

Kaydon Court Flats

Prepared by: David Wixted/Michele Summerton

Address: 1 Cooloongatta Road, Camberwell

Name: Kaydon Court Flats	Survey Date: Jan_March 2021
Place Type: Residential	Architect: Mackay & Potter
Grading: Significant	Builder:
Extent of Overlay: To title boundaries	Construction Date: 1959-66



Historical Context

Terry Sawyer in his architectural research report of 1982 identified over 225 blocks of flats designed by well-known architectural firms of Melbourne in the period prior to 1950. The earliest and most well-known example was Melbourne Mansions of 1906 at 91-101 Collins Street (demolished).

Most of Melbourne's flats were developed in the inter-war period which saw a tremendous boom in flat dwelling and many notable examples are recognised in Victoria's inventory of heritage places.

There are currently no reference studies on the history and development of Melbourne's post-war flats as a building typology, although academics are beginning to show interest in this area as examples emerge from investigations into notable architects of the period such as Ernest Fooks, Roy Grounds

and Frederick Romberg. The architect, Bernard Evans, perhaps the greatest developer of Melbourne's post-war flats, remains relatively unknown.

Inter-war Flats in Boroondara

The first great boom in flat building was between the late 1920s and 1940, with the bulk of development in the 1930s. Many examples have captured architectural and historical attention for their eclectic revival features or distinctive streamlined Moderne lines. The most outstanding examples are included on the VHR mainly for their architectural significance, with many others listed in Municipal Planning Schemes. While the distinctive form of flats differentiates this building typology, their styles largely follow domestic house designs perhaps in an attempt to blend with local streetscapes. This is apparent in the inter-war flats built in the suburbs now forming the City of Boroondara, but as observed by Simon Reeves, few blocks of flats were erected here during the 1920s and those that did appear were mostly confined to Hawthorn near its transport lines.¹ Kew's relatively undeveloped transport network hindered development and, as pointed out by Chris McConville, 'Camberwell's distance from the city kept flat-builders at bay', as did local by-laws introduced in the 1920s to control multi-unit housing.² Camberwell's history of building regulations date to 1889, each reflecting a continuous attempt to enforce high standards and protect the purely residential character of the suburb. Further into the inter-war period, flats did make an appearance in Camberwell, but their introduction was modest in scale as shown by the relatively small number lining the tramline along Riversdale Road. Sawyer identified five blocks of architect-designed flats in this suburb ranging in date between 1932 and 1939, however his list does not include the impressive Hatfield flats on Riversdale Road.

One good example representing the suburb's flats of the inter-war period is the complex, *Hatfield Flats* at 576 Riversdale Road (HO723). They were designed by architect F. Scott Mackay and built in stages, the main three-storey wing on the east side dating to 1935-36 and the two-storey west wing, 1939. The highly intact and well-detailed buildings reflect an eclectic mixture of Moderne and Tudor Revival styles, expressed in contrasting clinker brickwork and render, horizontal lines to solid balconies and windows balanced by a number of vertical elements including the stair tower with an unusual crenelated parapet. The play of forms include the stepped, asymmetrical massing of the buildings, hipped roofs, chimneys the eye-catching tower and arched gateway to the rear garages, all of which faces the street in a garden setting. Despite their height and imposing appearance, the complex blends with the adjacent free-standing houses of the same period.

Also not picked up by Sawyer is the much smaller block of four flats designed in the Art Deco Moderne style located at 712-14 Riversdale Road, close to the corner of Coolangatta Road. Constructed of cream brick with street-facing curved rendered panels, balconies and glazing, the streamlined, symmetrical design and simple clean lines and clear disassociation with styles of the past emphasise the horizontal, with plenty of banded windows allowing for natural light. The complex sits comfortably on the surrounding streetscape and at first glance could even be mistaken for a two-storey house or duplex. The architect is unknown.

