

Heritage Citation

'CHARTER OAK'

Address: 1121 Dandenong Road, Malvern East

Prepared by: GJM Heritage/Purcell

Date: June 2017 (updated 31 July 2018)

Place type: Residential	Architect: Hugh Ralston Crawford
Grading: Locally significant	Builder: Not known
Integrity: High	Construction Date: 1912
Recommendation: Include in the Heritage Overlay	Extent of Overlay: To property title boundary



Figure 1. 1121 Dandenong Road, Malvern East (GJM Heritage/Purcell, June 2016)



Statement of Significance

The Federation house known as 'Charter Oak' at 1121 Dandenong Road, Malvern East, built in 1912 for and by architect Hugh Ralston Crawford.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- the house's original external form, materials and detailing
- the house's high level of integrity to its original design

Later alterations and additions, including rear addition and side garage, are not significant.

How is it significant?

'Charter Oak' is of local architectural, aesthetic and technical significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

'Charter Oak' is a fine and representative example of a Federation house. It displays typical features of the Federation Bungalow architectural style popular in the 1910s in Malvern East and across Melbourne more broadly, including simple massing with wide-spreading roof form and attic rooms, a deep verandah and sturdy timber verandah posts with masonry piers. It also displays some characteristics more typical of the Federation Arts and Crafts architectural style, such as the symmetrical, butterfly plan form (Criterion D).

'Charter Oak' is a well-considered and carefully detailed example of what can broadly be defined as a Federation Bungalow house. The simple symmetrical design, with main hipped roof and prominent gabled bays, together with the restrained use of distinctive architectural elements, presents a picturesque composition of this architectural style (Criterion E).

'Charter Oak' is an early and unusual example of reinforced concrete construction in Malvern East and the municipality more broadly. It demonstrates the architect H R Crawford's innovative use of this material in residential work (Criterion F).

Historical Themes

The place illustrates the following themes as outlined in the *Stonnington Environmental History* (2009):

8 Building Suburbs

- 8.2 Middle-class suburbs and the suburban ideal
- 8.4 Creating Australia's most 'designed' suburbs
 - 8.4.3 Architects and their houses

Locality history

The first European settler in the Malvern district was John Gardiner in 1835, a pastoralist from New South Wales who was one of the first overlanders to Port Phillip. He pastured his stock near the junction of Gardiner's Creek and the Yarra River and was the namesake of Gardiner's Creek, Gardiner's Creek Road (now Toorak Road) and both the locality and the Shire of Gardiner (before they were re-named Malvern). The first recorded use of the name Malvern was in January 1854, when barrister Charles B. G. Skinner named his hotel on the corner of Malvern and Glenferrie roads the 'Malvern Hill' after a district in England. The name for the Shire of Malvern was derived from Malvern Hill Estate, a private subdivision in the area dating to 1856 (City of Stonnington [CoS]; Context 2006:34).

The first land sales in the area were held in 1854 and most original Crown grantees subdivided their allotments for resale (Context 2006:41; 2009:4). Gardiner's Road District was proclaimed in 1856 before Gardiner Shire was formed in 1871, which was renamed Malvern Shire in 1878 (CoS). The municipal boundary comprised the current localities of Malvern (previously Gardiner), Malvern East, Glen Iris (south of Gardiners Creek), Kooyong, Armadale (east of Kooyong Road), Toorak (east of Kooyong Road) and



Chadstone (west of Warrigal Road). Early directories listed Malvern and Malvern East as the one locality, until c1910.

