
Parthenon Flats



Holems Rd, 57



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Location

57 Holmes Road MOONEE PONDS, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO519

Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 31, 2019

What is Significant?

'Parthenon Flats' at 57 Holmes Road, Moonee Ponds, is significant. It was constructed in c1941 for Georgia and Arthur Raftopoulos, owners of the Spot Cafe in Melbourne.

The significant fabric includes:

original building and roof forms and fenestrations;

original building setbacks with generous front and side garden spaces;

terra-cotta roof tiles and chimneys;

unpainted face brick walls;

boxed eaves;

open stairwells with reinforced concrete stairs and metal hand rails;

open porches and cantilevered concrete slabs above ground floor entrances;

door and window joinery;

low brick fence to both street frontages and curved concrete path; and

original bank of garages.

How is it significant?

'Parthenon Flats' is of local historical and architectural (representative) significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

'Parthenon Flats' are historically significant for their illustration of the higher housing densities that began to appear in the municipality around World War II, marking a change from the detached villa character seen previously in suburbs like Moonee Ponds and Essendon. (Criterion A)

'Parthenon Flats' are an intact and representative example of late interwar Moderne flats, built at a time when architectural forms were becoming far more austere, both under the influence of Modernism and the war. Despite the lack of showy curves or corner windows, a high level of visual interest was created by the use of four brick colours in strong horizontal bands balanced by the delicate verticals of the chimney and stairwell. The mild-steel name above the entry adds a stylish and up-to-date note. The flats are enhanced by the survival of their original setting, including the low boundary fence in matching two-toned brick, a curved concrete pedestrian path, and the bank of garages along the secondary frontage. (Criterion D)

Heritage Study/Consultant Moonee Valley - Moonee Valley 2017 Heritage Study, Context, 2019;

Construction dates 1941,

Hermes Number 202235

Property Number

Physical Description 1

Designed in the Moderne style with Art Deco influences, 'Parthenon', a two-storey block of four flats, sits on a corner allotment at the south-western corner of Holmes Road, an arterial road, and Laura Street, a residential street. The allotment boundaries are marked with the original low fence with bricks in colours to match the building. The overall building footprint comprises three intersecting rectangles producing two hipped roof forms, with a slightly lower projecting hip at the centre. Between the porches of the units 1 & 2 is an opening to the staircase leading to the upper level. Units 1 & 2 are accessed directly through the individual ground floor porches enclosed by medium-height brick fences. On the first floor, units 3 and 4 are accessed through individual exposed open-air porches, placed on top of the porches of the units 1 and 2. Units 1 and 3 face north west, while units 2 & 4 are oriented to the south-easterly direction. Access is via open stairwells that house painted reinforced concrete

stairs. The name of the flats, 'Parthenon', is displayed in metal lettering on a first-floor balcony adjacent to the stairwell.

The main walls are of cream brick with contrasting red-blue clinker brick bands across the building, stopping around the main entrance and two chimneys. The external chimney breasts have panels of mottled cream brick to create an intermediate colour slightly darker than the walls. Stepping above the eaves, the chimneys are positioned close to the street boundaries, on the eastern elevations of each wing, being used as design elements emphasising vertical lines in the dominant horizontal design idiom. Similarly, the four-pane stairwell window with yellow textured glass expresses strong verticality continued from the main entrance below. Other compositional elements include boxed eaves, window frames and cantilevered slab above the ground floor entrances, and the contrasting orange-brown half-bricks that line the openings to the stairwells. The flats have sheltered balconies on each level to the west side elevation. The north-facing windows are larger than the east-facing ones. All window frames appear to be original. The handrails on stairs to the upper level are also original. The building appears to be highly intact to its built date externally, except for the introduction of screen doors to the units 1 and 2.

From the corner gate, a slightly curved, concreted footpath leads to the residences that sit behind a generous setback. The front garden with simple garden beds and a group of tall trees appears to be the original setting of the flats. The low front fence, of clinker brick and cream brick capping, and mild steel gates, is also original. Another distinctive feature is the original set of four garages near the southeast corner of the land, accessed from Laura Street, though their roller doors are replacements.

57 Holmes Road, Moonee Ponds, is of very high integrity with very few changes visible to original or early elements of the place. This block of flats retains its original building and roof forms, fenestration, and original building setbacks with generous front and side garden space.

The integrity of the building is greatly enhanced by the unusually high level of intactness of these main elements, which include the terracotta-tile clad roof, unpainted face brick chimneys, boxed eaves, unpainted face brick walls of a variety of colours, open stairwells with reinforced concrete stairs and metal handrails, open porches and cantilevered concrete slabs above the ground floor entrances, and door and window joinery.

The integrity of the place is enhanced by the original and early garden elements including the concrete footpaths, simple garden beds, group of tall trees, original low fence to the two street frontages, mild steel gate, and original bank of garages.

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/>