City of
STONNINGTON

Huahine

Prepared by: GJM Heritage (March 2025)

Address: 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra

Name:	Huahine	**Survey Date:**	July 2024
Place Type:	Residential	**Architect/Designer:**	Not known
Grading:	Significant (HO798)	**Builder:**	Hardy & Connor
Extent of the Overlay:	To property boundaries	**Construction Date(s):**	1890



Figure 1. 'Huahine', 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra (GJM Heritage, July 2024)

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra, constructed 1890.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include:

- Single-storey brick house in the Italianate style of the late Victorian period
- Slate-clad hipped roof with a pair of polychromatic brick capped chimneys placed at the sides

- Bluestone base
- Symmetrical principal elevation of polychromatic brickwork
- Shallow eaves with paired timber brackets
- Convex hipped verandah with cast iron frieze, brackets and columns
- Central entrance framed by pairs of cast iron verandah columns with glazed central pediment above, displaying the name 'Huahine'
- Central timber-framed front entrance with partially glazed main door, sidelights and highlight windows, and flanking pairs of timber-framed sash windows

The front fence – while appropriate for the architectural style of the house – is not original and does not contribute to the significance of the place. Additions to the side and rear of the property do not contribute to the significance of the place.

How is it significant?

Huahine, at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra has strong associations with the development of South Yarra in the land-boom period of the 1880s and early 1890s, when land was subdivided and sold for middle-class residential development. As a highly intact and elaborately detailed brick residence constructed in the late-nineteenth century for noted musical retailer Walter Sutton of Sutton Bros and Sutton's Music Warehouse, Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue clearly illustrates this important phase of development in the City of Stonnington (Criterion A).

Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra is a fine and substantially intact representative example of an Italianate house of the late-Victorian period. It displays the principal characteristics of the Victorian Italianate style, including hipped slate-clad roof, symmetrical principal elevation of polychromatic brickwork, paired timber eaves brackets, hipped front verandah with cast iron decoration and polychromatic brick chimneys. Huahine demonstrates the principal characteristics of the Victorian Italianate style in the City of Stonnington to a high standard (Criterion D).

Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra is a richly decorated and well-executed example of the Italianate style of the Victorian period. The detailing, including the polychromatic brickwork, paired timber eaves brackets, highly decorative verandah with cast iron frieze, brackets, columns and glazed central pediment, and elaborately detailed lead light glazing to the main entrance door and surrounding sidelights and highlight, presents a highly resolved and high-quality expression of this architectural style. Its elevated siting on bluestone foundations creates a prominent form within 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 Land speculation

8 Building suburbs

- 8.2 Middle-class suburbs and the suburban ideal

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Place History

The land that is now Davis Avenue was first offered for sale as part of the early Crown land sales in 1849 and 1850. A large tract of land, comprising Crown Allotments 36-38, bound by Punt Road to the west, Gardiners Creek (now Toorak) Road to the north, Chapel Street to the east and Commercial Road to the south, were purchased by Peter Davis, real estate agent. While the land benefited from having frontages to four major roads, its development potential was limited by a large swamp, known as Clifford's Paddock, occupying the central section and extending south to Commercial Road. Davis quickly sold off the suitably drained land – in particular the higher ground to the north – typically offering smaller farm allotments for sale. Some of these allotments were subsequently subdivided for residential development with narrow streets and small house lots.

The Prahran Rate Books suggest that Davis Avenue (known during this early period as Great Davis Street) was established soon after 1855. However, the marshy land in Clifford's Paddock hindered the extension of Davis Avenue and remained an impediment to early development. A subdivision plan dated c1875 (see Figure 2) shows residential lots established along Great Davis Street (the current Davis Avenue and Fawkner Street). The current 28 Davis Avenue was lot 120 of the subdivision.

