Place name:	*Excelsior*
Address:	10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds
Place typology:	Residential
Construction date range:	Circa 1889-90
Architectural style:	Victorian Italianate
Assessment:	heritage ALLIANCE, May 2021
Recommendation:	That the place be included in the heritage overlay schedule.

Photos of place:





10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds. Photographs, heritage ALLIANCE, May 2021.

Statement of Significance:

What is significant?

10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds, is a timber Victorian Italianate residence built circa 1889-1890, which has an unusual level of architectural detail and is highly intact. The significant features of the house includes:

- Single storey, freestanding asymmetrical form with projecting hipped bay and ornate, canted bay window to the street frontage and corrugated iron part-verandah.
- Ashlar timber boarding to front with expressed quoining also in timber board.
- Original, slate M-profile hipped roof, with terracotta finials and ridge capping, fish-scale patterning, timber eave brackets and painted badge mouldings between eave brackets and two rendered and corbelled chimneys.
- Original pattern of fenestration, window joinery, coloured sidelights and ornate mouldings to bay window sill, stall, eaves, mullions and pelmets.
- The original timber picket fence with recessed gate and tessellated tile path.

The rear skillion wing is not significant.

How is it significant?

10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds, is of local architectural (representative) significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds is significant as an ashlar timber boarded, asymmetrical Victorian Italianate residence on a large allotment. The Victorian era and dichromatic brick Italianate styles are common in Moonee Ponds, but timber Italianate villas of this size and highly ornate design are uncommon. Only two others, 76 Margaret Street, Ascot Vale and 12 Grosvenor Street, Moonee Ponds are listed on the heritage overlay.

10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds, demonstrates the attributes of the Italianate style through its form, unusual integrity of fabric and ornate design. It demonstrates the asymmetrical form with front projecting bay, including a canted bay window and part verandah. The canted bay window has an unusual level of detail in timber mouldings to the mullions, eaves, pelmets and stall. The M-profile hipped roof has an original slate roof with fish scale patterning and terracotta ridge capping and finials. The two rendered chimneys have corbelling.

10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds, is a largely intact example of the Victorian Italianate and is an unusually ornate and attractive design in timber for its period. (Criterion D and E)

Description:

10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds, is a free standing asymmetrical Victorian Italianate villa. It sits to one side of a very large allotment. The level of detail in the timber mouldings and decorations is unusual and the quality of the finishes is also unusual. The house appears to be mostly intact and has a high level of integrity. It would appear that the house has been painted very infrequently and it is possible the existing colour scheme is original.

The M-profile slate roof has a projecting hipped bay to one side with a canted bay window with a flat iron roof. The slate has fish-scale patterning across the front façade and bay and terracotta ridge capping and finials, all intact. There are two large rendered and corbelled chimneys. The part verandah roof is bullnose corrugated iron painted red with dentils on the timber fascia. The timber posts are chamfered and the verandah frieze is missing. It is probable that there was a cast-iron frieze as a bracket is still fixed to the wall.

The front façade is clad in ashlar timber boarding while the sides are weatherboard. The ashlar boarding has raised boards above the bay window in imitation quoining. Above the string course is more timber mouldings between pairs of

timber under eave brackets with red painted badges between. The bay window has a similar decorative detail under the eaves of the bay window roof with smaller versions of timber eave brackets and red painted badges.

The bay window is very ornate with original timber mouldings to mullions, the stall below the sills, and built-in pelmets. The pelmets above the timber double hung sashes have moulding and a toothed edge. The mullions have unusual timber columns with moulded capitals. There are decorative mouldings to the bay window fascia with a string course and brackets above the window head.

The timber picket fence has what looks like original posts and arrangement with a recessed ingo to the front door. The gate entry has a tessellated pavement which leads to the front door. There is no cross over or driveway on Primrose Street.

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 Environmental 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 Environmental 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 Environmental History*, 2012: p.65-68; 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).

