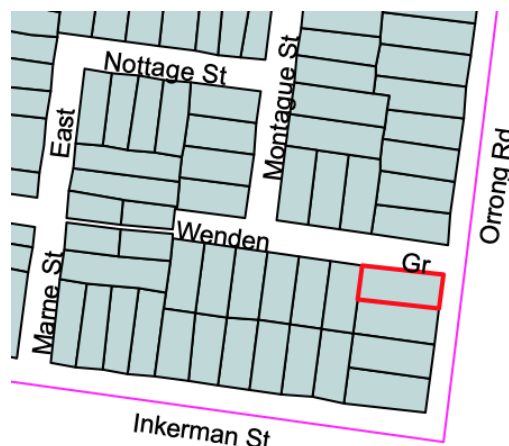


City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Place name: Avalon
Other names: House

Citation No:
773



Address: 285 Orrong Road, St Kilda East

Heritage Precinct: Not applicable

Category: Residential: House

Heritage Overlay: HO222

Style: Interwar: Arts & Crafts

Graded as: Significant

Constructed: 1925

Victorian Heritage Register: No

Designer: Unknown (T.H. Shellard, builder)

Amendment: C

Comment: Revised citation

Significance

What is significant?

Avalon, constructed by T.H. Shellard in 1925 as his own residence, at 285 Orrong Road, St Kilda East is significant. Avalon is a substantial, rendered brick, inter-war, Arts & Crafts, attic bungalow, on a prominent site at the corner of Wenden Grove. It has a dominant jerkinhead tile roof, and the walls are finished in roughcast render, above a clinker brick plinth. Other contributory features include the rendered brick fence with a clinker brick base along both street frontages, and the privet hedge, which is a typical interwar planting.

Non-original alterations and additions are not significant including the garage additions, and the dormer where two hips connect at the rear of the house.

How is it significant?

Avalon at 285 Orrong Road, St Kilda East is of local aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

Avalon is significant as a fine and well-detailed example of an inter-war Arts & Crafts rendered brick attic bungalow. It is notable for its complex massing, achieved by its asymmetrical composition and of smaller roof forms applied to a large transverse gable jerkinhead. These include a small hip roof at front containing a recessed balcony on the attic level, and below this the main roof continues to form a broad hip roof of the verandah; and a smaller jerkinhead roof to the left of the verandah with an unusual shingled hood. The

complexity in its massing is further emphasized with its curved-bay with a shingled-hood at one corner. A high-level of detailing has been applied to the house, in particular its street-facing elevations. This includes a linear moulding below eaves level, shingled hoods and gable ends, the verandah detailing of pairs of squat pillars and the ox-bow profile of its balustrade; double-hung sash windows with leadlight upper sashes in various groupings; a leadlight box window and a planter box upon corbels on the Wenden Grove elevation, timber brackets supporting the main jerkinhead roof at its gable ends, and two tall rendered brick chimneys at the rear of the house. Also of aesthetic value, is the brick boundary fence detailed in a similar manner to the walls of the house and including its *Avalon* and 285 signage, and the mature garden and its privet hedge, all of which contribute to the setting of this house. The high degree of external integrity contributes to the significance of the place. (Criterion E)

Thematic context

Victoria's framework of historical themes

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state: 6.3 Shaping the suburbs, 6.7 Making homes for Victorians

Port Phillip thematic environmental history

5. Buildings and cultural landscapes: 5.2 Shaping the suburbs (5.2.2 Private development), 5.3 Diverse Housing (5.3.3 Suburban bungalows, 5.3.4 Model housing estates)

History

Contextual history

Private development in the City of Port Phillip began from the time of the first sales of Crown land in the 1840s and 1850s. The gradual development of infrastructure, including roads, public transport networks and utilities, paved the way for increasing development of private land. Private subdivision within the broad framework set out by Hoddle's survey saw neighbourhoods in the City of Port Phillip grow into populated, thriving communities.

