City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Place name:	**Edleigh Court**	**Citation No:**
Other names:	**Flats**	**444**

Address:	**6 Broadway, Elwood**
Category:	**Residential: Flats**
Style:	**Interwar: Old English, Arts & Crafts**
Constructed:	**1934**
Designer:	**Unknown (J.H. Eddy, builder)**
Amendment:	**TBA**
Comment:	**Revised citation**

Heritage Precinct:	**St Kilda Botanical Gardens & Environs**
Heritage Overlay:	**HO7**
Graded as:	**Significant**
Victorian Heritage Register:	**No**

Significance

What is significant?

Edleigh Court, built by the contractor J.H. Eddy, in 1933-34, at 6 Broadway, Elwood is significant. Edleigh Court is a two-storey rendered brick block of six flats, which demonstrates influences of the Old English and Arts & Crafts style. The low bluestone and brick fence with integrated planters at the corners, planted with clipped privet, contributes to the significance of the place.

Alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

Edleigh Court, at 6 Broadway, Elwood is of local aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

Edleigh Court is of aesthetic significance as fine and well-detailed flats in the Old English and Arts & Crafts styles. It is notable for the strong and simple massing of the Milton Street elevation. This is achieved with a combination of wall openings of half circle Arts & Crafts-inspired arches, and Tudor arches embellished with exquisite manganese brick detailing, the sum of which creates a striking architectural composition. The quality of the brick detailing, which includes corbelling and 'nogging' to the gable ends is also of note, as is the apparent random placement of the smaller brick accents, which is a typical Old English style detail and adds to the picturesque qualities of the building. The use of slate for roofing is not common for residential buildings of this period. The setting of Edleigh Court is complemented by the front fence. (Criterion E)

Thematic context

Victoria's framework of historical themes

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state: 6.3 Shaping the suburbs, 6.7 Making homes for Victorians

Port Phillip thematic environmental history

5. Buildings and cultural landscapes: 5.2 Shaping the suburbs (5.2.2 Private development), 5.3 Diverse Housing (5.3.5 Higher-density housing)

History

Contextual history

The early twentieth century saw a marked decline in the viability of large mansions across Melbourne's suburbs in general, but it was particularly felt in the more affluent inner southern suburbs such as St Kilda and Brighton, where land was highly sought-after by a new generation of homebuilders seeking smaller detached dwellings, duplexes or flats. The trend toward higher-density living in St Kilda began with the conversion of mansions and terrace houses into boarding houses in the early 1900s and continued with the first purpose-built flats that appeared at the beginning of World War I. A 1919 newspaper article noted:

> It was held to be no longer necessary to labour with a house and all the domestic drudgery that entailed when by borrowing Continental ideas, people who could afford it could live in flats… Land has become so valuable the villa of the Victorian days, in a crowded thoroughfare, no longer shows anything like an adequate return of interest on the land's present capital value. It is more profitable to pull the house erected thereon down, and to erect flats. When the flat became popular in England the experiment was made in St Kilda, and it did not take long to discover there was a genuine demand for flats (Prahran Telegraph, 18 October 1919, p.4)

Higher-density housing in the form of boarding houses paved the way to flat development. Flats first appeared in Melbourne around 1906 and slowly spread to the suburbs. They followed a strong pattern of development, appearing close to transport routes, particularly along or within walking distance of tram routes, to allow easy travel to the city. With their proximity to the beach and parklands, good public transport networks and seaside character, the suburbs of St Kilda and Elwood were especially popular locations for flats. Flats became a dominant characteristic of St Kilda and Elwood, and still make up a high percentage of dwellings in those areas. They include some of the earliest surviving flats in Melbourne, some of the best examples of architectural styles and types of flats, and as a group demonstrate the increasing popularity of the lifestyle of flat living from the early twentieth century (TEH).

There was huge growth in flat development in St Kilda and Elwood in the 1920 and 1930s, attracting migrants, single people, and people of diverse sexuality. In 1920 there were 527 purpose-built flats in 92 blocks in St Kilda municipality. By 1925 this had increased to 884 flats in 164 blocks, including large complexes such as the Ardoch flats in Dandenong Road. By 1935, despite a slowing of development due to the Great Depression, there were more than 2,800 flats in over 500 blocks. A further 2,000 flats were added by 1940; however, the onset of World War II slowed development. Nonetheless, by 1947 St Kilda contained 5,500 purpose-built flats, a quarter of all flats in Melbourne (TEH).

Edleigh Court

Although reclamation of the Elwood Swamp began in 1889, the area that it occupied - bounded by present-day Marine Parade, Dickens Street, Mitford Street and Shelley Street - remained largely undeveloped at the turn of the century. MMBW plans of this area shows that the triangular tract of land between Barkly Street, Dickens Street, Mitford Street and the newly-formed canal was entirely vacant at that time.

The opening in 1906 of the electric tramway from St Kilda Station to Elwood and Brighton Beach via Mitford Street and Broadway encouraged development. Building was slow at first but improvements to the route including progressive duplication from 1913 stimulated development and encouraged the building of flats especially along Mitford Street and Broadway, but also in adjoining streets. The first blocks of flats were duplexes constructed in 1917: at 71 Mitford Street, designed by Schreiber & Jorgenson and 13 Southey Street, designed by J.J. Meagher. In the following year, W.A. Tombs designed Birnam, a block of four, at 15 Mitford Street. The building of flats gathered pace during the interwar period and by 1940 more than 30 blocks had been erected in Mitford Street, with a further 15 in Broadway (BP).

