

Statement of Significance: Miegunyah, 641 Orrong Road, Toorak (March 2022)

Heritage Place: Miegunyah, Toorak	PS ref no: HO88
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(Source: University of Melbourne)

What is significant?

The property at 641 Orrong Road, Toorak, (otherwise known as Miegunyah) is significant. Specifically, the form, scale and detailing of the substantial 1850s-1930s mansion as well as the English oak (*quercus robur*) trees and a Moreton Bay fig (*ficus macrophylla*) are of local heritage significance. The 1896 stables, if extant, would also be of local significance. The front boundary wall, pool, tennis court, broader garden setting and later alterations and additions to the property are not significant.

How is it significant?

Miegunyah is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington. It has likely associations with notable architect Harold Desbrowe-Anneer, and was the family home of the notable industrialist Grimwade family.

Why is it significant?

Miegunyah is of historical significance in demonstrating the development of mid-19th century Victorian mansions by Melbourne's wealthiest citizens in Toorak, an area once characterised by Victorian era estates. Miegunyah has important historical connections with a number of prominent Melbourne citizens, but most significantly as the home of the notable industrialist Grimwade family in the early 20th century. In addition to the residence, the mature English oaks (*quercus robur*) and the Moreton Bay fig (*ficus macrophylla*) are also historically significant as remnant plantings from the Miegunyah Estate. (Criterion A)

Miegunyah has aesthetic significance as a high-quality but visually distinct example of a mid-Victorian era mansion that has been extensively altered with Arts and Crafts extensions and design detailing. The Victorian characteristics are not easily discernible anymore, other than the hipped slate roof. The notable Arts and Crafts characteristics include the use of render, recessed square form and single corbel chimneys, window shutters, and elliptical windows reflective of Harold Desbrowe-Anneer's design style. The site also has aesthetic value for its mature garden setting, including several tall mature English oaks (*quercus robur*) and a mature Moreton Bay fig (*ficus macrophylla*). (Criterion E)

Miegunyah has associative significance for its connection with multiple architects including M. Shields (1910 additions to residence), Stephenson and Meldrum (1930s alterations and additions to

residence) and Philip B. Hudson and Wardrop (1919-20 conversion of stables). However, it is most important for its likely connection with notable architect Harold Desbrowe Annear (1920s alterations and additions to residence). Miegunyah also has important associations as the home of the Grimwade family in the early twentieth century. (Criterion H)

Primary source

Miegunyah, 641 Orrong Road Toorak, Citation Report, Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, November 2021.