

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Toorak Village- Historic Area



Location:

Toorak Road,, TOORAK VIC 3142 - Property No B7299

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:

Regional

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number:

Listing Authority: HI

Statement of Significance:

What is significant? In 1854 the State Government leased James Jackson's Toorak House for use as the Governor's residence, and Gardiner's Creek Road (subsequently Toorak Road) was transformed from a rough bush track into a made road. The presence of the Vice-Regal residence attracted wealthy merchants, pastoralists and politicians to the area and a small village gradually developed around Notley's Hotel at the foot of Orrong Hill, to service the mansions and villas of the gentry. This group of modest shops and dwellings would later be known as Toorak Village.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the area had broadly developed its current form of a shopping strip with retail premises on each side of the road and workers' cottages to the south. At that time, the Toorak village was broadly comparable to other shopping strips found throughout the inner suburbs of Melbourne. The wealth of the Toorak area ensured the prosperity of the businesses along Toorak Road, and unlike in some less wealthy areas the buildings have been continually updated. In the late 1920s and 1930s, noted architect Robert Bell Hamilton, possibly with others, undertook the refurbishment of a number of properties within the village in a Tudor Revival style, creating a character that distinguishes the Toorak Village from other small shopping strips in Melbourne.

Toorak Village occupies both sides of Toorak Road, between Tintern Avenue and Canterbury Road on the south side, and between Wallace Avenue and Grange Road on the north side. Its buildings are typically of one or two-storeys, several dating from the late nineteenth century, such as the shop row at numbers 464-70, and some from the early twentieth century. These include several refurbished in a Tudor Revival mode during the 1920s and 1930s, such as Robert Hamilton's redevelopment of several shops on the corner of Grange Road

(no 541 Toorak Road and 1& 1A Grange Road), and possibly 476-478 Toorak Road almost opposite, both at the eastern gateway to the precinct, and also the Tudor buildings east of Wallace Avenue and around 451 and 475 Toorak Road. Other early twentieth century buildings include the Moderne building on the east side of Mathoura Avenue (no 428), and the stripped classical Commonwealth Bank (1934, no 442) and Vintage Cellars (no 481). A number of modern infill buildings have been constructed in the area during the second half of the twentieth century but the scale and, to a lesser degree the early character, of the area, survives intact.

How is it significant? Toorak Village is significant for historical and social reasons at a local level, and the collection of Tudor Revival buildings (numbers 451-7, 475-9, 476-8, 527-9 and 541) is architecturally significant at a regional level.

Why is it significant? Toorak Village is historically significant as a reflection of the history of the Toorak area, one of Melbourne's wealthiest and most exclusive suburbs.

Toorak Village is socially significant as the local shopping place for Toorak residents for one hundred and fifty years, and as one of Melbourne's most exclusive shopping precincts. Toorak Village is architecturally significant as an early shopping strip which retains the scale and form of the original nineteenth and early twentieth century development. It retains a number of early buildings, as well as a collection of Tudor Revival shops by noted architect and Tudor Revival stylist Robert Bell Hamilton and others which define the character of the village.

Classified: 28/02/2005

Description

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The early character of the area has, to some extent, been diminished by the construction of a large number of modern infill buildings. The low scale of the strip has so far been preserved, but a new three storey development is currently (2004) being built behind 521 Toorak Road.

Heritage Study / Consultant	
Construction Date Range	
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	STONNINGTON CITY
Other names	
Hermes number	71611
Property number	B7299

This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online