Heritage Citation

HOUSE

Address: **11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran**

Prepared by: GJM Heritage/Purcell

Date: June 2017 (updated 31 July 2018)

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

Figure 1. 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran (GJM Heritage/Purcell, June 2016)
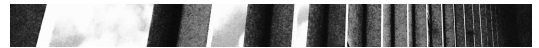
Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Federation house at 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran, a single-storey dwelling built in 1912.

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, such as the rear addition and carport, are not significant.

How is it significant?

The house at 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran is of local architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

The house at 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran is a fine, representative example of a Federation house. It displays typical features of the Federation Queen Anne architectural style popular in the first decade of the twentieth century in Prahran and across Melbourne more broadly, including a picturesque, asymmetrical composition, integrated verandah roof, tall prominent chimneys and timber verandah decoration (Criterion D).

The house at 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran is a carefully designed and well-resolved example of a Federation house. The front projecting gabled bay with shingle-clad gable-end, diagonally placed bay window, side entrance tower with scalloped parapet, tall chimneys, unpainted roughcast render finish and rich timber decoration present a picturesque composition of this architectural style (Criterion E).

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

Locality history

The close proximity of the former Prahran municipality to the centre of Melbourne resulted in its early development and growth. The municipality comprised the localities of South Yarra (east of Punt Road), Prahran, Windsor, Toorak (west of Kooyong Road), Hawksburn, and Armadale (west of Kooyong Road). The name Prahran was derived from the Aboriginal word for the area, 'Pur-ra-ran', which is reportedly a compound of two words, meaning 'land partially surrounded by water' (City of Stonnington [CoS]).

The Prahran municipality was first surveyed for farm lots in 1840. Most original Crown grantees subdivided their allotments for resale and a hierarchy of development quickly emerged. The desirable elevated locations immediately south of the Yarra River, in Toorak and South Yarra, attracted residential development in the form of substantial houses on large allotments. By 1849, land sales had reached Dandenong Road at the southern extent of the Prahran municipality, in the lower-lying areas that were prone to flooding. Development here comprised dwellings and worker's cottages on small allotments (Context 2006:37-40; 2009:11). The commercial area at the junction of Chapel Street and Toorak Road had begun to develop by the mid 1850s. In Prahran, Windsor and parts of South Yarra, much of the land was cultivated as small market gardens in the 1850s and 1860s. The early importance of this industry is illustrated by the opening of the Prahran Market in 1864 (Context 2006:92).
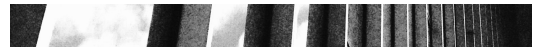
The Prahran Road District was proclaimed in 1854, soon becoming a municipality in 1855, and a Borough in 1863. In 1870 the Borough of Prahran was proclaimed a Town, and then a City in 1879 due to population growth (CoS). In the 1860s and 1870s the population of the municipality more than doubled, from approximately 10,000 in 1861 to 21,000 in 1881 (Victorian Places).

In 1860 the private Melbourne and Suburban Railway Company, opened a line through Richmond to South Yarra, Prahran and Windsor. In 1878 the Victorian Government purchased the existing railways in the municipality as part of a project to build a line through Oakleigh to Gippsland. The new Oakleigh line, which was opened in 1879, ran through Malvern, Armadale, Toorak and Hawksburn to join the existing line at South Yarra. The arrival of the Oakleigh railway line coincided with the start of the land boom, which resulted in considerable urban growth (Context 2006:65-7).

The Prahran municipality was serviced by a web of public transport routes when cable trams were established in Toorak Road and Chapel Street in 1888 and 1891 respectively, and major commercial centres grew along these tram routes. By 1891 the population of the municipality had again doubled from 21,000 in 1881 to almost 40,000 in 1891. By the 1890s, much of the Prahran municipality had been developed, and by 1900 the majority of large land holdings had been broken up, with subdivision often proceeding without any planning oversight. In terms of building stock, middle-class enclaves did develop throughout the former City of Prahran, however, it was in the neighbouring City of Malvern that the development of the 'suburban ideal' was to find its fullest expression (Context 2009:12). The population of the Prahran municipality grew at a steady rate from 1891 to the early 1930s, during both the 1890s and 1930s depressions (Context 2006:69; Victorian Places).

