

Statement of Significance: Montalto Avenue Precinct, Toorak (March 2022)

Heritage Place: Montalto Avenue Precinct, Toorak

PS ref no: HO143



What is significant?

The Montalto Avenue Precinct, comprising properties on Montalto Avenue, Orrong Road, Stradbroke Avenue, and Stonehaven Court, Toorak, is locally significant. The sweetgum (*liquidambar*) street trees on Montalto Avenue and Orrong Road, Edna Walling gardens at 23 Montalto Avenue and 6 Stonehaven Court, as well as a large eucalypt (*eucalyptus*) tree and two mature cedar (*cedrus*) trees at 6 Stonehaven Court are also locally significant.

Significant properties include:

- 16 Montalto Avenue, Toorak (highly intact and fine example of an Interwar Old English building)
- 18 Montalto Avenue, Toorak (highly intact and fine example of an Interwar Old English building)
- 19 Montalto Avenue, Toorak (highly intact and fine example of an Interwar Old English building with Tudor influences)
- 32 Montalto Avenue, Toorak (highly intact and fine example of an Interwar Old English building with Tudor influences)
- 681 Orrong Road, Toorak (highly intact and fine example of an Interwar Old English building)
- 1-8 Stonehaven Court 1-8 and 692 Orrong Road, Toorak (a substantial and intact example of an interwar Old English apartment building with Tudor Revival influences, designed by Robert Hamilton)
- Mullion at 6 Stonehaven Court, Toorak (Prairie style interwar era dwelling, designed by Walter Burley Griffin and Eric M. Nichols, original trees from the Egoleen Estate and Edna Walling designed gardens)

The remainder of the precinct is largely characterised by contributory buildings, with a small number of non-contributory infill developments. Refer to the gradings map for designations.

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

- The generous allotments, subdivision pattern and unique loop road formation established by the 1927 Montalto Estate, the last character of which creates a 'village' feel.
- The presence of a large group of individually significant dwellings of varying Interwar styles, including Old English, Georgian Revival, Tudor Revival and Prairie style, some associated with prominent architects.
- The high integrity of the contributory interwar buildings when viewed from the street. Dwellings typically survive with their presentation to the street largely unaltered, retaining elements such as verandahs, porticos, roof forms, chimneys, window and door openings, brick detailing and timber joinery;
- The regularity and harmony of the double-storey, freestanding interwar era building stock;
- Consistency in front setbacks on each individual street;
- Buildings characterised by brick, timber wall panelling, render, tile and timber joinery, as well as hipped and gabled roofs;
- Building designs responding to the rise in popularity of the motor car;
- Original or period appropriate front fences; and
- A garden estate character established by well-maintained garden settings and street trees, particularly the sweetgum (*liquidambar*) trees. Some gardens were designed by Edna Walling (23 Montalto Avenue and 6 Stonehaven Court). Further, a large eucalypt (*eucalyptus*) tree and two mature cedar (*cedrus*) trees remain at 6 Stonehaven Court from the former Egoleen Estate.

Later alterations and additions to the properties are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Montalto Avenue Precinct is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington. The precinct also has associative significance as related to a number of notable architects and landscape designer.

Why is it significant?

The Montalto Avenue Precinct is historically significant as the 1927 subdivision of the Montalto Estate which saw the formation of a highly unusual loop road form in the suburb. It is also historically significant as forming part of the 1927 Egoleen Estate subdivision; the former estate is still evident through a large eucalypt (*eucalyptus*) tree and two mature cedar (*cedrus*) trees at 6 Stonehaven Court. The precinct forms a tangible link to the interwar subdivision story of Toorak. (Criterion A)

The Montalto Avenue Precinct contains a good representative collection of Interwar era dwellings of various styles, including Old English, Georgian Revival, Tudor Revival and Prairie style. (Criterion D)

The Montalto Avenue Precinct is aesthetically significant as an intact and visually cohesive group of streetscapes in the City of Stonnington for this period of development. The streetscape consists of a large number of fine, well-detailed and cohesive freestanding dwellings from the interwar eras, as well as an aesthetically pleasing apartment building from the same era. As a group they display cohesion through form, materials, setbacks and heights, as well as a strong garden estate character established by sweetgum (*liquidambar*) trees, landscape architect designed gardens and remnant Victorian era estate trees, which combine to create a harmonious and attractive streetscape. The unique subdivision pattern formed by the Montalto Estate subdivision adds further aesthetic appeal, creating a village feel to the loop road. (Criterion E)

The Montalto Avenue Precinct has associative significance, featuring examples of the work of noted architects Walter Burley Griffin, Eric M. Nichols and Robert Hamilton as well as an Edna Walling designed garden. (Criterion H)

Grades

Street address	Proposed Grading
1 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
2 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
3 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
4 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
5 Montalto Avenue	Non- Contributory
6 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
7 Montalto Avenue	Non- Contributory
8 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
9 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
10 Montalto Avenue	Significant
11 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
12 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
14 Montalto Avenue	Non- Contributory
15 Montalto Avenue	Non- Contributory
16 Montalto Avenue	Significant
17 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
a18 Montalto Avenue	Significant
19 Montalto Avenue	Significant
20 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
21 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
22 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
23 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
24 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
25 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
26 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
27 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
28 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
29 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
30 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
31 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
32 Montalto Avenue	Significant
33 Montalto Avenue	Contributory
679 Orrong Road	Contributory
681 Orrong Road	Significant
690 Orrong Road	Contributory
1-8/692 Orrong Road	Significant

STONNINGTON PLANNING SCHEME

Street address	Proposed Grading
6 Stonehaven Court	Significant
7 Stonehaven Court	Contributory
8 Stonehaven Court	Contributory
1A Stradbroke Avenue	Contributory
1B Stradbroke Avenue	Non- Contributory
1 Stradbroke Avenue	Contributory
3 Stradbroke Avenue	Contributory

* IS: Individually significant

C: Contributory

NC: Non-contributory

Refer to Heritage Victoria's Model brief for consultants (p.6) for explanation of designations.

Primary source

Montalto Avenue Precinct, Toorak, Citation Report, Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, March 2022