City of
STONNINGTON

Hawksburn Retail Precinct

Prepared by: GJM Heritage (March 2025)

Address: Malvern Road and Williams Road, Prahran, South Yarra and Toorak

Name:	Hawksburn Retail Precinct	**Review Date:**	June 2024
Place Type:	Commercial Precinct	**Architect/Designer:**	Harold Bloom (510-520 Malvern Road)
Grading:	See grading table	**Builder:**	Not known
Extent of the Overlay:	See Figure 5	**Construction Date(s):**	1870s-1880s, 1930s



Figure 1. 475-487 Malvern Road


Figure 2. The Bush Inn, 505 Malvern Road



Figure 3. 530-536 Malvern Road


Figure 4. 161-163 Williams Road



Figure 5. Hawksburn Retail Precinct, Prahran, South Yarra and Toorak (GJM Heritage, August 2024)

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct, a commercial centre containing a collection of shop/residences and commercial buildings dating generally from the 1880s to the 1940s.

The precinct includes:

- Malvern Road (nos. 475-531 odd, 508-536 even)
- Williams Road (159-163A odd only)

Elements which contribute to the significance of the precinct include:

- Highly intact late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century precinct
- Predominantly two-storey scale with some single-storey buildings
- Predominantly Victorian-era (north side of Malvern Road) and interwar (south side of Malvern Road) commercial buildings, with a group of Edwardian-era commercial buildings north-west of the intersection
- No front or side setbacks
- Repetitive upper-floor fenestration patterns
- Splayed or curved corners to buildings at intersection.

Victorian-era buildings

- A variety of both simple and highly decorative façade parapets, concealing corrugated metal sheet-clad pitched roofs behind
- Rendered walls
- Rendered window surrounds and sills to upper-storeys
- Rendered ornament to upper-storeys
- Groups of repetitive shop parapets with projecting piers between properties.

Edwardian-era buildings

- Red brick walls (some overpainted) with contrasting cement render detailing
- Segmental arch-headed openings with bands of red and rendered brick
- Render highlighting to elevations including sills, cornice and banding and shaped parapets elements
- Splayed corner to main intersection with entrance
- Deeply recessed angled shop fronts with display windows.

Interwar buildings

- Horizontal emphasis to elevations with contrasting pilasters and wing walls
- Predominantly face brick facades with rows of contrasting brickwork to emphasise the horizontal appearance
- Render detailing to elevations including circular motifs and continuous shallow cantilevered hood above windows
- Metal or timber-framed windows to upper-storeys, generally set in horizontal openings
- Curved corner to main intersection
- Metal-framed early shop fronts with display windows and entry recesses.

The property at 495-497 Malvern Road is a non-contributory place within the precinct.

How is it significant?

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct, Prahran, South Yarra and Toorak, is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance.

Why is it significant?

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct has strong associations with the development of Prahran, South Yarra and Toorak from the mid-nineteenth century through to the mid-twentieth century. Developed from the 1860s as a commercial centre to serve the emerging local community, the rapid suburbanisation of the surrounding area during the 1880s – largely due to the establishment of the Oakleigh railway line and Hawksburn Railway Station in 1879 – provided the stimulus for much of the commercial development of the precinct. The early hotel – the Bush Inn at the corner of Malvern and Williams Road – also acted as a focal point for subsequent commercial development. Later Edwardian-era and interwar buildings demonstrate the pattern of recovery and infill which followed the economic depressions of the 1890s and early 1930s. As a highly intact precinct of commercial buildings constructed in the Victorian, Edwardian and the interwar periods, the Hawksburn Retail Precinct clearly illustrates these important phases of development in the City of Stonnington (Criterion A).