As shown by these two examples of flats built on Riversdale Road, flats were starting to make inroads into Camberwell during the 1930s. McConville notes that in 1937 three thousand building permits were issued by the council, 500 of which were for blocks of flats that included a total of 1,785 units. Fearing their suburb would be invaded by the same 'two-storey monstrosities' that lowered the standards of Toorak, Hawthorn and St Kilda, over a hundred members of Camberwell's fourteen progress

¹ Reeves, 'City of Boroondara Thematic Environmental History', 2012, p145

² McConville, p22

associations pressed the council to introduce a flat by-law limiting their size so that they would occupy just a quarter of an allotment.³

Post-war Flats in Boroondara

Comparatively stark, simplified and functional, houses of the 1950s and 1960s and blocks of flats have been slow to gain recognition for their heritage values and contribution to the character of our suburban streetscapes. Many flats are associated with the swathes of brick veneer style housing built across Melbourne's expanding middle suburbs for the more affordable end of the housing market, and are regarded as intrusive and ordinary. Brick veneers at least fulfilled the domestic ideal of home ownership but flats, often replicated in numbers at the cheaper end of the accommodation spectrum, were viewed as the opposite to this ideal, some arguing that they were detrimental to family values and a threat to suburban life. This wariness lingered through the twentieth century and as late as 1999, Miles Lewis commented that 'Even now there remains a degree of suspicion about a form of accommodation historically occupied by fast livers, welfare recipients and European refugees'.⁴

The prejudice against flats eased during WWII and the immediate post-war years, when few flats were built due to shortages of labour and materials, but returned in the early 1950s. Housing was in short supply and rental accommodation was fast becoming a necessity, and flats once again returned as a controversial topic of discussion. Ernst Keas, whose views on the matter were published in the *Argus* in 1952, understood the culture of flat-living was relatively 'new to Australians,' but urged, the 'question is not whether to build flats but how they could be built quickly and economically.'⁵ Indeed two years before this comment, the *Argus* reported that 'several architects' were already agreeing that blocks of flats were desperately needed to overtake Melbourne's housing shortage. They pointed out that in a large city like Melbourne there were many who did not want to live in a house with a garden, and a real estate agent added that thousands of people were occupying houses too big for their needs, and would gladly move into small flats.⁶

Architects seemed united on the issue, with Mr N. O'Connor chairman of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects Town Planning and Housing Committee, declaring:

Overemphasis on the single house, and the all too well known sprawl, have imposed an appalling financial burden on this and coming generations, while those who urgently need flats are condemned to makeshift accommodation.⁷

Many architects were also blaming Melbourne's low building density for the heavy burden of suburban road making and high council rates.⁸ All agreed that the co-operative idea of group ownership of flats had special appeal, especially for older people who wanted to eliminate gardening and external maintenance, and for couples employed in business with little time for household duties.⁹

Architects and developers were quick to capitalise on the shortage, building multi-unit blocks of modern flats and forming syndicates to purchase large sites in upmarket areas, including land in choice locations subdivided from the grounds of some of Melbourne's historic mansions.

³ McConville, p23

⁴ Lewis, 'Suburban Backlash', cited from 'Learnings from Australia's Post-War Apartment Building', discussion panel, University of Melbourne, 8 September 2020

⁵ *Argus*, 17 July 1952, p6

⁶ *Argus*, 28 April 1950, p5

⁷ *Argus*, 31 July 1953, p7

⁸ *Herald*, 29 May 1953, p9

⁹ *Herald*, 9 October 1953, p11

Some of the largest developments originated from the office of entrepreneurial architect Bernard Evans, who constructed some massive blocks of flats during the early 1950s, including *Sheridan Close* in St Kilda Road, St Kilda, *Elizabeth Court*, Queens Road St Kilda, *Ravendene*, Domain Road, South Yarra and *Merton Court*, Ormond Road, Elwood.¹⁰ Evans' first venture was *Greyfriars* at 53 Balaclava Road, Caulfield North (City of Glen Eira). Developed between 1949 and 1951, it comprises two and three storey blocks of 43 units set in a U-arrangement around a central garden with a dramatic wall. Constructed mostly of variegated cream brickwork, the two flat-roofed front blocks are linked by a series of unusual brick piers and spans, which boldly face the street with stripped Functionalist, rectilinear forms. This massing stands in marked contrast to the domestic character of the blocks to the rear. The first in Victoria to introduce tenant-owned, 'own-your-own' accommodation, *Greyfriars* flats were the catalyst for further development of this kind.

