

# STATION HEIGHTS ESTATE PRECINCT



Mashoobra Street Precinct,  
Coburg North



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Station Heights Estate Precinct Map

## Location

3-63 and 2-54 MASHOOBRA STREET, 3-33A GALEKA STREET, and 47-57 and 54 ORVIETO STREET, COBURG NORTH, MORELAND CITY

## Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO434

## Heritage Listing

Merri-bek City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

### What is significant?

The Station Heights Estate precinct is an inter-war residential area comprising houses constructed between 1923 and 1930 in Mashoobra Street, 3-33a Galeka Street and 47-57 & 54 Orvieto Street, which formed part of the Station Heights Estate subdivision created and developed by Captain D.S. Bain. The following features and elements are integral to the significance of the precinct:

- The houses at 3-25, 29-35, 39-49 & 53-63 and 2-20, 26-30, 36, 38 & 44-54 Mashoobra Street, 3, 5, 9-13 & 17-33 Galeka Street, and 47-53 & 54 Orvieto Street.
- The front fences and, as appropriate, gates at 4, 15, 14-18, 21, 49 & 63 Mashoobra Street and 21 Galeka Street.
- The mature Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) in the front garden of 33 Mashoobra Street.
- The homogeneous inter-war character created by the consistency of form, scale, style and detailing of the contributory dwellings, the detached siting behind garden setbacks and low front fences, and the extent to which development in one period is evident.
- The relatively high integrity of the majority of dwellings when viewed from the street.

Non-original alterations and additions to the contributory places, the houses at 22, 24, 27, 32, 37, 38a, 40a, 40, 42 & 51 Mashoobra Street, 7, 15 & 33a Galeka Street, 55 & 57 Orvieto Street and outbuildings are not significant.

### How is it significant?

The Station Heights Estate precinct is of local historic, architectural and aesthetic significance to Moreland City.

### Why is it significant?

It is historically significant as evidence of the significant growth of Coburg North during the inter-war period and for its associations with D.S. Bain as the largest of the estates he developed, thus creating the new suburb of Merlynston. The houses in Galeka Street are significant as houses built by the State Savings Bank of Victoria for the War Service Homes Commission and illustrate the important role that the Bank and the Commission played in the provision of housing after World War I. (Criterion A & H)

It is architecturally and aesthetically significant as a fine example of an inter-war residential precinct, which is notable for the consistency of its built form and the high degree of intactness from the original phase of development. The aesthetic qualities of the precinct are enhanced by the survival of early features such as front fencing, and the mature Canary Island Palm in Mashoobra Street. The houses at Nos. 2, 4, 10 and 14-18 Mashoobra Street are notable for the distinctive Spanish/Mediterranean detailing, which is rare in this part of Coburg. (Criteria B, D & E)

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Moreland - City of Moreland - North of Bell Street Heritage Study, Context Pty Ltd, 2013; |
| Construction dates        | 1923,   |
| Architect/Designer        | Leith, GB,  |
| Other Names               | Merlynston (Station Heights Estate), War Service Homes,                                   |
| Hermes Number             | 140034  |
| Property Number           |   |

## Physical Description 1

This is an inter-war residential area comprising detached single storey bungalows in a range of styles. The precinct includes all the houses in Mashoobra Street (except for 1a and 1b), Nos. 3-33a Galeka Street, and Nos. 47-57 & 54 Orvieto Street and comprises the most intact group of housing associated with the development of the Station Heights Estate during the inter-war period. The inter-war houses are mostly weatherboard, but in Mashoobra Street there is also a notable group of Mediterranean/Spanish Mission style rendered houses on the east side at the south end and several brick bungalows on either side at the northern end. The housing in the precinct is very intact to the 1920-30s era and the consistency of scale (single storey), siting (detached with front garden setbacks) and low front fences (some of which are original) creates a spacious 'garden suburb' character that is characteristic of inter-war residential areas. Houses in both streets have side driveways, with garages or carports located in the rear yard. The streets have concrete kerb and channel with narrow nature strips and small trees.

### *Mashoobra Street*

The timber bungalows in Mashoobra Street generally fall into two distinct types - those with a transverse gable roof with a projecting gable forming a porch (either off-set or placed centrally), and gable fronted examples with the minor gable forming the porch. Roofs are generally clad in terracotta tiles and most houses retain plain brick chimneys. All the houses have similar Arts & Crafts detailing including shingling or half-timbering to the gable ends, and single or paired timber posts or chunky brick and render piers supporting the verandah. No.21, on the other hand, has a particularly broad porch, which is supported by paired Tuscan columns. Windows to the main elevations are side-hung casements or boxed and paired double hung sash. Some have projecting bow or bay windows. Nos. 43 and 55 have very attractive, Japanese-influenced casement windows with coloured highlights. No.49 has unusually and highly decorative window and door architraves.

