Place name:	*Werona* (6 Mantell), *Nyora* (8 Mantell)
Address:	6 & 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds
Place typology:	Residential
Construction date range:	Circa 1888
Architectural style:	Victorian Italianate
Assessment:	M.McDougall, May 2021
Recommendation:	That the place be included in the heritage overlay schedule

Photo of place:



8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds, Photograph, M. McDougall 2021



6 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds, Photograph, M. McDougall 2021

Statement of Significance:

What is significant?

The single storey Victorian Italianate duplex villa at 6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds, constructed ca.1888, is a rare example of a duplex villa in Moonee Ponds. Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The single storey symmetrical Victorian Italianate duplex form
- Hipped slate roof (clad with original Welsh slates-Penhryn Heather Blue) with central band of scalloped slates
- Convex corrugated iron roofed verandah across frontage terminating at projecting verandah end parapet wall
- Polychrome brickwork
- Parapet end walls to front verandah with vermiculated rendered decorative end
- Victorian four-panel timber doors with side lights and fanlights
- Timber framed double hung windows
- Front garden settings with straight paths to the verandah

How is it significant?

6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds is of local historic and aesthetic significance and rarity, to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

The single storey duplex villa at 6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds is of historical significance for its capacity to demonstrate the manner in which the elevated land near Moonee Ponds railway station attracted a wide variety of housing types during the Land Boom. (Criterion A)

The single storey duplex villa at 6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds is of significance as an uncommon type in the Victorian Boom period- the single storey duplex form, without front parapet, when free-standing villas (both single and two storey) or terraces, also single or two storey, were the most common form. The continuous roof form, unbroken by the party wall, which makes it look like a larger single dwelling, is particularly unusual. The

substantial front setback of approximately 7 metres, while similar to other freestanding villas in the street, is also unusual for a modest sized Victorian duplex. (Criterion B)

The single storey duplex villa at 6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds is aesthetically important as an ornate Victorian Italianate single storey duplex, with original hipped slate roofs featuring a decorative scalloped band, convex roofed verandas with timber columns and decorative lace friezes and brackets. The three chimneys are also of polychrome brickwork, with bracketted cornice top and dentils below a secondary moulding. The duplex is polychrome brickwork and is substantially intact. (Criterion E)

Description:

6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds is an ornate Victorian Italianate single storey duplex villa, symmetrical, and set back from the front alignment to provide a front garden to each villa.

The slate roof is hipped and is continuous (no parapet party wall penetrating to roof). An aerial view shows the roof having a central valley extending across both houses. The slates are likely to be Welsh Penrhyn heather blue, and there is a decorative scalloped band in the middle section. The convex roofed verandas are corrugated iron, and the verandahs are supported on timber columns and decorative lace friezes and brackets. No. 6 has a convex roofed corrugated iron awning added to the south side, with timber lattice screen and gate (not contributory).

The walls are of polychrome brickwork, with the main brickwork being Hawthorn (brown), with cream brick decorative triangular surrounds to the windows and doors. There are bands of brown, red and cream brick under the eaves, and paired cream brackets. The three chimneys are also of polychrome brickwork, with bracketed cornice top and dentils below a secondary moulding. Two of the chimneys are painted white.

The parapet end walls to the front verandah have banded brick ends, mainly cream with brown bands, and there is a vermiculated render decorative end at the top. Unlike the main roof, the party wall to the verandah does extend to a parapet, so the two verandah roofs are separate.

The windows to the front are timber framed double hung. The doors are four-panel timber Victorian with side lights and fanlight (the glazing to the side lights at No. 6 appears to have been replaced).

The front gardens are larger than comparative examples, with straight red brick paved paths leading directly to the front door. There are areas of lawn and rose bushes and other small shrubs to both villas. The front fences are modern twisted wire with timber posts and rails and are not original to the duplex villa. The duplex is substantially intact.

