

## 519 Mount Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds Statement of Significance April 2021

Heritage Place:	House	PS ref no:	HO522
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*519 Mount Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds, principal elevation (source: Context 2018)*

### What is significant?

The apartment building at 519 Mount Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds, is significant. It was built in 1941-42 by owner William James Simmie, a Melbourne builder, who was a president of major interwar construction company Simmie & Co Pty Ltd. The building contained six apartments for rent, and a larger two-storey unit that was William Simmie's home until his death.

Significant fabric includes the:

- original building form, roof form and fenestrations;
- tiled roofs and chimneys;
- unpainted face brick walls;
- face brick details including contrasting sills, clinker brick base and brick detailing around the entry porches;
- window and door joinery;
- metal framed windows with horizontal glazing mullions;
- brick garages, laundry and counter-weighted garage doors; and
- front fence including mild steel gate, letterboxes and mild steel details

The generous garden setting and early rose garden are contributory elements.

### How is it significant?

519 Mount Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds, is of local historical and architectural (representative) significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

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

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The apartment building at 519 Mount Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds, is historically significant for its illustration of the higher housing densities that began to appear in the municipality around World War Two, marking a change from the detached villa character seen previously in suburbs like Moonee Ponds and Essendon. (Criterion A)

The apartment building at 519 Mount Alexander Road is a representative example of how scarcity of building materials and labour during the war impacted on construction techniques in a shift towards a functional austerity. This is evident in its simple design that relies on massing and subtle details for visual interest, such as the contrasting brick sills, horizontal glazing mullions, clinker brick base work and contrasting brick detailing around the entry porches. Overall this gives the building a gentle Moderne feel that reflects a restraint required for the period in which it was built, without losing the overall quality of execution that one would expect of a building that was constructed in part as the home of the head of a major construction company. The place is enhanced by the retention of its original setting, including the garages, external laundry, generous garden setting, original front fence and gate, and early rose garden. (Criteria A and D)

### **Primary source**

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This document is an incorporated document in the Moonee Valley Planning Scheme pursuant to section 6(2)(j) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.