

'Kaduwela' & 'Clare'

**173 & 175 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris**

Place type: Residential Buildings (private), Villa

Significance level: Local



*'Kaduwela', 173 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris (source: Context 2016).*



*'Clare', 175 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris, c2012 (source: Realestate.com.au).*

Recommended protection: Planning Scheme

Architectural style: Victorian period (1851-1901) Italianate

### **Locality history**

Glen Iris is a suburb that lies at the northern end of the former City of Malvern, and is bounded by Tooronga Road, Wattleree Road and the Monash Freeway. The hamlet of Gardiner now lies within Glen Iris, although this was formerly recognised as a locality of its

own. Glen Iris has long straddled two municipalities, with a portion in the former City of Malvern and a portion in the former City of Camberwell (now the City of Boroondara). It was originally bisected by Gardiners Creek but in the 1960s the South Eastern freeway created a wider barrier between the two sections. York Street, Glen Iris, for example, is now in two disconnected sections.

Glen Iris occupies gently undulating country along the Gardiners Creek Valley. This well-watered land was first taken up by settlers for dairying, orchards and market gardens. A local violet farm was a popular place to visit for Sunday drives in the early twentieth century. The area retained a rural character into the early twentieth century. In the most elevated section, near the intersection of High Street and Malvern Road, street names, such as Grandview, Valleyview and Fairview, were selected to celebrate the views across the creek.

There was some residential development in the late nineteenth century, such as the Glen Iris Estate subdivision. A small number of large Victorian homes survive from this period: examples are 173 and 175 Tooronga Road. Large areas were subdivided for suburban development in the Edwardian and Interwar periods, and this is reflected in the housing stock. Several large Victorian mansions were adapted for use as private schools, including ‘Valentines’ (1891-92), which was acquired by Malvern Grammar School (now Caulfield Grammar School); ‘Brynmawr’ (1859), now part of Sacre Coeur Girls School; and ‘Ranfurlie’ (1886; demolished), which was acquired for use as Korowa Girls’ School. Kalla Avenue, which was created in the subdivision of the Ranfurlie Estate in the early 1900s, is thought to mark the former carriage drive to ‘Ranfurlie’ (Foster & Stefanopolous 2009).

The proposed demolition of a large number of houses in Glen Iris and the loss of the creek environs to enable the construction of the South-Eastern Arterial (now Monash Freeway) in the early 1960s triggered long-running community protests (*Victorian Places*).

### Place history

Two double-storey brick villa residences were built in c1891-92 on an elevated site on Tooronga Road with views to the north and east. The owner of the land, Edward Shears, a successful grocer from Chapel Street (Sutherland 1888), presumably used the same designer and/or builder for both. George Sandow, a builder from South Australia, who occupied one of the houses, may have been the builder of both properties. Sandow built a number of houses in Sorrett Avenue and other parts of Malvern and Armadale (Foster 1999).

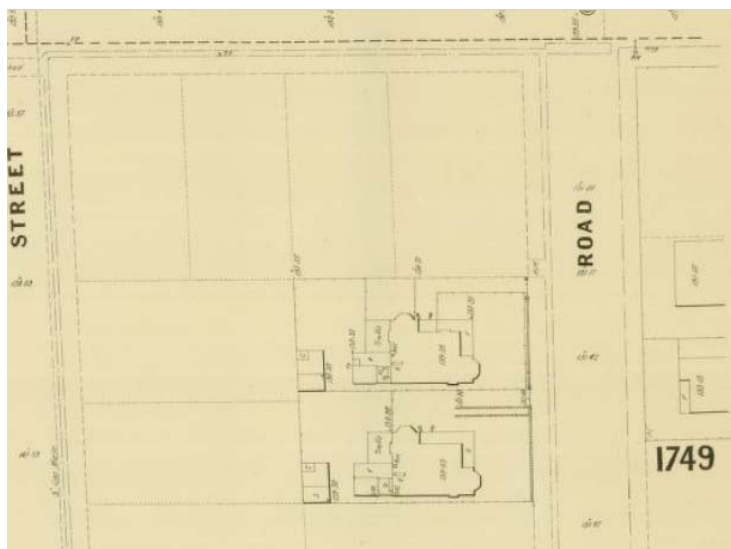


Figure 1. Extract from MMBW Detail Plan c. 1747, dated 1907, showing position at the corner of High Street and Tooronga Road, with clear unimpeded views to the north and east (source: SLV).

