

Waverley Estate Retail Precinct

81-99 Waverley Road, Malvern East



Heritage Assessment

August 2012

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1.0 Introduction

This report was commissioned by the City of Stonnington. It provides an assessment of the cultural heritage significance of the Waverley Estate Retail Precinct at 81-99 Waverley Road, Malvern East, and provides comment on the appropriateness of a heritage control for the place.

2.0 Sources of Information

The analysis below draws upon an external inspection of the buildings and their environs, and historical research using the Stonnington Local History Catalogue, Sands and McDougall Directories, and MMBW property service plans. The report also relies on secondary historical sources including the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context Pty Ltd, 2006).



Figure 1 Map of the Waverley Estate Retail Precinct, 81-99 Waverley Road.

3.0 Listings and Controls

City of Stonnington

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct is not currently subject to a heritage overlay control. None of the shops within the precinct were included in the schedule of significant buildings or significant areas identified in the *City of Malvern Heritage Study* (June 1992). The *Waverley Road Urban Design Framework – Preliminary Heritage Assessment Various Sites* (Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, May 2007) concluded that there was no strong argument for the protection of this retail group as part of a heritage overlay area, in part because it was thought to have only a tenuous association with significant residential areas in the Gascoigne and Waverley Estates to the immediate north. This conclusion has been reviewed and the opinion revised in light of the further historical research and the comparative analysis set out below.

Heritage Victoria

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct is not included on the Victorian Heritage Register.

National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct is not included on the National Trust's Register of classified places.

Australian Heritage Council

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct is not included on the Register of the National Estate, the Commonwealth Heritage List and National Heritage List.

4.0 History

The history of this section of the Municipality begins in the second half of the nineteenth century. Crown allotments 74, 75 and 77 to 86 which include the Gascoigne and Waverley Estates and the subject sites were originally sold in 1857. Part of Finch Street was formed in 1860 but the area generally remained undeveloped until 1879 when the rail link between Oakleigh and South Yarra was established. By 1880, a small number of houses were under construction in Finch Street, Coppin Street, Kerferd Road, Beaver Street and Central Park Road (then known as Hunter Street).¹

Over the next five years, much of the land was consolidated into a single ownership, and, in March 1885, the Gascoigne Estate (a subdivision of Crown allotments 79-82) was offered for sale by the Gascoigne Land Company. This area included the allotments of Coppin Street, the east side of Tooronga Road, the south side of Central Park Road and the west side of Burke Road. In November 1885, the Gascoigne Extension Estate was offered for sale, comprising Crown allotments 83 to 86 and including Anderson Street, the north end of Finch Street, Belson Street, Nott Street, Kingston Street and the land now occupied by Central Park. Manning Road, Bates Street, Epping Street, Turner Street and Douglas Street were created in 1890. In 1891, the Waverley Estate including sites

¹ Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, *Waverley Road Urban Design Framework – Preliminary Heritage Assessments Various Sites, Malvern East*, May 2007.

to these streets was offered for sale. This new estate was located immediately to the south of the former Gascoigne Estate and was broadly bounded by Coppin Street to the north, Finch Street to the west, Burke Road to the east and Waverley Road to the south (including allotments in the Waverley Estate Retail precinct).



Figure 2 An undated plan of the Waverley Estate. Source: Stonnington Local History Catalogue.

Sands & McDougall Directories indicate that the first signs of a small retail strip to the north side of Waverley Road began around this time.² Directories from 1891 show no listings for any properties to the north side of Waverley Road in this area. The following year directories list a general store, run by D Ross, and J Ellis, a plumber. It appears that these premises were located at the northwestern corner of the intersection of Burke and Waverley Roads (the premises are visible in the 1903 MMBW plan of the area below).

However, further development in this section of Waverley Road was prevented by the appropriation of large areas in the eastern sections of the Gascoigne and Waverley Estates for use as a golf course. With the depression of the early 1890s development slowed and suburban land prices fell. The Melbourne Golf Club took over a large tracts of land north of Waverley Road on both sides of Burke Road in 1891. The course was abandoned to residential development in 1907.

² Sands and McDougall directories.

