

ARMADALE AREA

History and Significance This land in Armadale was first sold at the Crown land sale on 15 May 1850. Five years later when James Kearney compiled his Map of Melbourne and Suburbs very little development had taken place in the area. A sprinkling of about 15 cottages covered the area, predominantly towards Kooyong Road and a pump was located to the north of Commercial Road (now Malvern Road) near the intersection of the present day Densham Road. Subsequent subdivisions took place and Clendon Road and Densham Road ran along the borders of the original allotments 48, 49 and 50. In 1878 James Munro, a prominent businessman and later infamous Premier of Victoria during the land boom, erected his residence 'Armadale House' in Kooyong Road. It was his Scottish childhood town of Armadale which gave its name to the suburb.

The railway cut through the Armadale area in 1879 when the section from South Yarra to Oakleigh completed the direct link between Melbourne and Geelong. Typical of the land sales in this area was the Allanvale estate, auctioned on 11 February 1888, which included Beatty Avenue, Malvern Road, Clendon Road, Rose Street and Clarke Street (presumably now Watson Street). Northcote Road was subdivided parallel to the railway and this imposed a disruption to the normally geometric grid of roads in this area. Other roads such as Royal Crescent later contributed to this character.

A bowling club, on land donated by James Munro, was established in Northcote Road after the construction of the railway on land donated by James Munro. A primary school was erected in Densham Road in 1886 and with the rapid development of the area additional accommodation was added in 1891 and 1899. The original Toorak railway station was erected in 1879 although after the railway cutting was formed a new station was erected in 1913. Because of the large railway cutting the goods yard was unusually located at a different level. The lift for the conveyance of goods from the platform still survives on the south side of the line and this appears to be a unique construction for the Victorian railways. The erection of shops around the railway station consolidated in this 1913-14 period coinciding with the construction of the railway station and today the general high level of intactness of these commercial premises is noteworthy. Subdivision of the land in this Armadale area resulted in uniform small allotments and in the period 1880-1910 the area was highly developed with residential building activity.

Several notable buildings in Kooyong Road, Munro Street and Northcote Road form the architectural highlights of this area although the general level of intactness of the remainder of the building stock in this locality makes the whole area bounded by Kooyong Road, Malvern Road and the railway one of great importance in the municipality of Prahran. Other elements of significance are the shops in Beatty Avenue which present an intact streetscape of Edwardian facades, and the railway station.

street tree planting, intact sections of bluestone kerbs and
channels, and street furniture such as the early tram shelter at
the corner of Malvern Road and Orrong Road all form significant
features in this area.