

Address	29 Coster Street, BENALLA		
Heritage Overlay	HO number to be allocated		
Heritage Overlay Map <i>(proposed)</i>			
Designer/s		Dates	
Significance	Local	Builder/s	
		Survey Date	March 2024



29 Coster Street (Monaro) Benalla

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).

What is Significant?

29 Coster Street Benalla 'Monaro' is significant.

The context as found in the surrounding setting and landscaped gardens with a number of large trees is significant.

The Cedrus deodar, Phoenix canariensis and the Quercus Sp contributes to the significance of the place.

Significant fabric includes, but is not confined to: decorative features which include the decorative gable with timber strapping; the chimneys; rough cast features; the timber posted verandah, entrance door and bay windows and the timber framed windows.

Alterations and additions from the c1980s and later are not significant.

How is it Significant?

29 Coster Street Benalla 'Monaro' is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the Benalla Rural City.

Why is it Significant?

The building is of historical significance as it provides evidence of the turn of the century settlement pattern of Benalla. It demonstrates the outward push beyond the township boundary road, which is now Salisbury Road (formerly 'East Boundary Road') that occurred during the early twentieth century. Despite the subdivisions that have occurred, it is located on a substantial allotment and its early semi-rural character can still be appreciated. (Criterion A)

The building is of aesthetic significance for its fine Federation Queen Anne styling. It is substantive and stylish building that demonstrates many of the features associated with this period. This includes: the decorative gable with timber strapping; the chimneys; rough cast features; the timber posted verandah; entrance door and triple timber framed windows and bay windows. (Criterion E)

Additional Controls

External paint controls apply	Yes
Internal alteration controls apply	No
Tree controls apply	Yes
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

Place History

General

The following history was produced by historian Dr Jacqueline Durrant.

Wilmot's expanded survey of Benalla, 1855

Thomas Wedge's first survey of Benalla was undertaken in 1848.¹ Wedge set out a boundary for the township. The first expansion of his survey was necessitated by the gold rush. By 1854, Benalla's population had trebled from its pre-gold rush level in 1851,² to 300 permanent residents;³ but more importantly, the gold rush meant that the local and wider economy had money to invest in property. In 1855, surveyor E. V. Wilmot drew up a new plan of the town, illustrating some minor extensions to Wedge's grids, one of which was 'Section S' — a town block, bounded by Grey, Smythe and Barkly Streets.⁴ **[Figure 1]** Wilmot conformed to Wedge's original planning scheme, creating 20 half-acre allotments inside Section S. The majority of these were purchased in 1853.⁵

This expansion stretched the township allotments to connect with its 'suburban lands'. At the time of the first town survey in 1848, Thomas Wedge had put a square border of 'suburban lands' around the town, which was divided into five acre allotments. This square was not oriented around the River and its banks, as were the three township street grids; but instead was positioned on a cardinal-point axis. **[Figure 2]** (The planning of Benalla shares many commonalities with Hoddle's plan of Melbourne, which also has an inner street grid that is angled to address the Yarra River, which in turn is surrounded by a square of 'suburbs' arranged on a cardinal axis.)

The arrangement of suburban lands on a cardinal-point axis inevitably meant that as the three township street grids were extended to their logical boundaries, they met the differently-angled suburban lands. While Barkly, Smythe and Grey Streets are continuations of the inner township grid originally instituted by Thomas Wedge; Salisbury Street (formerly 'East Boundary Road', or just 'Boundary Road') is a street that forms the inner outline of what were originally the 'suburban lands'. These 'boundary roads' outlining suburban lands around Benalla, are 100 links wide, which is two-thirds of the width of township street.

