

POWER STREET PRECINCT TOORAK

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd in association with Di Foster, historian, in support of an amendment to the Stonnington Planning Scheme that will create an urban conservation area to the north-west of the intersection of Glenferrie and Toorak Roads in Toorak. The report builds on work carried out by Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd in association with the Malvern Historical Society for the *City of Malvern Heritage Study*, 1992.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the area be protected as an Urban Conservation Area under the Stonnington Planning Scheme and be nominated to the Register of the National Estate.

EXTENT OF URBAN CONSERVATION AREA

The extent of the Urban Conservation Area is shown in the Heritage Overlay – HO180 – to the Stonnington Planning Scheme (Maps 2HO and 3HO).

HISTORY

TOORAK North of Toorak Road & KOOYONG Glenferrie Road

THE FIRST LAND SALES

The first known European sighting of the Toorak area was recorded on 4 February 1803 by James Flemming, a member of a survey party led by Charles Grimes. Flemming noted in his journal that the party 'proceeded onto a creek [Gardiners Creek] ... Saw some natives. The land in general is a fine black soil. Timber, gum, banksia, oak and mimosa of sorts, but not large except the gum.'¹ Gardiners Creek was known to the Aborigines as 'Kooyong Koot'. Much has been written about the overlander John Gardiner who, in company with Joseph Hawdon and John Hepburn, brought his cattle and settled at the same creek more than thirty years later. Gardiner had settled on the north side of Gardiners Creek near its junction with the Yarra River, where the tributary flowed in a number of different channels through natural bushland. Pastoralists took advantage of the undulating countryside, which was well grassed and well timbered.

The first sales of Crown land were held in June 1840. The sale, which marked the change from a grazing area to closer land settlement, attracted speculators looking for quick returns. Robert Hoddle and his team of surveyors had created a framework for speculative subdivision by establishing large agricultural allotments divided by a grid of unmade government roads. Allotments situated north of present day Toorak Road, on high land sloping down to the Yarra River and Gardiners Creek were the first to be sold. Until 1857, Toorak Road was known as Gardiners Creek Road.

As Melbourne's population increased so did the rush to buy land and speculators, farmers, market gardeners and pastoralists looked beyond Melbourne town and into the rural districts. These districts included acres of uncleared land with only surveyors' marks to show the line of future roads.

Crown allotments 19 and 20, consisting of 131 acres of well-drained land west of present day Glenferrie Road, were purchased by speculator John William Gosling for £1625.² East of Glenferrie Road, lot 21, which included 60 acres extending to the line of present day Avenel Road, was purchased by solicitor Peter Ferrie for £540.³ Glenferrie Road, a government road first surveyed in 1837, was

¹ James Flemming, 'A journal of the explorations of Charles Grimes, Acting Surveyor-General of New South Wales', in J. J. Shillinglaw, *Historical Records of Port Phillip*, Melbourne, 1879, pp.24-6, cited in Grant & Serle, *The Melbourne scene 1803-1956*, Melbourne, 1957, p.18.

² Ian F. McLaren, *Malvern Crown Land Sales' 1840-1879*, Melbourne 1987, unpublished manuscript, Malvern Archives.

³ Rob Bower, 'Malvern, a history of the subdivision, 1840-1989', Plan 1, unpublished manuscript, Malvern Archives.

initially known as the Hawthorn, or the Richmond to Brighton Road, then in 1857 the name Barkly Road was adopted.⁴

Land values dropped when speculation in land and a drop in wool prices caused an economic slump. In February 1851, just a few months before the discovery of gold was first announced in Victoria, John Gosling sold his allotments to pastoralist Thomas Herbert Power at a substantial loss.⁵ Thomas Power, one of Melbourne's three principal stock and station agents and one of Melbourne's first Irish settlers, made his fortune as a land speculator, pastoralist and auctioneer.⁶ He later held positions of some standing, including Member of the Legislative Council, Director of the National Bank and Commissioner of the Savings Bank.⁷

Thomas Power's rich pastoral lands bordering Gardiners Creek, were an invitation to the wealthy merchants, pastoralists and politicians of the colony to purchase large estates. Power subdivided his land with the line of Moonga Road separating the two allotments.⁸ Purchasers were not deterred by Toorak's rural environment, primitive roads and distance from town and in 1855, four allotments, each of more than four acres, were sold to Parliamentarian John McCrae; gentleman James Kidd; landholder James Brown and stock and station agent, Gideon Rutherford.⁹ In Gardiners Creek (Toorak) Road and Boundary (Kooyong) Road, brick houses were built on each of the four allotments.

GORRY (West of Kooyong Road)

Land at the north west corner of Kooyong Road and Toorak Road, forms part of Crown allotment 18, which first sold in June 1840. Kearney's map of 1855 shows the allotment as mainly undeveloped land with a few scattered dwellings. From 1849 the adjacent allotment, lot 17, was the site of James Jackson's Toorak House, which became the Governor's residence five years later. Proximity to Toorak House and the fine elevated land with good views, encouraged development of the area with fine mansion homes.

⁴ Glenferrie Road was named for Governor Sir Henry Barkly.

⁵ Lots 19 & 20 were sold to Power on 8 February 1851 for £828. Leslie A. Schumer, *Malvern Pioneers*, No 1, The first of a series of reports on the original Crown grants of land within the City of Malvern. Malvern Historical Society, 1979.

⁶ Garryowen, *The Chronicles of early Melbourne, 1835-1852*, Centennial Edition, vol.II, Melbourne, 1888, p.767.

⁷ K. Thomson & G. Serle, *A Biographical Register of the Victorian Parliament 1859-1900*, p.107.

⁸ Bower, op cit, plan 1.