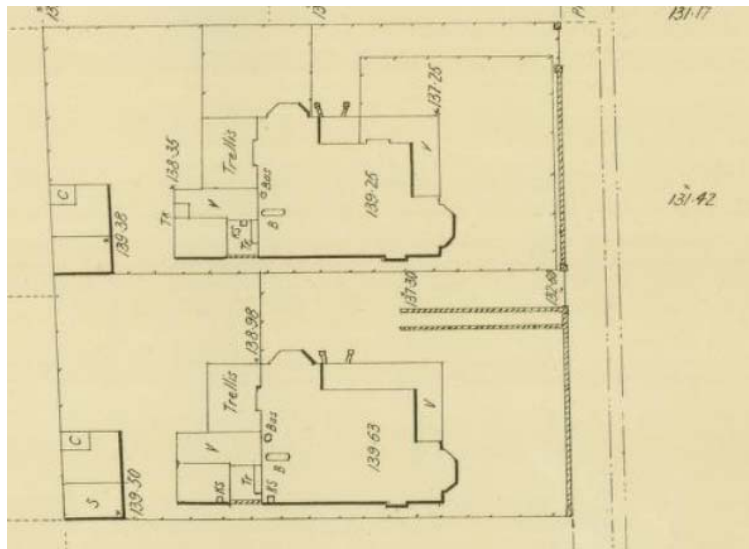


Figure 2. Detail showing matching layout of both blocks; from MMBW Detail Plan c. 1747, dated 1907 (source: SLV).

The MMBW detail plan, dated 1907, shows a pair of free-standing residences with an identical footprint and uniform set-back. Both houses have an asymmetrical plan with projecting front bay and a return verandah to the east and north. The main entrance to both houses is on the northern side. Each house has indoor plumbing to the basin and bath. There is a trellis at the rear of each house, and an outside toilet and stables at the rear boundary of the allotment. Stabling was erected at both properties in 1891 (Foster 1999).

The house at 173 Tooronga Road was owned and occupied by James and Jessie Spargo and their family from c1900 (Foster 1999). They had several daughters and one son, Lieutenant Edwin Bennet Spargo, 6th Battalion, who was killed in action at Gallipoli in 1915. By 1910 a Mr George Schoen Davies resided there. He had emigrated from England with his family as a boy, and worked as an auditor and accountant as well as serving as an elder of the Presbyterian Church (Death notice, *Age* 3 February 1910).

In 1949 the Minns purchased the property at 173 Tooronga Road for £3,500. The house was sold to Hutchinson in 1954, Barry in 1967 and Gleeson in 1973 (Foster 1999).

In 1892 the house at 175 Tooronga Road was owned and occupied by E.J.D. Guinness (RB), who had been appointed Crown Prosecutor for Victoria in 1889 and served in that position for thirty-seven years (*Argus*, 31 March 1926:24). He called the house 'Clare' (S&McD). Later occupants included George S. Davies, gentleman, who owned the 8-roomed brick house from 1908 (RB). George Davies, who died in 1910, was a banker and accountant (ADB). During his occupation, the house at 175 Tooronga Road became known by the Welsh name 'Llanfyngye' (S&McD).

The house at 175 Tooronga Road was divided into two separate living quarters in the c1930s-50s, indicated by the additional external stairway and entrance door to the upper level. Presumably the interior of the upper level was modified accordingly. The return verandah was likely removed at this time to allow the new staircase. A separate block of flats was also built in the rear yard around this time.



Figure 3. View of 175 Tooronga Road from the north, photographed by Jellis Craig in 2007 (source: SHC).

### Sources

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## Physical description



Figure 4. Detail of 173 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris (source: Context 2016).

The residences at 173 and 175 Tooronga Road are examples of substantial late-Victorian two-storey Italianate villas that occupy elevated allotments on the west side of Tooronga Road, south of the intersection with High Street in Glen Iris. The residence known as 'Kaduwela' at no. 173 is set back behind a recent high masonry wall, which is set just back from what appears to be an original iron palisade fence with a large masonry gate post. The front garden retains a number of mature trees. No. 175, originally known as 'Clare', is set back on the rise behind a matching iron palisade fence and gate post. The pair of houses are a landmark in this part of Tooronga Road.

Constructed in 1891 the buildings are built to an asymmetrical plan with two perpendicular stepped and canted projecting bays which, in the case of no. 173 is linked by a returning two-storey cast-iron verandah (the verandah has been lost to no. 175). The asymmetrical plan form became popular during the 1880s, and in this respect the houses at 173 and 175 Tooronga Road stand as large but relatively typical suburban Italianate villas. The buildings have hipped roofs which are clad in terracotta tiles, which appears to be a later change (e.g., from slate). Their cornices are distinctive for the deep moulding supported by paired eaves brackets set between floral swags and rosettes.

