
GOWRIE COURT



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Location

716 ORRONG ROAD,, TOORAK VIC 3142 - Property No 45389

Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO446

Heritage Listing

Stonnington City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

Gowrie Court, 716 Orrong Road, Toorak as designed by Robert B. Hamilton and constructed by 1940 is significant. The significant attributes are the Old English style form, materials and detailing of the flats as designed by Hamilton, the garden setting and the brick front fence with semi-circular entry, which is typical of Hamilton's work.

Later alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

Gowrie Court is of local historic, architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

Historically, Gowrie Court is significant as 'Luxury' residential flats designed by Robert B. Hamilton who was the leading designer of this type of flat development in Toorak and South Yarra during the inter-war period. The mix of flat types - in this case a maisonette, large family flats and one bachelor flat - is characteristic of Hamilton's developments of the late 1930s. The inclusion of the 'bachelor' flat is of note as a rare example of a 'Luxury' flat specifically for single people or couples. (Criteria A, D & H)

Architecturally and aesthetically, Gowrie Court is a highly accomplished example of inter-war flats designed in a simplified Old English style. Picturesque variety is created for the L-shaped flats building by skilful modulation of projecting hipped and gabled bays, rectangular, round and segmentally arched window and door openings, and bay and oriel windows. The brickwork is of high quality, and the corbelled base to an oriel window is of particular note. In addition, the finely detailed front fence and curve benches contribute to its aesthetic significance. Gowrie Court demonstrates the skill of Robert Hamilton, Victoria's foremost practitioner of the inter-war Old English style. (Criteria E, F & H)

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|---------------------------|---|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Stonnington - Residential Flats in Stonnington - Heritage Citations Project, Context P/L, 2013; |
| Construction dates | 1941, |
| Architect/Designer | Hamilton, Robert B., |
| Other Names | Luxury flats & maisonettes, |
| Hermes Number | 165702 |
| Property Number | |

Physical Description 1

Gowrie Court flats, 716 Orrong Road, Toorak, is a large, two-storey block of flats and a smaller garage and mews block. The L-shaped block and the garage/mews are situated around a long courtyard, which is open to Orrong

Road. There are small garden beds along the flats building with brick edging and paths, but the rest of the courtyard is paved. The front of the property is bounded by a low brick fence and a wide vehicular entry at the centre with tall piers. On either side of the entry are curved benches integrated into the wall. The detailing of the fence is exceptional, with 'gabled' coping to the low piers and the back rest of the benches, and a band of narrow clay tiles at the top of the fence and low piers, and six bands in all on the tall gate piers. The piers retain carriage lamps at the top, which may be early.

The flats building has a high hipped roof with brown Marseille tiles and exposed rafter ends. Chimneys are massive with corbelling to the top. There is a variety of two-storey hipped and gabled breakfronts along the elevations to the courtyard, which mark the entries to the different flats. The gables have flush verges, corbelled ends and intricate brickwork vents at the apex.

The clinker bricks have some overburnt texture to them, and there are also simple diamond patterns created by protruding headers, suggesting diaper work.

Entries are varied, and include round-arched brick openings with wrought-iron gates, segmentally arched openings, and a parapeted entrance tower in the inner corner at the rear of the courtyard. The window types and shapes are even more varied, with six-over-six double-hung sashes - both rectangular and segmentally arched, some with two-over-two sidelights, two-storey canted bay windows with board-and-batten cladding to the spandrels, a canted oriel window with a bell-cast roof and conical brick corbelling below, and tiny triangular oriel windows resting on a triangular timber bracket. The many projecting bays and the multiplicity of door and window types and shapes lends a pleasant picturesque character to the flats and effectively breaks up the building's bulk.

The mews building on the north side of the courtyard is much simpler in massing and details, but shares the same wall and roofing materials. A small mews flat is located above a row of garages. At the west end is a parapeted bay, providing entry to the flat. Windows to the flat are six-over-six double-hung sashes with louvered shutters, lending it a Georgian Revival appearance. All garage doors are modern.

There is a recent bank of garages adjoining the west end of the mews building, which is sympathetic in design, with a high hipped and tiled roof, and clinker brick walls. Built in 1983, it replaced four carports of unknown date. Dormer windows were added to the roof of the flats building at the same time to create an upper level, designed by Joyce Nankivell Architects. A number of them face the courtyard, but were sympathetically and unobtrusively designed, with only one clearly visible from the public domain (on the western slope of the roof). In 1996 a small first-floor terrace at the front of the site, the north-west corner, was enclosed. This involved the creation of a new hip above it, and creation of brick walls and multipane windows to enclose it, both intended to match the original features.

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/>