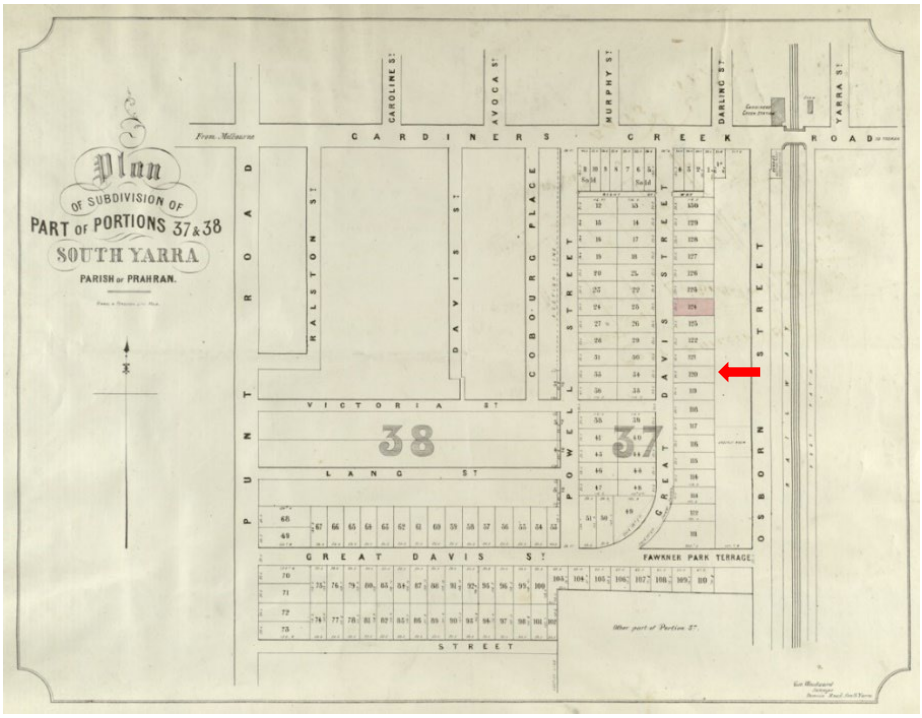


Figure 2. Plan of subdivision for Crown Allotments 37 & 38, South Yarra, c1875. Lot 120 is indicated by red arrow (Source: SLV, ID 2031763)

The house at 28 Davis Avenue was constructed in 1890 as a brick house with seven rooms for Walter Sutton, of Sutton Bros and Sutton's Music Warehouse. The house at no. 28 (and at no. 30 for Alfred Sutton) was built by Hardy & Connor (SHC). The house was likely architect designed, but research has not determined an architect.

Walter and Alfred Sutton were two of four brothers of Sutton Bros and Sutton's Music Warehouse, first established in Ballarat in the 1850s by their parents Richard and Mary Sutton. As business expanded, Walter and Alfred Sutton moved to Melbourne in the 1880s to establish a store on Elizabeth Street.

The Suttons acquired land on Great Davis Street. In November 1889, Mrs Mary Sutton of 31 Sturt Street, Ballarat was rated as the owner of two vacant lots on the east side of Great Davis Street, and Walter Sutton owned an adjacent lot (each with a 50ft – approximately 15m – frontage). Walter Sutton's address was recorded as 'c/o Sutton Bros, 131 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne' (RB, 1889-90). In November 1890, Walter Sutton was rated as the owner and occupant of a seven-roomed brick house (with a Net Annual Value of £70) on the east side of Great Davis Street. Adjacent, Alfred Sutton was also rated as the owner and occupant of a seven-roomed brick house. Both men were identified as an 'importer of music' of

‘Sutton Bros’. Immediately north, Mary Sutton remained the owner of one vacant lot (RB, 1890-1). The street numbering on Great Davis Street was reversed c1890, establishing the current numbering system (RB; S&M). In 1891, the subject site was addressed as no. 28, owned and occupied by Walter Sutton (RB, 1891-2). Notices published in newspapers in the 1890s refer to the house as ‘Huahine’ (*Australasian*, 29 Sep 1894:41; *Argus*, 24 Mar 1896:8).

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Drainage Plan of 1895 (Figure 3) shows the original footprint of the house at 28 Great Davis Street. A verandah extended along the front of the house, reached by central steps setback from the front boundary by grassed areas. On the rear (east) boundary was an outbuilding with a water closet (since removed).