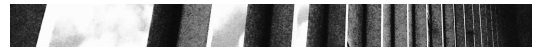
The former Malvern Shire saw slow population growth to 1881, by which time it totalled just under 2,000 people (Victorian Places). In 1879, the Oakleigh railway line was opened along the southern extent of the municipality, through Malvern, Armadale, Toorak and Hawksburn to join the existing line at South Yarra. The arrival of the Oakleigh railway coincided with the start of the land boom, which resulted in considerable urban growth. In the 1880s the district comprised substantial residences on large allotments, as well as pastoral and agricultural holdings (including market gardens and orchards) and commercial development (Context 2006:41, 65-6). During the 1880s boom period, the municipality saw a dramatic increase in population, quadrupling to approximately 8,000 by 1891, and steadily increasing to 10,000 by 1901 (Victorian Places). In the 1890s a number of timber houses were built in Malvern as an economy measure, but some residents complained that wooden houses would degenerate into slums. Concern about this development led to a slum abolition movement and subsequently, c1912, Malvern Council began to declare brick areas, where timber houses were not permitted. By 1916 the Council had also fixed a minimum area for individual housing allotments at 6000 square feet, with minimum frontages of fifty feet (Context 2006:128).

The railway line along the northern extent of the municipality was established in 1890 through the Glen Iris Valley from Burnley. Stations were established at Heyington, Kooyong, Tooronga, Gardiner, Glen Iris and Darling stations, however, expected residential development in their vicinity stalled during the 1890s, following the economic collapse (Context 2006:66). The 1893 *Australian Handbook* (as cited in Victorian Places) described Malvern as ‘an elevated residential suburb’, served by a line of omnibuses from Prahran, with many leading merchants and professional men living in the area in pleasantly situated ‘dwellings of a superior class’. The entry noted that a number of notable mansions had been erected by this date, and that the market gardens and orchards were ‘steadily being reduced, and cut up into building allotments, on which [were] being erected many handsome villas and business establishments’ (Victorian Places). The municipality saw rapid development and urbanisation from 1900 and it was declared both a Borough and then a Town in 1901. In 1911 the Town of Malvern was declared a City, with a population of 16,000 (Context 2006:86; Victorian Places).

The Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust was established in 1908, with electric tramlines opened along High Street in 1910-14, Malvern Road in 1915, Glenferrie Road in 1910-13 and to the south along Wattletree Road in 1910-12; reaching Malvern East at the eastern extent. The arrival of the tramlines further drove the development of commercial centres in the immediate vicinity and residential development beyond. New train stations were built at Armadale, Hawksburn, Malvern and Toorak between 1908 and 1918, and at Malvern East in 1929 (Context 2006:70-2, 113; Victorian Places).

Residential development during the early twentieth century often occurred on newly subdivided estates or filled nineteenth century subdivisions that had remained partly or wholly undeveloped during the 1890s depression (Context 2009:5). In 1912 it was reported that 800 houses a year were being built in the (by then) City of Malvern, which boasted ‘a progress unprecedented by any other suburb’ (Context 2009:128). In the decade between 1911 and 1921 the population of the former City of Malvern doubled, from 16,000 to 32,000, and then increased steadily to 43,000 by 1933 (Victorian Places). This population growth saw development spread to the Glen Iris Valley and the outer reaches of the City, in Malvern East. The housing stock in this eastern part of the municipality was more characteristically uniform and unadorned in comparison to housing in Malvern. Kooyong's development was substantially completed by the end of the 1920s (Context 2006:128, 131).

By 1946 the *Australian Blue Book* (as cited in Victorian Places) stated that Malvern was one of the ‘leading residential suburbs of the Metropolis’. It comprised the substantial homes of many of Melbourne's leading citizens, in what was termed ‘The Garden City’ due to the number of parks and public gardens. Development in the former City of Malvern steadied from the 1930s, with the population averaging 45,000



until the 1990s (Victorian Places). The City of Malvern amalgamated with the City of Prahran in 1994, to form the City of Stonnington. The municipality retains a number of fine architect designed houses, dating from all periods of development.

Place history

In August 1909 George A. Rowell, St Kilda investor, purchased land totalling approx 15¼ acres on the north-east corner of Dandenong and Darling roads, which he subdivided, creating Washington and Boston avenues (bound by what is now Washington Lane at the northern extent). Rowell on-sold lots from 1910 (LV:V3143/F464).

