

## Heritage Citation – Precinct

**Heritage Place:** Inverness Terraces Precinct

**Address:** 5-9 Inverness Avenue, Armadale

**HO Reference:** HO765

**Citation status:** Final

**Date Updated:** 26 October 2023

**Designer:** Unknown

**Year of Construction:** c.1890-1895

**Builder:** Unknown



Photograph of 5-9 Inverness Avenue (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Location map and extent of 5-9 Inverness Avenue, Armadale.

**Heritage Group:** Residential buildings

**Heritage Type:** Terrace

**Key Theme:** Building suburbs

**Key Sub-theme:** Middle class suburbs and the suburban ideal

**Significance Level:** Local

**Recommendation:** Recommended for the Heritage Overlay as a new precinct.

<b>Controls:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> External paint colours	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal alterations	<input type="checkbox"/> Tree controls
	<input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Heritage Register	<input type="checkbox"/> Incorporated Plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Outbuildings and fences exemptions
	<input type="checkbox"/> Prohibited uses may be permitted	<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Heritage Place	

## Statement of Significance

### *What is significant?*

The Inverness Terraces Precinct, comprising three semi-detached two-storey Victorian Italianate terraces on Inverness Avenue, Armadale, is significant.

The precinct is characterised by contributory graded buildings.

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

- The harmony of the three matching semi-detached two-storey Victorian Italianate terrace houses characterised by hipped roofs and rendered corbelled brick chimneys concealed by tall and highly ornamented parapets, stucco rendered walls, open upper level balconies, cast iron filigree lacework, arched timber sash windows with hood moulds, projecting bay windows and pre-cast finials and flower moulds;
- A high degree of integrity and intactness arising from the same construction period and absence of modern infill;
- The unusual stepped arrangement of the terrace group, reflecting the distinctive subdivision pattern and development of 1881 Mount Pleasant Estate as well as its proximity to what was then the Gippsland and Oakleigh Railway;
- The uniformity of the steeped setbacks, allotment sizes and building heights; and
- Original rendered and cast iron palisade fencing at 7 and 9 Inverness Avenue, Armadale.

Later alterations and additions to the properties are not significant.

### *How is it significant?*

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

### *Why is it significant?*

The Inverness Terraces Precinct is of historical significance as a small pocket of residential terraces in Armadale that developed following the 1881 subdivision of Mount Pleasant Estate, which precipitated the area's shift from sparsely developed paddocks to a suburban upper-middle class enclave. The dwellings were developed during an important phase whereby the land boom of the 1880s that saw a period of land speculation, rapid subdivision and development. The terrace group thus forms a tangible link to this period of development. (Criterion A)

The Inverness Terraces Precinct are representative of a Victorian Italianate terrace group, including principal design characteristics such as a tall decorative parapet concealing a hipped roof, original arched timber sash windows with hood moulds, stucco rendered walls, rendered corbelled brick chimneys, cast iron filigree lacework to the balustrades and valance, solid timber panel doors with original timber joinery, and decorative party walls. (Criterion D)

The Inverness Terraces Precinct is of local aesthetic significance as an intact and visually cohesive group of semi-detached Victorian Italianate era terraces. The buildings retain a high level of integrity as a group and demonstrate stylistic cohesion through uniformity in built form, materials, detailing, ornamentation, fenestration, fencing allotment sizes, setbacks and height. Its unified and harmonious character is also further complemented by its striking stepped arrangement, which adds further visual

interest to the group and distinguishes it from conventional semi-detached terrace arrangements.  
(Criterion E)

#### HERCON Criteria Assessment

A	<i>Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history</i>	The Inverness Terraces Precinct is of historical significance as a small pocket of residential terraces in Armadale that developed following the 1881 subdivision of Mount Pleasant Estate, which precipitated the area's shift from sparsely developed paddocks to a suburban upper-middle class enclave. The dwellings were developed during an important phase whereby the land boom of the 1880s that saw a period of land speculation, rapid subdivision and development. The terrace group thus forms a tangible link to this period of development.
B	<i>Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
C	<i>Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
D	<i>Important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments</i>	The Inverness Terraces Precinct is representative of a Victorian Italianate terrace group, including principal design characteristics such as a tall decorative parapet concealing a hipped roof, original arched timber sash windows with hood moulds, stucco rendered walls, rendered chimneys with cornice mouldings, cast iron filigree lacework to the balustrades and valance, solid timber panel doors with original timber joinery, and decorative party walls.
E	<i>Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics</i>	The Inverness Terraces Precinct is of local aesthetic significance as an intact and visually cohesive group of semi-detached Victorian Italianate era terraces. The buildings retain a high level of integrity as a group and demonstrate stylistic cohesion through uniformity in built form, materials, detailing, ornamentation, fenestration, fencing allotment sizes, setbacks and height. Its unified and harmonious character is also

