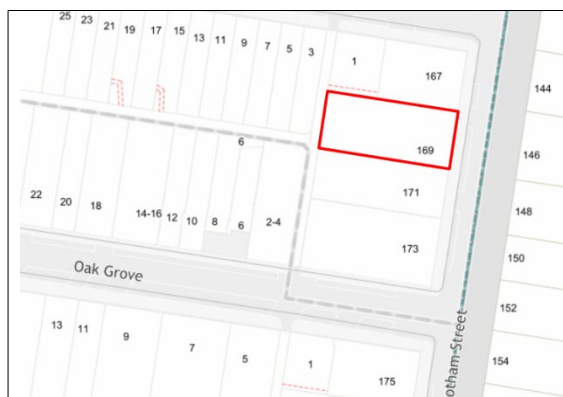


Statement of Significance: Feldhagen Flats Group Listing 1

Address:	99 Westbury Street, Balaclava; 169 Hotham Street, Balaclava; 247 Inkerman Street, Balaclava	Name:	Feldhagen Flats Group Listing 1
Place type:	Residential: Flats	Grading:	Significant
PS ref no:	HO559	Constructed:	1961 - 1968
Heritage precinct:	Not applicable	Citation No.:	2445



What is significant?

The Feldhagen Flats Group Listing 1 (1961-1968) comprising three separate blocks of flats, designed by the émigré architect Michael R E Feldhagen and constructed primarily in the early 1960s, at 169 Hotham Street, 247 Inkerman Street and 99 Westbury Street, Balaclava is significant.

All three buildings are intact and are similar in that they all have upper storeys that partly cantilever over the ground floor, have flat roofs and make use of a similar materials palette including textured concrete roman bricks and breeze blocks. All retain at least parts of their original fences.

169 Hotham Street, comprised of 7 flats, was designed in 1961/1962, and likely constructed by Peter Bros. and later extended in 1967/68. The three-storey building has a rectangular footprint. The upper levels of the façade are articulated with decorative brickwork and a central panel of breeze blocks. Fenestration is mostly contained in the long elevations.

247 Inkerman Street was designed in 1962 and constructed by Camillo Bros. It is two-storey and has a rectangular footprint. The balconies to the long east elevation are partly recessed and partly projecting with flange screen/privacy walls. The short north and south elevations feature shadow concrete blocks, configured in a hexagonal pattern to the upper levels.

99 Westbury Street, comprised of 9 flats, was designed in 1963 and constructed in 1963-64 by Abraham Wolf Schachter of Perfection Constructions P/L, but incorporates the partly completed ground floor from an earlier (1961) abandoned scheme for the site. The two-storey building has an L-shaped footprint with two discrete wings to the front and rear. The ground floor and the upper level of the rear wing is in cream brick. The symmetrical façade has central recessed balconies/porches to both levels, flanked by mirrored bays with large windows with spandrels.

Alterations and additions are not significant. The current paint colour schemes are not significant.

How is it significant?

The Feldhagen Flats Group Listing 1 (1961-1968) at 99 Westbury Street, 169 Hotham Street and 247 Inkerman Street, are of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

The Feldhagen Flats Group Listing 1 (1961-1968) is historically significant as part of the extensive flat building activity that has characterised much of the 20th century history of the municipality but especially this part of St Kilda East/St Kilda and which gained pace after WWII. Although the Own-Your-Own (OYO) model of development was popular at the time, these three buildings were investments. As was common, the flats either replaced earlier Victorian period houses or were built in excised sections of their grounds. The flat typology evolved with the work of several émigré architects, who were responsible for a high proportion of the architect-designed examples and who often worked with Jewish developers. These imbued the area with a more progressive, International character, and which was supported by the local, often Jewish, community. The group also have associations with the architect Michael R E Feldhagen, one of the leading exponents of flat design. (Criterion A)

The Feldhagen Flats Group Listing 1 (1961-1968) is of aesthetic significance as a distinctive group of Modernist flats by the Polish-born, German trained émigré architect Michael R E Feldhagen. They are fine examples of the approach that evolved during the late 1950s and early 1960s, when there was a shift from the post-war era to what is often defined as the late 20th century period. The blocks are relatively small, limiting the need for common circulation areas. Feldhagen's output during the early 1960s, which was likely to have been influenced by his training and contemporary architecture in Berlin during the 1950s, has no ready comparison in contemporary flat or residential architecture in the municipality as it is more expressive than the output of his contemporaries with a varied material palette (especially the range of concrete/Besser blocks), greater use of expressed concrete, and varied geometric articulation with shadow blocks and breeze blocks, and partly indicative of a Featurist mode. Even amongst Feldhagen's own work, these three buildings have a distinct aesthetic with limited comparison, for soon after the expression he employed shifted. Their overall high level of intactness are complemented by the retention of parts of front fences. (Criterion E)

Primary source

RBA Architects & Conservation Consultants, *Review of Heritage Precinct HO7 – Elwood, St Kilda, Balaclava, Ripponlea - Stage 2 Report (2022)*

Place schedule

PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME

Name	Address	Grading
Flats	99 Westbury Street, Balaclava	Significant
Flats	169 Hotham Street, Balaclava	Significant
Flats	247 Inkerman Street, Balaclava	Significant