Rowell sold Lot 4 (1121 Dandenong Road and the eastern portion of 1A Washington Avenue) to Hugh Ralston Crawford, gentleman, in September 1911 (LV:V3540/F822). The 1911-12 rate books recorded that Hugh R. Crawford, architect, was the owner of Lot 4, on the north side of Dandenong Road adjacent to Washington Avenue, which remained land at the time. The following year, the 1912-13 rate books listed Hugh R. Crawford as the owner and occupant of a 6 room brick house, with a Net Annual Value of 56 pounds. Hugh Ralston Crawford occupied the house throughout his ownership of the property (RB). Miles Lewis states that the house at 1121 Dandenong Road, Malvern East may be an example of Crawford's hollow concrete wall system, which he patented in 1907 (Lewis, 2013:7.08.8).

An advertisement published in the *Argus* in 1914 (17 Oct 1914:3) advertised the sale of a house described as "'Charter Oak," Dandenong Road, Close Carnegie Station'. The house was described as a 'superior villa' constructed of 'reinforced concrete' with a slate roof and nine rooms, 'recently erected for Mr. H. R. Crawford, Architect'. The property measured '79 x 177' feet, which matched the size of 1121 Dandenong Road during this period.

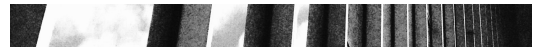
In December 1922, the property was transferred to Richard L. S. Dobson, salesman, 'of Dandenong Road, East Malvern'. The house remained in the Dobson family until 1951, after which date there were various owners (LV:V3540/F822). In 1950, 1121 Dandenong Road, Malvern East, was advertised for sale, described in newspapers as a 'concrete attic villa' with seven large rooms and sunroom on a corner allotment (*Age*, 6 Oct 1950:8; *Argus* 4 Oct, 1950:20). The lot to the north was consolidated by 1965, and was subsequently subdivided off to create 1A Washington Avenue by 1969 (LV:V8601/F686; V8757/589). No. 1121 Dandenong Road served as chiropractic consultation rooms from the 1970s (SCC PF).

Council valuation records described the property with a 'concrete house' and indicate that permits were granted for a utility shed in 1968 (Valuers Field Book). The house continued to serve as a medical clinic in the 1980s (Valuers Field Book). A brick garage (pre-1977; rendered) is located off the left side of the Dandenong Road facade. Council permit records indicate that the additions off the west elevation of the house date to the early 2000s. Later additions to the house comprised the addition off the rear (north) elevation, addition of two dormer windows, alteration of the north end of the east elevation, and construction of the garage on the north boundary, designed in a sympathetic style to the house (SCC PF).

Hugh Ralston Crawford, architect

Crawford was an architect and engineer, known to have worked as an engineer with the Queensland Railways before working in India (VHD; Lewis 1988:17). In 1907, Crawford patented a hollow concrete wall system (the patent was granted for a 'monolithic reinforced concrete cavity wall') (*Building*, 1907:37), as discussed in Miles Lewis's article on cavity walling (Lewis, 2013:7.08.8):

... the appearance of the full cavity wall in concrete is a little mysterious. In 1907 the American architect Grosvenor Atterbury developed a system of hollow-cored factory precast concrete panels for use in walls, floors and roofs, and this was used by the Russell Sage Foundation in 1913-18 for a low cost housing development in Forest Hill. The system ultimately failed because of the high cost of transporting the components to the site, and little else in the way of



precasting occurred overseas prior to World War II. While this may have had some influence in Australia, it appears to have been preceded by local cavity systems constructed in situ.

Torode's houses in South Australia had hollow walls, and a hollow concrete wall system was patented in Victoria in 1907 by H R Crawford, who built houses on the system in Canterbury and East Camberwell. The house which he built for himself in 1912, and which it still stands at 1121 Dandenong Road, East Malvern, may well be another example of Crawford's system, as may a house at Whitfield, believed to date from 1910. At Whitfield the walls appear to about 280 mm or a nominal eleven inches thick, comprising inner and outer leaves each of about 90 mm, inclusive of the external render and the internal plastering respectively, with a cavity of about 100 mm. Some pieces of galvanised wire are visible, and the material may have been used both to reinforce the concrete and to connect the leaves together.