⁹ Ibid

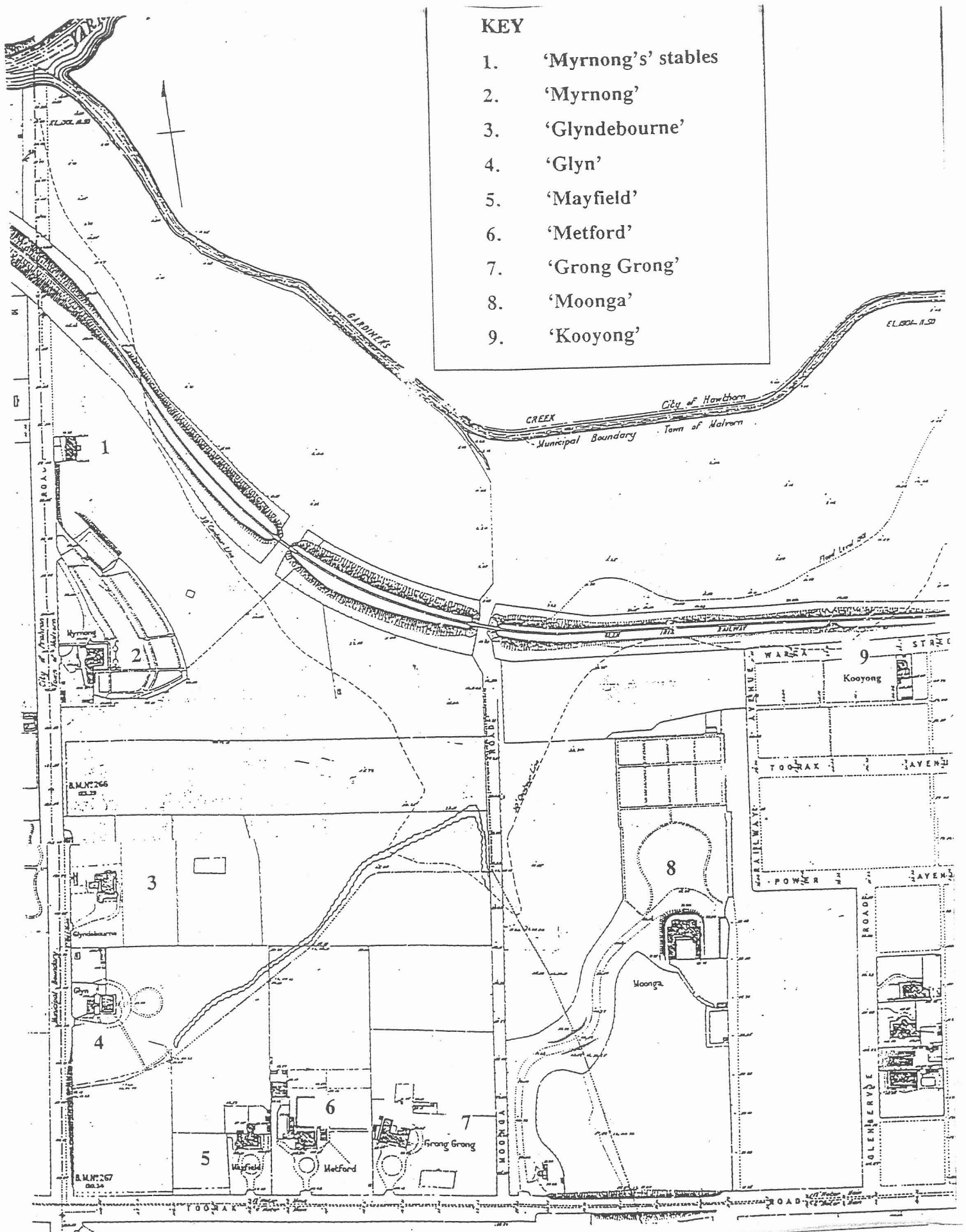


Illustration 1 MMBW detail plan showing mansions, Crown Allotments 10 & 20, 1902.

In Kooyong Road, opposite the present Glyndebourne Road, the mansion Gorry, with extensive formal gardens, carriage drive and gatehouse, was built with its entrance off Heyington Place. (Forrest Court is now on the site of Gorry). The MMBW plan of 1895 shows Gorry's southern boundary adjoining a large undeveloped paddock at the corner of Toorak Road. This vacant land was eventually subdivided into large building allotments. Three of these allotments, now opposite Selwyn Court, were first developed during the inter-war years, and the present homes date from this period.

GLYN (Selwyn Court)

John McCrae paid £800 for his allotment and built a five-roomed house with detached kitchen, stables and cellar, at the corner of Gardiners Creek Road and Boundary Road.¹⁰ The house was later named Glyn. In 1865 McCrae sold his property to James Stewart Butters for £3000.¹¹ Within three years of his arrival in Victoria in 1853, Butters had become a stock and share broker and gold-buyer and by 1860 he was involved in the establishment of a stock exchange. Butters was elected to parliament as MLA for Portland, and along with his neighbour, John Quarterman, his involvement with Hugh Glass led to his expulsion from the Legislative Assembly.¹² In 1868, the year Butters was re-elected to Parliament, his land in Toorak was transferred to Glass, who was the mortgagor.¹³

Glyn changed hands a number of times before being purchased in 1905 by MLA Edward Miller.¹⁴ Miller, the second son of Henry (money) Miller, 'inherited his [father's] mantle as Melbourne's leading figure in banking, insurance and real estate.'¹⁵ Edward Miller was considered 'a careful conservator of his inheritance, constantly developing and modernising his valuable city properties and managing the family's Victorian pastoral interests and further property.'¹⁶

Miller commissioned prominent architect Rodney Alsop of the firm Klingender & Alsop, to design a new home on the site of Glyn. The grand Edwardian mansion, also named Glyn, was completed in 1908.¹⁷ When Sir Edward Miller died in 1932, the property passed to Mary his widow, and their son, philanthropist Everard Studley Miller occupied the family home. Born in 1886, Everard, the younger of two sons, followed the family tradition by working in the Bank of Victoria.¹⁸ He continued his classical

¹⁰ Gardiner Road Board, rate book, 1856-7.

¹¹ Bower, op cit, plan 1.

¹² Margaret Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday*, Carlton, 1961, p. 251; de Serville, *Pounds & Pedigrees* p. 365.

¹³ Gardiner Road Board, Rate Book, 1868; *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 3, p. 316.

¹⁴ Shire of Malvern Valuation book Western riding, 1889, no.4. Butters had previously sold the property to a syndicate of Melbourne Club members; Melbourne's best known grocer Germaine Nicholson, Hon. George Harker and squatter and company director, Joseph Sutherland. Germaine Nicholson, successful merchant, philanthropist and anti-transportation agitator, expanded his tea importing business during the gold rush. Michael Cannon, *Melbourne after the Gold Rush*, Main Ridge, 1993, p.203. Ownership of Glyn as recorded in National Trust file 224 Kooyong Road.

