

Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

RSTCA No: R011

Name of Place: Manuka Swimming Pool

Other/Former Names:

Address/Location: Manuka Circle GRIFFITH 2603

Block 5 Section 99 of Griffith

Listing Status:	Registered	Other Heritage Listings:	
Date of Listing:	1984	Level of Significance:	Local
Citation Revision No:		Category:	Social/ Recreational
Citation Revision Date:	November 1987	Style:	Art Deco

Date of Design:		Designer:	EH Henderson (Architect, FCC)
Construction Period:	1930-31	Client/Owner/Lessee:	
Date of Additions:		Builder:	

Statement of Significance

A significant example on an Art Deco style building in Canberra. The swimming pool is historically and socially significant as an example of public baths in the early 1930's in Canberra, and in its time a great innovation being the only one of its kind within 330 kms. The pool has retained its original form, details, Art Deco decoration and the character of its period, and is a valuable example of its building type. A significant example of Federal Capital Architecture, its style is consistent with that of other Art Deco style buildings in the townscape of Canberra. The significant siting of the building contributes greatly to its prominence, centred opposite Telopea Park and now surrounded by mature trees. The building, historically and socially significant, has been a focal point of social activities in Canberra for over 50 years.

Description

The swimming pool complex consists of a simple elegant entrance block, flanked on either side by dressing rooms for 86 men and 41 women, forming a courtyard around the then Olympic (100ft x 40ft) size pool. The walls are rendered brickwork and the tiled roofs are hipped. The pool is tiled with white ceramic tiles made in Victoria, and varies in depth from 900mm to 2100mm. The entrance block has vertically fluted pilasters and complementary fluting along the parapet. The Art Deco style decoration includes shell motif embellishments and wave patterned stained glass fanlights and is continued in wrought iron grilles to the narrow openings each side of the entrance which are particularly well crafted. The whole complex has retained the character of the period, without deterioration of the structure. The Gatekeeper's House at Manuka Oval relates to the swimming pool.

Condition and Integrity

Alterations since the pool was built are the reworking/re-siting of the filter and chlorinating equipment into what was the S. E. sunbathing enclosure. Recently restored.

Background/History

Analysis against the Criteria specified in Schedule 2 of the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991

(i) a place which demonstrates a high degree of technical and/or creative achievement, by showing qualities of innovation or departure or representing a new achievement of its time

(ii) a place which exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group

(iii) a place which demonstrates a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function which is no longer practised, is in danger or being lost, or is of exceptional interest

(iv) a place which is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations

(v) a place which is the only known or only comparatively intact example of its type

(vi) a place which is a notable example of a class of natural or cultural places or landscapes and which demonstrates the principal characteristics of that class

(vii) a place which has strong or special associations with person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history

(xi) a place which demonstrates a likelihood of providing information which will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site

References

Other Information Sources