Terraces, 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran

Heritage Place: Terraces
Address: 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran

HO Reference: HO77
Citation status: Final
Date Updated: 5 April 2024

Designer: James Hole
Builder: James Hole

Year of Construction: 1863-1864



Photograph of 372-374 Malvern Road, Prahran (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Location map and extent of revised HO77.

Heritage Group: Residential buildings
Heritage Type: Terrace

Key Theme: Settling the land
Key Sub-theme: Land speculation

Significance Level: Local

Controls:	☐	External paint controls	☐	Internal alteration controls	☐	Tree controls
	☐	Include on Victorian Heritage Register	☐	Incorporated Plans	☐	Outbuildings and fences not exempt
	☐	Prohibited uses may be permitted	☐	Aboriginal Heritage Place	■	Solar energy system controls

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The properties at. 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran are significant. Specifically, the bluestone masonry construction, scale, form, detailing and fenestration of the pair of mid-Victorian semi-detached terraces is of local heritage significance. Aside from the contributory front boundary timber picket fence at 372 Malvern Road, later alterations and additions to the properties are not significant.

How is it significant?

The terrace at. 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran is of local historical, rarity and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington. It is also of associative significance as a semi-detached terrace constructed by early local stonemason, builder and Councillor, James Hole, who was the Mayor of Prahran between 1880 and 1881.

Why is it significant?

372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran are of historical significance as a pair of mid-nineteenth century terrace houses constructed during the initial development of Prahran in the 1860s. While the suburb was only scarcely developed by the 1850s, growing wealth and industry stemming from the Gold Rush precipitated increased settlement in the area throughout the 1860s. This not only saw a greater demand for housing, but also the capacity for more ornate dwellings in certain pockets of the suburb. The terraces form a tangible link to this period of development. (Criterion A)

372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran are significant as a rare and unusual pair of bluestone terraces erected in Prahran during the mid-Victorian period. It is the only known surviving example of residential terraces within the municipality constructed of bluestone, a material which was typically applied to civic and church buildings. (Criterion B)

372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran are of aesthetic significance as a relatively intact pair of mid-Victorian terrace houses constructed of bluestone masonry. They incorporate elements from both the Colonial Regency and Italianate styles, and key elements include their bluestone construction, symmetrical composition, concave verandah, and fenestration featuring quoining and blockwork lintels. These features, along with the sympathetic timber picket fence at 372 Malvern Road, combine to form a visually pleasing mid-Victorian terrace pair along the busy thoroughfare. (Criterion E)

372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran is of associative significance as a pair of terraces constructed by James Hole, a local stonemason, builder and Prahran Councillor who would go on to become the Mayor of Prahran between 1880-1881. James Hole resided in 374 Malvern Road throughout his career, and also retained ownership of both terrace houses until his death in 1893. (Criterion H)

HERCON Criteria Assessment

A	*Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history*	372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran are of historical significance as a pair of mid-nineteenth century terrace houses constructed during the initial development of Prahran in the 1860s. While the suburb

		was only scarcely developed by the 1850s, growing wealth and industry stemming from the Gold Rush precipitated increased settlement in the area throughout the 1860s. This not only saw a greater demand for housing, but also the capacity for more ornate dwellings in certain pockets of the suburb. The terraces form a tangible link to this period of development.
B	*Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history*	372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran is of aesthetic significance as a relatively intact pair of mid-Victorian terrace houses constructed of bluestone masonry. It incorporates elements from both the Colonial Regency and Italianate styles, and key elements include its bluestone construction, symmetrical composition, concave verandah, and fenestration featuring quoining and blockwork lintels. These features, along with the sympathetic timber picket fence at 372 Malvern Road, combine to form a visually pleasing mid-Victorian terrace pair along the busy thoroughfare.
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*	372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran is of aesthetic significance as a relatively intact pair of mid-Victorian terrace houses constructed of bluestone masonry. It incorporates elements from both the Colonial Regency and Italianate styles, and key elements include its bluestone construction, symmetrical composition, concave verandah, cast iron lacework and fenestration featuring quoining and blockwork lintels. These features, along with the sympathetic timber picket fence at 372 Malvern Road, combine to form a visually pleasing mid-Victorian terrace pair along the busy thoroughfare.

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.*	372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran is of associative significance as a pair of terraces constructed by James Hole, a local stonemason, builder and Prahran Councillor who would go on to become the Mayor of Prahran between 1880-1881. James Hole resided in 374 Malvern Road throughout his career, and also retained ownership of both terrace houses until his death in 1893.

