

Statement of Significance: Joseph Tarry House Group Listing

Address:	149 & 151 Argyle Street, St Kilda East 1 Queen Street, St Kilda East	Name:	Joseph Tarry Houses
Place type:	Residential: House	Grading:	Significant
PS ref no:	HO558	Constructed:	1872 and 1876
Heritage precinct:	Not applicable	Citation No.:	2418



What is significant?

The attached houses at 149 & 151 Argyle Street, built 1872, and the detached house at 1 Queen Street, built 1876, are significant. The houses were all constructed for, and presumably by, Joseph Tarry. 149 & 151 Argyle Street are an attached pair of single storey timber houses. The surviving original format is composed of an undivided transverse gable roof section shared by both dwellings, separate skillion roof rear wings aligned to the outside boundaries, and a full width front verandah (though the extant fabric is not original and the original detail is unknown). The roof is clad in corrugated sheet metal and the walls in weatherboards. The façade compositions are mirrored, with one window and one door to each dwelling. Windows to the original sections are timber double hung sashes, with multipaned upper and lower sashes divided into six by narrow timber glazing bars and retaining some original glazing. The windows to the front have moulded architraves and those to the Queen Street side have plain architraves. Above the doors (which likely date to the early 20th century) are multipaned highlights. Two brick chimneys with corbelled caps survive at the rear.

1 Queen Street is a single storey freestanding timber house. The surviving original format is composed of a transverse gable roof section with an asymmetrical pitch and a full width front verandah. The roof is clad in corrugated sheet metal and there is a chimney at the rear. The walls are clad in weatherboards, including some which are shingled (the latter probably a later introduction). The façade has a symmetrical composition with a window either side of a central door. Above the door there is a highlight. Alterations and additions are not significant. The current paint colour schemes are not significant.

How is it significant?

The attached houses at 149 & 151 Argyle Street and the house at 1 Queen Street, St Kilda East, are of local historical and representative significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

The houses are historically significant for their association with an early phase of development in the St Kilda East area which accelerated following the 1859 introduction of the railway. By the 1870s, modest timber houses proliferated in pockets of St Kilda East and Balaclava, particularly on the lower lying land to the south of Argyle Street known as the 'Balaclava Flats', contrasting with more substantial houses on nearby surrounding higher ground. They were originally part of a group of seven timber houses of various sizes built for, and presumably by, bricklayer/builder Joseph Tarry who in 1871 purchased half an acre of land bounded by Chapel, Argyle and Queen streets and developed it over the ensuing five years. The houses are amongst the earliest surviving in Balaclava/St Kilda East and a now comparatively small number dating from pre-1880. (Criterion A)

The houses are of representative significance as uncommon examples of modest pre-1880 timber houses in the municipality, of which many were built (particularly in the St Kilda East/Balaclava area) but few survive. 149 & 151 Argyle Street are one of only two known surviving pre-1880 paired examples in the St Kilda East/Balaclava area, the others being located opposite at 2 and 4 Queen Street. Although altered, like early surviving timber cottages almost invariably are, they largely retain their original formats and where fabric has been replaced it has generally been in a similar manner or in keeping with the character/period. Typical of the period, they have symmetrical façade compositions, transverse gable roofs, brick chimneys and full width front verandahs. 149 & 151 Argyle Street are an unusual early paired example that share an undivided roof, whereas the freestanding double-fronted house at 1 Queen Street conforms to a more typical format. (Criterion D)

Primary source

RBA Architects & Conservation Consultants, *Review of Heritage Precinct HO7 – Elwood, St Kilda, Balaclava, Ripponlea - Stage 2 Report* (2022)

Place schedule

Name	Address	Grading
Joseph Tarry Houses	149 & 151 Argyle Street, St Kilda East	Significant
Joseph Tarry Houses	1 Queen Street, St Kilda East	Significant