Mansion estates – large detached homes on generous allotments – defined early, permanent housing in Elwood and St Kilda, in the mid-nineteenth century. Although the oldest surviving houses in Elwood – such as Vautier House, built in the mid-1850s – are terrace houses, it was mansions on large allotments that came to characterise the neighbourhood in its early years. The estates were in four distinct clusters: St Kilda Hill; the semi-rural estates occupying the high ground on the south side of Dandenong Road from the Nepean Road (now St Kilda Road) to Orrong Road; those surrounding the St Kilda Botanical Gardens and along Brighton Road; and the remote 'sea-side' estates along Ormond Esplanade. Kearney's 1855 map of the area shows the contrast between dense residential development in St Kilda, and the large mansion estates to the east of the Nepean Road including Charnwood and Marlton, south of Carlisle Street (then known as Beach Road), and on both sides of Brighton Road, including Erindale and Chiverton, and Bramshaw, Osborne House and Wiltonia further south.

As demand for housing grew, mansion estate subdivisions commenced as early as the 1870s when part of the Charnwood Estate in St Kilda was subdivided to create Charnwood Crescent and Charnwood Grove, where detached villas were erected. The original mansion often survived the first two rounds of subdivision, only to be demolished by the interwar or post-war periods. Those that were retained on much smaller blocks of land were rarely used as single dwellings. Instead, many were converted into boarding houses or flats and this often ensured their survival. Examples include Eildon and Marlton in St Kilda and Rotherfield, Tiuna and Thalassa in Elwood. Others that were demolished are remembered in street names such as Charnwood Avenue, Cintra Avenue, and St Leonards Avenue.



Significant population growth after World War I created a demand for housing, leading to the subdivision (or re-subdivision) of the remaining pockets of vacant or underdeveloped land in the City of Port Phillip. This included vacant land previously thought to be unsuitable for housing, such as in Fishermans Bend, as well as the re-development of the remaining mansion estates. Apart from the mansion estate subdivisions, there were two major interwar subdivisions at either end of the City of Port Phillip: The Garden City estates in Port Melbourne and the Brunnings Estate subdivision in Ripponlea.

Avalon

In the late nineteenth century, the land on the west side of Orrong Road between Alma Road and Inkerman Street was occupied by three large mansion estates: Fern Acres in the north, Great Hill (which faced Pine Hill Grove, now the southern section of Lansdowne Road) and Keroongola, which occupied a ten-acre site at the northwest corner of Inkerman Street (MMBW).

In the early twentieth century, all three estates were progressively subdivided to create the street network that exists today as well as new allotments facing to the main roads. Suburban development of the area commenced during the 1920s and continued into the post-war period.

This property at the south corner of Orrong Road and Wenden Grove was created by the 1919 subdivision of the Keroongola estate, which contained 31 allotments facing Orrong Road and Inkerman Street, and the new streets of Wenden Grove and Montague Street. It appears the mansion was (initially) retained on a reduced allotment in Montague Street (LV).

In 1925 local builder T.H. Shellard constructed Avalon as his own residence (BP). Shellard was still living here in 1935 (SM). No architect has been identified (the original drainage plan only lists Mr Shellard as owner and occupier) and it is possible that Mr Shellard designed the house himself.

In 2003 alterations and additions were carried out at the rear of the house, which extended the garage (BP).

References

Apperly, R., Irving, P & Reynolds, P., *A pictorial guide to identifying Australian architecture. Styles and terms from 1788 to the present*, 1994

Land Victoria (LV), LP 7666

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works Plan No. 1418, dated 1901

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St Kilda Council building permits (BP) nos. 6007, 25 March 1925; P/5179/2003, 22 October 2003

Sands & McDougall Directory (SM) 1925, 1930, 1935, 1940

South East Water, Drainage Plan no. 146296

Description

Avalon is a substantial, rendered brick, inter-war, Arts & Crafts, attic bungalow, on a prominent site at the south corner of Orrong Road and Wenden Grove. The house has a dominant jerkinhead tile roof, its ridge parallel with the Orrong Road frontage, and the walls are finished in roughcast render above a clinker brick plinth. A linear moulding extends at the tops of walls on each elevation below the eaves level. The house is complemented by a rendered brick fence with a clinker brick base along both street frontages, which references the materiality of the house. The fence steps down between piers with pyramidal rendered tops, and has a splay at its corner where the pedestrian entrance is formed by broader piers with rendered signage *Avalon* and 285.