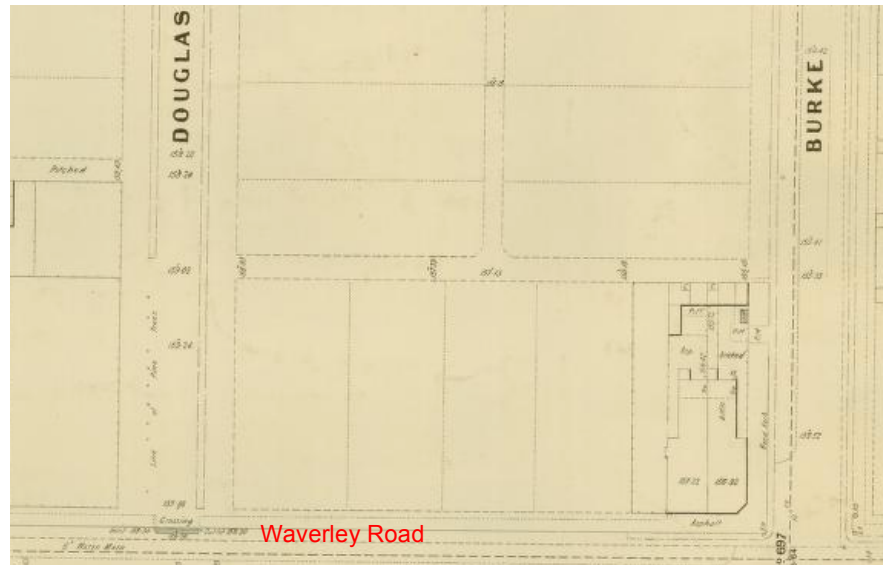


Figure 3 Part of a c1903 MMBW Plan showing early retail premises on the north-west corner of Waverley and Burke roads. Source: State Library of Victoria.

From around 1910 the retail strip gradually extended eastwards from the intersection of Burke Road, beginning with the shop at 95 Waverley Road.³ In 1916 a pair of shops was built at 91-93 Waverley Road with a bakehouse at the rear of the latter.⁴

The large development at 81-89 Waverley Road was completed c1927 when the group took on more or less its current appearance.⁵ By 1928, the shopping strip had a draper, stationer, ladies tailor, milliner and a florist. These types of businesses suggest an affluent and largely female clientele drawn from surrounding middle class housing estates. Large cinema going crowds would also have been attracted to the shopping strip after the Waverley Theatre was built on the opposite side of the road in 1936.

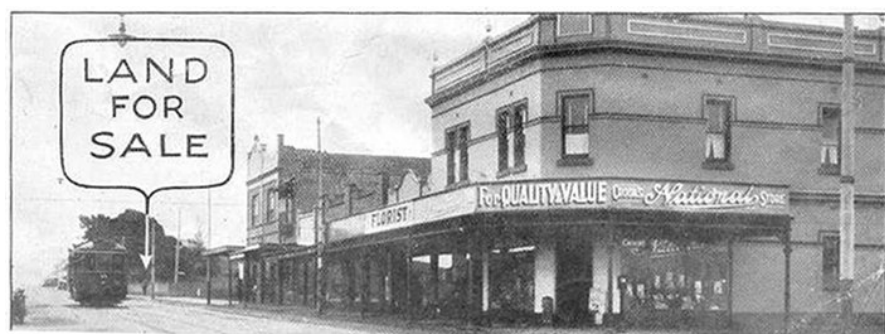


Figure 4 A c1922 photograph of Waverley Road looking west from Burke Road. The building in the foreground has been demolished and the site is now occupied by a service station. Source: Stonnington Local History Catalogue.

³ MMBW Plan of Drainage, no.71646.

⁴ MMBW Plain of Drainage No. 102427.

⁵ Sands and McDougall directories.

5.0 Description

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct at 81-99 Waverley Road, Malvern East, is a small shopping strip, predominately comprised of double-storey Edwardian and interwar commercial buildings. The interwar shop row at 81-89 Waverley Road has a quasi-domestic bungalow character derived from broad gabled roofs with terracotta tiles, squat chimneys and double hung box windows. Three of its five shopfronts remain highly intact.

The buildings at 91 and 93 Waverley are pair of Edwardian double-storey shops with red brick walls and rendered parapets. Both have highly intact shopfronts. 93 Waverly Road appears to have lost its pediment details but has retained early painted signage relating to its original use as a bakery. The original bake house also survives at the rear.

95 Waverley Road is an Edwardian double-storey shop with a bay window on the first floor and a fairly plain stepped parapet (possibly altered). The original ground floor shopfront is modern. The adjacent single-storey c1920s shop at 97 Waverley Road is occupied by the same business and has the same type of modern shopfront. The last building in the group, at 99 Waverley Road, is a single-storey c1920 building with a largely intact shopfront clad in glazed ceramic tiles.



Figure 5 *The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct looking east from Douglas Street.*



Figure 6 *The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct looking west from Burke Road.*



Figure 7 (left) Early shopfront at 91 Waverley Road.



Figure 8 (right) The former bakehouse at the rear of 93 Waverley Road.

6.0 Comparative Analysis

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct belongs to the category of smaller suburban strip shopping centres which illustrate the historic theme 7.1 Serving Local Communities, as identified in the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context Pty Ltd). These shopping centres generally catered to a local community and occupy a status between the corner shop development meeting the requirements of a few contingent streets and the larger strip developments such as Lygon Street, Carlton, Clarendon Street, South Melbourne, Smith Street, Collingwood, Chapel Street, Prahran and Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, which service the needs of an entire district. Developments of this type are common around suburban Melbourne.