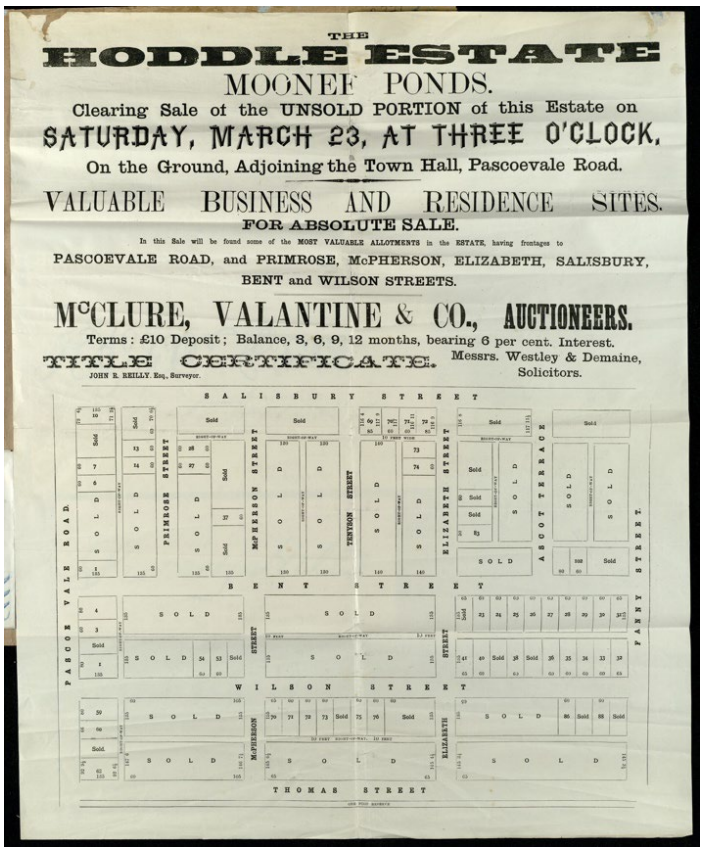
Many houses in these post-war areas were austere weatherboard or brick veneer bungalows, with a few scattered architect designed or project homes on new blocks, particularly along the Boulevard in Aberfeldie. These post-war housing areas were car-centred communities located close to industry along Keilor 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

10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds, formerly 22 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds, is located between Salisbury and Bent Streets along the southern portion of Primrose Street. The house dates to circa 1889-90 following the 1888 subdivision of the Hoddle Estate (*The Argus*, 12 May 1888, p.3; Sands & McDougall, 1890).



Batten & Percy, "Hoddle Estate Moonee Ponds," 1889, State Library of Victoria: 18901889.

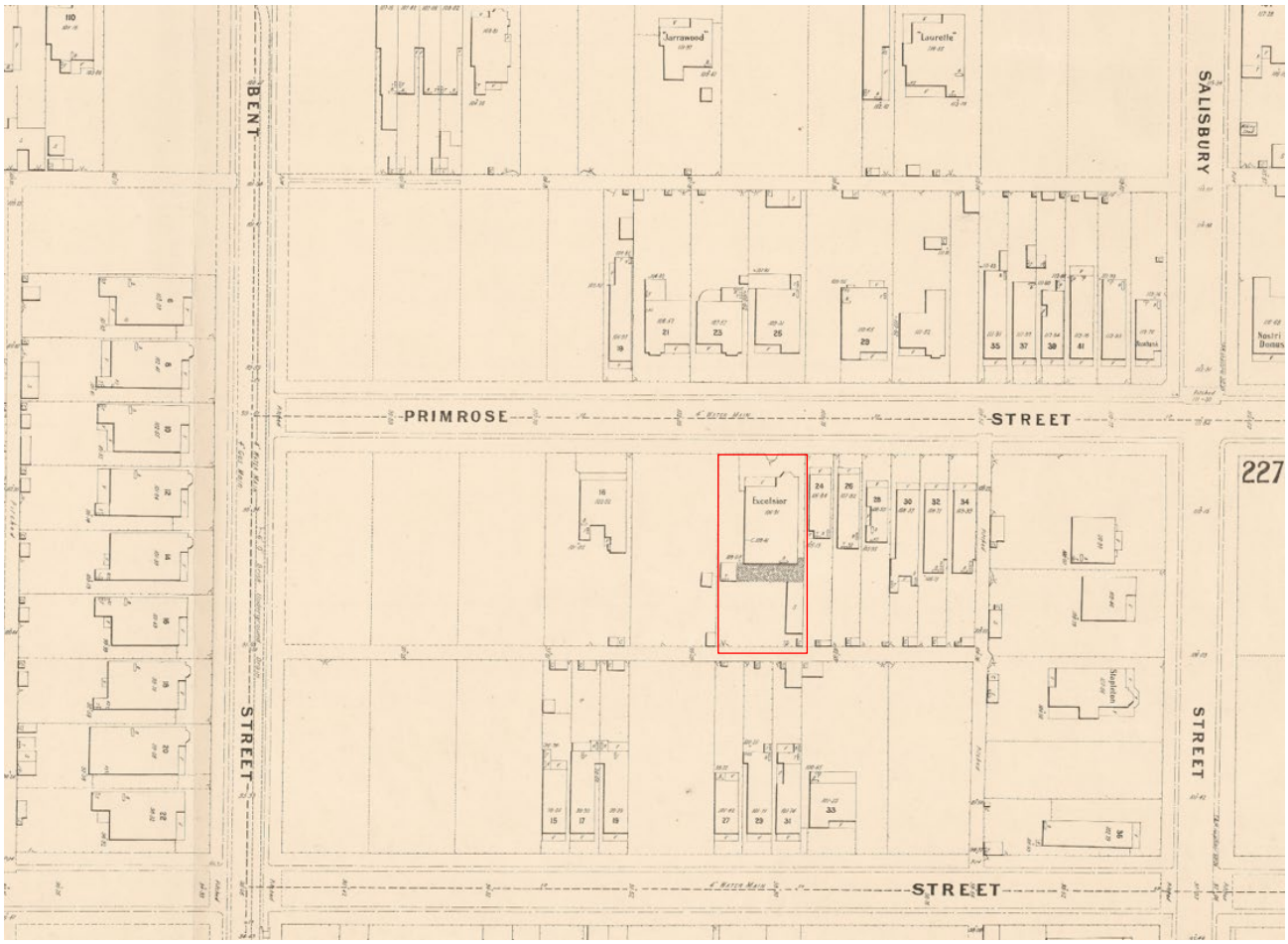
The Hoddle Estate subdivision comprised of Crown Allotments 3 and 4 and part of Allotment 2, Section 5 in the Parish of Doutta Galla (Context, *2017 Heritage Study, Vol. 2*, 2021: p.501). The land was purchased from the crown by Robert

