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# House



66 Napier Crescent  
Essendon

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## Location

66 Napier Crescent ESSENDON, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

## Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO498

## Heritage Listing

Moonee Valley City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 4, 2019

What is Significant?

66 Napier Crescent Essendon, a Postwar Moderne house built in 1955 is significant.

The significant fabric includes the:

original building and roof form;

face brick walls, porches, balconies and fenestrations;

original chimneys, tiled roofs, eaves and soffit details;

door and window joinery and steel framed windows;

porch detailing including the screen wall;

wrought iron work including the balustrade, external lamps and screen to porch; and

low brick fence along both frontages and wrought iron gates.

The high fence at the rear of the Peterleigh Grove (side) frontage and rear garage with roller door are not significant.

How is it significant?

66 Napier Crescent Essendon is of local architectural (representative) and aesthetic significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

66 Napier Crescent, Essendon, is architecturally significant as an example of a post-war Moderne residence. The Moderne style formed a distinct change from past architectural styles, combining aspects of Functional Modernism that were concerned with building form and structure, with a decorative approach to materials and detail. 66 Napier Crescent is one of a small cohort of Moderne houses in Moonee Valley. Two particularly early examples of the style were built pre-war at 2-4 Sherbourne Street, Essendon, c.1936 (HO279) and 2 Riverview Road, Essendon, 1935 (VHR1160, HO108). Two further examples include houses built in 1940 at 93-95 Mooltan Street, Travancore (HO75), and 34 Peterleigh Grove, Essendon (HO97). 66 Napier Crescent is somewhat later than these examples, being built in 1955, however it does demonstrate key aspects of the style. The Moderne is evident in the horizontally proportioned, streamlined curved glass window, whilst the corner windows and the front porch with its brise soleil wall and matching feature wall that forms part of the curved glass window are elements borrowed from Functional Modernism. (Criterion D)

66 Napier Crescent, Essendon, is aesthetically significant for its form, materials and details all present at a high level of integrity. Elements include the 'L'-shaped form of the house combining a single-storey and double-storey block of cream brick with base courses of dark brown brick, and occasional use of random stone facing. Steel-framed corner windows contribute to the horizontality of the Moderne aesthetic and culminate in the projecting curved window with the unusual porch screen in the manner of a brise soleil. 66 Napier Crescent is aesthetically significant for its wrought iron to balustrades, external lamps, gates, and porch screen, the latter being highly elaborate in pattern with a door and side panels. The integrity of the building is greatly enhanced by the very high level of intactness of these main elements, and by its setting that includes an original brick fence and wrought iron gate. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant Moonee Valley - Moonee Valley 2017 Heritage Study, Context, 2019;

Hermes Number 202282

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

66 Napier Crescent, Essendon, a large two-storey residence built in 1955, sits on a generous site on the corner of Peterleigh Grove, a narrower cross street running south through a residential area to Brewster Street. The site

is close to the railway line (which gives this crescent its distinctive form) but is located on the south side of a straight section of the 'crescent' leading east to Pascoe Vale Road (forming an eastern continuation of Glass Street and which prior to the construction of the railway formed part of Glass Street). Neighbouring residences in Peterleigh Grove consist principally of interwar and wartime dwellings due to the subdivision in 1937-38 of the Peterleigh Estate. Peterleigh Street runs through the centre of this former city mansion estate from Brewster Street in the south to Napier Crescent in the north.

The bulk of the residence at 66 Napier Crescent, Essendon, is an L-shaped, two-storey block with hipped tile roof, with a narrower hipped-roofed single-story wing projecting to the north. The building is principally constructed of cream brick, with base courses of dark brown brick, and occasional use of random stone facing (for example to planter boxes). Expanses of exposed reinforced concrete and cement rendered brickwork are juxtaposed against the predominant face brick, notably in the principal entry porch and adjoining wall. The roofs are clad in dark brown glazed terracotta tiles, with slatted timber soffit to the eaves. Unadorned cream brick chimneys, rectangular in section, protrude to the north and south of main double-storey section.

Fenestration provides an important and distinctive element of this residence. The windows are a mix of metal-framed casements and fixed sashes, especially for prominent positions (such as the upper corner window at north-east corner of two-storey section and an unusual curved window to northern wing), with timber double-hung sash windows; west-facing windows of two-storey section have canvas awnings. Windows that have special prominence are a bow-fronted bay on the ground floor (to the south of the main entrance) supporting a corresponding terrace on the top storey; the curved window and a set of fully-glazed French doors opening onto small balustraded patio with steps into the front garden from north of single-storey wing.

A feature is made of the front porch. This is created at the internal angle of the main L-shaped building wings by use of a north-facing, perforated concrete (or possibly rendered brick) screen in the manner of a 'brise soleil', the east-facing entry screened by an elaborate wrought iron door and surrounds, an emphasis accentuated by the corner window at first-floor level. The porch wall returns to the east front of the single-storey wing, where the perforations take the form of indented squares infilled with rosettes to form an impervious wall, which then abuts and forms a continuation of the curved window to produce a streamlined effect. Wrought-iron work is prominent throughout, including balustrades, external lamps, gates, and screen to the porch, the latter being highly elaborate in pattern with a door and side panels.

The residence is set in a mature garden setting of lawn, garden beds, and several large trees and shrubs, the allotment frontage edged by a low fence of cream brick, curved at the street corner, and capped by a row of headers topped with a frieze of wrought iron panels (stylistically matching those to the main house). A high fence to the rear section of the Peterleigh Grove (side) frontage and rear garage with roller door both appear later than original date of construction although have a stylistic unity with the main house-and-fence ensemble.

66 Napier Crescent, Essendon, is of very high integrity with very few changes visible to original or early elements of the place. The building retains its original building and roof forms, face brick walls, porches, balconies, and fenestration.

The integrity of the building is greatly enhanced by the very high level of intactness of these main elements, which include details such as the original chimneys, tiled roofs, eaves and soffit details, metal-framed windows, unpainted face brickwork, porch detailing (including screen wall), wrought ironwork details (including balustrades, external lamps, and screen to the porch).

The integrity of the place is enhanced by the retention of its original brick fence along both frontages that matches the architectural style of the house as well as the wrought iron gate and retention of the early garden setting.

The integrity of the place is slightly diminished by the high fence to the rear section of the Peterleigh Grove (side) frontage and rear garage with roller door; both appear later than original date of construction although have a stylistic unity with the main house-and-fence ensemble.

*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/>*