Heritage Citation – Precinct

Heritage Place: Lansell Road Precinct
Address: 573-579 Toorak Road, 1 and 2A-12 Lansell Road, and Dalriada Street

HO Reference: HO764
Citation status: Final
Date Updated: 22 March 2022

Designer: N/A
Builder: N/A

Year of Construction: 1910s-1930s



Photograph of 577 Toorak Road (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



Location map and extent of Lansell Road Precinct.

Heritage Group: Residential buildings
Heritage Type: Residential precinct

Key Theme: Building suburbs
Key Sub-theme: Creating Australia's most 'designed' suburbs – houses as a symbol of wealth, status and fashion

Significance Level: Local

Recommendation: Removal from the curtilage of HO143 Montalto Avenue Precinct and include on the HO as a new local heritage precinct; tree controls recommended in relation to the mature oak (*Quercus*) and elm (*Ulmus*) street trees on Lansell Road, and the two 20th century eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus*) trees at 579 Toorak Road.

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 Lansell Road Precinct, comprising properties on Toorak Road and Lansell Road, as well as the mature oak (*Quercus*) and elm (*Ulmus)* street trees on Lansell Road, and the two 20th century eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus*) trees at 579 Toorak Road, is locally significant.

Significant buildings include:

- 577 Toorak Road, Toorak (highly intact and fine example of an Interwar Streamline Moderne residence).
- Langi at 579 Toorak Road, Toorak (highly intact and fine example of an Interwar Prairie style building designed by noted architect Walter Burley Griffin).
- Halstead at 12 Lansell Road, Toorak (highly intact and fine example of an Interwar Arts and Crafts building with Dutch Colonial influences, designed by noted architect Walter Butler).

The remainder of the precinct is largely characterised by contributory buildings, with only one non-contributory site. Refer to grading maps for designations.

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

- The generous allotments, subdivision pattern and unique bend in the road established by the 1874 subdivision of Toorak Estate, creating the feel of a garden suburb;
- The presence of a group of significant dwellings of varying Interwar styles, including Streamline Moderne, Art Deco, Arts and Crafts, Georgian Revival and Prairie style, some associated with prominent architects;
- The high integrity of contributory interwar era buildings when viewed from the street. Most dwellings typically survive with their presentation to the street largely unaltered, retaining elements such as roof forms, chimneys, brick detailing, timber joinery and fenestration;
- The regularity and harmony of the interwar era building stock;
- Building designs reflecting the growing popularity of interwar high density flat development;
- Landscape setting established by the wide roads and mature oak (*Quercus*) and elm (*Ulmus)* street trees; and
- Retention of two 20th century eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus)* trees at 579 Toorak Road.

Later alterations and additions to the properties are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Lansell Road Precinct is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

The Lansell Road Precinct is historically significant as an 1874 subdivision of the Toorak Esatate which saw the formation of a wide, elegantly winding street that was aimed at wealthy pastoralists, merchants and professionals. The rise of residential development during the interwar period subsequently resulted in further subdivisions in this area, paving the way for the erection of several substantial interwar buildings. The precinct forms a tangible link to the interwar subdivision story of Toorak. (Criterion A)

The Lansell Road Precinct contains a fine and representative collection of interwar era dwellings of various styles, including Streamline Moderne, Art Deco, Prairie, Georgian Revival and Arts and Crafts styles. (Criterion D)

The Lansell Road Precinct is aesthetically significant as an intact and visually cohesive group of interwar buildings in the City of Stonnington. As a group, the heritage buildings display cohesion through form, materials, and heights, presenting as a harmonious and attractive streetscape. The unique bend in the wide road and mature oak (*Quercus*) and elm (*Ulmus)* street trees also create a landscape setting which adds to its aesthetic appeal. (Criterion E)

HERCON Criteria Assessment

A	*Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history*	The Lansell Road Precinct is historically significant as an 1874 subdivision of the Toorak Esatate which saw the formation of a wide, elegantly winding street that was aimed at wealthy pastoralists, merchants and professionals. The rise of residential development during the interwar period subsequently resulted in further subdivisions in this area, paving the way for the erection of several substantial interwar buildings. The precinct forms a tangible link to the interwar subdivision story of Toorak.
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*	The Lansell Road Precinct contains a fine and representative collection of interwar era dwellings of various styles, including Streamline Moderne, Art Deco, Prairie, Georgian Revival and Arts and Crafts styles.
E	*Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics*	The Lansell Road Precinct is aesthetically significant as an intact and visually cohesive group of interwar buildings in the City of Stonnington. As a group, the heritage buildings display cohesion through form, materials, and heights, presenting as a harmonious and attractive streetscape. The unique bend in the wide road and mature oak (*Quercus*) and elm (*Ulmus*) street trees also