The post-war boom in architect-designed flat construction resounded throughout the metropolitan area, continuing its pre-war development pattern of following tram and train line routes. Within Boroondara, it again focussed on Hawthorn, particularly in the area south of Riversdale Road, where large allotments formerly associated with older housing were carved up and replaced with two and three storey walk-up flats, many of 'high quality', offering modern, innovative designs with functional interiors allowing plenty of sunshine and ventilation, and 'a high amenity inner urban location in a garden setting'.¹¹

Flats a little further out in more conservative Camberwell and Surrey Hills, were also exploring alternative albeit restrained design responses, as demonstrated by *Kaydon Court's* planned approach to acceptable levels of density and a respect for the suburban context, and a concern for providing direct sunlight into living rooms, private balconies and gardens to enhance settings.

Several of Melbourne's most noted Modernist architects designed flats in the suburbs now comprising the City of Boroondara.

Kaydon Flats History

Planning of the site

The layout appears to come from necessity, with buildings spread about on either side of the now-filled and undergrounded stream gully. However, this is different to many 'court' cottages from the period which run along the boundary of a property in uniform file, or down and back, with the cottages on either side of a central road.

The northern part of the site, behind shops and houses, had once been a tennis court which faced onto Riversdale Road and hosted a copse of trees, including a surviving Peppercorn, along the south edge of the court in the gully. The oak may have been a planting from the 1950s, as the tree appears more like a 60 year-old than an earlier planting from about 1900 at the time of the formation of roads in the area (Pictured online in the Melbourne aerial of 1945).¹²

The flat construction commenced with a building application being made in February 1959 to the design of Mackay & Potter, Architects and Engineers. The first group of four two-bedroom flats were completed by 1960, as advertised in the *Age* newspaper in June that year. The features of the 'Exclusive architect-designed superbly built Flats' included a spacious combined lounge-dining room, 2 bedrooms with built-in robes, a well-fitted kitchen, beautiful, tiled bathroom, Venetian blinds, flywire screens and doors, and wiring for a phone and television. Ready for occupation they were priced at £6,350, and £6,500 with a lock-up garage. Prices for units had risen markedly during the 1950s as illustrated by *Parklands* flats, built in Power Street, Hawthorn in 1953 and advertised for sale in the range £4,900 to £6,700.¹³

¹⁰ *Herald*, 4 September 1953, p10

¹¹ Gould, 'Hawthorn Heritage Study', p44, cited from Reeves, p146

¹² *Melbourne 1945*

¹³ *Argus*, 29 October 1953, p12

Impacts of the Transfer of Land Act (1960) and the Strata Title Act 1967

This site was developed prior to Acts that allowed sales of flats individually. Prior to this, flats were tenanted and rents paid, but some constructed from the early 1950s were set up on a co-operative system of members, each buying a share in the Corporation which owned the property. This came to be known as an *Own Your Own* purchase. It gave the purchaser a self-contained property (interior), while exteriors, service zones and yards were held by the corporation. Kaydon Court Pty Ltd controlled sales of the flats, charged a weekly fee to cover maintenance and management and also controlled any further development of the Cooloongatta property as well as other flat building ventures elsewhere. Given that Kaydon Court Pty Ltd was established in 1957, it is possible this was their first venture.

The *own your own* form of ownership was fully used to advantage by architect and entrepreneur Bernard Evans (1905-1981), whose company was responsible for some of Melbourne's most prominent flats and offices of the 1950s and 1960s. Evans designed Victoria's first own your own set of flats known as *Greyfriars*, a development of 44 flats in Balaclava Road, East St Kilda.¹⁴ He sold the first own your own flat in this complex in October 1952, which, under the new co-operative system allowed the new owner to become a shareholder of *Greyfriars Pty Ltd*. The same system was promoted in an advertisement in the *Age* classifieds in 1960, when the first stage of the newly erected Kaydon Court flats were available for purchase.

The Transfer of Land Act was an early form of the Strata Title Act with the 1967 act consolidating and clarifying the 1960s Act but both were aimed at allowing three dimensional ownership of property according to drawn plans approved by Councils. This was the first time such ownership was even discussed anywhere in Australia and even the British Empire. Thus Victoria became a leader in this form of ownership and this stemmed from Bernard Evans promotion of the Own Your Own idea of ownership over a number of years.