History:

Contextual History

City of Moonee Valley occupies part of the Traditional lands of the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woi-wurrung people. Many sites in the area now known as City of Moonee Valley show evidence of Woi-wurrung activities and spiritual connections. Fish were trapped in the rivers and creeks, stone was quarried from the river edges, murnong daisy was collected and kangaroos hunted across grassland areas, and bark was harvested from trees in the river valleys. This relationship between the Woi-wurrung and the land, water, animals and plants, continues to this day (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.29).

The first Europeans to explore the area known as Moonee Valley was a surveyor, Charles Grimes in 1803. In 1836, settlers moving from Van Diemen's Land crossed the area in the hope of finding empty, cheap and plentiful land for sheep. By 1842, surveyors had created the first map of the Parish of Doutta Galla and then Woi-wurrung lands were offered for sale by the British Crown to Europeans (noting that the land was never ceded). The Wurundjeri were moved off their land which had a profound impact on their culture, health and language. By 1860, the entire parish was sold (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.32-33).

Early development of the area began with the goldrush period of the 1850s which saw Mount Alexander Road used as a thoroughfare to the diggings with over 30,000 people estimated as moving along the dirt road each week. Businesses and shops sprang up providing sustenance, transport and accommodation to service the passing gold rush trade. Some very early wayside hotels and shops still survive from this period (Living Histories, *Thematic History*, 2012: p.51-54).

After the heady days of the goldrush, the 1860s saw Essendon, Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds and Flemington develop into permanent townships. The development of railways by private companies gave huge impetus to suburban development of the area with the opening of the Essendon railway in 1860. The government purchased the line in 1868. Suburban trains terminated at Essendon and it wasn't until 1889 that Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds and Newmarket stations were completed. By 1893 stations opened at Strathmore and Pascoe Vale and in 1922 Glenbervie Station opened. The railways provided an enormous boost to residential development along the line and those who had previously moved to areas without trains, now clamoured for them (Living Histories, *Thematic History*, 2012: p.59).

By the 1880s Essendon had become a Borough and by 1891 had a population of 14,411. Many subdivisions occurred during the land boom of the 1880s and many failed to eventuate due to the depression of the 1890s. In the interwar period a boom in subdivision and residential infill occurred in Travancore, Essendon, Ascot Vale, Strathmore and Moonee Ponds, which was focused on new transport routes along the tram lines, first established to Essendon in 1905. In 1919 the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board was formed and lines were extended and improved. The tram lines saw development occur either side of Maribyrnong Road, further along Mt Alexander Road, Buckley Street and Keilor Road (Living Histories, *Thematic History*, 2012: p.65-68, p.115).

In the three decades after the Second World War, Melbourne's suburbs ballooned outward to cater for post-war migration, the baby boom, an increasing need for new housing, and a more car-centred economy. Areas to the north of Essendon had been open paddocks in 1945, but by 1950 the Shire of Keilor found themselves with a developing suburb with no name. It was later called Niddrie. Similarly, Airport West was developing quickly with houses being built before the roads. By 1964 it was claimed that Airport West had the cheapest cream brick veneers in Melbourne (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.120-121).

Many houses in these post-war areas were austere weatherboard or brick veneer bungalows, with a few scattered architect designed or project homes on new blocks, particularly along The Boulevard in Aberfeldie. These post-war housing areas were car-centred communities located close to industry along Keilor Road, Matthews Avenue around Essendon Airport and East Keilor. By 1960 Airport West had its first hotel, the famous Skyways Hotel and then in the 1970s the first shopping centre, owned by Westfield was begun (heritage ALLIANCE, *Gap Heritage Study*, 2005: p.28-30).