Crawford was an innovative designer, whose work comprised factory and warehouse commissions including silos, with some residential projects in inner Melbourne suburbs during the later Edwardian period (AAI; VHD; Lewis 1988:18). Crawford's hollow concrete wall system was used to construct houses in Canterbury (Figure 2) and East Camberwell, and possibly his own house at 1121 Dandenong Road, East Malvern (Lewis 1988:25). Crawford may have also used the system at 'Banff' at 150 Winmalee Road, Balwyn (1915) and 6 Kitchener Street, Balwyn (1913) (Lovell Chen 2005).

Crawford designed the commercial Dovers Buildings at 5-7 Drewery Lane, Melbourne (1908). He reportedly planned to use some form of reinforced concrete, but apparently adopted the Turner Mushroom System, incorporating reinforced concrete flat slabs, after construction started. Crawford was C. A. P. Turner's Australian agent from c1909, and applied this method to projects in Melbourne, such as the Herald Building at Flinders Street, Melbourne (1921) and Myer Emporium at 258 Queensberry St, Carlton (1928) (VHD; SLV). Crawford worked as the consulting engineer for architects WH & FB Tompkins on the 1930s sections of the Myer Emporium, Bourke Street, Melbourne (SLV).



Figure 2. A villa under construction in Mont Albert Road, Canterbury, constructed using Crawford's patented hollow reinforced concrete wall system; not known if remains (Lewis 1988:26).

Description

The dwelling at 1121 Dandenong Road is a single-storey detached dwelling set on a corner allotment with modern landscaping. Built of concrete with a ruled ashlar render finish (overpainted) the dwelling, by owner/architect Hugh Ralston Crawford, draws on the Federation Bungalow style with some Arts & Crafts



influences. It strongly addresses the corner and is designed to be viewed in-the-round. Constructed in 1912, the dwelling remains in good condition.

The house has a strong diagonal emphasis in plan with two deep projecting gables to the east and south and recessed gablet to the corner bay (Figure 1). Clad in slate, the roof features decorative terracotta ridge tiles and ball finials to the gable ends (Figure 1). Modern dormer windows have been installed on the rear north and west roof planes (constructed 2006). Two visible chimneys remain, with rendered stacks (overpainted) and modern metal flues (Figure 3). The gables are supported on decorative timber brackets and with timber verges, bargeboards and eaves lining (Figure 3). The gable ends are rendered with timber vents and surmount projecting bay windows with simple incised render surrounds, decorative moulded cornices and painted metal balustrading (see Figure 3). Addressing the corner is a blind gablet, with roughcast render end and simple rendered stringcourse. The corner verandah, contained under a separate shallow pitch hip roof, is supported on tapering timber half height posts on masonry piers. The posts support a wide, flat timber capital, simple solid timber frieze and small sections of balustraded timber fretwork. The verandah floor is timber board, with a single timber step. Windows are double hung sashes with highlights to the bays, and casements with arched heads and leaded coloured lights simply set into the wall under the verandah. These flank a central panelled timber door, with leaded coloured light, and matching side and fanlights.

A modern extension, which imitates the original finish of the house, was constructed to the rear of the dwelling in 2006. The dormers on the north and west roof planes were also constructed at this time. A modern garage, located and accessed off the eastern boundary, also utilises details from the original dwelling including the render finish and slate roofing detail (see Figure 4). The site is bounded by a tall modern masonry plinth fence with modern iron railings and gates.



Figure 3. Gable end detail (GJM Heritage/Purcell, June 2016)



Figure 4. Modern garage and dormer window additions to the rear (GJM Heritage/Purcell, June 2016)

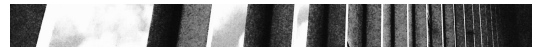
Integrity

The house retains a high degree of integrity to the Federation Bungalow style, in fabric, form and detail. While the house has undergone some alterations and additions, these do not diminish the ability to understand and appreciate the place as a fine example of a Federation house.

