

# SIBBEL BUILDERS HOUSES

Place No. 416

**ADDRESS** 68-70 Olympus Drive  
Lower Templestowe

**Last Update** 8/07/2005

**DESCRIPTION** The houses at 68 and 70 Olympus Drive, Lower Templestowe are of similar post-war contemporary design. The houses are brick and have flat steel deck roofs with deep eaves which extend forward over a carport in front, at left. No. 68 is of clinker brick, with blue/grey stained timber and plantings of shrubs and tree clusters. It is similar in design to another house at No. 37 Olympus Drive (constructed at a similar time, but reputedly by Merchant Builders), but larger, extending in U-shape around a courtyard. No.70 has tan brick walls with matching paved drive and light brown stained timber. The carport is enclosed on its south side by a storage locker wall and the garden has a railway sleeper retaining wall.

**Condition** Excellent

**Integrity** Intact

**Threats** None apparent

**Key elements** Buildings

**Designer** Herman Sibbel

## HISTORY

In May 1965, Hooker Town Developments Pty. Ltd. of 327 Collins Street, Melbourne purchased 20 hectares of land on the north-west corner of Williamsons and Manningham Roads (1) from Alan David Williamson, a descendent of the Doncaster pioneer Robert Williamson, who settled in the district in the 1890s with his brother David. Hooker began subdividing immediately and by 1966 had built part of Olympus Drive. A later subdivision to the north completed the subdivision. The houses now at 68 and 70 Olympus Drive are situated on Lots 54 and 53 respectively of subdivision LP73038 (2).

The site of the house at 68 Olympus Drive on Lot 54 was purchased by Leo Edward and Peggy Caripi, shop proprietors, on 18 August 1967. The present owners, Dr Terence and Dr Beverley Alma Hore purchased the site on 11 April 1969. A building permit was issued for the construction of a house on the site in June 1969. The house was built by Sibbel Builders (3).

The site of the house at 70 Olympus Drive on Lot 53 was also bought by Leo Edward and Peggy Caripi on 9 February 1967 (4). A building permit was issued for the construction of this house in May 1968. Like No. 68 it was designed and built by Sibbel Builders (5).

Sibbel Builders was one of several project homes firms constructing 'unashamedly modern' homes in the Melbourne metropolitan area from the mid-1960s until the 1980s. The first to establish were Merchant Builders who built display homes at 18-22 Olympus Drive in 1968. Others included Pettit and Sevitt of Sydney who had a display site at Glen Waverley, Peter Hooks, architect, whose firm had a display site of three houses in Lower Templestowe; Vindin Squares who had a display home in George Street, close to Olympus Drive in the early 1970s, and Lucas and Morris. All these firms are thought to have 'followed the trend begun by Eichler Homes in California in the 1950s' (6).

As Rushman (7) concludes:

'While firms such as AV Jennings catered for a prevailing level of taste, the new project builders, including Merchant Builders, sought to educate public taste.'

Sibbel Builders was run as a partnership by brothers Herman and Martin Sibbel between c1964 and c1975 (8). The two brothers emigrated from Germany to Australia in 1953, and settled at Eltham (9). The designs for this firm's houses were by Herman Sibbel, who had trained as an architect in Holland. After the partnership was dissolved, Herman Sibbel continued to operate a building firm until his retirement in the late 1970s. From 1978 until 1997, his son Meyer ran the business (10).

Sibbel Builders specialised in the design and construction of houses. Their houses have 'passive' solar features, i.e northerly aspect wherever possible, and are environmentally friendly. Most are built on concrete slabs, with hydronic heating inside the slab. Care was taken whilst building not to disturb the site too much; and this was achieved by excavating as little as possible. Their approach to the environment is described as being ahead of it's time. (11)

Herman Sibbel designed for the firm, and his daughter assisted in designing, and prepared the plans (12). It is believed that Martin was a fine builder and cabinet maker. The quality of the workmanship in Sibbel houses was very high, therefore, the cost was almost twice that of comparable houses by their competitors Merchant Builders Pty. Ltd. (13).

