

Gordon Street Precinct, Balwyn Statement of Significance, November 2021

Heritage Place:	Gordon Street Precinct	PS ref no:	HO947
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What is significant?

The Gordon Street Precinct, comprising 133–141 Gordon Street, Balwyn, is significant. Elements that contribute to the significance of the precinct include:

- The house and maisonettes constructed between 1937 and 1950, as shown on the precinct map.
- The overall consistency of single-storey built form and materials of timber or brick walls, tiled hipped roofs, asymmetrical planning, and integrated entrance porches.
- Consistent street setbacks.
- Expression of individual detailing across the group, which includes rendered brick walls, face brick detailing including base brick work, roman and tapestry brick detailing, exposed brick flashes and window sill, head and jamb details (numbers 133, 133A, 135, 135A, 139), weatherboard walls with brick entry porches (numbers 137 and 141), double-hung sash windows, picture windows, leadlighting, curved walls (numbers 133A, 133 and 141) and all extant chimneys.
- Early concrete paths and drives at numbers 135, 135A and 141.

Contributory buildings include 133, 133A, 135, 135A, 137, 139 and 141 Gordon Street, Balwyn.

Features that do not contribute to the significance of the precinct include non-original alterations and additions to individual properties. Although none of the front fences are original, their low height (with the exception of no. 133) enhances the distinctive interwar character of the precinct.

How is it significant?

The Gordon Street Precinct, Balwyn, is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

The Gordon Street Precinct is of local historical significance for the evidence it provides of the extensive residential development in this section of Balwyn during the interwar and early postwar period, which was the result of improved transport connections established in the first decades of the twentieth century and the development of infrastructure (such as electricity from 1920 and sewage from 1927). It reflects the significant expansion of residential development in the middle suburbs of Melbourne during this period. Modest in scale, this small group of houses and maisonettes is representative of the interwar and early postwar housing stock that once proliferated throughout this area of Balwyn, bounded by Burke Road, Whitehorse Road, Balwyn Road and Doncaster Road, but which is now increasingly rare due to development pressures. (Criterion A).

Houses in the Gordon Street Precinct are significant as a highly intact group of dwellings that represent typical domestic architectural styling popular during the 1930s, which carried over into the immediate postwar years, and which were once prevalent throughout this area. Constructed of brick or timber, all have a simple asymmetrical built form with low-pitched tiled hip roofs, each pair of maisonettes being designed to appear as a single dwelling. Features across the houses which are typical of the era include recessed entry porches; rendered brick walls with contrasting face brick work often utilising roman or tapestry bricks; flashes of face brick at the buildings' edges suggesting the decay of age-old stucco and limewash; tripartite timber double-hung sash windows, frequently with leadlight in the upper panes and large fixed 'picture' windows; and simple rendered, unadorned chimneys with face brick cap detailing. (Criterion D).

Aesthetically, the precinct is significant as a cohesive group of intact late interwar to early postwar houses that exhibit a particularly consistent expression in terms of their built form, low pitched hipped roof lines, common setback and general articulation of facades with large picture windows and asymmetrical planning. At the same time, the houses and maisonettes express a lively sense of individuality through their contrasting façade articulation which display stylistic eclecticism applied to the standard hipped roof houses of the late interwar period. This is evident in the different treatment of window surrounds (such as sills, heads and jambs brick details), finishes (weatherboard or different permutations of rendered brickwork with face brick details utilising different brick types) and detailing (including diamond and Adamesque leadlighting, curved corners and entry porch detailing). The distinctive interwar character of the precinct is enhanced by the retention of low front fences (although not original) and some early concrete paths and driveways. (Criterion E).

Primary source

Gordon Street Precinct, Balwyn Heritage Citation (GML Heritage, November 2021)

Grading table

Name	Number	Street	Grading	Built Date
House	133	Gordon Street	Contributory	1938
House	133A	Gordon Street	Contributory	1938
House	135	Gordon Street	Contributory	1938

Name	Number	Street	Grading	Built Date
House	135A	Gordon Street	Contributory	1938
House	137	Gordon Street	Contributory	1938
House	139	Gordon Street	Contributory	1937
House	141	Gordon Street	Contributory	1950

This document is an incorporated document in the Boroondara Planning Scheme pursuant to section 6(2)(j) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*