

257 Heidelberg Road, Northcote (Residence) Statement of Significance, September 2021

Heritage Place:	257 Heidelberg Road, Northcote	PS ref no:	HO322
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What is significant?

257 Heidelberg Road, Northcote, a single-storey cream face brick residence, built c.1948-49 for the owner Beniamino Bortolussi, is significant.

Significant fabric includes the:

- original built form, roof and scale of the residence and separate garage;
- unpainted brick surfaces and decorative brickwork, pattern of fenestration;
- chimney, and steel framed windows including the curved glass to the corner windows;
- low masonry brick fence with saw tooth detailing, mild steel panels and gates; and
- front garden and landscaping including the concrete and marble-paved driveway and footpath; and
- two cypresses by the gate.

How is it significant?

257 Heidelberg Road, Northcote, is of local historic, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Darebin

Why is it significant?

257 Heidelberg Road, Northcote, a single-storey cream face brick residence, built c.1948-49, is historically significant as an example of immediate postwar residential development in Darebin. A major boom commenced in the late 1940s changed the pattern of Darebin's settlement. Over 2500 new private houses were built in the municipality between 1949 and 1954, to meet the increasing demands for housing. The building reflects the massive postwar boom and suburban expansion that characterises Darebin's postwar development. (Criterion A)

257 Heidelberg Road, Northcote, is of representative significance, for its design characteristic of the late 1940s domestic architecture. Severe shortages of building materials and increased labour costs meant that architect-designed economic housing became favoured by new homeowners. House plans published in popular magazines and design handbooks provided solutions to maximise the efficiency of the budget and land size.

The subject residence displays the defining elements of the early postwar houses influenced by Interwar Moderne style that was popular for the interwar domestic architecture and carried onto 1950s. The elements highly characteristic of the type include its cube forms juxtaposed with curves; horizontal emphasis to the façade through its use of bands of different coloured brickwork; tall chimney that acts as a strong vertical element; relatively formal garden and landscaping of the front setback; and low masonry fence with mild steel panels and gates. These are defining elements of

the late 1940s examples that developed out of the Moderne Style of the 1930s and was popular during the immediate postwar period. (Criterion D)

257 Heidelberg Road, Northcote, is also aesthetically significant, distinguished by its high intactness and integrity as well as its use of well-detailed elements that reflect the influences of Moderne style architecture adapted for late 1940s residences. Key elements include the curved corner windows with curved glass and deep eave overhangs, recessed bands of slim dark coloured brickwork and its unusually proportioned and detailed chimney. The overall brickwork and refinement of detail in the design are evidence of a high level of craftsmanship. The brickwork incorporating face cream, brown and dark red bricks, curved corners laid in header course, saw tooth detail to the fence's brick capping, piers with stepped tops and curved corners to the driveway opening all bring interest and textural depth to the elevations achieved through the adaptation of cheap building materials under the Government's building restrictions.

The front garden also features distinctive features. The driveway is paved with large custom-made brown concrete panels with a raised edge on one side that forms the edge of the garden bed. There is a brown concrete strip inserted with irregular-cut marble pieces in the middle of the driveway, which reflects the property's association with the first owner Beniamino Bortolussi, granolithic and marble contractor. Other landscaping elements that are consistent with the style include the narrow garden bed that is covered with aggregate gravels and wraps around the front lawn; cypresses planted on either side of the gate; and various ornamental plants including tapestry hedge and standard roses in the front garden. (Criterion E)

Primary source

Context Heidelberg Road Heritage Assessment report - Final Report, September 2020

This document is an incorporated document in the Darebin Planning Scheme pursuant to section 6(2)(j) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*