The 1903 *Australian Handbook* (as cited in Victorian Places) entry for Prahran stated that the municipality comprised rail and cable tramcar networks, a landmark town hall, numerous 'public buildings of a charitable, educational, and ecclesiastical character', 'handsome recreation areas' that beautified the neighbourhood, and many tree lined streets. The entry further noted that the 'outskirts of the municipality [were] adorned by very many elegant private houses, the residences of merchants and others in business in Melbourne' (Victorian Places).

By 1927 the Prahran municipality had five electric tram routes: Dandenong Road (1911), High Street (1910), Malvern Road (1915), Toorak Road (1927) and Chapel Street (1926). By 1933, the municipality had a population of 51,000 (Vic Places; Context 2006:70 & 2009:6). In the 1930s, the local housing stock, comprising many small dwellings and workers cottages, was considered in reports on slum reclamation (Vic Places). The 1946 *Australian handbook* (as cited in Vic Places) stated that the municipality was largely residential, with a number of factories, 80 acres of parks and gardens, and recreational facilities. In 1947, the municipality reached its peak population, at almost 60,000 people (Victorian Places).

During the early post-war period, slum reclamation projects coincided with a boom in flat development, with private flat developments in east Prahran and Housing Commission projects in Prahran and Windsor often occurring in the reclamation areas. This resulted in an influx in migrants, particularly of Greek and British nationality, in the 1950s and '60s, who occupied the old working-class houses and newly built Housing Commission flats. By 1991 the population of the municipality had declined to 42,000 (Victorian Places; Context 2006:142). The City of Malvern amalgamated with the City of Prahran in 1994, to form the City of Stonnington. In 2011, the housing stock of the Prahran locality comprised 50% flats and units, 20% row houses and 30% freestanding houses (Victorian Places).

Place history

The land on the west side of A'Beckett Street (originally Pohlman Street) was purchased by Heinrich A. Wehl, gentleman, in June 1908, who subdivided the land (just over 2.5 acres) into large lots, which he on-sold from 1909 (LV:V3275/F996). Charles H. Lucas, Melbourne 'solicitor and notary public', purchased one lot (totaling just over one acre) in January 1909. Lucas subdivided the property into five smaller lots
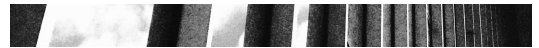
(LV:V3318/F482).

The current 11 A'Beckett Street was sold to Annie Isabella Scarborough, married woman, in November 1910. A covenant on the property stated that the proprietor was required to construct a building of brick, that the 'building line thereof shall be not less than 37 feet from Pohlman Street' and that the cost of the dwelling should be no less than 750 pounds (LV:V3461/F009). The 1911-12 rate books recorded that Annie I. Scarborough was rated for land on the west side of Pohlman Street. The following year, the 1912-13 rate book recorded Annie I Scarborough as the owner of a 6 room brick house (with a Net Annual Value of 70 pounds), occupied by Tom L. Scarborough, accountant (RB). This indicates that the house was built in 1912 for owner, Annie I. Scarborough.

Annie Scarborough remained the owner of the property until her death in 1940, after which the property was transferred to her executors and John F. D. Scarborough (b.1901, d.1973), architect, of 6 Pelham Place, Balwyn, followed by Louis and Jean Scarborough 'of 11 ABeckett Street, Armadale' in 1946. The house remained in the Scarborough family until 1953, when it was sold to Jean Carmicheal, who retained ownership until 1988 (LV:V3461/F009). An auction notice published in the *Age* in 1953 (28 Feb 1953:26) described the house at '11 A'Beckett Street, Armadale', as a 'solid brick villa' with six large rooms, and describing some interior details.

The Council Property File and valuation records indicate that a permit was granted for alterations and additions to the house c1990. These works comprised the demolition of the rear of the house which was replaced with an addition and attached carport along the south boundary (which remained in 2016 according to aerial photos, see Figure 4) (Valuers Field Book; SCC PF). An early fence was removed c1997, when it was replaced with the existing timber framed fence (Hilbert, pers. comm. 10 Oct 2017).

Description

The dwelling at 11 A'Beckett Street is a single-storey detached dwelling, set on a prominent site with deep street setback and located within a mature garden. The dwelling occupies a commanding position, raised above street level. Built of brick with an unpainted roughcast finish and smooth rendered dressings with a slate roof, the Federation dwelling is modest with simple, restrained detailing. Constructed in 1912, the dwelling remains in good condition.