The Architects, Mackay and Potter

Keith MacKay (1903-97) and Charles Potter, along with Norman Henry Mussen (1909-67), and briefly, Denis George Mirams, formed the firm of Mussen, Mackay & Potter in 1950.¹⁵ Potter and Mussen both civil engineers, and MacKay, an architect, together specialised in commercial, educational and industrial buildings.¹⁶ The firm's works included the Oakleigh Centre for the Retarded, a design they completed free of charge (1952); the 'Triangle House', Kew (1952, in association with Roy Grounds); boiler house for Australian Paper Manufacturers featuring a glazed curtain wall (1954); grandstand for Caulfield Racecourse (1955, in association with Albion H. Walkley); and gabled, brick buildings for the John Curtin School of Medical Research at the Australian National University (1955-56).¹⁷

Around 1958, Mussen had left the practice and moved to Canberra. Following his departure, from 1959 to circa 1967, the practice designed a number of office blocks in the inner Melbourne area, including: the State Rivers & Water Supply Commission administration building, Orrong Road, Toorak (1959); the Gas & Fuel Corporations' administrative offices, St Kilda Road, Melbourne (1960; pictured below); and the multi-storied, State Accident & Motor Car Insurance Co. office building at 480 Collins Street, Melbourne (1965).

These very competent and substantial constructions share certain stylistic features with the domestic scale, suburban Kaydon Court flats in their similar restrained use of brick pattern-work, window walls and an interest balanced rectilinear geometry of horizontal and vertical elements in their overall structure.

¹⁴ *Herald*, 30 April 1949, p5

¹⁵ Goad and Willis, *Encyclopaedia of Australian Architecture*, p484

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p489

With regard to the flats at Kaydon Court, any connection with Norman, must be discounted as he had left the firm by the time these flats were designed.

Description & Integrity

The complex comprises five blocks of 17 flats loosely arranged in a court setting either side of a curving concrete driveway with generous garden landscape surrounds. The blocks are two-storey in height and are constructed in sand-coloured brick with timber details for windows and doors. The roofs are either hipped or gabled and clad with glazed Marseille tile work. The earlier upper block closest to Cooalongatta Road includes flats 1 to 4; the next downhill, flats 5 and 6. These are followed by two linear blocks with hipped roofs each with four flats – numbers 7 to 10 and numbers 14 to 17. The last block to be constructed, with flats 11 and 12, illustrate a variation of the form in their planning and materials. Unobtrusive carports and garages are located to the rear of the blocks.

The five blocks of flats are highly intact and remain unchanged due to their continued, single ownership. The degree of intactness extends to building form, fabric and external details, the landscaping, landform, driveway, carports and brick garages, and brick bank of letterboxes.

In addition to the flats there is number 13, a house possibly built for the owner/developer. This is a substantially larger and later construction with darker brick walls and tiled roof. This building does not contribute to the significance of the blocks of flats and their setting.

Comparative Analysis – Post-war Flats in Boroondara

Parklands, 4 Grattan Street, Hawthorn (City of Boroondara HO647)

Parklands, a group of ten two-storey flats, described at the time as ‘maisonettes’, were built soon after *Greyfriars* as another example of own-your-own accommodation. They were designed by architect Frederick Romberg (1913-1992), a leading figure in the development of Modernism in Melbourne. After briefly working with the firm of Stephenson and Turner, he went into partnership with Mary Turner Shaw, and together they designed and built a number of innovative large-scale apartment buildings, including Newburn Flats (1939-41), 30 Queens Road Melbourne, (VHR H0578), and the landmark, high-rise Stanhill Flats, 33 Queens Road Melbourne (VHR H1875). Romberg designed Stanhill in 1943 while interned during the war as an ‘enemy alien,’ and it was built between 1947 and 1950.

High rise towers of flats were suitable for city development, but middle-ring suburbs required contextually sensitive, more homely designs of two or perhaps three stories. Romberg limited the *Parklands*’ flats to ten, two-storey units, in a design that was ‘intended to represent an ideal compromise between individual suburban housing and multi-unit flat dwellings’.¹⁸ His L-shape plan retained a large part of the land for garden and also preserved the old trees on the site.¹⁹

