

Expert Witness Statement to Panel
Amendment C426melb
Melbourne Planning Scheme

172-182 Walsh Street, South Yarra

Prepared under instruction from Planning and Property Partners
October 2023

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1.0 Introduction

1. This statement of evidence to was prepared under instruction from Planning and Property Partners on behalf of the owner's corporation (representing submitter numbers 4, 19, 20, 21, 22 & 23) of the subject site at 172-182 Walsh Street, South Yarra. I have been asked to comment on the heritage considerations associated with Amendment C426melb, which proposes, *inter alia*, to include the subject site in the South Yarra Heritage Overlay precinct as a significant place.
2. By way of background, on behalf of the City of Melbourne GML Heritage completed the *South Yarra Heritage Review* (August 2022). The objectives of the Review included, *inter alia*, a review of heritage places and precincts, preparing a thematic environmental history and heritage citations, where required.
3. Volume 4 of the *South Yarra Heritage Review* reassessed the whole of the South Yarra Precinct (HO6), which is a large, irregularly shaped precinct covering an area between the Yarra River and Fawkner Park and broadly bound by Alexandra Avenue and Punt Road to the east and St Kilda Road to the west. To provide a more nuanced description and re-assessment of the South Yarra Precinct, GML divided the precinct into five areas, based on early subdivisional patterns. The subject site is located within sub area 5, broadly bound by Domain Road in the south, Punt Road to the east, Alexandra Avenue to the north and Anderson Street to the west.
4. At present, the building at 172-182 Walsh Street is subject to an interim heritage control as part of its proposed permanent inclusion in the South Yarra Precinct (HO6), with the interim control having been gazetted on 8 June 2023.
5. Buildings contained in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme are categorised as 'significant' or 'contributory' or 'non-contributory'. As part of the subject site's inclusion in the South Yarra Heritage precinct, it is proposed to be identified as a 'significant' building.
6. This statement was prepared with assistance from Sally Beaton of my office. The views expressed are my own.
7. I note that there is no private or business relationship between myself and the party for whom this report is prepared other than that associated with the preparation of this statement and associated advice on heritage issues.

2.0 Sources of Information

8. The analysis below draws upon an external inspection of the site and a review of the Amendment C426melb documentation, which included a proposed citation for the South Yarra Heritage Precinct, Area 5, and Thematic Environmental History by GJM Heritage. I have also had regard to submissions made to the City of Melbourne in respect to the Amendment. Other documents referred to include:

- *Melbourne Planning Scheme – Clause 15.03-S (Heritage Conservation) and Clause 43.01 (Heritage Overlay)*
- *Report to the Future Melbourne Committee, South Yarra Heritage Review – Planning Scheme Amendment C426, 19 September 2023*
- *Applying the Heritage Overlay, Planning Practice Note 1 (August 2018).*
- *North Melbourne Heritage Review Methodology Report (Lovell Chen, July 2022).*
- *Melbourne Planning Scheme Incorporated Document: Heritage Precincts Statements of Significance February 2020 (Amended April 2022)*
- *Panel Report Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C258 Heritage Policies Review (21 May 2021).*
- *City of Melbourne Heritage Review: Local Heritage Policies and Precinct Statements of Significance Methodology (Lovell Chen, September 2015, updated May 2016).*
- *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture (eds. Philip Goad & Julie Willis, 2012).*
- *Thematic History: a History of the City of Melbourne's Urban Environment (Context Pty Ltd, for the City of Melbourne, 2012).*
- *City of Melbourne Building Permit Application Files (held at Public Record Office Victoria).*
- *Architects Registration Files (held at Public Record Office Victoria).*
- *MELMO: Modernist Architecture in Melbourne (Robin Grow, 2021).*
- *Residential Flats in Melbourne: The development of a building type to 1950 (Terry Sawyer, Honours thesis, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, The University of Melbourne, 1982).*

3.0 Author Qualifications

9. I have Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Western Australia and have worked as a heritage consultant for the past 23 years. I commenced my career in 2000 at Palassis Architects, a Perth based architectural and building conservation firm. My role at Palassis Architects included the preparation of conservation management plans and heritage assessments for the East Perth Redevelopment Authority.
10. From 2002 to 2004 I was employed at Allom Lovell & Associates (now Lovell Chen) where I assisted in the preparation of conservation management plans and heritage studies for the municipalities of Greater Shepparton and Bass Coast Shire.
11. I have been employed at Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd since 2004, and I am currently an associate director of that firm. Over the past two decades I have gained considerable experience across a broad range of heritage and conservation projects, including assessing the significance of individual sites and precincts, assisting in the preparation of expert witness statements, and providing advice on technical issues relating to the conservation of building fabric. I have authored numerous heritage impact statements in support of permit applications for sites of local, state and national significance and contributed to masterplans for RMIT, Geelong Grammar School, Methodist Ladies College, and Trinity Grammar School. My experience extends to the documentation of conservation works for heritage buildings such as Melbourne Grammar School, Loreto Mandeville Toorak and the Australian Catholic University (Fitzroy campus).

