

Statement of Significance: 34 Mercer Road, Armadale (March 2022)

Heritage Place: 34 Mercer Road, Armadale

PS ref no: HO82



(Source: Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2021)

What is significant?

The property at 34 Mercer Road, Armadale is significant. Specifically, the form, scale and detailing of the 1888 boom era mansion is of local heritage significance, as well as the mature palm (*arecaceae*) trees in the front setback. The 1929 extension (later significantly altered), front fence, post-2008 weatherboard extension, carport, bungalow and shed are not significant.

How is it significant?

The residence at 34 Mercer Road, Armadale is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington, and a special association with Sir David AC Rivett. Further, the façade has rare articulation and ornamentation.

Why is it significant?

The residence is of historic significance in demonstrating the development of boom era mansions in the suburb of Armadale during the late 19th century, and in particular, the development of comparatively smaller allotments than those of the large Armadale mansions and estates constructed during the same period. The residence is also of historical significance in demonstrating residential development in the south eastern suburbs by Melbourne's wealthiest citizens during the gold rush period. (Criterion A)

The façade of the residence is of interest as an unusual and comparatively rare example of an arcuated four bay verandah in two tier composition, divided by engaged columns in superimposed orders and enhanced with classical mouldings in stucco. Ornamentation in this manner is reasonably rare within the municipality. (Criterion B)

The residence is a high-quality, fine and intact example of an Italianate boom era mansion, comprising an unusual arcaded verandah, decorative stucco and ornamented parapet. The building is a prominent structure on Mercer Street owing to the elaborate façade design, high integrity and high visibility. The mature palm (*arecaceae*) trees in the front setback are likely remnant plantings from the construction of the house and add to the setting of the place. (Criterion E)

The residence has a special association with Sir David AC Rivett who resided at the property in the 1930s. Sir Rivett was a successful chemistry professor and science administrator who made significant contributions in the field of animal disease control and was knighted in 1935. His wife, Stella Rivett, a research chemist, was the middle daughter of second Australian Prime Minister Alfred Deakin. (Criterion H)

Primary source

34 Mercer Road, Armadale, Citation Report, Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, September 2021.