¹⁵ *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 10, p.509.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Town of Malvern Rate Book, 1906. Brick house in course of erection, Kooyong Road.

¹⁸ *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 10, p.510.

studies however, and became interested in family history, engineering and geography. When Miller died in 1956, a sale of his extraordinary collection of antiques, fine arts and porcelain was held at the house.¹⁹ Miller's will determined that part of his estate was to bequeath property and money to the National Gallery of Victoria.²⁰ Glyn was sold, the adjacent land was subdivided and Selwyn Court was created to the south of Glyn.²¹

GLYNDEBOURNE (Glyndebourne Avenue)

In 1857 Western District squatter and MLA, John Quarterman, purchased nine acres of land in Boundary Road²² where he built a modest villa of five rooms with detached kitchen, stone cellar and stables.²³ During the 1880s, land values rose rapidly and in 1889 the house which had been enlarged to twelve rooms²⁴ was sold to Thomas Power's son, neighbour Robert Power.²⁵ Robert Power had owned part of his father's land in Boundary Road since 1863,²⁶ but when land values plummeted Equity Trustees then the National Bank acquired the property. Crown Prosecutor John Gurner purchased the estate in 1905 and named the house Glyndebourne.

In 1911 a new house, also named 'Glyndebourne', was built to the design of William Blackett for Judge Gurner on the site of the old Glyndebourne.²⁷ From 1915, land surrounding Gurner's house was subdivided and sold as the Glyndebourne Heights Estate. Glyndebourne, with two acres of land, was purchased by Harold Gordon Darling. On the death of his father in 1914, Darling became principal of John Darling and Son, his father's milling and grain business. The headquarters of the company moved to Melbourne and Darling made his home in Toorak. As Chairman of the Board of B.H.P. Darling was its youngest member.²⁸ In the 1930s Glyndebourne was re-named 'Armagh' and a ballroom was added to the design of Robert Hamilton. In 1937 'Armagh' was sold to industrialist Cecil McKay, the Managing Director of H.V. McKay, Massey Harris Pty. Ltd.²⁹

¹⁹ Sale catalogue, The superb antique furniture contained in Glyn, under instructions from Trustees in the Estate of the late E. Studley Miller, 1957. Copy held in Malvern Archives.

²⁰ The bequest of £170,000 was to be a purchasing fund to be used for the acquisition of 'portraits of individuals of merit in history, painted engraved or sculptured before 1800.' *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 10, p.511.

²¹ Selwyn Court, LP44816 Declared 8.10.1957. Lodged 22.5.1959, Bower, plan 1, p.29.

²² de Serville, op cit, p. 430; E. M. Robb, *Early Toorak & District*, Melbourne, 1934, p.77.

²³ Gardiner Road Board, rate book, 1856-7, no. 157.

²⁴ Shire of Malvern Valuation book, Western riding, 1883-4, no. 2.

²⁵ Shire of Malvern Valuation book, Western riding, 1889, no. 3.

²⁶ Bower, op cit, plan 1.

²⁷ *W. A. M. Blackett has in hand a residence at Toorak for Mr. J. A. Gurner*, in Building 12.6.1911, p. 20, cited in Miles Lewis (ed.), *Australian Architecture Index*, University of Melbourne, 1977.

²⁸ *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol 10, p. 210-11.

²⁹ *Who's who*, 1947. Cecil was the son of Darling's colleague, B.H.P. director and agricultural machinery pioneer Hugh V. McKay.

In the 1920s development was rapid and in Glyndebourne Avenue vacant blocks quickly became building sites.³⁰ One of the first houses to be built was 'Windarring'. Designed in 1918 by Oakden and Ballantyne, the house was reported as 'command[ing] an extensive view of the Yarra and its valley, Scotch College and the Kooyong tennis courts.'³¹ In 1923 Walter Burley Griffin designed Stanley Salter's house at 16 Glyndebourne Avenue.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1913,
At Three o'clock, on the Ground.

MOONGA ESTATE

PICTURESQUE **TOORAK** ACCESSIBLE

39 Choice Residential Allotments

With Frontages to Toorak Road, Power Avenue, Toorak Avenue and Warra Road

C. J. and T. HAM, Auctioneers,
281 COLLINS STREET (opposite the Bank).

The Estate is charmingly situated in the progressive portion of this popular suburb, within

Three Minutes' Walk of Kooyong Railway Station,

Two Minutes' Walk of Glenferrie Road Electric Tram,

Seven Minutes' Walk of Toorak Cable Tram,

in a position which has rapidly developed into a

High-class Residential Area - where in recent years many Modern Mansions and Villas have been erected, and where the demand for Allotments has been so active that this subdivision presents to home buyers, investors, and speculators an

Opportunity too Good to Miss of securing land in this Picturesque and Accessible Locality, with its Claiming Views of the Beautiful GLEN IRIS VALLEY, augmented by the pleasing surroundings of the Gardens of the Mansions, and the undulating fields of the adjoining suburbs.

Every Lot perfectly Drained.

LIBERAL TERMS.
One-tenth Deposit, one-tenth in a month, balance in equal instalments at 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 years, interest at 5 per cent. per ann., payable half-yearly, right to pay off at any time.

TITLE CERTIFICATE.
To be issued by the Registrar-General.

Solicitors,
MR. W. H. SMITH AND JEFFERSON,
105 GUNPOWDER STREET.

Illustration2

Subdivision plan, Moonga Estate, 1913.

³⁰ Glyndebourne Avenue, first known as Gladys Avenue. LP7662, 1919. Bower, op cit, plan 1, p.25.
³¹ 2 Glyndebourne Avenue, Malvern Building Plan No 1523; Hedley Sanders, *Windarring*. in *The Australian Home Beautiful*, 1 March 1928.