12. Commencing in 2008, I was part of the project team for the *City of Stonnington Heritage Overlay Gap Study*, a municipal wide survey carried out with the objective of identifying precincts of potential heritage significance. I was involved in all stages of the gap study from the initial identification of potential heritage places through to the preparation of citations.
13. The success of the gap study lead to my further involvement with heritage studies for the City of Stonnington relating to shops, dairies, stables, transport infrastructure and interwar houses. I have had further experience with municipal heritage studies acting as lead heritage consultant for the *Frankston Central Activities District Heritage Review* (2010) and *Frankston City Post War Modernist Heritage Study – Stage 1* (2012).
14. In 2013 I attended the Conservation of Traditional Buildings summer school, held at the Australian National University, Canberra.
15. I was the project heritage consultant for the Clendon Centre at Loreto Mandeville Hall, Toorak by Architectus [winner of the AIA (Victorian Chapter) Henry Bastow Award for Educational Architecture, 2022] and the Melbourne Grammar School Myer Music Centre by Peter Elliot Architects [winner 2022 AIA Heritage Architecture Award (Creative Adaptation) and Educational Architecture Award].
16. Since October 2021 I have held the position of heritage advisor to the City of Stonnington and have also acted as heritage advisor to the City of Frankston.
17. I am a member of the Society of Architectural Historians of Australia and New Zealand (SAHANZ) and the Victorian Environmental and Planning Law Association (VEPLA).

4.0 Declaration

18. I declare that I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate, and that no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.



Martin Turnor

5.0 Brief History and Description

19. The subject site, 172-182 Walsh Street, South Yarra is located on the east side of Walsh Street, a short distance north of Domain Road. The place has secondary access on its south and east sides to Airlie Bank Lane. It is occupied by a three storey block of flats, known as 'Motstone', constructed 1959-60 for Mrs Florence Webb of Murphy Street, South Yarra, at a cost of £80,000.¹ Motstone's architect of Motstone, Charles J White, applied to become a registered architect in 1940, after serving his Articles of apprenticeship and working for and with A. S. Eggleton, a well-known early twentieth century Melbourne architect.²
20. The flats have a U shaped plan enclosing a central north-facing courtyard. The building is elevated providing an undercroft for carparking on its east, south and west sides. The Walsh Street facade is formed by repetitive timber framed window walls, divided into six equal bays. Cantilevered balconies with thin metal framed balustrades project forward of the facade. The east (rear) elevation is also comprised of timber framed window walls, but does not have balconies. The south elevation presents as a plainly detailed cream brick wall with an array of timber framed windows and a smaller number of glass block windows.



Figure 1 Western facade of the subject site, 172-182 Walsh Street, South Yarra.

¹ City of Melbourne Building Application Records 33619.

² Architects Registration File, PROV, 8838/P0001.



Figure 2 Western façade, with crazing paving clad steps leading up to the main entrance.



Figure 3 Balcony detail. Note window walls separated by the floor slab (painted dark grey).



Figure 4 South elevation.



Figure 5 East elevation.



Figure 6 Central courtyard.



Figure 7 Eastern elevation fronting the courtyard.

6.0 Heritage Status

21. An interim heritage control has been applied to the subject site as part of the proposed extension to the South Yarra Heritage Precinct (HO6). External paint controls apply under the interim control but there are no internal alteration controls. Prior to the gazettal of the interim control (on 8 June 2023), the subject site did not form part of HO6.