'Monaro'⁶ is an impressive Queen Anne-styled home, decorated with roughcast features and a number of bay windows jutting out beneath a shady wrap-around verandah; it was built on what was originally a large triangular suburban allotment (7 Sect.6, Benalla Parish), at 29 Coster Street. This home was built in the first decade of the twentieth century, and certainly pre-WWI. For many decades, it was owned by local barrister and solicitor Eric Trenerry Brown (1888–1968; the son of local barrister Frederick Trenerry Brown) and his wife Beatrice.⁷

¹ 'Survey of the ground near the crossing place, Broken River, 1848', surveyed by Thomas Wedge, map held in a sub collection of VPRS 8168 Historic Plan Collection, Public Records Office of Victoria.

² 'BENALLA'S HISTORY', *Benalla Standard*, Tuesday 12 March 1935 - Page 6.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ 'Plan of the township of Benalla' by E. W. Wilmot, Assist Surveyor July 15th 1855; lithographed by E. Gilks, Victoria. Surveyor General's Office, Aug. 6th 1855 (National Library of Australia, MAP NK 2456/264).

⁵ 'Benalla Township plan, Imperial measure 5066', A Parish plan from VPRS 16171, Dept Crown Lands and survey, 1954, Public Records Office Victoria.

⁶ As listed in the Commonwealth - Indi, State - Benalla, electoral roll for 1931, 1924, 1922.

⁷ 'Mrs Elizabeth Brown,' *Benalla Ensign*, Friday 1 June 1945 - Page 3.

Edwin ('Eric') Trenerry Brown was born in Mitchell Street in 1888.⁸ He studied law at University of Melbourne,⁹ and was admitted as practicing barrister and solicitor in 1912.¹⁰ After qualifying, he joined his father's practice in Benalla, which became F. Trenerry Brown & Son, Solicitors. Brown served in both world wars. He was on the Benalla Soldier's Memorial Hall Committee,¹¹ and served as president of the Benalla branch R.S.S.I.L.A (ie: RSL).¹²

The Browns came to live at Monaro around 1922. It appears to have been Eric Trenerry Brown's first and only adult home. He died in 1968.

'Monaro' was originally surrounded by large garden and orchard.¹³ Land was subdivided off the original allotment to the west in the 1940s/1950s, and to the east in 1973.¹⁴

Relevant Historic Themes as identified in the Benalla Rural City Gaps Heritage Study: Thematic History Prepared by Dr Robyn Ballinger

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state

6.3 Making homes in Benalla Rural City

Physical Description

29 Coster Street 'Monaro' has been designed in the Federation Queen Anne-style. It is a relatively large house with a projecting gable with a recessed timber posted verandah roofed section that includes the entrance door and triple timber framed windows. The gable front has timber strapping and a bay window. Sections of the building have roughcast features that are typical for the period.

⁸ 'Family Notices,' The Argus, Tuesday 14 February 1888 - Page 1.

⁹ UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE. SUPPLEMENTARY PASS EXAMINATION. DECEMBER, 1908.

Article - The Argus (Melbourne, Vic. : 1848 - 1957)Thursday 24 December 1908 - Page 9;

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE. ANNUAL EXAMINATION. NOVEMBER, 1910. RESULTS.

Detailed Lists, Results, Guides - The Argus (Melbourne, Vic. : 1848 - 1957)Friday 9 December 1910 - Page 9

¹⁰ PERSONAL ITEMS. The Ballarat Star (Vic. : 1865 - 1924)Tuesday 5 March 1912 - Page 2.

¹¹ 'To the Editor.' Benalla Standard, Friday 14 May 1926 - Page 6.

¹² ARMISTICE DAY COMMEMORATION Service at the Monument at [?], Benalla Standard, Tuesday 10 November 1931 - Page 1

¹³ John Hanlon recalls the property well, having been caught stealing apples from the orchard as a boy, and being invited by Eric (a slightly gruff man who usually wore a white suit and pith helmet) 'next time, knock on the door and ask.' (pers. comm, John Hanlon to Jacqui Durrant, 13 February 2024).

¹⁴ Plan of subdivision 110739.