Both projecting bays facing Tooronga Road are distinctive for the quality of cast and run cement render detailing. The bay windows feature segmentally arched double-hung sash windows with moulded architraves with vermiculated keystones that run into moulded imposts. Other render details to the projecting bay include vermiculated panels between the moulded sill and string courses. Other windows to the buildings are unadorned segmentally arched double-hung sash windows. The chimneys feature bold moulding, corbels, rosettes and vermiculated panels giving them a high level of detail.

The exterior of no. 173 appears remarkably intact as viewed and appreciated from Tooronga Road, despite alterations undertaken c2014. It retains its intact two-storey return verandah with high quality cast-iron work which utilises a range of floral patterns. Dental mouldings to the verandah beams at both levels add further embellishment to the composition. The alterations seem to have been mostly confined to a large addition to the rear of the building and a small

ensuite addition to the southern elevation. The original iron palisade fence with large cement rendered piers, and bluestone plinth, remains intact in front of a new masonry wall.



Figure 5. Detail of the iron palisade fence with highly decorative masonry piers that has been retained in front of a new masonry front wall (source: Context 2016).



Figure 6. 'Kaduwela' at 173 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris c2014 prior to the construction of the masonry front wall (source: Realestate.com.au).

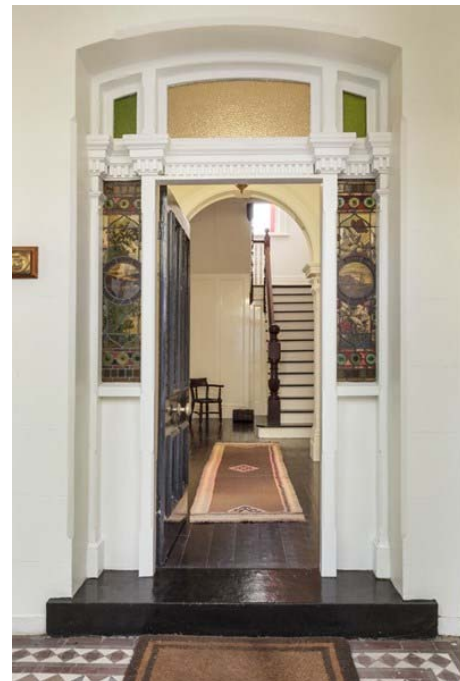


Figure 7. Detail of intricate decorative glazing retained to sidelights of front door to no. 173 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris c2014 (source: Realestate.com.au).



The verandah at no. 175 has been replaced by side access stairs to the rear projecting bay. Real Estate photos of c2012 indicate that the building has been altered internally to accommodate individual apartments and an extension has been constructed to the rear of the building. A separate apartment building has also been constructed in the former rear yard. The iron palisade fence on a rock faced bluestone plinth has been retained to the front boundary.



Figure 8. Detail of masonry pier to no. 173 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris and neighbouring iron palisade fence with bluestone plinth to no. 175 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris (source: Context 2016).



Figure 9. Iron palisade fence with corrugated iron retaining on a bluestone plinth at no. 175 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris (Context 2016).

### Comparative analysis

Although many single-storey villas were built in Melbourne and its suburbs during the nineteenth century, after the 1840s the grandest houses were almost always of two-storeys, or occasionally three as at Government house and 'Cliveden'. Owners often added a-storey to their single-storey house as their fortunes improved, of example, 'Como' in South Yarra had a second-storey added by 1855. Towards the end of the century, there was an increasing tendency to prefer the higher status of a two-storey house over that of a single-storey house (Jordan 2003:117 as cited in Statham 2008).

The architectural expression of a grand two-storey Victorian house could reflect any one of a range of fashionable British antecedents drawing their inspiration from classical Greek, Roman or Georgian sources to the more picturesque, such as Gothic or Tudor. British country houses of the mid-nineteenth century drew predominantly from the range of Picturesque styles. About a third of these grand Victorian houses adopted an Italianate style combining informal massing with a plain rendered expression enriched by classical motifs. The balance adopted a formal symmetrical classical expression. The Italianate was seen to combine the stateliness of a classical style with a picturesque and fashionable asymmetry (Jordan 2003:117 as cited in Statham 2008).

The Italianate style had its origins in the landscape paintings of Nicholas Poussin and Claude Lorrain over a century earlier. These two French artists were enamoured with the landscapes and architecture of rural Italy, depicting it as a vision of Arcadia. Their efforts inspired a broader pursuit of 'the Picturesque' in architecture (Statham, 2008).

