

Statement of Expert Evidence – Heritage

for

Minta Farm Precinct Structure Plan

Casey Amendment C228



Figure 1: Myer House, Minta Farm (GJM Heritage, 7 March 2018)

Prepared for the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) under the instruction of Harwood Andrews Lawyers by:

Dr Leo Martin | Director

4 April 2018

GJM Heritage

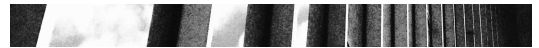
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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1	Name and address of expert.....	3
1.2	Expert’s qualifications and experience	3
1.3	Statement identifying the Expert’s areas of expertise to make this report	3
1.4	Statement identifying any other significant contributors to the report.....	3
1.5	Instructions.....	3
1.6	Site Inspections	3
1.7	Reports relied upon	4
1.8	Statement identifying the role the Expert had in preparing or overseeing the exhibited report(s).....	4
1.9	Facts, matters and assumptions upon which statement proceeds	4
1.10	Any questions falling outside the Expert’s expertise	4
1.11	Summary Opinion.....	4
1.12	Statement identifying if the evidence is incomplete or inaccurate in any respect.....	4
2	BACKGROUND.....	5
3	THE MYER HOUSE	6
3.1	Summary Description	6
3.2	Statement of Significance	7
3.3	Heritage Curtilage.....	8
3.4	Casey Submission	9
4	WORKERS’ QUARTERS	11
4.1	Summary Description	11
4.2	Casey Submission	14
4.2.1	Criterion A	14
4.2.2	Criterion B.....	14
4.2.3	Criterion H	15
4.2.4	Comparative Analysis.....	15
4.2.5	Conclusion	16
5	OTHER SUBMISSIONS IN RELATION TO C228	17
6	OTHER MATTERS.....	17
7	DECLARATION	17
	ANNEXURE A – GJM Heritage Reports for Stages 1, 2 and 3 (Myer House, Minta Farm)	18
	ANNEXURE B – Heritage Criteria	19

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Name and address of expert

Dr Leo Martin, Director, GJM Heritage
Level 3, 124 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000

1.2 Expert's qualifications and experience

I hold a Doctorate in Australian History from the University of Melbourne together with a Bachelor of Arts (with first class honours) from the University of Melbourne, a Bachelor of Planning and Design from the University of Melbourne and a Bachelor of Laws from Monash University. In 2005 I was awarded a scholarship to undertake my PhD at the University of Melbourne. My thesis involved a study of the evolution of the Castlemaine Market Square over 150 years and an analysis of the way in which a close reading of the site could challenge narratives around the evolution of the Victorian goldfields. In 2006 I was awarded a traveling scholarship to the University of Oxford where I worked on a research project investigating the forests and chases of Medieval England and Wales. I am a current member of the Professional Historians' Association (PHA) and of the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association (VPELA).

I have practiced as a property and planning lawyer at Deacons (Norton Rose Fulbright) in Australia and as a historian and heritage consultant at Context. From 2011-12 I worked as the Hearings Manager of the Heritage Council of Victoria and from 2012-15 I served as the Manager of the Heritage Council's Secretariat. I established GJM Heritage with two colleagues in November 2015 and have worked as a Director at GJM Heritage since that time.

As an independent heritage consultant, I have advised on heritage assessment, management and works to heritage places including private dwellings, places of worship, institutional and commercial buildings, and industrial properties.

1.3 Statement identifying the Expert's areas of expertise to make this report

I am an expert in the assessment of cultural heritage significance of historical heritage places and the interpretation of legislation to regulate and manage historic heritage places.

As a consultant I have prepared a number of heritage assessments for potential inclusion in the Heritage Overlay and the Victorian Heritage Register.

1.4 Statement identifying any other significant contributors to the report

This report was prepared with the assistance of Renae Jarman, Director and Ros Coleman, Associate of GJM Heritage. The views expressed in this report are my own.

1.5 Instructions

I have been instructed by Harwood Andrews Lawyers to prepare expert evidence in relation to the heritage significance of the Myer House and Workers Quarters located within Minta Farm.

1.6 Site Inspections

I most recently inspected the property on 7 March 2018. This included an internal and external inspection of the Workers Quarters and Myer House and external inspections of other farm buildings. I previously conducted an internal and external inspection of the Myer House on 27 March 2017.

1.7 Reports relied upon

In addition to the exhibited heritage reports prepared for the place by GJM Heritage (see Annexure A), I have considered the documents listed below in preparing this evidence:

- Planning Practice Note 1: *Applying the Heritage Overlay* (July 2015, updated January 2018) (PPN1)
- Proposed Planning Scheme Amendment C228 to the Casey Planning Scheme – exhibited documentation
- City of Casey Submission on Amendment C228, including heritage assessments prepared by Context Pty Ltd (Casey Submission).

1.8 Statement identifying the role the Expert had in preparing or overseeing the exhibited report(s)

GJM Heritage was engaged by the Victorian Planning Authority to assess the cultural heritage significance of the Myer House within Minta Farm. The heritage citation and recommended management strategies for the place are contained with the three exhibited documents prepared by GJM Heritage and attached at Annexure A.

1.9 Facts, matters and assumptions upon which statement proceeds

In the preparation of this report, it is assumed that all documents referred to above, including the exhibited amendment documents, are current and correct in the information they contain at the time of completion of this report.

1.10 Any questions falling outside the Expert's expertise

No questions in relation to the heritage matters that have been raised fall outside my expertise. However, I have not had specific regard to the economic and social impacts of this amendment, as the assessment of these impacts falls outside my area of expertise.

1.11 Summary Opinion

- The Myer House with Minta Farm is of local historical and architectural significance to the City of Casey and warrants inclusion in the Heritage Overlay of the Casey Planning Scheme on an individual basis.
- The heritage assessment of the Myer House by GJM Heritage has been conducted in accordance with PPN1.
- The Workers Quarters, Minta Farm are not of local heritage significance and do not warrant inclusion in the Heritage Overlay of the Casey Planning Scheme.

1.12 Statement identifying if the evidence is incomplete or inaccurate in any respect

Since the completion of the Myer House heritage assessment in July 2017 an additional Myer House has been located in the City of Hobsons Bay at 21 Hobson Street, Newport. This property is included within HO11 (Halls Farm Heritage Precinct) of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme. The statement of significance for the precinct does not specifically identify the property as being a Myer House. It is, however, identified as contributing towards the significance of the precinct.

With the above exception, to the best of my knowledge, nothing of significance has been omitted from this statement of evidence and is otherwise to the best of my knowledge complete and correct.

2 BACKGROUND

As part of the preparation of the Minta Farm Precinct Structure Plan, an ‘Historic Cultural Heritage Assessment’ of the entire farm was undertaken by Tardis Enterprises Archaeologists and Heritage Advisors in 2011 (Tardis Assessment). The Tardis Assessment identified a series of structures on the site, including the ‘Minta Homestead’, a small Dairy, Workers Quarters, a Cottage and a ‘Myer House’.

Ultimately, the Homestead, Workers Quarters, Dairy and Cottage were identified in the Tardis Assessment as having “*low historic cultural heritage significance*”. (p.v).

In contrast, the Tardis Assessment determined that the Myer House had “*moderate historic cultural heritage significance*” (p.v) and that: “*the Myer House should be considered for retention if possible*” (p.47).

In March 2017, the Victorian Planning Authority commissioned GJM Heritage to peer review the Tardis Assessment in respect of the Myer House only and to undertake further research and assessment of the Myer House in the following stages:

Stage 1

- Undertake a peer review of the ‘Historic Cultural Heritage Assessment’ prepared by Tardis Enterprises
- Desktop research into the history of the Myer House
- Preparation of a contextual history of the Myer House

Stage 2

- Preparation of heritage assessment of the Myer House
- Collation and indexation of the photographic record

Stage 3 (if required)

- Preparation of a heritage citation for the Myer House
- Preparation of a report making recommendations in relation to integration, conservation and management within the Precinct Structure Plan (PSP)

All reports prepared by GJM Heritage in the completion of the above tasks are provided at Annexure A.

After completing an assessment of the Myer House in accordance with the guidance contained in PPN1, GJM Heritage concluded that the Myer House was of historical and architectural significance to the City of Casey. The Myer House is therefore proposed to be included in the Heritage Overlay of the Casey Planning Scheme through Amendment C228.

Following the public exhibition of Planning Scheme Amendment C228, Harwood Andrews Lawyers instructed GJM Heritage to undertake a review of the Context Pty Ltd assessments of the Myer House and the Workers Quarters contained within the Casey Submission and to prepare a Statement of Expert Evidence in relation to the cultural heritage significance of both the Myer House and the Workers Quarters within Minta Farm.

We have not been asked to consider the cultural heritage significance of any other part of the subject site – including the Homestead and other outbuildings.

3 THE MYER HOUSE

3.1 Summary Description

The Myer House is of local heritage significance as an example of the AL model of the pre-fabricated 'Myer House', produced by the Myer Emporium to address the housing shortage in Victoria following World War II.

The house is a simple rectangular form with two slightly offset gables meeting at the mid-point, a small protruding gable-end to the east and a large protruding gable to the west. A deep recessed porch, located at the mid-point of the north façade, provides entry to the house.

The external walls are timber framed with a roughcast finish, and the roof is clad with corrugated galvanised iron. A broad, unadorned tapered chimney breast protrudes from the north façade. Windows are timber-framed with double-hung aluminium sashes.

The Myer House was constructed at Minta Farm in c1947 by the Baillieu family, who had purchased the farm in 1931. Located to the north-west of the main homestead complex, it appears that it was intended to provide additional accommodation at the property for farm workers. It is noted that the Baillieu and Myer families were related by marriage - Marjorie Merlyn Baillieu married the developer of the chain of Myer stores, Sidney Myer in the 1920s.

A full historical and physical description is contained within the Heritage Citation included at Annexure A.



Figure 2: Northern Façade



Figure 3: Eastern Façade



Figure 4: South-eastern Façade



Figure 5: Northern Façade



Figure 6: Eastern Façade – gable end detail



Figure 7: Eastern Façade – roughcast finish detail



Figure 8: North-western Façade



Figure 9: Northern Facade

3.2 Statement of Significance

The following Statement of Significance for the place is taken from the citation prepared in Stage 3 of the assessment of the Myer House by GJM Heritage (provided in full at Annexure A):

What is significant?

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick, a prefabricated house constructed c1947.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- *The external form, materials and detailing of the building.*

Later alterations and additions are not significant

How is it significant?

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick is of local historical and architectural significance to the City of Casey.

Why is it significant?

The prefabricated Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick clearly illustrates the response to the housing shortage in Victoria after World War II. This resulted in the development of prototype prefabricated houses, by both the private and public sector, which could be constructed cheaply and quickly, including the Myer House type (Criterion A).

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick is one of a small number of prefabricated houses known to remain from the late 1940s in Victoria. It is a highly intact and rare surviving example of the prefabricated Myer House type. The original form, materials and detailing of the place clearly demonstrate the typical characteristics of this building type (Criterion B).

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick has strong associations with two well-known Victorian families which were related by marriage, the Baillieu and Myer families. The Baillieu family owned Minta Farm and were responsible for the construction of the Myer House on the property, while, as directors of the Myer Emporium, the Myer family were instrumental in the development of this prefabricated house type (Criterion H).

3.3 Heritage Curtilage

As part of the Stage 3 GJM Heritage assessment, consideration was given to an appropriate curtilage for the Myer House.

PPN1 provides guidance on 'Curtilages and Heritage Overlay Polygons'. It notes that:

In many cases, particularly in urban areas and townships, the extent of the curtilage will be the whole of the property (for example, a suburban dwelling and its allotment).

PPN1 then goes on to discuss instances where some land is not significant and a reduced curtilage may be appropriate.

In the case of the Myer House, the broader Minta Farm complex has not been identified as possessing sufficient cultural heritage value to satisfy the threshold for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay of the Casey Planning Scheme. The Myer House constitutes a very small part of the broader Minta Farm complex and it is considered appropriate that the proposed extent of the Heritage Overlay focuses only on the Myer House itself.

PPN1 provides guidance on how the extent of the proposed Heritage Overlay should be established in such circumstances. Specifically, it states that the proposed extent should:

- Capture those elements of the place that are significant; and
- Include a curtilage in order to:
 - Retain the setting or context of the significant building, structure, tree or feature
 - Regulate development (including subdivision) in close proximity to the significant building, tree or feature.

PPN1 proposes, where possible, the application of uncomplicated and easily recognised boundaries. In this instance the exercise is made difficult by the absence of such boundaries. Therefore, in order to establish an appropriate curtilage, consideration was given to how comparable buildings (as noted within the comparative analysis of the citation in Annexure A and at 1.12 above) within an urban context have been treated – particularly as these buildings were intended to be used in a suburban context.