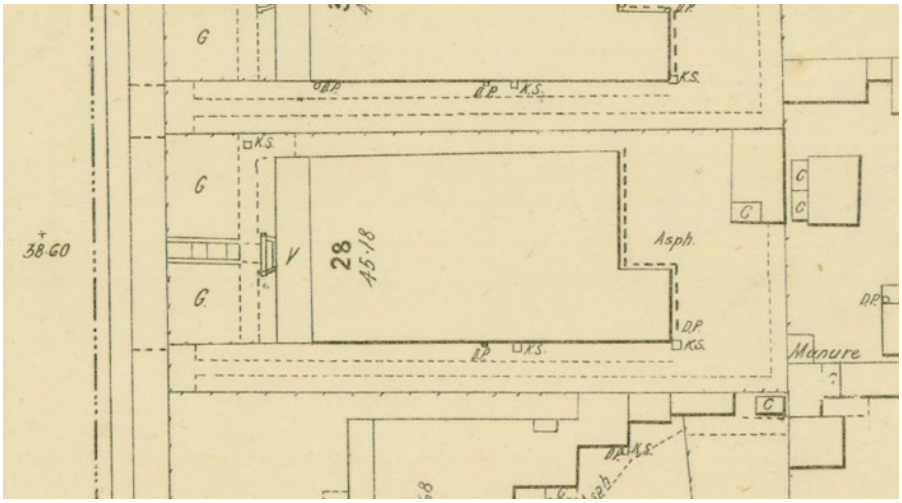


Figure 3. Footprint of the house and outbuilding at 28 Davis Avenue, 1895 (Source: MMBW Detail Plan 949, City of Prahran, 1895)

For a short period between 1895 and 1897 the house was occupied by Albert Duckett, ironmonger. Adjacent, Alfred Sutton continued to own and occupy no. 30 (RB, 1895-6, 1897-8). From 1905, Walter Sutton retained ownership of the property, but let the house to tenants, including Emma A Cuthbert from 1916 (RB, 1905-6, 1916-17).

During the early 1900s, the names Great Davis Street and Davis Street were used interchangeably. The thoroughfare was known simply as Davis Avenue from about 1910.

In 1923, Walter Sutton sold 28 Davis Avenue, still recorded with a seven-roomed brick house (Net Annual Value of £90) to Miss Emma A Cuthbert (RB, 1923-4). In the 1920s and 1930s, rooms within the house or a ‘half villa’ were advertised requesting tenants (*Argus*, 1 Oct 1918:10; 23 Aug 1920:14; 13 Jan 1934:24). Miss Cuthbert (daughter of the previous occupant with the same name) joined the Australian Army Nursing Service in 1902 and served as a nurse during World War I. She was presented with the Royal Red Cross in 1919 and upon returning to Melbourne, worked at the Caulfield Repatriation Hospital (FOKG; *Herald*, 18 May 1918:8; LV:V4987/F293). Cuthbert owned and occupied the house at 28 Davis Avenue until the 1950s (RB, 1950-51).

An oblique aerial photograph dated c1925 shows the façade and roof form of the house (**Error! Reference source not found.** and 5). A 1951 aerial photograph and Drainage Plan dated 1958 shows the unchanged footprint of the house and outbuilding (Figures 6 and 7). In the 1970s the house served as three flats (S&M; Prahran Valuations). It appears that the house at no. 30 was demolished and replaced with flats in the 1980s.



Figure 4. A c1925 aerial photograph looking east at the row of Victorian era houses on the east side of Davis Avenue, the subject site indicated (Source: SLV, ID 9916539613607636)



Figure 5. Detail of the c1925 aerial photograph, the subject site indicated (Source: SLV, ID 9916539613607636)

