

Statement of Significance: Fountain Court, 70 Orrong Crescent, Caulfield North

Date of Statement: August 2020

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| Address: | 70 Orrong Crescent, Caulfield North | Name: | <i>Fountain Court</i> |
| Place Type: | Residential building (private) | Grading: | Significant |
| PS ref no: | HO236 | Constructed: | 1967-68 |



Photograph by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, October 2019

What is significant?

Fountain Court, at 70 Orrong Crescent, Caulfield North, is a flat-roofed three-storey block of flats on an elongated curved plan, extruded upwards to create two storeys of flats above an open undercroft. It has a varied but symmetrical façade of full-height window walls, brick spandrels and projecting or recessed balconies, with textured concrete block screen walls, mosaic-tiled columns and glass-walled lobbies at ground level. Erected in 1967-68, the flats were designed by the Polish-born husband-and-wife architectural partnership of Holgar & Holgar.

The significant fabric is defined as the entire exterior of the building.

How is it significant?

Fountain Court satisfies the following criteria for inclusion on the heritage overlay schedule to the City of Glen Eira planning scheme:

- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.
- Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Why is it significant?

Fountain Court is aesthetically significant as highly distinctive and idiosyncratic example of post-WW2 modernism. The concave plan, adopted as a specific design response to the challenging convex curvature of the street frontage, has resulted in a building of unusually striking form and bold streetscape presence. Although a number of Melbourne architects in the 1950s and '60s were intrigued by such applications of pure geometry, relatively few actual examples were realised; this concave-planned building has virtually no true comparators in the City of Glen Eira and is rare even on a broader metropolitan scale. Its external treatment, while adopting a standard modernist vocabulary of stark walls, full-height windows and *pilotis*, has introduced an uncommon degree of complexity in its varied fenestration and alternating projecting/recessed balconies, its use of contrasting texture (eg stack bond brickwork and concrete block screen walls) and evocation of luxury (eg gold mosaic tiling, anodized aluminium and marble flooring). (*Criterion E, Criterion F*)

Primary sources

Heritage Citation PW21, *City of Glen Eira Post-war & Hidden Gems Heritage Review 2020, Stage 2: Citations*, prepared by Built Heritage Pty Ltd.