I note that two other Myer Houses have been identified within a suburban context (659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South – HO120 and 21 Hobson Street, Newport – within HO11). The house at 659 Moreland Road is located on a block of approximately 510m². The house at 21 Hobson Street, Newport is located on a block of approximately 380m². The comparable 'Beaufort Houses' within the Gallipoli Parade Precinct (HO80) are generally on blocks of approximately 600m².

In light of this, it is recommended that the Heritage Overlay boundary extends:

- 5m from the eastern elevation
- 6m from the northern elevation
- 3m from the southern elevation, and

- 10m from the western elevation.



Figure 10: Subject site marked up to show proposed extent of Heritage Overlay © Nearmap, 2017.

The recommended curtilage creates a Heritage Overlay of 589m², which, while larger than the lot at 21 Hobson Street (within HO11), is comparable in size to the lot at 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South (HO120) and also the lots containing the Beaufort Houses within the Gallipoli Parade Precinct – HO80.

Further, the Stage 3 Report noted that Myer Houses were designed and constructed off-site and without reference to their ultimate destination. As a result, the siting of this building is considered to be less important than its fabric. Historical research was unable to identify any significance attributed to the location of the Myer House within the Minta Farm complex. Therefore, while the preferred option in heritage terms is to maintain the building in its current location, its relocation within the extent of the Minta Farm complex (with which it is historically associated) may be an acceptable heritage outcome, particularly if its relocation provides an opportunity for the building to be better used and understood.

3.4 Casey Submission

The Casey Submission contains a heritage assessment of the Myer House prepared by Context Pty Ltd (2017). The Context assessment concludes that the Myer House is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria. I note that the 'Heritage Criteria' for establishing significance at a state level are the same as those used at a local level (attached at Annexure B), but that the threshold is different (i.e. the place is of significance to the State of Victoria rather than to the local municipality, township or suburb).

The Context assessment concludes that the Myer House is of significance to the State of Victoria for the following reasons:

Architecturally, the Myer House building at Minta Farm, Berwick, which dates to c.1947-48, is a highly intact and rare surviving example of its type in the City of Casey. There are only a few known comparable examples which survive with a high degree of integrity of the prefabricated Myer House,

which were constructed by the CAC and marketed by the Myer Emporium, that survive in Victoria (Criterion B).

Historically, the Myer House at Minta Farm, Berwick, is an example of the measures taken to alleviate the housing shortage in Victoria immediately following World War II. The Myer House was an affordable and easily constructed dwelling that was designed in response to this need. The mature Oak Tree at the front of the residence, and Hawthorn hedge at the rear contribute to the setting and demonstrate the residential nature of this buildings intent (Criterion A)

Historically, the Myer House at Minta Farm, Berwick, through its use as a farm manager's house, is evidence of the prosperous period of the wool industry in Victoria in the postwar era and the general prosperity of graziers in the district during that period.

Historically, the Myer House at Minta Farm, Berwick, is associated with the various successful enterprises, including grazing, pursued by members of the Baillieu family, who were one of the wealthiest and most prominent families in Victoria. (Criterion H)

The finding that the place is of State-level significance is questioned. Myer Houses were one of a number of prefabricated and/or affordable housing projects developed in the years following the conclusion of World War II and it is my view that the necessary analysis of where Myer Houses sit within this broader typology needs to be established before a conclusion on State-significance could be reached by the appropriate authority (being the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria). I also note that both the total number of Myer Houses constructed and the number of examples remaining are unknown, so it is difficult to determine their rarity with any confidence.

Notwithstanding this, there is agreement that the Myer House should be included in the Heritage Overlay of the Casey Planning Scheme against Criterion A, B and H of the Heritage Criteria outlined in PPN1 (and attached at Annexure B).

Leaving aside the matter of threshold, the areas in which I question the Context assessment are as follows:

1. The significance of the place as “...evidence of a prosperous period of the wool industry in Victoria in the post-war era and the general prosperity of graziers in the district during that period”. The Myer House is a modest dwelling that was specifically marketed as being an affordable and quickly constructed housing option, which belies the asserted claims for significance. It is also noted that the Myer House is located within what is an obviously humble and modest collection of farm buildings. Even the Homestead, which would typically be the “grand” element in any demonstration of prosperity, is relatively modest in scale. The Context assessment provides no evidence to support this claim for historic significance. It is also noted that the Berwick area was not known for its wool production, with the City of Casey’s *Thematic Environmental History (Post-European Contact)*, December 2004 only noting the prominence of: grazing, cropping, dairying, orchards, market gardens and nurseries and poultry farms in the area. It is considered that any claims of significance on the basis of “evidence of the prosperous period of the wool industry in Victoria” cannot be supported.
2. The significance of the plantings around the Myer House (including the Hawthorn Hedge and English Oak). While a logical response to the siting of the house to screen it from the surrounding farm, neither the tree nor the hedge relates to the significance of the place. It is my view that the Myer House is significant as a rare and historically important example of a pre-fabricated house located on a Baillieu property, not because of the farming or operational history of the farm. The particular location and surrounding context of the Myer House within Minta Farm does not – in my view – contribute to the significance of the place. It is therefore not considered reasonable to include the English Oak and Hawthorn Hedge within the heritage curtilage or to trigger Tree Controls in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay.

I am of the view that the GJM Heritage citation, as exhibited, is the appropriate citation for the Myer House.

4 WORKERS' QUARTERS

4.1 Summary Description

The building known as the Workers' Quarters at Minta Farm is located to the south-east of the Homestead, approximately halfway between the Homestead and the Myer House. It is a simple L-shaped building formed from two perpendicular gable-roofed sections. The building is timber-clad (metal-cladding to the rear wall) with corrugated iron roofing which forms a semi-open verandah, with upper flywire screening, along the two inner sides. All rooms are accessed via the verandah. Metal-framed casement windows are the main form of fenestration throughout the building.

The present owner suggests that the building was constructed in two stages – the rear wing, then the perpendicular front wing. Differences between the form and detail of the two wings support this proposition. These include:

- The front wing has eaves while the rear wing is eaveless (Figures 12 and 14)
- The ridge line of the front wing is lower than the rear wing (Figure 13)
- The roof line of the rear wing changes pitch over the verandah, suggesting that the front wing and the entire verandah were constructed after the rear wing, necessitating this change in pitch (Figure 13)
- The rear wing is clad with square-edge weatherboards and the front wing with bull-nose weatherboards (Figures 17 and 18).

Both wings of the Workers' Quarters contain metal-framed casement windows, which were also used at the main Homestead and at another farm building to the south of the property. This suggests that they were acquired as a collection, stored and then used as required rather than specifically acquired for the Workers' Quarters. Both shortages of, and restrictions on, building materials after World War II continued into the 1950s and made the acquisition of building materials difficult in the late 1940s and early 1950s. If the Workers' Quarters were constructed in the late 1940s, it is considered most probable that available materials would have been used.



Figure 11: South Eastern Façade



Figure 12: Northern Façade

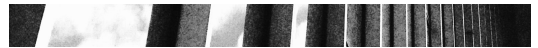


Figure 13: Northern Façade



Figure 14: Western Facade



Figure 15: Semi-enclosed Verandah – looking east



Figure 16: Semi-enclosed Verandah – looking north

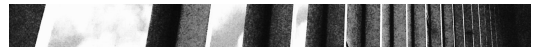


Figure 17: Square – edged weatherboards (rear wing)



Figure 18: Bull – nosed weatherboards (front wing)



Figure 19: Southern Façade – showing louvre

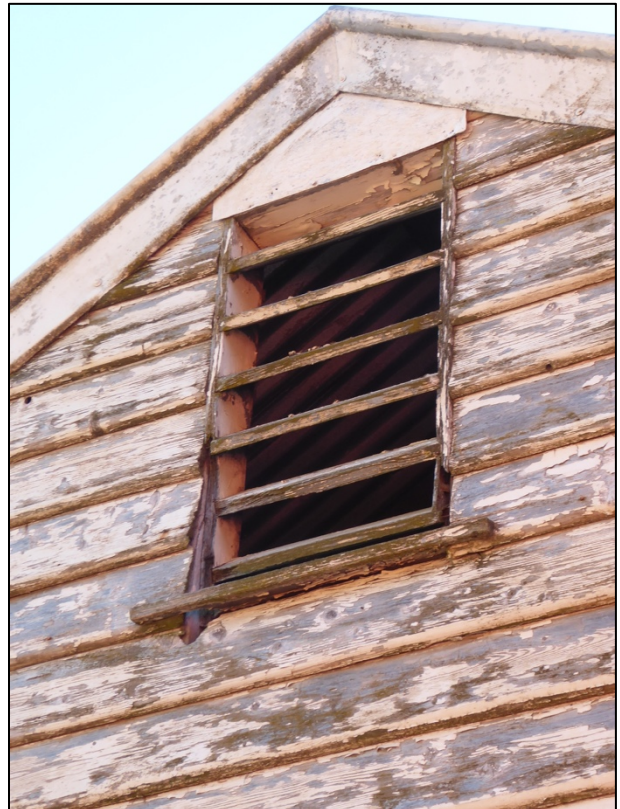


Figure 20: Southern façade – Showing louvre detail

4.2 Casey Submission

The Casey Submission contains a heritage assessment of the Workers' Quarters prepared by Context Pty Ltd (2017). The Context assessment concludes that the Workers' Quarters are of architectural and historical significance to the City of Casey for the following reasons.

Architecturally, the workers' quarters building at Minta Farm, which date to c.1947-48, are a highly intact and relatively sophisticated example of farm workers' accommodation, which is a rare building type in the City of Casey. Although once a common building type on the large grazing properties in the district, there are now few known examples of workers' quarters remaining in the City of Casey. There are no other known comparable examples of workers' quarters built in the postwar period that survive in the municipality. (Criterion B)

Historically, the workers' quarters at Minta Farm, Berwick, is evidence of the prosperous period of the wool industry in Victoria in the postwar era, when farm workers were in demand, and the general prosperity of graziers in the district during that period.

Historically, the workers' quarters at Minta Farm, Berwick, is associated with the various successful enterprises, including grazing, pursued by members of the Baillieu family, who were one of the wealthiest and most prominent families in Victoria. (Criterion H).

The conclusions arrived at in this assessment are disputed for the following reasons.

4.2.1 Criterion A

It is claimed that the Workers' Quarters were constructed c1946-48 (p 3) and c1947-48 (p 3). Aerial photographs indicate that the building was constructed between 1945 and 1961 and the physical fabric of the building indicates that it was likely to have been constructed in two distinct stages. The Context assessment provides no evidence that the building was constructed in the narrower date range of c1946/47-48.

It is claimed that: *"Historically, the workers' quarters at Minta Farm, Berwick, is evidence of the prosperous period of the wool industry in Victoria in the postwar era, when farm workers were in demand, and the general prosperity of graziers in the district during the period."* (p 7).

This claim appears to suggest that the Workers' Quarters are significant at the State-level without evidence to support the claim at either the State or local level. It is unclear how the simple Workers' Quarters at Minta Farm reflects a period of prosperity in the wool industry in Victoria in the post-war era, particularly when Berwick was not known for its wool production. Built sometime between 1945 and 1961, using what appears to be available or salvaged materials, this building provided accommodation for a small number of farm workers to assist in running the property. All buildings on the property are simple, unpretentious and are not considered to readily demonstrate a "prosperous period".

4.2.2 Criterion B

It is claimed that *"Architecturally, the workers' quarters building at Minta Farm, which date to c1947-48, are a highly intact and relatively sophisticated example of farm worker's accommodation, which is a rare building type in the City of Casey. There are no other known examples of workers' quarters built in the postwar period that survive in the municipality. (Criterion B)"* (p 7).

I note that one of the three comparative examples cited in the Context assessment refers to a 'post 1942' farm manager's cottage at Piney Ridge (HO42). Leaving that aside, while they remain intact, there is no evidence that an architect was involved in the building's design. The Context assessment makes a number of assertions in this regard, specifically:

"The inclusion of the enclosed verandah, or breeze-way, and the steel-framed windows are refinements that suggest an architect was involved in the design" (p 3).

“The timber louvres on the gable ends reflect residential design for middle-class housing of the era. This gives the house a sense of style that is compatible with the design of the Myer House and provides an unusual architectural refinement for a farm building. The use of fly screen for large enclosures was common in well-designed housing in earlier periods and employed by architects in the postwar period” (p 5).