MAYFIELD & GRONG GRONG**(Evans Court & Grong Grong Court)**

Meanwhile in Gardiners Creek Road, James Kidd had also paid £800 for his six acres, cleared the land for cultivation and pasture and built 'Mayfield Villa'. Three years later, in 1858, 'Mayfield Villa' was sold to stock and station agent, Gideon Rutherford, for £2000.³² Auctioned in 1876, 'Mayfield Villa' was described as having 'five rooms, detached kitchen and servant's room, stable, coach-house, cellar, tanks and other accommodation.'³³ The property became the home of merchant Robert Harper and his sons Robert, also a merchant and Andrew, a clergyman and school master. Robert jnr. became a prominent member of the Legislative Assembly, an acknowledged authority on finance, chairman of the Commercial Bank and was a founder of the Toorak Presbyterian Church.³⁴ In 1877 the family commissioned noted architect Thomas Watts to design alterations to 'Mayfield Villa'.³⁵

On the west corner of Toorak Road and Moonga Road, Gideon Rutherford's allotment was the site of Ettrick a nine-roomed brick house with kitchen, cellar, coach-house & stables.³⁶ Gideon, a partner in stock and station agents, Power, Rutherford & Co., had married Mary Anne McCrae in 1847 and two sons and three daughters were born. In 1860 ill health forced Rutherford's resignation as the first chairman of the Gardiner Road Board and he died at the age of 41.³⁷

Rutherford's property was eventually sold to pastoralist and racing enthusiast, John Inglis, in 1878 and ten years later it was sold to solicitor Robert Whiting for £6600 and named Grong Grong.³⁸ Grong Grong, with its lawn tennis court and pavilion, was sold in 1907 to Mrs Isabella Ross-Soden as the site for the family's new home.³⁹ They had just returned from a grand tour of Asia and Europe and society architect Walter Butler was chosen to design the new house which was to provide a suitable setting for the family's busy social life. Butler created a villa of twenty rooms that was well suited to its Australian environment; the wide eaves protected the sunny side of the house and all the main rooms and bedrooms opened directly onto balconies or terraces which looked onto the terraced garden. The home was complete with servants quarters, a grand stair-case and large entrance hall. Marble steps and a tiled entrance led from the porte-cochere and a separate staircase provided access to the servants' quarters at the rear. The ballroom with parquetry floor overlooked the rear gardens. Hedges grew along both street frontages, and the house and garden, also designed by Butler, were linked by terraces, steps and hedges.

³² Bower, op cit, plan 1.

³³ *Argus*, 9 December 1876, p.2, cited in Miles Lewis (ed.) *Australian Architectural Index*, University of Melbourne, 1977.

³⁴ de Serville, op cit, p. 399; *Fred John's Annual, Australia's Prominent People*, London, 1914, p. 92; Sutherland, vol. 2, p.481.

³⁵ Shire of Malvern valuation book Western Riding, 1880, No. 19. *Argus*, 7 May 1877, p.32, Tenders for additions and alterations to Mayfield, Toorak for Robert Harper. MLAAL.

³⁶ Gardiner Road District Rate book 1856-7, No 111.

³⁷ Rev. C. S. Ross, *Victorian historical journal*, No 10. December 1913, pp.81-83.

³⁸ de Serville, op cit, p. 307; Gardiner Road District Rate book 1878, No 53; Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1888, no. 7.

³⁹ City of Malvern valuation book, North Ward, 1907-8, no. 29.

On the exterior facades, Butler decorated the smooth cement rendered wall surfaces with art nouveau wreaths of gum leaves. The house was one of the most impressive buildings of the Federation period'.⁴⁰

In 1927, land surrounding 'Grong Grong' and 'Mayfield Villa' was subdivided to create Evans Court, leaving both homes on reduced allotments.⁴¹ The auctioneers boasted of 'Mayfield's' premier location -

All Australia knows Toorak as Melbourne's outstanding residential centre. It is a name synonymous with the best in home life, its excellence being the standard for comparison. ... Apart from its prestige and exclusiveness, the investment value of Toorak as a residential area cannot be over-estimated. ... while Evan (sic) Court, the new private roadway adjoining the estate, is a graceful means of approach, which greatly enhances the exclusiveness of this most desirable residence. Mayfield Estate occupies a commanding, elevated position and is surrounded by charming homes.'⁴²

At the Toorak Road end of Evans Court, architect Joseph Plottel designed a block of four apartments with a matching maisonette for his own use in 1933.⁴³ Other leading architects including Arnaud Wright, Philip Hudson, Butler & Martin and Robert Hamilton, also designed houses in Evans Court.

During World War II, 'Grong Grong' was used by the Defence Department for an Air Force administration school and a hospital and rest area for servicemen. When the War ended, the house became a technical and learning centre for the Post Master General's Department.⁴⁴ One of Melbourne's finest homes was finally demolished in 1964 when Grong Grong Court was created.⁴⁵

METFORD/KYEAMBA (Kyeamba Grove)

In Toorak Road, James Brown's house was surrounded by four acres of pasture and cultivated land and from 1880 the property was owned by merchant, parliamentarian and Commissioner of Customs, William Froggatt Walker.⁴⁶ Walker ran a successful general store in Bourke Street, before establishing Walkers' Bonded Stores, which became the Melbourne Storage Company in 1881. W.F. Walker and Co. were general merchants and importers of coal, lime and cement.⁴⁷

As the 1880s boom years progressed, houses became larger and more elaborate, with no shortage of money to convert previously modest villas into mansions with ball-rooms, banquet halls and lofty reception halls. By 1890 Walker's house had been enlarged to include sixteen rooms spread over two-

⁴⁰ Anne Mancini, *Grong Grong Melbourne*, in Architect, October 1986, p.14.

⁴¹ City of Malvern rate book, North Ward, 1927-8, No. 48; Evans Court LP12597, Bower, p.25.

⁴² Subdivision and sale notice, Mayfield Estate, 1927, Malvern Archives.

⁴³ Evans Court, LP12540, Bower, plan 1, p. 25; Joseph Plottel, Burnett and Alsop are shown as owners of land in the subdivision and sale notice, Mayfield Estate, 1927, Malvern Archives.

⁴⁴ City of Malvern rate books, North Ward, 1937-43, No 60, 1943-9, No 73 & 1954-59, No 91.

⁴⁵ Grong Grong Court. LP 64952, Bower, plan 1, p.25.

⁴⁶ Shire of Malvern Rate book, Western Riding, 1880, No 67.

⁴⁷ Thomson & Serle, *A Biographical Register of the Victorian Legislature, 1851-1900*. (Canberra 1972), p.216; Sutherland, p.506.

storeys.⁴⁸ The house was named Metford. At the turn of the century Metford (Mitford) was leased to barrister Stewart McArthur.⁴⁹ and the McArthur's golf course extended to 'Mrs Power's paddock', on the east corner of Moonga Road.

