

Moderne Apartments Blocks



299-299A (left) & 301 (right) Lygon Street Brunswick East



37 Lygon Street, Brunswick East



Serial listings map 1 - north



Serial listings map 2



Serial listings map 3 - south

Location

37 LYGON STREET AND 301 LYGON STREET AND 434C LYGON STREET BRUNSWICK EAST, MERRI-BEK CITY

Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO443

Heritage Listing

Merri-bek City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 15, 2024

What is significant?

The four Moderne Apartment Blocks in this series as described are located in Lygon Street, Brunswick East. The apartments are on individual allotments, and are all freestanding, of two levels and are non contiguous in location. Stylistically, and based on primary research, all of the apartment blocks appear to date from between 1940-1946. The buildings all have a very high degree of integrity externally, as do the small front gardens, although 37 Lygon Street has lost its front fence. All are in good to very good condition. The significant elements of each place include the external fabric including the building and roof form and materials, original features including doors and windows detailing and decoration, the garden setting and layout, low walls set on the title boundary (constructed of brick or rendered brick) and modest side setbacks. The clear views to the Apartment buildings from the public realm (giving them a landmark quality) is also considered significant.

Included in this series is all of the land at the following addresses:

- 37 Lygon Street
- 301 Lygon Street
- 434c Lygon Street

How is it significant?

The Moderne Apartment Block series is of aesthetic (architectural) and historical significance to the City of Merri-bek.

Why is it significant?

Architecturally, the series reflects the evolution of housing types in the city of Moreland in the late interwar and early postwar periods, changing from the single-storey, freestanding houses that were erected during the 1920s and early 1930s, to two-storey, multi-family flats. 37 and 299-299A Lygon St both demonstrate the direct translation of common domestic forms and details - such as hipped roofs and six-over-one sash windows (at No 37) - into this new building type. No 37 is also distinguished by the well-detailed brickwork, with rusticated pillars and tapestry brick lintels. The apartment buildings at 301 and 434C Lygon St are distinguished by their translation of a requirement of this new building type - a shared staircase - into a dominant architectural feature. Both have a projecting stairwell at the centre of the facade, with balconies projecting from it at both levels. Both buildings are also distinguished by their use of Art Deco motifs on this stairwell, and fashionable curved balconies. At No 301, the curves are carried through to the corners of the building, creating a sculptural form. The buildings at 299-299A, 301 and 434C are enhanced by original front fences executed in similar brickwork. All four buildings are rare in the City of Moreland as the earliest autonomous (that is, not linked with shops or other business uses) apartment buildings identified. Historically, the series provides evidence of the immediate post-war phase of development along Lygon Street. (Criteria B D, E & F)

Theme

6. Building towns cities and the garden state

Heritage Study/Consultant Moreland - Lygon Street Heritage Study Stage 2, Context Pty Ltd, 2012;

Construction dates 1940,

Hermes Number 184691

Property Number

Physical Description 1

Location

The individual places which make up the Moderne Apartments serial listing are located on Lygon Street, Brunswick East, between Brunswick Road and Bladen Avenue. All but two of the buildings are non-contiguous in location. They are believed to all date from the 1940s.

Setback and gardens

The four apartment buildings all have a moderate setback from the street, allowing for a small front garden. Side setbacks are minimal, though all of them are freestanding buildings.

Three of the four buildings, Nos 299, 301 and 434C, retain early or original front fences. They are all quite low in height (about 600 mm), built of brick with piers at either end and geometric mild-steel pedestrian gates. The fences to Nos 299 and 434C are virtually identical, constructed of red bricks with a 'castellated' top created by alternating pairs of soldier-coursed bricks. The fence to No 301 has tapestry bricks along the top.

Materials and design

All four apartment buildings have masonry walls, with a variety of decorative combinations of render and brick types to create visual interest. Nos 37 and 434C have predominantly brick facades with tapestry brick and smooth render accents. Nos 299 and 301 are predominantly rendered, though No 301 has tapestry brick accents. Nos 301 and 434C have curved balconies that may be cast concrete.

All four buildings have hip roofs clad in terracotta Marseille tiles. No 299 has a very simple roof, but a fashionable vertical accent extends above the roof on the south side of the facade. No 37 is the most traditional, with a slightly projecting hip-roof bay on the south side of the facade under which a recessed balcony is situated. Nos 301 and 434C have symmetrical verandah roofs above two first-floor balconies which is an extension of the main roof. Set between the pair of balconies both buildings have a projecting stairwell whose face continues well above the roofline with a fashionable Art Deco fin at the centre.

Nos 37 and 434C have timber six-over-one double hung windows of the sort that had been popular since the 1920s. No 434C also has glazed apartment doors with decorative vertical panes; the same doors are seen on No 301. The windows of No 301, as well as No 299, are steel-framed casements with highlights which would have been quite modern when they were constructed.

All four apartment buildings are two storeys in height. No 299 is single-fronted and has an external stair to the upper flat. The other three are double-fronted and have enclosed stairwells.

In terms of style, Nos 37 and 299 are typical of their period and No 37 has particularly nicely detailed brickwork, but neither would be called high-style. Nos 301 and 434C are very similar in overall form (projecting stairwell at the middle of the facade, parapet rising above the centre of the roof) and in many details. These include Moderne design elements such as the curved balconies, corbelled tapestry brick accents at the base of the centre parapet, and the fins to the parapet. The designer of No 301 took the style one step farther, echoing the curve of the front balconies to entirely curved and rendered front walls of the building which project above the roof, giving the building a bold, sculptural form.

Integrity

The series has a very high degree of integrity.

The front fence to No 37 is modern in date; the original would have been quite low, as seen in front of the other apartment buildings. Otherwise the group is highly intact.

Condition

All of the apartment buildings appear to be in good to very good condition.

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/>