Hoddle, surveyor-general of Victoria, and passed to his wife Fanny Agnes following his death in 1881 (Robert Hoddle Probate, Public Records Office Victoria (PROV), VPRS 28/P0, 22/930). At the time, his real and personal properties were valued at £127,000 (*The Age*, 8 Aug 1894, p.9).

The Hoddle Estate was then acquired by speculator Thomas Bent which Bent and Thomas Streets are named (Context, *2017 Heritage Study, Vol. 2*, 2021: p.502. The subdivision ran between Salisbury Street to the north, Thomas Street to the south, Fanny Street to the east and Pascoe Vale Rd to the West ("The Hoddle Estate Moonee Ponds," State Library of Victoria, 1889). Multiple subdivisional sales took place, the first on June 2, 1888, which offered 40 business, villa, and mansion sites (*The Argus*, 12 May 1888, p.3). Advertisements lauded the location of the estate, noting:

> *"It may, however, be mentioned that the Hoddle Estate is situated close to the Essendon Town Hall, and within a few minutes walk of the Moonee Ponds Station and busses, so that a more convenient position could not possibly be chosen for building purposes* (*North Melbourne Advertiser,* 30 June 1888, p.2)*."*

All allotments were sold for a total of £13,689 (*The Age*, 4 June 1888, p.4). The following sales occurred in the following weeks with similar success (*North Melbourne Advertiser*, 30 June 1888, p.2; *The Argus*, 6 June 1888, p.6). An auction poster advertising the clearing sale of the estate shows lots with frontages to Primrose Street remaining to be sold ("The Hoddle Estate Moonee Ponds," State Library of Victoria, 1889). Based on this poster, it is likely 10 Primrose was located on lot 26 having a recorded frontage of 120 ft with a dept of 135 ft ("The Hoddle Estate Moonee Ponds," State Library of Victoria, 1889; Probate: Thomas Jarrett, PROV VPRS 28/P3, 148/207).



Extract from Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Plan no. 2275, State Library of Victoria, 1905.

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) map of 1908 shows an Italianate villa constructed on the subject site with the name "Excelsior (MMBW Plan no. 2275, 1908)." Then numbered 22 Primrose St, the earliest identified resident is William Pinkerton Young, a builder (Sands & McDougall, 1890). Young operated his construction business from the home; however, it is unknown whether he built the house itself (*The Argus*, 24 March 1896, p.2; *The*

Age, 2 June 1892, p.7). In February 1912, Young sold the house in a public auction, then investing in a number of smaller properties (*The Age*, 30 March 1912, p.10). Advertising for the sale described the villa:

> *"The abovementioned property, comprising specially built and comfortable family villa residence containing 9 rooms […] The buildings are substantial, and consist of stabling, coach house, man's room, workshop, cow and poultry houses, &. [sic] Neatly laid out lawn and garden, conservatory and fernery* (*The Age*, 27 Jan 1912, p.3)."

