

City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Place name: Sixty Six
Other names: House

Citation No:
437



Address: 66 Brighton Road, Ripponlea

Heritage Precinct: Brunnings Estate & Environs

Category: Residential: House

Heritage Overlay: HO7

Style: Interwar: Bungalow

Graded as: Significant

Constructed: 1931

Victorian Heritage Register: No

Designer: Dickson & Yorston

Amendment: TBA

Comment: Revised citation

Significance

What is significant?

Sixty Six, constructed by Dickson & Yorston in 1931 for George Booth, at 66 Brighton Road, Ripponlea is significant. It is a substantial, rendered brick inter-war attic-style bungalow with an Arts & Crafts massing, overlaid in Mediterranean-style detailing.

Non-original alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

Sixty Six at 66 Brighton Road, Ripponlea is of local representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

Sixty Six is of local representative significance as an example of housing built by G.C. Dixon and Yorston, one of Melbourne's most prominent and successful building companies during the interwar period. The firm specialised in residential buildings, with their housing targeted at the higher end of residential market, as they were relatively costly in comparison with the housing built by other builder-developers. The house is also of representative value for its former attic 'sleep out', which was within the small gable bay on the north elevation. This, representative of the trend of open-air sleeping areas on housing in the early twentieth century, which mimicked the temperate climate of the Mediterranean and Southern California and their lifestyles. (Criterion D)

Sixty Six is of aesthetic significance for the melding of two popular inter-war styles, and as an example of the eclecticism of inter-war residential design. What is essentially an Arts & Crafts-style attic villa massing, is overlaid with detailing of the Mediterranean-style, with this detailing including arched mouldings (one referencing the Serliana motif) openings flanked by Tuscan columns and piers on the porte cochere, entrance porch and verandah. In contrast the massing of the house references the Arts & Crafts inspired core of this composition, as an attic-style villa with steep pitched interconnecting gable roofs and a tall clinker brick chimney that reinforces the verticality of the composition. Arts & Crafts inspired detailing is applied sparingly and includes shingled gable ends. (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.

Sixty Six

Land to the north and south of Glen Eira Road between Brighton Road and the Sandringham railway was subdivided and offered for sale during the land boom of the late nineteenth century and by 1904 several villas had been constructed in Glen Eira Road and in Maryville Street, which formed the southern boundary of the vast Brunning's Nursery (MMBW). However, the economic depression of the 1890s halted development and it was not until the Ripponlea railway station was opened in 1913 that building recommenced. A shopping centre was rapidly established along Glen Eira Road between the railway and Hotham Street. Most of the shops were constructed in a flurry of building that occurred from 1913 to

1918 and the centre was almost fully developed by 1923. This served the growing residential areas developed on the vacant land to the north and new estates including the Quat Quatta and Erindale subdivisions to the south of Glen Eira Road.

The electrification of the railway in 1919 and the extension and electrification of the tramway along Brighton Road in 1925 stimulated development and almost all the remaining vacant land to the north and south of Glen Eira Road east of Brighton Road was developed during the interwar period. This included the subdivision of the vast Brunning's Nursery as a housing estate, which included creation of the new streets of Los Angeles Court and Monkstadt Avenue.

Land along the east side of Brighton Road between Maryville Street and Glen Eira Road remained vacant until the early twentieth century. While this land did not form part of the original Brunnings Estate subdivision it was acquired by George and Herbert Brunning in 1920. They subdivided the land in 1921, and development soon commenced (LV). Dickson & Yorston constructed this house in 1931 for George Booth as his own residence. Dickson and Yorston also constructed Midlothian at 64 Brighton Road (see citation 307).

At some time in the post-war period the house was reconfigured internally to form three flats.

Dickson & Yorston

G.C. Dixon and Yorston was one of Melbourne's most prominent and successful building companies during the interwar period and specialised in residential buildings. As well as constructing single residences and blocks of flats the firm was responsible for developing several distinctive bungalow court subdivisions in late 1920s and 1930s in Melbourne's eastern and southeastern suburbs, often created on former mansion estates. The first of these was Rothesay Avenue in Brighton, constructed in 1925-26 on the site of The Elms mansion estate. This was followed by Lempriere Avenue, St Kilda East (1926-27 on the site of the Rozelle mansion), Fosbery Avenue, Caulfield (1930) and Redcourt Avenue, Armadale (1933, Redcourt mansion). Dickson and Yorston were strongly influenced by the Garden City Movement in the planning of their estates and provided generous front gardens and low front fences. At Lempriere Avenue, services were placed underground and replaced by decorative lamp standards, and the firm also landscaped the entrance from the street to the adjacent Greenmeadows Gardens at their own cost. These subdivisions were targeted at the higher end of residential market making Dickson and Yorston's houses relatively costly in comparison with those of other builder-developers such as A.V. Jennings. Most if not all their houses and flats were architect designed, many of them by Gordon J. and Bruce Sutherland.

