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## Loreto and Carmel



Brewster St, 55



Brewster St, 55



Brewster St, 57

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### Location

55 Brewster Street and 57 Brewster Street ESSENDON, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

### Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO487

### Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 5, 2019

What is Significant?

The pair of houses 'Loreto' and 'Carmel' at 55 and 57 Brewster Street, Essendon, are significant. They were constructed by Ascot Vale owner-builder Robert Joseph Shaw in 1936 as a speculative venture and showcase of his talents.

Significant fabric includes the:

original building forms and roof forms;  
chimneys and tiled roofs;  
face brick and cement rendered walls including tapestry brick highlights;  
porches, windows and front doors;  
door and window joinery, leaded glass panels to principle window sashes;  
window boxes, metal embellishments including gates and name plates;  
brick front fences, gates, concrete front paths and divided track driveway; and  
garage at number 57.

How is it significant?

55 and 57 Brewster Street, Essendon, are of local architectural (representative) significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

The two houses 'Loreto' and 'Carmel' at 55 and 57 Brewster Street, Essendon, are fine representative examples of the stylistic eclecticism applied to the standard hipped-roof houses of the late interwar period. They share prominent tiled hipped roofs, decoratively modelled front chimneys, and textured rendered walls with contrasting brick detail. 'Loreto' at No. 55 displays decorative elements characteristic of the Old English style, including a depressed Tudor arch to the front porch and brick 'flashes' around openings suggesting the decay of age-old stucco and limewash. In contrast to its nostalgia, 'Carmel' at No 57 takes the machine-age Moderne style, with curves and horizontal lines suggesting speed. As a small and visually cohesive group, they reinforce each other's presence, and are enhanced by the retention of original front fences, gates, concrete front paths, driveway and garage (No 57). (Criterion D)

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

Construction dates 1936,

Hermes Number 202290

Property Number

## Physical Description 1

55 and 57 Brewster Street, Essendon, a pair of detached residences erected by the same owner-builder as a single building campaign, share many similarities yet also display clearly identifiable stylistic differences. Named respectively 'Loreto' and 'Carmel' (religious names reflecting the deep Catholic faith of the Ellis family, the original owners) the pair comprises modest single-storey dwellings with rendered brick walls and hipped tile roofs, each running across the conjoined site with a generous building setback and garden spaces front and rear. The pair's north-facing corner location is in a short section of Brewster Street (at the corner of Grice Crescent) truncated and divided by the railway serving Essendon and northern suburbs.

Each residence has rendered brick external walls trowelled to give a lightly textured stucco effect and relieved by bands and random quoins of orange/brown clinker bricks and punctuated at intervals by terracotta air vents (now

painted but originally perhaps left exposed). The base courses of red/blue clinker brick (with brown terracotta air vents) forming the foundation are left exposed, their contrasting dark colour anchoring the lighter render of the main body of the buildings. The rear and side walls of 'Loreto' facing away from the street, of red brick with cement rendered window lintels, are commensurately plain. The pair shares a common roofing material of dark brown, glazed, terracotta tiles, with a hipped configuration having a simple eaves detail. Each residence has double-hung sash windows, the principal front rooms with a larger tripartite frame and large central fixed sash flanked by double-hung sashes and overlooking rendered planter boxes. Both houses feature window leading in a fan pattern relying for effect on simple changes of glass pattern.

Stylistically speaking, 'Carmel' has jaunty, Moderne overtones, contrasting with the more conservative Old English appearance of 'Loreto', both of which styles were very popular in the mid-1930s.

The projecting porch of 'Loreto' at No 55 forms a covered entry to the front door, graced by a wrought iron exterior light and incorporating a small open patio to the (east) side, opening off the porch and protected from the garden by a low wall incorporating planting boxes. Flanking the front concrete step is a pair of clinker brick planter boxes. The detailing is gently Old English in style with flat Tudoresque arch, flanked on the (west) side by an intricately detailed chimney. There are irregular exposed brick 'flashes' at the edges of door and window openings, mimicking the wearing away of ancient stucco and limewash. The principal chimney is of clinker brick, tall with a capping of bricks on end sandwiched between projecting courses. The front of the principal chimney (which penetrates the eaves) incorporates occasional paired cream tapestry bricks and is decorated with a small blind arch and angled copings placed asymmetrically. The contrast between the brick chimney and rendered wall is accentuated by a panel of orange/red tapestry brick, regularly margined yet containing a random angled pattern of bricks with highlight window sandwiched between chimney breast and porch. To the right (west) of the chimney the house name 'Loreto' is worked in low-relief script. The north-east corner window introduces an element of modernity to 'Loreto', somewhat at odds with the overall Old English effect, but serving to accentuate the horizontal lines of the two related dwellings.

The Moderne streamlined details of 'Carmel' (No 57) include the predominant use of stucco on the external walls creating sheer planes, unadorned window openings to the porch, the rounded porch with stepped fins punching through the parapet, coursed bands and slim quoins of contrasting brick, and centrally placed chimney reprising decorative elements of the walls (stepped curves to the shaft, simple quoins, and contrasting capping). The unusually placed central chimney stands prominently in the composition of the facade. The porch, bearing the house name in low-relief script lettering above the external lamp and contained in a panel flanked by the decorative brickwork, combines with the central chimney to give the house its greatest stylistic flourish. The subsidiary chimney to the east is plainer, with slim rendered shaft and brick capping, while the rear chimney reflects its order in the hierarchy with unadorned brickwork.

To the west of each house, walls matching in materials and detailing link each residence to its side timber-paling fence. Both dwellings retain their original curved concrete path leading from corner gates to entry porch; in addition, 'Carmel' retains an early (presumably original) motor garage, its facade repeating details of its parent residence, served by a concrete driveway. The gardens are simple and characteristic of their era, with lawn edged by garden beds sparingly planted with low shrubs; hedge plantings divide the two properties from street frontage to the alignment of the front wall setback. A low clinker brick fence with sloped capping of grooved orange/brown tapestry bricks runs along Brewster Street frontage, returning down Grice Crescent; mild steel gates are supported off squat brick pillars, which also bear the house numbers carved in a small stone panel. The front fence and gates are likely to be original, with design and materials in keeping with those used for the dwellings.

As a pair, 55 and 57 Brewster Street, Essendon, is of very high integrity with very few changes visible to original or early elements of the place. The buildings remain almost as built and retain their original building forms, tiled roofs, face brick and cement rendered walls, porches, and windows and front doors.

The integrity of the buildings is greatly enhanced by the unusually high level of intactness of these main elements, which include the original chimneys, unpainted face brick details (such as tapestry brick highlights), name plates, window boxes, metal embellishments (including gates), and leaded glass panels to principal window sashes.

The integrity of the place overall is greatly enhanced by the high level of intactness of both residences, unusually high for a pair of dwellings, as well as the front fences, gates, concrete front paths and driveways, and garage (No 57).

*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/>*