

Place Citation H08
1 – 3 Benalla Street BENALLA

Address	1 – 3 Benalla Street, BENALLA		
Heritage Overlay	H08		
Heritage Overlay Map			
Designer/s	Unknown	Dates	1878
Significance	Local	Builder/s	Unknown
Heritage Overlay Map	The application of the heritage overlay map to the full title area is supported.	Survey Date	March 2024



1- 3 Benalla Street Benalla (Moira House)

Statement of Significance 1992

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Source: Hermes number: 44395 <https://hermesorion.heritage.vic.gov.au/places/44395>

"Moira House" is of regional significance for its associations with George Sharpe, prominent local businessman, MLA and MLC, and as a uniquely substantial Italianate villa in the City. It is however, typical of its period in architectural terms, the survival of the stuccoed surfaces in unpainted condition being a noteworthy feature.

The following Statement of Significance has been prepared in accordance with the Planning Practice Note 01: Applying the Heritage Overlay, (2018)

Assessment against criteria

The following analysis is based on Victorian Government Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay (August 2018).

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 understanding 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).

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

1 – 3 Benalla Street, Benalla, Moira House is significant.

The context as provided by the expansive front, side and rear setbacks contributes to its significance.

Significant fabric includes, but is not confined to:

- the original form, fabric and scale of the building
- architectural features of the building; including but not confined to: the two storeyed cast iron verandah with projecting pedimented central section; the tympanum with its cast iron infill, hipped slate roof with its cast iron ridge cresting; the symmetrical façade; timber framed sash windows and the timber front door.

The building is substantially intact and has largely retained its integrity.

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Alterations from the c1970s and this includes the construction of a bowling green to the rear area are not significant.

How is it Significant?

1 – 3 Benalla Street, Benalla (Moira House) is of local historical; aesthetic and associative cultural heritage significance to the Benalla Rural City.

Why is it Significant?

1 – 3 Benalla Street, Benalla (Moira House) is of historical significance as it provides evidence of the settlement pattern of Benalla and a key phase of development in Benalla. The construction of the railway in 1873 provided the basis for an increased economic prosperity within the township and this fostered development in Benalla with a particular emphasis in Benalla East. (Criterion A)

1 – 3 Benalla Street, Benalla (Moira House) is of aesthetic significance as a fine example of a boom style Italianate villa. Its architecture is imposing and defined by the large two storey cast iron verandah with its projecting pedimented section. The tympanum with its cast iron lace infill and the cast iron ridge cresting are distinguishing features of this villa. (Criterion E)

1 – 3 Benalla Street, Benalla (Moira House) is of associative significance with George Sharpe who was a notable nineteenth century entrepreneur in Benalla and built Moira House in 1878. Sharpe was a successful businessman, MLA for Moira (1877 - 1881) and MLC (1880), Shire Councillor and President (1869 – 75) and one of the drivers of development, both private and civic, in Benalla East during the nineteenth century. (Criterion H)

Additional Controls

External paint controls apply	Yes
Internal alteration controls apply	No
Tree controls apply	No
Outbuildings or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-4	No
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017	No
Prohibited uses permitted	No
Aboriginal heritage place	No
Solar energy system controls apply	Yes

Description and Integrity

A two storeyed Boom Style Italianate villa of unusually imposing proportions having a two storeyed cast iron verandah with projecting pedimented central section. The "tympanum" has a cast iron lace infill in the manner of Benalla's more prestigious villas whilst the hipped slate roof retains its cast iron ridge cresting. The front elevation is symmetrical and enhanced by the window proportions and vermiculated quoins.

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To the rear is a bowling green that was constructed during the nineteenth century.

Place History

George Sharpe (1822? - 1882) was a prominent local businessman, arriving in Benalla in 1854 and prospering as a storekeeper, hotelkeeper (The "Commercial" q.v.) and miller. Following retirement, he devoted himself to local affairs and politics, becoming MLA for Moira (1877 - 80, 1880, 1881), MLC for the Eastern Province (1880) and Shire Councillor from its foundation (president 1869- 75). He acquired his Benalla Street land between 1872 and '74, building "Moira House" in 1878. It remained in his hands until 1882 when ownership passed to his widow Annabella Sharpe, who lived there until 1919.

Richard and Deborah Cooke were the next owners of the property until 1928 when Father O'Reilly purchased it for the Roman Catholic Church. During this time the house was let as a residence and then apartments. In 1948 the "Benalla Club" for "gentlemen only" purchased the property.

References:

Bassett, J., and Dennis, J., *Benalla Sketched* 2nd Ed. Neptune Press Pty Ltd Newtown (Vic.) 1986, p.22-25.