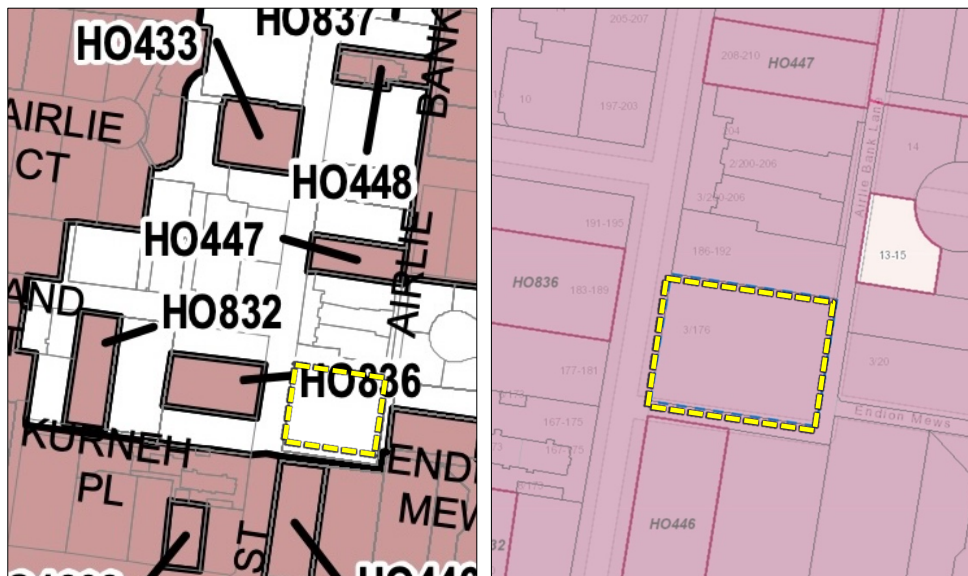


Figure 8 (left)

Extract from the Heritage Overlay map prior to implementation of the interim control. Note that the subject site is excluded from HO6.

Figure 9 (right)

The subject site (indicated with a black arrow) is proposed to be included within HO6 as a significant place.

22. As part of the property's inclusion in HO6, it is proposed to be made a significant place. A significant heritage place is defined in the *Heritage Places Inventory – March 2022* (Amended February) as:

.... individually important at state or local level, and a heritage place in its own right. It is of historic, aesthetic, scientific, social or spiritual significance to the municipality. A significant heritage place may be highly valued by the community; is typically externally intact; and/or has notable features associated with the place type, use, period, method of construction, siting or setting. When located in a heritage precinct a significant heritage place can make an important contribution to the precinct.

7.0 Significance

23. While the South Yarra Heritage Overlay Precinct has existed for a number of years, a formal Statement of Significance for the precinct was only gazetted during the City of Melbourne Amendment C258 (July 2020).
24. The documents exhibited in support of Amendment C426melb included a citation prepared by GJM Heritage, which contained an updated Statement of Significance for the South Yarra Precinct, with detailed information relating to each sub-area. As noted, the subject site is located in sub-area 5. The Statement of Significance for the South Yarra Precinct, Area 5 (gazetted as part of the interim control) is reproduced below:

What is significant?

The South Yarra Precinct, South Yarra, incorporating an area in the Parish of Melbourne South developed from the 1840s, is significant.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the precinct include (but are not limited to):

- *Area 5, including:*
 - *early pattern of subdivision of the land comprising three 10-acre allotments (Crown Allotments 8, 9 and 10), and a smaller allotment (Crown Allotment 5), sold in 1845-46. These allotments were developed with a number of houses in the 1840s and 1850s. Further residential subdivisions occurred from the 1880s, creating allotments fronting Walsh Street, Domain Road and Clowes Street, and newly formed streets of Airlie Street and The Righi*
 - *early pattern of subdivision comprising reclaimed land (part of a former lagoon) on Crown Allotment Y, bounded by Clowes Street, Punt Road and Alexandra Avenue, subdivided in 1910-13*
 - *mixed-era residential building stock characterised by eclectic range of interwar styles and influences, including Arts and Crafts, Georgian Revival, Old English, Moderne, Mediterranean and Spanish Mission*
 - *a cluster of intact 1920s-30s Georgian Revival style buildings in St Leonards Court*
 - *consistent pre-1901 streetscapes in Airlie Street*
 - *a varying topography with land sloping down towards the river*
- *the low-scale external form of buildings developed pre-World War I (typically one to three storeys); featuring original hipped and gabled roof forms (sometimes with parapets); early chimneys; timber and masonry construction and finishes (some painted and rendered); the pattern and size of original fenestration; stylistic detailing; and early iron palisade fences on stone plinths or retaining walls*
- *the low-scale external form of buildings from 1918-45 (typically one to four storeys) featuring masonry construction and finishes (some painted and rendered), original hipped, gabled and flat roof forms (sometimes with parapets); intact early chimneys; the pattern and size of original fenestration; stylistic detailing; and early low masonry fences (some with integrated letter boxes and garden beds)*
- *the typical external form of post-1945 buildings (with varying heights); which have masonry and concrete construction and finishes; original hipped, gabled and flat roof forms (sometimes with parapets); early chimneys; the pattern and size of original*

fenestration; stylistic detailing; and early fences and landscaping (including masonry or stone fences, garden edging, garden beds or retaining walls)