Description

- ### Physical Analysis

372 & 374 Malvern Road are a pair of symmetrical, single-fronted two-storey terrace houses. The front façade consists of a highly textured bluestone block construction. The façade of 372 Malvern Road, however, has been overpainted. The side elevations of the main structure present an open gable form of brick construction with a painted finish. The terraces include skillion roof extensions to the south. The main hipped roof is clad with corrugated sheet metal but remains obscured from view by the stuccoed flat parapet of the front façade. A single rendered corbelled brick chimney extends from the main roof.

The front façade of the terrace pair presents a simple and symmetrical design. Both levels include two single door openings. The fenestration is detailed with a smoothed stone quoining and blockwork lintel. The quoining is repeated at the corner edge of the façade. A verandah structure with a concave roof clad with corrugated sheet metal projects from the front façade. It is supported by simple, paired timber posts with circular fretwork, although these are not original. The upper-level verandah includes timber fretwork and a boom style cast iron balustrade. As with the timber posts, this detailing is not typical for the mid-Victorian era, and was likely added at a later date. The front verandah consists of glazed tile flooring with a slate trim at 372 and polychrome tiling at 374.

The terrace pair occupy long and relatively narrow lots. The terrace pair is setback from the street with an open front yard. The street front and middle boundary of the residences consist of a timber picket fence, with the front fence at 372 Malvern Road presenting in a traditional timber picket style and the front fence at 374 Malvern Road presenting with an interwar style flat top

fence. A concrete laid pathway leads to the front verandah and entrance. No. 372 includes side access to the bluestone cobbled laneway, accessed from Summers Street.

372 & 374 Malvern Road are bounded by Malvern Road to the north, adjacent to the junction with Cromwell Road. 372 & 374 Malvern Road are currently used as residential properties. The residence at 374 is considerably more intact, having retained its face bluestone blockwork. The parapet shows signs of damage with the cracking and staining of the rendered stucco finish. The verandah awning and some timber verandah elements also appear to be in poor condition. The pair of residences at 372 & 374 Malvern Road overall, are of moderate integrity and are in a fair condition.

Alterations and Additions

372 Malvern Road:

- Verandah posts replaced with paired timber posts with circular fretwork (likely).
- Cast iron balustrade added to upper floor verandah (likely).
- Painting of the original bluestone.
- Painting of the face brick side elevation.
- Replacement of ground floor façade doors with glazed and paneled doors (by 2016).
- Residential extension to the rear.
- Rear verandah along side elevation removed.
- Front verandah flooring laid with glazed tiles.
- Timber fretwork added to upper floor of verandah.
- Front pathway laid with concrete.
- Replacement of ground level timber posts.
- Replacement of front façade with double paned glazed doors and windows.
- Replacement of the front fence over time with a sympathetic timber picket style.

374 Malvern Road:

- Verandah posts replaced with paired timber posts with circular fretwork (likely).
- Cast iron balustrade added to upper floor verandah (likely).
- Painting of the face brick side elevation.
- Replacement of the ground and first floor doors with glazed and panelled doors integrating coloured glass.
- Residential extension to the rear.
- Rear verandah along side elevation removed.
- Replacement of the front fence over time with an unsympathetic flat top timber fence.
- Wall mounted meter box added to the front façade.
- Replacement of front façade doors and windows presenting an early twentieth century style.
- Verandah awning and timber elements refurbished and repainted (2016)

History

• Historical Context

The area presently known as Stonnington is the traditional home of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nation. Formerly characterised by pre-contact plains, grassy woodland and floodplains on the banks of the Yarra River (Birrarung), Gardiners Creek

(Kooyong Koot) and Hawksburn Creek (now channelised), this once thriving habitat provided Traditional Owners access to a range of water, plant and animal resources integral to their way of life. The onset of colonialism not only saw the transformation of these landscapes, but also Woi wurrung and Bunurong displacement through violence and land dispossession, as is evident in the establishment of George Langhorne's Aboriginal Mission Station Reserve along the southern banks of the Yarra River in present day Prahran and Toorak. Operating under the guise of 'protection', this reserve ultimately became a focal point for segregation, dislocation and colonial control of Aboriginal people's lives (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 31).

Despite decades of ongoing dispossession, the rich cultural heritage of Traditional Owners in Stonnington has an enduring presence to this day. Through continued resistance and the passing down of Indigenous knowledge, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong people maintain an ongoing connection to, and care for Country.