The fabric is cream brick, including the party walls extending as pilasters, which visually separate each unit and provide a sense of privacy. As reported by the *Herald*, Romberg conceived this application as a modernised interpretation of Melbourne’s nineteenth century terrace housing. Each flat faces the garden with wide tri-partite, timber-framed window walls, with the upper and lower fenestration separated by a panel with vertical timber strapping, somewhat suggestive of balcony railing on a terrace house. The roof is clad with concrete tiles and a driveway leads to garages to the rear and side. Commenced in 1950 and completed in 1951, the flats were the first in a series of similar projects undertaken by LH Luscombe & Co, estate and business agents.²⁰

¹⁸ *Herald*, 17 November 1950, p14

¹⁹ *Ibid*

²⁰ *Ibid*

Luscombe & Co were also the developers for the cream brick *Power Court* flats (no Heritage Overlay), erected in 1953/1954 on part of the grounds belonging to one of Hawthorn's oldest houses at 146 Power Street, Hawthorn. The name of the architect is unknown, although the company, New Melbourne Homes P/L is mentioned in the *Argus* as having planned the T-shaped the two-story complex of sixteen own-your-own units, which were 'carefully planned to make full use of available space, at the same time giving maximum privacy to each room'.²¹

Yarralands Flats, 150 Power Street, Hawthorn (City of Boroondara HO792)

Designed by Frederick Romberg, and built in 1958, *Yarralands Flats* further demonstrate his consideration 'and design for the changing levels of privacy within a small community of flats'.²² The cream brick set of eight joined flats with metal skillion roofs run perpendicular to the street with each north facing unit stepped down the southern site boundary. The functional and compactly designed units include two-bedrooms and an open kitchen and living space and each is provided with full length timber-framed windows overlooking a private front garden separated by opaque glass partitions. Brickwork laid in a 'breeze block' pattern provides filtered light to the rear of the units.

Ardene Court, 11 Ardene Court, Hawthorn (City of Boroondara HO781)

The cul-de-sac, Ardene Court, resulted from the subdivision of a neighbouring property in 1960 and the two, two-storey blocks of flats were constructed at the head of the court in 1960-61. Designed by architect, Klaus (Nick) Veltjens (c.1927-) for the company, Innovation Development Pty Ltd, the 'model flats and maisonettes' with 'sun balconies and private gardens' were built in 1960-61.²³ Constructed of cream/salmon brick, they feature a flat-roof, cantilevered balconies and an interest in pattern work, which includes metal balcony panels, contrasting wall fabric and the arrangement of large and small timber-framed windows. The siting in the court contributes to the garden setting of the blocks, with one set of flats standing parallel the street and the other at an angle. Designed without a front fence, the flats instead have an open front lawn, which adds a sense of space to their relatively short set-back from the public footpath.

Flats, 20 Denmark Hill Road, Hawthorn East (City of Boroondara HO854)

This three-storey block by architect, Ernest Fooks is a further expression of his interest in pattern work, in this instance incorporating a rubble stone feature wall and spandrels into the street-facing façade, and ribbed glazing and textured wood, and continuing the use of decorative metal balcony panels. Like several examples of other flats of this period, they have cantilevered balconies, although in this case they extend along the side of the stepped side of the flat-roofed building, which is orientated to occupy a long narrow site. The flats were constructed in 1960 and also include a pair of garages under the building and a rear cantilevered corridor at the rear, both of which would become increasingly common features of flats throughout the 1960s. Although the landscaping is limited, the natural qualities of the stonework, other textured surfaces, stepped form of the block and side hedging relieve the concrete surfaces and bulk of the building.

Kylemore Flats, 52 Union Road, Surrey Hills (City of Boroondara HO629)

The group of seven o-y-o, split-level cream brick flats have flat skillion roofs and are stepped along one side down the allotment. Each has a private rear courtyard and sits above a garage, which is accessed by a driveway running the length of the side boundary. The concrete cantilever stairs and associated verandahs have wrought iron balustrades and grille columns, which support a pergola, features typical of brick veneers of this period. Suited to singles or couples more than families, the compact flats provided an alternative to the standard form of housing usually associated with suburban living. They

²¹ *Argus*, 29 October 1953, p12

²² Trethowan in association with Context, 'City of Boroondara Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study', June 2019, pp582-595

²³ Context, 'City of Boroondara Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study', June 2019, p215

were designed by Kurt Popper for the company, Glengariff Heights P/L, registered by J & B Boumeester and constructed in c.1961.²⁴

Comparative Post-war Cluster Development in Victoria

Winter Park, Doncaster, City of Manningham, (VHR1345)