- *early subdivision patterns as evidenced in the hierarchy of principal and secondary streets and lanes (including the layout and width of streets), allotment sizes, and setbacks from property boundaries*
- *public space elements including:*
 - *the Golden Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra* 'Lutescens') at 2 Clowes Street*
 - *street trees, especially mature London Plane trees (*Platanus x acerifolia*) planted along Arnold Street and Adams Street and in a verge along Bromby Street*
 - *a group of mature trees planted on the stretch of reserve along the Yarra River (opposite 1–45 Alexandra Avenue), including two Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), Washingtonia (*Washingtonia robusta*), Schinus Peppercorn Tree (*Schinus areira*) and Eucalyptus Bangalay (*Eucalyptus botryoides*)*
 - *two mature Moreton Bay Figs (*Ficus macrophylla*) at the triangular traffic island at the corner of Toorak Road and St Kilda Road*
 - *extant street lamp (55 Bromby Street) and street lamp bases (outside 1–9 and 19 Park Street, at the corner Park Street and Mason Street, at the corner Toorak Road and Park Street, and outside 1 Walsh Street)*
 - *asphalted footpaths, bluestone kerbs and gutters, and the lanes with bluestone pitchers and central drains*
- *views into and out of the adjoining parks and gardens.*

Early fences and landscaping contribute to the significance of the precinct.

More recent (post-1980s) alterations and additions to significant and contributory buildings are not significant.

How is it significant?

South Yarra Precinct, South Yarra, is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

South Yarra Precinct is historically significant for its demonstration of a predominantly residential development pattern that spans from the 1840s through to the postwar period. The concentration of high-quality building stock in the precinct demonstrates the significant influence of wealth and privilege in this part of Melbourne. This is reflected in the prestigious location and desirability of the area associated with its elevated position, proximity to the river and pleasant parkland setting. Area 2 retains most housing stock from the Victorian period. Substantial terraces and detached villas developed by prominent property owners are interspersed with smaller working-class houses built for their servants and those who worked in trades. Several boarding houses, guesthouses and private hotels were established in Park Street. Occupying elevated land and in close proximity to the city centre, merchants, professionals and wealthy speculators were drawn to the area. Owing to the social cachet of the area, graziers established town houses here from the mid nineteenth century or later retired to the area. Subsequent suburban subdivisions and nineteenth-century building stock are well represented across the South Yarra Precinct, especially with consistent Victorian streetscapes in Domain Street, Hope Street, Mason Street, Leopold Street (Area 2) and Airlie Street (Area 5). (Criterion A)

Throughout the twentieth century, remaining vacant lots were taken up for further residential development. From the interwar period, South Yarra became a focus for flat development in Melbourne where low-rise blocks of flats became a lucrative form of investment in the aftermath of the stock market crash of 1929 and subsequent Depression.

This is particularly evidenced by the interwar streetscapes in Marne Street (on the site of the Maritimo estate, in Area 3), developed over a short period 1928–40. The popularity of flat development continued into the postwar period. Area 3 is distinguished for its collection of a high number of architecturally designed, mostly interwar, luxury blocks of flats and houses. Fairlie Court and St Leonards Court (the former Fairlie and St Leonards estates, in Area 5) represent similar concentration of interwar development at smaller scale. Area 1 is predominantly characterised by interwar and postwar flats interspersed with Victorian-era building stock. Area 4 also had a similar phase of active flat development following demolition and subdivision of Victorian era properties such as Salisbury (42–66 Walsh Street), Riahnva (at the corner of Toorak Road and Punt Road) and Fairholm (55–77 Walsh Street). The South Yarra Precinct is distinguished for its array of mixed-era development. This resulted in the area having a rich combined architectural and streetscape character. (Criterion A)

The South Yarra Precinct is also significant for its retention of nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial and industrial buildings in St Kilda Road (Area 1), Millswyn Street and the intersection of Domain Road and Park Street (Area 2). The latter was the location of one of the earliest commercial developments in the suburb, and was substantially renewed around the time of the electrification of tram lines in 1927. The emergence of automobile-related businesses in the 1910s and 1920s in St Kilda Road (Area 1) and St Martins Lane (Area 2) is evidence of relatively early car ownership in the area. (Criterion A)

The South Yarra Precinct is of aesthetic significance primarily as a prestigious residential area of mixed character that has developed and evolved from the 1840s through to the present day. This layering of development has resulted in the area having a rich combined architectural and streetscape character. This mixed character is unified by a general consistency in building quality, height, setback, form, and a pattern of fenestration and materiality that harmonises buildings of different historical eras and architectural styles within a cohesive urban setting. The precinct's character is enriched by its public realm elements, which include a mix of wide and finer grade streets that have mature and semi-mature deciduous and evergreen trees, bluestone kerbs and guttering, asphalt footpaths and a network of bluestone lanes (the latter are a particular feature of Areas 2 and 5). Throughout the precinct oblique views are possible due to the generous side setbacks of many buildings. This allows buildings to be viewed three-dimensionally, including roofscapes of hip and gable roof forms clad with slate or terracotta combined with chimneys and parapets. The aesthetic quality of the precinct is further enhanced by its proximity to parklands; it is bound by Fawkner Park to its south, and the Royal Botanic Gardens, and Yarra River to its north. (Criterion E)

