

Balwyn Road Residential Precinct
Place Citation

17 Balwyn Road, Canterbury

Name	Maling House and Garden		
Place	Residential		
Type			
Date	1888	Survey Date	Dec 2005
Architect	Not known	Previous Grading	C
Builder	William Maling and his father, John	Grading	B



Intactness ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

Heritage ☐ HV ☒ AHC ☒ NT ☐ BPS Heritage Overlay

History¹

This site was sold to John Maling in 1884 from the Heathfield Estate owned by Ernst Carter. It was allotment 73 on the north corner of Erica Street. Subsequently it was transferred to one of his sons, William Maling, who also owned other allotments which he purchased from the estate of his brother Fred in 1897. In the 1950s, these allotments (19 Balwyn Road and 1A Erica Street) were owned by Maling descendants, in whose hands they still remain.

1 The history is largely derived from G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', vol4, p18

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The existing house was built in 1887-8 by William Maling,² assisted by his father John, as a home for himself and his first wife Hannah. Maling's fireplace and his original furniture, almost all of which remains in the house, reveal his ability as a cabinetmaker, an occupation he pursued after his carpentering career. The coach house and stables were at 1A Erica Street and his horse grazed on the site of 19 Balwyn Road.³

The garden was started as soon as the house was built in 1888.⁴ Its layout remains largely unaltered other than some modifications in the 1930s to a gate and fence leading to 1A Erica Street. Remnants of a side path to 19 Balwyn Road are still visible. The garden includes an outhouse with a copper, a 1930s green house, a well (now covered over by the garage but still in use and shown in the 1905 MMBW detail plan no 1996). In his 1980 'Historic Gardens Study', Peter Watts included the garden at 17 Balwyn Road as a rare surviving example of an artisan's nineteenth century garden. He stated '... the rear garden is the only small city garden known which retains its original largely utilitarian form'. However, since then a 100 year old lemon and flowering currant have been lost.

In 2000, a single storey rear extension was undertaken in a manner which has left the original part of the building largely intact.⁵

Description & Integrity⁶

The house is a double-fronted, single storey, timber Italianate-style Victorian-era building, planned in the usual fashion with central passage, flanking rooms and a cellar. The block fronted façade belies the symmetry of the plan with one room projecting and the verandah to balance. However, not so typical is the high integrity of the interior with a number of original wall-papers and almost all the joinery with some furniture, evidently made by the first owner, Maling. The house is generally original except for a new kitchen.

The garden plantings and layout (front, side and rear), the well and circular rock fish pond add to the strong period expression of the site. The rear garden is semi-formally laid out with red brick edging of rectangular garden paths. A distinctive ornamental tiled path runs parallel and adjacent to the front fence. The front garden contains an extensive collection of bulbs and a number of very large mature Camellia cultivars which have not been successfully identified despite

2 William Sanders Maling was born in 1865 in Australia. He was the eldest child of John Butler Maling, who was born in Shepreth, Cambridgeshire in 1841, and came to Australia in 1857-8. He was a builder and cabinetmaker of considerable ability, the chief surviving public examples of whose work is in joinery at St Barnabas Anglican Church, Balwyn and St John's, Camberwell (altar table and reredos of Kauri pine).

3 MMBW plans (1905)

4 National Trust Citation, G15. This section regarding the garden is mostly reproduced here but contains material from the earlier G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991, vol 4, p18

5 Building File, 40/409/05212 and Planning File, 40/408/17257

6 National Trust Citation, G15. The description is mostly reproduced here but contains material from the earlier G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991, vol 4, p18

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attempts by staff at the Royal Botanic Gardens. Similarly, a large mature white azalea near the fernery eludes identification. These plantings are part of the original planting scheme. The New Zealand palm *Rhopalostylis sapida* (Nikau Palm) in the fernery is also an uncommon mature planting. Overall, the garden layout and planting is largely intact except for removal of some mature shrubs.

Statement of Significance

One of several modest, late Victorian era houses which represent the first major period of development in the precinct. This house was built by its owner, William Maling, who was a cabinet maker and was responsible for the high quality internal timber work.

According to the National Trust, the site is of State significance as the house is largely intact internally and the original garden layout and some early fabric are also extant. As such, the site is a rare surviving, remarkably intact example of a modest, artisan's cottage and garden.⁷

Grading and Recommendations

The site is part of the identified Balwyn Road Residential Precinct, which is recommended for inclusion within the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay.

Identified By

G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991, vol 4, pp18-19

References

Building File, 40/409/05212
G Butler, 'Camberwell Conservation Study', 1991
MMBW plans (1905)
Register of the National Estate, place ID - 5218
National Trust of Australia (Victoria) citation B6283 and G15
Planning File, 40/408/17257

7 National Trust Citation, G15