Heritage Citation – Precinct

Heritage Place: Canterbury Road Precinct
Address: 4-16 Canterbury Road, Toorak

HO Reference: HO748
Citation status: Final
Date Updated: 28 March 2022

Designer: N/A
Builder: N/A

Year of Construction: 1882-1886



Photograph of 6 Canterbury Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Location map and extent of Canterbury Road Precinct.

Heritage Group: Residential buildings
Heritage Type: Residential precinct

Key Theme: Building suburbs
Key Sub-theme: Middle class suburbs and the suburban ideal

Significance Level: Local

Recommendation: Recommended for the Heritage Overlay as a new precinct.

Controls:	☐	External paint colours	☐	Internal alterations	☐ Tree controls
	☐	Victorian Heritage Register	☐	Incorporated Plans	☐ Outbuildings and fences exemptions
	☐	Prohibited uses may be permitted	☐	Aboriginal Heritage Place	

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Canterbury Road Precinct, comprising a group of freestanding Victorian cottages on Canterbury Road, Toorak, is significant.

The precinct is wholly characterised by contributory graded buildings.

Character elements that contribute to the significance of the precinct include:

- The distinctive pattern of the 1882 subdivision of Poynton Estate and subsequent development created by the cohesive group of Victorian era buildings;
- A high degree of intactness arising from the same construction period and absence of modern infill;
- The regularity and harmony of the single-storey, freestanding Victorian era cottages characterised by modest built forms, hipped roofs, single and double fronted façades, raised portico entrances, bracketed eaves, timber sash windows, rendered walls and open face dichromatic brickwork;
- The uniformity of allotments, siting, setbacks and building heights across the precinct;
- Cast iron lacework, balustrade and bullnosed awnings at 4-8 Canterbury Road, Toorak.
- Cast iron palisade fencing with decorative cast iron posts at 4 Canterbury Road, Toorak.

Later alterations and additions to the properties are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Canterbury Road Precinct is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant*?*

The Canterbury Road Precinct is of historical significance as a small pocket of cottages that were developed within a short period of time as investment properties following the 1882 subdivision of Poynton Estate, which precipitated the area's shift from sparsely developed paddocks and mansion estates to a suburban upper-middle class enclave. The dwellings were developed during an important phase for Toorak, being the land boom of the 1880s that saw a period of land speculation, rapid subdivision and development. This group of houses therefore forms a tangible link to this period of development. (Criterion A)

The Canterbury Road Precinct is of local aesthetic significance as an intact and visually cohesive collection of single-storey freestanding Victorian cottages. The buildings retain a high level of integrity as a group and demonstrate stylistic cohesion through uniformity in built form, materials, detailing, ornamentation, fenestration, allotment sizes, setbacks and height. The formal entrance porticos at 10-16 Canterbury Road are also of particular note as a unique feature for this era, distinguishing it from other Victorian era building stock. Combined, these elements create a harmonious and attractive collection of buildings that are free from modern infill within the curtilage. (Criterion E)

HERCON Criteria Assessment

A	*Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history*	The Canterbury Road Precinct is of historical significance as a small pocket of cottages that were developed within a short period of time as investment properties following the 1882 subdivision of Poynton Estate, which precipitated the area's shift from sparsely developed paddocks and mansion estates to a suburban upper-middle class enclave. The dwellings were developed during an important phase for Toorak, being the land boom of the 1880s that saw a period of land speculation, rapid subdivision and development. This group of houses therefore forms a tangible link to this period of development.
B	*Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history*	This place does not meet this criterion.
C	*Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history*	This place does not meet this criterion.
D	*Important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments*	This place does not meet this criterion.
E	*Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics*	The Canterbury Road Precinct is of local aesthetic significance as an intact and visually cohesive collection of single-storey freestanding Victorian cottages. The buildings retain a high level of integrity as a group and demonstrate stylistic cohesion through uniformity in built form, materials, detailing, ornamentation, fenestration, allotment sizes, setbacks and height. The formal entrance porticos at 10-16 Canterbury Road are also of particular note as a unique feature for this era, distinguishing it from other Victorian era building stock. Combined, these elements create a harmonious and attractive collection of buildings that are free from modern infill within the curtilage.

