

372 & 374 Malvern Road, Prahran



History and Description

This pair of two-storey bluestone houses were constructed between 1863 and 1864 by James Hole, local stonemason and builder.²⁴⁹ These houses are an unusual type of building construction in the Prahran area but obviously relate to the skills of the first owner. Hole had an interest in the site from the early 1860s and was rated in 1862 for vacant land in Commercial Road.²⁵⁰ The name Commercial Road is now only used for the continuation of Malvern Road on the west side of Punt Road.

In 1863 Hole was rated for a five-roomed stone and brick and slate house (NAV 36 pounds) and an 'unfinished building' (NAV 6 pounds) on the site of 372-374 Malvern Road.²⁵¹ By 1864, Hole's two stone houses were completed. One was occupied by Hole and the other by Gerald Supple, a barrister.²⁵² Hole continued to live in one house and rent the other. Tenants included Thomas Elms, tailor, and Robert Pearce, mariner.²⁵³ Hole became a well-known Prahran resident. He was a Prahran Councillor from 1872-1887 and owned a number of other local properties, including two four-roomed wooden houses in Bendigo Street and a house in Malvern Road.²⁵⁴

Hole's Malvern Road stone houses are simple in design, together comprising a symmetrical facade with a concave verandah supported on unadorned pairs of timber columns. The stonework tuck-pointed stonework and vermiculated quoins are

249. Town of Prahran Rate Book 1863 Nos. 1697, 1698; 1864 Nos. 1580, 1581.

250. Prahran Rate Book 1862 No. 1669.

251. Prahran Rate Book 1863 Nos. 1697, 1698.

252. Prahran Rate Book 1864 Nos. 1580, 1581.

253. Prahran Rate Book 1866 No. 1749; 1872 Vol. 1. No. 2025.

254. Prahran Rate Books 1872 Nos. 2052, 2054, 2153.

mostly painted. The eastern house has intact windows with coloured panes and polychrome tiled verandah floor with slate trim. The ground floor is exposed stonework. The house on the west side is less intact, with windows, doors and verandah floor replaced. A turn of the century drainage plan shows the pair of houses with front verandahs facing Malvern Road and an outbuilding at the rear of No. 374. At this time, Harriet Wilson was owner/occupier of No. 372 and T. Overton of No. 374.²⁵⁵

Significance

This pair of early 1860s bluestone houses has state design significance as an unusual type of building construction in the Prahran area. The houses have significance, also, for their associations with early local stonemason and builder, James Hole, who was a Prahran Councillor from 1872 to 1887. During his ownership of the properties, Hole lived in one and let the other.

Sources

City of Prahran Rate Books, (Town of Prahran records).

City of Prahran Valuer's records.

MMBW House Covers Nos. 22589, 21526.

Analysis & Recommendations

It is recommended that this property be retained at A1 level.

²⁵⁵. MMBW House Cover Nos. 22589, 21526.