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## 3-5 MACQUARIE ROAD PRAHRAN

### INTRODUCTION

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This report has been prepared by Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd with Di Foster, historian, to investigate the significance of the properties at 3-5 Macquarie Road, Prahran, in order to determine the appropriateness of their inclusion within the schedule to the Heritage Overlay within the planning scheme. The report builds on work carried out by Context Pty Ltd in the *City of Prahran Conservation Review*, 1993.

The *City of Prahran Conservation Review* graded the buildings as A2+ (almost certainly of regional significance). They are not presently listed on the Victorian Heritage Register or the Register of the National Estate, nor are they classified by the National Trust.

### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

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This report finds that the cottages at 3-5 Macquarie Road are of regional significance and should be added to the schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the local section of the Stonnington Planning Scheme and nominated to the Australian Heritage Commission for inclusion in the register of the National Estate.

## HISTORY

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The small streets of Crown allotments 40 and 41, which extended from Perth Street to Chapel Street, were created in the 1850s by subdivisions designed to provide rented cottages on small allotments. Most were replaced or renovated during the 1880s housing boom.<sup>1</sup>

Two wooden cottages each of three rooms, (later numbered 3 and 5 Macquarie Street) were built by William Deane in 1875-6.<sup>2</sup> Deane, a carpenter/cabinet maker, lived in a larger house immediately to the north of the two new dwellings. Deane's occupation may explain the elaborate timber detailing to the facades.

Numbers 3 and 5 Macquarie Street were immediately rented out, and in 1876, the first tenants were George Moore at number 3 and Jane Fenton at number 5.<sup>3</sup> Blacksmith James Roos lived at number 3 from 1877 and James Messer at number 5.<sup>4</sup> Deane's tenants changed frequently, with Henry Lloyd living at number 5 in 1880.<sup>5</sup> Hairdresser Charles Currie and mason James Cummings occupied the houses in 1887.<sup>6</sup> Other tenants of number 5 included Ross Cameron, carpenter; Frederick Rowland, wigmaker and Brigid Burke. Number 3 was occupied by Thomas and Martin Lewis for more than forty years from 1889.<sup>7</sup> Frances Deane<sup>8</sup> was the owner of the two buildings in 1920.

## DESCRIPTION

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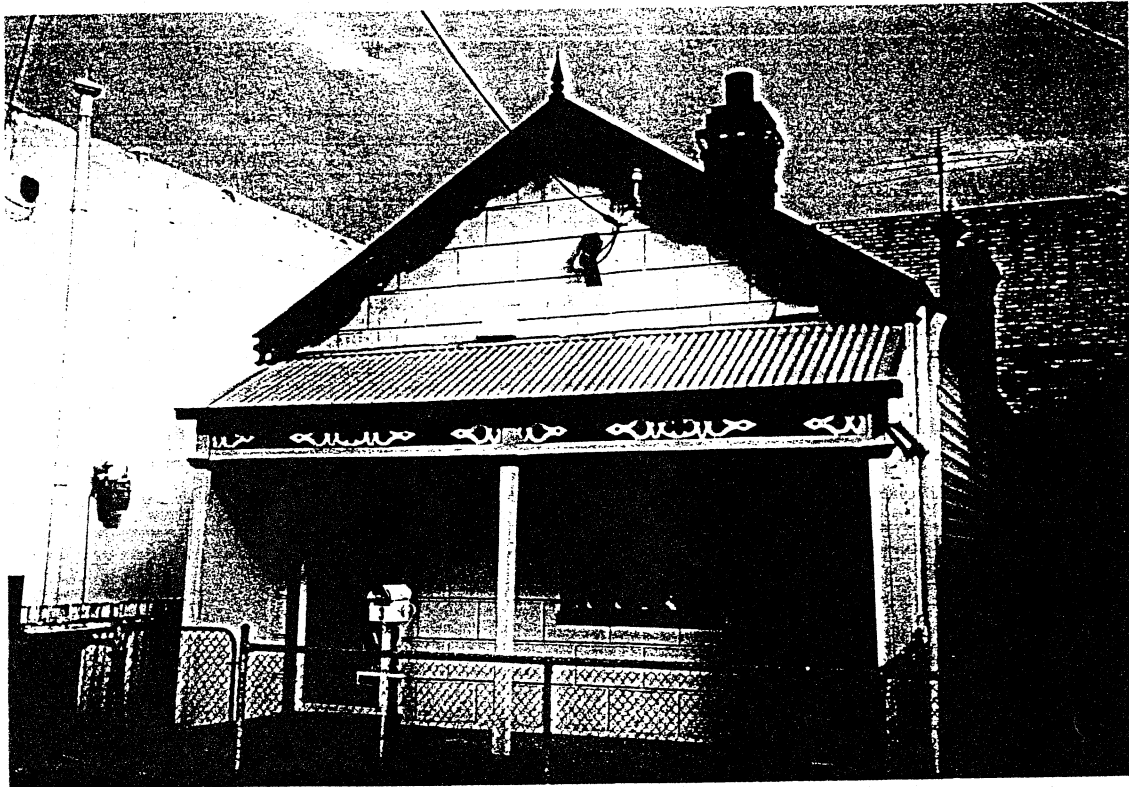
Macquarie Street has become essentially a service lane providing rear access to the busy retail district of Prahran. It is composed largely of industrial buildings and car parking areas and a handful of early cottages.