F	*Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period*	This place does not meet this criterion.
G	*Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of the continuing and developing cultural traditions*	This place does not meet this criterion.
H	*Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.*	This place does not meet this criterion.

Description

- ### Physical Analysis

The Canterbury Road Precinct consists of seven single-storey residences built in a Victorian era style. The residences have a modest form and massing but include some distinct and notable design features within the group. The residences generally consist of a double hipped roof which would have been originally clad with slate tiles, and two or three chimneys extend from the main roof of each residence.

The front facades are single fronted with the exception of 4A Canterbury Road which has a projecting hipped roof and 8 Canterbury Road which contains a polygonal projection. Most of the residences are finished with stucco on the front façade, with the exception of 6 and 8 Canterbury Road which contain face dichromatic brickwork laid in a bond consisting of alternating single stretcher and paired header bricks. The dichromatic bricks primarily consist of a dark liver brick with blond bricks used in the trim to detail imitation quoining and sill courses. Consistent features within the group include timber sash windows and bracketed eaves.

4 Canterbury Road includes a raised front verandah with expressed imitation stone quoining, turned timber posts, cast iron valance, a timber rail and cast-iron balustrade and a green corrugated sheet metal bullnose awning. The building features a raised front across the front façade with cast iron columns, lacework and a hipped awning clad with green and white corrugated sheet metal. The front steps, driveway and pathway consists of bluestone.

8 Canterbury Road features a raised front verandah with square timber posts, cast iron lacework, a timber rail and cast-iron balustrade and a green corrugated sheet metal bullnose awning. The polygonal front projection is unique within the group, and features tuckpointing, highly detailed brickwork in the cross motifs and flat gauged arches.

10-16 Canterbury Road present with symmetrical front façades featuring a central raised portico entrance. While the general form of the porticos are similar, individual elements differ between the residences. This includes a main arched and side openings at 12 and 14 Canterbury Road. The portico at 14 Canterbury Road appears most intact, retaining its chamfered columns, console bracket and sill course defined by the arched fenestration form.

The front façades of the group address Canterbury Road. The precinct is bounded by a bluestone paved laneway at its rear east boundary, accessible from Malvern Road. The northern extent of the precinct is bounded by the railway line. The property lots appear approximately equal in size except at 16 Canterbury Road in response to its location defined by the curving railway line.

The residences have a consistent setback, however there is no regularity between the residences front landscaping, driveway layout and front walls. The front wall of number 4 is likely the most intact, consisting of a low palisade fence and hipped decorative cast iron posts set on a rendered stone base. All the residences have a single-storey rear extension in varying sizes. However, the rear extensions are not visible from the main street front. 10 Canterbury Road features a large second storey hipped roof addition however this is not readily visible.

The Canterbury Road Precinct is accessible from Malvern Road and Ruabon Road. The seven properties are considered to be in good condition. The front of the residences appear to be largely intact to their original built form, key detailing and materiality. There is a high degree of variation between the front landscape and front fences. Despite the variations, the group is highly cohesive owing to the setback, massing and façade elements. The Canterbury Road Precinct has high integrity overall.

- ## Alterations and Additions

4 Canterbury Road

- Front façade finished with a white render.
- Window hood awning added to the front gable projection.
- One skylight added to the main roof.
- Rear extension with covered patio added.
- Skillion roof lean-to extension added to the north (garage) and south elevation.
- Carport added to the rear yard.
- Rear yard relandscaped.
- Front yard relandscaped including a concrete laid front driveway and footpath.

6 Canterbury Road

- Side elevations finished with a concrete render.
- Palisade security bars mounted to the front windows.
- One skylight added to the main roof.
- Corbel on one chimney removed.
- Internal face of the main roof reclad with steel corrugated sheet metal.
- Rear extension with clerestory roof and solar panels added.
- Rear yard relandscaped.
- Swimming pool added to the rear.
- Skillion roof lean-to extension added to the north and south elevation.
- Front yard relandscaped.
- Timber front fence added.

