clifford's Paddock after marshy land was drained. It includes all dwellings in Fawkner Street, others in the southern sections of Davis Avenue; and a small group of shops and

houses in Punt Road and dwellings in Osborne Street which form the two gateways to the precinct.

Elements which contribute to the significance of the precinct include:

- . High degree of intactness of the area to its early twentieth century state. The late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century housing includes single-storey cottages coexisting with more substantial detached and semi-detached dwellings.
- . The unusual street layout of the area, particularly the sweeping curve at the south end of Davis Ave.
- . Intactness of individual buildings to their original states. Dwellings typically survive with their presentation to the street largely unaltered retaining verandahs and decorative detailing.
- . Single- and occasionally two-storey scale.
- . Absence of prominent additions and alterations.
- . Face brick, timber or render materiality and roofscapes with chimneys and pitched roof forms clad in corrugated galvanised steel or slate tiles.
- . Interwar or earlier stands of Plane trees in Davis Avenue.

How is it significant?

The Fawkner Street/Davis Avenue Precinct, South Yarra, is of local historical and aesthetic significance.

Why is it significant?

The Fawkner Street/Davis Avenue Precinct, South Yarra, is of historical significance as evidence of the surge of urban development which swept across South Yarra, Prahran and Melbourne more generally during land boom of the 1880s (3.3.3 *Speculation and land boomers-subdivision from 1880 onwards*). Unlike nearby workers accommodation built on higher ground through the 1850s and 60s, the area illustrates the development of the area as middle class residential stock on land made available after the draining of the swamp (8.2 *Middle class suburbs and the Suburban ideal*).

The Fawkner Street/Davis Avenue Precinct is of aesthetic significance for its largely intact collection of fine late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings (3.3.5 *Recovery and infill 1900-1940*). The precinct generally contains representative examples of modest cottages and polite villas of the period as well as a number of more substantial semi-detached pairs of one- and two-storeys. Dwellings at No 2 Davis Avenue and 5 Fawkner Street along with shops and early dwellings to Punt Road are of particular distinction.

Statement of Significance from Prahran Conservation Review (1993)

The Fawkner Street and Davis Avenue Urban Conservation Area has significance for its unusual street layout and its grouping of small Victorian villas, terraces and shops which collectively represent an important aspect of the nineteenth century development of Prahran. The fine avenue of Planes along Davis Avenue contributes to the quality of this streetscape.

The key characteristics of the Fawkner Street and Davis Avenue area are:

- the consistent scale, form and period of the buildings within the area creating a precinct characteristic of nineteenth century Prahran
- the street pattern, especially the curved alignment of Davis Avenue, which is unusual and reflects the history of the development of the locality
- the Plane trees in Davis Avenue which create a picturesque avenue.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - Prahran Conservation Study Identification of Buildings & Areas of Major Significance, Nigel Lewis & Associates, 1983;
Construction dates	1850,
Other Names	Centred on Fawkner Street, South Yarra,
Hermes Number	30733
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

From Prahran Conservation Review 1993

The area is distinguished by the street layout pattern, in particular. Davis Avenue which curves northwards from Fawkner Street towards Toorak Road. The form of Davis Avenue, shown as Great Davis Street on the 1895 MMBW Plan suggests that the street was subdivided in at least two sections.

The area is predominantly semi-detached terraces or small detached villas with narrow side boundaries to their neighbours. The majority of the buildings are in brick with some rendered and many recently painted. The house on the corner of Davis Avenue and Fawkner Street at No.2 Davis Street is a key focal point within the Area. It is set on an unusually shaped block, and its form and the layout of the buildings on the site reflect the form of the allotment.

Davis Street contains medium-large Plane trees set into the road reserve on both sides of the street. They provide a partial canopy across the street, creating a distinctive character and emphasising the curve of the street. Plane trees have been recently planted as a parallel avenue within the footpath of Fawkner Street.

High front fences, many in brick, are becoming an unfortunate characteristic of the area. Given the closeness of the houses to the street, the high fences restrict views of the dwellings and have an adverse impact on the quality of the streetscape.

The houses within the area are typical rather than outstanding in form, however collectively they represent an important element of the nineteenth century development of Prahran.

## Physical Description 2

From Citation Review June 2014

The precinct is located within an area bounded by Toorak Road, Punt Road, Commercial Road and the Sandringham rail line in South Yarra. Despite its location close to major transport arteries, its character is suburban in nature notable for wide streets lined with polite housing and mature trees. The area is distinguished by its street layout, in particular, the curving form of Davis Avenue as it meets Fawkner Street. The precinct comprises dwellings along both sides of Fawkner Street and a section of Davis Street extending northwards to Alexandra Street. In addition, it includes a two-storey Victorian retail group at Nos 338-352 Punt Road and adjacent housing at Nos 354 and 356-8 Punt Road along with dwellings at Nos 85 and 87 Osborne Street which form the two gateways to Fawkner Street.

Built form in the area is predominantly comprised of semi-detached residential pairs and small detached villas with narrow side setbacks. The majority of buildings are finished in face brick or render although a small number of timber dwellings such as those at Nos 13, 15 and 17 Fawkner Street are also present. Early buildings in the area have typically been overpainted. The character of the precinct largely derives from straightforward

residences adopting reasonably typical builders' designs. However, a number of dwellings of individual note such as No 2 Davis Avenue and No 5 Fawkner Street, are also present. The greater part of the extant built form dates from c.1880s although a small number of sites remained undeveloped until the early decades of the twentieth century. Edwardian dwellings at No 334 Punt Road and No 4 Fawkner street contribute to the character and significance of the area through their scale and form and illustrate the manner in which the recession of the early 1890s halted local development for over a decade. Stands of plane trees in Davis Avenue are visible in a 1945 aerial photograph of the area suggesting a c.1920s planting.[1]

Some later development occurred in the area when a number of early dwellings visible on the MMBW plan of 1896 were demolished through the twentieth century. One, very substantial, block of Modern flats has been constructed at No 37 Fawkner Street. However, post-war development more typically takes the form of polite one- and two-storey developments such as those in those vicinity of No 14 Fawkner street and others in the vicinity of No 50 Fawkner Street. The early character of the area has been diminished to some extent through the introduction of tall, often impermeable, walls to the street and vehicle accommodation in front setbacks.

[1] Victorian Department of Lands and Survey, *Melbourne 1945 photo maps*, available at: [www.lib.unimelb.au/collections/maps](http://www.lib.unimelb.au/collections/maps).

## Local Historical Themes

From Citation Review 2014

Thematic context

In broadly chronological order, the area illustrates the following themes identified in the Stonnington Thematic Environmental History (Context Pty Ltd, 2006 with upgrades 2009):

3.3.3 Speculators and land boomers

8.2 Middle-class suburbs and the suburban ideal

3.3.5 Recovery and infill 1900-1940

*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/>*