'Metford' was renamed Kyeamba and sold to prominent eye surgeon Dr William Francis Orr.⁵⁰ In 1937 the sale of Kyeamba set a record price for suburban residential land. The *Argus* reported that 'the property [was being retained] as a private home' and that 'not for many years had an old mansion home of this description been sold for use as a residence'.⁵¹ The two-storey mansion was 'surrounded by magnificent gardens, which were originally laid out by the then curator of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens'.⁵² However, the following year it was announced that 'Kyeamba' was to be demolished and the land subdivided.⁵³ This was in 1938, the same year Robert Hamilton wrote of the increasing numbers of maisonettes being built. In the newly created Kyeamba Grove, architects including Arnaud Wright, Philip Hudson and Cowper, Murphy & Appleford, were responsible for several pairs of maisonettes.⁵⁴

MYRNONG

(Myrnong Crescent)

Glyndebourne, Glyn, Metford, Mayfield, and Grong Grong, were surrounded by the large estates of Thomas Power and his sons, Herbert and Robert. Robert Power was only twenty-five years old, when in 1860, he commissioned architect Francis Maloney White to design his new home in Boundary Road.⁵⁵ The site for Robert Power's home Myrnong was carefully selected on seventeen acres of high land with views across Gardiners Creek. Five acres of Myrnong's land near the creek were flood-prone, but in the same year the river flats were cut off by the construction of the railway.⁵⁶

The new line from Burnley to Darling was opened just before the bank crash of 1891. Following the devastating collapse of the land boom, it was not uncommon for homes to be vacated by their owners. For a time during the depression, Charles Fairbairn, brother of politician Sir George Fairbairn, leased Myrnong.⁵⁷ Robert Power lived at Myrnong with his wife Harriett (French), until his death in 1914.⁵⁸

48 Shire of Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1889 & 1890, No 6.

49 Ibid. 1898, No 63.

50 Dr William Orr was a foundation fellow of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons. Monica Starke, *Malvern identities*, unpublished notes, undated, family history files, Malvern Archives.

51 *Argus* 10 September 1937 p.7.

52 Ibid.

53 26 May 1938 in RVIA Press cuttings 1939, cited in Miles Lewis Architectural Index

54 Kyeamba Grove 1938, LP14843 Bower, op cit, plan 1, p.26.

55 Francis Maloney White. Tenders wanted for erection of a house for Robert Power, Gardiners Creek Road. *Argus*, 27 October 1860, p.8. MLAAL.

56 Shire of Malvern valuation book, Western Riding, 1889, no.1.

57 Shire of Malvern rate book, Western Riding, 1892, no. 1.

58 de Serville, op cit, p. 139 & p. 328.

In 1923 the subdivision of the Myrnong Estate created twenty-six 'magnificent' allotments in Myrnong Crescent & the east end of Turnbull Avenue.⁵⁹ Myrnong was purchased by former bicycle racing champion, William Howard Lewis who renamed the property Gleneagles. Lewis ran a city bicycle store prior to his association with Tarrant Engineering Co.⁶⁰ William Lewis died at Gleneagles in 1939 and the following year 'Gleneagles' was sold, the land subdivided and Robert Power's old home was demolished.⁶¹ The sale notice recorded that 'it is of historical interest that in addition to the "Monarch of the Glen" Red gum (hundreds of years old) on Gleneagles Estate there are the remnants of another ancient Red Gum showing where the aborigines cut off a canoe from the trunk'.⁶²

MOONGA (Moonga Road, Merriwee Crescent, Monomeath Avenue, Power Avenue, Toorak Avenue, Warra Street)

Herbert Power, pastoralist and stock and station and Robert's brother and business partner, was born in 1836. In 1880 Power built a lodge-house in Toorak Road and commissioned architect Francis White to design his new home facing Gardiners Creek.⁶³ Moonga was completed in 1884 and the mansion included thirty-six rooms, large enough to house Power's family of seven children.⁶⁴ Herbert Power was one of a number of 'well-known Melbourne citizens', who employed the services of William and George Dean, Melbourne's 'leading firm of house decorators'.⁶⁵ Moonga's carriage-drive curved down the valley from Toorak Road.

A brisk walk along Toorak Road brings the pedestrian to a valley in which weeping willows grow luxuriantly. To the left (looking between the tree-strands), standing on a low terrace, is 'Moonga', Mr. Herbert Power's home. ... Moonga drive is perhaps, one of the prettiest in Victoria, winding through high banks of well-kept shrubs and flowers, backed up by a dense growth of trees.⁶⁶

The Power brothers were expert riders and in 1899 Herbert won the Melbourne Cup on his own horse 'Merriwee'. Herbert Power was a founder of both the Victoria Racing Club and the Victorian Amateur Turf Club.⁶⁷

In 1888, in anticipation of the railway and with the opportunities for speculation and development provided by the inflated economy, the north east corner of Power's land was subdivided and the east end of Warra Street, (first known as Station Street), was created.⁶⁸ At the same time pasture land at the

⁵⁹ Myrnong Estate, subdivision plan and sale notice, 1923. Myrnong Crescent & Turnbull Avenue, LP10846, 1925, Bower, op cit, plan 1, p.28.

⁶⁰ Tarrant and Lewis were the first to manufacture a workable petrol driven car. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 10, p.96.

⁶¹ Subdivision and sale notice, Gleneagles Estate 9.3.1940.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Sutherland, Victoria and its metropolis, Melbourne, 1988, p. 537.

⁶⁴ Shire of Malvern valuation book Western Riding, 1884, no. 8

⁶⁵ *Romance of Melbourne business houses*, in The Age, 7 January 1933, p.5.

⁶⁶ Ixion, 'A saunter through a fashionable suburb', *Australasian*, 1892, p.232.

⁶⁷ James Smith, (ed.) *The Cyclopedia of Victoria*, Melbourne, 1905, p.115.

⁶⁸ LP 2167.

corner of Glenferrie and Toorak Roads was subdivided by the Progressive Land Company and Glenbervie Road was created.⁶⁹

The extension of Warra Street in 1903 and the creation of Toorak (Monomeath) Avenue was to be the forerunner of Toorak's twentieth century subdivisions.⁷⁰ In 1907 the Toorak Estate included residential allotments in Warra Street, Power Street and Monomeath Avenue, and commercial allotments in Glenferrie Road.⁷¹ Jorgen Pedersen purchased the commercial sites from the Victorian Building Society in 1911 and built the first store on the corner of Warra Street.

