Statement of Significance: Bowen Street Precinct, Prahran (June 2026)

Heritage Place:	Bowen Street Precinct Prahran	**PS ref no:**	HO124



Figures 1-6: *Examples of residences included in the precinct (L-R, starting at the top) 5, 7, 13, 15, 29, and 39 Bowen Street, Prahran* (City of Stonnington, February 2020).

What is significant?

The Bowen Street Precinct, comprising a group of Victorian-era dwellings on Bowen Street, is locally significant.

With the exception of two non-contributory properties at 6 and 9 Bowen Street, Prahran, the precinct is characterised by contributory properties. Refer to the gradings and grading map for designations.

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

- The distinctive pattern of the c.1850s Bowen Street subdivision, and subsequent c.1887-1888 development created by the group of Victorian era cottages sited close together on narrow allotments;
- A high degree of intactness arising from the same construction period and relative absence of infill development;
- The regularity and harmony of the Victorian-era cottages characterised as freestanding structures with a single-storey presentation to the street, modest single fronted façades, hipped roofs clad with corrugated sheet metal, bullnosed or convex verandahs with corrugated sheet metal, turned and square timber posts and cast iron fretwork and brackets, timber weatherboard cut to appear like stone blockwork, paired pendant eave brackets, paired and single timber sash windows, timber panel doors with sidelights and fanlights, and profiled rendered brick chimneys;
- The uniformity of allotments, siting, setbacks and building heights across the precinct; and
- The retention of original or sympathetic, low to medium height timber picket fencing.

Later alterations and additions to the properties are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Bowen Street Precinct is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

The Bowen Street Precinct is historically significant as an intact collection of Victorian-era weatherboard cottages that were erected during Melbourne's 1880s land boom, which ushered in a period of unprecedented prosperity, growth and development. Constructed to accommodate the rapid increase of workers settling in the suburb due to its growing manufacturing and service industries, the precinct is also notable as a working-class pocket situated within the more affluent area of eastern Prahran. Subsequently, the Bowen Street Precinct not only forms a tangible link to this period of suburban development, but also exemplifies the changing socio-economic demographic of eastern Prahran during the late nineteenth century. (Criterion A)

The Bowen Street Precinct is aesthetically significant as a visually unified residential area, characterised by near identical single-storey Victorian weatherboard cottages. The buildings retain a high degree of integrity as a group and demonstrate stylistic cohesion through consistency in built form, materials, fenestration, detailing, height, scale, allotment sizes and setbacks. These features, along with the retention of original and sympathetic low to medium height timber picket fencing, combine to create a visually consistent and harmonious residential streetscape. (Criterion E)

Primary source

Prahran and Windsor Heritage Review (Extent Heritage, April 2024).

Precinct map



Gradings schedule

Street address	Grading
1 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
2 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
3 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
4 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
5 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
6 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Non-contributory
7 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
8 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
9 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Non-contributory
10 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
11 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
12 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
13 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
14 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
15 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory

16 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
17 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
18 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
19 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
20 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
21 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
22 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
23 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
24 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
25 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
26 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
27 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
28 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
29 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
31 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
33 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
35 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
37 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory
39 Bowen Street, PRAHRAN	Contributory