3 and 5 Macquarie Street are a pair of these modest timber cottages, clad in timber blockwork with roofs of corrugated metal. The simple interior arrangement is expressed in the single door and window of the narrow front facade. The properties are set back less than a metre from the footpath, allowing for only a narrow strip of garden between the verandah and the low cyclone fence. The cottages draw broadly upon Gothic sources, with facades distinguished by verandahs with square posts and unusual

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- 1 Betty Malone, 'Discovering Prahran'. No. 3. The hub of the municipality, p.2. Unpublished manuscript, Prahran Archives.
  - 2 Town of Prahran rate book, 1876, nos. 3235 & 3236.
  - 3 Ibid.
  - 4 Ibid., 1877, nos. 3465 & 3466.
  - 5 City of Prahran rate book, Prahran Ward, 1880, nos. 3609 & 3610.
  - 6 Ibid., 1887, nos. 7081 & 7082.
  - 7 Ibid., 1889, nos. 6532 & 6533.
  - 8 Ibid., 1920, nos. 8435 & 8436.

timber valences; by ornate bargeboards and finials to the gable ends; and by tall chimneys in decorative polychrome brickwork (all of which are possibly the work of the first owner, carpenter, William Deane). This level of ornament was not unusual amongst workers cottages in the nineteenth century, but this level of intact decorative timber work is increasingly rare .

The cottages appear to be in fair but substantially original condition, with the exception of their concrete verandah floors, wire screen doors and, possibly, fenestration.



*Illustration 3 Macquarie Street, 1997.*

## ANALYSIS

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The cottages at 3-5 Macquarie Street are of regional significance as fine and increasingly rare examples of the nineteenth century revival of interest in Gothic architecture, particularly as a mode of expression for residential construction. The Gothic styles derived from the ecclesiastical architecture of medieval Europe, but enjoyed a renewed popularity during the nineteenth century as a result of the writings of A.W.N. Pugin and John Ruskin. The domestic mode is typified by steeply pitched roofs, ornate barge boards and a sense of verticality that has seen the style referred to as *pointed architecture*. When constructed in timber it is commonly referred to as Carpenter Gothic. The style proved a major influence in Sydney, but failed to find a constituency in Victoria and is more common amongst the churches of rural Victoria where it is occasionally described as Victorian Rustic Gothic.<sup>9</sup> Metropolitan examples are typically associated with church buildings and notable local examples include the vicarage at St Martins Church in Cromwell Road, South Yarra and the rectory at Christ Church in Acland Street, St Kilda. Non-ecclesiastic examples include the two-storey bluestone residence in Hotham Street East Melbourne which may have been the work of Joseph Reed.

Timber cottages of this period and detailing have typically been degraded by the process of refurbishment. Local tastes have traditionally favoured the Italianate appearance of cast iron over the decorative timber fretwork of Northern Europe. Consequently many timber cottages have been refurbished in the Italianate manner. The Macquarie Street cottages are substantially intact to their exteriors and appear to retain original or early timber valences, finials and bargeboards characteristic of the Gothic mode further accentuating their significance.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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The cottages at 3-5 Macquarie Street are of regional, or metropolitan, significance as fine, relatively rare and substantially intact exemplars of the Gothic mode in timber cottages, often referred to as Carpenter Gothic or Victorian Rustic Gothic.

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9 Apperley, Irving and Reynolds, *Identifying Australian Architecture*, pp 92-95.

## REFERENCES

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Apperley, Irving and Reynolds, *Identifying Australian Architecture*, North Ryde, 1989.

Context Pty Ltd, City of Prahran Conservation Review, 1993.

Betty Malone, 'Discovering Prahran'. No. 3. The hub of the municipality.. Unpublished manuscript, Prahran Archives.

Prahran rate books 1875-1920.

*Sands & McDougall Directories, 1975-1950.*