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct is a fine and highly intact example of a late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century neighbourhood commercial precinct in the City of Stonnington. The rows of commercial shop/residences display typical characteristics of this class of place, including a predominantly two-storey scale with some single-storey buildings, no front or side setbacks, brick construction (both red brick and rendered), render or clinker brick detailing to principal elevations including to parapets and window surrounds, roofs concealed behind parapets, and splayed or curved corners to buildings at key intersections (Criterion D).

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct contains distinct groups of high quality, finely detailed shop/residences and commercial premises from the Victorian, Edwardian and interwar periods. Despite the variation in architectural styles, the consistent scale, setbacks, materiality and application of decorative motifs and detailing presents a high-quality and aesthetically cohesive streetscape. The precinct is also distinguished from other local shopping centres in the City of Stonnington by its highly intact and cohesive group of interwar shops on the southern side of Malvern Road. The strong horizontal emphasis along the street frontage, with contrasting pilasters and wing walls, combined with unpainted face brick facades with rows of contrasting brickwork and render detailing such as circular motifs, elevates the aesthetic qualities of the streetscape (Criterion E).

Historical Context

This place is associated with the following historic theme(s) taken from the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (2009):

3 Settling the land

- 3.3.5 Recovery and Infill 1900-1940

7 Retailing and hospitality

- 7.1 Serving local communities

- 7.4.1 Early Hotels

Place History

The following history is drawn from the City of Stonnington Heritage Citation Report, prepared by Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd in 2007, with additional information as cited.

Lot 33, a tract of land comprising 52 acres between Gardiner's Creek (now Toorak) Road and Malvern Road immediately to the west of Williams Road, was offered for sale at the Crown land sales in June 1849. The lot was purchased by RA Balbirnie, a wealthy Scottish gentleman, who subdivided much of the land for resale as 'portions suitable for orchards, vineyards and market gardens' in 1851. Lot 32 on the east side of Williams Road was purchased by T Colclough, who erected the Bush Inn at the intersection of Williams and Malvern Roads soon after the land sales. To the south, on the opposite side of Malvern Road, George Augustus Robinson, Protector of Aborigines, purchased Lot 45 (Figure 6).

