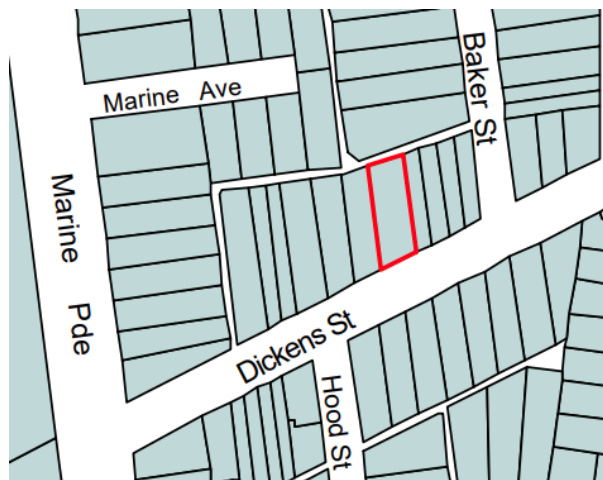


City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Place name: House
Other names: -

Citation No:
28



Address: 70 Dickens Street, Elwood

Category: Residential: House

Style: Interwar: Moderne

Constructed: 1939

Designer: A. Halley

Amendment: TBA

Comment: Revised citation

Heritage Precinct: Not applicable

Heritage Overlay: HO105

Graded as: Significant

Victorian Heritage Register: No

Significance

What is significant?

The house designed constructed by A. Halley master builder in 1939 for Rudolph & Clarissa Dettmer, at 70 Dickens Street, Elwood is significant. Contributory features include the house and the low brick front fence.

Alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

The house at 70 Dickens Street, Elwood is of local aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

The house is of aesthetic significance as a house designed in the Streamlined Moderne style with characteristic form and detailing including the curved wall corner incorporating a window and the flat curved porch hood (and curved terrazzo floor), and the emphasis on horizontality in the use of contrasting bands of cement render with dark bricks and the horizontal glazing bars in the windows. The port hole window is also a characteristic motif. The setting is complemented by the original low brick 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 (5.3.3 Suburban bungalows)

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 (TEH).

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).

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 (TEH).

House, 70 Dickens Street

Dickens Street extended west as far as Mitford Street in 1866. From Mitford Street it became a fair weather track across the northern stretches of the Elwood Swamp. By 1879, the street extended to the Bay, however the area remained relatively undeveloped until the twentieth century.

In 1915, Charles Herschell, a commercial traveller, owned a six roomed wood house on the north side of Dickens Street between Marine Parade and Baker Street. The street number at the time was 76. The house was subsequently owned by Emily Vincent who sold it to Rudolf (a pastrycook) and Clarissa Dettmer in 1938. By then, the street number had been changed to 70. The Dettmers demolished the house and in 1939 engaged A. Halley, master builder of Bentleigh, to design and construct a brick house on the site. The house contained two bedrooms and a 'sleep out' at the rear, and separate lounge and dining rooms and a central kitchen. Halley also designed and constructed a garage in the rear yard, and the brick front fence.

The Dettmers continued as owner/occupants in 1960 at which time the house was described as "brick, five rooms, population 4, NAV 325 pounds".



Extract of original building plans (City of Port Phillip)

References

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

St Kilda Council building permit (BP) no. 10212, 28 March 1939

Sands & McDougall Directories (SM) 1935-1940

Description

The house at 70 Dickens Street, Elwood is an interwar brick bungalow with a hipped tile roof. The house shows the influence of the Streamlined Moderne style in its 'waterfall front' treatment with a curved wall corner incorporating a window and the flat curved porch hood (and curved terrazzo floor), and the emphasis on horizontality in the use of contrasting bands of cement render with dark bricks and the horizontal glazing bars in the windows. The port hole window is also a characteristic motif. The house is complemented by the original low front fence constructed from the same bricks as the house.

The house is in good condition and appears has good integrity (additions at the rear are concealed from view). The driveway opening to the front fence has been widened and the original wrought iron metal gates removed.

Comparative analysis

No information.

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

2022: Retain in the Heritage Overlay with external controls.

Primary source

City of Port Phillip, *H07 Elwood St Kilda Balaclava Ripponlea Precinct heritage review Stage 2: Review of existing heritage citations*, 2022

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