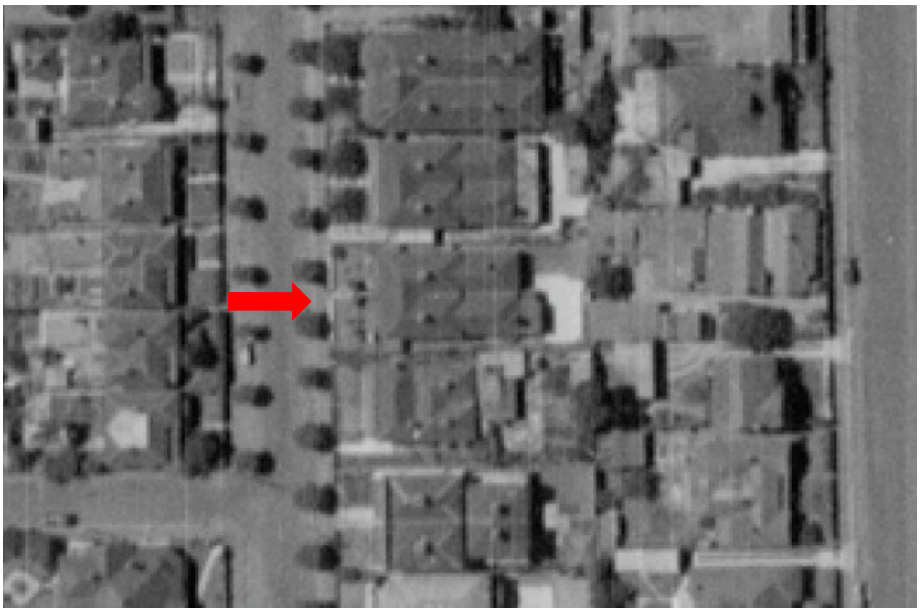


Figure 6. Aerial photograph showing the house (indicated by red arrow) in 1951 (Source: Landata Victoria)

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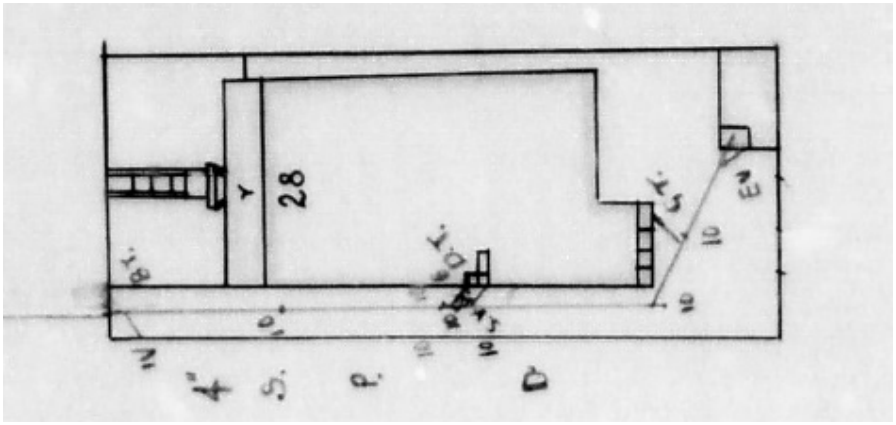


Figure 7. Footprint of the house and outbuilding dating to 1958 (Source: Drainage Plan No. 3935)

Additions were made to the house in the 1960s and 1990s to the rear elevation (Prahran Valuations). The front fence was erected in 1989 (Valuation Records). The slate to the interior planes of the roof were replaced with Colorbond in the 2010s (Nearmap). The carport off the south elevation was built in 1994 (BF). The elaborately-detailed front elevation of Huahine can be seen in a 1991 sales advertisement (Figure 8) and photographs taken in 1992 (Figures 9 and 10)

