

Statement of Significance: 12 Marine Parade, St Kilda – “Edgewater Towers” - December 2021

Address: 12 Marine Parade, St Kilda	Name: Edgewater Towers, Flats
Place type: Residential: Flats	Grading: Significant
PS map ref (Heritage Overlay): HO510	Constructed: 1960-61



What is significant?

‘Edgewater Towers’, designed by Mordechai Benshemesh and constructed in 1960-61, at 12 Marine Parade, St Kilda is significant. It is a thirteen-storey apartment block in the International Style. Typical of the style, it is completely stripped of any applied ornamentation and decoration, and is characterised by rectilinear forms and the use of glass and steel with reinforced concrete surfaces painted plain white. The projecting front and side balconies provide a nod to the bayside location, particularly in trying to secure views for apartments not located to the front. Externally, the most visible alteration has been the enclosure of many of the balconies.

Non-original alterations and additions are not significant.

How is it significant?

‘Edgewater Towers’ at 12 Marine Parade, St Kilda is of local historic, architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

‘Edgewater Towers’ is significant as one of the first large scale residential ‘high rise’ apartment buildings in Port Phillip and Melbourne. It introduced a new concept of luxury ‘own your own’ apartment living that encouraged the building of similar apartment blocks in St Kilda and South Melbourne over the following decades, and forms part of an extraordinary collection of flats in St Kilda that demonstrate the history of flat building in Melbourne during the twentieth century. It was the first

high-rise apartment design by Mordecai Benshemesh and is said to have secured his reputation as a leading designer of high-density residential developments in Melbourne. (Criteria A & H)

'Edgewater Towers' is an example of the International Style as applied to multi-level residential buildings. This is demonstrated by its monumental scale, rectilinear forms, use of plain white concrete surfaces, and the 'skin' of glass and steel. (Criterion D)

It has aesthetic significance as a landmark building on the St Kilda foreshore. (Criterion E)

Primary source

Helms, David, *Port Phillip Heritage Review Update*, 2019

Port Phillip Heritage Review - Volumes 1-6 (Panel Version Amendment C161port Part 2, December 2020)