The cluster-style arrangement of the *Kaydon Court* flats, with groups of units sited in a common landscape with paved areas to provide access, reflected an approach taken to design which was further explored by the housing project firm, Merchant Builders in the 1960s. After completing six townhouse projects in Melbourne's middle-ring eastern suburbs, including Kew and Hawthorn, in 1967 and 1968, the company began focussing on housing projects in the outer-eastern suburbs, including the prototype *Winter Park* development, which eventually comprised twenty houses representing five different designs sited around common landscaped and paved areas. The project aimed to pleasantly relate the designs and integrate the houses with their surroundings while also enjoying privacy and sharing communal facilities.²⁵

The innovative, award-winning *Winter Park* - an almost archetypal "cluster" development - predated the advent of cluster housing as a policy. Instead, it was executed under the auspice of the earlier *Strata Titles Act* 1967, where the shared spaces were administered under a body corporate; the cluster dwellings joined with a connective tissue of pergolas and carports were required to qualify it as such. The need for a dedicated policy on cluster developments was clear, and led to the initial formation of the Victorian Cluster Code Committee in 1971, headed by David Yencken with substantial involvement from Graeme Gunn.

The work undertaken alongside Yencken, which led directly to the creation of the *Cluster Titles Act* 1974, is representative of Gunn's wider preoccupation with housing and urban issues. One of these projects is now listed at State level importance: the *Winter Park* by Graeme Gunn of the 1970s, containing four groups of five houses, all of single storey brick construction in a natural setting. The arrangement of housing units at *Winter Park* is extensive but all have something of a drawing board relationship with the site and each other (i.e. all units are sited as objects parallel to each other and the site boundaries).

²⁴ Lovell Chen, 'Surrey Hills and Canterbury Hill Estate Heritage Study', 2011, pp184-190

²⁵ O'Callaghan and Pickett, p138

Assessment Against Criteria

Criteria referred to in *Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay*, Department of Planning and Community Development, September 2012, modified for the local context.

CRITERION A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (historical significance).

Kaydon Court Flats, built between 1960 and 1966, are historically significant for their association with the post-war boom in architect-designed flat construction throughout the metropolitan area, continuing its pre-war development pattern along tram and train routes. Kaydon Court Flats are significant as a relatively early illustration of the extension of the post-war boom from Hawthorn to socially conservative Camberwell, where the community was highly protective of the suburb's residential character. Kaydon Court Flats are historically important for demonstrating the growing demand for smaller size accommodation by couples and singles and the overemphasis placed on the single, free-standing house as an ideal, and the attention of architects and developers paid to this issue. Kaydon Court Flats illustrate an alternative to the standard form of housing usually associated with suburban living and are historically important as examples of the earlier tenant owned *own-your-own* system of accommodation, introduced c.1952-53.

CRITERION B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (rarity).

N/A

CRITERION C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (research potential).

N/A

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

Kaydon Court Flats is a representative example of a post-WWII complex of compact, grouped units in a high amenity suburban location in a garden setting. Designed in rectilinear styles generally influenced by the Modern movement, they demonstrate the principal characteristics of the easily recognised, functional two-storey blocks of brick units which proliferated as an evolving typology throughout Melbourne's inner and middle-ring suburbs during these years.

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

Kaydon Court Flats are aesthetically significant as an architecturally competent and intact complex of post-WWII units purposefully designed for a garden setting by accomplished modernist architects, Keith McKay and Charles Potter, whose larger commercial buildings share certain stylistic features with the domestic scale, suburban Kaydon Court flats in their restrained use of brick pattern-work, window walls and an interest in balanced rectilinear geometry of horizontal and vertical elements in their overall structure.

The flats are aesthetically important for their ability to demonstrate a planned design that is contextually sensitive to acceptable levels of density for a middle-ring, suburb typified by free-standing houses, family living, gardens and privacy. The design of the complex contributes to the domestic character of

Camberwell as a successful compromise between the ideal of individual suburban housing (and owning a house) and multi-flat blocks.

Kaydon Court Flats are aesthetically significant as a development which anticipates the large ambitious cluster style housing projects in the outer eastern suburbs designed and constructed by Merchant Builders from 1968.

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

N/A

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).

N/A

CRITERION H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the City of Boroondara's history (associative significance).