The front elevation of the house faces Orrong Road and has a deep set back behind a mature garden that includes a privet hedge behind the street boundary fence, which is a typical interwar planting. The setback from Wenden Grove is relatively shallow.



The east (front) elevation is asymmetrically composed. The large roof contains attic bedrooms and is expressed on the front elevation as a balcony beneath a small projecting hip roof at centre. Below this balcony is the verandah on the ground floor, which has a roof with a broad sweep across the east elevation, and this roof is supported by pairs of pillars. An ox-bow profile is incorporated into the balustrade of the verandah. The front entrance to the house is accessed from this verandah.

At left on the east elevation is a canted bay, which has a smaller jerkinhead roof projecting from the main roof. The gable end of this bay, clad in shingles, forms a hood over double-hung sash windows. At right is another bay, which is curved, and is at the junction of the east and north elevations. It has a curved shingled hood, above a series of double-hung sash windows. The upper sashes of these windows, and other windows on the house, have leadlight glazing.

The side elevations have similar materiality and detailing to the front elevation. The fall of the land along Wenden Grove creates a greater proportion of red brick on this elevation than the front - the red brick a continuum of the brick plinth at front. Timber brackets at the eaves support the gable ends of the roof, which are shingled, and have double-hung sash windows (four on the north elevation and three on the south). On the north elevation, on the ground floor, a shallow bay with a hip roof projects towards Wenden Grove. This bay has double-hung sash windows in a tripartite arrangement. Also on the Wenden Grove elevation is a leadlight box window, and a planter box supported by corbels is fixed to the wall below the curved bay window.

At the rear of the house a large gambrel roof projects from the main jerkinhead roof. There is a small skillion roof to one of the attic-level spaces, at the junction of the two roofs. Also at the rear are two, tall, rendered brick chimneys. The garage facing Wenden Grove has been extended in a sympathetic manner (the garage door has been replaced), and has a rooftop deck, which is concealed by a parapet.

Apart from the extension of the garage and other minor alterations and additions at the rear, the house has a high degree of external integrity.

Comparative analysis

Arts & Crafts houses are characterized by features including the use of contrasting textures and materials on facades (such as facebrick, roughcast render, timber shingles and brackets to gables); entrance porches beneath the main roof supported on heavy battered piers or paired timber posts or columns resting on low piers; simple, geometric decoration created by projecting bricks or small voids (e.g., hit and miss brick walls); box windows (with timber frames that project from the wall, resting on timber or brick corbels) and semi-circular windows and openings. The roof is often a dominant element, featuring gables and/or hips of medium to steep pitch with prominent eaves, often requiring bracketing.

This house is a fine example of the style with many typical characteristics. It is notable for its complex massing and high-level of detail in a fine Arts & Crafts composition on an inter-war bungalow.

Other examples in the City of Port Phillip include:

- House, 18 Normandy Road, Elwood (1919). Designed by Matthew Sherlock (Citation 747)
- Yarramundi, 27 Ormond Esplanade (1921). Designed by Matthew Sherlock (Citation 751)
- House, 175 Hotham Street, Ripponlea (1922-23). Designed by Schreiber & Jorgensen (Citation 2021)
- House, 209 Alma Road, St Kilda East (1924). Designed by A.H. Beckwith (No citation)
- Flatman House, 207 Alma Road, St Kilda East (1925). Designed by Schreiber & Jorgensen (Citation 2138)
- House, 211 Alma Road, St Kilda East (c.1925). Designer unknown (No citation).

Assessment

This place has been assessed in accordance with the processes and guidelines outlined in the Australia ICOMOS *Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* (The Burra Charter) 2013, using the Hercon criteria.

Recommendations

Retain in the Heritage Overlay with paint controls.

Primary source

Peter Andrew Barrett, *H07 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct heritage review Stage 2: Review of existing heritage citations*, 2021

Other studies

Andrew Ward & Associates, *City of Port Phillip Heritage Review*, 1998

Robert Peck von Hartel Trethowan, *St Kilda 20th century architectural study*, Volume 3, 1992

Other images



Avalon in 1998