		further complemented by its striking stepped arrangement, which adds further visual interest to the group and distinguishes it from conventional semi-detached terrace arrangements.
F	<i>Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
G	<i>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</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.
H	<i>Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.</i>	This place does not meet this criterion.

## Description

### • Physical Analysis

The Inverness Terraces Precinct is a group of three double-storey Victorian Italianate terrace houses. The brick structures are finished with a smooth stucco on the front and painted brick along the sides. The terraces have an original hipped roof clad with sheet metal. The rear of each building includes a hipped roof rear addition, some clad with slate and others with sheet metal. The roof profile of each building is obscured from view by the decorative front and side parapets. Each terrace includes one rendered corbelled brick chimney extending from the upper roof.

The terraces are stepped in plan with an overall symmetrical and repeated façade. The ground level on each terrace includes a small front yard and path leading to a covered front porch. The main entrance door consists of a single timber door with side lights and arched fan light. Next to the front door is a projecting bay window with arched timber sash windows topped with an arched hood mould. The inner facing party walls include a blind arch.

On each building the upper-level balcony includes a single door and sash window with hood mould. The outer facing party wall includes an arched sash window opening and highly detailed pre-cast console moulds on both levels. The porch and verandah are supported by a single cast iron Corinthian column with ornate cast iron lacework and balustrade. The front façade of each building is capped with a highly ornate circular balustraded parapet featuring pre-cast flower moulds, flanking urn finials and a double hipped centred pediment. The centre parapet features a double hipped pediment while the two flanking parapets have a rounded top pediment.

The rear of each terrace opens up to a small enclosed back yard space. Each terrace has been extended at the rear. The street front boundary to two of the dwellings is demarcated by a brick foundation and post wall with black iron palisade fencing.

5-9 Inverness Avenue is located in front of a railway line which runs parallel to Inverness Avenue, close to Armadale Station. While the group of terraces have been substantially altered at the rear, the front facades appear to be largely intact and alterations can be reversed. As a group they have moderate integrity. 5 and 7 Inverness Avenue are in good condition. Number 9 is in overall fair condition with elements such as the render finish and cast-iron lacework in poor condition.

- [Alterations and Additions](#)

#### **5 Inverness Avenue**

- Two storey rear extension added.
- Roof reclad with a mixture of corrugated galvanised iron and Colorbond sheeting.
- Skylight and services added to the roof.
- Parapet altered with the balustrade and top of the pediment removed.
- Rear yard relandscaped.
- Front post and palisade fence removed.
- Front yard laid with aggregate.

#### **7 Inverness Avenue**

- Single storey rear extension.
- Roof reclad with a mixture of corrugated galvanised iron and Colorbond sheeting.
- Skylight and services added to the roof.
- Chimney altered.
- Rear yard relandscaped.

#### **9 Inverness Avenue**

- Two storey rear extension with balcony added.
- Roof reclad with Colorbond sheet metal.
- Skylight and services added to the roof.
- Rear yard relandscaped.

### [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.

The first land sales in what would become Armadale began in 1854 following the surveying of Glenferrie Road and High Street. The suburb of Armadale was formally included in the City of Prahran and, as is the case with many of the suburbs in Stonnington and surrounds, it received its name from a lone but notable property. Armadale House was built by one James Munro, son of the first keeper of the Prahran pound. On arriving in Australia from his home in Sutherland, Scotland, Munro worked for the stationer business Fergusson and Moore—Fergusson being James Fergusson of Kooyong. Armadale House, built in c.1887, was the first of many grand houses constructed in the suburb in the late 19th century. Munro went on to become Premier of Victoria and, later, Attorney General, before losing all in the economic crash of the 1890s. Following the turn of the century, many of the original 19th century properties faced demolition and subdivision, encouraging growth in early 20th century and the interwar period. While Armadale today enjoys an affluent reputation for its association with the surrounding suburbs of Toorak, Malvern and Kooyong, traces of remnant working class houses can be seen at the small timber workers cottages present in some parts off High Street and near the border with Malvern (Cooper 1924, 268).