Comparative Analysis

Federation Bungalow Style

The Federation Bungalow style peaked in Victoria in the 1910s and led to the California Bungalow style of the Inter-War period. The principles of the Arts and Crafts movement in Britain were promoted in America in the early twentieth century and led to a popular bungalow style of house, which was simple and



unpretentious. American journals publicised this style and it was repeated by architects and builders in Australian periodicals from the late 1900s. The houses varied greatly in style; however all shared simple and unpretentious qualities and expressed an honesty in their use of materials.

The resulting Federation Bungalow house was typically single-storey and it cast off the picturesque complexities of the Federation Queen Anne style. Massing was simple, and roof planes were broad and simple, often extending over a deep verandah. Typical characteristics include wide eaves and exposed rafters, prominent gable verges, and dormers or balconies in the first floor roof space. Walls were typically of face brickwork, roughcast render and timber shingles, roofs were generally tiled and verandah roofs are supported by masonry piers or simple, sturdy posts.

Leading Melbourne architects designed houses in the Federation Bungalow style principally from 1910 and the style was commonly adopted in developing suburbs such as Malvern, Malvern East and Glen Iris and in established areas such as Armadale and Toorak.

Within the City of Stonnington a very small number of Federation Bungalow style houses are included in the Heritage Overlay on an individual basis. These include:

- HO336 1 Spring Road, Malvern
- HO343 Wombalana, 704 Toorak Road, Malvern

These two dwellings have been recognised as fine examples of the simple Federation Bungalow style in the City of Stonnington. They both display individual characteristics of the Federation Bungalow style as follows:

- 1 Spring Road, Malvern (possibly designed by G F Ballantyne although this has not been confirmed, 1911) is a simple bungalow design which displays typical characteristics of the Federation Bungalow style. The front facade of the single-storey red brick house is symmetrical with central entry stairs and symmetrical window bays within a wide verandah. The main terracotta-clad roof form is a broad gable, which is hipped over the verandah and is interrupted above the front entry by a hip roof projecting porch. An unusual verandah balustrade is formed from brickwork.

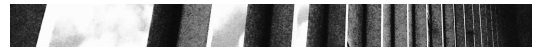
The citation states that '1 Spring Road is of regional significance for its strong building forms, its expansive front verandah and the detailing of the brickwork, especially the verandah columns as well as for its relatively high level of intactness.'

- Wombalana, 704 Toorak Road, Malvern (W A M Blackett, 1916) is a simple but striking form of the Federation Bungalow style. The main roof of the single-storey timber house is a gable set perpendicular to the road. The front shingle-clad gable end dominates the facade with deep eaves supported by simple timber struts, and this gable covers a verandah with latticework detail. The top apex of the gable has a slim horizontal band of double louvres. Rafter and joist ends are exposed and timber struts are repeated around the building. A large side gable repeats the detailing of the front gable.

The citation states that 'Wombalana is of regional significance for its unusually simple design of the verandah, Craftsman detailing and building forms, which create a distinctive architectural character to this building. It also illustrates the social desirability of trend setting weatherboard houses at this period.'

Like the places listed above, 'Charter Oak' displays a range of characteristics that have associations with the Federation Bungalow style. These include:

- Simple massing and broad, wide-spreading roof form
- Prominent gable verge
- Broad, deep verandah
- Verandah roof supported by simple and sturdy timber posts on masonry piers



- Plain timber posts and simple verandah fretwork
- First floor rooms in roof space

Federation Arts and Crafts Style

'Charter Oak' also displays some characteristics of the Federation Arts and Crafts style which flourished in Victoria from the 1890s to the commencement of World War I. Built in 1912 at the time when the popularity of the Federation Arts and Crafts style was reaching its peak, it is of note for the:

- Butterfly plan form (as introduced in British domestic design by such architects as Richard Norman Shaw, Edward Prior and Edwin Lutyens from the 1890s)
- Symmetrical composition

Construction type and architect/engineer Hugh Ralston Crawford

'Charter Oak' was built of reinforced concrete in 1912. It was designed by, and for, architect and engineer H R Crawford who had patented a hollow concrete wall system in 1907. It is highly likely that Crawford adopted this early system of concrete residential construction at his own house in 1912.