Through the first half of the nineteenth century, the Italianate style spread widely in Britain fuelled by the works of architects such as John Nash and Charles Barry and through designs promoted in pattern books such as Charles Parker's *Villa Rustica* (1832). In 1845, the style

received Royal endorsement when Prince Albert, working with architect Thomas Cubitt, designed 'Osbourne' on the Isle of Wight as a retreat for Queen Victoria and the Royal family. 'Osbourne' with its plain stuccoed expression and tall balustraded tower would become the model for many large residences throughout the Empire including Government House in Melbourne.

The style, which emerged as the preferred expression for Melbourne's grandest mansions of the mid-century, was quickly adapted to suit more modest suburban villas and terraces. As Hubbard (2012:357) notes:

*Flexibility and adaptability were the secrets to the success of the Italianate style. It could range from the simplest of buildings to the grandest. It was not a precise style and could accommodate different levels of architectural sophistication. It could be formally symmetrical or informally asymmetrical. While towers were standard, they might be reduced to just a porch. The style was easy to copy and could be used by speculative builders buying stock items for decoration. Most importantly, the Italianate style used the vocabulary of classical architecture freely but sparingly, generally with relatively plain expanses of wall and hipped roofs with bracketed eaves.*

The Italianate house is so common in the Melbourne area that this is the standard image people hold of the 'Victorian house'. Condensed to its key features, they would be a hipped roof with an M-profile (i.e. having a central valley to the rear half, which allows a low ridgeline), bracketed eaves, chimneys with a cornice at the top (a run cement-render moulding), and a timber or iron-framed verandah with cast-iron ornament to all but the grandest houses. Common extras included a faceted (canted) bay used to create an asymmetric composition (or occasionally used symmetrically), and windows that had a round or segmental arched opening, some of which were embellished with run cement-render mouldings or delicate hood moulds.

There were three general types of cladding for Italianate houses. The most modest were clad in timber weatherboards or blocked boards emulating expensive ashlar. The two most common types were finished in cement render or face brick. Rendered houses could obtain a high level of run and cast ornament at an affordable price, leading to some highly embellished examples. All, even the most modest houses, had ruled render with incised lines to emulate the more expensive stone construction. Face brickwork was also common, usually dark brown Hawthorn bricks with cream brick dressings (bichrome) from the late 1860s, and later in the century with red brick accents as well (polychrome). Some architects and designer-builders created bold patterns with the coloured bricks. As good building stone was not common in Victoria, very few houses were built of stone. Early examples were of bluestone, such as the grand 'Bishopscourt' in East Melbourne.

The development of the former City of Prahran and the western part of the former City of Malvern coincides with the emergence of the Italianate forms of expression in Victoria. Consequently, the City of Stonnington retains a disproportionate number of Melbourne's better examples of the mode. A number of these, typically the grandest and most elaborate mansions or those associated with Victoria's most notable families, have been added to the Victorian Heritage Register. These include: 'Toorak House', 'Greenwich House' and 'Mandeville Hall', in Toorak; 'Stonington' in Malvern; and 'Malvern House' in Glen Iris.

Generally, 'Kaduwela' and 'Clare' can be compared with other substantial houses of the 1880s that demonstrate Italianate massing and detailing. Comparable examples that are Significant in the Stonnington Heritage Overlay (both in individual HOs and HO precincts) include:

- 'Carrington', 58 Kooyong Road, Armadale (HO318) – an imposing two-storey Italianate villa designed by architect Alfred Dunn. The building (c1887) has an asymmetrical form with a two-storey cast-iron return verandah set within a canted projecting bay fronting Kooyong Road.
- 29 Grandview Grove, Prahran (in HO135) – a substantial two-storey Italianate villa with an asymmetrical plan. The building has an unusual variation of the typical two-storey return verandah to one side of a canted projecting bay arrangement, where in this instance the cast-iron verandah is continuous across the front façade of the building.



- 72 Elizabeth Street, Malvern (HO309) – an imposing two-storey Italianate villa with two perpendicular projecting bays (one rectangular and one canted) with a two-storey cast-iron return verandah set between them. The building has elaborate detailing to the cement render, especially the architraves and paired eaves brackets.
- ‘Glenayon’, 19 Pine Grove, Malvern (HO278) – an imposing two-storey Italianate villa sited on a prominent corner location in Malvern. The building retains its unpainted cement render finish to two perpendicular canted bays which contain a two-storey cast-iron return verandah.

In comparison to the other substantial Italianate villas listed above, the residences known as ‘Kaduwela’ and ‘Clare’ are closest in massing and detail to the villas at 72 Elizabeth Street, Malvern (HO309) and ‘Glenayon’, Malvern (HO278), sharing an asymmetrical plan form with a cast-iron return verandah contained between two perpendicular projecting bays. These examples are broadly contemporary with the Tooronga Road villas with slight differences relating to their particular detailing and architectural composition; for example, the house at 72 Elizabeth Street adopts the canted bay window to only one of its projecting wings. 72 Elizabeth Street and ‘Glenayon’ appear substantially intact externally, although 72 Elizabeth Street has a contemporary two-storey addition to one side and a garage to the other.