Within the precinct there are streets that have a particularly high uniformity that demonstrate subsequent subdivision patterns. These include the intact Victorian streetscapes along Hope Street, Mason Street, Park Street and much of Leopold Street (Area 2) and Airlie Street (Area 5) which retain a large proportion of Italianate style houses. It includes interwar streetscapes of Marne Street (Area 3), St Leonards Court (Area 5) and (to a lesser degree) Fairlie Court (Area 5). These are characterised by an eclectic range of interwar styles and influences, including Arts and Crafts, Georgian Revival, Old English, Moderne, Mediterranean and Spanish Mission. Of note is the large number of interwar Georgian Revival residences, particularly in St Leonards Court and Fairlie Court (Area 5). Area 2 retains a group of intact interwar shops at the corner of Domain Road and Park Street. Early commercial development can also be observed along Millswyn Street (although all buildings are now used for residential purposes). (Criterion E)

The precinct is distinguished by its high concentration of refined architect-designed buildings. This is particularly evident along Park Street, Domain Road and Toorak Road (Area 2) and Marne Street (Area 3) for Victorian and interwar architecture respectively,

however such places are not confined to any one section of the precinct nor to any one development period. This, coupled with the general high quality of architectural design and materiality, provides an unusually rich aesthetic quality to the streetscapes across the entire area. (Criterion E)

The precinct contains a large number of blocks of residential flats from the interwar and postwar periods. While those from the interwar period tend to be large luxury flats, the later postwar flats reflect the changing urban landscape seen in much of inner city Melbourne. Through its high concentration of refined architect-designed building stock the precinct demonstrates the influence of the many middle and upper-middle class arbiters of taste who chose to live in the area. The postwar buildings themselves sit comfortably side by side with earlier development due to their scale, form and materiality. (Criterion E)

8.0 Discussion

25. There are two key issues to be addressed in determining whether the subject site should be included in HO6 as a significant building –being (1) contribution that post war flats make to the significance of HO6 and (2) the level of significance of the building itself.
26. In respect to issues of precinct significance, the existing statement of significance for the South Yarra Precinct, prepared by Lovell Chen and gazetted as part of Amendment C258 in July 2020, made only a fleeting reference to buildings constructed in the postwar period, stating *'later development, of the 1940s and after, is generally stripped of ornamentation, with plain walls and limited detailing'*. The statement of significance provides a of history South Yarra of almost 3 pages in length, of which only a single sentence is dedicated to post war flat developments:

The popularity of flat block developments continued into the post-war period, with the Argus noting that 'many small attractive blocks of flats ... are regarded as good investments'.³

27. Reference is made to the aesthetic/architectural significance of the interwar and 'later' flat blocks *'of which the precinct has many distinguished examples'* but does not further elaborate on the importance of the post war flats other than passing reference to the Robin Boyd designed Domain Park Towers.
28. The Lovell Chen statement of significance was informed by reference to the *Thematic History: A History of the City of Melbourne's Urban Environment* (Context Pty Ltd, for the City of Melbourne, 2012). It hardly mentions post war flat development other than describing *'numerous 'six-pack' blocks erected in South Yarra, East Melbourne, North Melbourne and Carlton.'*⁴
29. It is also worth noting that the Lovell Chen statement of significance was informed by community and stakeholder consultation. Meetings were conducted with key internal and external stakeholders, including City of Melbourne heritage advisors, representatives from the National Trust and the Melbourne Heritage Action Group.

³ Melbourne Planning Scheme Incorporated Document: Heritage Precincts Statements of Significance February 2020 (Amended April 2022).

⁴ *Thematic History: A History of the City of Melbourne's Urban Environment*, p.65.

30. The summary of the stakeholder and community feedback does not suggest that post war flat development was at the forefront of the participants' concerns:

Participants felt that South Yarra embodied the development pressures of Melbourne throughout history, from grand gold rush mansions to interwar flats ... The interwar flats were highlighted as playing a significant role in shaping the area as an apartment area. Participants strongly supported adding interwar period development to the Statement of Significance.⁵

31. Given that the Lovell Chen statement of significance was adopted in the relatively recent past, it could reasonably be argued that an appreciation of the historical and aesthetic/architectural value of many post war buildings has not changed in any meaningful or considerable way and if post war buildings were to be considered of meaningful value with the South Yarra Precinct, then the Lovell Chen statement of significance would have described their worth in greater detail.⁶

32. The currently proposed statement of significance references post-1945 buildings but does not make a strong or compelling case in identifying their significance and how they contribute to the precinct, being that the only substantial mention of their value within the precinct is the reference to their 'typical external form' and their historical importance as a demonstration of '...the changing urban landscapes seen in much of inner city Melbourne'. This is a broad brush observation applicable to a number of municipalities – it does not explain how post war flats specifically contribute to the significance of the South Yarra Precinct.