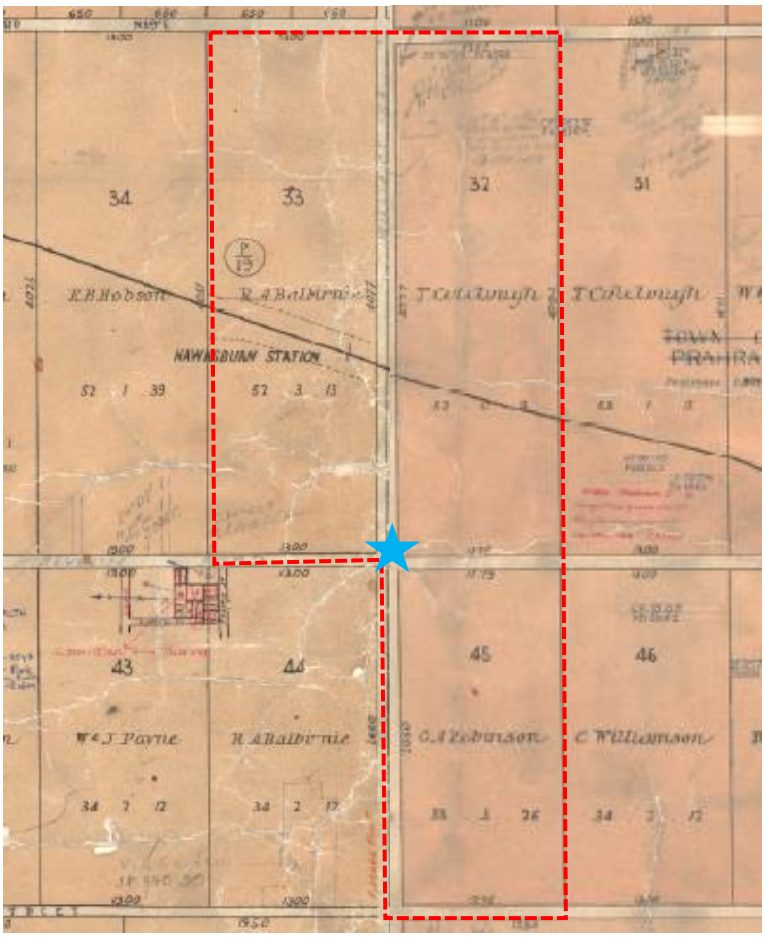


Figure 6. Detail of parish plan, showing Lots 32, 33 and 45 (indicated) with later notations; plan dates to c1880. Williams and Malvern roads intersection indicated by blue star (Source: Public Record Office Victoria)

By the mid-1850s the area on which the precinct is located remained largely undeveloped, with the exception of two large buildings to Williams Road and three smaller buildings to Malvern Road at the Malvern and Williams road intersection. The Hawksburn Hotel (which was destroyed by fire in c1860) was situated at the corner directly opposite the Bush Inn. Kearney's map of Melbourne and suburbs dating to 1855 illustrates the development of the area at the time (Figure 7).

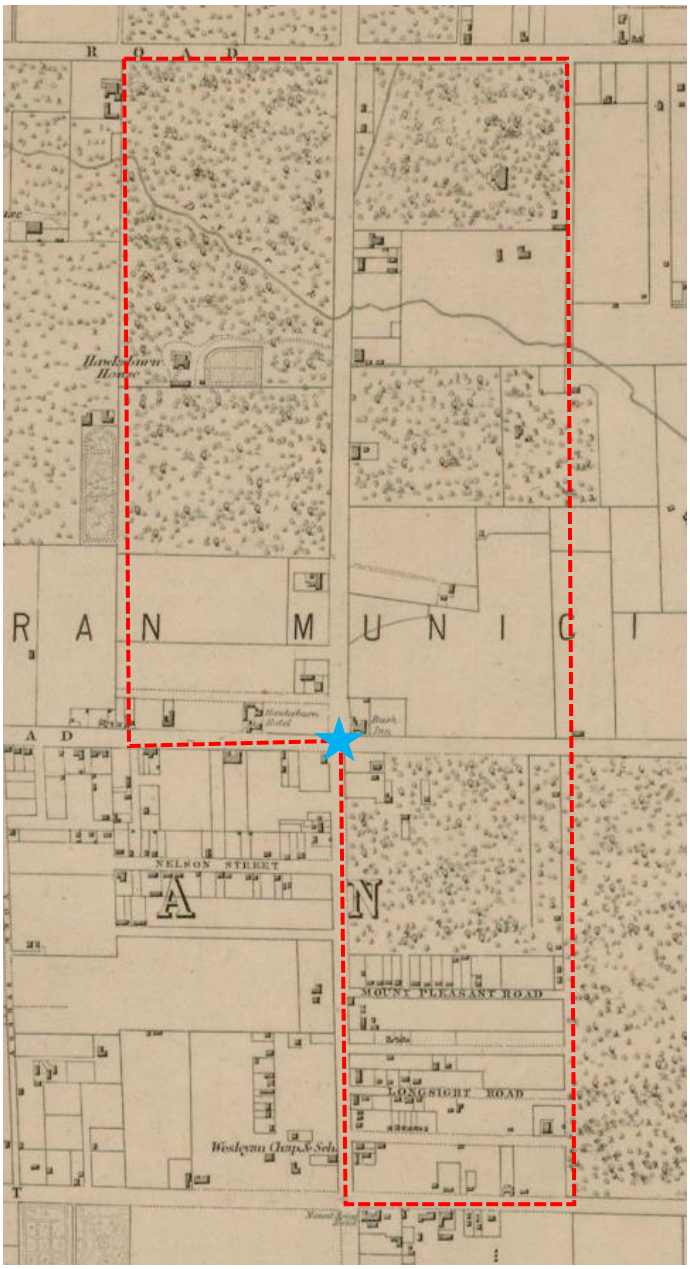


Figure 7. Detail of plan of Melbourne and its suburbs, compiled by James Kearney, 1855 showing the Williams and Malvern roads intersection, indicated by blue star (Source: State Library of Victoria)

