

Wimbledon Estate Precinct



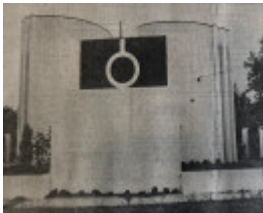
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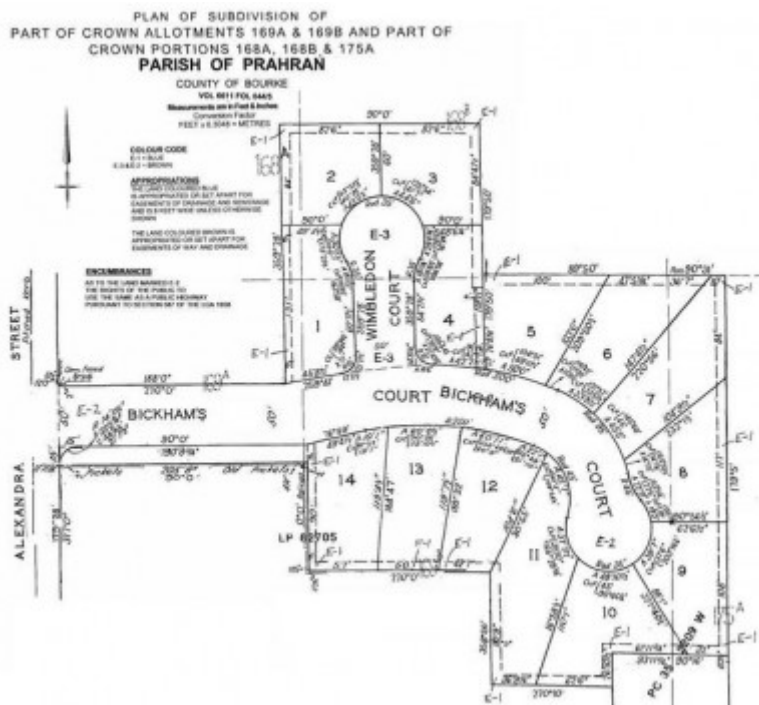
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2



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Location

1 AND 1A AND 3 AND 4 AND 9 BICKHAMS COURT AND 2 WIMBLEDON COURT AND 1 / 8 AND 2 / 8 ALEXANDRA STREET ST KILDA EAST, GLEN EIRA CITY

Municipality

GLEN EIRA CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO: Contributory

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO239

Heritage Listing

Glen Eira City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 6, 2023

What is significant?

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct comprises a group of post-WW2 houses in the cul-de-sacs of Bickhams Court and Wimbledon Court, and one adjacent block on Alexandra Street, built after the 1960 subdivision of what had been the Wimbledon Public Tennis Courts, established in 1923 by the eponymous Charles Bickham. With their stark rectilinear

massing, flat roofs and large windows, the individual houses are all reflective of the prevailing modernist idiom of the time. Mostly completed during the 1960s (with a single slightly later example from 1972), the houses in the precinct were all designed for European emigre clients by architects of similar background.

The following houses (including any original garages, carports, front fences and hard landscaping where still extant) are deemed to be contributory elements in the precinct:

- Bickhams Court: Nos 1, 1a, 3, 4, 9
- Wimbledon Court: No 2
- Alexandra Street: Nos 1/8 and 2/8 (semi-detached pair on corner site)

How is it significant?

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Glen Eira's cultural history.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.
- Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or groups of persons, of importance in our history.

Why is it significant?

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct is significant as one of very few cul-de-sac residential subdivisions in the Caulfield area that were created and developed from scratch in the post-WW2 era. By the 1950s, most of the north-western part of the present-day City of Glen Eira was already densely settled, leaving only a few atypical pockets of land for further expansion. The Wimbledon Estate, laid out in 1960 on the site of public tennis courts operated by the Bickham family since 1923, thus provided one of the last opportunities for homebuilders to establish themselves on a new subdivision within a well-established suburb. Consequently, allotments were keenly sought-after and, without exception, would be developed by wealthy European emigre families to create a residential enclave that encapsulated Caulfield's post-WW2 migrant demographic. (Criterion A)

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct is significant as small but excellent collection of post-WW2 modernist houses. The earlier houses, erected between 1960 and 1967 and mostly designed by European-trained emigre architects, were all conceived in a consistent hardedged modernist style, broadly characterised by bold rectilinear massing, flat roofs with broad eaves, and expansive windows. Within this dominant modernist idiom, most of the houses incorporated a degree of embellishment (such as feature walls of stone, slate or tile) that evoked the early '60s fad for applied ornament, famously dismissed by Robin Boyd as 'Featurism'. These contrast with the later house on the south

side of Bickhams Court that, of monumental and expressionistic form, demonstrates a return to a purer and more unadorned approach. (Criterion E)

The Wimbledon Estate Precinct is significant for associations with a number of architects of Continental European background (including Holgar & Holgar, Robert Rosh, Erwin Kaldor and Harold Shafer) who, consequent to their strong personal and professional links to Caulfield's thriving post-WW2 Jewish emigre community, are known to have been notably active in this part of the present-day City of Glen Eira during the 1950s, '60s and '70s. (Criterion H)

Heritage Study/Consultant	City of Glen Eira Post-war and Hidden Gems Heritage Review, Built Heritage Pty Ltd, 2020;
Hermes Number	210188
Property Number	

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/>