“The building has well considered design and may be the work of an architect. The use of a considered architectural expression for residential farm buildings was more common in the nineteenth century when the idea of a picturesque feudal farm village was found at such locations as Warrock homestead in the Western District of Victoria” (p 5).

“For a family with the social standing of the Baillieu family, the employment of an architect in the construction of new buildings would have been standard practice” (p 3).

The Workers’ Quarters building is of simple design and may well have been constructed in two stages using readily available materials. Nothing in the design, or materials used, indicates that an architect was involved. Semi-enclosed verandahs – or sleep-outs – and steel-framed windows were commonly used in twentieth century houses, including modest houses. It is unusual for steel-framed windows to be used in a timber-clad building and this indicates the use of readily available or salvaged materials at a time of building supply shortages rather than the involvement of an architect.

Neither the very simple timber louvres or the flyscreen enclosures are elements that would clearly demonstrate middle-class housing or materials employed by architects. These elements were used in a range of designs in the mid-twentieth century and in earlier periods.

Further, the other buildings at Minta Farm do not support the claim that *“for a family with the social standing of the Baillieu family, the employment of an architect in the construction of new buildings would have been standard practice”*. The additions that have been made to the main Homestead over a period of time are *ad hoc* and modest and do not suggest that an architect was involved in their design or in the design of any other buildings on the farm.

Further, I question the claim that the Workers’ Quarters were most likely erected around the same time as the Myer House as the choice of design was in sympathy with the Myer House design (p 3). The Workers’ Quarters bear little resemblance to the Myer House in form or in the materials used. The Myer House is a prefabricated building with roughcast finished walls resembling brickwork, and an original red pressed metal tiled roof. The Workers’ Quarters, with timber cladding and corrugated iron roof, is located at a distance from the Myer House and has no physical or visual relationship with it. There is no evidence or apparent reason for the claim that the design of the Workers’ Quarters is sympathetic to that of the Myer House.

4.2.3 Criterion H

It is claimed that: *“Historically, the workers’ quarters at Minta Farm, Berwick, is associated with the various successful enterprises, including grazing, pursued by members of the Baillieu family, who were one of the wealthiest and most prominent families in Victoria. (Criterion H)” (p 7).*

All buildings at the property and the land itself have associations with the Baillieu family. This simple building does not reflect the claimed wealth and prominence of the Baillieu family. Inclusion of this building in the Heritage Overlay is not necessary to demonstrate the importance of the Baillieu family to Victoria (or the local area).

4.2.4 Comparative Analysis

Three properties have been used in the ‘Comparative Analysis’ provided in Context’s ‘Minta Farm Heritage Assessment – Workers Quarters’. These are:

- HO152 Tulliallan, Cranbourne North

- HO1 Roads End, Berwick
- HO42 Piney Ridge, Endeavour Hills

A search of the Hermes database reveals 61 farming and grazing properties included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Casey Planning Scheme. These all include the homestead and often include the associated garden and/or landscape. In addition to the homestead, outbuildings are specifically identified in the Statement of Significance for 17 of these farming and grazing properties (including the three examples cited by Context). Those that have identified outbuildings are:

- HO1 Roads End, Berwick (stables, stable master's quarters, builder's cottage)
- HO42 Piney Ridge, Endeavour Hills (associated outbuildings – brick manager's cottage, dairy, garage, chicken sheds)
- HO4 (& VHR H0653) Edrington, Berwick (stone stables)
- HO164 Farm Complex, Clyde North (concrete block dairy c1962)
- HO93 Grasmere, Berwick (milking shed c1920s, pre-1920s stables, brick creamery)
- HO111 Harkaway Farm, Harkaway (several corrugated iron sheds)
- HO95 Kalimna, Harkaway (outbuildings)
- HO41 Melrose, Harkaway (a number of outbuildings)
- HO126 Menenia Park, Devon Meadows (outbuildings)
- HO51 Oatlands, Narre Warren (outbuildings including cottage, cool stores, stables)
- HO3 The Springs, Narre Warren South (associated brick cottage, blacksmith's shop & nearby stables)
- HO15 Tooradin Estate House, Tooradin (stables)
- HO80 Wandeen Farm, Harkaway (1920s caretakers's cottage)
- HO47 Wickham, Harkaway (smokehouse)
- HO170 Wilga, Harkaway (timber outbuildings)
- HO191 Farm Complex, Tooradin
- HO152 Tulliallan, Cranbourne North (these are not identified in the Statement of Significance but in the citation physical description)

In all 17 examples provided above, the homestead has been identified as a significant element, and in some cases the associated garden, landscape and outbuildings have also been identified as contributing to the significance to the place. In this instance, however, the Minta Homestead has been identified in the Tardis Assessment as having had "*several additions added and alterations made over time*" which have "*detracted from its potential historic value*" (p.36). As a result, the Casey Submission proposes that the Workers' Quarters at Minta Farm should be included in the Heritage Overlay without the Homestead or surrounding elements (with the exception of the Myer House).

The absence of the Homestead or surrounding elements will mean that the Workers' Quarters will be devoid of any meaningful historical or environmental context. It will significantly impact on the capacity of the public to understand the historic function or significance of the Workers' Quarters.

4.2.5 Conclusion

As previously noted, there are already 61 farming and grazing properties within the City of Casey included on the Heritage Overlay. At least 17 of these include outbuildings and the three comparative examples provided by Context each include managers/workers quarters. The Workers' Quarters at Minta Farm are an unsophisticated structure built of simple materials and probably constructed in two stages. While the building "type" (as a post-World War II example of rural workers' accommodation) may be uncommon within the City of Casey, it is my view that the building is not of sufficient historical or architectural interest for an attribution of rarity to be assigned to it.

In summary, it is considered that the Workers' Quarters are a modest vernacular structure created from available materials to meet the immediate needs of Minta Farm. They are not of any particular architectural or historical merit and the attribution of rarity to this structure is questionable.

It is my view that the Workers Quarters do not meet the threshold for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay within the Casey Planning Scheme.

5 OTHER SUBMISSIONS IN RELATION TO C228

In addition to reviewing the City of Casey's Submission, I have also been asked to review comments prepared by other submitters. The only other submission that makes specific reference to post-contact cultural heritage is from Ms Sarah Horsfield – Director, Urbis, lodged on behalf of TMG on 4 December 2017.

Ms Horsfield notes that: *"TMG objects to the application of a Heritage Overlay to the Myer House. We do not believe the overlay is warranted and has not been appropriately justified. We reserve the right to make further submissions on this matter."*

I disagree with the position that the Heritage Overlay is not warranted for the Myer House and remain of the view that the application of a Heritage Overlay, in the form proposed in the exhibited amendment, is justified for the reasons outlined in this Statement of Evidence.

6 OTHER MATTERS

In addition to the matters raised above, I have also been asked to provide my view on whether "the proposed Heritage Requirement R9 in Section 3.1.3 of the exhibited PSP in its current form is appropriate."

Requirement R9 provides that *"Subdivision and development must ensure that the eastern elevation of the Myer House (post-contact heritage site) is fronting a street, and that the Myer House is a key and visible component within the urban structure"*.

The house was designed to be viewed from its front (eastern) elevation. The failure to orientate the house accordingly, will compromise the capacity of the viewer to understand the designer's intent and, as a result, limit their understanding of the heritage place. As a result, I consider that the requirement that the house be orientated so that the eastern elevation is fronting a street is reasonable and appropriate.

The preservation of the Myer House as a key and visible component within the urban structure is important to ensure that it can be properly appreciated and understood. As a result, I consider that the management of subdivision and development to achieve this objective is reasonable and appropriate.

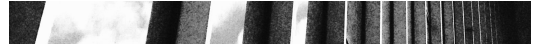
7 DECLARATION

I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate and no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.

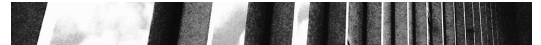


Dr Leo Martin
Director, GJM Heritage

4 April 2018



ANNEXURE A – GJM Heritage Reports for Stages 1, 2 and 3 (Myer House, Minta Farm)



Heritage Advice for the Victoria Planning Authority, 'Myer House', Minta Farm, Berwick (Stage 1)



Figure 1: Myer House (27 March 2017)

18 April 2017

Prepared for: Victorian Planning Authority

by:

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Planning Controls	3
3. The Place	3
3.1 Location	3
4. The Tardis Report	4
4.1 Assessment Summary.....	4
4.1.1 The History of the Myer House	4
4.1.2 The Significance of the Myer House	5
5. Peer Review of Tardis Report.....	6
5.1 Myer House Assessment	6
5.1.1 The History of the Myer House	6
5.1.2 The Minta Myer House - History	9
6. Conclusion.....	11

1. Introduction

Minta Farm is a site of some 288.9 hectares located in the suburb of Berwick on Melbourne's urban fringe. A 'Historic Cultural Heritage Assessment' of the entire farm was undertaken by Tardis Enterprises 'Archaeologists and Heritage Advisors' in 2011 (the Tardis Report). The Assessment identified a series of structures on the site, including the 'Minta Homestead', a small dairy, workers quarters, a cottage and a 'Myer House'. The assessment identified the Myer House as having 'moderate historic cultural heritage significance' and suggested a series of management options, but did not explicitly recommend a Heritage Overlay for the site.

We have been engaged to provide additional advice on the significance of the Myer House, as per the following tasks. The tasks have been broken into stages as agreed.

Stage 1

- Undertake a peer review of the 'Historic Cultural Heritage Assessment'
- Desktop research into the history of the Myer House
- Preparation of a contextual history of the Myer House

Stage 2

- Preparation of heritage assessment of the Myer House
- Collation and Indexation of the photographic record

Stage 3 (if required)

- Preparation of a heritage citation for the Myer House
- Preparation of a report making recommendations in relation to integration, conservation and management within the Precinct Structure Plan (PSP)

This Report contains all deliverables required in Stage 1. It is informed by an external and internal inspection of the building, which was undertaken on 27 March 2017. Images in this report were taken by GJM Heritage on that date, unless otherwise stated.

2. Planning Controls

Minta Farm is located within the Urban Growth Boundary. The entire property is subject to the Growth Area Infrastructure Contribution. Parts of the broader Minta Farm complex are also identified as being within an area of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity. The Minta Farm Complex and 'outbuildings' are identified in the Casey Heritage Study (2004), although the site is not included on the Heritage Overlay. The Myer House has not been specifically identified as a building of heritage significance in any previous heritage study – excepting the limited reference within the Tardis Report of 2011.

3. The Place

3.1 Location

Minta Farm comprises approximately 288.9 hectares of land – broadly bounded by Soldiers Road (to the west), the Princes Freeway (to the north) a series of lakes (to the east) and Grices Road (to the south). The site is located on Melbourne's urban fringe and the entire site is currently going through a PSP process with a view to it being re-zoned as residential land and subdivided.