In 1913 the subdivision of 'Moonga' created the south end of Power Avenue and left the mansion standing on a reduced allotment. The Moonga Estate was -

Charmingly situated in the progressive portion of this popular suburb ... in a position which has rapidly developed into a high class residential area where in recent years many Malvern mansions and villas have been erected and where the demand for allotments has been so active that this subdivision presents to home buyers, investors and speculators, an opportunity too good to miss of securing land in this picturesque and accessible locality with its charming views of the beautiful Glen Iris valley, augmented by the pleasing surroundings of the gardens of the mansions and the undulating fields of the adjoining suburbs.⁷²

Architects of note were immediately attracted to the new estate, with the first house built by Walter Butler in 1914 for his own family on lot 16 at the corner of Power Avenue and Power Street.⁷³ In 1920 when a second subdivision created Merriwee Crescent, 'Moonga' was demolished and Merriwee Crescent, named for Herbert Power's Melbourne Cup winner, took the line of 'Moonga's' carriage-drive.⁷⁴

Toorak's topography, with its old creek gullies and hilly disposition has influenced present day development. The interesting curved subdivision pattern of the estates bordering Gardiners Creek has contributed to the area's 'high architectural and landscape qualities'.⁷⁵ New roads, planned around the earlier mansion estates, were a diversion from the standard suburban grid, creating an unconventional curving road pattern. This pattern made excellent use of the undulating terrain, presenting opportunities for imaginative design. Building standards remained high as vacant land continued to bring premium prices and the resulting new developments were for clients who could afford to pay for the best quality

⁶⁹ Station Street LP2167, 12.10.1888, Bower, op cit, plan 1, p. 29; Glenbervie Road LP2633, Bower, op cit, plan 1, p. 25.

⁷⁰ Warra Street LP6190 14.10.1903. Bower, op cit, plan 1, p.29.

⁷¹ Toorak Estate subdivision and sale notice, 1907, Alway collection, Malvern Archives.

⁷² Moonga Estate subdivision and sale notice, 1913, Alway collection.

⁷³ Avalon, 14 Power Avenue designed in 1914 by Butler & Bradshaw, University of Melbourne Architectural Drawing collection, SLV (WD HOU. 148-1). See also Lewis & Aitken, Malvern Heritage Study, p. 309.

⁷⁴ Merriwee Court. LP7795, Bower, op cit, plan 1, p.27.

⁷⁵ Lewis and Aitken, op cit, p. 4.

in design as well as materials. Houses, particularly those built during the Interwar period, stood as examples of fine architecture.

During the post war years, Toorak continued to attract the cream of Melbourne's architectural profession and the work of noted post war architects such as Robin Boyd, Neil Clerehan, Frederick Romberg and Roy Grounds can be found throughout the district. However, Toorak's reputation as Australia's leading residential address also attracted less appropriate development and that legacy of undistinguished flats and multi-unit dwellings has become an equally legible aspect of postwar development in the area.

DESCRIPTION

The urban conservation area was once part of some grand estates that occupied the land between Kooyong, Toorak and Glenferrie Roads and the railway. The area includes a range of streetscapes of varying period but uniformly high character.

Glenferrie Road itself contains a blend of buildings dating mainly from the twentieth century. The early character of the area is retained in a group of shops at the northern end of the road and in the nearby Federation era railway signal box. However, the principal focus of the streetscape derives from a sequence of early twentieth century and interwar villas and apartment blocks. These include *El Tovar* (No 459 Glenferrie Road) and *Melville Court* (No 453 Glenferrie Road).

The area immediately to the west of Glenferrie Road offers a variety of streetscapes unified by the steeply falling land, unusual curved subdivision patterns and extraordinarily high standards of architectural design. The number and variety of buildings to designs by major architectural figures includes extensive bodies of work by Robert Bell Hamilton, Walter Butler, the Klingenders and the Kings. This unique conjunction of topographic opportunity, talented designers and wealthy clients combine to produce an area of very attractive and significant architectural streetscapes. Little of the nineteenth century building stock associated with the grand mansion estates has survived and the area largely derives its character from buildings constructed between 1910 and 1940.

Stylistically, the area draws from a number of sources. The Old English influence, present in Glenferrie Road is reiterated throughout the area. Fine examples of the style remain in Power Avenue, Moonga Road, Merriwee Crescent and Evans Court with outstanding examples of the idiom at 655 and 657 Toorak Road. Residences drawing on Georgian Revival sources are equally abundant with particularly fine examples in Power Avenue, Glenbervie Road and Moonga Road. The bungalow form appears throughout the area and can be seen in its earliest form in 11 Toorak Avenue and its most highly

developed in residences such as 3 Glenbervie Road. Other streets are more modest. Warra Street, for example comprises simple Federation dwellings at the eastern end with slightly more substantial interwar bungalows to the west while the Selwyn and Kyeamba Courts offer a restrained mixture of villas and maisonettes of more recent construction. The area is also noteworthy for a handful of less typical residences of considerable individual significance such as *Glyn* at 224 Kooyong Road by Klingender & Alsop, the former *Revell* at 9 Toorak Avenue by Edward F Billson or the residences at 1 and 3 Myrnong Crescent.

As might be expected in so desirable district, some redevelopment of the area has taken place in recent years. Toorak Road in particular has suffered some degradation as a result of unsympathetic development in the form of multi storey flats, and for this reason has been left out of the area, with the exception of a group of distinguished houses between Moonga Road and Power Avenue. Nonetheless, the area has retained its essential characteristics of prestige and quality, with fine houses of the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s dominating the area as a whole.

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Illustration 3

Subdivision plan, Glyndebourne Heights Estate, c. 1915.

ANALYSIS

Comparative analysis of this section of Toorak is constrained by the fact that few or no comparable areas of domestic development exist, either locally or nationally. In this area, the stature of the architects, builders and clients combine to create an atmosphere of grandeur. The early associations with Government House attracted a cross section of Melbourne's gentry to the area and assigned a cachet to Toorak which has survived the subdivision of the mansion homes and the withdrawal of the Governor to the Domain, and which persists to the present day. From its earliest settlement, Toorak has been associated with the expression of status through opulence and style. This expression, along with successive waves of subdivision and resubdivision since the turn of the century, has created a mix of housing dating largely from Federation through to WWII. While this mix is in itself not unusual for the inner eastern suburbs of Melbourne, it is the scale and consistently high quality of the building stock that render this area extraordinary.