No other examples of reinforced concrete residential construction have been identified in the City of Stonnington, however examples in the City of Boroondara include houses in Canterbury, East Camberwell and Balwyn. Crawford designed a number of commercial buildings using reinforced concrete construction, including the Herald Building, Flinders Street, Melbourne in 1921.

Assessment Against Criteria

Following is an assessment of the place against the recognised heritage criteria set out in *Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay* (July 2015).

Criterion D: *Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).*

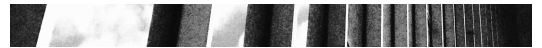
'Charter Oak' is a fine and representative example of a Federation house. It displays typical features of the Federation Bungalow architectural style popular in the 1910s in Malvern East and across Melbourne more broadly, including simple massing with wide-spreading roof form and attic rooms, a deep verandah and sturdy timber verandah posts with masonry piers. It also displays some characteristics more typical of the Federation Arts and Crafts architectural style, such as the symmetrical, butterfly plan form.

Criterion E: *Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics*

'Charter Oak' is a well-considered and carefully detailed example of what can broadly be defined as a Federation Bungalow house. The simple symmetrical design, with main hipped roof and prominent gabled bays, together with the restrained use of distinctive architectural elements, presents a picturesque composition of this architectural style.

Criterion F: *Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period*

'Charter Oak' is an early and unusual example of reinforced concrete construction in Malvern East and the municipality more broadly. It demonstrates the architect H R Crawford's innovative use of this material in residential work.



Grading and Recommendations

It is recommended that the place be included in the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme as a locally significant heritage place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Stonnington Planning Scheme:

External Paint Controls?	No
Internal Alteration Controls?	No
Tree Controls?	No
Outbuildings or Fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-3?	No
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	No
Incorporated Plan?	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	No

Extent of the recommended Heritage Overlay

To the property title boundary, as indicated by the purple polygon on the aerial below.



Figure 5. 2016 aerial of subject site (Source: Stonnington City Council).

**References:**

Australian Architectural Index (AAI), copyright Miles Lewis, <<http://mileslewis.net/>>, accessed February 2017: entries for H R Crawford.

City of Malvern Rate Books (RB), East Ward: 1911-12, entry 6433; 1912-13, entry 6980.

City of Stonnington (CofS), 'History of Stonnington', <<http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Discover/History/History-of-Stonnington>> accessed 8 March 2017.

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Land Victoria (LV), Certificates of Title, as cited above.

Lewis, Miles, Australian Architectural Index (AAI), records as cited above, <<http://mileslewis.net/>>, accessed February 2017.

Lewis, Miles (1988), *200 Years of Concrete Construction in Australia*, Sydney.

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Building, September 1907, p. 37. Cited in Australian Architectural Index (AAI), Record no. 42674.

Lovell Chen (2005), *Boroondara Heritage Review B Graded Buildings*, Building Citations for 'House, 6 Kitchener Street, Balwyn' & 'Banff, 150 Winmalee Road, Balwyn'.

State Library of Victoria (SLV), Biographical/Historical note in the online catalogue entry for 'The Myer Emporium Ltd. / Bourke St.', <<http://slv.vic.gov.au>>, accessed February 2017.

Stonnington City Council Property File (SCC PF), including Building and Planning Permit records for the place, provided by Council: File Nos. 19968BL, 2130.1650.

The Age.

The Argus.

Valuers Field Book (c1950-1994), City of Malvern, Record for '1121 Dandenong Road'. Provided by Stonnington History Centre.

Victorian Heritage Database (VHD), citation for 'Dovers Building, 5-7 Drewery Lane, Melbourne', <<http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/744>>, accessed February 2017.

Victorian Places, 'Malvern', 'Malvern East' & 'Glen Iris', <<http://www.victorianplaces.com.au/>>, accessed 8 March 2017.