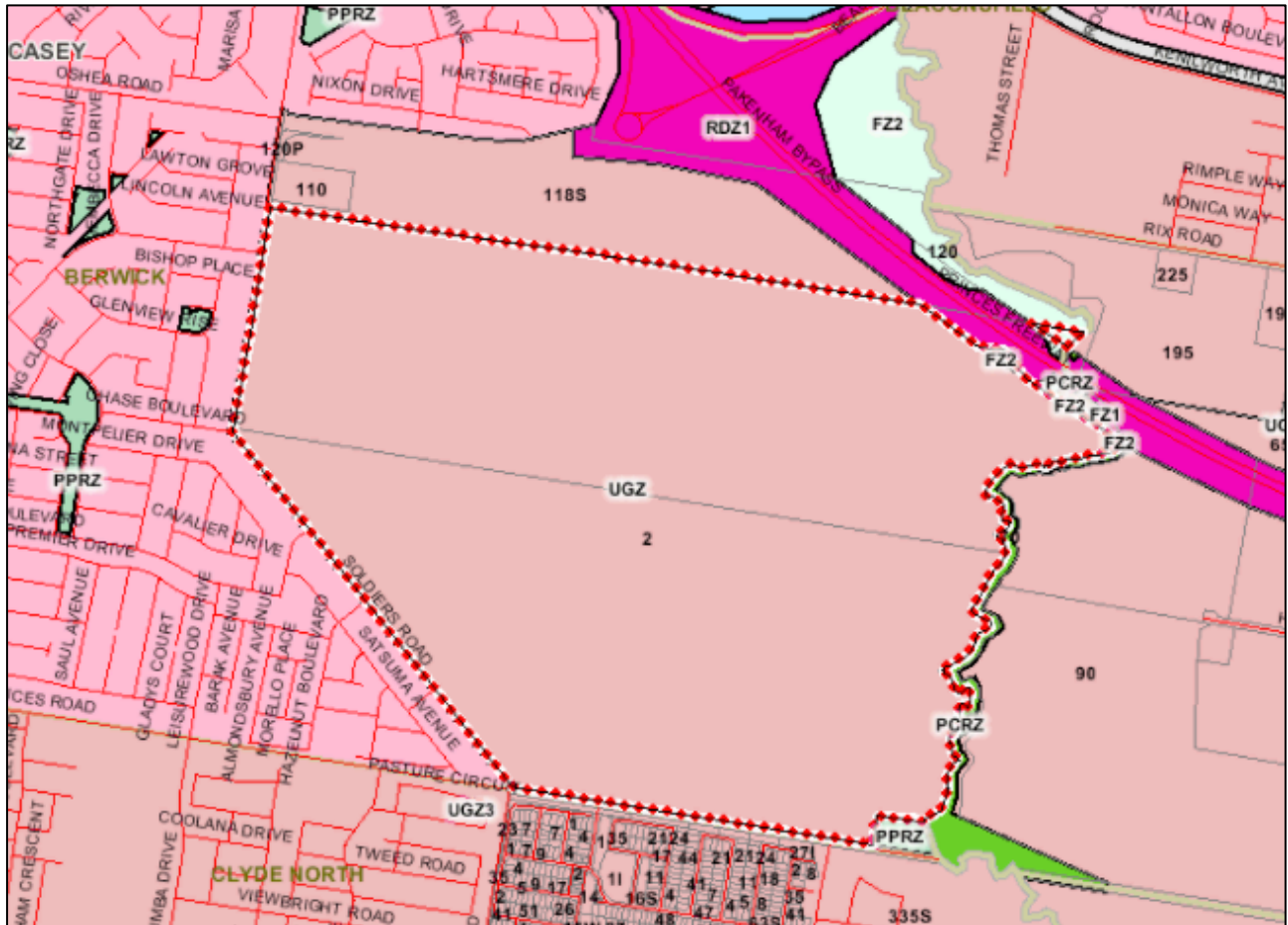
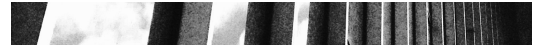


Figure 2: Planning Maps Online showing the subject site (accessed 28 March 2017)

4. The Tardis Report

4.1 Assessment Summary

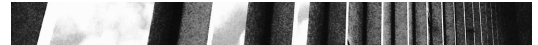
4.1.1 The History of the Myer House

The assessment of the Minta Farm Complex was undertaken by Tardis in 2011. While containing a detailed assessment of the Minta Homestead and other outbuildings, it includes more limited information in relation to the Myer House. The Report makes the following observations in relation to the history of the Myer House:

A phase of later additions to the property, potentially coinciding with the first addition of a second storey to the homestead (based on the gable vents) includes workers quarters and another small dwelling.... Also, a more recent stucco/cement render 'Myer House' (1940/50s) has been added at the southwestern extent of the farm building complex... These structures have been added since the Baillieu family acquired the activity area (post-1931).

In particular, Myer Houses (also labeled 'lifetime homes') were created as a response to a housing shortage following WWII. In 1945, Norman Myer, of the famous Myer retail store family, first introduced the prefabricated steel homes to 60 Melbourne businessmen and politicians on Friday 7 September, 1945 at the Ansett Airways factory, Essendon as an answer to 'the housing problem' (The Argus 8 September 1945: 9 & 16 January 1947: 12).

The houses were available "in six designs, each capable of carrying an additional room if required. All the normal fittings are built-in, and the home, because of its design, will require much less furnishings and furniture than normal". Their design, while in an American Colonial style, consisted



of an entrance hall, lounge, dining room, two bedrooms (with built-in cupboards & bunks in the second bedroom), kitchen (streamlined & cherry red & white), bathroom, and laundry (with hot-water service) and wall to wall carpeting in green. The Myer House used only one-third of the normal manpower, timber, and cement in its construction, and was one-third lighter to allow for transportation (The Argus 16 January 1947: 12 & The Argus 13 February 1947: 13).

The Myer Homes went into commercial production off an assembly line at Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation's works at Fishermen's Bend on Wednesday 17 January, 1947 under the supervision of Wing-commander LJ Wackett. "JC Taylor and Sons P/L, who had built many of the city's main buildings, would erect the houses" at a cost of around £1,500 fully furnished, including delivery. It was claimed that the houses were "capable of erection and occupancy within 15 days of leaving the line" (The Argus 16 January 1947: 12).¹

The Argus reported that Norman Myer claimed the homes were:

The cheapest home of its type ever built. Minimum use had been made of materials which would deteriorate. There was no exposed woodwork, and very little wood was used in the interior. The house had an all-cement foundation, an iron frame, thick cement and plaster walls, and zinc anneal tiles, which would neither move nor break. (The Argus 16 January 1947: 12).

The Tardis Report goes on to note that:

The first Myer House was constructed in Treasury Gardens, Melbourne and was open for public inspection, for which tickets were required, on Wednesday 12 February, 1947 by then Victorian Premier Mr Cain. A large crowd attended the opening (The Argus 13 February 1947: 13).

4.1.2 The Significance of the Myer House

In commenting on the significance of the Myer House, the Tardis Report notes:

This survey resulted in the identification of several structures ... and associated floral plantings of various ages within the activity area. However, when these structures and plantings were subject to historic cultural heritage assessment criteria, all but one was assessed as being of low historic cultural heritage significance. The structures included the property 'Minta' homestead, a small dairy, workers quarters, a 'Myer House' and a cottage. The homestead was first referred to in 1913 on a record of sales and is presumed to have been established around this time. Since then the homestead has been significantly altered and added to until recently, which has resulted in its low significance assessment.

The additional structure that was assessed as having moderate historic cultural heritage significance is a 'Myer House'. This house is in excellent condition and its style/structure was created in a Government response for affordable housing due to housing shortages following WWII. Additionally, the structure and design of the Myer House is highly influenced by Norman Myer of Myer retail stores, as he was the instigator of the development of these homes which were known as 'Myer Houses'.²

On the basis of the above, the Report concludes that: ... *the Myer House should be considered for retention if possible.*³

¹ Tardis Report, p.38.

² Tardis Report, p.v.

³ Tardis Report, p. vi.

5. Peer Review of Tardis Report

5.1 Myer House Assessment

The history of the development of the Myer House type contained within the Tardis Report is accurate. However, as the Tardis Report was broad in its scope, it has provided limited discussion of the historic economic and social context for the development of the 'Myer House' type, about how long the houses were produced for, or about how many might survive. Some broader contextual history is provided below.

5.1.1 The History of the Myer House

The advent of the Great Depression in 1930 saw a dramatic decline in building activity in Victoria. In his history of the Peter Lalor House Building Co-Operative Society, Gary Johns notes that while 'the pre-depression building operations were valued at £2.6 million a year and by 1931-32 the figure was a mere £383,000.⁴:

The advent of the Great Depression had a dramatic impact upon housing growth in Victoria: The reduction in building activity created a shortage of houses, but it also reduced opportunities for apprentices, creating a longer term skills shortage. The advent of World War II diverted resources away from residential development in Victoria and, indeed it virtually ground to a halt. The migration of large numbers of soldiers overseas reduced demand whilst the war lasted. However, as the soldiers returned the true extent of the housing shortage became apparent. The problem was compounded by a lack of qualified labour and a shortage of materials. As a result, between 1939 and 1947 the cost of building rose by 90%.⁵

There was significant interest – both from the public and private sector – in attempting to resolve the issue. The solutions identified were varied. They included the formation of housing co-operatives, for example the Peter Lalor Homebuilding Cooperative Society, which involved the subdivision of what is now the suburb of 'Lalor', as well as the development of a series of prototype homes that could be constructed quickly and cheaply. Two of the earliest housing types developed were the Beaufort and Myer Houses.

The Beaufort House was designed in 1946 by the technical staff of the Beaufort Division of the Department of Aircraft production, and was developed through the Victorian Housing Commission. The project was financed by the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Works and Housing.

A brochure issued at the time noted that:

The Beaufort Home is the culmination of intensive research in design, durability, insulation and equipment by the Beaufort Division of the Department of Aircraft production in association with the Victorian State Housing Commission and the Commonwealth Department of Works and Housing through the Experimental Building Station.

The house is essentially of steel construction, comprising floor members, walls, roof structure and sheeting, and is mounted on concrete foundation stumps. Wooden flooring is used except in the bathroom, which is covered with a special waterproof slab.

Wood is also used for doors and built in wardrobes and cupboards.

Plaster ceilings are used and wall linings are of the same material, except the bathroom and laundry, where Masonite has been chosen.⁶

⁴ Gary Johns, *Building a Suburb: the Peter Lalor Home Building Co-Operative Society* (Melbourne: Melbourne State College, 1978), p.2.

⁵ Context, *Peter Lalor Housing Estate: Heritage Significance Assessment*, June 2012, p.13.

⁶ Beaufort Division, Department of Aircraft Production, *Beaufort Homes* [(Melbourne) June 1946), quoted in Timothy Hubbard Pty Ltd, *City of Coburg Heritage and Conservation Streetscape Study*, 1990, p.32.

The Myer House was a similar initiative by Norman Myer (of the Myer Stores family) who introduced it to a group of 60 Melbourne businessmen and politicians on 7 September 1945. The plan was to develop a house that was capable of quick erection at low cost and would require only limited maintenance. The 'Myer House' was to cost approximately £1500 and would be capable of erection within 15 days. The benefits of the house were detailed in an article published in the Argus on 16 January 1947, where Norman Myer was reported as stating:

It is the cheapest home of its type ever built. The minimum use has been made of materials which would deteriorate. There was no exposed woodwork and very little wood was used in the interior. The house had an all-cement foundation, an iron frame, thick cement and plaster walls, and zinc anneal tiles, which would neither move nor break.⁷

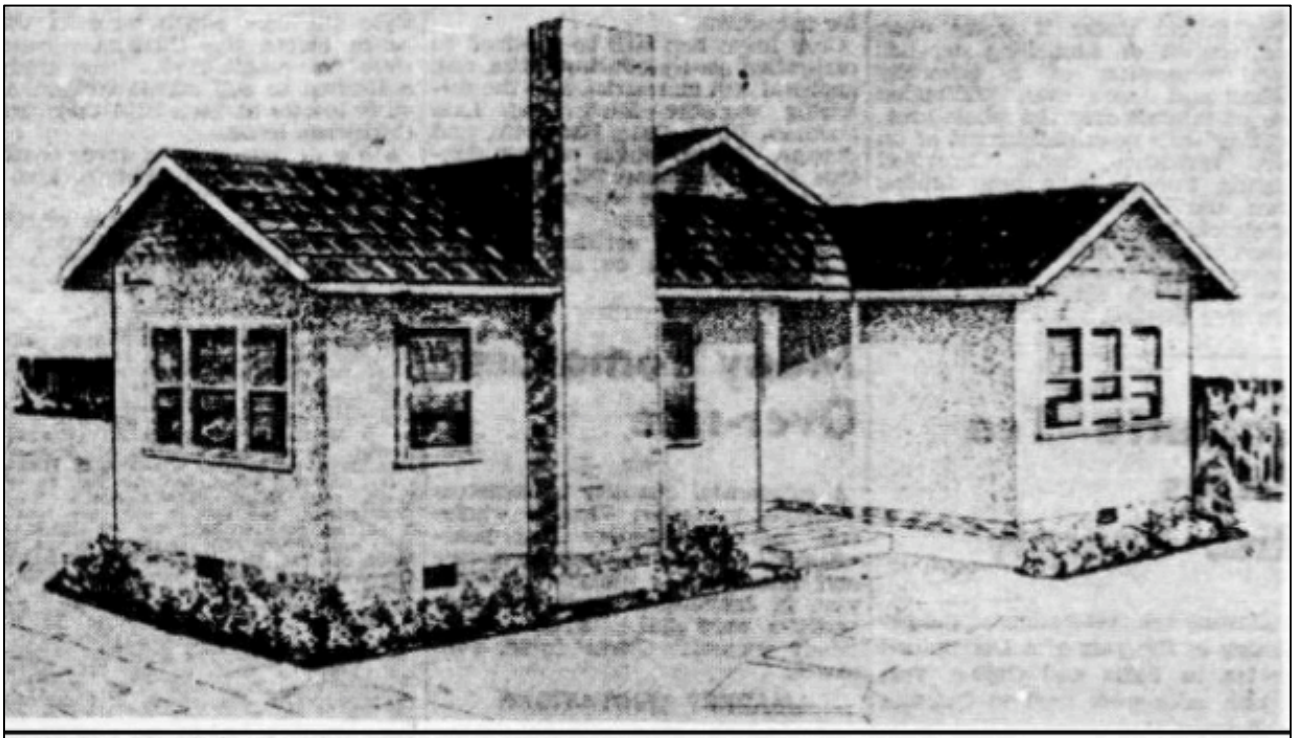


Figure 3: Illustration of one of a 'Myer House', The Argus, 16 January 1947

The Argus went on to report that:

The house is to be built in six designs, each capable of carrying an additional room if required. All the normal fittings are in-built, and the home, because of its design, will require much less furnishings and furniture than is normal.⁸

The Myer House was to be constructed by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation Pty Ltd under the supervision of Wing-Commander L.J. Wackett.⁹ There was considerable government and public interest in the project, with a demonstration Myer Home (that was to be raffled) erected in Treasury Gardens in January 1947 and reports of long queues of people waiting to order the house.

