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## Munition Workers Housing Heritage Area



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### Location

Churchill, Dedrick, Dobson, Lily, Myalla, Ravenhall, Treloar and Watson Streets, Groves or Courts BRAYBROOK, MARIBYRNONG CITY

### Municipality

MARIBYRNONG CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO5

### Heritage Listing

Maribyrnong City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

Statement of Significance

The Munition Workers' Housing precinct is significant to Victoria because:

- it is part of a Federal Government-initiated housing scheme for workers in the munitions industry in the Maribyrnong-Footscray area, then the largest concentration of defence production establishments in Australia, when World War Two began, as exemplified by the high integrity of the estate with its uniformity of house design, siting, lot layout, early landscape and concrete road construction (Criterion A4, B2).
- it was among the first major Commonwealth war housing schemes to be undertaken and was one of the few large-scale housing schemes undertaken in Victoria during World War Two (Criterion B2); and
- it is a good exemplar of contemporary mass house planning and estate layout principles, as indicated by the provision of parklands, curvilinear street patterns, street trees and culde- sacs (Criterion F1).

Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) criteria

The Australian Heritage Commission criteria consist of a set of eight criteria which cover social, aesthetic, scientific, and historic values. Each criterion has sub-criteria written specifically for cultural or natural values. The relevant criteria are:

A.4 demonstrates well the course and pattern of history, important historic events

B.2 rarity

F.1 design or technological achievement .

Heritage Study/Consultant	Maribyrnong - Maribyrnong Heritage Review, Jill Barnard, Graeme Butler, Francine Gilfedder & Gary Vines, 2000;
Construction dates	1942,
Other Names	Commonwealth Housing,
Hermes Number	149844
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

This estate extends across Duke St, from Sunshine (City of Brimbank) into Braybrook (City of Maribyrnong). The estate is characterised in plan by the curving street forms, culde- sacs and the provision of integrated parkland. The 1945 aerial photograph shows the estate development clearly, with large vacant grassed areas surrounding a regularly and distinctively planned housing group. The aerial view shows the estate commencing on the east at Yewers St and including the relatively large internal park enclosed by Lowe Cr, Nixon and Baker streets. The housing extended south along Correy and Duke Streets and crossed over into Braybrook in an area bordered on the south by Myalla St, on the east by Dobson and part of Ravenhall and on the north by Lily St. Within these loose boundaries is a series of cul-de-sacs or courts which include Treloar, Dobson, Dedrick and Watson.

On the ground, the houses typically are single storey, have hipped or gabled and Marseilles pattern terracotta tiled roofs, red or clinker brick walls, timber framed windows (some replaced with aluminium) and a duplex or paired configuration. There are some concrete houses in the estate but these are mainly in Sunshine and can be distinguished from the Housing Commission of Victoria housing of the 1950s and onwards, which surround the estate, by their detached form, thicker wall construction and smaller windows (eg. 11 Baker St). Related planting includes Italian cypress and privet in gardens and ash street trees while kerb and channel is concrete with grassed medians, some concrete road paving. Concrete road paving is rare in the metropolitan area and is often associated with sustenance labour schemes initiated by local councils.

Contributory streets and sites in the City of Maribyrnong include (using City base plan house numbers- see following plan): Myalla St, 1-27 duplexes (HCV concrete 36-32)  
Duke St east side 70 -124 (contributory houses 74-76, 78-80, 82-4)  
Dobson Crt 1-25;  
Ravenhall St. 2-18 no concrete road  
Lily St south side 67-57 (HCV nearby);  
Devonshire Rd 140-148, 155, 157;  
Treloar Crescent & Crt. 1-29, 2-46 (1-6 all duplexes), concrete road  
Dedrick Gr. 1-19, all duplexes concrete road (10 is new two storey dual occupancy); and  
Watson Gr. 1-5- west side only, east is reserve, concrete road.

The Sunshine section of the estate has a higher integrity and is generally in better condition. The internal park and mature street trees lend more diversity to representation of the development period and a higher amenity but it is likely that these were developed over a number of years. There are more concrete houses than in the Braybrook section.

The following description comes from the City of Brimbank heritage study: `...an estate of concrete houses and brick semi-detached houses built by the Commonwealth to house munitions workers, a total of 234 houses. The development extends across Duke Street with a substantial number of houses in Braybrook, now the City of Maribyrnong (58%). The Brimbank precinct (98 houses) comprises houses in Baker Street, Nixon Street, Yewers Street, Cobrey Street, Duke Street, Devonshire Road and around Lowe Crescent. A characteristic of the area is the concrete roads and the curving Lowe Crescent on a small irregular shaped square with landscaping of contemporary date and also later periods. The houses themselves are generally hipped roof with overhanging eaves. The Nixon Street, Baker Street, Yewers Street and Lowe Crescent houses are concrete-walled, while the others are generally red brick, with a series of long duplexes in Duke Street and Cobrey Street. The larger part of this same development occurs across Duke Street in the City of Maribyrnong' {COB}.

## **Physical Conditions**

Physical Conditions: good (partially disturbed, well preserved) - retaining much of the original character of the area due to the retention of original fence, concrete roads and planting.

## **Integrity**

Integrity:substantially intact/some intrusions

## **Physical Description 2**

Context:The estate is surrounded by largely post WW2 housing both private and government.

## **Historical Australian Themes**

### **Thematic context**

**Local Theme(s):** Government -provided housing

**PAHT Subtheme:** Making suburbs

**Australian Principal Theme:** Making suburbs

### **Physical Description 3**

**Map (Melway)** 27B12, 41A1

**Boundary description** Duke St on the west, Myalla St on the south, Dobson and part of Ravenhall on the east and on the north by Lily St. Within these boundaries is a series of cul-de-sacs or courts which include Treloar, Dobson, Dedrick and Watson.

**Heritage Significance:** State

**Creation date(s):** 1942

**Local Government Area:** City of Maribyrnong

**Ownership Type:** Private & Public

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*