

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE – NORTH RICHMOND HOUSING ESTATE

Heritage Place: North Richmond Housing Estate

HO Reference: HO504

Date: 21/10/2026

Address: 106-112 Elizabeth Street, 139 Highett Street, and 23-25 Lennox Street, Richmond



South-west facing view of northern towers from Elizabeth Street, October 2026. *Source:* Extent Heritage. *Source:* Extent Heritage, 2026.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

What is significant?

The North Richmond Housing Estate at 106-112 Elizabeth Street, 139 Highett Street, and 23-25 Lennox Street, Richmond, is significant (Figure 1),

Significant elements include:

- The five high rise 'Z' shaped residential tower buildings, including their distinctive built form, configuration, imposing scale, exposed concrete materiality, rectilinear lines and materiality with uniform colour scheme and window pattern (see Figure 2)

Contributory elements include:

- The two multi-storey car parks, original 1975 school building and original landscaping elements, reflecting an integrated planning approach, and inclusive of open green

spaces, curved pedestrian pathways, tree plantings and two outdoor basketball courts (see Figure 2)

The contemporary North Richmond Community Health Centre buildings, along with alterations and additions to the five residential towers and the two multi-storey car parks, as well as alterations to the original school building and landscaping are not significant.

Non-original recreational amenity elements, including the community garden, contemporary playgrounds, soccer pitch, planter boxes, park benches, fencing and shaded BBQ areas are not significant (see Figure 2).

How is it significant?

The North Richmond Housing Estate is of historical, representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Yarra.

Why is it significant?

The North Richmond Housing Estate is of historical significance to the City of Yarra as a public housing estate developed by the Housing Commission of Victoria (HCV) as part of its post-war high-rise program of slum reclamation and public housing provision in inner Melbourne. Developed on land previously occupied by workers' cottages associated with low income and working-class post-war migrant communities, the Estate illustrates the state government's approach to addressing post-war housing shortages through large-scale redevelopment and the provision of purpose-built public housing estates incorporating recreational amenities and shared open spaces. Its development is a tangible manifestation of a significant phase in the urban and social transformation of Richmond and the wider City of Yarra, when post-war urban renewal and international architectural influences, particularly the adoption of high-rise public housing, significantly reshaped established residential neighbourhoods, the built environment and patterns of community life. (Criterion A)

The North Richmond Housing Estate is of representative significance to the City of Yarra for demonstrating the principal characteristics associated with HCV's high-rise public housing estates, which left an enduring mark on the municipality's urban and social landscape. These principal characteristics are demonstrated through the Estate's substantially intact LPS constructed 'Z' configuration residential towers, landscaped grounds incorporating original recreational amenities, multi-storey car parks and the original 1975 Richmond West Primary School building. Collectively, these elements reflect the integrated planning approach of a typical HCV high-rise public housing estate, in which residential accommodation, open space, recreational facilities, and community and education infrastructure were conceived as cohesive, integrated components across landscaped grounds. (Criterion D)

The North Richmond Housing Estate, specifically its five uniform high-rise residential towers, is of aesthetic significance to the City of Yarra as a prominent landmark within the local urban landscape. The five high rise residential tower buildings, including their distinctive built form, configuration, imposing scale, exposed concrete materiality, rectilinear lines and materiality with uniform colour scheme and window pattern. As the largest HCV public housing estate in the municipality, the Estate as a whole maintains a noticeable and distinct urban presence, reinforced by large areas of open green space surrounding the towers, which provide a sense of openness and contrast with their monumental built form. These characteristics, together

with their location within an otherwise predominantly low-rise residential and commercial streetscape, contribute to the austere architectural identity of the Estate and make them readily recognisable and highly visible features of the streetscape and surrounding neighbourhood. (Criterion E)

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☐	External paint controls	☐	Internal alteration controls	☐	Tree controls
☐	Victorian Heritage Register	☒	Incorporated Plans	☐	Outbuildings and fence not exempt
☐	Prohibited uses may be permitted	☐	Aboriginal Heritage Place	☐	Solar energy system controls

Primary Source

North Richmond Housing Estate Heritage Citation, Extent Heritage, 2026.



Figure 1. Map showing site boundary of North Richmond Housing Estate.



Figure 2. Map showing significant, contributory and non-contributory elements within the site