Place name:	Tomlinson Residence (former)
Address:	6 Patrick Court, Airport West
Place typology:	Residential
Construction date range:	1968
Architectural style:	Post-War Modernist
Assessment:	Built Heritage Pty Ltd, May 2022
Recommendation:	To be included in the schedule to the heritage overlay

Photos of place:





Photographs by Built Heritage Pty Ltd, May 2022

Statement of Significance:

What is significant?

6 Patrick Court, Airport West, is a single-storey post-war modernist brick house on an elongated rectangular plan with broad gabled roofline and full-width front verandah. It was erected in 1968 for Rodney and Ann Tomlinson, to a design by architects Chancellor & Patrick.

The significant features of the house include:

- The elongated and narrow linear plan form and low spreading roofline
- The deliberate vernacular allusions including the timber-posted verandah and segmental arched doorways
- The garage, added five years later but designed by the same architects in a matching style
- The original brick fence and gate

How is it significant?

6 Patrick Court, Airport West, is of local architectural significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?

6 Patrick Court, Airport West, is significant as a distinctive and unusual example of an architect-designed house of the late 1960s. Designed at a time when domestic architecture in Melbourne was characterised by increasing stylistic diversity, the house reflected an emerging interest in the Australian vernacular tradition and, specifically, the form and detailing of the rural homestead or farmhouse. This house, with its long rectilinear plan, low spreading roofline, full-width timber-posted verandah with simple fenestration and segmental-arched doorways, represents a confident distillation of historical forms which continued to influence domestic architecture into the early 1970s. (Criterion E)

6 Patrick Court, Airport West, is also significant as a key example of the work of architects Chancellor & Patrick. While this celebrated post-war architectural partnership was prolific across much of the metropolitan Melbourne area as well as regional Victoria, this house not only represents a rare foray into what is now the City of Moonee Valley, but also the only survivor of the four projects they undertook therein. The allusions to vernacular architecture in this house had been explored in a some of the firm's earlier houses and would continue to be explored in later ones, most significantly in the design of a project house known as the *CP3 Farmhouse*, which has many elements in common with 6 Patrick Court and must be considered to have been strongly influenced by it, if not directly developed from it. (Criterion F)

Description:

The house at 6 Patrick Court, Airport West, is a single-storey dwelling of beige brick construction with a longitudinal gabled roof clad in cement tiles. Laid out on an elongated rectangular plan, the house has a wide street elevation with a full-width verandah comprising a skillion roof (set at a slightly gentler pitch to the main roof) supported on square timber posts, defining six bays. The facade has simple repetitive fenestration, with each of these six bays containing a segmental arched doorway with pairs of glazed doors. The front entrance, set into the side (east) elevation, is accessed via a recessed porch that connects the house to the garage.

The garage, added in 1973 to a design by the same architects, is set slightly back but is otherwise similarly expressed with matching beige brickwork and low gabled roof clad in cement tiles. It has a wide door with segmental arched lintel and pale green roller shutter, and is accessed by a concrete paved ribbon driveway.

The front garden is enclosed by a tall wall of matching beige brick that extends from the front corner of the house, along one side of the driveway, and then curves along the remainder of the street boundary. The wall incorporates an opening next to the house with metal slat gate, and there is a matching gate to the recessed entry porch alongside.

History:

Contextual History

City of Moonee Valley occupies part of the Traditional lands of the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woi-wurrung people. Many sites in the area now known as City of Moonee Valley show evidence of Woi-wurrung activities and spiritual connections. Fish were trapped in the rivers and creeks, stone was quarried from the river edges, murnong daisy was collected and kangaroos hunted across grassland areas, and bark was harvested from trees in the river valleys. This relationship between the Woi-wurrung and the land, water, animals and plants, continues to this day (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.29).

The first Europeans to explore the area known as Moonee Valley was a surveyor, Charles Grimes in 1803. In 1836, settlers moving from Van Diemen's Land crossed the area in the hope of finding empty, cheap and plentiful land for sheep. By 1842, surveyors had created the first map of the Parish of Doutta Galla and then Woi-wurrung lands were offered for sale by the British Crown to Europeans (noting that the land was never ceded). The Wurundjeri were moved off their land which had a profound impact on their culture, health and language. By 1860, the entire parish was sold (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.32-33).

Early development of the area began with the goldrush period of the 1850s which saw Mount Alexander Road used as a thoroughfare to the diggings with over 30,000 people estimated as moving along the dirt road each week. Businesses and shops sprang up providing sustenance, transport and accommodation to service the passing gold rush trade. Some very early wayside hotels and shops still survive from this period (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p. 51-54). After the heady days of the goldrush, the 1860s saw Essendon, Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds and Flemington develop into permanent townships. The development of railways by private companies gave huge impetus to suburban development of the area with the opening of the Essendon railway in 1860. The government purchased the line in 1868. Suburban trains terminated at Essendon and it wasn't until 1889 that Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds and Newmarket stations were completed. By 1893 stations opened at Strathmore and Pascoe Vale and in 1922 Glenbervie Station opened. The railways provided an enormous boost to residential development along the line and those who had previously moved to areas without trains, now clamoured for them (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.59).