The firm built houses in Glen Waverley, Eltham, Doncaster, Templestowe, Toorak and Flinders. It is believed that at least four or five houses in Olympus Drive were built by Sibbel Builders (14). The other two or three have not been positively identified. Although they concentrated on building houses, other projects completed by the firm include flats, factories and a renovation to the Roman Catholic Church in Eltham. At its busiest times the company employed twelve staff and a further 50 to 60 subcontractors. (15)

**SOURCES**

- (1) Land Victoria, Certificate of Title Vol. 8056 Fol. 351
- (2) Land Victoria, LP 72168 and LP 73038
- (3) Land Victoria, Certificate of Title Vol. 8643 Fol. 586; City of Doncaster and Templestowe Building Approvals Record BA 5066; Gordon Rushman, 'Submission to Panel on behalf of Dr. and Mrs. T Hore, 68 Olympus Drive, Lower Templestowe. Re-Proposed Heritage Overlay (HO 127) over Nos. 37, 66, 68 and 70 Olympus Drive, Lwr. Templestowe', March 2001.
- (4) Land Victoria, Certificate of Title Vol. 8643 Fol. 585.
- (5) City of Doncaster and Templestowe Building Approvals Record BA 1689; Gordon Rushman, 'Submission to Panel on behalf of Dr. and Mrs. T Hore, 68 Olympus Drive, Lower Templestowe. Re-Proposed Heritage Overlay (HO 127) over Nos. 37, 66, 68 and 70 Olympus Drive, Lwr. Templestowe', March 2001.
- (6) Ibid
- (7) Ibid
- (8) Peter Andrew Barrett, '68 Olympus Drive, 70 Olympus Drive', 6 March 2001, cites Meyer Sibbel, son of Herman Sibbel, pers. comm. with Peter Barrett on the 27 February 2001
- (9) Peter Andrew Barrett, op. cit., cites Inga Bovell, daughter of Herman Sibbel, pers. com with Peter Barrett on 27 February 2001.
- (10) Peter Andrew Barrett, op. cit., cites Meyer Sibbel, son of Herman Sibbel, pers. com with Peter Barrett on 27 February 2001.
- (11) Peter Andrew Barrett, op. cit., cites Meyer Sibbel, son of Herman Sibbel, pers. com. with Peter Barrett on 27 February 2001.
- (12) Peter Andrew Barrett, op. cit., cites Meyer and Inga Sibbel, children of Herman Sibbel, pers. comm. with Peter Barrett on 27 February 2001.
- (13) Peter Andrew Barrett, op. cit., cites Dr Terry Hore and Dr Beverly Hore pers. comm. with Richard Peterson on 21 July 2000. Herman Sibbel (junior), son of Herman Sibbel, pers. comm. with Richard Peterson on 24 July 2000.
- (14) Peter Andrew Barrett, op. cit., cites Meyer Sibbel, son of Herman Sibbel, pers. comm. with Peter Barrett on 27 February 2001.
- (15) Peter Andrew Barrett, op. cit., cites Meyer Sibbel, son of Herman Sibbel, pers. comm. with Peter Barrett on 27 February 2001.

<b>Creation Date</b>	1968-69	<b>Change Dates</b>	
<b>Associations</b>		<b>Local Themes</b>	
	Herman Sibbel, Sibbel Builders Pty Ltd		8.02 - Architects

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**What is Significant?**  
 The houses, designed by Herman Sibbel and constructed in 1968-69 by Sibbel Builders Pty Ltd, at 68-70 Olympus Drive, Lower Templestowe.

**How is it Significant?**  
 The Sibbel Builders houses at 68-70 Olympus Drive, Lower Templestowe are of local historic and aesthetic significance to Manningham City.

**Why is it Significant?**  
 The Sibbel Builders houses are of historic significance as representative examples of the houses constructed by Sibbel Builders, one of a number of major residential development companies who were responsible for innovative residential development in the study area during the late 1960s and early 1970s. (RNE criteria A.4 and H.1)

The Sibbel Builders houses are of aesthetic significance as fine and intact representative examples of post-war contemporary houses, which exhibit the characteristics that are typical of

the firm's style. They are also important contributory elements within the Olympus Drive precinct, which includes a number of other houses in similar style by Sibbel and by their rivals, Merchant Builders. (RNE criterion E.1)

**LEVEL** Potential significance

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Heritage Register Listings**

<b>Register</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Status</b>
None Specified			

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**Extent**

**Heritage Schedule**

External Paint Controls:	On VHR:	VHR Ref No:
Internal Alteration Controls:	Prohibited Uses:	
Tree Controls:	Aboriginal Heritage Place:	
Outbuildings or Fences:	Incorporated Plan:	Incorporated Plan Details
Description:		

**Conservation Management**

It is recommended that further research be undertaken, including comparative analysis with other Sibbel Builders houses, in order to determine the significance of these houses. It would be desirable to do this after a thematic environmental history has been prepared for the municipality, which includes the theme of architect-project builders during the post-war period.

**Extra Research**

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY** Context Pty Ltd, (2005), Manningham Heritage Study Review, Manningham City Council, Doncaster  
 Richard Peterson, (1993), City of Doncaster & Templestowe Heritage Study. Additional Sites Recommendations, City of Doncaster & Templestowe, Doncaster, 14-17