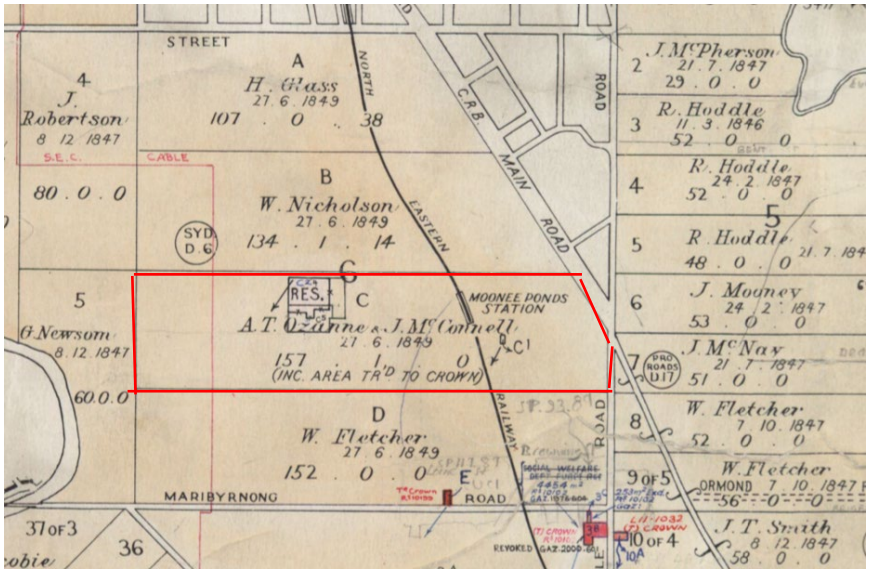
Post-war housing pressure also saw a huge investment by the Housing Commission of Victoria who developed 150 bungalows in concrete, weatherboard and brick in Aberfeldie. They then began an ambitious estate of houses and flats on a 77 acre site at Ascot Vale in 1949. These low-rise walk-up flats eventually gave rise to the high-rise flats of Flemington which opened in June 1965 (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.123).

Many post-war migrants bought or built houses in the outer areas of the municipality, close to employment and industry and where new, cheaper housing was readily available. These developments and public housing in Aberfeldie, Ascot Vale and Flemington have had a long-lasting effect on the nature of the Moonee Valley community which today is one of the most diverse and vibrant in Melbourne (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.124)

Place History

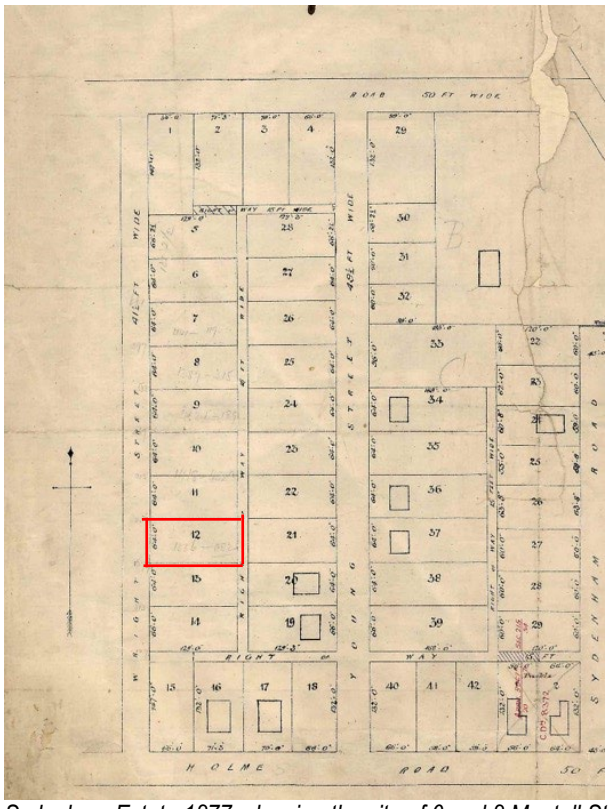
The land at 6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds, part of Crown Allotment C, Section 6, Parish of Doutta Galla, County of Bourke, was first purchased from the Crown by A.J. Ozanne and J. McConnell on 27/6/1847. The land within Allotment C includes much of what is now central Moonee Ponds and is divided into two by Holmes Road/Puckle Street. The Melbourne to Essendon railway line bisected the area in 1859-60 and the Moonee Ponds station erected near Holmes Road gave impetus to development nearby. The re-opening of the railway in 1871

encouraged further subdivision of the land west of the railway line for housing, which was substantially developed by the end of the nineteenth century (Butler, 1985: p.227).