The Waverley Road Shopping Centre (HO354), Glen Iris Shopping Centre (HO352) and Central Park Shopping Centre (HO353) are good examples of this type of local shopping strip development. They share similar patterns of development resulting from the expansion of the electric tram network through eastern parts of the Municipality in the 1910s and the accompanying phases of rapid suburbanisation. Similar factors influenced the development of the Waverley Estate Retail Precinct.

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct, while limited in extent, compares favourably with these other shopping strips in terms of its condition and integrity. Comparable strips such as the Glen Iris Village or the Central Park group, are similar in terms of age and usage, but retain fewer intact shopfronts. The high proportion of original and early shopfronts in the Waverley Estate Retail Precinct enhances the interest of the group, and sets the precinct apart from most comparable shopping strips.

The building stock in the Waverley Estate Retail Precinct is generally representative rather than exceptional, being mostly typical of Edwardian and interwar suburban strip development. The shop group at 81-89 Waverley Road is, nonetheless, noteworthy as a reasonably rare example of an interwar retail building with a gable-roofed domestic bungalow character. Shops with hipped or gabled roofs had become increasingly prevalent by the 1920s, but these roofs were usually given a recognisably commercial character by having some form of parapet at the front.



Figure 9 (left) Waverley Road Gateway precinct.

Figure 10 (right) Waverley Road shopping precinct.



Figure 11 (left) Glen Iris shopping precinct.

Figure 12 (right) Central Park shopping centre.

7.0 Thematic Environmental History

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct illustrates the theme 7.1 ‘Serving Local Communities’ as explained in the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context Pty Ltd, Addendum, March 2009):

8.0 Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct is a small retail strip of Edwardian and interwar buildings located at 81-99 Waverley Road, Malvern East. Development of the precinct occurred alongside major phases of residential development in the adjacent Gascoigne and Waverley housing estates, and was further stimulated by the extension of the electric tram line along Waverley Road in 1913.

Elements which contribute to the significance of the precinct include (but are not limited to):

- The high degree of intactness of the shops to their c1928 state.
- The generally high integrity of upper level facades and original detailing and finishes typically comprising face brick or render.
- The attached form of the buildings with uniform front setbacks and facade widths forming repetitive modules.
- The near uniform double-storey scale of the buildings.

- Roofs concealed by parapets (one retaining early painted signage) or exposed gabled roofs with terracotta tile cladding and chimneys.
- The form and fabric of extant early shopfronts, typically built with recessed timber doors, large bronze-framed display windows, leadlight highlight windows and glazed ceramic tile surfaces.
- Early cantilevered awnings.
- External signage generally restricted to the traditional signage zones on the verandah fascia or suspended from the underside of the verandah.
- The limited number of modern internally illuminated signs.

How is it significant?

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct is historically significant as an example of a small local shopping centre which is associated with the extension of the electric tram network and residential development in the highly valued Gascoigne and Waverley estates located to its immediate north (*Historic Theme: 7.1 Serving Local communities*). The development of the shops is illustrative of the interdependence of public transport and suburban development, especially in the late Edwardian and interwar periods.

The Waverley Estate Retail Precinct is aesthetically significant as a well-preserved example of an Edwardian and interwar commercial precinct. The high proportion of original and early shopfronts greatly enhances that significance.

9.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Waverley Estate Retail Precinct at 81-99 Waverley Road, Malvern East, be added to the schedule of the Heritage Overlay under the City of Stonnington Planning Scheme. It is further recommended that the buildings be exempt from external paint controls, internal alteration controls and tree controls under the heritage overlay. In addition, the former bakehouse at the rear of 93 Waverley Road should be listed in the heritage overlay schedule under 'Outbuildings or fences which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-4'.

The City of Stonnington has adopted the former City of Prahran building grading system. The buildings in the precinct have not previously been assessed or graded under this system. Accordingly, the shops have been graded as follows:

Address	Description	Grading
81-89 Waverley Road	Double-storey interwar shop group	A2
91 Waverley Road	Double-storey Edwardian shop	B
93 Waverley Road	Double-storey Edwardian shop	B

Rear 93 Waverley Road	Double storey Edwardian bakehouse	B
95 Waverley Road	Double-storey Edwardian shop	B
97 Waverley Road	Single-storey interwar shop	C
99 Waverley Road	Single-storey interwar shop	B

10.0 References

Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, *Waverley Road Urban Design Framework – Preliminary Heritage Assessment Various Sites*, May 2007.

MMBW Detail Plan No.1705. State Library of Victoria.

MMBW Plan of Drainage No.102427. Yarra Valley Water.

MMBW Plan of Drainage No.71646. Yarra Valley Water.

Sands and McDougall Directories.

Stonnington Local History Catalogue.