Last night upwards of a hundred people stood, snored or dosed in Collins Street west, so that they would be sure of a chance of purchasing a 'Myer house' when the doors of Electra House, open at nine o'clock this morning. Because many more hundreds are expected to join the queue before 'zero hour', employees of the building will be compelled to enter the building by the back door'. The first

⁷ The Argus, 16 January, 1947, p.12.

⁸ The Argus, 16 January 1947, p.12.

⁹ The Age, 12 February 1947, p.5

25 in the queue will, providing they have land in the right district, have a home erected complete with water, lighting and sinks, within 17 days... Six hundred houses, which are five roomed and complete with all accessories, will be erected this year under the scheme. At least 1000 will be erected next year.¹⁰



Figure 4: Myer House in Treasury Gardens, 24 January 2017

Despite the apparent enthusiasm for the 'Myer House' model it declined quickly. Even prior to the launch of the Myer House, State Cabinet had already determined to favour the 'Beaufort Model'.

A report from 11 February 1947 notes that, 'State Cabinet yesterday decided in favour of the Beaufort steel home as the type of prefabricated house with which Victoria's housing problem could be best solved.' The report noted that the plan was subject to the Commonwealth Government's approval, but that if that was obtained 'an order of 5,000 homes would be placed almost immediately'.¹¹ The critical factor in the State Cabinet's decision appears to have been the relative cost. The Beaufort house was reported to cost £1,050 plus £150 site cost, whereas the total price of the Myer House was reported as £1,650 (presumably £1500 plus the £150 site cost).

Other doubts appear to have emerged about the suitability of the 'Myer model'. A report in the 'Argus' from 3 April 1947 notes that 'Dr Doris Office' had criticized the house as being unsuitable for large families.¹² There were also concerns about the structural integrity of the building with the Builders and

¹⁰ The Age, 19 February 1947, p.8.

¹¹ The Argus, 11 February 1947

¹² The Argus, 3 April 1947, p.20.

Allied Trades Association, in relation to Council approval of the erection of a Myer House in Glen Waverley, raising a number of issues – including that the foundations are laid on the ground, that the height of the kitchen walls and ‘conveniences’ was inadequate, that the wall studs were inadequate.¹³

Despite the reservations, construction of Myer Houses proceeded, although in far smaller numbers than had been anticipated. In addition to the approval of the Glen Waverley house mentioned above, there are also reports of houses being constructed in Newport (Hobson Street), and at 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South. Two Myer houses were also erected in 1948 in the grounds of Eynesbury Homestead. Other examples were reportedly constructed in Trafalgar, Mount Eliza, Sunshine and Pascoe Vale.¹⁴

A change of Government in Victoria on 8 November 1947 along with concerns about the economic viability of both the Beaufort and Myer Houses led to their demise. By December 1947 (within a month of their election), the Hollway Liberal - Country Coalition Government had recommended to the Commonwealth that the Beaufort Homes’ contract be scrapped. The State Minister for Housing (Mr. Warner) also noted that ‘the steel supplies for the Myer prefabricated home built by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation would also be curtailed, and probably cancelled’. The Minister for Housing went on to claim that ‘eight ordinary type dwellings could be built for every Myer House erected.’¹⁵

The Commonwealth acceded to the State’s request to cancel the Beaufort homes project to save steel and to ‘curtail’ the construction of the Myer house ‘until the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation’ could reduce the large quantity of light-gauge metal used.¹⁶ Subsequent reports noted that ‘Myer prefabricated steel homes might be produced again if satisfactory substitutes for light-gauge steel were devised’.¹⁷ However, there does not seem to have been an uptake in production. By 1949 other alternatives were available – including the homes designed by a variety of architects as part of the ‘Small Homes Service’. Neither the Beaufort or Myer homes appear to have been manufactured in significant numbers after this time.

There is uncertainty about the total number of Myer Houses erected in the State, but a newspaper article from 6 August 1947 notes that a Glen Waverley House will be the ‘35th’ Myer House to be erected.¹⁸

5.1.2 The Minta Myer House - History

There is limited information available about the installation of the Myer House on Minta Farm. However, as the houses were only manufactured for a short period of time, it can be assumed that the house was manufactured in c1947 and subsequently transferred to the site. Rate records are not conclusive, but a hand annotation to the entry for Minta Farm in 1958 notes that there are ‘5 houses’ on the farm. An aerial image of the site from January 1960 clearly shows the Myer House – in its current location – on site.

¹³ The Dandenong Journal, 6 August 1947, p.11.

¹⁴ Personal Correspondence – Martin Zweep, Heritage Victoria 29 March 2017.

¹⁵ The West Australian, 13 December 1947, p.8.

¹⁶ The Argus, 12 February 1948, p.1.

¹⁷ The Argus, 25 March 1948, p.3

¹⁸ The Dandenong Journal, 6 August 1947, p.11.

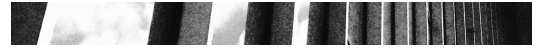


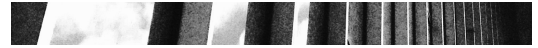
Figure 5: January 1960, Aerial image – arrow indicates Myer House



Figure 6: February 1971, Aerial Image – arrow indicates Myer House

There is no record of why the house was erected, but it seems likely that it was intended to provide accommodation for either extended family or agricultural workers. Fleur Philip (the owner's daughter who grew up on the site) indicated that it was occupied by a mechanic and his wife for an extended period of time. The land though remained in the ownership of Minta Farm.

The house remains highly intact externally. Some internal changes have been made – including the removal of a wall separating the kitchen and dining areas and the replacement of the kitchen.



6. Conclusion

The Myer House is a highly intact example of a prefabricated dwelling designed in response to the housing crisis in the immediate post-war period. In Stage 2, we will prepare an assessment of the house against the heritage criteria contained within the *Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay* (July 2015). The assessment will also involve a comparative analysis of the Myer House against other known examples within Victoria.

References:

- Beaufort Division, Department of Aircraft Production, Beaufort Homes, Melbourne, June 1946.
- Context, *Peter Lalor Housing Estate: Heritage Significance Assessment*, June 2012.
- Johns, Gary. *Building a Suburb: the Peter Lalor Home Building Co-Operative Society*, Melbourne: Melbourne State College, 1978.
- Personal Correspondence – Martin Zweep, Heritage Victoria 29 March 2017.
- Shire of Berwick, Rate Books – 1947 and 1958.
- The Age, 12 February 1947, The Age, 19 February 1947.
- The Argus, 16 January 1947, 11 February 1947, 12 February 1948, 3 April 1947, 25 March 1948.
- The Dandenong Journal, 6 August 1947.
- The West Australian, 13 December 1947.

Heritage Advice for the Victoria Planning Authority, 'Myer House', Minta Farm, Berwick (Stage 2)



Figure 1: Myer House (27 March 2017)

25 May 2017

Prepared for: **Victorian Planning Authority**

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. The Myer House.....	3
2.1 Historical Information.....	3
3. The Myer House, Minta Farm	5
4. Comparative Analysis.....	8
4.1 Eynesbury, Eynesbury Road, Eynesbury (VHR H0362)	9
4.2 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South, City of Moreland (HO120)	11
4.3 Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind (VHR H1002) (demolished).....	11
4 Assessment of Significance	12
5. Conclusion.....	13
Appendix 1	15
Images taken by GJM Heritage on 27 March 2017	15

1. Introduction

Minta Farm is a site of some 288.9 hectares located in the suburb of Berwick on Melbourne's urban fringe. A 'Historic Cultural Heritage Assessment' of the entire farm was undertaken by Tardis Enterprises 'Archaeologists and Heritage Advisors' in 2011 (the Tardis Report). The Assessment identified a series of structures on the site, including the 'Minta Homestead', a small dairy, workers quarters, a cottage and a 'Myer House'. The assessment identified the Myer House as having 'moderate historic cultural heritage significance' and suggested a series of management options, but did not explicitly recommend a Heritage Overlay for the site.

We have been engaged to provide additional advice on the significance of the Myer House, as per the following tasks. The tasks have been broken into stages as agreed.

Stage 1

- Undertake a peer review of the 'Historic Cultural Heritage Assessment'
- Desktop research into the history of the Myer House
- Preparation of a contextual history of the Myer House

Stage 2

- Preparation of heritage assessment of the Myer House
- Collation and Indexation of the photographic record

Stage 3 (if required)

- Preparation of a heritage citation for the Myer House
- Preparation of a report making recommendations in relation to integration, conservation and management within the Precinct Structure Plan (PSP)

This Report contains all deliverables required in Stage 2. It is informed by an external and internal inspection of the building, which was undertaken on 27 March 2017. Images in this report were taken by GJM Heritage on that date, unless otherwise stated.

2. The Myer House

2.1 Historical Information

The History of the Myer House as a typology has been explored in the Stage 1 Report. In brief, Myer Houses were constructed in small numbers in Victoria over a brief period after the end of World War II. In response to the housing shortage caused by returning servicemen and an influx of immigrants, a number of different prefabricated housing types were developed in Australia in the 1940s.¹ These included the Myer House which was developed by the Myer Emporium, and the Beaufort House which was developed by the Victorian Housing Commission. Both of these prefabricated housing schemes continued for only a brief period. The Beaufort House ceased production in early 1948, after a change in government the previous year, and the Myer House ceased production soon after. It is probable that only a very small number of both Myer and Beaufort houses were actually built despite plans to speedily construct thousands of affordable houses.

A coloured brochure 'The Myer House', produced in 1947 by the Myer Emporium, illustrated and described this particular prefabricated house type. The house, to be erected by J C Taylor & Sons Pty Ltd. of Richmond, was described as 'the result of three years of world-wide investigation on modern home building' and as 'a substantial structure in concrete, brick and timber, combined with factory produced 'zincaneal' roofing, joinery, plumbing and all generous interior fittings'.

¹ University of Melbourne Archives, Harold Bartlett Collection, files of prefabricated house types.

Three plan types were offered, as well as the mirror image of these plans, resulting in six plan variations. The materials of the Myer Houses were described as follows:

- reinforced concrete foundations
- steel and timber floors
- timber external walls, with concrete sheeting and stucco or sand finish
- timber interior walls with plaster sheeting
- steel roof trusses with zinc tiles, barges and fascias
- aluminium doors
- timber and aluminium windows
- timber architraves, picture rails and skirtings.

Built-in furniture included bedroom cupboards and drawers. Kitchens, laundries and bathrooms were produced as units at the factory and transported to site in a finished condition, with all equipment and services built in. Future extension of the houses was made possible by the inclusion of a door in the exterior wall, enabling a third bedroom to be provided if required.²



Figure 2: The Myer House, AL model and plan type



Figure 3: The Myer House, BL model and plan type



Figure 4: The Myer House, CL model and plan type

² Plan types taken from: The Myer Emporium 'The Myer House' brochure (1947).

3. The Myer House, Minta Farm

The Myer House, Minta Farm is an AL model and plan type. It is sited with the main facade facing north and appears to have been built with the optional third bedroom at the west end. The house is highly intact and is very similar in appearance to the house illustrated in the Myer House brochure (see Figure 2).

The house is of simple rectangular gable form with two slightly offset gables meeting at the mid-point, a small protruding gable-end to the east and a large protruding gable to the west. The latter accommodates the third bedroom. A partly open, covered area is located to the north of this gabled section. This has a flat roof, roughcast end wall and guttering which matches that of the house, suggesting it formed part of the original construction. A deep recessed porch, located at the mid-point of the north façade, provides entry to the house.

