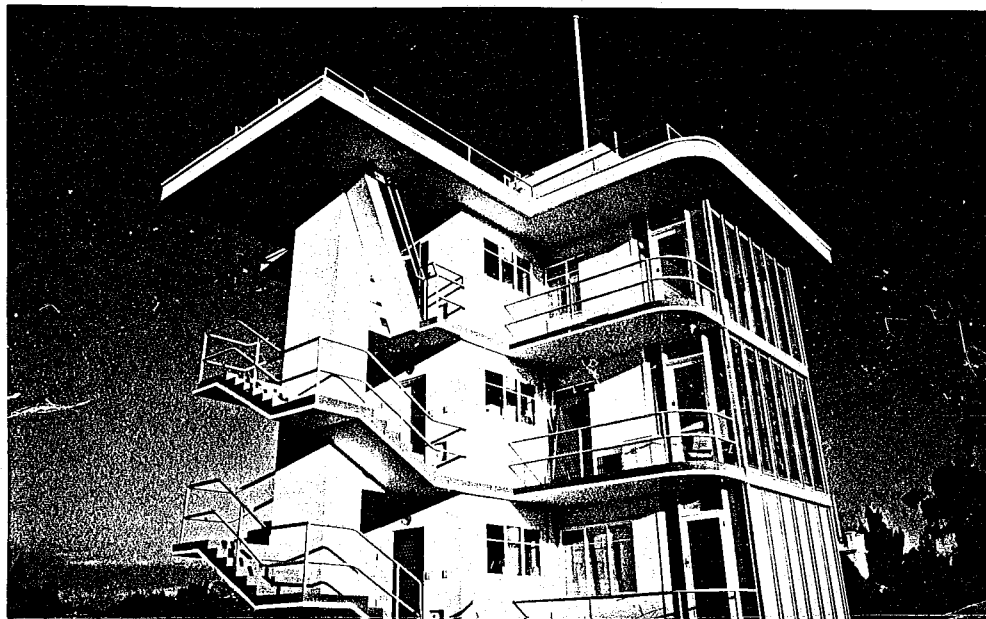


'CARINGAL'  
3 Tahara Road, Toorak



Recommendations It is recommended that this building be retained on the Register of Historic Buildings, Register of the National Estate and be protected using the provisions of Clause 8 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Third Schedule).

History and Description 'Caringal' was designed in 1948 by John W. Rivett and erected in Tahara Road, Toorak between 1948 and 1952. The flats are in two blocks: one of twelve flats in a long, curved three-storey block and six flats in a six-storey tower block which provides extensive views towards the city. The flats were built for the James Fairley (?) Agency, and were financed partly on a co-operative basis, allowing the tenants the choice of becoming debenture holders. All flats were let prior to the completion of the project, which featured intercom facilities between the flats and the main entrance, telephones to each room (incl. bathroom and kitchen) and a tea garden, sun deck and childrens playground on the flat roof of the three-storey block. It was claimed in the Argus that the floor and ceiling heating through metal coils cast into the concrete floor slabs was the first of its kind in Australia, and probably the world. Both blocks have an off-form concrete finish, flat roofs, large glazed areas and cantilevered balconies and stairways. The sweeping horizontal lines of the lower block are dramatically opposed by the verticality of the tower block. The buildings are sparsely and elegantly detailed, with finely scaled window mullions and steel tubing balustrading to balconies, external stairways and accessways.

Significance 'Caringal' is an important group of flats in the International style and exhibits many characteristics of European residential blocks which were developed during the 1930s. The plan form of the contrasting three-storey block and the tower block is without equal in Melbourne. Of particular interest is the recreational roof top of the curved block, which was intended for the communal use of the tenants, and is one of the few of its type remaining. The slab heating may well be of particular significance if the Argus claim can be substantiated.

Intactness 'Caringal' is substantially intact. Some sunroom windows have been replaced with those consistent to the original design, but the recently built brick wall fencing along Tahara Road and the paint colours of the blocks are unsympathetic to the original design. The roof playground equipment no longer exists, but the playground boundary can be recognized by the high mesh fencing around its perimeter.

References

Building Register, Building Department, City of Prahran.  
Guide to Victorian Architecture, 1956, RVIA & ARBV, p. 43  
Argus, 4 January, 1949. p. 3.