		create a landscape setting which adds to its aesthetic appeal.
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 precinct consists of properties across Toorak Road, Lansell Road and Dalriada Street. The Toorak Road front has concrete footpaths and bluestone curbs. Lansell Road is a wide road with a single lane and parking on both sides. Each side features concrete footpaths, crossovers and planting strips with the east side slightly wider than the west. The street is planted with evenly spaced mature deciduous trees that form a dense canopy and consistent streetscape. Lansell Road features bluestone curb and guttering. Dalriada street is a no-through road and is accessible from the east from Lansell before doglegging north. The entrance to Dalriada Street is laid with square bluestone paving. The bluestone is continued down the street in the kerb and guttering.

Toorak Road

Four properties on Toorak Road lie within the precinct curtilage. This includes two single residences and two apartments at 573 to 579 Toorak Road. The properties along Toorak Road are two-storey masonry structures. The buildings vary in style with the Interwar Georgian Revival with Mediterranean Influences style at 573-575 Toorak Road, Streamline Moderne style of 577 Toorak Road and the Prairie style of 579 Toorak Road. The front boundaries are also defined by a mixture of fencing types which includes red brick, liver brick and render. The curved built form at 577 Toorak Road responds its location at its junction with Lansell Road. 579 Toorak Road is defined by short garden beds and a wide and open front yard planted with mature prominent eucalypt (*Eucalypt)* trees on the Toorak Road front.

Lansell Road

The Lansell Road properties within the precinct curtilage are primarily located on the west side of the road. A notable feature of the area is the long setback properties which run the length of the entire block defined by Lansell Road to the west and Dalriada Street to the east. Some of the properties have been subdivided with varying proportions. The buildings vary in style, with notable buildings including

the Old English style residence called Brentwood at 8 Lansell Road, the Arts and Crafts building with Dutch Colonial influences at 12 Lansell Road and the Art Deco flats called Deauville at 1 Lansell Road. The front boundaries along Lansell Road are defined by tall masonry walls.

Dalriada Street

The residences fronting Lansell Road are partially visible from Dalriada Street as they are mostly located towards the rear of each property. This includes several Georgian Revival houses along the south bend of Dalriada Street and the Old English style residence at 6 Lansell Road.

Precinct

The precinct presents a variety of styles and setbacks, however they are cohesive in their interwar era of design idioms. The unusually deep properties along Lansell Road add to the variety of the precinct with its setbacks and front yards. Contributory and significant graded buildings are generally in good condition and of high integrity.

- Alterations and Additions
- Contemporary properties at 2A Lansell Road.
- Properties subdivided with varying proportions along Lansell Road.

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 suburb of Toorak was the scene of intensive subdivision and development in the interwar period. While the subdivision of large estates was taking place as well before this period, rising labour costs following World War I made the cost of servants and other workers to maintain the estates prohibitive (Context Pty Ltd 2006). This resulted in the formation of several streets characterised by grand architect designed homes situated on generous allotments. The following section provides a brief history of the relevant streets within the precinct, as well as the subsequent housing developments that took place during the interwar period.

The land and surrounds on which the precent is lcoated was formerly part of Crown Portions 16 and 17 that were initially up for auction in June 1840. This land was soon purchased by wealthy merchant James Jackson, who erected the noted property named Toorak House with a formal garden on 148 acres of land in 1849-50. By 1874, prominent Bendigo mining entrepreneur George Lansell was the owner of the vast estate. He soon subdivided the land into allotments facing Orrong Road and Toorak Roads, and created the elegantly winding streets of Lansell and St Georges Road. According to historian Di Foster, George Lansell's subdivision was aimed specifically for the gentry of Victoria, and the sale of land in this area quickly attracted wealthy pastoralists, merchants and professionals who chose this prestigious area to build their mansions (Foster c.1996)

By the late 19th century, the area bounded by St Georges Road, Orrong Road, Toorak Road and present day Tahara and Robertson Roads was interspersed with several Victorian style residences situated on substantial allotments. A 1905 MMBW map reveals a residence named Repton with a landscaped garden and tennis court on the corner of Lansell Road west and Toorak Road, as well as several other substantial residences immediately to the west on Orrong Road and further east on St Georges Road (1905). The east side of Lansell Road that now comprises 2-12 Lansell Road and Dalriada Street, however, appears as an undeveloped singular vacant lot (MMBW 1905; Purchas 1910).