The dwelling is of a simple plan form, with a broad hipped roof and dominant gable to the front elevation. Simple timber shingles (overpainted) fill the gable end, with a plain bargeboard and the flying gable is supported on decorative timber brackets (see Figure 2). Two unpainted roughcast chimneys, with simple rendered cornicing and brick tops remain. A return verandah across the front façade is contained within the large hip roof and is supported on simple square timber posts, with capitals and an arched timber frieze. At the rear of this verandah return is a side entrance tower with scalloped parapet. A projecting angled bay window is located on the verandah return. The windows are double hung sashes, set into the walls. The bay window features an original, simple slate window hood with exposed rafter tails, supported on decorative timber brackets.

The site is bounded by a timber post and wire fence (erected c1997), with a lavender hedge (see Figure 3). Access to a modern garage is provided by the rear right of way.
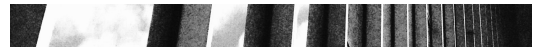
Figure 2. Gable end detail (GJM Heritage/Purcell, June 2016)

Figure 3. Facade of the house and deep setback (GJM Heritage/Purcell, June 2016)

Integrity

The house retains a high degree of integrity to the Federation Queen Anne 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

The house at 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran is of note as a fine and intact example of the Federation Queen Anne style which was commonly applied to the design of houses in Victoria from the late 1880s through to the early twentieth century. It was the dominant style in Victorian domestic architecture during the decades immediately before and after 1900 and was applied to both large and modest designs. Originally an English revival of both traditional rural design and elements from a range of periods, this style was seen in the work of English architects such as Norman Shaw. This 'Old English' style became popular in the United States and influences of both English and American Queen Anne can be seen in a distinctly Federation Queen Anne style which developed in Australia.

Predominantly a domestic style, houses were designed in a picturesque manner with asymmetrical forms, dominant and complex roofs with multiple gables, conical towers, dormer windows and tall chimneys. Houses were often single-storey and sprawled over large suburban sites. They share a basic set of materials: usually red brick for walls, timber for verandah posts and decoration, half-timbering with roughcast in the gable ends, and terracotta tiles, or less commonly slate, with decorative terracotta ridge capping and finials for the roof. Other typical characteristics include a variety of bay windows, multi-paned windows with decorative coloured glass sashes and diagonally projecting corners with surrounding verandahs, particularly on corner sites.

A number of leading Melbourne architects designed houses in the Queen Anne style particularly in the 1890s and 1900s and it was commonly adopted in the City of Stonnington in developing suburbs, such as Malvern and Glen Iris, and in wealthy, established areas, such as Armadale and Toorak. Architects associated with this style include Beverley Ussher, Henry Kemp and Christopher Cowper.

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

- Darnlee, 33 Lansell Road, Toorak (HO69 & VHR H1024) c1899
- Edzell, 76 St Georges Road, Toorak (HO101 & VHR H0691) 1892

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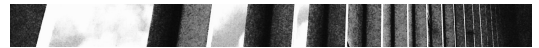
- Redcourt, 506 Orrong Road, Armadale (HO166) 1887
- Chesterfield, 6 Mayfield Avenue, Malvern (HO275) 1891

Two of these houses have identified significance at the state level. These are Darnlee, 33 Lansell Road, Toorak and Edzell, 76 St Georges Road, Toorak and will not be considered further here. The other dwellings are both large and early examples of the Federation Queen Anne style. They are both recognised as fine and early examples of the style in the City of Stonnington and display typical characteristics of the Federation Queen Anne style. They are noted as follows:

- Redcourt, 506 Orrong Road, Armadale (Reed, Henderson & Smart, 1887) is a fine and very early example of the Federation Queen Anne style in Melbourne. It is a large, two-storey, red brick house, set on a large allotment, with tiled roof, jettied gables supported on ornate, timber brackets, half-timbered gable ends, segmental arched windows, large oriel bay window and tall buttressed chimneys.

- Chesterfield, 6 Mayfield Avenue, Malvern (Phillip E Treeby, 1891) is an accomplished and early example of the Federation Queen Anne style in Melbourne. It is a large, two-storey, red brick house with steeply pitched tiled roofs, prominent half-timbered gables, multiple tall chimneys with rendered strapwork, jettied gables supported on ornamental timber brackets, bay windows and tall chimneys.