8 Canterbury Road

- Verandah awning roof reclad with steel corrugated sheet metal.
- Two skylights added to the main roof.
- Corbels on two chimneys removed.
- Rear extension added.
- Rear yard relandscaped.
- Front yard relandscaped.
- Timber front fence added.

10 Canterbury Road

- Portico fenestration and details altered.
- One skylight added to the main roof.
- Roof reclad with steel corrugated sheet metal, with the exception of the street facing roof plane.
- Chimneys altered.
- Upper floor level addition (not readily visible).
- Front yard relandscaped including aggregate laid driveway.
- Front fence removed.

12 Canterbury Road

- Timber shutters added to the front windows.
- Internal face of the main roof reclad with steel corrugated sheet metal.
- Chimneys altered.
- Rear extension with a skillion roof added.
- Front yard relandscaped.
- Painted brick front wall added.

14 Canterbury Road

- Internal face of the main roof reclad with steel corrugated sheet metal.
- Rear extension with a skillion roof added.
- Rear yard relandscaped.
- Secondary structure added to the rear yard.
- Front yard relandscaped to include brick paved parking and path.
- Rendered brick front wall with palisade fencing added.

16 Canterbury Road

- Portico roof altered to incorporate a flat roof.
- Roof reclad with steel corrugated sheet metal.
- Window fenestration altered.
- Rear extension with a skillion roof added.
- Front yard relandscaped.
- Paved driveway added.
- Garage structure added to the north elevation.

- Rendered brick front wall added.
- Contemporary colour scheme.

History

• Historical Context

For thousands of years preceding European colonialism, the area now known as Stonnington was the traditional home of the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung people of the Eastern Kulin Nation. This environment would have provided Traditional Owners with access to pre-contact plains, grassy woodland, and floodplains on the banks of the Yarra River (Birrarung), Gardiners Creek (Kooyong Koot), and Hawksburn Creek (now channelised), in a rolling landscape on the northern shore of Port Phillip Bay. It is important to note that the rich cultural heritage of Traditional Owners in Stonnington did not end with colonialism—it has a rich presence to this day.

Following the establishment of Melbourne in 1835, squatter John Gardiner and many others like him sought out land in what would become present day Toorak and surrounds on account of its densely timbered landscape, undulating terrain and proximity to water. By 1840, crown land sales marked the area's transition to pastoral settlement, and later in 1851, with the purchase of land in Hawthorn by Thomas Herbert Power, the surrounding environments gradually became a place where the early merchant and squatter elite of Melbourne built their homesteads. In Toorak, this is best represented by the purchase of lot 26 by James Jackson, associate in Jackson, Rae & Co. soap and candle merchants. Jackson was described by politician William Westgarth as 'Melbourne's greatest merchant of this early time' (Forster 1999, 10). It is only fitting that his house, called Toorak House, would be the namesake of what would become arguably the most affluent suburb in Melbourne. Following the discovery of gold in the 1850s and the wealth this produced for ancillary trades, the Toorak area drew in Melbourne's newly wealthy. Today, over a century later, Toorak still has connotations of wealth and prestige as best represented in its history and built environment (Forster 1999, 5–26).

• Place History

The land and surrounds of the Canterbury Road Precinct formerly comprised Crown Portion 32 (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 39). Purchased by Thomas Coclough in the June 1849 land sales, the area largely remained undeveloped over the next decade, with an 1855 map showing the vicinity as vacant land (Surveyor General's Office 1855).

The property known as Poynton was eventually erected on land at the eastern corner of Canterbury and Malvern Roads in the 1860s, and was initially inhabited by the Webster family (The Argus 1867, 4). Poynton was subsequently put to auction in February 1870, with a newspaper advertisement providing the following physical description:

> The ground, comprising between five and a half aces, has large frontages to the Malvern and Canterbury roads, and has been subdivided into two paddocks, well laid down in the best grasses, croquet ground…The garden has been all well and expensively drained, and is planted with great taste, with choice flowers, shrubs, fruit trees, vines, vegetables…The house is built almost entirely of brick, slate roof, with elegant verandah, is well finished… (The Age 1870, 4).