- **Place History**

The land and surrounds on which Inverness Terraces Precinct is situated formerly comprised Crown Portion 51 and 52. Sold to speculators T. Fulton, L McKinnon, F. J. Sargood and L.A. Moody in the first land sales of 1854, ownership of the land changed hands several times over the next few decades, and by 1881, ownership of both Crown Portions 51 and 52 were taken up by the National Land Company (Porter 2014; Department of Crown Land 1882). Following this transfer in ownership, the land was subdivided into fifty allotments fronting the newly created St James Road, St Georges Road and The Terrace, the western end of which comprises present day Inverness Avenue, and put up for auction as the Mount Pleasant Estate (The Age 1881, 2). Notably, the area's proximity to the newly established Gippsland and Oakleigh Railway Line (1879) meant that the subdivision's area bounded by Union Street, The Terrace, St James' Road and Kooyong Road (then known as Boundary Road), was distinguished by a triangular-like arrangement. As with many other contemporaneous Victorian estates in the area, this subdivision process was largely an outcome of the gold rush and Melbourne's subsequent 1880s land boom which saw a period of rapid subdivision and expansion across Armadale. As Melbourne experienced a period of unprecedented prosperity, growth and development, urban boundaries were pushed out as people, sharing in the ideals of home ownership, sought new residential lands (Context Pty Ltd 2009, 41).

The allotments were subsequently put to auction on 10 December 1881, and the entire fifty lots were reportedly sold on the day by auctioneer E. J. Dixon, reflecting the feverish 1880s land boom atmosphere (The Age 1881, 2). The land at 5-9 Inverness Avenue comprised Lot 9 of the subdivision (Dixon 1881). While the buildings' exact date of construction has not been substantiated through archival research, the terraces within the Inverness Terraces Precinct appear to have been constructed between c.1890-1895 as investment properties (Sands & McDougall 1890-1895). The developer subsequently sold the group and associated land in 1898, with a print advertisement describing the properties as 'three well appointed two-storey brick houses of seven and eight rooms, all modern conveniences; let to good tenants' (The Caulfield and Elsternwick Leader 1898, 3). By 1902, they are depicted on a MMBW map as three semi-detached terraces named Edina, Langley and Culzean respectively with projecting bay windows fronting Inverness Avenue (then a continuation of The Terrace) (MMBW 1902). Noticeably defined by an unusual stepped arrangement, the unique siting of



this terrace group reflected the allotment boundaries drawn up during the Mount Pleasant Estate subdivision.

The Sands & McDougall directories from the late 19th and early 20th centuries indicate a frequently changing list of occupants for the terraces, suggesting that the properties continued to be owned by one or more landlords, rather than by owner-occupiers (Sands & McDougall 1895-1974). Street names in the area changed in roughly 1910, and the portion of the terrace in question was re-named Inverness Avenue. This pocket of terraces have survived intact against the pressures of interwar and post-war development. Today, these residences are privately owned and continue to be used as properties.

### Comparative Analysis

Designed in a Victorian Italianate style, the Inverness Terraces Precinct are directly comparable to several Victorian Italianate terrace groups that were also constructed in the municipality as investments during the boom era. Popularised following the development of Toorak House in 1850 and its subsequent use as the Governor's residence in 1854, the use of Italianate derived elements in domestic architecture was particularly prevalent in the Victorian colony. Its connotations with the social and political elite was integral to its success, and the style grew in popularity during Melbourne's 1880s boom period as a result of rapid population growth, prosperity and development.