Development on the east side of Broadway proceeded more slowly than on the west. By 1925 the west side was almost fully developed between Mitford Street and the Canal, while there were only three houses on the east side with a further three under construction.

These flats at the northwest corner of Milton Street were constructed in 1934 by and for builder, J.H. Eddy. Known as Edleigh Court, the block contained six, two-bedroom flats over two levels (BP, SM).

References

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plans nos. 1392, 1393

O'Hanlon, Seamus, 'Home together, Home apart: Boarding house, hostel and flat life in Melbourne c.1900-1940', PhD Thesis, History Department, Monash University

Port Phillip Thematic Environmental History (TEH) Version 1, July 2020

St Kilda Council building permit (BP) no. 8423, 12 December 1933

Sands & McDougall Directories (SM) 1935, 1940

Sawyer, Terry, (1982) 'Residential flats in Melbourne: the development of a building type to 1950', Honours thesis, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, The University of Melbourne

Description

Edleigh Court is a two-storey, block of brick inter-war flats, at the northwest corner of Broadway and Milton Street, which has a large hip roof that is clad in slate tiles. The flats have shallow setbacks from street boundaries behind a low bluestone and brick fence with integrated planters at the corners, planted with clipped privet. There is a residents' car park to the west of the flats.

Despite the Broadway address, the façade of the flats face Milton Street. It is composed of three projecting gable bays, containing porches on the lower level and recessed verandahs that extend across the first floor of the façade. There are chimneys with terracotta pots between two gable bays. The roughcast render finish of the walls of the flats are relieved in places with exquisite manganese brick detailing of varying patterns and size, around wall openings, wall corners and window reveals, and to the gable ends. These wall openings on the façade also vary, and include semi-circular and pointed arches. The combination of these wall openings, and the brick detailing, amounts to a striking architectural composition in Milton Street.

The east and west elevations have the same materiality however detailing is applied with restraint in comparison to the façade. Two sets of stairs, accessed from the east elevation, lead to the front and rear of the flats. A chimney is on the east elevation and is flanked by timber frame double-hung sash windows on the ground and first floors. The upper sashes have six glazed panes. A bay projects forward left of the bay with the chimney. This, like the other elevations, contains identical windows, some with flower boxes resting on brick corbels.

The building is in good condition and has a relatively high degree of external intactness.

Comparative analysis

Old English Revival, which included Tudor and Medieval influences, was a popular style for residential buildings of the interwar period and there are many examples in Port Phillip. It is characterised by red and clinker bricks, brick nogging and half-timbering, tiled roofs with steeply pitched gables, and highly modelled brick chimneys. Massing and details are picturesquely asymmetrical, as were window types, ranging from arches, standard casements and oriels, with multiple panes (often with diamond leadlights). Front fences are low and often in clinker bricks.

Early examples, in the late 1910s and 1920s tended to have gabled roofs and half timbering or brick nogging in gables. By the mid-1930s, most examples had hipped main roofs accented by vergeless gables, and walls and gables were entirely of brick enlivened by patterning in multiple colours.

The earliest use of the style in Port Phillip was in the flat conversion known as Hampden, 74 Barkly Street, St Kilda designed by Arthur W. Plaisted and constructed in 1919-20 (HO370, Citation 405). Plaisted also designed one of the finest examples, Hartpury Court (1923) at 9-11 Milton Street, Elwood (included on the Victorian Heritage Register, VHR H797, Citation 381), as well as the house Limerick Lodge (1927) at 58 Brighton Road, Ripponlea (Citation 306).

Other Old English flats within the HO in Port Phillip mostly date from the 1930s and include include Surrey Court (J. Esmond Dorney, 1933), 71 Ormond Road, Elwood (Citation 362), Astolat (Leslie J.W. Reed, 1934), 301 Carlisle Street, Balaclava (Significant within HO316 precinct, Citation 317), Flats (Marsh & Michaelson, 1936) 628 St Kilda Road, Melbourne (Citation 928), Clovelly (Joseph Plottel, 1938) 136 Alma Road, St Kilda East (Citation 400) and Eildon Close (Bernard Evans, 1940) 7-9 Eildon Road, St Kilda (Citation 896).

Edleigh Lodge demonstrates influences of the Old English and Arts & Crafts styles. It is notable for the strong and simple massing of the Milton Street elevation where the combination of the wall openings (half circle Arts & Crafts style and Tudor style compressed arch) and the exquisite brick detailing creates a striking architectural composition. The quality of the brick detailing, which includes corbelling and 'nogging' to the gable ends is also of note, as is the apparent random placement of the smaller brick accents, which is a typical Old English style detail and adds to the picturesque qualities of the building. The use of slate for the roof is rare for a residential building of this period.

Assessment

This place has been assessed in accordance with the processes and guidelines outlined in the Australia ICOMOS *Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* (The Burra Charter) 2013, using the Hercon criteria.

Recommendations

Retain in the Heritage Overlay with paint controls and apply front fence control.

Primary source

Peter Andrew Barrett, *HO7 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct heritage review Stage 2: Review of existing heritage citations*, 2021

Other studies

Andrew Ward & Associates, *City of Port Phillip Heritage Review*, 1998

Robert Peck von Hartel Trethowan, *St Kilda 20th century architectural study*, Volume 3, 1992

Other images