European settlement in what would become the suburb of Prahran grew gradually following the 1849-1850 Crown Land Sales, which saw the subdivision of land bounded by present day Toorak Road, Orrong Road, Dandenong Road and Punt Road into fifty-one allotments (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 39). George Langhorne, the Commissioner of an 1837 Aboriginal mission in the area south of the Yarra River around Punt Hill, called this area 'Pura-ra-ran', a compound of two Bunurong words believed to mean land partially surrounded by water (O'Callaghan 1922, 54). In 1840 the name was changed to Prahran for official use.

While higher ground overlooking the Yarra to the north of Prahran was quickly acquired and settled by the colonial elite following the 1840 Crown Land Sales, the majority of present day Prahran, being of poorly drained low-lying land characterised by wetlands, was primarily purchased by land speculators. These areas were subsequently re-sold for farming, industry and housing the working classes. The high level of natural deposits of alluvial clay in the area meant that pockets of low-lying land were used as brickyards (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 17). By 1856, the land encompassing Prahran primarily consisted of a scattered series of timber and brick workers cottages set on narrow allotments to the west of Williams Road, while land to the east and south remained undeveloped or in use as paddocks (Surveyor-General's Department 1856). The area was also distinguished by its strong market garden character during this period, with much of the land awaiting development being used for cultivation during the 1850s and 1860s (Malone 1983, 12).

The area underwent a period of rapid change following the 1880s land boom, which spurred the replacement of many small, mid-nineteenth century cottages with more ornate, single-fronted Victorian and Edwardian style terraces that could house the influx of factory workers as part of the area's growing brick manufacturing, food processing and textiles industries around Chapel Street and Commercial Road. Additionally, upper-middle class enclaves and mansion estates in the formerly undeveloped area of eastern Prahran were also developed to house the wealthy settling adjacent to the suburb of Armadale (Malone 2000, 20).Comprising higher ground with no major drainage problems, this area attracted comparably wealthier residents (Malone 2003, 1). These transformations were also compounded by the construction of impressively detailed shops along Chapel Street, solidifying the strip as a popular retail and commercial centre by the late nineteenth century (Allom Lovell 2000, 45).

Pockets of the suburb continued to be used as a centre for small-scale manufacturing into the early- and mid-twentieth centuries. Although business restructuring and trade liberalisation in

the late twentieth century ultimately resulted in the closure and demolition of many of these factories, built remnants of this era can be seen at the c.1910 Former Kia-ora Cordial factory chimney at 181-187 High Street, Prahran and at the former milliner factory at Grattan Street, Prahran (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 95). Today, Prahran's working-class history is best represented through the relatively modest late nineteenth and early twentieth century single fronted cottages and dwellings that dominate the suburb's building stock. Meanwhile, traces of late nineteenth century middle-class residential development are best seen in the grand Victorian dwellings adjacent to Armadale along Grandview Grove.

• Place History

The land on which 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran currently sits comprised Crown Portion 43 during the 1849-50 Crown Land Sales (Surveyor General's Department 1849). Subsequently purchased by land speculators and brothers William and John Payne in 1850, the Portion was quickly subdivided for resale. By 1856, the Portion comprised a mixture of small and medium sized residential allotments interspersed with substantially sized pastoral allotments. An 1856 map depicts various dwellings interspersed throughout this area, with land at present day 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran, occupied by a modestly sized building (Surveyor General's Department 1856) (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. 1855 map showing the approximate location of present day 372-374 Malver Road, Prahran (then occupied by another building) in red. *Source*: Public Record Office Victoria.

Although the land remained undeveloped throughout the 1850s, this changed when it was purchased by James Hole in c.1862. A local stonemason and builder, Hole subsequently erected a pair of two-storey bluestone houses between 1863 and 1864 on present day 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran. Closely related to Hole's occupation as a stonemason, each dwelling consisted of five rooms and utilised a mixture of stone, brick and slate building materials (Prahran Rate Books 1863).

Hole resided in 374 Malvern Road, Prahran, while 372 Malvern Road, Prahran was rented out to a variety of middle-class residents. Known residents at 372 Malvern Road, Prahran during the initial few decades included barrister Gerard Supple, tailor Thomas Elms, and mariner Robert Pearce. Notably, Hole went on to become a well-known Prahran resident and served as the local Councillor between 1872 and 1887, and Mayor of Prahran between 1880 and 1881. He also owned a number of other local properties, including two four-room wooden houses in the nearby Bendigo Street as well as another residence on Malvern Road (Context 1993, 84-85).