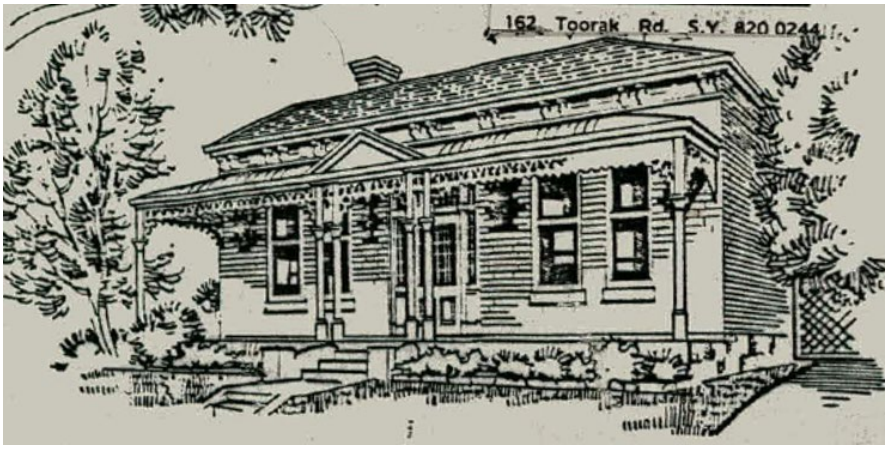


Figure 8. Illustration of the house that accompanied a sales advertisement published in 1991 (Source: Prahran Valuations)



Figure 9. Front elevation of Huahine, 1992 (Source: Context Pty Ltd, 1992)



Figure 10. Front elevation of Huahine, 1992 (Source: Context Pty Ltd, 1992)

Description

Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra is located on the east side of Davis Street, south-east of the main intersection of Punt Road and Toorak Road and west of the Sandringham railway line. The rectangular site is accessed by a driveway at the southern end of the street boundary and the house is setback behind a more recent formal symmetrical garden with central path.

Set on a bluestone base, the single-storey house is constructed of brick with a slate-clad hipped roof. The symmetrical principal elevation is of polychromatic brickwork with paired timber brackets below shallow eaves and a pair of polychromatic brick capped chimneys located at the sides (north and south) of the U-shaped hipped roof form. A convex hipped verandah is clad with corrugated sheet metal and extends across the principal elevation, with cast iron frieze, brackets and columns. Accessed by a set of bluestone steps, the central verandah entrance is framed by pairs of cast iron columns with glazed central pediment above, displaying the name ‘Huahine’. The central timber-framed front entrance with highly elaborate lead light glazing and sidelights and highlight, is flanked by pairs of timber-framed sash windows.

A later metal picket fence, with centrally placed pedestrian gate and vehicular gates at the southern end, lines the front boundary. A carport has been constructed at the south side of the house and additions have been made to the rear.

Key Features:

- Single-storey brick house in the Italianate style of the late Victorian period
- Slate-clad hipped roof with a pair of polychromatic brick capped chimneys placed at the sides
- Bluestone base
- Symmetrical principal elevation of polychromatic brickwork
- Shallow eaves with paired timber brackets
- Convex hipped verandah with elaborate cast iron frieze, brackets and columns
- Central entrance framed by pairs of cast iron verandah columns with glazed central pediment above, displaying the name ‘Huahine’
- Central timber-framed front entrance with elaborately detailed, partially glazed main door, sidelights and highlight windows, and flanking pairs of timber-framed sash windows.



Figure 11. Aerial photograph of Huahine, 28 Davis Avenue (Source: Nearmap, dated 9 October 2024)



Figure 12. Huahine, 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra (Source: GJM Heritage, June 2024)

Intactness and Integrity

Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra remains substantially intact to its period of construction and retains a very high degree of integrity as a late-nineteenth century Victorian residence. Recent additions, including a carport at the south side of the house and additions to the rear, do not diminish the appreciation of the property as a late-Victorian middle-class residence in an Italianate style.

Comparative Analysis

Huahine is a distinctive and elaborately detailed example of a late-Victorian Italianate-style house constructed in the City of Stonnington.

The western part of the City of Stonnington, including South Yarra, was first surveyed and sold by the Crown from 1840 to 1850, only three years after Melbourne was established. The close proximity to the emerging township of Melbourne and the favourable topography of the high ground overlooking the Yarra quickly established the area as a desirable place for settlement. Cycles of speculation and development

continued in South Yarra from the 1840s into the 1880s, when Melbourne experienced a period of unprecedented prosperity, growth and development (Context 2006:37-41). A very large number of Victorian houses, including a substantial number of double-fronted, single-storey brick houses built at the end of the boom period remain in the municipality, in varying states of intactness, to demonstrate this historic period of development. Huahine is distinguished from the majority of these remaining Victorian residences through its unpainted polychrome brickwork, highly decorative cast iron details and columns to a pedimented verandah, and elaborately detailed front elevation.

