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## COLWYN



Flats



Flats



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### Location

1263 HIGH STREET,, MALVERN VIC 3144 - Property No 30389

### Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO440

### Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

### **What is significant?**

Colwyn, comprising four maisonettes and garages at 1263 High Street, Malvern designed by J.H. Esmond Dorney and constructed in 1937, is significant. The significant attributes are the original 'Prairie School' inspired form, materials and detailing of the flats, and the associated garages, walls and fences. The high degree of external integrity is integral to the significance of the flats.

Later alterations and additions are not significant.

### **How is it significant?**

Colwyn is of local architectural significance to the City of Stonnington.

### **Why is it significant?**

Architecturally, it is significant as a striking example of J. Esmond Dorney's Prairie School inspired buildings. Dorney trained with Walter Burley Griffin in the 1920s, and was said to have rejected the solidity and heaviness of Griffin's style, but was clearly influenced by the Prairie School in a number of his 1930s designs. Of these, Colwyn is the most dramatic and monumental design and shows similarity in its massing and details to Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple. The integrity of the complex, which includes original garages as well as fences and low garden walls also contributes to its significance. (Criteria F & H)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Stonnington - Residential Flats in Stonnington - Heritage Citations Project, Context P/L, 2013;
Construction dates	1936,
Architect/Designer	Dorney, J. H. Esmond,
Other Names	Maisonettes Flats,
Hermes Number	150269
Property Number	

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## **Physical Description 1**

Colwyn Flats, 1263 High Street, Malvern, is a large two-storey building at the corner of High Street and Northbrook Avenue, with the principal facade to Northbrook. There is a private garden on the High Street side, concealed behind a hedge. There is a lesser setback on the Northbrook Avenue side. The entire site is bounded by a low rendered fence with a clinker brick plinth and piers. Clinker brick steps lead to the main entrance on Northbrook Avenue.

The building has wide eaves, and a long hip roof clad in Marseille tiles. It has three projecting hip-roof bays, at either end of the Northbrook elevation, and at the centre of the High Street elevation. Chimneys are plain, with square, rendered shafts. The walls are finished in smooth render with banded tapestry brick accents and a clinker brick plinth.

The Northbrook (east) elevation is symmetrically arranged, with a central entrance and breakfronts at either end. The building is given further vertical emphasis by giant-order pilasters with abstracted tapestry brick 'capitals' below the eaves, both to the breakfronts and the central part of the wall. Between the pilasters are tapestry brick spandrels. The projecting breakfront bays have curved corners that stop short of the eaves.

The wide, nearly flat eaves, intricate pilaster capitals, and framing of the breakfronts with masses that stop short of the eaves all show the influence of the Prairie Style, and are particularly reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright's

Unity Temple (Chicago, 1906). A bay of giant-order pilasters beneath wide, flat eaves are also seen in Wright's designs such as the Dr John Storer House in Los Angeles of 1923.

The entrance is set below a curved concrete hood supported on massive curved corbels, and the doorway is outlined in tapestry brick 'quoins'. Above the entrance hood are render fins which step upward suggesting the Jazz Moderne. Windows are a mix of eight-over-eight double-hung sashes and eight- and twelve-pane casements.

The High Street elevation repeats the breakfront with curved corners and giant-order pilasters, but the rest of the wall is much simpler. The door is set under a flat roof supported on a pier.

At the rear of the site there are garages, entered both from High and Northbrook streets. They are rendered with a smaller version of the fin decoration from over the building entries. The garage doors have been replaced.

The only other alteration noted is the overpainting of some of the brick fence piers.

*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/>*