The rendered brick houses at Nos. 10, 14, 16 and 18 stand out in the precinct as a result of their distinctive Spanish/Mediterranean detailing. This is principally expressed by the elaborate porch structures, which have arched colonades with barley-twist columns and high parapets that are either square with balusters (18), triangular with square end piers (16) or almost Baroque (14). The porches are rendered with tapestry brick detailing. Apart from the porches the houses are otherwise conventional in their form and detailing. The houses are complemented by original brick or brick and render low front fences with wrought iron gates, while Nos. 10 and 14 also retain their green Marseille tile roofs. These houses are complemented by a pair of Mediterranean Revival houses at 2 & 4 Mashoobra Street, which are also rendered. No.4 retains its original or early chain-link fence.

The California Bungalows at the northern end of the street are built of red brick with accents in clinker bricks or roughcast render. With one exception they have transverse gable roofs with a central projecting gabled porch supported on chunky render and brick piers. The most intact examples include No.48, which retains a band of roughcast render at the top of the wall that remains in its original, unpainted state and Nos. 46, 61 and 63, which have a clinker brick band around the top of the wall and highlights below the windows. Nos. 46, 48 & 63 also have finely detailed window hoods, while No.63 is complemented by a low brick fence. No.57, on the other hand, is a fine, gable-fronted example, which is very intact. The examples at 44, 50 and 52 have all been altered with

replacement of the windows and modification (or in the case of No.44 complete removal) of the porch being the most visible change.

Apart from those already mentioned the houses at Nos. 15, 21 and 49 also retain original or early front fences (and sometimes gates). Another notable feature is the mature Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) in the front garden of No.33, which is a typical inter-war planting.

Mashoobra Street has a high degree of intactness to the 1920s/30s construction date. The majority of the contributory houses have a relatively high degree of integrity when viewed from the street. Common alterations include replacement of porch/verandah supports (e.g., 7, 41 & 49) or replacement of windows (e.g., 3, 7, 9, 20, 26, 28 etc.) - most of these changes are readily reversible. The non-contributory houses are the post-war houses at 22, 24, 27, 32, 37, 38a, 40a, 40, 42, 51 & 65.

#### *Galeka Street*

Compared to Mashoobra Street, Galeka Street has a lower level of integrity, with a greater number of non-contributory dwellings as well as more significant alterations to surviving 1920s dwellings. As a result only the west side of the street, south of Orvieto Street has been included in the precinct. The contributory houses are weatherboard bungalows, mostly with transverse gable roofs with a projecting gable either placed centrally or at one side. The exceptions are the houses at 31 and 33, which have hip roofs with projecting gables, and No.9, which is gable fronted. Detailing such as timber shingling, verandah supports etc. is similar to the houses in Mashoobra Street, however, the original windows are often narrower and taller with multi-paned upper sashes and are sometimes, but not always, 'boxed' as in the majority of houses in Mashoobra Street. The house at No.21 retains an early front fence.

As noted in the History all the houses in this part of Galeka Street were constructed to standard designs by the State Savings Bank of Victoria on behalf of the War Service Homes Commission and so many houses are very similar in style and detailing and some were probably near-identical originally. The house at No.25 appears to 'Type No.13' or 'Type No.20' from the c.1920 patternbook, and in spite of its rather large and dominating second storey addition, No.3 was originally probably the same type. No.5 is one of a number of examples of 'Type No.9', all of which have been altered to some degree - the others include Nos. 23, 27 & 29. No.9, the only gable fronted house, was originally a 'Type No.14', but has now lost its windows and shingling to the gable end. No.13 is a good example of 'Type No.10', while other examples include No.17 and probably its altered neighbour at No.19. Apart from the various alterations to the porch of No.21 it appears that it was once a 'Type No.7', as was No.11, which is less intact. Finally, Nos. 31 and 39 seem to match 'Type No.4'.

The east side of Galeka Street has a high degree of intactness to the 1920s construction date. Common alterations again include the replacement of windows and verandah/porch detailing as noted above. The post-war houses at 7 and 33a Galeka Street are non-contributory.

#### *Orvieto Street*

The south side of Orvieto Street between Galeka and Mashoobra, which contains a group of inter-war houses at 47-53 and the inter-war house at No.54, at the north-east corner of Mashoobra Street provide a link between Galeka and Mashoobra streets. The contributory inter-war houses are all weatherboard and three have a gable-fronted roof with a minor gable forming the porch (49, 51 & 54). Of these No.51 retains its original (unpainted) asphalt shingles to the gables. No.54 has a transverse roof with jerkin-head gables, which appears to be a SSBV design, while the house at No.47 has a hip tile roof with a projecting gabled porch supported by paired Tuscan columns.

The contributory houses have a high degree of external integrity with few alterations when viewed from the street. The post-war houses at 55 and 57 Orvieto Street are non-contributory.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*