The external walls are timber framed with a roughcast finish and the roof is clad with corrugated galvanised iron. The latter may have replaced original zinc tiles, which were specified in the promotional brochure, or may be the original cladding. Zinc pressed shingle sheets line the gable ends. A broad, unadorned tapered chimney breast protrudes from the north façade. This differs from the exposed brick, straight-sided chimney illustrated in the brochure. Windows are timber-framed with double-hung aluminium sashes. The interior of the house contains a longitudinal hall, which provides access to a living room and main bedroom to the east and second bedroom, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, laundry and third bedroom to the west. Interior walls are timber framed and lined with plaster, with timber skirtings, picture rails and architraves; floors are of timber and ceilings and cornices are of plaster.

The Myer House, Minta Farm is of high integrity. The external form has been retained, and the original materials are generally intact.



Figure 5: Myer House, Minta Farm – Looking at south-east facade

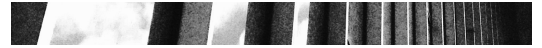


Figure 6: Myer House, Minta Farm – Looking at north-west facade



Figure 7: Detail of eastern façade – showing brick and roughcast render

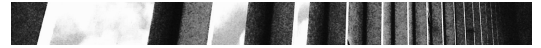


Figure 8: Detail of eastern façade – showing zinc shingles and roughcast render



Figure 9: Northern façade – showing chimney



Figure 10: Internal image showing kitchen / dining



Figure 11: Living Room – with fireplace and windows facing north

4. Comparative Analysis

In the absence of a broader typological study of Myer Houses (or pre-fabricated houses constructed after the Second World War) it is impossible to be certain about the number of houses constructed, or the number that remain. As noted, in the Stage 1 Report, an article from 6 August 1947 reports that a proposed Myer House in Glen Waverley will be the '35th' to be erected – so the numbers constructed were comparatively small.³

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the small number of houses constructed and their relatively modest form, few extant examples of the Myer House have been identified as remaining in Victoria. All those identified to date appear to be examples of the AL model, similar to the demonstration model constructed in the Treasury Gardens in January 1947.⁴ (since demolished).

Identified extant examples are:

- Two three-bedroom houses at Eynesbury Homestead, Eynesbury Road, Eynesbury (VHR H0362)
- House, 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South (HO120, City of Moreland)
- Three-bedroom house, Minta Farm, Berwick.

Another Myer House is known to have been constructed at the Royal Victorian Institute of the Blind (RVIB), St Kilda Road, Melbourne (VHR H1002), however this has since been demolished. It is interesting to note that the properties at Eynesbury and Berwick were both owned by the Baillieu family in the late 1940s/ 1950s – at the time the Myer Houses are likely to have been constructed. The Baillieu and Myer families were related from the 1920s when Marjorie Merlyn Baillieu married the developer of the chain of Myer

³ *Dandenong Journal*, 6 August 1947, p.11

⁴ *Age*, 24 January 1947, p 4.

stores, Sidney Myer – and it is likely that their connection explains the use of these structures on Baillieu owned properties.

Likewise, few extant examples of the prefabricated Beaufort House have been identified in Victoria. A group of eight houses, of an original twenty-three houses built in Pascoe Vale South for the War Services Homes Commission, remains highly intact. These are of identical design and are included in the Heritage Overlay of the Local Planning Scheme of the City of Moreland as part of Gallipoli Parade Precinct, HO80.

The comparative analysis below has been based upon an analysis of the three other extant Myer Houses identified to date, although we have also briefly considered the now demolished building within the RVIB.

4.1 Eynesbury, Eynesbury Road, Eynesbury (VHR H0362)

Two identical three-bedroom prefabricated Myer Houses were erected to the south of the homestead c1947, after the purchase of the Eynesbury property by John Baillieu the previous year. Both are examples of the AL type floor plan, as illustrated in the Myer House brochure, with an additional bedroom. The houses are considered to contribute to the state significance of the Eynesbury estate as rare and highly intact examples of these prefabricated Myer Houses.

They are mentioned in the VHR Citation for Eynesbury – albeit briefly. The History notes that: ‘two identical prefabricated Myer houses were erected to the south ... of the property in 1947’. The houses are identified as being: ‘historically and architecturally important as rare and highly intact examples of one of the many prefabricated houses constructed by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation and marketed by the Myer Emporium during the world-wide shortage of housing following the Second World War.’

Both houses are of high integrity; although they do not appear to have been lived in for some time and the condition of one (in particular) has been compromised. The images below were taken on 17 January 2017 and provided by Heritage Victoria.



Figure 12: Myer House 1, Eynesbury © Heritage Victoria, 17 January 2017

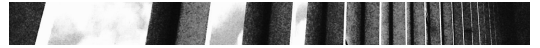


Figure 13: Myer House 1, Eynesbury © Heritage Victoria, 17 January 2017



Figure 14: Myer House 2, Eynesbury © Heritage Victoria, 17 January 2017

4.2 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South, City of Moreland (HO120)

The house at 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South was identified in the City of Coburg Heritage Conservation and Streetscape Study (Timothy Hubbard Pty Ltd, 1990) and graded 'B'. The property is subject to an individual Heritage Overlay (HO 120) within the City of Moreland. 'B' graded houses in the study were identified as being:

Either already included on, are recommended by this Study for nomination to the Register of the National Estate. Inclusion upon the Register provides statutory protection only to buildings owned by the Commonwealth of Australia. It is recommended that control over the majority of the B buildings identified in this study should therefore rest with the Responsible Authority, the City of Coburg, under the enabling provisions of the Planning and Environment Act. These buildings should not undergo alterations or be demolished without close reference to the relevant Guidelines. These buildings may fall either within or outside a Conservation Area or an Urban Design Area. Limited controls should also be introduced for sites contiguous with B Graded Buildings outside Conservation and Urban Design Areas

The house has since had an individual Heritage Overlay applied. While the form of the home remains readable, it has been somewhat altered – in particular the addition of external roller shutters, the replacement of the roof tiles and the apparent addition of weatherboard / imitation weatherboard cladding to the gables have compromised the building's integrity.



Figure 15: 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South © Google Streetview, 29 March 2017.

4.3 Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind (VHR H1002) (demolished)

A prefabricated Myer House was also erected in the grounds of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind between 1947 and 1953. The Statement of Significance for the place describes this house as 'one of the few examples of its type in Victoria' and states that it contributed to the state significance of the place. Despite this, the Myer house has been demolished since assessment of the place was undertaken.

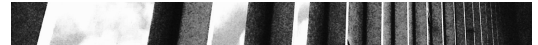


Figure 16: Myer House, Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind (since demolished) (image from Victorian Heritage Database)

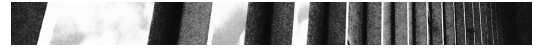
4 Assessment of Significance

The Myer House was an expression of the significant growth in the demand for housing following the Second World War. Because this housing type was only manufactured during c1947-48 and was not the model favoured for development by the Commonwealth Government, comparatively few were produced. Only three other examples have been identified as remaining in the State. Even assuming that there are other houses identified, given the small number built, it is clearly a rare example of its type. Two of the houses (both at Eynesbury) are included on the VHR – as part of the Eynesbury Homestead. The remaining house is included on an individual Heritage Overlay within the City of Moreland. All examples known to remain are examples of the ‘AL’ model.

An analysis indicates that the house at Minta Farm is of a high intactness and comparable in quality to the two houses at Eynesbury. It is in more intact condition than the example within the City of Moreland. While we have not undertaken a full assessment against the Criteria (in accordance with Planning Practice Note 1), we are of the view that the house would meet the threshold for inclusion on the Heritage Overlay of the City of Casey’s Planning Scheme.

We note that Myer Houses were designed and constructed off site and without reference to their ultimate location, therefore the siting of this building is of less significance than its fabric. While the preferred option, in heritage terms, would be to maintain the building in its current location, its re-location within the extent of the Minta Farm complex (with which it is historically associated) may be an acceptable heritage outcome, particularly if its relocation provides an opportunity for the building to be better used and understood.

In accordance with the agreed scope of works, Stage 3 will involve the preparation of a heritage citation for the Myer House at Minta Farm. This will include the preparation of an assessment against the Criteria and a Statement of Significance. It will also include advice on the appropriate curtilage and orientation – both in relation to the current site and in the event that the building is re-located elsewhere within the Minta Farm Complex.

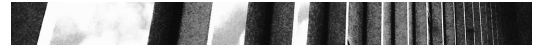


5. Conclusion

The Myer House at Minta Farm, Berwick is a rare and highly intact example of its type and one of the few examples known to exist in Victoria. Like the examples above, the house remains as an important illustrative example of experimentation in the prefabrication of houses that occurred directly after the end of World War II, to address housing shortages and to utilise both engineering techniques and skilled workforce from wartime.

References

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Context, 'Gallipoli Parade Heritage Precinct & Beaufort Houses. Review of Heritage Significance Final Report', 2011
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University of Melbourne Archives, 'Harold Bartlett Collection, Housing Commission, Victoria, Prefabricated House Types Files', 1939-60
Victorian Institute for the Blind, St Kilda Road, Melbourne, VHR H1002, Victorian Heritage Database



Appendix 1

In accordance with the agreed scope of works, we have collated images of the house obtained during the course of our research.

Images taken by GJM Heritage on 27 March 2017



Photo A: Northern facade



Photo B: Eastern facade



Photo C: Looking at south-east facade



Photo D: Looking at north-west facade



Photo E: Looking at north-west facade



Photo F: Looking at northern facade

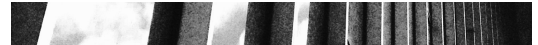


Photo G: Northern façade



Photo H: Eastern façade - detail



Photo I: Eastern façade – detail



Photo J: Northern facade



Photo K: Porch roof

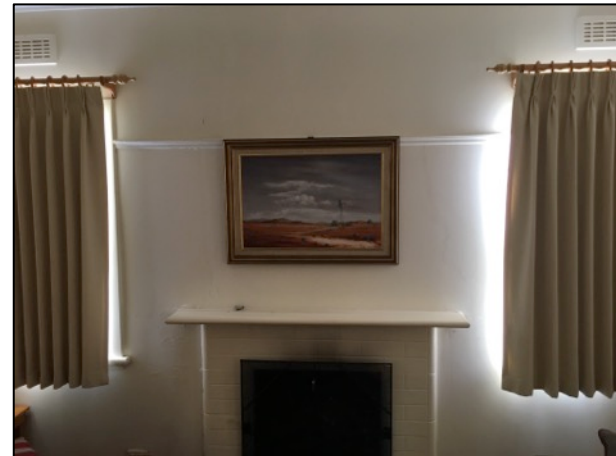


Photo L: Internal – northern facade

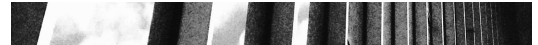


Photo M: Internal – cornice detail living room



Photo N: Internal - water damage – western bedroom



Photo O: Internal –kitchen / dining room



Photo P: Towards Minta Farm – from Soldiers Road



Photo Q: Northern Façade – Context

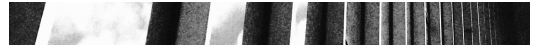


Photo R: Eastern façade



Photo S: Chimney detail



Photo T: Northern façade – detail



Photo U: Covered area off western end of house

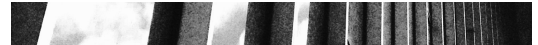


Photo V: Internal – floorboards



Photo W: Internal – showing built in cupboard



Photo X: Internal – kitchen/ dining area

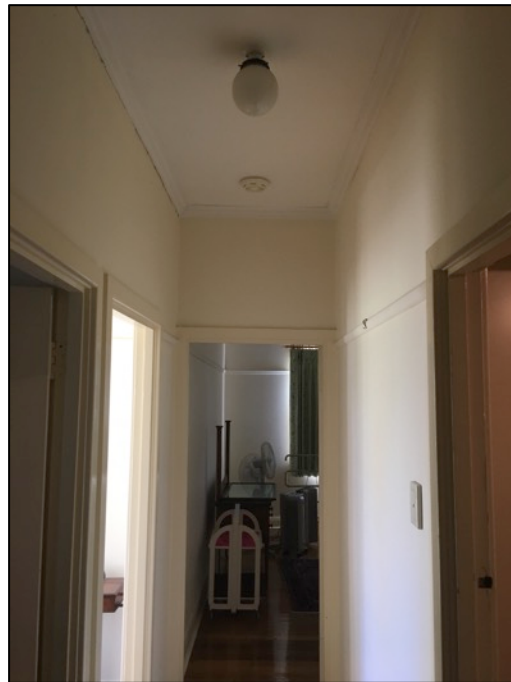
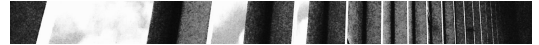


Photo Y: Internal – corridor looking east



Heritage Advice for the Victoria Planning Authority, 'Myer House', Minta Farm, Berwick (Stage 3)



Myer House, Minta Farm (27 March 2017) © GJM Heritage

11 July 2017

Prepared for: **Victorian Planning Authority**

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BA, GradCert (Planning and Environment)

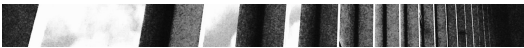
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Contents

1. Introduction 3

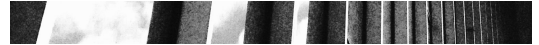
2. The Myer House, Minta Farm 4

 2.1 Heritage Citation..... 4

 2.2 Statement of Significance 4

 2.3 Management Recommendations 4

Appendix A: Heritage Citation 7



1. Introduction

Minta Farm is a site of 288.9 hectares located in the suburb of Berwick on Melbourne's urban fringe. A 'Historic Cultural Heritage Assessment' of the entire farm was undertaken by Tardis Enterprises 'Archaeologists and Heritage Advisors' in 2011 (the Tardis Report). The Tardis Report identified a series of structures on the site, including the 'Minta Homestead', a small dairy, workers quarters, a cottage and a 'Myer House'. The assessment identified the Myer House as having 'moderate historic cultural heritage significance' and suggested a series of management options, but did not explicitly recommend a Heritage Overlay for the site.

