City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Address:	**58 Brighton Road, Ripponlea**
Category:	**Residential: House**
Style:	**Interwar: Old English**
Constructed:	**1927-28**
Designer:	**Arthur Plaisted**
Amendment:	**TBA**
Comment:	**Revised citation**

Heritage Precinct: **Brunnings Estate & Environs**

Heritage Overlay: **HO7**

Graded as: **Significant**

Victorian Heritage Register: **No**

Significance

What is significant?

Limerick Lodge, designed by architect, Arthur Plaisted, and built in 1927 for Mrs. F.J. Fleming, at 58 Brighton Road, Ripponlea is significant. Limerick Lodge is a large, single-storey, brick, inter-war, Old English-style house on a corner site. An early single-car garage, sharing some of the detailing and materials of the house, and the timber entry gate with clinker brick piers and another brick pier at the corner, are contributory.

Alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

Limerick Lodge at 58 Brighton Road, Ripponlea is of local aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

Limerick Lodge is of aesthetic significance as a fine and substantial Old English-style house. It has a busy architectural composition, of large and smaller roof forms, expressed as interconnecting gables and hips clad in glazed terracotta tiles, juxtaposed with prominent clinker brick chimneys of unusual form and detailing. This compositional arrangement is layered with textured rendered wall finishes, stained timber brackets, and half timbering (with timber pegs) on gable ends. Of note are the panels of stained-timber in a waived effect on some gable ends, the cruck frame verandah form, windows with 'repairs', rough boarding to the eaves, and the parge effect to the stucco. Windows are in single and grouped arrangements, some as bays, adding to the complexity of the overall composition of the house. A garage at the rear of the site,

shares some of the detailing and materials of the house. This and a timber gate, with adjacent clinker brick piers with domed render caps, on the front fence contribute to the character and setting of the house. (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 (5.3.3 Suburban bungalows, 5.3.4 Model housing estates)

History

Contextual history

Private development in the City of Port Phillip began from the time of the first sales of Crown land in the 1840s and 1850s. The gradual development of infrastructure, including roads, public transport networks and utilities, paved the way for increasing development of private land. Private subdivision within the broad framework set out by Hoddle's survey saw neighbourhoods in the City of Port Phillip grow into populated, thriving communities.

Significant population growth after World War I created a demand for housing, leading to the subdivision (or re-subdivision) of the remaining pockets of vacant or underdeveloped land in the City of Port Phillip. This included vacant land previously thought to be unsuitable for housing, such as in Fishermans Bend, as well as the re-development of the remaining mansion estates. Apart from the mansion estate subdivisions, there were two major interwar subdivisions at either end of the City of Port Phillip: The 'Garden City' estates in Port Melbourne and the Brunnings Estate subdivision in Ripponlea.

The Brunnings Estate was established on the site of George Brunning's nursery in St Kilda (Balaclava), which had been in that location since 1884. Subdivision and sales commenced in 1920, but most of the estate was surveyed and subdivided into 53 blocks in 1927. Los Angeles Court has been identified as the first cul-de-sac in Melbourne and other notable features included concrete roads, street lamps and consistent low brick fences to all properties. At least 17 stylish, detached houses were built on Los Angeles Court and Brighton Road by the late 1930s in a range of popular styles including Old English, Spanish Mission and Moderne and a high proportion of these were architect-designed. As a result, the Brunnings Estate contains perhaps the most comprehensive and intact collection of interwar housing styles in Port Phillip.

Limerick Lodge

This property at the north corner of Maryville Street and Brighton Road was Lot 6 in the Brunnings Estate subdivision. Constructed by builder W.B. Plaisted in late 1927 for Mrs. F.J. Fleming (BP), Limerick Lodge was one the first two houses completed in the estate. Arthur Plaisted was the architect and the original plans (see below) show the house and the detached garage and workshop

In 1970 a permit was granted for a new front fence (BP). The entry gate and brick piers, and the brick pier at the street corner were noted as existing and retained as part of the works.

Arthur Plaisted

Arthur W. Plaisted was a versatile architect, who designed in a range of styles applied to a variety of commissions that included houses and flats. His earliest houses were generally bungalow influenced attic villas, exemplified by the Blaikie house, Union Street, Surrey Hills (c.1916) and the Love house, St Kilda

(c.1916). His father, W.B. Plaisted, was a builder/developer and this doubtless this accounted for his prolific output – in St Kilda and Elwood he designed several gable fronted bungalows to a standard plan, which were constructed by his father.

Plaisted was also an early designer of flats, and in the 1920s he became interested in the Old English and Spanish Mission styles. Together with Robert Hamilton, he was the finest exponent of Old English style flats in Melbourne: Plaisted designed Hampden at 74 Barkly Street, St Kilda (1919-20, Citation 405), which is credited with being the first Old English style flats in Melbourne, and Hartpury Court (1923, Citation 381), 11 Milton Street, Elwood, which is widely regarded as one of the finest in the Old English style and is included on the Victorian Heritage Register. Plaisted also helped to introduce the Spanish Mission style in Melbourne, and wrote an article on the subject, published in *Australian Home Beautiful* in 1925. In that same year he designed a Spanish Mission style house in Canterbury, which was one of the first in Melbourne.

