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Name	<i>Alvah, Illawarra, Berwick</i>	Reference No	
Address	51 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East	Survey Date	27 April 2006
Building Type	Residence	Grading	C*
Date	1905-06	Previous Grading	C*2



#### Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

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Intactness ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

Heritage Status ☐ HV ☐ AHC ☐ NT ☒ Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

#### History

Mayston Street takes its name from Richard Mayston Willdridge or Willdredge, a district landowner whose property holding was subdivided for sale in 1898. Mayston Street's close proximity to both the developing Burke Road district and Camberwell railway station meant that after an initially slow development period, smaller brick houses were constructed by speculators in the early years of the twentieth century. These developments took advantage of the new demand for properties in close proximity to the railway.<sup>1</sup> The subject property was, with 49 Mayston Street, owned by a Jane Miller, a resident of the street before moving to Middle Park. The houses were constructed for investment purposes, and were tenanted for several years. Both properties were described as seven-roomed brick houses, each with a net annual value of £42 in the 1906-07 rate books.<sup>2</sup> Occupants of the subject property included Henry Chambers (c. 1906) and John Stoneham (c. 1908), who apparently named the house *Illawarra*.<sup>3</sup> William Robertson (c. 1918-30) and Frederick Trehearn (c. 1933), were among later tenants.<sup>4</sup> From the late 1930s, the house was owned and occupied by Misses Elizabeth and Mary Ann Young, and from 1960, by Miss E Young. From c. 1962 until at least 1974, the house was occupied by J Stecyk.<sup>5</sup>

(G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote Places (draft)*, 2000; additional research by Lovell Chen, 2006)

#### Description & Integrity

*Alvah*, at 51 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, is a double-fronted, single-storey later Federation brick house with stucco dressings, with a projecting bay (asymmetrical wing front) on the east side of the south façade. The house has a slate-clad roof, iron ridge capping and chimneys of red face brick with a conspicuous moulded brick collar and an unpainted, stucco clad crown. The plain-coursed brick gable face to the wing front has longitudinally planked eaves and a bargeboard supported by a timber lattice. A bay window is located in the wing, under an engaged slate hipped roof with exposed rafters; the window is a three-sash timber-framed casement with a top light division on a 'Norman Shaw' 1:3 ratio. This is balanced, compositionally, with a recessed porch on the west side of the wing front,

entered through a stucco dressed arch with plain reveals. That is topped with a moulded cornice that bends over the arch and is bracketed on two long fluted brackets that spring from two extruded guttae-like mouldings. Three stucco string courses run across the wing front, the top one moulded in a woven floral pattern. The recessed wing to the west of the front door is located beneath a verandah which has a roof integral with the main roof structure, but is marked out by a frieze in finely grained fretworked timber. Two of the stucco courses continue across this façade. The entrance is centrally located beneath the recessed porch, and has a later fly-screen door, and a main door with a window that may have been replaced with plainer glass. The front door sidelight also looks contemporary. The garden is long-standing and heavily grown; the concrete path and picket fence are later additions, the picket fence being added in 1968.<sup>6</sup>

### Historical Context

Mayston Street takes its name from the subdivision of a large property, owned by Richard Mayston Willdridge, in 1898. The street's close proximity to both the developing Burke Road area and Camberwell station saw increasing local development in the early years of the twentieth century.

### Comparative Analysis

*Alvah*, 51 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, represents the increasing simplification of external massing and form that was marking Federation architecture around the time of Australia's first twentieth century building recession (1905-7). This was in part a reaction against the perceived over-complexity and 'restlessness' of earlier Federation architecture, and in this case has resulted in the asymmetrical elevational play of smaller Federation buildings evidenced in the fairly simple one-step massing approach, with frontal verandah. In various respects the subject house was moving toward the simpler red-brick form that marked the Melbourne suburban bungalow of the 1920s. Intricacy was now compressed into small details. The porch mouldings, for instance, are an early intimation of Edwardian Baroque in house design, of which a much better known (and much later) example was Harold Desbrowe-Anneer's design for the Vallek Meyers house at 446 St Kilda Road, South Melbourne (c. 1925, now demolished).<sup>7</sup> There is also a reasonably generic similarity to several neighbours in the street, although the subject house's composition differs from these others which have more conventional bay window and front door placements. More broadly, similar 'commuter housing' developments can also be seen in related clusters in Rathmines Road, Hawthorn, Station Street Auburn, and the wealthier Camberwell subdivisions east of Burke Road around the railway line.

### Assessment Against Criteria

#### *Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria*

*CRITERION D: The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as a part of a class or type of places or objects.*

*Alvah*, 51 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, is a well executed, generally externally intact, double-fronted, single-storey later Federation brick house with stucco dressings, verandah, and an asymmetrical wing front. It represents a type of late nineteenth and early twentieth century 'commuter development' found in Boroondara, which responded to subdivisions in areas near railway stations.

*CRITERION E: The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.*

*Alvah*, 51 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, is a later Federation dwelling which represents an increasing simplification of external massing and form in the early years of the twentieth century, and increasingly sparing use of ornamental detail. In these aspects it characterizes a new direction in Federation architecture in the middle 1900s, and is a telling example of how this mode presaged what was later called the suburban or 'Californian' Bungalow.

### Statement of Significance

*Alvah*, 51 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, is of historical and architectural significance at a local level. It is a well executed, generally externally intact, double-fronted, single-storey later Federation brick house with stucco dressings. It represents a type of late nineteenth and early twentieth century 'commuter development' found in Boroondara, which responded to subdivisions in areas near railway stations. Architecturally, it is a later Federation dwelling which characterises a new direction in

Federation architecture in the middle 1900s, including a growing simplification of external massing and form, and increasingly sparing use of ornamental detail.

#### Grading Review

Unchanged.

#### Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

#### Identified By

Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, *Hawthorn Heritage Study*, 1992.

#### References

*General:* (G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote Places (draft)*, 2000; Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, *Hawthorn Heritage Study*, 1992.)

*Specific:*

<sup>1</sup> Draft citation, G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote places* (draft), 2000.

<sup>2</sup> City of Hawthorn Rate Books, 1906-07, #7232-33, cited in G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote places* (draft), 2000.

<sup>3</sup> The origins of the other names for the house are not known.

<sup>4</sup> Pattern of occupation derived from listings in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years between 1910 and 1935.

<sup>5</sup> Pattern of occupation derived from listings in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years between 1938 and 1974.

<sup>6</sup> City of Hawthorn Building Card Index, Permit #8125, dated 27 December 1968.

<sup>7</sup> The Meyer house was illustrated on the cover of *Transition*, 27, Spring 1987, and discussed by Harriet Edquist in 'Legends of Australian architecture', *ibid.*, and in her *Harold Desbrowe Annear: a Life in Architecture*, Melbourne, Miegunyah, 2004, pp.