Extract from Doutta Galla Parish Plan, Source: Public Records Office of Victoria

The land was subdivided around 1877, with 6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds being part of the Sydenham Estate.



Sydenham Estate 1877, showing the site of 6 and 8 Mantell Street on Lot 12, Wright Street (now Mantell) Source: Essendon Historical Society plan collection

There was an auction of 3 "Handsome Villa Residences" and 22 allotments on 27 September, 1877, including 6 allotments in Mantell Street. An advertisement stated:

> *"The above fine allotments form part of what has been so long and favourably known as the Sydenham Estate, situated exactly opposite and to the westward of Moonee Ponds Station,*

on the North Eastern Railway. For village and cottage sites they cannot be surpassed, and the estimation in which the whole neighbourhood is held by the public is well shown by the fact that numerous handsome and comfortable residences which are now scattered over sites which four years ago were covered with primitive wattle and gum trees…It may surprise some perhaps to learn that in less than five years land has here increased in value to the extent of fully 500 per cent., and is still rising (*The Age* 15 September,1877 p. 2)."

The land (now 6 and 8 Mantell Street) was purchased on 1 April 1884 by Alexander Grant, builder and councillor, residing at number 1 Grosvenor street Moonee Ponds, and that the second owner was Bridget James, widower of Melbourne, who purchased on the 27 July 1885 (Certificate of Title Vol. 1556 Folio 082, Source: Essendon Historical Society)

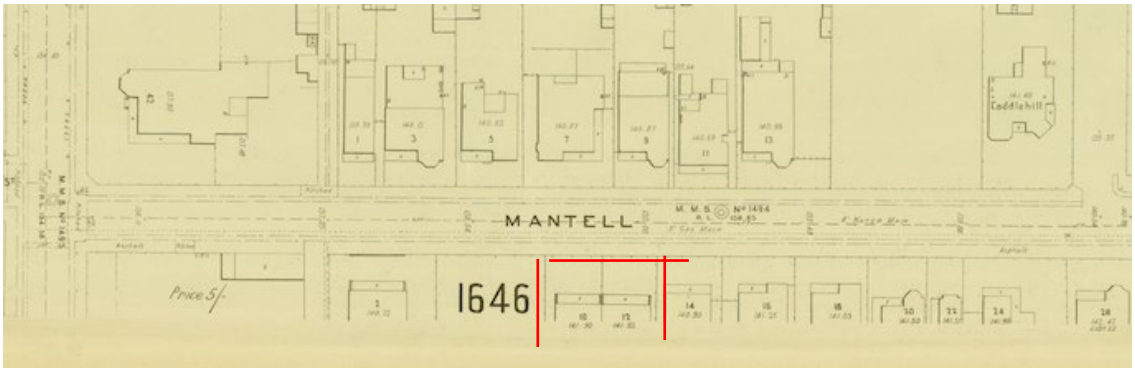
The Argus reported on Mon 15 November 1886 that:

> *"Messrs. Patterson and Sons (in conjunction with Messrs. J. Vale and Sons and Messrs. Wilder and Griffiths) report having held an auction of the Sydenham Estate this afternoon, 64 allotments being disposed of from 5s to 9s per foot."*

The duplex was most likely constructed between 1885 and 1890 and remained on a single title until it was subdivided into 2 allotments in 1951. The street numbers have changed, and the *Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plan* of 1905 shows the duplex is numbered 10 and 12, now 6 and 8 respectively.

The house at No. 6 was named Werona, while No. 8 was named Nyora (Essendon Historical Society).

The *Sands and McDougall Directory* for 1890 has no street numbers, but the likely occupants of Nos. 10 and 12 at the time are T.L Winchcomb, No.10 and Thomas Heaney, No.12, corresponding to 6 and 8 respectively. Other early occupants were J. Smith in 1895 at No. 10, followed by William A Milne, till at least 1905, and Henry E Wauchope at No. 12 until around 1905, when the occupant becomes Robert Flood.