The house was purchased that same year by Thomas and Sabina Jarrett (S&D, 1912). At the time of Thomas' death in October 1916, the property was valued at £900 (Probate: Thomas Jarrett, Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV), VPRS 28/P3, 148/207). Sabina continued to occupy the house until her passing in 1938 along with their daughter, and for a time, son-in-law, Elsie May and James Henry Baker (*The Age*, 2 Dec 1924, p.10; Probate: Sabina Jarrett, PROV, VPRS 28/P3, 303/839). Elsie May inherited the house and resided there until her death in 1984 (Probate: Elsie May Baker, PROV, VPRS 28/P14, 933/192).

Sources:

Primary Sources

The Age
The Argus
Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Plans, State Library of Victoria
North Melbourne Advertiser
"Hoddle Estate Moonee Ponds," auction poster, State Library of Victoria
Sands & McDougall Directories
Probates and Wills, Public Records Office of Victoria

Secondary Sources

Context, *2017 Heritage Study, Vol. 2,* 2021

Thematic Context:

City of Moonee Valley Thematic Environmental History, 2012

6. Building Towns, Cities, and the Garden State

   6.7 Making Homes for Victorians

Comparative Analysis:

Victorian Italianate in Moonee Valley

During the boom years during the 1880s, the City of Moonee Valley saw increased residential development through subdivision of large estates. Often demonstrating the early phase of the suburban expansion near the railway lines or arterial roads, Victorian-era houses in Moonee Valley are mostly single-storey Italianate style villas, with some examples of mansions, double-storey villas, single- and double-storey terraces and detached cottages. Most are built of brick, with one timber example evident.

The Italianate style is a revival in the mid-nineteenth century of earlier Italian architectural forms and details, especially those from the time of the Renaissance, which were in themselves a revival and reappraisal of Greek and most importantly Roman architecture. The Italianate style was also associated, but less commonly in Victoria and chiefly in the 1840s to 1860s but with lingering influence, with a revival of building forms of vernacular Italian rural buildings, particularly in their use of asymmetrical massing and towers producing a picturesque effect.

The Italianate style as applied to domestic architecture in Victoria favoured simple building forms, sometimes enlivened by bays and towers, with sheer wall surfaces in face brick (often bi-chrome or polychrome) or cement render generally incorporating quoining (often as surface decoration if not necessarily structural need).

Decoration in the Italianate style derived from Roman precedents and included elements from Classical entablatures and architectural orders, including a hierarchy of architraves, friezes, and cornices with associated moulding, panels, and brackets, applied to eaves, parapets and chimneys.

Eclectic touches were often married to the Italianate style, including Romanesque, Gothic, or stilted segmental arch-headed fenestration, incongruous replication of masonry features in timber, and excessive ornament that characterised the Boom style of the late nineteenth century.

The Italianate style is well represented in the Moonee Valley Heritage Overlay. Individually significant examples included detached villas (both symmetrical and asymmetrical in plan), terrace houses and mansions. Typically, they are set within a garden with a low front fence at the street frontage. Detailing ranges from modest to elaborate, typically including features from the era including cast-iron verandah friezes and posts and polychrome masonry to the front façade. The level of intactness of the Victorian-era Italianate villas in the City of Moonee Valley is moderate to very high (Context, *2017 Heritage Study, Vol.* 2, 2021: p.242-243).

	Photos by Google Streetview
76 Margaret Street, Ascot Vale, is a single-storey timber villa with slate roof and is a significant property in precinct HO465. Stylistically, the house has characteristics of typical late Victorian, Italianate residences. The residence has timber ashlar blocks on the street elevations, while the minor elevations are clad in weatherboard. It is very comparable to 10 Primrose Street though it is in poor condition and has lost some of its original detailing.	
72 Eglinton street, Moonee Ponds (HO12) is an asymmetrical Victorian Italianate rendered villa located on a high corner. The property has stucco moulding over the windows and elaborate moulding between the eave brackets. It has a polygonal bay to one side and a hipped bay to the other with a return verandah between them. It is an example in masonry of an Italianate villa that has been included as a contributory building in a precinct.	
12 Grosvenor Street, Moonee Ponds (HO517), *Sans Souci* is an asymmetrical Victorian Italianate with ashlar timber boarding built in 1881-1883. It includes a polygonal bay, hipped roof with chimneys and timber double hung sash windows. It is comparable to 10 Primrose for its retention of ornate original features and slate roof. It is an unusual timber Italianate, and quite early. Another timber Italianate is located at 3 Ardmillan Road on the corner of Grosvenor.	

Recommendation:

That 10 Primrose Street, Moonee Ponds be included in the Heritage Overlay schedule.

Schedule:

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