In addition, Stonnington Planning Scheme Amendment C225 recently included the following four Federation Queen Anne houses in the Heritage Overlay in the Stonnington Planning Scheme on an individual basis:

- Coomaroo, 63 Albany Road, Toorak
- Maroondah, 177 Kooyong Road, Toorak
- Quantock, 179 Kooyong Road, Toorak
- Helenslea, 181 Kooyong Road, Toorak

These are recognised as representative examples of the Federation Queen Anne style in the City of Stonnington. They display the principal characteristics of the style and are noted as follows:

- Coomaroo, 63 Albany Road, Toorak (architect unknown, 1898/99) is a well-resolved and carefully designed composition which displays the principal characteristics of the Federation style. It is a single-storey, red brick house with tiled roof, prominent and distinctive crenellated turret with crowning cast iron balustrade and multiple half-timbered gable ends.

- Maroondah, 177 Kooyong Road, Toorak (architect unknown, 1898/99) is a well-resolved and carefully designed composition which displays the principal characteristics of the Federation style. It is a single-storey, red brick house (front overpainted) with slate roof, asymmetrical facade with prominent half-timbered and stuccoed gabled bay window and verandah with smaller gable.

- Quantock, 179 Kooyong Road, Toorak (architect unknown, 1898/99) appears to be a well-resolved and carefully designed composition which displays the principal characteristics of the Federation style. It is a single-storey red brick house with tiled roof, large moulded and strapped chimney, central transverse ridge and projecting front gables.

- Helenslea, 181 Kooyong Road, Toorak (architect unknown, 1898/99) appears to be a well-resolved and carefully designed composition which displays a fusion of Victorian and Federation style characteristics. It is a single-storey, bichromatic brick house with slate roof, terracotta roof cresting, large corbelled and strapped chimneys, asymmetrical front facade with projecting gable end with canted bay window, half-timbering, stucco finish and decorative timber brackets, and a verandah roof integral with the main roof.
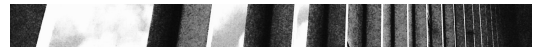
The house at 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran is later in date and a more modest example than the individual places listed above however, like these examples, it displays a range of characteristics which have strong associations with the Federation Queen Anne style and the house remains highly intact to demonstrate these strong associations.

The house at 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran demonstrates the following Federation Queen Anne characteristics:

- Asymmetrical form with projecting front gable
- Verandah roof integral with the main roof
- Unpainted roughcast render walls and chimneys
- Slate roof and window hood
- Shingle-clad gable end
- Timber verandah posts, fretwork and brackets
- Diagonally placed rectangular bay window

There are also large numbers of Federation Queen Anne style houses that are included in the Heritage Overlay in the Stonnington Planning Scheme as significant and contributory places in Heritage Precincts. These are included in precincts such as HO130 Armadale Precinct, HO133 Gascoigne Estate, HO156 Claremont Avenue Precinct and HO375 Coonil Estate Precinct Malvern.

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).*

The house at 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran is a fine and representative example of a Federation house. It displays typical features of the Federation Queen Anne architectural style popular in the first decade of the twentieth century in Prahran and across Melbourne more broadly, including a picturesque, asymmetrical composition, a verandah roof integrated with the main roof, tall prominent chimneys and timber verandah decoration.

Criterion E: *Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).*

The house at 11 A'Beckett Street, Prahran is a carefully designed and well-resolved example of a Federation house. The front projecting gabled bay with shingle-clad gable-end, diagonally placed bay window, side entrance tower with scalloped parapet, tall chimneys, unpainted roughcast render finish and rich timber decoration present a picturesque composition of this architectural style.
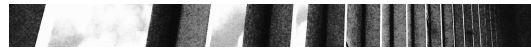
Grading and Recommendations

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 4. 2016 aerial of subject site (Source: Stonnington City Council).
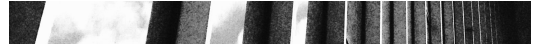
References:

City of Prahran Rate Books (RB), Prahran Ward: 1911-12, entry 5122; 1912-13, entry 5719; 1920-21, entry 5837.

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

Context Pty Ltd (2006 & 2009 addendum), *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History*.

Hilbert, S. (owner), personal communication to Council, 10 October 2017.

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

Malone, Betty (1998), *Discovering Prahran, Area One*, Prahran.

Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plain No. 988 (1899).

Stonnington City Council Property File (SCC PF), including Building and Planning Permit records for the place, provided by Council: File No. 8335.90.

The *Age.*

Valuers Field Book (1968-1994), City of Prahran record for '11 A'Beckett Street'. Provided by Stonnington History Centre.

Victorian Places (Vic Places), 'Prahran', < http://www.victorianplaces.com.au/>, accessed 8 March 2017.