

Statement of Significance: Stokell, 49-50 Adelaide Street, Armadale (March 2022)

Heritage Place: Stokell, Armadale	PS ref no: HO1
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(Source: Stonnington Library, 'Stokell', 1990)

What is significant?

The property at 49-51 Adelaide Street, Armadale (otherwise known as Stokell) is significant. Specifically, the form, scale and detailing of the substantial 1889 boom era Italianate mansion is of local heritage significance. The front fence and gate, carport, pool and pool house are not significant.

How is it significant?

Stokell is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington. It is also associated with prominent local building contractor Stephen Armstrong and prominent architect John Beswicke.

Why is it significant?

Stokell is of historical significance in demonstrating the development of Late Victorian mansions on estates within Armadale during the late 19th century, prior to the wider subdivisions of the late Victorian estates in the area. The mansion is of historical significance in demonstrating residential development in the south eastern suburbs by Melbourne's wealthiest citizens during the gold rush period. Stokell also has historical significance as a former private hospital between 1938-1990, known as St. Ronan's Rest Home and later St. Ronans Private Hospital. (Criterion A)

Stokell has principal design characteristics attributed with late Victorian mansions. These include the masonry construction with render, a hipped roof form, stucco render, projecting bay windows, and arcaded verandah. (Criterion D)

Stokell is aesthetically significant as a high-quality and fine example of an Italianate boom era mansion with a grand setting established by the late Victorian detailing, openings, scale, form and setback. This aesthetical value is accentuated through the stilted segmental arcaded verandah, decorative stucco, projecting bay windows and chimneys. Although it is not highly visible, the building is a landmark residence in Armadale owing to the scale and deep setback which contrasts with the style of later developments in the area. (Criterion E)

Stokell has associative significance in relation to prominent local building contractor Stephen Armstrong who constructed the dwelling and was responsible for the construction of several affluent mansions in Melbourne's east. Armstrong was known for his ability to demonstrate the workmanship and elaborate detailing in his Italianate buildings, with prominent external massing, arcaded verandah, projecting bays, intact decorative stucco, chimneys and fenestrations. Stokell is also of associative significance as a house either designed by, or copied from, well known architect John Beswicke. This

is evidenced by the combination of semicircular and stilted segmental arches which is highly characteristic of his work. (Criterion H)

Primary source

Stokell, 49-51 Adelaide Street Armadale, Citation Report, Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, September 2021.