The substantial estate was ultimately purchased by Robert Barton and his wife, who are noted in newspaper articles as residing at the property through much of the 1870s (The Argus 1874, 1). By the

late 1870s, ownership had transferred to William Watkins (The Argus 1879, 1). Watkins' residency precipitated a series of changes to the grounds, beginning with the 1882 subdivision of Poynton Estate. Both the gold rush era and subsequent 1880s land boom saw a period of subdivision and rapid expansion on former grand estates in what was then the City of Prahan. As Melbourne experienced a period of unprecedented prosperity, growth and development, urban boundaries were pushed out as people, sharing in the ideals of home ownership, sought new residential lands (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 41). While this process was most readily demonstrated in the housing stock of present day Prahan, Armadale and Malvern, it would also find expression in various pockets around what is now the suburb of Toorak. Within this context, Poynton was subdivided into three lots on the corner of Malvern Road and Canterbury Road, roughly corresponding with present day 2-12 Canterbury Road, on what was formerly the entrance to the estate (The Argus 1882, 2). Meanwhile, Poynton Estate was retained on a reduced lot to the east.

By 1886, the eight subject properties had been established as investment properties for James Munro, although the dwellings were initially listed as numbers 48-62, with 48 Canterbury Road beginning at present day 16 Canterbury Road (Sands & McDougall 1890; Prahan Book 1886-1890). A successful land boomer, James Munro, was one half of the successful real estate agency Munro & Baillieu. By 1888, ownership of all the subject properties are attributed to the Real Estate Bank Limited, of which James Munro was the chairman of directors (The Argus 1887, 13). The Rate Book of 1892 shows 'Real Estate Banks Limited' crossed out, and the Commercial Bank of Australia listed as the owner of the subject properties. Indeed, while Real Estate Bank Limited were rapidly acquiring property throughout the 1880s, the financial crash that resulted in the 1890s depression saw its liquidation by 1892 (Yule 2009, 10; The Argus 1892, 7).

By 1891 the street numbers had been altered to the current pattern. A MMBW plan from 1899 depicts a row of eight properties at 2-16 Canterbury Road (MMBW 1899). With the exception of 2 Canterbury Road, which appears slightly larger in size, the dwellings are depicted as free-standing single-storey Victorian dwellings, all of a similar size and with identical setbacks and sitting (MMBW 1899). Known occupants during this late 20th century period include Petty Richard, Martha Quarterman, William Nichol, Hubert D. Church, May Flint and John W. Walker (Sands & McDougall 1895).

With the exception of 2 Canterbury Road which has since been demolished and therefore not included in this precinct, this pocket of dwellings have survived intact against the pressures of interwar and post-war development. Today, they continue to be used as private residential properties.

Comparative Analysis

Designed in a late Victorian Italianate style, the Canterbury Road Precinct is directly comparable to several modest Victorian Italianate single-storey cottage groups that were also constructed in the municipality, particularly around present day Armadale and Prahan, as investments during the boom era. Popularised following the development of Toorak House in 1850 and its subsequent use as the Governor's residence in 1854, the use of Italianate derived elements in domestic architecture was particularly prevalent in the Victorian colony. Its connotations with the social and political elite was integral to its success, and the style grew in popularity during Melbourne's 1880s boom period as a result of rapid population growth, prosperity and development.

Key comparative examples include:

- **Bush Inn Estate Precinct, Toorak (HO380).** The Bush Inn Estate Precinct is directly comparable to the Canterbury Road Precinct as a residential area comprising Victoria era building stock that was developed during the land boom era of the 1880s. While it is larger and more diverse than Canterbury Road Precinct, featuring both grand double-storey terraces and villas as well as modest single-storey cottages, it shares with the Canterbury Road Precinct similarities in integrity, scale, form, as well as stylistic and visual cohesion. This is particularly evident in the single-storey Victorian cottages along the north side of Evelina Road, which also feature the distinct portico entrances.
- **Union Street Precinct, Armadale (HO377).** The Union Street Precinct contains a substantially intact and cohesive collection of late 19th and early 20th century housing stock from the Victorian and Federation/Edwardian era as well as some interwar period dwellings. As with the above Bush Inn Estate Precinct, while it is much larger in size, it features a number of comparable dwellings in terms of built form and style. Notably, however, no examples of the portico style dwelling seen on Canterbury Precinct have been identified in this precinct. As it features a range of styles, it is also considered less stylistically cohesive than the Canterbury Road Precinct.
- **Auburn Grove Precinct, Armadale (HO123).** The Auburn Grove Precinct comprises a group of Victorian, Edwardian and Federation era dwellings and shops, and includes a number of high-quality Victorian villas that can be particularly likened to 6 and 8 Canterbury Road. While also large and more diverse in terms of style than the Canterbury Road Precinct, it retains a high level of cohesiveness stemming from consistency in building forms, heights, materials and allotment sizes. Notably, however, there are no examples of the distinct portico style as seen on Canterbury Road Precinct in this precinct.