33. Nor can the *South Yarra Heritage Review Thematic Environmental History* (TEH) be relied upon as a demonstration of the significance of post war flats to the development of the area. Section 3.6.3 of the TEH 'Flats maisonettes and duplexes' is principally concerned with prestigious interwar architect designed flats. The ubiquitous 1960s 'six pack' flat does not garner a mention. Section 3.6.4 'Post war residential development' mainly relates to houses of the professional classes and 'established money'.⁷ Post war flats are discussed in Section 3.6.5 'Protecting the character of South Yarra' but only in the sense that they were seen to threaten the character of the area:

From the 1950s onwards there was increased pressure in [South Yarra] to develop larger blocks for flats. As the pattern of old homes being replaced by blocks of flats continued, there was mounting concern from a section of the community that the character of the area was being lost. The competing interests of development on the one hand and the protection of the established character of the area on the other intensified in the 1960s. In 1972, a report to the City of Melbourne by heritage consultant James Colman recommended that the historical and architectural character of the area be protected as a "conservation area" along the lines proposed by the Town and Country Planning Board and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works i.e. an area of special architectural and historic character worthy of preservation⁸

⁵ City of Melbourne Local Heritage Policy Review: Summary of engagement findings, p. 10.

⁶ City of Melbourne Heritage Review: Local Heritage Policies and Precinct Statements of Significance Methodology, p.15.

⁷ South Yarra Heritage Review Thematic Environmental History, p.74.

⁸ South Yarra Heritage Review Thematic Environmental History, p.76.

34. Accepting that flat development is a major theme in the development of South Yarra it is best demonstrated in the interwar flats which were often designed by leading architects of the day and which by their quality help to reinforce the social cachet of the suburb.
35. By way of comparison, the recent *North Melbourne Heritage Review*, completed by Lovell Chen and Extent in 2022 on behalf of the City of Melbourne, did not identify post war flats in the North and West Melbourne Precinct (HO3) as being of significance. Specifically, this building type was identified as non-contributory (some examples of which are illustrated below). The notable exception to this is the Hotham Gardens -Stage1. Constructed in 1959-1961, Hotham Gardens – Stage 1 is identified as being of historical significance as an example of post war ‘slum’ clearance developed by private industry as own your own flats, designed with input from some of Melbourne’s pre-eminent mid-century architects, including Roy Grounds, John Mockridge, John Murphy and Roy Simpson.

Non-contributory post-war flats in the North and West Melbourne Precinct (HO3)



Figure 10 (left) 49 Brougham Street.



Figure 11 (right) 51 Brougham Street.



Figure 12 (left) 28 Canning Street.



Figure 13 (right) 19 Chapman Street.



Figure 14 (left) 7 Curran Street.

Figure 15 (right) 469 Dryburgh Street.

36. North Melbourne was not immune from the pattern of redevelopment that saw older housing stock replaced by 'six pack' flats – it is not an historical event unique to South Yarra.
37. On the basis that post war flats were not identified as being of significance in a very recent heritage review of a predominately residential heritage precinct in the very same municipality, a much stronger case would need to be made to explain why post war flats are of significant value in the particular context of South Yarra.
38. Further to this issue, the statement of significance comments that '*The postwar buildings themselves sit comfortably side by side with earlier development due to their scale, form and materiality*'. I would generally contest this statement too, and would argue that post war flat development was, by and large, intrusive to the valued heritage character of the South Yarra Precinct.
39. While there is certainly a growing appreciation of post war architecture in Melbourne, I do not believe that the statement of significance provides a strong enough argument that all building stock of this era contributes to the heritage character of the South Yarra precinct (noting that virtually all blocks of flats from the 1950s through to the early 1970s are proposed to become either contributory or significant under Amendment C426).
40. It can reasonably be argued that if a post war building in South Yarra was to be included within the Heritage Overlay, it would need to be individually significant i.e., significant in its own right. The subject site does not meet this criteria.
41. Useful comparisons can be made with the post war flats that are proposed for individual heritage overlay controls as part of Amendment C426melb, namely: Fairlie Flats at 54-60 Anderson Street (1961), Sheridan Close, 485-491 St Kilda Road, Melbourne (1950-53) and Domain Park, 191-201 Domain Road, South Yarra (1960-62). The refined modernist simplicity of Fairlie Flats is demonstrative of the skill of architects Yuncken Freeman. Domain Park stands out for as a landmark high rise apartment building by the pre-eminent post war modernist architect Robin Boyd.