In 1910, the land between Lansell Road and Dalriada Street was further subdivided into sixteen lots, paving way for the construction of several substantial interwar residences (Purchas 1910). Notable residences erected following this period include the Walter Butler designed brick villa Halstead at 12 Lansell Road (1916), the Old English residence Brentwood at 8 Lansell Road (c.1915) and the Walter Burley Griffin designed Prairie style corner Langi Flats at 579 Toorak Road (c.1925-26). The dwellings on the west side of Lansell Road at 1 Lansell Road and 573-577 Toorak Road however, were only developed following the demolition and sale of the Victorian residence Repton in 1936 (The Argus 1936, 8). These include the Streamline Moderne house at 577 Toorak Road (c.1938), the Art Deco flats Deauville at 1 Lansell Road (c.1940), the Georgian Revival house at 573 Toorak Road (1936) as well as the residence at 575 Toorak Road.

Comparative Analysis

The Lansell Road Precinct is characterised by a mixture of mostly two-storey houses and apartments that present in a range of interwar era styles. Although there is no stylistic cohesion, the dwellings together comprise an intact collection of interwar residences erected during a period of intense subdivision and development that was taking place across the wider municipality. The most common design seen throughout this precinct is the interwar Moderne style apartments that occupy the corner

block between Toorak Road and Lansell Road. This style is interspersed with a mixture of Arts and Crafts, Old English and Prairie Style buildings along the east side of Lansell Road.

Comparative precinct examples include:

- **Montalto Avenue Precinct (HO143).** The Montalto Avenue Precinct is an interwar precinct predominantly characterised by two storey freestanding dwellings and apartment buildings. As with Lansell Road Precinct, the precinct presents in a mixture of interwar styles with some infill development, although with the most common being that of the broader Old English and Georgian Revival styles. Other similarities include consistency in height across residences, a strong garden estate character, as well as a slight bend to the road and mature street trees which combine to encapsulate the essence of an affluent interwar suburb. It is slightly more cohesive than Lansell Road by virtue of its consistency in setbacks and form.
- **Huntingfield Road Precinct (HO347).** The Huntingfield Road Precinct is an important and visually distinct example of an interwar residential estate of Georgian Revival dwellings. The quality of its homes, the relative uniformity of their scale and architectural character, the extent to which the original interwar homes survive largely intact, the slight bend to the road and the maturity of its street trees all combine to encapsulate the essence of an affluent interwar suburb. While it is more cohesive owing to the prevalence of the Interwar Georgian Revival style, it nevertheless compares well to the Lansell Road Precinct in terms of intactness of dwellings, a dominant two-storey character and unique road formation with street trees.
- **St Georges Court Precinct (HO348).** The St Georges Court Precinct is an interwar era precinct that is also characterised by two-storey Georgian Revival style residences with Mediterranean influences. Shared similarities with the Lansell Road Precinct include its dominant two-storey character, intactness of dwellings, unique road form and street trees. As with the above, it is also more visually cohesive than the Lansell Road Precinct owing to is clear and consistent Georgian Revival character and lack of infill development.

As demonstrated by the above examples, while the Lansell Road Precinct is not the most visually consistent interwar era precinct compared to other precincts, it encompasses a high quality and intact collection of architect designed interwar era residences, a dominant two-storey character, a unique road form and important landscape character through street trees. The range of interwar styles, forms and detailing adds a sense of cohesive diversity.

Precinct Map



Grading Table

* 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 the architectural style categories set out in Heritage Victoria's HERMES Orion heritage 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*
TOORAK ROAD			
573 Toorak Road	Town House	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	C
575 Toorak Road	House	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	C
577 Toorak Road	House	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	S
1, 2, 5 and 6/579 Toorak Road (associated with 2A Lansell Road)	Flats	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	S
LANSELL ROAD			

Street address	Place type	Style/era	Grading
1 Lansell Road	Flats	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	C
2 Lansell Road	House	Contemporary	NC
3, 4, 7 and 8/2A Lansell Road (associated with 579 Toorak Road)	Flats	Circa Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940), heavily modified	NC
1-2/4 Lansell Road	House	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	C
3-4/4 Lansell Road	House	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	C
5-6/4 Lansell Road	House	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	C
6 Lansell Road	House	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	C
8 Lansell Road	House	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	C
10 Lansell Road	Vacant lot	None	NC
12 Lansell Road	House	Interwar period (c.1910-c.1940)	S

References

Context Pty Ltd. 1993. 'Conservation Review: City of Prahran.' Unpublished report prepared for City of Prahran. PDF file.