GJM Heritage has been engaged to provide additional advice on the significance of the Myer House, as identified in the following tasks, which fall into three stages:

Stage 1

- Undertake a peer review of the 'Historic Cultural Heritage Assessment'
- Desktop research into the history of the Myer House
- Preparation of a contextual history of the Myer House

Stage 2

- Preparation of a heritage assessment of the Myer House
- Collation and indexation of the photographic record

Stage 3 (if Stages 1 and 2 resulted in the finding that the Myer House was of heritage significance at the local level)

- Preparation of a heritage citation for the Myer House
- Preparation of a report making recommendations in relation to integration, conservation and management within the Precinct Structure Plan (PSP)

This report contains all deliverables required in Stage 3. It is informed by an external and internal inspection of the building, which was undertaken on 27 March 2017. Images in this report were taken by GJM Heritage on that date, unless otherwise stated.

2. The Myer House, Minta Farm

2.1 Heritage Citation

The Stage 2 Report prepared by GJM Heritage involved an analysis of the Myer House at Minta Farm and a comparative analysis of its significance against the other known examples of Myer Houses that remain in Victoria. The Stage 2 Report found that:

The Myer House at Minta Farm, Berwick is a rare and highly intact example of its type and one of the few examples known to exist in Victoria ... the house remains as an important illustrative example of experimentation in the prefabrication of houses that occurred directly after the end of World War II, to address housing shortages and to utilise both engineering techniques and skilled workforce from wartime.

On this basis, the Stage 2 Report concluded that the house would meet the threshold for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay of the Casey Planning Scheme.

Stage 3 has involved the preparation of a Heritage Citation, including a Statement of Significance, for the Myer House at Minta Farm. The citation has been prepared in accordance with the guidance contained within *Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay* (PPN01). The Statement of Significance for the place is provided below. The full citation is included at Attachment A.

2.2 Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick, a prefabricated house constructed c1947.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The external form, materials and detailing of the building.

Later alterations and additions are not significant

How is it significant?

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick is of local historical and architectural significance to the City of Casey.

Why is it significant?

The prefabricated Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick clearly illustrates the response to the housing shortage in Victoria after World War II. This resulted in the development of prototype prefabricated houses, by both the private and public sector, which could be constructed cheaply and quickly, including the Myer House type (Criterion A).

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick is one of a small number of prefabricated houses known to remain from the late 1940s in Victoria. It is a highly intact and rare surviving example of the prefabricated Myer House type. The original form, materials and detailing of the place clearly demonstrate the typical characteristics of this building type (Criterion B).

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick has strong associations with two well-known Victorian families which were related by marriage, the Baillieu and Myer families. The Baillieu family owned Minta Farm and were responsible for the construction of the Myer House on the property, while, as directors of the Myer Emporium, the Myer family were instrumental in the development of this prefabricated house type (Criterion H).

2.3 Management Recommendations

In light of the identified significance of the Myer House, GJM Heritage has prepared a number of

management recommendations that relate to the integration, conservation and management of the building within the PSP.

We understand that as part of the PSP implementation process, Casey has a policy of including a requirement in the Schedule to the Urban Growth Zone for the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for each heritage place identified in the relevant PSP. It may therefore be prudent to expedite the preparation of the CMP to provide a more comprehensive set of management recommendations at this point.

Notwithstanding the above, the following recommendations will assist in the consideration of the place in the development of the PSP.

2.3.1 Integration

Myer Houses were designed and constructed off-site and without reference to their ultimate destination. As a result, the siting of this building is less important than its fabric. Historical research has been unable to identify any significance attributed to the location of the Myer House within the Minta Farm complex. While the preferred option, in heritage terms, is to maintain the building in its current location, its re-location within the extent of the Minta Farm complex (with which it is historically associated) may be an acceptable heritage outcome, particularly if its relocation provides an opportunity for the building to be better used and understood.

2.3.3 Orientation

As Myer Houses were not designed for a particular location, their orientation would also have varied. The large site at Minta Farm has provided the opportunity for the owners to orientate the house to the north – which they have done. However, this is simply a reflection of the opportunity afforded by a large site. It is considered that the re-orientation of the house may be possible, provided that an appropriate curtilage was maintained to allow the form of the house to be understood. Whether the Myer House remains in its current location or is re-orientated, the future subdivision pattern of the PSP should ensure that the principal designed façade of the house (in the case the eastern elevation) addresses a road. This will ensure the heritage place has presence in the new urban landscape and can continue to be used as a dwelling.

2.3.3 Curtilage

PPN1 provides detailed guidance on ‘Curtilages and Heritage Overlay Polygons’. It notes that:

In many cases, particularly in urban areas and townships, the extent of the curtilage will be the whole of the property (for example, a suburban dwelling and its allotment).

It then goes on to discuss instances where some land is not significant and a reduced curtilage may be appropriate.

The broader Minta Farm complex has not been identified as possessing sufficient cultural heritage value to satisfy the threshold for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay of the Casey Planning Scheme. The Myer House constitutes a very small part of the broader Minta Farm complex and it is appropriate that the proposed extent of the Heritage Overlay focus only on the Myer House itself.

PPN1 provides further guidance upon how the extent of the proposed Heritage Overlay should be established in these circumstances. Specifically, it states that the proposed extent should:

- Capture those elements of the place that are significant; and
- Include a curtilage in order to:
 - Retain the setting or context of the significant building, structure, tree or feature
 - Regulate development (including subdivision) in close proximity to the significant building, tree or feature.

PPN1 proposes, where possible, the application of uncomplicated and easily recognised boundaries. In this

instance the exercise is made difficult by the absence of such boundaries.

In the absence of recognized boundaries, we have considered the curtilage necessary to regulate development and also looked at how comparable buildings within an urban context have been treated. We note that the only other Myer House that exists within a suburban context (659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South – HO120) is located on a block of approximately 510m² (all of which is affected by the HO). The Beaufort Houses within the Gallipoli Parade Precinct (HO80) are generally on blocks of approximately 600m² – again the full blocks are affected by the HO control.

In light of this, if a connector street or other local street extends north-south along the frontage, we propose that the HO for the Myer House at Minta Farm extends 5m from the eastern elevation and 6m from the northern elevation. This will ensure that significant views to the building's 'front' (eastern) façade are retained and that the northern façade (which includes the main windows and the chimney) can also be seen and read from the public realm. The southern façade is not heavily articulated and a smaller curtilage of 3m will be sufficient. Finally, we have allowed for a 10m curtilage at the property's rear (western) façade.

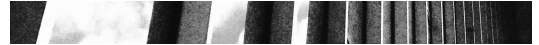
The proposed curtilages would create an HO of 589m², which is comparable in size to the lot at 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South (HO120) and also the lots containing the Beaufort Houses within the Gallipoli Parade Precinct – HO80.

As a result, our recommended Heritage Overlay extent (blue boundary) is as indicated in the Heritage Citation at Appendix A.

We note that the proposed extent has been informed by the existing orientation of the Myer House and the proposed road layout described above. The proposed HO extent will need to be reassessed in the event that the house is re-orientated or a different road layout is proposed.

2.3.4 Interpretation

Given the relatively modest nature of the Myer House, the development of on-site interpretative material to explain the history and significance of the place is appropriate.



Appendix A: Heritage Citation

MYER HOUSE, MINTA FARM

Address: 2-106 Soldiers Road, Berwick (part of)

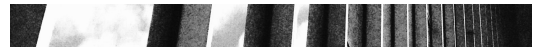
Prepared by: GJM Heritage

Date: 11 July 2017

Place type: Prefabricated House	Architect:
Grading: Locally significant	Builder: Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation Pty Ltd / J C Taylor & Sons Pty Ltd
Integrity: Very high	Construction Date: c1947
Recommendation: Include in the Heritage Overlay	Extent of Overlay: Refer to Figure 18



Figure 1: Myer House (27 March 2017)



Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick, a prefabricated house constructed c1947.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- The external form, materials and detailing of the building.

Later alterations and additions are not significant

How is it significant?

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick is of local historical and architectural significance to the City of Casey.

Why is it significant?

The prefabricated Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick clearly illustrates the response to the housing shortage in Victoria after World War II. This resulted in the development of prototype prefabricated houses, by both the private and public sector, which could be constructed cheaply and quickly, including the Myer House type (Criterion A).

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick is one of a small number of prefabricated houses known to remain from the late 1940s in Victoria. It is a highly intact and rare surviving example of the prefabricated Myer House type. The original form, materials and detailing of the place clearly demonstrate the typical characteristics of this building type (Criterion B).

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick has strong associations with two well-known Victorian families which were related by marriage, the Baillieu and Myer families. The Baillieu family owned Minta Farm and were responsible for the construction of the Myer House on the property, while, as directors of the Myer Emporium, the Myer family were instrumental in the development of this prefabricated house type (Criterion H).

Historical Themes

The place illustrates the following theme as outlined in the *City of Casey Thematic Environment History* (2004):

- 4 Working the land
 - 4.1 Grazing
- 7. Building Settlements, Towns and Cities
 - 7.1. Township Development
 - 7.1.4 Twentieth century private subdivisions & suburban estates

Locality history

Informed by Context Pty Ltd, City of Casey Thematic Environmental History (Post European Contact), 2004.

Minta Farm is located in the suburb of Berwick, on the urban fringe to the south-east of Melbourne. Squatters took up pastoral runs in this district from the late 1830s, where Cardinia Creek provided the main water source for grazing. Subdivision of these runs occurred in the early 1850s and initial land sales took place in 1853 and 1854.

The small agricultural township of Berwick, established to service farming communities, developed in the 1870s. The impetus for development was the completion of the Gippsland Road from Melbourne to Sale in 1865 and the provision of regular coach services, as well as the subsequent construction of the Main

Gippsland Railway in 1877-79 with the opening of a station at Berwick in 1877.

Much of the land surrounding the Berwick township continued to be used for grazing, with some cropping, through the twentieth century. The recent growth of urban fringe suburbs such as Berwick has resulted in the subdivision of former agricultural land and the development of housing estates in the locality.

Place history

Established as a pastoral run in the nineteenth century, Minta Farm, Berwick had numerous owners before it was acquired by Francis and Lillian Officer in 1910 (Certificate of Title 3451/097). The original portion of the existing homestead appears to have been built by 1913 (Rate Book 1913/14) with additions and outbuildings constructed at the property probably after 1931 when Minta Farm was acquired by Marshall Lawrence Baillieu (Certificate of Title 2943/485). After M L Baillieu's death, Minta Farm was transferred to Ian Marshall Baillieu in 1985 (Certificate of Title 3451/097).

A prefabricated house, a Myer House type developed by the Myer family, was constructed at Minta Farm c1947 by the Baillieu family. Located to the north-west of the main homestead complex, it was presumably intended to provide additional accommodation at the property for farm workers. It is of interest to note that the Baillieu and Myer families were related by marriage - Marjorie Merlyn Baillieu married the developer of the chain of Myer stores, Sidney Myer in the 1920s.

The prefabricated Myer House type developed in response to a housing shortage in Victoria. The advent of the Great Depression in 1930 saw a dramatic decline in building activity in Victoria and this, together with the advent of World War II, resulted in a shortage of housing which became extremely apparent as soldiers returned home from the war. A lack of qualified labour and shortage of materials compounded this problem. There was significant interest – both from the public and private sector – in attempting to resolve the issue, including the development of a series of prototype homes that could be constructed quickly and cheaply (University of Melbourne Archives, 'Harold Bartlett Collection'). Two of the earliest housing types developed were the Beaufort and Myer Houses; the former by the Victorian Housing Commission and the latter by the Myer Emporium.