Extract from Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Plan no. 1644, Source, State Library of Victoria, 1905, ID1184591 (showing 10-12, now 6-8, Mantell Street immediately to the right of the number 1646. North is to the right, with Holmes Road on the left)

Sources:

Primary Sources

The Age
The Argus
Certificates of Title, LANDATA
Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Plans, State Library of Victoria
Public Records Office Victoria, Probates and Wills
Sands & McDougall Directories, State Library of Victoria

Secondary Sources

Aldous, Grant, *The Stop-Over That Stayed: A History of Essendon*, 1979, City of Essendon
Butler, Graeme, *Essendon Conservation Study,* 1985
Living Histories, *Moonee Valley Thematic Environmental History*, Adopted 18 September 2012
Context Pty Ltd, *Moonee Valley Gap Study Stage 1*, 2014
Research by Essendon Historical Society
Ancestry.com

Thematic Context:

City of Moonee Valley Thematic Environmental History, 2012

2. Building Victoria's industries and workforce
   - 2.7. Promoting settlement
6. Building towns, cities and the garden state
   - 6.7 Making homes for Victorians

Comparative Analysis:

The duplex at 6 and 8 Mantell Street Moonee Ponds is best compared to similar single storey duplexes or attached houses of a similar age, style and materials.

However, the duplex form appears to be uncommon, particularly with a continuous roof, i.e. not interrupted by party walls with parapet penetrating the roof of the duplex villa. The continuous roof form is generally uncommon, as it was not effective in stopping the spread of fire from one dwelling to the adjoining one, as when there is a parapet party wall between the residences.

The other unusual aspect of this pair, is that other single storey duplexes or pairs, or terraces of this period with polychrome brickwork, usually had a front parapet, whereas 6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds has a hipped roof and no front parapet.

Of the comparative examples examined, Kevin Terrace in Margaret Street, Moonee Ponds and 17 and 19 Maribyrnong Road, Ascot Vale, are the most similar, with similar continuous roof, lack of front parapet, and polychrome brickwork. However, the duplex at 17 and 19 Maribyrnong Road, which is most similar in form, is a lot less intact.

6 and 8 Mantell Street also have larger front gardens (i.e. deeper set back) than the other comparative examples. In George Street, Moonee Ponds, numbers 7 and 9 are attached parapeted terraces, located almost on the street with tiny garden frontages. These are the classic Melbourne style terrace, whereas 6 and 8 Mantell are more unusual. This generic Melbourne style included a parapet, eave cornice and a frieze, brackets and sometimes balustrades. Party walls were decorated with corbels or even small heads. Brickwork was polychrome and highly detailed and decorative cast-iron was filigree style.

	All photos from Google Streetview
Kelvin Terrace 42-64 Margaret St, Moonee Ponds, (HO311) comprises 12 attached houses constructed between 1887 and 1889 for John Thomson. Similar in roof form with a continuous slate hipped roof (some slate replaced with corrugated iron). The polychrome brickwork and details including chimneys, which are also similar. These are Terraces not a duplex though.	
Terrace, 41, 43 and 45 Regent Street, Ascot Vale (HO382). A weatherboard terrace of three dwellings c1885 with continuous corrugated iron hipped roof, with rendered chimneys, and convex verandah roof with hipped ends. The terrace is significant as a rare example of a row of three undivided timber houses, which are among the oldest dwellings in Ascot Vale.	
12-14 and 16-18 St Leonards Road, Ascot Vale (HO18). A pair of weatherboard duplexes with continuous slate hipped roofs, and bullnosed verandahs.	

Recommendation:

That 6 and 8 Mantell Street, Moonee Ponds be included in the Heritage Overlay schedule.

Schedule:

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Solar Energy Controls	Yes
Fences and Outbuildings	No
Prohibited Uses	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No