Colclough sold the Bush Inn, along with a sizeable block of land which extended north along Williams Road to the present-day Evelina Road and east along the Malvern Road frontage. Colclough's land was subsequently subdivided and offered for sale in 1871. A small shopping strip developed around the inn by the late 1870s with the construction of several two-storey retail premises. The northern streetscape around the intersection adopted its current appearance by about c1890 (Figure 8). In 1888, architects Ravenscroft and Freeman advertised for tenders for the erection of a new wing and other additions to the Bush Inn.

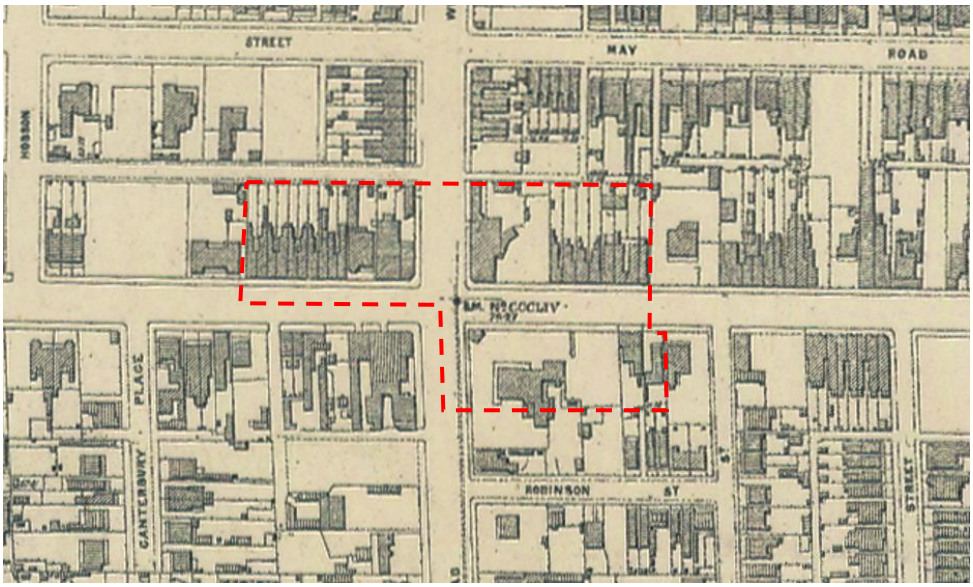


Figure 8. Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Plan No 13, Portion of Richmond, Hawthorn and Prahran, 1895 showing the Malvern and Williams roads intersection (precinct boundary outlined) (Source: State Library of Victoria)

Development to the south of Malvern Road on Lot 45 progressed more slowly. By 1860 some residential development had occurred in the southern half of the block. However, the northern sections of the Lot near the intersection of Malvern and Williams Roads remained largely vacant. From the 1860s, a private school operated from the southeastern corner of the intersection. In 1895, James Laing, a former Inspector of Schools, became the school's headmaster. By 1900 the school had adopted the name 'Eastleigh'.

The school closed in the 1930s and the site was auctioned in 1936. The Malvern Road frontage was rapidly transformed into a retail strip. Directories of 1937 noted a bootmaker to the corner of Williams Road, a plumber, fancy goods store and fishmonger along the Malvern Road frontage. In the same year a row of six shops at 512-520 Malvern Road and an adjacent ES&A Bank at 510 Malvern Road were completed to a design by architect Harold Bloom (Figure 9). This new building, designed in a Streamline Moderne style with horizontal stripes of contrasting bricks and steel-framed windows, comprised the new bank branch and shops at the ground level with a bank manager's and additional residential quarters above (*Herald,* 10 March 1937:21).

