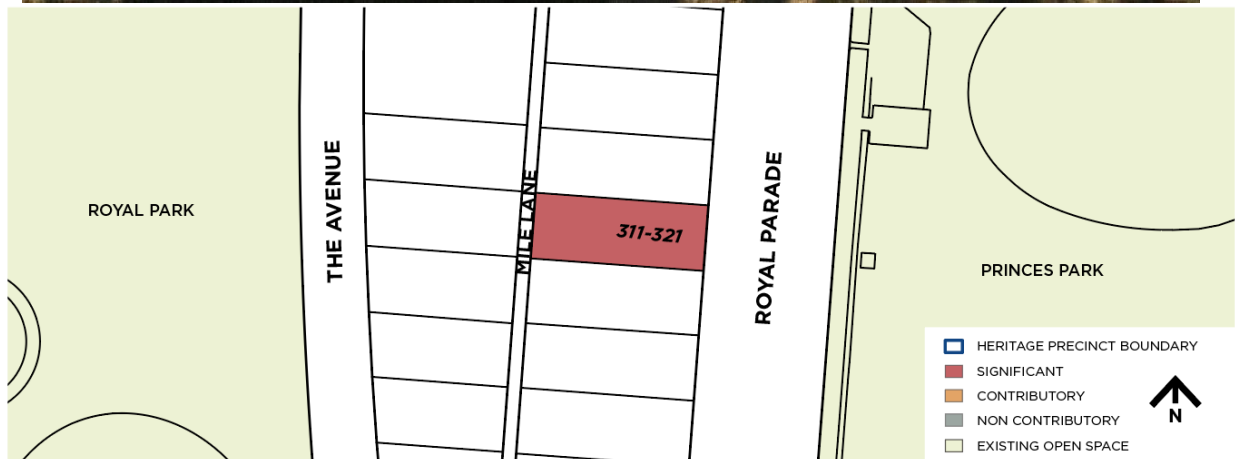


Royal Court, 311-321 Royal Parade, Parkville Statement of Significance (GML Heritage, September 2025)

Heritage Place:	Royal Court, 311-321 Royal Parade, Parkville	PS ref no:	HO1448
------------------------	--	-------------------	--------



What is significant?

Royal Court at 311–321 Royal Parade, Parkville, built 1938–39, is significant.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include the:

- building's original external form, fabric and detailing; and
- building's high level of integrity to its original design; and
- integrated central courtyard and landscape plan with brick pathway; and
- pattern and size of original fenestration; and

- treatment of the façade with bands of decorative brick and colour-blocking articulated across the external walls; and
- hipped and tiled roof and concealing parapets; and
- original Moderne elements and detailing, including the curved balconies, metal handrails, decorative brickwork and moulding, the ornamentation of the door surrounds, parapets and chimneys, and the strong horizontal and vertical compositional emphasis and detailing; and
- form and matching paint scheme of the front brick fence with its curvilinear motif.

How is it significant?

Royal Court at 311–321 Royal Parade, Parkville, is of local historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Melbourne.

Why is it significant?

Royal Court is historically significant as a highly intact example of a block of flats designed in the Moderne style at the end of the interwar period. Constructed in 1938–39, possibly to a design by Bruce & Gordon Sutherland, as an evolution of the firm's neighbouring design at Park Court, the building demonstrates the balance between the growing popularity of high-density inner-city housing and the importance placed upon spacious modern living. It is notable as a fine example of its typology as a low-rise block of flats with an integrated courtyard which had grown in popularity in Melbourne throughout the later 1930s. The building's U-shaped plan demonstrates the maximisation of space in narrower lots from the remnant land of earlier Victorian estates. The retention of its bold detailing and landscape plan, and its siting on the affluent and desirable Royal Parade boulevard, reflect Parkville's character as a middle-class area. Royal Court is a key remnant example of the typology in the area, reflecting the development of middle-class housing prior to the emergence of high-rise apartments. (Criterion A)

Royal Court has representative significance as a highly externally intact block of flats demonstrating the emerging design principles of the later interwar period. The complex was designed to provide spacious, modern, affordable accommodation for the middle class in the inner suburbs, catering to the desire for a stylish design and liveability. The largely rectangular plan of the wings is elevated by the use of Moderne detailing, and the integration of the central courtyard, which maximises the availability of natural light and views to each individual flat. This is historically representative of the focus placed upon health in the 1930s, and the growing awareness of the benefits of sunshine and green spaces. Opened in 1939, Royal Court is a later example of a Moderne building in the City of Melbourne and is a bold example of the style. It showcases characteristic elements of the style, and, together with the neighbouring property at Park Court, is representative of the widespread popularity of the typology in the period. (Criterion D)

Royal Court has aesthetic significance for its integration of planned landscaping and built form. It is a striking example of the Moderne style in Parkville, showcasing the characteristic juxtaposition of geometric motifs and massing. The key Moderne details include triple-fronted elevations to the east, curved balconies, bands of horizontal brickwork, and prominent projecting bays within the courtyard. The contrasting colour scheme and decorative landscaping enhance the design. Although low in scale, and comparatively modest in relation to surrounding development, the bold, open design of the building and its courtyard invites views from the public domain and gives the site a high degree of landmark quality in its immediate setting. (Criterion E)

Primary source

Parkville Heritage Review (GML Heritage, October 2023)