On behalf of the Myer Emporium, Norman Myer introduced the Myer House to a group of Melbourne businessmen and politicians in 1945 (*The Argus*, 8 September 1945: 9). The plan was to develop a house that was capable of quick erection at low cost, which would require limited maintenance. The houses were to be constructed by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation Pty Ltd (*The Age*, 12 February 1947:5). The benefits of the house were detailed in an article published in *The Argus* on 16 January 1947, p 12, where Norman Myer was reported as stating:

It is the cheapest home of its type ever built. The minimum use has been made of materials which would deteriorate. There was no exposed woodwork and very little wood was used in the interior. The house had an all-cement foundation, an iron frame, thick cement and plaster walls, and zinc anneal tiles, which would neither move nor break.

The Argus went on to report that:

The house is to be built in six designs, each capable of carrying an additional room if required. All the normal fittings are in-built, and the home, because of its design, will require much less furnishings and furniture than is normal.

There was considerable government and public interest in the project, with a demonstration Myer House (that was to be raffled) erected in the Treasury Gardens in January 1947 and reports of long queues of people waiting to order the house (*The Argus*, 13 February 1947: 13).



Figure 2 *The Argus*, 13 February 1947, p 13



Figure 3 *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 29 March 1947, p 36

A coloured advertising brochure 'The Myer House', produced in 1947 by the Myer Emporium, illustrated and described this prefabricated house type, stating that they were to be erected by J C Taylor & Sons Pty Ltd. of Richmond. It was described as 'the result of three years of world-wide investigation on modern home building' and as 'a substantial structure in concrete, brick and timber, combined with factory produced 'zincanneal' roofing, joinery, plumbing and all generous interior fittings'. Three basic plan types were illustrated, the AL, BL and CL, and mirror image of these plans resulted in six plan variations.

The materials of the Myer Houses were described in the brochure as follows:

- reinforced concrete foundations
- steel and timber floors
- timber external walls, with concrete sheeting and stucco or sand finish
- timber interior walls with plaster sheeting
- steel roof trusses with zinc tiles, barges and fascias
- aluminium doors
- timber and aluminium windows
- timber architraves, picture rails and skirtings.

Built-in furniture included bedroom cupboards and drawers. Kitchens, laundries and bathrooms were

produced as units at the factory and transported to site in a finished condition, with all equipment and services built-in. Future extension of the houses was made possible by the inclusion of a door in the exterior wall, enabling a third bedroom to be provided if required.

Despite the apparent enthusiasm for these prefabricated housing schemes, construction continued for only a brief period. A change of government in late 1947 and concerns about the economic viability of both housing schemes led to the demise of the Beaufort House in early 1948 (*The Argus*, 12 February 1948:1) and the Myer House soon after. It is likely that only a small number of both Myer and Beaufort houses were built and this included the Myer House at the Baillieu-owned property, Minta Farm in c1947.

Description

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick is an example of the AL model and plan type as illustrated in the advertising brochure 'The Myer House', produced in 1947 by the Myer Emporium. It is sited with the main facade facing north and appears to have been built with the optional third bedroom at the west end. The house is highly intact and is similar in appearance to the house illustrated in the Myer House brochure (Figure 4).

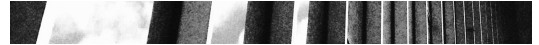


Figure 4 Myer House model and plan type AL, from Plan types taken from: The Myer Emporium 'The Myer House' brochure (1947).

The house is of simple rectangular form with two slightly offset gables meeting at the mid-point, a small protruding gable-end to the east and a large protruding gable to the west. The latter accommodates the third bedroom. A partly open covered area is located to the north of the western gabled section. This has a flat roof, roughcast end wall, and guttering which matches that of the house, suggesting it formed part of the original construction. A deep recessed porch, located at the mid-point of the north façade, provides entry to the house.

The external walls are timber framed with a roughcast finish, and the roof is clad with corrugated galvanised iron. The latter may have replaced original zinc tiles, which were specified in the promotional brochure, or may be the original cladding. Zinc pressed shingle sheets line the gable ends. A broad, unadorned tapered chimney breast protrudes from the north façade. This differs from the exposed brick, straight-sided chimney illustrated in the brochure. Windows are timber-framed with double-hung aluminium sashes.

The interior of the house contains a longitudinal hall, which provides access to a living room and main bedroom to the east and second bedroom, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, laundry and third bedroom to the west. Interior walls are timber framed and lined with plaster, with timber skirtings, picture rails and



architraves. Floors are of timber and ceilings and cornices are of plaster.



Figure 5: Northern Façade



Figure 6: Eastern Facade



Figure 7: South- eastern Façade



Figure 8: Northern Façade



Figure 9: Eastern Façade – gable end detail



Figure 10: Eastern Façade – roughcast finish detail



Figure 11: North-western Façade



Figure 12: Northern Façade

Integrity

The Myer House, Minta Farm retains a high level of integrity to its original design in form, fabric and detail. The house remains highly intact externally which enables the place to be clearly understood and appreciated as an example of a Myer House.

Comparative Analysis

Historical research has not been able to identify the number of Myer Houses constructed, or the number that remain. It was reported in an article in 6 August 1947, that a proposed Myer House in Glen Waverley was to be the '35th' to be erected. As production ceased in early 1948 it would appear likely that the overall number constructed was relatively small (*Dandenong Journal*, 6 August 1947:11).

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the small number of houses constructed and their relatively modest form, few extant examples of the Myer House have been identified as remaining in Victoria. All those identified to date appear to be examples of the AL model, similar to the demonstration model constructed in the Treasury Gardens in January 1947 and since demolished (*The Age*, 24 January 1947:4).

Identified extant examples are:

- Two three-bedroom houses at Eynesbury Homestead, Eynesbury Road, Eynesbury (VHR H0362)
- House, 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South (HO120, City of Moreland)
- Three-bedroom house, Minta Farm, Berwick.

Another Myer House is known to have been constructed at the Royal Victorian Institute of the Blind (RVIB), St Kilda Road, Melbourne (VHR H1002), however this has since been demolished. It is interesting to note that the properties at Eynesbury and Berwick were both owned by the Baillieu family in the late 1940s/1950s – at the time the Myer Houses are likely to have been constructed. The Baillieu and Myer families were related by marriage and this is likely to explain the use of these structures on Baillieu-owned properties.

Likewise, few extant examples of the prefabricated Beaufort House have been identified in Victoria. A group of eight houses, of an original twenty-three houses built in Pascoe Vale South for the War Services Homes Commission, remains highly intact. These are of identical design and are included in the Heritage Overlay of the Local Planning Scheme of the City of Moreland as part of Gallipoli Parade Precinct, HO80.

The comparative analysis below has been based upon an analysis of the three other extant Myer Houses identified to date, and the now demolished building within the RVIB.

Eynesbury, Eynesbury Road, Eynesbury (VHR H0362)

Two identical three-bedroom prefabricated Myer Houses were erected to the south of the homestead

c1947, after the purchase of the Eynesbury property by John Baillieu the previous year. Both are examples of the AL type floor plan, as illustrated in the Myer House brochure, with an additional bedroom. The houses are considered to contribute to the state significance of the Eynesbury estate as rare and highly intact examples of these prefabricated Myer Houses.

They are mentioned in the VHR Citation for Eynesbury – albeit briefly. The History notes that: ‘two identical prefabricated Myer houses were erected to the south ... of the property in 1947’. The houses are identified as being: ‘historically and architecturally important as rare and highly intact examples of one of the many prefabricated houses constructed by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation and marketed by the Myer Emporium during the world-wide shortage of housing following the Second World War.’

Both houses are of high integrity; although they do not appear to have been lived in for some time and the condition of one (in particular) has been compromised.



Figure 13: Myer House 1, Eynesbury © Heritage Victoria, 17 January 2017

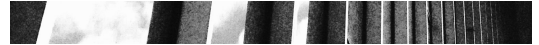


Figure 14: Myer House 1, Eynesbury © Heritage Victoria, 17 January 2017

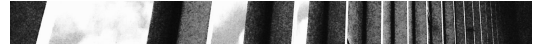


Figure 15: Myer House 2, Eynesbury © Heritage Victoria, 17 January 2017

659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South, City of Moreland (HO120)

The house at 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South was originally identified in the City of Coburg Heritage Conservation and Streetscape Study (Timothy Hubbard Pty Ltd, 1990) and graded 'B'. The property is presently subject to an individual Heritage Overlay (HO 120) within the City of Moreland. The citation prepared for the City of Moreland Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay described the house as 'a largely intact example of the Myer houses' and the 'only known example in Coburg'.

While the form of the home remains readable, it has been somewhat altered. In particular the addition of external roller shutters, the replacement of the roof tiles and the apparent addition of



weatherboard/imitation weatherboard cladding to the gables have compromised the building's integrity.



Figure 16: 659 Moreland Road, Pascoe Vale South © Google Streetview, 29 March 2017.

Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind (VHR H1002) (demolished)

A prefabricated Myer House was also erected in the grounds of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind between 1947 and 1953. The Statement of Significance for the place describes this house as 'one of the few examples of its type in Victoria' and states that it contributed to the state significance of the place. Despite this, the Myer house has been demolished since assessment of the place was undertaken.



Figure 17: Myer House, Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind (since demolished) (image from VHD)

Conclusion

The Myer House was an expression of the significant growth in the demand for housing following World War II. Because this housing type was only manufactured during c1947-48, comparatively few were produced, and only three other examples have been identified as remaining in Victoria. Given the small number built, it is clearly a rare example of its type. Two of the houses (both at Eynesbury) are included on the VHR as part of the Eynesbury Homestead and the house at Pascoe Vale South is included on an individual Heritage Overlay within the City of Moreland. All examples known to remain are examples of the 'AL' model.

An analysis indicates that the house at Minta Farm is of high integrity and comparable in quality to the two houses at Eynesbury. It is in more intact condition than the example within the City of Moreland.

Assessment Against Criteria

Following is an assessment of the place against the recognised heritage criteria set out in *Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay* (July 2015).

Criterion A: *Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).*

The prefabricated Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick clearly illustrates the response to the housing shortage in Victoria after World War II. This resulted in the development of prototype prefabricated houses, by both the private and public sector, which could be constructed cheaply and quickly, including the Myer House type.

Criterion B: *Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural history.*

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick is one of a small number of prefabricated houses known to remain from the late 1940s in Victoria. It is a highly intact and rare surviving example of the prefabricated Myer House type. The original form, materials and detailing of the place clearly demonstrate the typical characteristics of this building type.

Criterion H: *Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).*

The Myer House, Minta Farm, Berwick has strong associations with two well-known Victorian families which were related by marriage, the Baillieu and Myer families. The Baillieu family owned Minta Farm and were responsible for the construction of the Myer House on the property, while, as directors of the Myer Emporium, the Myer family were instrumental in the development of this prefabricated house type.

Grading and Recommendations

It is recommended that the place be included in the Heritage Overlay of the City of Casey Planning Scheme as a locally significant heritage place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the City of Casey Planning Scheme:

External Paint Controls?	No
Internal Alteration Controls?	No
Tree Controls?	No
Outbuildings or Fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-3?	No
Prohibited Uses Permitted?	Yes
Incorporated Plan?	No

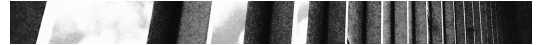
Aboriginal Heritage Place?	No
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Extent of the recommended Heritage Overlay

It is recommended that the Heritage Overlay be applied to the following land and buildings. The extent of the overlay should extend 5m from the eastern façade, 6m from the northern façade, 3m from the southern façade and 10m from the western façade of the Myer House. As outlined in blue in Figure 18.



Figure 18: Proposed extent of Heritage Overlay.



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The Age, 8 September 1945: 24 January 1947: 12 February 1947, p.5.

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Tardis Enterprises Pty Ltd. Minta Farm – GAA PSP11. Historic Cultural Heritage Assessment no 3780, 2011.

University of Melbourne Archives, 'Harold Bartlett Collection, Housing Commission, Victoria, Prefabricated House Types Files', 1939-60.

Victorian Institute for the Blind, St Kilda Road, Melbourne, VHR H1002, Victorian Heritage Database.

ANNEXURE B – Heritage Criteria

Recognised Heritage Criteria (taken from Planning Practice Note 1)

The following recognised heritage criteria shall be used for the assessment of the heritage values of the heritage place. These model criteria have been broadly adopted by heritage jurisdictions across Australia and should be used for all new heritage assessment work.

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).