A 1945 aerial photograph shows the fully developed precinct in the mid-twentieth century (Figure 10).

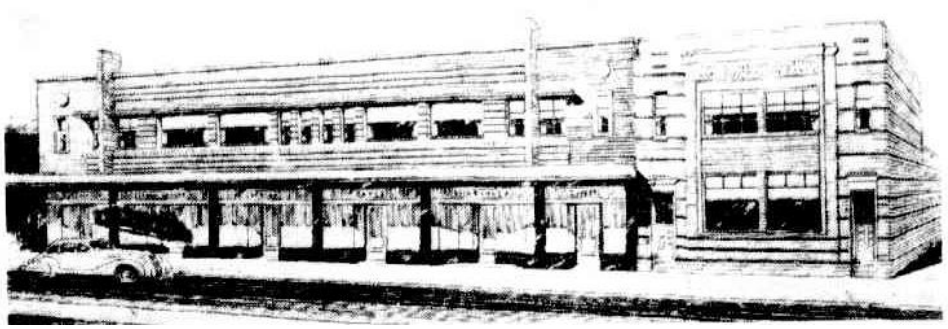


Figure 9. New bank and shop centre on Malvern Road, 1937 (Source: Herald, 10 March 1937:21)



Figure 10. Aerial photograph showing the Hawksburn Retail Precinct (outlined in red) at the intersection of Malvern and Williams roads, 1945 (Source: Landata Victoria)

Description

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct is located at the junction of Malvern Road and Williams Road, Prahran, South Yarra and Toorak. It includes commercial properties on the north side of Malvern Road to the east and west of Williams Road, properties on the south side of Malvern Road, east of Williams Road, and commercial properties on the west side of Williams Road, north of Malvern Road to McKillop Street. The properties are located on rectangular sites and are built to the street and side boundaries, with splayed or curved corners to the main intersection.

The precinct comprises commercial premises predominantly from the Victorian and interwar periods, with a group of premises from the Edwardian period. The precinct also includes the Bush Inn which was established at the north-east corner of Malvern Road and Williams Road in the 1850s and modified in the 1880s.

Located on the north side of Malvern Road, the Victorian commercial buildings are predominantly of two-storeys with a small number of single-storey buildings. Façade parapets are either simple or highly decorative, concealing corrugated metal sheet-clad pitched roofs behind. Walls are rendered with repetitive upper-floor fenestration patterns, rendered window surrounds, sills and ornament. Groups of repetitive shop parapets are divided by projecting pilasters between properties.

The Edwardian group of commercial premises at the north-west corner of the intersection of Malvern and Williams roads and continuing northward along Williams Road, is built of red face brickwork (some overpainted) with contrasting cement render detailing to segmental arch-headed windows, sills, cornice and banding and shaped parapets.

Located on the south side of Malvern Road, east of Williams Road, the interwar commercial premises form an extensive elevation which is horizontal in character with contrasting vertical pilasters and wing walls. Façades are predominantly of face brick with rows of contrasting brickwork to emphasise the horizontal appearance of the façade. A limited amount of render detailing is applied to these elevations, including circular motifs, and a continuous shallow cantilevered hood above a set of windows. Windows are generally set in horizontal openings and are either steel or timber-framed.

The majority of the Victorian shopfronts have been altered, with two timber-framed shopfronts remaining at 499-501 Malvern Road. The timber-framed Edwardian shop fronts to Williams Road, with angled entrances, have been retained, and some of the interwar shops retain their metal-framed display windows and entry recesses.

Key Features:

- Highly intact late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century precinct
- Consistent two-storey scale with some single-storey buildings
- Predominantly Victorian-era (north side of Malvern Road) and interwar (south side of Malvern Road) commercial buildings, with a group of Edwardian-era commercial buildings north-west of the intersection
- No front or side setbacks
- Repetitive upper floor fenestration patterns
- Splayed or curved corners to buildings at intersections.