By the 1930s the range of styles used by Plaisted had broadened to include American Colonial/Georgian Revival (for example, Corio, 304 Dandenong Road, St Kilda East, built in 1939, Citation 889), Moderne as well as a distinctive style, which was influenced by French Chateau architecture (for example, 39 Eildon Road, St Kilda, c.1939). At the very end of the 1930s his office designed a block of flats in the International style at 45 Acland Street, St Kilda (Citation 388) although the design is credited to an 'overseas architect' working in Plaisted's office at the time.
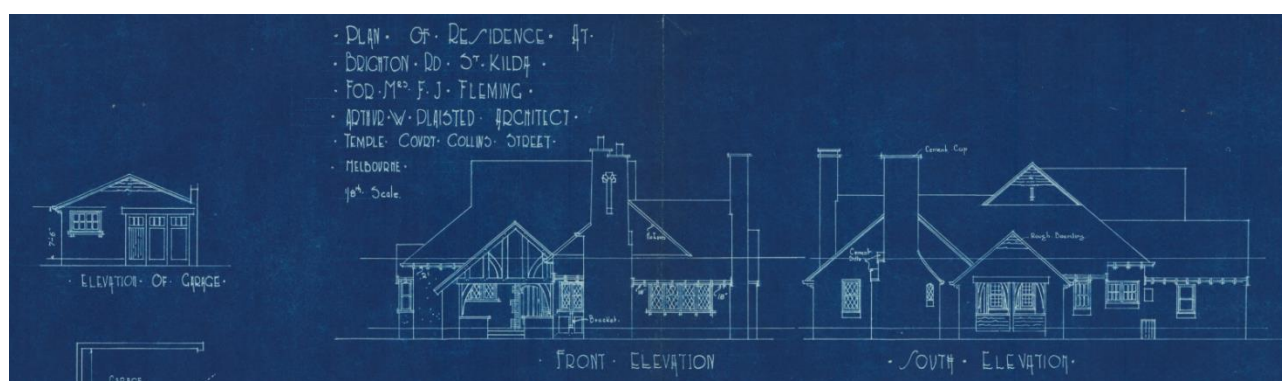
Extract of original building plans showing elevations of the house and detached garage/workshop

References

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

St Kilda Council building permit (BP) no. 6936, 3 November 1927 (house and garage), 3557, 2 October 1970 (front fence)

Sands & McDougall Directories (SM) 1930, 1935

Description

Limerick Lodge is a large, single-storey, brick, inter-war, Old English-style house, built on a corner site at the intersection of Brighton Road and Marysville Street. The house is a busy composition of large and smaller roof forms, expressed as interconnecting gable and hips, clad in glazed terracotta tiles. Two gable ends are embellished with prominent clinker brick chimneys of unusual form and detailing. One with a stepped form at its top, with a long narrow arched niche, facing Brighton Road; another facing Marysville Street broadens towards its base, curved at one side and stepped at the other. It has a small arched niche at the base. Another tall, but plainer, chimney is on a portion of roof at the side adjacent to Marysville Street. All chimneys have a plain rendered capping. The apex of gable ends on the Marysville Street and rear elevation are clad in stained timber with a waived effect. The gable end above the porch is half timbered. The lower walls of the house are finished in textured render. Wall openings are expressed in places with stained timber beams. Windows are in single and grouped arrangements, some as bays, adding to the complexity of the overall composition of the house.

An early single-car garage, sharing some of the detailing and materials of the house, is situated at the rear of the site and accessed from Marysville Street. A rustic timber gate, with adjacent clinker brick piers with domed render caps, another at the street corner, form part of the original fence replaced by the existing fence in 1970. Behind this is a privet hedge, which is a typical interwar planting. The mature garden setting of Limerick Lodge gives the house a recessive quality despite its corner siting.

The house is in good condition and has a very high degree of external intactness.

Comparative analysis

Following the economic depression of the 1890s, there was concern that inner Melbourne was becoming overcrowded. Terrace houses fell out of favour, as they were perceived as being cold and dark with limited garden space. Instead, detached bungalows became the most popular form of housing from the Federation/Edwardian period onward (TEH).

This concept of a 'garden suburb' (as distinct from the consciously-planned model Garden City estates that came later), comprising a reasonably spacious single-family dwelling in a secluded garden setting, became the ideal expression of urban living in the early twentieth century. Facilitated by improvements to public transport networks, particularly the electrification of the tram and railway networks, this housing defines the suburbs that developed during this era, including much of Middle Park, St Kilda East, Elwood and Ripponlea (TEH).

Arthur Plaisted was a skilled exponent of the Old English style and Limerick Lodge is notable for its picturesque composition and fine and authentic detailing, which includes the cruck frame verandah form, half-timbering (with timber pegs), windows with 'repairs', rough boarding to the eaves, and the parge effect to the stucco (Plaisted wrote about this in his 1925 article on the Spanish Mission style). It is complemented by the early timber front gate and brick posts, and the original garage.

Other Old English style houses included in the HO in St Kilda or Elwood include:

- Chipping Camden, 52 Brighton Road, Balaclava (1927) Citation 305.
- 247 Brighton Road, Elwood (1929) Jenkins & Goldsmith, architect.
- 27, 29 & 31 Hotham Street, St Kilda East (1929) Marcus R. Barlow, architect.
- 23 Monkstadt Avenue, Ripponlea (1932) R.M. & M.H. King, architect. Citation 358
- 9 Los Angeles Court, Ripponlea (1932) O.H. Jorgenson, architect.
- 24 Murchison Street, St Kilda East (1933) James H. Wardrop, architect.
- Free Presbyterian Church Manse (former) (1938), 88 & 92 Alma Road, St Kilda. Victor G. Cook, architect. Citation 82.

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.

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