N/A

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Kaydon Court Flats, 1 CooLoongatta Road, Camberwell, are significant to the City of Boroondara. The complex comprises five blocks of 17 flats loosely arranged in a court setting either side of a curving concrete driveway with generous garden landscape surrounds. The blocks are two-storey in height and are constructed in sand-coloured brick with timber details for windows and doors. The roofs are either hipped or gabled and clad with glazed Marseille tile work. The earlier upper block closest to CooLoongatta Road includes flats 1 to 4; the next downhill, flats 5 and 6. These are followed by two linear blocks with hipped roofs each with four flats – numbers 7 to 10 and numbers 14 to 17. The last block to be constructed, with flats 11 and 12, illustrate a variation of the form in their planning and materials. Unobtrusive carports and garages are located to the rear of the blocks.

In addition to the flats there is number 13, a house possibly built for the owner/developer. This is a substantially larger and later construction with darker brick walls and tiled roof. This building does not contribute to the significance of the blocks of flats and their setting.

How is it significant?

The whole of the site, excluding the free-standing house, is of local historical, architectural (representative) and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Kaydon Court Flats, built between 1960 and 1966, are historically significant for their association with the post-war boom in architect-designed flat construction throughout the metropolitan area, continuing its pre-war development pattern along tram and train routes. The flats are important as a relatively early illustration of the extension of the post-war boom from Hawthorn to socially conservative Camberwell, where the community was highly protective of the suburb's residential character. (Criterion A)

Kaydon Court Flats are historically significant for demonstrating the growing demand for smaller size accommodation by couples and singles and the overemphasis placed on the single, free-standing house as an ideal; importantly they illustrate the attention that architects and developers paid to this issue. The flats are historically important as examples of the earlier tenant owned *own-your-own* system of accommodation, introduced c.1952-53 which introduced an alternative to the standard form of housing usually associated with suburban living. (Criterion A)

Kaydon Court Flats is a representative example of a post-WWII complex of compact, grouped units in a high amenity suburban location in a garden setting. Designed in rectilinear styles generally influenced by the Modern movement, they demonstrate the principal characteristics of the easily recognised, functional two-storey blocks of brick units which proliferated as an evolving typology throughout Melbourne's inner and middle-ring suburbs during these years. (Criterion D)

Kaydon Court Flats are aesthetically significant as an architecturally competent and intact complex of post-WWII units purposefully designed for a garden setting by accomplished modernist architects, Keith McKay and Charles Potter, whose larger commercial buildings share certain stylistic features with the domestic scale, suburban Kaydon Court flats in their restrained use of brick pattern-work, window walls and an interest in balanced rectilinear geometry of horizontal and vertical elements in their overall structure. (Criterion E)

The flats are aesthetically important for their ability to demonstrate a planned design that is contextually sensitive to acceptable levels of density for a middle-ring, suburb typified by free-standing houses,

family living, gardens and privacy. The design of the complex contributes to the domestic character of Camberwell as a successful compromise between the ideal of individual suburban housing (and owning a house) and multi-flat blocks. (Criterion E)

Kaydon Court Flats are aesthetically significant as a development which anticipates the large ambitious cluster style housing projects in the outer eastern suburbs designed and constructed by Merchant Builders from 1968. (Criterion E)

Grading and Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme as an individually Significant place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Boroondara Planning Scheme:

External Paint Colours <i>Is a permit required to paint an already painted surface?</i>	No
Internal Alteration Controls <i>Is a permit required for internal alterations?</i>	No
Tree Controls <i>Is a permit required to remove a tree?</i>	Yes (peppercorn)
Victorian Heritage Register <i>Is the place included on the Victorian Heritage Register?</i>	No
Incorporated Plan <i>Does an Incorporated Plan apply to the site?</i>	No
Outbuildings and fences exemptions <i>Are there outbuildings and fences which are not exempt from notice and review?</i>	Yes (brick garages)
Prohibited uses may be permitted <i>Can a permit be granted to use the place for a use which would otherwise be prohibited?</i>	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place <i>Is the place an Aboriginal heritage place which is subject to the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?</i>	No

Identified By

David Wixted and Michele Summerton, survey and assessment, 2021

References

Archer, John, *Building a Nation: A History of the Australian House*, Collins, Sydney, 1987.

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