Key comparative examples include:

- **Wilson Street Precinct, 66-74 Wilson Street, South Yarra (HO379).** The Wilson Street Precinct is a residential area of late 19th and early 20th century buildings, including both freestanding buildings and groups of two-storey Italianate terrace buildings. While it is a larger precinct than Inverness Avenue, its building stock incorporates semi-detached two-storey terraces at 66-74 Wilson Street that are directly comparable to Inverness Avenue in terms of overall style, form, cast iron lacework detailing, materiality and the use of timber sash windows. Inverness Terraces Precinct is more visually striking however, owing to its stepped arrangement and use of Italianate detailing including ornamented parapets, arched hood moulds and projecting bay windows.
- **Bush Inn Estate Precinct, 4-8 Evelina Road, Toorak (HO380).** Situated in Toorak, the Bush Inn Estate Precinct is a residential area that was also established as a result of the 1880s land boom. While it is a larger and more diverse precinct than Inverness Terraces Precinct, featuring a mixture of grand double-storey terraces, villas and modest single-storey cottages as well as interwar era building stock, its semi-detached double-storey terraces at 4-8 Evelina Road are directly comparable to the Inverness Terraces Precinct in terms of style and design quality. As with Inverness Terraces Precinct, they similarly adopt a highly ornate appearance and incorporate elements of the Italianate style that were popular during this period of residential development. Key analogous elements include tall ornamented parapets concealing the roof, pre-cast finials and flower moulds, a detailed verandah with ornate cast iron lacework, bay windows with timber framed sash windows and a stepped entrance. Unlike Inverness Terraces Precinct however, these terraces within Bush Inn Estate lack a stepped formation, arched windows and arched hood moulds. While Inverness Terraces Precinct is of greater visual interest owing to these details, the Evelina Road terraces are more intact as a group, all having retained all of their parapet detailing across the group.
- **Grandview and Devon (45 & 47 Darling Street, South Yarra) (HO560).** Although Grandview and Devon are a pair of dwellings as opposed to a precinct, they are comparable to the Inverness

Terraces Precinct as Victorian boom era two-storey residences constructed in 1892-93. While they are freestanding as opposed to semi-detached, they maintain several key similarities, particularly with respect to style, form, and degree of ornamentation. These include the use of projecting bay windows, ornamented parapets, pre-cast finials, decorative lacework and materiality. As the upper floor balcony of Grandview has seen the addition of shutters, the pair are of a lower level of intactness when compared to the terraces within Inverness Terraces Precinct.

As the above comparative analysis has demonstrated, Inverness Terraces Precinct comprises a small group of two-storey semi-detached terraces that are of a similar design merit to other examples currently protected on the Heritage Overlay. This is by virtue of its unique stepped arrangement, a detailing not observed in other examples, as well as its incorporation of arched hood moulds, arched windows and decorative pre-cast mouldings. The loss of parapet detail at 5 Inverness Avenue does not adversely diminish its overall intactness, and as a group, their integrity compares well with existing boom era precincts.

### Precinct Map





## Grading Plan

\* 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 architectural style categories set out in Heritage Victoria's HERMES Orion 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
<b>INVERNESS AVENUE</b>			
5 Inverness Avenue	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C
7 Inverness Avenue	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C
9 Inverness Avenue	House	Victorian period (1851-1901)	C

## References

Advertising. (1898, December 10). *The Caulfield and Elsternwick Leader*, 3.

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

Department of Crown Lands and Survey. 1882. *Prahan County of Bourke*, Melbourne: Department of Crown Lands and Survey.

Dixon, E. J. 1881. Mount Pleasant Estate, Prahan, close to Armadale railway station, subdivided into fifty grand villa allotments. Map. Vale collection, ID no. 2165761. State Library of Victoria.

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

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Stonnington City Council. 2013. Heritage Citation Report: Bush Inn Estate, Toorak. Hermes ID 104285. Unpublished report. PDF file.

Stonnington City Council. 2013. Heritage Citation Report: Wilson Street Precinct, South Yarra. Hermes ID 104947. Unpublished report. PDF file.

Stonington City Council. 2018. Heritage Citation Report: Grandview and Devon, 45 & 47 Darling Street, South Yarra. Hermes ID 200117. 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



Culzean at 9 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Detail of upper floor and parapet at 9 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Langley at 7 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Edina at 5 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



South-west facing view of 5-9 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Detail of upper floor balcony at 7 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).





South-west view of 5-7 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Detail of parapet at 9 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Detail of parapet at 7 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Detail of upper floor balcony and parapet at 5 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



West facing view of side elevation of 9 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).



Detail of side elevation, chimney and parapet of 9 Inverness Avenue, Armadale (source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021).

## Authors

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

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