Hole appears to have retained ownership of 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran until his death in 1893 (Chronicle 1893, 3). Following his death, Harriet Wilson is listed as the occupier of 372, while real estate agent Thomas Overton is listed as the occupier of 374 (MMBW House Cover 22589; Sands & McDougall 1895). An 1896 depiction of the dwelling in an MMBW Plan shows the terrace pair with a generous setback featuring front and rear side verandahs, a rear garden as well as an outdoor water closet (MMBW 1896) (see Figure 2).

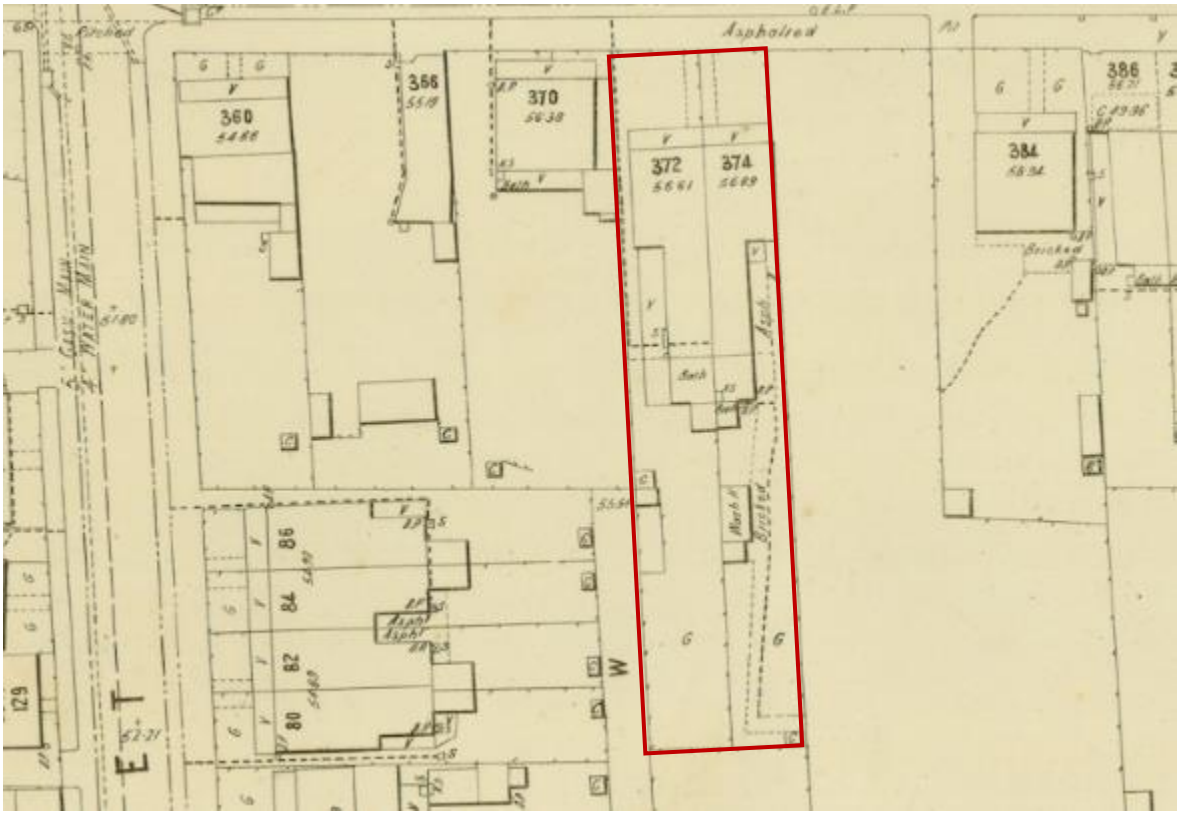


Figure 2. 1896 MMBW detail plan 984 showing 372-374 Malvern Road, Prahran in red. *Source*: State Library of Victoria.

Directories indicate that Harriet Wilson resided at 372 Malvern Road, Prahran until at least 1935 (Sands & McDougall 1935). Given the long duration of her occupancy, it is likely that she was also the owner of the property. 372 Malvern Road, Prahran was subsequently passed onto C. C. H. Wilson onto 1940, a relative of Harriet Wilson (Sands & McDougall 1940). Meanwhile, Thomas Overton is listed as the resident of 374 Malvern Road, Prahran until at least 1920 (Sands & McDougall 1920).

As of 2023, the terrace buildings remain in use as private residential properties.