A number of late-Victorian houses are included in the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme on an individual basis or are graded 'Significant' within a precinct. Those that are comparable to Huahine include:

41 Dixon Street, Malvern (Individual Heritage Overlay, HO590)



Figure 13. 41 Dixon Street, Malvern (Source: Google Street View, July 2013)

5 Northcote Road, Armadale (included in HO130, graded 'Significant')



Figure 14. 5 Northcote Road, Armadale (Source: Google Street View, September 2017)

13 Evelina Road, Toorak (included in HO380, graded 'Significant')



Figure 15. 13 Evelina Road, Toorak (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

558 Waverley Road, Malvern East (Individual Heritage Overlay, HO531)



Figure 16. 558 Waverley Road, Malvern East (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

45 The Avenue, Windsor (included in HO148, graded 'Significant')



Figure 17. 45 The Avenue, Windsor (Source: Google Street View, November 2021)

35 McIlwrick Street, Windsor (included in HO138, graded 'Significant')



Figure 18. 35 McIlwrick Street, Windsor (Source: Google Street View, December 2009)

16 Greville Street, Prahran (included in HO456, graded 'Significant')



Figure 19. 16 Greville Street, Prahran (Source: Google Street View, August 2014)

18 Greville Street, Prahran (included in HO456, graded ‘Significant’)



Figure 20. 18 Greville Street, Prahran (Source: Google Street View, January 2019)

20 Greville Street, Prahran (included in HO456, graded ‘Significant’)



Figure 21. 20 Greville Street, Prahran (Source: Google Street View, January 2019)

13 Donald Street, Prahran (included in HO456, graded ‘Significant’)



Figure 22. 13 Donald Street, Prahran (Source: Google Street View, May 2022)

Like Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra, the above houses were constructed in what is now the City of Stonnington in the late nineteenth century. These brick houses exhibit a range of characteristics representative of Italianate-style housing of the late Victorian period, including double-fronted symmetrical facades, hipped roof forms, tall chimneys, polychrome brickwork, timber-framed windows, and decorative cast iron detailing. Like the above examples, Huahine retains a high degree of integrity to its period of construction and remains highly intact to demonstrate a range of characteristics of the Victorian Italianate style in the City of Stonnington. The architectural expression of Huahine is equally or more elaborately detailed than the other Victorian houses included on the Heritage Overlay. Similar to the Victorian houses included in in the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme, Huahine clearly demonstrates an important phase in the historical development of the City of Stonnington.

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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).*

Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra has strong associations with the development of South Yarra in the land-boom period of the 1880s and early 1890s, when land was subdivided and sold for middle-class residential development. As a highly intact and elaborately detailed brick residence constructed in the late-nineteenth century for noted musical retailer Walter Sutton of Sutton Bros and Sutton's Music Warehouse, Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue clearly illustrates this important phase 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).*

Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra is a fine and substantially intact representative example of an Italianate house of the late-Victorian period. It displays the principal characteristics of the Victorian Italianate style, including hipped slate-clad roof, symmetrical principal elevation of polychromatic brickwork, paired timber eaves brackets, hipped front verandah with cast iron decoration and polychromatic brick chimneys. Huahine demonstrates the principal characteristics of the Victorian Italianate style in the City of Stonnington to a high standard.

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

Huahine at 28 Davis Avenue, South Yarra is a richly decorated and well-executed example of the Italianate style of the late-Victorian period. The detailing, including the polychromatic brickwork, paired timber eaves brackets, highly decorative verandah with cast iron frieze, brackets, columns and glazed central pediment, and elaborately detailed lead light glazing to the main entrance door and surrounding sidelights and highlight, presents a highly resolved and high-quality expression of this architectural style. Its elevated siting on bluestone foundations creates a prominent form within 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

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Grading and Recommendations

It is recommended that the place be included in the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme as a locally significant heritage place (HO798).

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

Extent of Overlay

To the extent of the property boundary, as shown in Figure 23 below.



References

Argus.

Australasian.

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