Figure 10. 72 Elizabeth Street, Malvern HO309 (source: Context 2016).



Figure 11. 'Glenayon', 19 Pine Grove, Malvern HO278 (source: Google Streetview).

'Kaduwela' and 'Clare' are in comparison as architecturally sophisticated as these examples, if not as intact ('Clare', at least). The villas adopt the somewhat typical asymmetrical plan form as viewed and appreciated from Tooronga Road, and are distinguished by their elaborate cast and run cement render detailing, particularly expressed to the canted bay windows. It is not known when the return verandah was removed from no. 175 although likely accompanied the conversion of the residence into flats c1930s-1950. Panels of matching cast-iron balcony lacework have been incorporated into the replacement exterior stairwell. 'Montrose House' at 38 Huntingtower Road, Armadale (HO367) and 21 William Road, South Yarra (HO462) are individually significant under the City of Stonnington Heritage Overlay despite the loss of their verandahs. No. 175 compares well to 'Montrose House' in particular in terms of its massing, detailing and intactness.

In conclusion, the villas 'Kaduwela' and 'Clare' are fine examples of the substantial two-storey asymmetrical Italianate-type residence which are distinguished by their fine cast and run render detailing. The moulded architraves with vermiculated keystones that run into moulded imposts distinguish the segmentally arched double-hung sash windows to the projecting bays and other render details such as the vermiculated panels between the sill and string courses provide further embellishments to the otherwise typical suburban Italianate form. Their landmark appearance on Tooronga Road and the comparatively small number of substantial Victorian houses in Glen Iris further distinguishes this pair.

### **Thematic context**

This place illustrates the following themes, as identified in the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (Context Pty Ltd, rev. 2009):

*3.3.3 Speculators and land boomers*

*8.2.1 'Country in the city' - Suburban development in Malvern before WWI*

### **Assessment against criteria**

Assessment of this place was carried out in relation to the HERCON model criteria as set out in the VPP Practice Note 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' (2015).

## **Statement of significance**

### **What is significant?**

'Kaduwela' and 'Clare' at 173 and 175 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris, built in c1891-92 and comprising a formerly identical detached pair of substantial two-storey Italianate villas, are significant. The houses were constructed for landowner, Edward Shears, a successful grocer from Chapel Street.

The houses are significant to the extent of their nineteenth-century external form and fabric, including the surviving iron palisade fences (to both houses) with large masonry piers (to no. 173 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris). As landmarks to this part of Tooronga Road, the legibility of the built form in views from the public realm contributes to the significance of 'Kaduwela' in particular.

Later alterations and additions are not significant.

### **How is it significant?**

'Kaduwela' and 'Clare' at 173 and 175 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris are of local architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

### **Why is it significant?**

'Kaduwela' and 'Clare' at 173 and 175 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris are architecturally, fine representative examples of substantial Victorian Italianate villas built for middle-class residents of Glen Iris during the boom years of the 1880s and early 1890s. The houses adopt the typical Italianate asymmetrical plan with two perpendicular stepped and canted projecting bays which, in the case of no. 173 is linked by a returning two-storey cast-iron verandah. They are two of a small number of nineteenth-century houses in Glen Iris. (Criteria B & D)

Aesthetically, the houses are distinguished by their fine cast and run render detailing. To the front canted projecting bays, the moulded architraves with vermiculated keystones distinguish the segmentally arched double-hung sash windows. Other render details such as the vermiculated panels between the sill and string courses, and the cornice supported by paired eaves brackets set between floral swags and rosettes provide further embellishments to the otherwise typical suburban Italianate form. The two-storey return verandah to no. 173 appears to be highly intact with high quality cast-iron work of a range of floral patterns which is also of note. Both houses retain their original iron palisade front fences with large masonry gate posts, which provide an appropriate setting. (Criterion E)

### **Recommendation**

Recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay to the extent of the whole properties at 173 and 175 Tooronga Road, Glen Iris, as defined by the title boundaries.

HO Schedule controls: Fence Controls: Iron palisade fences (nos. 173 & 175) & rendered gate posts (no. 173)





Figure 12. Recommended extent of heritage overlay for 173 & 175 Toorong Road, Glen Iris (source: [www.land.vic.gov.au](http://www.land.vic.gov.au)).

Recommended grading: A2