Comparative Analysis

Relatively modest in detailing, 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran, this terrace is primarily defined by its bluestone construction, vermiculated quoins and concave verandah. Its level of embellishment is typical for mid-Victorian houses, which were more decorative than its early Victorian precursors, but less grander and ornate than late Victorian boom era dwellings. Within the City of Stonnington, there are several mid-Victorian terraces that 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran can be compared to:

- **House, 30 Macfarlan Street, South Yarra (HO74).** 30 Macfarlan Street, South Yarra comprises a single-storey timber house dating back to the c.1850s. While it is a freestanding single-storey timber house as opposed to a semi-detached bluestone terrace pair, it nevertheless shares several key mid-Victorian stylistic and decorative features, including a corrugated concave verandah, symmetrical façade and a sympathetic picket front boundary fence. It is also similar in terms of its relatively restrained use of detailing, although its verandah lacework appears to also be an addition. Of the two, 30 Macfarlan Street, South Yarra is less intact, having lost its original window openings.
- **76 Caroline Street, South Yarra (significant in HO355 Caroline Street Precinct).** Erected in c.1858, 76 Caroline Street, South Yarra, comprises a double fronted two-storey villa that incorporates both Italianate and Georgian style features. Although it differs from 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran in terms of its overall composition and use of materials, it shares key characteristics in relation to detailing. This includes its two-storey form, prominent corrugated iron concave verandah, quoining and symmetry. It is more formal in terms of its rendered walls and incorporation of architraves, and lacks the textured finish demonstrated at 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran.

In terms of its bluestone masonry construction, 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran is best compared to examples located outside of the municipality. These include:

- **Royal Terrace, 50-68 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy (HO183 City of Yarra / VHR H0172).** Constructed between 1854 and 1856, Royal Terrace comprises a row of ten, three-storey residences designed in a restrained Regency style. While evidently more impressive than 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran in terms of its siting, landmark scale, refined construction and degree of intactness, it nevertheless compares in terms of its use of bluestone materials, formal symmetrical composition, concave verandahs, and incorporation of quoining.
- **House, 98 Summerhill Road, West Footscray (HO69 City of Maribyrnong).** Constructed in the mid nineteenth century, the house at 98 Summerhill Road, West Footscray comprises a restrained Georgian Revival dwelling defined by its central chimney, high-hipped roof, formal symmetry and timber framed sash windows. While its façade features dichrome brickwork, rubble bluestone construction is visible along the side and rear walls. Aside from the construction, other key comparative features also include its symmetrical form and fenestration. Unlike 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran, its ground floor awning has been removed.

Although there are several mid-Victorian dwellings within the municipality that share some stylistic features with. 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran, there are no known examples within the municipality that share the distinct bluestone masonry construction. The dwellings that do exist are located outside the City of Stonnington, and are more restrained in terms of detailing

owing to their Georgian and Colonial Regency style. Consequently, while 372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran are not the most intact nor articulated dwellings in terms of style, they nevertheless represent a rare and unusual example of a mid-Victorian terrace erected using bluestone in Prahran.

References

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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 as well as desktop resources.

3. The historical notes provided for this citation are not considered to be an exhaustive history of the site.

Images



Overview of 372-374 Malvern Road, Prahran façade (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



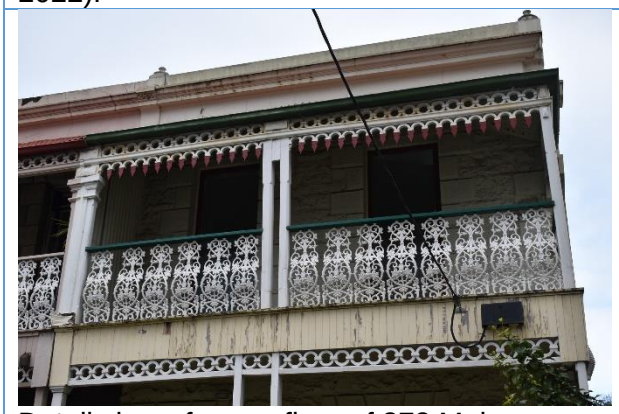
North-west facing overview of 372-374 Malvern Road, Prahran (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Overview of 372 Malvern Road, Prahran façade (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of ground floor at 372 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of upper floor of 372 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of verandah detailing and fretwork of 372 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of upper floor and side elevation of 372 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of verandah lacework at 372 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Oblique view of upper floor at 374 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Overview of ground floor and front boundary fence at 374 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of ground floor at 374 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of ground floor at 374 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of upper floor timber fretwork at 374 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).



Detail view of cornice at 374 Malvern Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022).

Authors

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