

406 Barkers Road, Hawthorn East Statement of Significance

Heritage Place: Newtown Housing Project	PS ref no: HO849
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What is significant?

Newtown Housing Project at 406 Barkers Road, Hawthorn East, a set of three modern terrace houses designed by renowned architect, Kevin Borland for project builder Habitat Pty Ltd, is significant. Constructed in 1967, the terrace houses also feature Besser block forecourts to each house, contributing to the setting and continuing the design aesthetic.

How is it significant?

Newtown Housing Project, the modern terrace houses at 406 Barkers Road, Hawthorn East are of local architectural, aesthetic and associational significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

406 Barkers Road, Hawthorn East are an important example of late twentieth-century domestic architecture, inspired by the terrace housing typology, and designed by renowned Victorian architect Kevin Borland. The design of the terrace housing, for project builder Habitat Pty Ltd, belongs stylistically to the Brutalist mode, made popular by the local examples seen at the Harold Hold Memorial Swim Centre in Malvern (VHR H0069) and the Plumbers and Gasfitter Union Building (VHR H2307), both built after the subject site. It should be noted that the modern terrace houses are also significant as one of the first examples inspired by the Brutalist movement, preceding both above mentioned examples, and other listed examples within the municipality (Merchant Builder Townhouses HO325 and MLC Resource Centre HO204).

Further, the houses demonstrate the continued development and refinement of the terrace house typology following the post-war period. It is an outstanding example of the typology from this time, within the municipality. (Criterion D)

The modern terrace houses derive their aesthetic appeal from the boldly composed and functionalist expression of the set of three houses. The strong rectilinear forms of the building are further seen in the general expression of materiality including the textured concrete blockwork and exemplified by the boxed, projecting built in robes. This aesthetic is also utilised to create forecourts of Besser block to each of the terrace houses. (Criterion E)

'Newtown Housing Project' is significant for its association with architect Kevin Borland whose innovative designs in both domestic and public architecture make him notable amongst Melbourne architects of the second half of the twentieth century. Borland, himself a former resident of Kew, along with Daryl Jackson and others formed Habitat Pty Ltd and invested in the local area by choosing to build this, their first development in Hawthorn East. He was also a member of the design team for the Olympic Swimming Pool (1952, VHR H1977) and, with Jackson, designed the Harold Holt Swim Centre (1968, VHR H0069). Along with Borland's buildings at Preshil School (1962–72, VHR H0072), his residential work includes the experimental Rice House (1953-4, VHR H0123) and the former McDonald Smith House (1969). (Criterion H)

Primary source

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This document is an incorporated document in the Boroondara Planning Scheme pursuant to section 6(2)(j) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*