
Barwon



Barwon

Location

38 Cromwell Road SOUTH YARRA, Stonnington City

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0825

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO29

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

Barwon (formerly Cromwell House) was constructed on land made available through the draining of swampy land near Surrey Road and made more desirable through the construction of the Hawksburn Railway Station in 1879

and the ensuing land boom (3.3.3. *Speculators and land boomers*). It is a substantial two-storey rendered brick residence combining Italianate and Georgian influences. It is notable for verandahs to its key facades but is otherwise a straightforward, two-storey volume beneath a low-pitched hipped roof and prominent chimneys. It was built in 1881 for the architect Edmund G Ovey, who is believed to be its designer.

How is it significant?

Barwon is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria and the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

Barwon is of architectural significance at a State level for its internal decorative treatment. It contains extant painted decoration of a very high quality. Of particular note is the drawing room with ceiling and walls that are considered a quite exceptional and rare treatment for houses after the mid-1880s. The front hall contains compositional painting in the scenic panels painted in the frieze, as distinct from stencilling, a very unusual feature in Australia. These painted interiors provide a remarkable example of high quality late-19th century interior decoration. These elements are not protected under the City of Stonnington Planning Scheme.

Externally, Barwon is of architectural significance for its unusual form, incorporating two notable verandahs, and providing one of the best examples of a distinctive feature of Melbourne houses from this period. (8.4.1 *Houses as a symbol of wealth, status and fashion*).

Barwon is of architectural significance for its associations with Edmund Ovey. Ovey designed many buildings in and around Prahran in the period from the 1870s to the early 1890s. These include timber and brick residences, shops in nearby Chapel Street and Toorak Road and, most notably, St Martins Church and parsonage in nearby Surrey Road. His contribution to the profession was recognised in 1892 when he was made a fellow of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects. The house is of particular interest as the architect's own residence (8.4.3 *Architects and their houses*).

Barwon is of historical significance as a fine example of a substantial suburban house which demonstrates the growth of the more privileged areas of Melbourne (8.2 *Middle-class suburbs and the suburban ideal*), and the successful living that could be obtained by architects in the burgeoning colony.

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|---------------------------|---|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Stonnington - Conservation Review City of Prahran, Context P/L, 1993; Stonnington - References to Victorian Heritage Register, Heritage Victoria, 1900; |
| Other Names | 38 Cromwell Road, South Yarra, |
| Hermes Number | 31630 |
| Property Number | |

Physical Description 1

Barwon (formerly Cromwell House) is located on land made available when swampy ground near Surrey Road was drained. It is a substantial two-storey rendered brick residence combining Italianate and Georgian influences. The facade comprises a simple symmetrical arrangement of square-headed windows with an ornate semi secular highlight window above the principle ground floor entry. The residence is notable for verandahs to its key facades. The two-storey verandah to the street adopts an arcaded form with circular motifs throughout its cast iron lacework. A secondary verandah to the northern elevation provides a small trafficable area above a canted bay window. Despite these adornments the building is otherwise a straightforward two-storey volume beneath a low-pitched hipped roof and prominent chimneys.

The interior of the building was not examined in the preparation of this brief report. It is understood to contain extant painted decoration of a very high quality.

Local Historical Themes

3.3.3. Speculators and land boomers.

8.4.1 Houses as a symbol of wealth, status and fashion.

8.4.3 Architects and their houses.

8.2 Middle-class suburbs and the suburban ideal.

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/>