

Stanhill flats

Address 34 Queens Road, Melbourne (St Kilda Rd) 3004

Practice Frederick Romberg (1910-1992)

Designed 1942 Completed 1950

History & Description Stanhill is a nine storey block of apartments, designed in an inter-war Functionalist style by renowned emigre architect Frederick Romberg. Considered to be the most impressive of his works, it was designed in 1942 for Stanley and Hillary Korman Stanhill Pty Ltd) but not completed until 1950.

The flats are of finely executed off-form concrete construction with sophisticated steel and glass detailing. The building is asymmetrically massed with stepped plan and elevation. The southern facade is of concrete frame containing large areas of flush glazing, with individual thin slab balconies and slim iron railings. Four main masses are stepped back at a slight angle to allow privacy and to give views to all. The northern facade is strikingly different, with a broad and fluid sweep of open access galleries shading glazing to cill height. The galleries are connected to a closed stairway at the Queens Road end, to the central lift tower, and to the sculpted open stairway at the eastern end. The roof sports attic flats and roof gardens, stepped down towards Albert Park (Extract from VHR#1875).

Professional critiques of the time described the building as an "exaggerated and unorganised jumble", and "a monumental incubator", because of its expressionist sculptural shape, but acknowledged it as "a textbook of engineering skill in construction" impressive in design and with its details extraordinarily well executed.

Statement of Significance Stanhill is significant as the most ambitious and accomplished project by the renowned emigre architect Federick Romberg.

The design of Stanhill is a rigorous and coherent application of Functionalist principles, combined with Romberg's individualistic interpretation. Stanhill stands apart from more derivative Internationalist compositions by many other architects of the time and subsequently.

Stanhill demonstrates outstanding quality in integrated design and construction for its period, consummately incorporating fluid forms and smooth and fluted finishes in off form concrete, as well as closely allied and subtle detailing in glass and steel window framing.

Criteria Applicable N2 - Significant heritage value in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics
N3 - Significant heritage value in establishing a high degree of creative achievement
N5 - Having a special association with the life or works of an architect of significant importance in our history



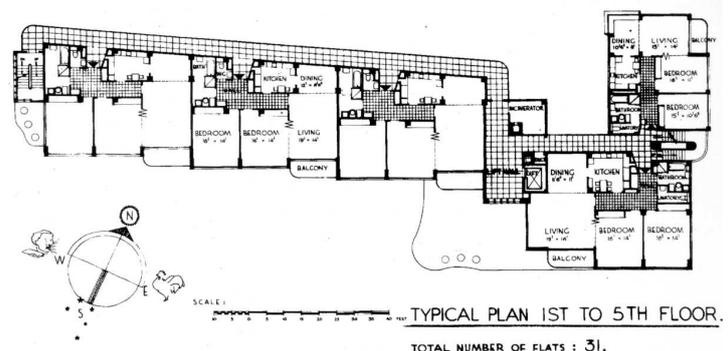
North elevation 1951. Photo by Wolfgang Sievers, SLV



Roof terrace 1945. Photo: J Gallagher, National Archives



View looking east 1957. Photo by Wolfgang Sievers, SLV



Typical floor plan, 1948. [SLV Manuscripts]