

Statement of Significance: St Elmo, 133 Tucker Road, Bentleigh

Date of Statement: August 2020

| | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Address: | 133 Tucker Road, Bentleigh | Name: | <i>St Elmo</i> |
| Place Type: | Residential building (private) | Grading: | Significant |
| PS ref no: | HO215 | Constructed: | 1889 |



Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019

What is significant?

St Elmo, at 133 Tucker Road, Bentleigh, is a single-storey double-fronted Late Victorian bichromatic brick villa with a hipped slate roof, prominent brick chimneys and a verandah with bullnosed corrugated steel roof on cast iron columns with lacework frieze and brackets. It was erected in 1889 for market gardener Benjamin Collins.

The significant fabric is defined as the exterior of the entire building.

How is it significant?

St Elmo satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

Why is it significant?

St Elmo is historically significant as rare evidence of early settlement in Bentleigh's eastern fringe. Dating back to 1885, it predates the minor flurry of Boom-era residential development that took place in the area in the later 1880s and early 1890s, which resulted in only a few dwellings that now constitute the bulk of surviving Victorian-era housing in the area. *St Elmo* is the oldest surviving house in Bentleigh's eastern fringe, as well as one of the oldest in the entire suburb and in that part of the municipality formerly under the auspices of the City of Moorabbin. The house retains important association with farming activities that once characterised the area: market gardening in the late nineteenth century and, subsequently, a highly-regarded poultry farm that continued to occupy the site in the first half of the twentieth century. (*Criterion A; Criterion B*)

St Elmo is aesthetically significant as an excellent, notably intact and uncommonly ornate example of a Late Victorian brick villa. While houses of this vintage are intrinsically rare south of North Road, this particular example, with its lively bichromatic brickwork, represents a marked contrast to the typically less prepossessing villas of rendered brick or block-fronted timber that survive on failed Boom-era estates in the area. With so many of its comparators altered to a greater or lesser degree by recladding of roofs, removal of verandahs or (in one case) roughcast rendering of face brickwork, this example, with a virtually unaltered street frontage that retains slate roof with terracotta ridges, canted bay window and verandah with corrugated iron roof, cast iron columns, lace frieze and tessellated floor, is exceptional at the local level (*Criterion B; Criterion E*)

Primary sources

Heritage Citation HG014, *City of Glen Eira Post-war & Hidden Gems Heritage Review 2020, Stage 2: Citations*, prepared by Built Heritage Pty Ltd.