References

Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Detail Plan no.1451, dated 1904

Peterson, Richard, *A place of sensuous resort: 35. Los Angeles Court*, viewed online

<http://www.skhs.org.au/SKHSbuildings/35.htm> on 9 June 2021

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

St Kilda Council building permit (BP) no. 7932, 12 June 1931

Sands & McDougall Directories (SM) 1935, 1940, 1945

Description

Sixty Six is a substantial, rendered brick inter-war attic-style bungalow, which is massed with a steeply pitched dominant roof of interconnecting gables. The end of the main gable is shingled and has a pair of double-hung sash windows. These windows probably enclosed what is shown as a former 'sun porch' on the attic level of the façade. There is a small gable that projects on the north ridge of the main roof, that formerly contained a sleep out. The end of the lower, projecting gable, is rendered and has a diamond-shaped vent. There is a wall opening on the lower projecting gable with three double-hung sash windows with leadlight glazing in their upper sashes. The windows are framed with a rendered moulding, with an arch towards the centre, alluding to a Serlian motif. There are small rectangular box windows on the wall

of the south elevation of the lower projecting gable bay. A tall, plain, clinker-brick chimney is on the right ridge of the smaller projecting gable bay, and a lower clinker brick chimney is on the transverse portion of the main gable roof. The tall clinker brick chimney reinforces the vertical emphasis of the composition.

The main gable roof contrasts with flatter, or horizontal, lower roof forms. These horizontal roof forms include the skillion over a verandah at the left of the projecting gable bay, and an entrance porch and porte cochere at right. The verandah at left has a broad segmental arched opening, supported at each end by squat Tuscan columns. Brick detailing around the arch has been overpainted. On the rear wall of the verandah is a wall opening with three double-hung sash windows with leadlight detailing in their upper sashes.

On the parapet of the porte cochere is *sixtysix* detailed in wrought iron. The open side elevation of the porte cochere is flanked by fluted Tuscan piers. Between the porte cochere and the projecting gable bay is the entrance porch, which has an arched moulding above the entry also supported by fluted Tuscan piers. The brick detail of an arched moulding has been overpainting. The roof of the porch is concealed by a stepped parapet - an awkward detail occurs where this parapet connects with the gable roof of the main part of the house.

Sixty Six is in good condition and has good external integrity.

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.

This concept of a 'garden suburb' (as distinct from the consciously-planned model Garden City estates that came later – see below), 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.

Sixty Six is an example of housing built by G.C. Dixon and Yorston, one of Melbourne's most prominent and successful building companies during the interwar period. The firm specialised in residential buildings, with their housing targeted at the higher end of residential market, as they were relatively costly in comparison with the housing built by other builder-developers. Other houses constructed by Dixon and Yorston include Midlothian (1929), the Spanish Mission style house on the adjoining site at 64 Brighton Road, and the house at 247 Brighton Road, Elwood (1929), which was designed by architects Jenkins & Goldsmith.

The house is also of representative value for its former attic 'sleep out', which was within the small gable bay on the north elevation. This, representative of the trend of open-air sleeping areas on housing in the early twentieth century, which mimicked the temperate climate of the Mediterranean and Southern California and their lifestyles.

Sixty Six is an example of the eclecticism of inter-war residential design, which blends two popular inter-war styles. What is essentially an Arts & Crafts-style attic villa massing, is overlaid with detailing of the Mediterranean-style, with this detailing including arched mouldings, one referencing the Serliana motif; openings flanked by Tuscan columns and piers on the porte cochere, entrance porch and verandah. In contrast the massing of the house references the Arts & Crafts inspired core of this composition, as an attic-style villa with steep pitched interconnecting gable roofs and a tall clinker brick chimney that reinforces the verticality of the composition. Arts & Crafts inspired detailing is applied sparingly and includes shingled gable ends.

Sixty Six forms part of a stylistically diverse collection of inter-war housing within the Brunnings Estate & Environs precinct and compares with:

- House, 50 Brighton Road (1927) Attic bungalow with Arts & Crafts influences with original front fence (Citation 435).
- Besanoo, 5 Los Angeles Court (1933) Bungalow with Art & Crafts and Mediterranean influences, designed by H. Geoffrey Bottoms (Citation 342).
- Janette, 2 Albion Street (1934) Bungalow with Arts & Crafts and Mediterranean influences (Citation 394).

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. Specific controls (external painting, internal alterations etc.) are not required (**OR SPECIFY IF THEY ARE**).

Primary source

Peter Andrew Barrett, *H07 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