

Yarralands Flats Statement of Significance, August 2020

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| Heritage Place: 150 Power Street, Hawthorn | PS ref no: HO792 |
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What is significant?

Yarralands Flats at 150 Power Street, Hawthorn, a set of eight single storey flats designed by renowned émigré architect, Frederick Romberg, is significant. Constructed in 1958, the flats were built during the acclaimed partnership of Grounds, Romberg and Boyd.

How is it significant?

Yarralands Flats are of historic, aesthetic and associational significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Yarralands Flats is of historical significance as it is representative of the flats and apartments that were built as a result of the immediate post war housing shortage. Within the City of Boroondara, Hawthorn was a centre for flat development, where it represented a logical continuation of the pre-war apartment boom. The 'Yarralands Flats', built in 1958, were an early attempt to consider and design for the changing levels of privacy within a small community of flats and are also an interesting example of an architect as developer. (Criterion A)

The flats are a good representative example of post-war design, by one of Victoria's and Australia's foremost émigré architects, Frederick Romberg. The design of 'Yarralands Flats' belongs stylistically to the middle period of Romberg's work, during the early years of the Grounds, Romberg and Boyd partnership (1953-1962). (Criterion D)

The flats derive their aesthetic appeal from the colonnade achieved through the repetition of the post and beams structure and the glazed northern boundary partition. Of note are the semi-private spaces formed under the timber pergola which transition into the private spaces of the flat. The quality of architecture includes full height and length timber framed windows overlooking the front courtyard, the brickwork detail running the length of the southern boundary wall and the incorporation of an existing elm tree within the original plan. (Criterion E)

The flats are significant for their association with renowned architect Frederick Romberg of the firm Grounds, Romberg and Boyd. Romberg was an early proponent of Modernism in Australia and influential in the adoption of the style for flats such as 'Newburn' (1939-41) and 'Stanhill' (1945-51). Within the City of Boroondara, Romberg designed a number of small scale flats across Hawthorn which includes 'Parklands Flats' at 4 Grattan Street (HO647), flats at 2 Barkers Road (HO642) and 'Yarralands Flats' at 150 Power Street. Each set of flats address various housing issues while dealing with the landscape of each particular site. (Criterion H)

Primary source

City of Boroondara Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study Volume 3: Hawthorn (Context Pty Ltd, 20 July 2020)