Most obviously, the proposed heritage overlay area shares these qualities with the existing conservation area immediately to the west. It is similar in terms of topography, housing stock, architects and occupant profile. The failure to extend this existing UCA beyond Kooyong Road in the past should not be inferred as an indication of a disparity in the quality of the building stocks, but rather a reflection of the fact that Kooyong Road was the boundary between the former municipalities of Prahran and Malvern.

Throughout the postwar period, Toorak has continued to offer a rare mixture of amenity and prestige making it attractive not simply as a residential address, but as a speculative opportunity for builders and developers. Much of the work competed throughout the 1950s and 1960s maintained the themes of scale, setback and form of the earlier work, and thus has not intruded overmuch upon the primarily early twentieth character of the area. Redevelopment continues to the present day. Even now, the majority of this new construction has continued the processes which have, historically been responsible for the formation of Toorak: namely the construction of high quality residential stock for distinguished clients by capable architects. The better new developments are respectful of the existing housing stock and respond sympathetically to existing scales, massing and streetscape values. The major exception to this has been the postwar redevelopment of the north side of Toorak Road, between Kooyong Road and Glenferrie Road. The newer buildings in this streetscape primarily comprise multi-level flats and townhouses quite distinct in scale and density to the houses found in the streets to the north. Those streets judged to have irrevocably lost the distinctive character deriving from the late nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century subdivision and development have been excluded from the proposed area.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Power Street heritage area of Toorak is part of an exceptional suburb within Melbourne featuring consistently fine residential building stock produced predominantly during the twentieth century. The area is outstanding for its consistently high standards of construction and design.

It provides a substantial representation of residential development of the interwar period, superimposed through redevelopment of the large estates of the previous century alongside other remnant buildings of the first wave of limited development during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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APPENDIX

**SCHEDULE OF BUILDINGS, DESCRIPTIONS AND
RECOMMENDED GRADINGS**

EVANS COURT*Street No. Grading***West Side**

1	A2	Refer 625 Toorak Rd.
3	B	Double storey interwar villa with garage additions.
5	B	Double storey interwar villa.
7/9/9A	B	Double storey interwar flats.
11/13	B	Double storey interwar pair. Semi detached.

North Side

15	B	Double storey postwar flats with basement parking.
17/17A	B	Double storey interwar pair. Semi detached.
19	B	Interwar villa with attic storey.
21	-	Double storey modern villa.
25	B	Double storey interwar villa.
27	B	Double storey interwar villa.
31/33	-	Single storey modern pair. Semi detached.
35-37	-	Double storey building under construction.
39/41	B	Double storey interwar pair. Semi detached.
43	B	Double storey postwar villa.

East Side

2	-	Single storey modern villa.
4	-	Demolished.
6	B	Moonya. Early double storey villa. Extensively modified.
8	B	Double storey interwar villa.
10	B	Double storey interwar villa.

South Side

12	B	Double storey interwar villa.
14	B	Double storey interwar villa.
18	-	Double storey modern villa.
22	-	Single storey modern villa.
26	B	Double storey interwar villa.
28	B	Double storey interwar villa.
30	B	Double storey interwar villa.
32	B	Double storey interwar villa.

GLEN ROAD*Street No. Grading***North Side**

3	-	Double storey modern villa.
25	-	Double storey modern pair with Moonga Road.

South Side

2	B	Double storey interwar villa.
18	B	Double storey interwar villa.

GLENBERVIE ROAD*Street No. Grading***West Side**

3	B	Early double storey villa.
5	-	Double storey modern house.
7	B	Double storey interwar villa. (HO311)
9	B	Double storey interwar villa.
11	A2	Double storey interwar villa.
15	-	Double storey modern villa
17	-	Single storey modern villa.

East Side

2	B	Single storey interwar villa.
4	B	Late Victorian single storey villa.
6	B	Late Victorian double storey villa.
8	-	Single storey modern villa with basement parking.
10	-	Vacant.
12	B	Double storey interwar villa.
16	-	Single storey modern villa.
18	-	Double storey modern villa.

GLENFERRIE ROAD*Street No. Grading***West Side**

449	B	Double storey interwar villa.
- Park -		
451	B	The Guild. Single storey interwar villa with ground floor additions.
453	B	Double storey interwar villa with carport extension.
- Power Street -		
455	B	Double storey interwar villa.
457	B	Williscroft. Single storey Victorian villa. Extensively modified
459	B	El Tovar. Double storey interwar flats.
- Monomeath Avenue -		
461	B	Double storey Federation shop.
463	B	Double storey Federation shop.
465-467	B	Pair of double storey Federation shops.
469-471	B	Pair of double storey Federation shops.
473	B	Double storey Federation shop.
475-483	B	Pedersen's Buildings. Six double storey interwar shops.

GLYNDEBOURNE AVENUE*Street No. Grading***North Side**

1	B	Double storey interwar villa.
3	-	Double storey modern villa
3A	-	Double storey modern villa.
3B	-	Double storey modern villa.
23	B	Interwar villa.

South Side

2/2A	A2	Windarring. Double storey interwar villa with attic storey. Divided into units.
24	B	Double storey interwar villa.

KOORYONG ROAD

<i>Street No.</i>	<i>Grading</i>	
East Side		
224	A1	Glyn. Early villa with attic storey (Listed on the Heritage Register – HO68)
226/226A	A2	Armagh. Early double storey villa with ground floor extension and large outbuildings including single storey modern villa with Glyndebourne Avenue frontage.

KYEAMBA GROVE

<i>Street No.</i>	<i>Grading</i>	
West Side		
1/3	B	Double storey interwar villa.
5/7	B	Double storey interwar units. Semi detached.
9/11	B	Double storey interwar units. Semi detached.
13	B	Double storey interwar villa.
15	B	Double storey interwar villa.
East Side		
2/4	B	Single storey interwar flats.
6	B	Double storey interwar villa.
8	B	Double storey interwar villa.
10	B	Double storey interwar villa with attic storey.
12	B	Double storey interwar villa.
14	B	Double storey interwar villa.