Victorian-era buildings

- A variety of both simple and highly decorative façade parapets, concealing corrugated metal sheet-clad pitched roofs behind
- Rendered walls
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- Curved corner to main intersection
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Figure 11. '475-487 Malvern Road, South Yarra



Figure 12. 489-493 Malvern Road, South Yarra



Figure 13. 503 Malvern Road, South Yarra



Figure 14. 'The Bush Inn', 505 Malvern Road, Toorak



Figure 15. 513-517 Malvern Road, Toorak



Figure 16. 519-523 Malvern Road, Toorak



Figure 17. 530-536 Malvern Road, Prahran



Figure 18. 512-522 Malvern Road, Prahran



Figure 19. 'Former ES&A Bank', 510 Malvern Road, Prahran



Figure 20. 508 Malvern Road, and 168 Williams Road, Prahran



Figure 21. 161-163 Williams Road, South Yarra



Figure 22. 163-163A Williams Road, South Yarra

Intactness and Integrity

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct remains substantially intact to its three phases of construction and retains a high degree of integrity in fabric, form and detail to these phases. While the shops have undergone some minor alterations, especially changes to shopfronts, these changes do not diminish the ability to understand and appreciate the place as a finely detailed and cohesive precinct of retail and commercial premises dating from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century.

Assessment Against Criteria

Criteria referred to in *Planning Practice Note No. 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, August 2018), modified for the local context.

CRITERION A: *Importance to the course or pattern of the City of Stonnington's cultural or natural history (historical significance).*

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct has strong associations with the development of Prahran, South Yarra and Toorak from the mid-nineteenth century through to the mid-twentieth century. Developed from the 1860s as a commercial centre to serve the emerging local community, the rapid suburbanisation of the surrounding area during the 1880s – largely due to the establishment of the Oakleigh railway line and Hawksburn Railway Station in 1879 – provided the stimulus for much of the commercial development of the precinct. The early hotel – the Bush Inn at the corner of Malvern and Williams Road – also acted as a focal point for subsequent commercial development. Later Edwardian-era and interwar buildings

demonstrate the pattern of recovery and infill which followed the economic depressions of the 1890s and early 1930s. As a highly intact precinct of commercial buildings constructed in the Victorian, Edwardian and the interwar periods, the Hawksburn Retail Precinct clearly illustrates these important phases of development in the City of Stonnington.

CRITERION B: *Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Stonnington's cultural or natural history (rarity).*

N/A

CRITERION C: *Possession to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Stonnington's cultural or natural history (research potential).*

N/A

CRITERION D: *Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).*

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct is a fine and highly intact example of a late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century neighbourhood commercial precinct in the City of Stonnington. The rows of commercial shop/residences display typical characteristics of this class of place, including a predominantly two-storey scale with some single-storey buildings, no front or side setbacks, brick construction (both red brick and rendered), render or clinker brick detailing to principal elevations including to parapets and window surrounds, roofs concealed behind parapets, and splayed or curved corners to buildings at key intersections.

CRITERION E: *Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).*

The Hawksburn Retail Precinct contains distinct groups of high quality, finely detailed shop/residences and commercial premises from the Victorian, Edwardian and interwar periods. Despite the variation in architectural styles, the consistent scale, setbacks, materiality and application of decorative motifs and detailing presents a high-quality and aesthetically cohesive streetscape. The precinct is also distinguished from other local shopping centres in the City of Stonnington by its highly intact and cohesive group of interwar shops on the southern side of Malvern Road. The strong horizontal emphasis along the street frontage, with contrasting vertical pilasters and wing walls, combined with unpainted face brick facades with rows of contrasting brickwork and render detailing such as circular motifs, elevates the aesthetic qualities of the streetscape.