Context Pty Ltd. 2009. 'Stonnington Thematic Environmental History.' Unpublished report prepared for City of Stonnington. PDF file.

Foster, D. 1999. 'Melbourne's Most Fashionable Suburb: A History of Toorak, East of Kooyong Road 1840–1998.' Unpublished Masters diss., Monash University.

Foster, D. c.1996 to 2000. '12 Lansell Road.' Unpublished report prepared to the City of Stonnington. PDF file.

Old Toorak Home to be Demolished. (1936, May 12). *The Argus,* 8.

Purchas, C. 1910. Land subdivision- Lansell Road and Dalriada Street. Land subdivision plan. Prahan Collections, ref no. 967837.

Purchas, C. 1916. Land subdivision- Allotments between Lansell Road and Orrong Road. Land subdivision plan. Prahan Collections, ref no. PH11294. Stonnington History Centre.

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Stonnington City Council. 2011. Heritage Citation Report: Huntingfield Road Precinct, Hermes ID 31528. Unpublished report. PDF file.

Stonnington City Council. 2018. Heritage Citation Report: St Georges Court Precinct, 1-15 St Georges Court, and 7-11 St Georges Road, Toorak. Hermes ID 31529. 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



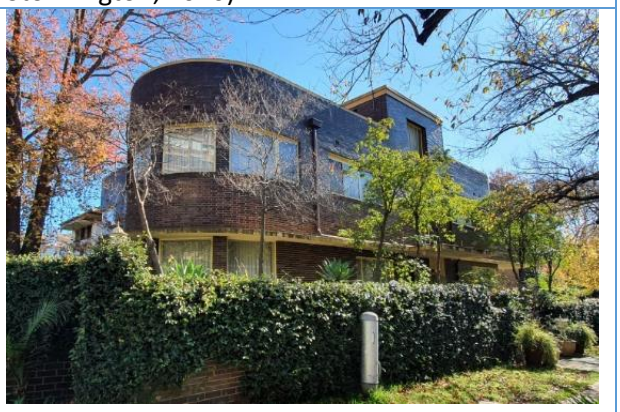
North-east facing view of Langi at 579 Toorak Road (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



North facing view of Langi at 579 Toorak Road and mature eucalyptus trees (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



View of Langi at 579 Toorak Road from Lansell Road, eastern elevation (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



North-west facing view of 577 Toorak Road from Lansell Road, showing the western elevation (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



Detail view of upper level fenestration and curved form at 577 Toorak Road (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



North-west facing view of 577 Toorak Road from Lansell Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



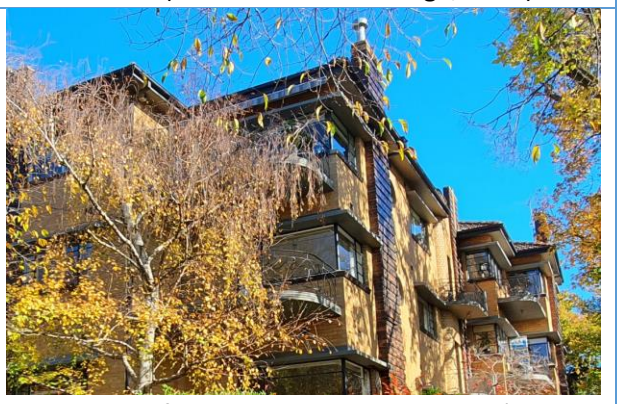
Streetscape view of 573-577 Toorak Road from Toorak Road (source: Extent Heritage, 2021).



Streetscape view of 573-575 Toorak Road from Toorak Road (source: Extent Heritage, 2021).



West facing view of Deauville at 1 Lansell Road (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



Detail view of Deauville at 1 Lansell Road (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



East facing view of 1-2/4 Lansell Road (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



View of 12 Lansell Road from within the property (source: www.realestate.com.au, 2021).



East facing view of Brentwood at 8 Lansell Road (source: City of Stonnington, 2020).



North facing streetscape view of Lansell Road (source: Extent Heritage, 2021).



South-west facing streetscape view of Lansell Road (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).

Authors

Former citation prepared by: Context Pty Ltd, 1993. *Note: the building group was included in precinct citation for HO143.*

Updated citation prepared by: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2022 (Vivian Lu and Reuel Balmadres).

Quality assurance review conducted by: Corinne Softley.