42. Whereas Fairlie Flats and Domain Park are demonstrative of luxury flats that helped to reinforce the social cachet of South Yarra, Motstone offers a more basic form accommodation, more akin to the oft derided 'six pack' flats.



Figure 16 (left) Fairlie Flats, .
Figure 17 (right) Domain Park,

43. Accepting that Amendment C246melb does not seek to apply an individual heritage overlay control to the subject site, it is proposed to be graded significant. By definition, a significant place is individually important at a state or local level *in its own right*.
44. At present, to be identified as a place of local significance sufficient to warrant application of the Heritage Overlay, a place should meet one or more of the criteria to a degree that meets a threshold level of local significance. The South Yarra Precinct has been identified as meeting criterion A and criterion E. The subject site would need to meet one or both of these criteria to warrant a significant grading. I do not believe that the subject site meets criterion A or E, as demonstrated in an assessment against the criteria as follows.

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).

45. As discussed above, the subject site is demonstrative of a pattern of post war flat development that does not contribute to the significance of the South Yarra Precinct. Nor is Motstone representative of the boom in flat development in Melbourne brought by the introduction of strata title legislation.

46. The Stratum Title system introduced in 1960 offered separate registered title to individual flats, defined by height measurements based on data provided by the MMBW. It has been described as unwieldy and difficult to administer.⁹ The passage of the Strata Title Act of 1967 was far more impactful and meant that purchasers of apartments or flats could at last obtain separate titles for their unit and carpark.¹⁰ Motstone was built well in advance of the introduction of the Strata Title Act, and in any event it was not Strata Titled until 1974.¹¹

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

47. The subject building does not demonstrate unique or exceptional aesthetic characteristics. With reference to the proposed statement of significance for the South Yarra Precinct, this is not a refined architect designed building. Matters pertaining to the aesthetic/ architectural significance of Motstone are elaborated on below.
48. GML Heritage provided Council with a response to objecting submissions that expanded justification behind inclusion of Motstone in HO6 as a significant building, as follows:
- *Motstone is distinguished from the places categorised as “contributory”, with its refined design articulated by the use of full curtain wall, U-shaped plan with a central court, massing of projecting balconies and double-height glazed entry foyer.*
 - *Motstone has high architectural merit with its refined detailing, intact original built form and roof, minimal alterations to the building (with any changes not visually dominant when viewed from the public domain), original opening patterns, intact original detailing and intact wall and floor surfaces*
49. Motstone is not of high architectural merit. The building adopts a conventional design for the period and is the work of an architect who does not appear to have played an important or influential role in advancement of modernist design post-war Melbourne. Motstone utilises standard design tropes of 1950s modernism, including the flat-roofed rectilinear form and gridded façade, absence of decorative ornament and use of timber-framed window walls. The cream brick walls hark back to pioneering modernist designs of late 1930s and early 1940s, such as Moonbria Flats (designed by architect Roy Grounds and constructed in 1942).
50. Nor is Motstone entirely intact to its original form. There is a crudely built upper storey addition at the north-east corner, multiple air-conditioning units retrofitted to windows and some of the original timber window frames have been replaced with aluminium frames. In their response to submissions, GML have in part relied on a simple illustration from a 1960 real estate advertisement as evidence of the building’s level of intactness. Motstone is not depicted in enough detail in that illustration to discern subsequent alterations. That said, I recognize that the alterations to the building are not consequential to issues of whether it should be made a significant place in HO6.

⁹ MELMO: *Modernist Architecture in Melbourne*, p.172.

¹⁰ MELMO: *Modernist Architecture in Melbourne*, p.172.

¹¹ Submission 21.

51. To describe Motstone as having a 'full curtain wall' is inaccurate and suggests a degree of architectural sophistication that is not evident in the design. A curtain wall is a continuous, non-loading bearing skin on the face of the building became a leitmotif of sleek, corporate modernism of the 1950s. The window walls to the façade of Motstone are slotted in between the floors slabs and are not continuous in the manner of a true curtain wall. Regardless of the terminology used to describe Motstone's façade, it is not an innovative or unique design. It is pre-dated by a very similar block of flats with a *faux* curtain wall at 29 Coolullah Avenue, South Yarra. Built in 1957-58, the Aminya flats are a non-contributory building in the Coolullah and Quamby Avenues Heritage Overlay Precinct (HO382 to the Stonnington Planning Scheme).