By the 1880s Essendon had become a Borough and by 1891 had a population of 14,411. Many subdivisions occurred during the land boom of the 1880s and many failed to eventuate due to the depression of the 1890s. In the interwar period a boom in subdivision and residential infill occurred in Travancore, Essendon, Ascot Vale, Strathmore and Moonee Ponds, which was focused on new transport routes along the tram lines, first established to Essendon in 1905. In 1919 the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board was formed and lines were extended and improved. The tram lines saw development occur either side of Maribyrnong Road, further along Mt Alexander Road, Buckley Street and Keilor Road (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.65-68, p.115).

Education was an important consideration in the development of the municipality, with schools having been established in Essendon and Flemington in the 1850s. The development of State schools in the area reflects the major phases of education and includes a number of 'firsts'; the first non-denominational school in Victoria was set up in Essendon in 1850, the first purpose-built infants school in the state was set up in 1902, and Essendon High School was the first purpose-built high school in the Melbourne metropolitan area. Denominational schools were also set up in the area in the early 1850s, with more private schools established during the boom period of the 1880s. Residents wanted a better life than the one most had left behind in Britain, including a good education for their children (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.157-161).

In the three decades after the Second World War, Melbourne's suburbs ballooned outward to cater for post-war migration, the baby boom, an increasing need for new housing, and a more car-centred economy. Areas to the north of Essendon had been open paddocks in 1945, but by 1950 the Shire of Keilor found themselves with a developing suburb with no name. It was later called Niddrie. Similarly, Airport West was developing quickly with houses being built before the roads. By 1964 it was claimed that Airport West had the cheapest cream brick veneers in Melbourne (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.120-121).

Many houses in these post-war areas were austere weatherboard or brick veneer bungalows, with a few scattered architect-designed or project homes on new blocks, particularly along the Boulevard in Aberfeldie. These post-war housing areas were car-centred communities located close to industry along Keilor Road, Matthews Avenue around Essendon Airport and East Keilor. By 1960 Airport West had its first hotel, the famous Skyways Hotel and then in the

1970s the first shopping centre, owned by Westfield, was begun (heritage ALLIANCE, G*ap Heritage Study*, 2005: pp.28-30).

Post-war housing pressure also saw a huge investment by the Housing Commission of Victoria who developed 150 bungalows in concrete, weatherboard and brick in Aberfeldie. They then began an ambitious estate of houses and flats on a 77 acre site at Ascot Vale in 1949. These low-rise walk-up flats eventually gave rise to the high-rise flats of Flemington which opened in June 1965 (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.123).

Many post-war migrants bought or built houses in the outer areas of the municipality, close to employment and industry and where new, cheaper housing was readily available. These developments and public housing in Aberfeldie, Ascot Vale and Flemington have had a long-lasting effect on the nature of the Moonee Valley community which today is one of the most diverse and vibrant in Melbourne (Living Histories, *Thematic Environmental History*, 2012: p.124).

Place History

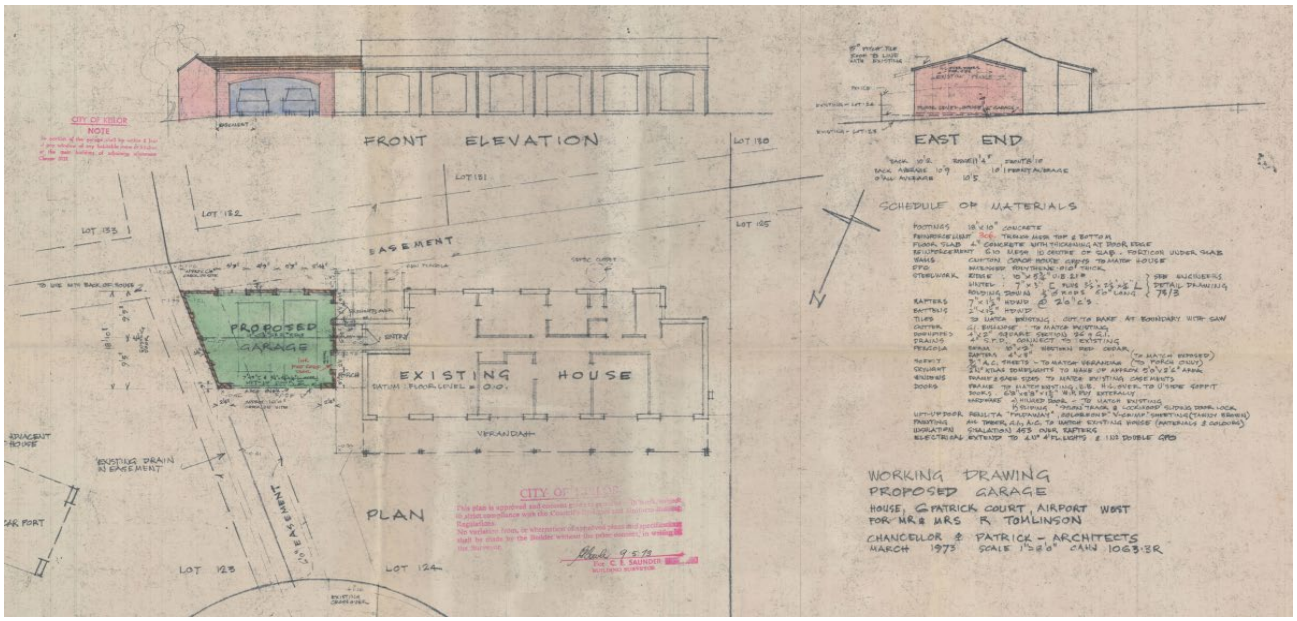
The house at 6 Patrick Court, Airport West, was erected in 1968 for Rodney and Ann Tomlinson, to a design by the architectural firm of Chancellor & Patrick.

