

Statement of Significance: Whernside, 2A Whernside Avenue, Toorak (March 2022)

Heritage Place: Whernside, Toorak	PS ref no: HO117
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(Source: Collins, J. 1976)

What is significant?

The property at 2A Whernside Avenue, Toorak, (otherwise known as Whernside, and formerly known as Belcroft) is significant. Specifically, the form, scale and detailing of the substantial 1876 mansion and the mature palm trees (*arecaceae*) are of local heritage significance. The front fence, pool, tennis courts and remaining landscaping are not significant.

How is it significant?

Whernside is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington, and is architecturally rare as a late Victorian mansion that has been extensively altered with Arts and Crafts characteristics. Further, it is associated with notable architect Harold Desbrowe-Annear.

Why is it significant?

Whernside is of historical significance in demonstrating the development of late Victorian mansions on estates within Toorak during the late 19th century. The mansion is also of historical significance in demonstrating residential development in the southeastern suburbs by Melbourne's wealthiest citizens during the gold rush period. The palm trees are historical significance as early plantings associated with the former estate. (Criterion A)

Whernside possesses rare architectural qualities, as a late Victorian mansion that has been extensively altered with Arts and Crafts characteristics. There are few recorded sites of such scale within the City of Stonnington that possess these qualities or characteristics. (Criterion B)

Whernside has aesthetic significance as a high-quality example of a late Victorian mansion that has been extensively altered with Arts and Crafts extensions and decorations. The Victorian characteristics include the use of stucco render, polygonal bays, scale, decorative dental bracketing, arched windows, and hipped slate roofing. The Arts and Crafts characteristics include the use of roughcast render, timber cladding on window boxes, unadorned chimneys, and elliptical windows reflective of Harold DesbroweAnnear's design. Although it is not highly visible, the building is a landmark residence in Toorak owing to the scale, deep setback and architectural interest. (Criterion E)

Whernside has associative significance for its connection with notable architect Harold DesbroweAnnear. Whernside also has important historical associations with a number of prominent urban citizens, including the former 1886 Minister of Defence James Lorimer and Colin Fraser, managing director of BHP, General Motors Holden and Myer Emporium Ltd. (Criterion H)

Primary source

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