MERRIWEE CRESCENT

<i>Street No.</i>	<i>Grading</i>	
West Side		
5	B	Single storey interwar villa.
7/7A	-	Double storey modern pair. Semi detached.
9	-	Double storey modern villa under construction.
11	B	Double storey interwar villa.
13	-	Double storey modern villa.
15	B	Double storey interwar villa.
East Side		
2	-	Double storey modern villa.
4	-	Single storey modern villa.
6	B	Single storey interwar villa.
8	B	Single storey interwar villa with first floor additions.
10	B	Double storey interwar villa.
12	B	Double storey interwar villa with basement parking.
14	B	Double storey interwar villa.
16	B	Double storey interwar villa with carport additions.
18	B	Selsdon. Double storey interwar villa.

MONOMEATH AVENUE*Street No. Grading***North Side**

1	B	Double storey interwar villa.
3/3A	-	Double storey modern pair. Semi detached.
5	-	Double storey modern house.
7	-	Single storey modern villa.
9	-	Double storey modern flats.
11	B	Double storey interwar flats.
13	-	Double storey modern flats.

South Side

2	-	Double storey modern villa.
4	C	Single storey late Federation villa with basement parking.
6	-	Double storey modern villa.
8	B	Single storey late Federation villa.
10	B	Double storey interwar villa.
12/12A	B	Double storey interwar pair maisonettes.
14	B	Federation villa with attic storey.

MOONGA ROAD*Street No. Grading***West Side**

9	-	Modern villa.
11	B	Double storey interwar villa.
- Evans Court -		
13	B	Double storey modern villa with basement parking.
15	C	Single storey postwar villa.
17	B	Single storey interwar villa with basement car parking.
19	B	Double storey interwar villa.
- Glyndebourne Avenue -		
- Glen Road -		
25	-	Double storey modern pair. Semi detached.

East Side

2A/2B	B	Kingswood. Double storey interwar pair. Semi detached.
2	B	Double storey interwar villa.
- Merriwee Crescent -		
4	A1	Double storey interwar villa.
6	-	Single storey modern villa.
8	B	Double storey interwar villa with garage additions.
10	B	Single storey interwar villa.
12	-	Double storey modern villa.
14	B	Single storey interwar villa.
16	B	Oak Cottage. Double storey interwar villa.
18	B	Double storey interwar villa with garage.
- Toorak Avenue -		
20	-	Double storey modern villa.

MYRNONG CRESCENT

<i>Street No.</i>	<i>Grading</i>	
West Side		
1	A2	Double storey interwar villa.
3	A2	Double storey interwar villa.

POWER AVENUE

<i>Street No.</i>	<i>Grading</i>	
West Side		
1A	B	Double storey interwar maisonette.
1B	-	Double storey postwar maisonette.
1	B	Interwar bungalow with attic storey.
3	B	Single storey interwar villa.
5	-	Single storey modern villa.
7	-	Double storey modern villa.
9	-	Double storey modern villa.
11	C	Single storey interwar villa. Extensively modified.
15	B	Double storey interwar villa.
17	B	Double storey interwar villa.
19	A2	Double storey interwar villa.
21	B	Double storey interwar villa.
23	B	Double storey interwar villa.
<i>- Toorak Avenue -</i>		
25	-	Double storey modern villa
27	-	Double storey modern villa
East Side		
4	B	Double storey interwar villa.
6	B	Double storey interwar villa.
8	A2	Double storey interwar villa.
10	B	Double storey interwar villa.
12	B	Single storey interwar villa.
14	A2	Avalon. Early double storey villa. (HO332)
<i>- Power Street -</i>		
16		
<i>- Monomeath Avenue -</i>		
20		

POWER STREET

<i>Street No.</i>	<i>Grading</i>	
North Side		
31	B	Double storey interwar villa.
33	B	Double storey interwar villa.
35	B	Federation single storey villa.
37	-	Vacant block.
39	-	Double storey modern villa.
41	B	Federation single storey villa.
43	B	Interwar villa with attic storey.
South Side		
?16	-	Double storey modern villa?.
28	-	Majestic Court. Three storey modern flats.

TOORAK AVENUE*Street No. Grading***North Side**

1	B	Single storey interwar villa.
3	B	Double storey interwar villa.
5	B	Double storey interwar villa.
7	B	Double storey interwar villa.
9	A1	Revelstoke (formerly Revell). Double storey interwar villa. (HO342)
11	B	Carisbrooke. Double storey interwar bungalow.
13	B	Double storey interwar villa.
15	-	Double storey modern villa.
17	B	Interwar villa with attic storey.
19	-	Double storey modern villa.
21	B	Double storey interwar villa.

South Side

2	C	Interwar villa with attic storey.
4	C	Single storey interwar villa with basement parking and ground floor additions.
6	B	Single storey interwar villa.
8	B	Interwar villa with attic storey.
10	B	Double storey interwar villa.
<i>- Merriwee Crescent -</i>		
12	-	Double storey modern villa.
14	-	Double storey modern villa.
16	-	Single storey modern villa.

TOORAK ROAD*Street No. Grading***North Side**

625	A2	Redholme. Double storey interwar flats. 1932.
<i>- Evans Court -</i>		
<i>- Kyeamba Grove -</i>		
<i>- Moonga Road -</i>		
655	A1	Double storey interwar villa.
657	A2	Normandie. Double storey interwar villa.
659	B	Double storey interwar villa.
661/661A	B	Double storey interwar villa divided into units.
663	B	Double storey interwar villa.
665	B	Double storey interwar villa.

WARRA STREET*Street No. Grading***South Side**

2-4	-	Two blocks of modern flats.
6/6A	B	Double storey interwar pair. Semi detached.
8	B	Double storey interwar villa.
10	B	Single storey interwar villa.
12/14	B	Single storey interwar villa. House divided into units.
16	B	Double storey interwar villa.
18	B	Single storey interwar villa.
20	B	Single storey interwar villa.
22	B	Interwar villa with attic storey.
24	-	Single storey modern villa with basement parking.
<i>- Power Avenue -</i>		
26	B	Interwar villa with attic storey.
28	B	Single storey interwar villa.
30	B	Single storey late Federation villa.
32	B	Single storey Federation villa.
34	B	Single storey Federation villa.
36	B	Single storey Federation villa.
38	B	Single storey interwar villa.
40	B	Single storey late Victorian villa.
42	-	Building under construction.