CRITERION F: *Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.*

N/A

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 their continuing cultural traditions (social significance).*

N/A

CRITERION H: *Special association with the life or works of a period, or group of persons, of importance in the City of Stonnington's history (associative significance).*

N/A

Gradings and Recommendations

It is recommended that the 'Heritage place name' column within the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay be updated to:

Hawksburn Retail Precinct
Prahran, South Yarra and Toorak

The properties at 167-179 Williams Road (odd nos. only) are residential properties that are currently included within HO142 Hawksburn Retail Precinct. They do not share the historic use or architectural characteristics of the balance of the retail precinct and are more appropriately included in the directly adjacent, predominantly residential HO137 Hawksburn Precinct (see Figure 23).

The property at 43 Mckillop Street (rear of 425 Malvern Road) is a building of recent construction on a subdivided block. It does not share the historic or architectural values of the balance of the precinct. As it located on the edge of the precinct, it is recommended it be removed from HO142 Hawksburn Retail Precinct.



Figure 23. Recommended changes to extent of HO142

It is recommended that the balance of the properties remain in the Heritage Overlay as a Heritage Precinct known as *Hawksburn Retail Precinct* (HO142) with gradings as set out in the table below and at Figure 24.

City of
STONNINGTON

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) to the Stonnington Planning Scheme:

External paint controls *Is a permit required to paint an already painted surface?*	No
Internal alteration controls *Is a permit required for internal alterations?*	No
Tree controls *Is a permit required to remove a tree?*	No
Solar energy system controls *Solar energy system controls apply?*	Yes
Outbuildings and fences exemptions *Are there outbuildings or fences which are not exempt from notice and review?*	No
Victorian Heritage Register *Is this place included on the Victorian Heritage Register?*	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted *Can a permit be granted to use for a use which would otherwise be prohibited?*	No
Aboriginal heritage place *Is the place an Aboriginal heritage place which is subject to the requirements of the* Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?	No
Incorporated Plan *Does an incorporated plan apply to the site?*	No

Gradings of individual properties within the precinct are recommended as follows and as shown in Figure 23:

Number	Address	Name/alternate address	Grading
475	Malvern Road	*Commercial Buildings*	Significant
477	Malvern Road	*Commercial Buildings*	Significant
479	Malvern Road	*Commercial Buildings*	Significant
481	Malvern Road	*Commercial Buildings*	Significant
483	Malvern Road	*Commercial Buildings*	Significant
485	Malvern Road	*Commercial Buildings*	Significant
487	Malvern Road	*Commercial Buildings*	Significant
489	Malvern Road		Significant
491	Malvern Road		Significant
493	Malvern Road		Significant
495-497	Malvern Road		Non-contributory

City of
STONNINGTON

499-501	Malvern Road		Contributory
503	Malvern Road		Significant
505	Malvern Road	*Bush Inn*	Significant
508	Malvern Road		Contributory
510	Malvern Road	*Former ES&A Bank*	Contributory
511	Malvern Road		Contributory
512	Malvern Road		Contributory
512A	Malvern Road		Contributory
513	Malvern Road		Contributory
514	Malvern Road		Contributory
514A	Malvern Road		Contributory
515	Malvern Road		Contributory
516	Malvern Road		Contributory
517	Malvern Road		Contributory
518	Malvern Road		Contributory
519	Malvern Road		Contributory
519A	Malvern Road		Contributory
520	Malvern Road		Contributory
521	Malvern Road		Contributory
523	Malvern Road		Contributory
524	Malvern Road		Contributory
525	Malvern Road		Contributory
526	Malvern Road		Contributory
527	Malvern Road		Contributory
528	Malvern Road		Contributory
529	Malvern Road		Contributory
530	Malvern Road		Contributory
531	Malvern Road		Contributory
532	Malvern Road		Contributory
534	Malvern Road		Contributory
536	Malvern Road		Contributory
159	Williams Road		Significant
159A	Williams Road		Significant
161	Williams Road		Significant
161A	Williams Road		Significant
163	Williams Road		Significant
163A	Williams Road		Significant