Although the group of dwellings within the Canterbury Road Precinct are not without minor alterations, they retain a high level of integrity and intactness by virtue of their built form, roof from, chimneys, materiality, use of face brick and render, and original portico entrances. The portico feature is of particular note as a feature that was more prominent in the interwar and postwar years, making this built form highly unusual for their era of development. As the above comparative analysis has shown, the Canterbury Road Precinct is also noteworthy as the only Victorian era precinct within Toorak, with the exception of the Bush Inn Estate Precinct. With this, they are not only readily likened to other precincts within the broader municipality in terms of integrity and cohesiveness but are also an unusual representation of this style within the suburb of Toorak.

Precinct Map



Grading Plan

* S: Significant

C: Contributory

NC: Non-contributory

Refer to Heritage Victoria's Model brief for consultants (p.6) for explanation of designations.

Note: the Style/era column follows architectural style categories set out in Heritage Victoria's HERMES Orion database and does not necessarily reflect the date of construction. For details on construction era(s) where available, refer to the Place History section.

Street address	*Place type*	*Style/era*	*Grading*
CANTERBURY ROAD			
4 Canterbury Road	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C
6 Canterbury Road	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C
8 Canterbury Road	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C
10 Canterbury Road	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C
12 Canterbury Road	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C
14 Canterbury Road	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C

Street address	Place type	Style/era	Grading
16 Canterbury Road	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C

References

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Stonnington City Council. 2013. Heritage Citation Report: Bush Inn Estate Precinct, Toorak, Hermes ID 104285. Unpublished report. PDF file.

Limitations

1. Access to all heritage places was limited to a visual inspection from the public domain. The interiors of buildings and inaccessible areas such as rear gardens were not accessed as part of this heritage study.

2. Condition and site modification assessment was limited to a visual inspection undertaken from the public domain.
3. The historical notes provided for this citation are not considered to be an exhaustive history of the site.

Further Images



4A Canterbury Road, Toorak (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



6 Canterbury Road, Toorak (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



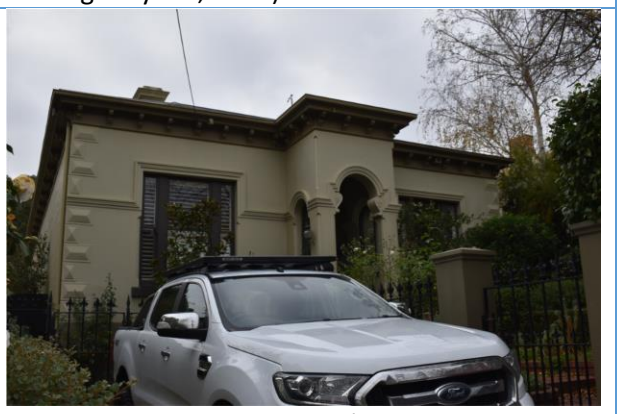
8 Canterbury Road, Toorak (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



10 Canterbury Road, Toorak (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



12 Canterbury Road, Toorak (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



14 Canterbury Road, Toorak (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



16 Canterbury Road, Toorak (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



North-east facing streetscape view of 4A-6 Canterbury Road (source: Google Streetview, 2019).



South-east facing streetscape view of 12-14 Canterbury Road (source: Google Streetview, 2019).

Authors

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