Figure 18 *Aminya Flats, 29 Coolullah Avenue, South Yarra. A non-contributory building in the Coolullah and Quamby Avenues.*

52. With respect to the significance of Motstone's U shaped plan and central courtyard, this design feature was not new at the time of construction. Flats with a semi-enclosed court were popular in the mid 1930's in the affluent suburbs of Melbourne, one example being the Cylde and Castle Village flats, 39-41 Kensington Road, South Yarra (1940).¹² Cairo Flats, at 98 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy, were designed in 1936 by architect Best Overend with a U shaped plan with a central courtyard facing the street.

¹² Terry Sawyer - *Residential flats in Melbourne: the development of a building type to 1950*, p.83.

53. Clendon Flats in Armadale, constructed in 1940 by architect Roy Grounds, also have a U shaped plan, enclosing a private north facing courtyard. All living rooms had large, floor to ceiling windows and glazed doors adjacent to the court to visually link outdoor and indoor space. The integration of the courtyard with both the site and the flats to provide a private, sun-filled open space is without parallel in earlier flats.¹³ Clendon Flats is an individually significant building within the Armadale Precinct (HO130 to the Stonnington Planning Scheme). Similarly, Moonbria Flats at 68 Mathoura Road, Toorak (HO81 to the Stonnington Planning Scheme), another design of Roy Grounds, were constructed in 1942 with a north facing courtyard and U-shaped design.



Figure 19 (left)

Clyde and Castle Village flats, South Yarra, showing central landscaped courtyard.

Figure 20 (right)

A 1936 illustration of Cairo Flats, Fitzroy, showing the U shaped plan with central garden courtyard. Cairo Flats are on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR 1005). Source: RVIA Journal.

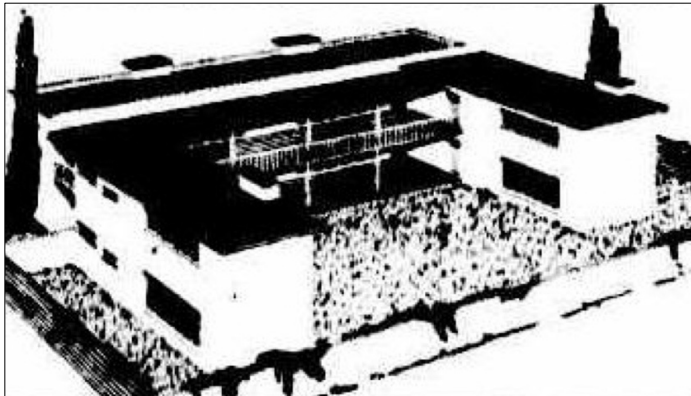
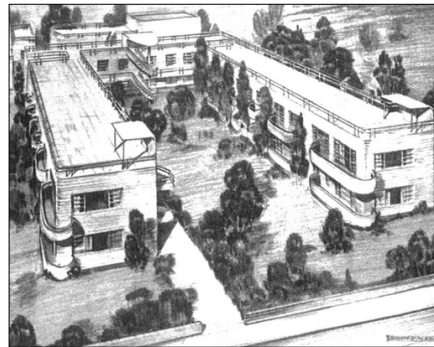
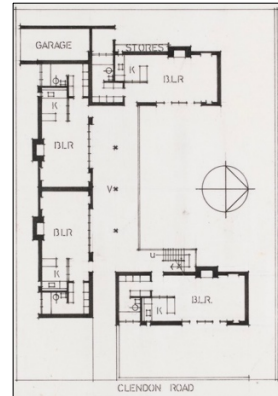


Figure 21 (left)

A 1940 illustration of Clendon Flats. Source: Argus

Figure 22 (right)

A 1971 floor plan of Clendon Flats. Source: State Library of Victoria.



¹³ Terry Sawyer - *Residential flats in Melbourne: the development of a building type to 1950*, p.83.



Figure 23 (left) Moonbria Flats, view from within the courtyard.

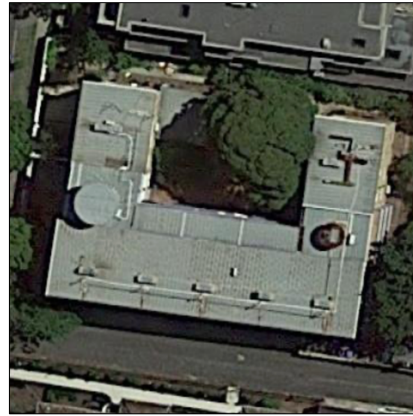


Figure 24 (right) Aerial photograph of Moonbria Flats showing its U Shaped plan form with north facing courtyard.

9.0 Conclusion

54. Having regard for the above, it is my view that the place is not of sufficient historic, architectural or aesthetic significance to warrant inclusion within HO6 as significant place, as proposed by Amendment C426melb. If the place were to be included within the extended boundaries of HO6, it should be identified as non-contributory.