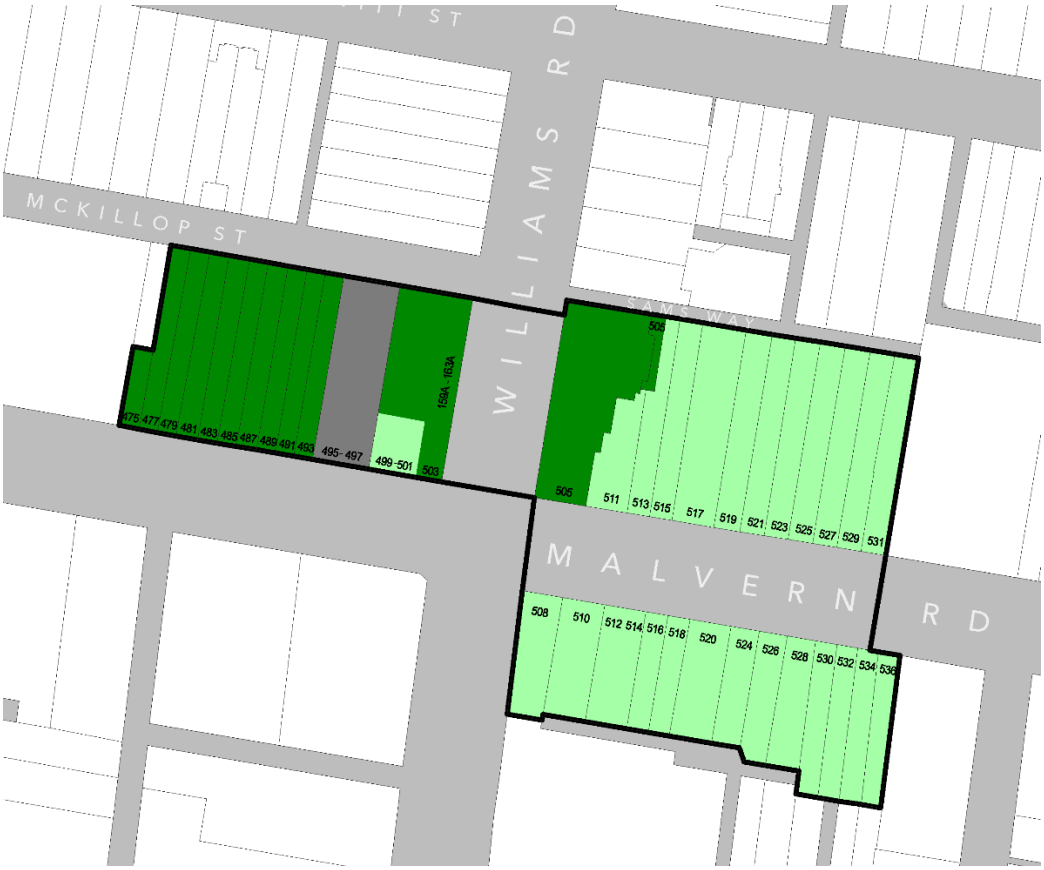


Figure 24. Gradings map

Previous Assessments

City of Stonnington Heritage Citation Report, Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, 2007.

City of Prahan Conservation Review, Context Pty Ltd, 1993.

Prahran Conservation Study, Nigel Lewis and Associates, 1983.

References

Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, *City of Stonnington Heritage Citation Report*, 2007.

Context Pty Ltd, *City of Prahan Conservation Review*, 1993.

Context Pty Ltd, *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History*, 2006.

Herald.

Landata Victoria, Central Plan Office, Historical Aerial Photography, 1945.

Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Plan No 13, City of Prahran, 1895.

Nigel Lewis and Associates, *Prahran Conservation Study*, 1983.

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), Parish and Township Plans collection.

State Library of Victoria, map collection.