Born and raised in Perth, Rodney Kenneth Tomlinson (1938-1987) continued to reside with his parents in the bayside suburb of Como into the early 1960s. An airline pilot by profession, he had moved to Adelaide by 1966, when he married Ann Heaslip. Within two years, the couple relocated to Airport West, Melbourne. In February 1968, the Tomlinsons secured the title to a block of land in Patrick Court that formed part of a large subdivision of nearly 200 residential allotments between Roberts Road and Parer Road, released in several stages in the mid-1960s. Their site, designated as Lot 124, was above-average in size but oddly shaped, with a sinuous street frontage due to being located near the end of the cul-de-sac. To design their new house, the couple turned to architects Chancellor & Patrick.

The eminent post-war partnership of Chancellor & Patrick sprang from the sole practice of William David Chancellor (born 1926), who began working from his home in Frankston in 1952 and, two years later, promoted colleague Rex Patrick (1926-2018) to full partnership. Over the next few years, the Frankston-based firm established a reputation for fine residential work, with many houses (often invoking the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright) published in newspapers and magazines. In 1958, Chancellor moved to Box Hill and relocated the practice to South Yarra, leaving the Frankston office as a branch under staff member John Rouse. The bifurcated practice thrived into the 1960s, continuing to garner press attention as it embraced a wider range of commissions including project housing, churches, preschool centres and large-scale university buildings, as well as a steady stream of single private dwellings. By the end of the decade, the Wrightian tendencies that had informed the firm's earlier output had given way to a broader range of stylistic influences.



The Tomlinson Residence photographed soon after completion. Source: Peter Wille Collection, State Library of Victoria



Drawings for 1973 garage addition by Chancellor & Patrick. Source: City of Moonee Valley

Original drawings for the house do not seem to have survived, either in the Chancellor & Patrick archive or the building permit records of the City of Moonee Valley. However, the architectural attribution is confirmed by the fact that, in the near-definitive list of projects compiled by Winsome Callister for her PhD thesis on Chancellor & Patrick, there is an entry for the Tomlinson House, dated 1968. Although no street address was cited, this clearly refers to 6 Patrick Court, Airport West. Five years after the house was completed, the Tomlinsons returned to Chancellor & Patrick to design a garage. Working drawings for this minor addition, copies of which survive in the City of Mooney Valley's records, are dated March 1973 and bear the title block of the firm's South Yarra office. The delineator, identified by the initials CAHJ, was senior staff member Colin Arthur Herbert Jones. The drawings show the original house with its elongated rectilinear plan and low gabled roof and full-width verandah, with the new garage at the east end, slightly set back with matching gabled roofline, brickwork and segmental arched double door. A building permit for the garage, estimated to cost $3,427, was issued on 28 March 1973, and construction was undertaken by builder D R Mittasch of Oak Park. Three years later, the Tomlinsons erected a tall brick wall that curved along the sinuous street boundary of the property; building permit records confirm that Chancellor & Patrick was not involved. The family would remain in residence in Patrick Court for many years. Following Rodney's early death in 1987, his widow Ann continued to live there until 2004.

Sources:

Primary Sources

Chancellor & Patrick, "Proposed garage, house, 6 Patrick Court, Airport West, for M & Mrs R Tomlinson", working drawings dated March 1973. City of Moonee Valley.

Secondary Sources

Winsome Callister, "Anchoring Identify: The Architecture of Chancellor & Patrick, 1950-1970", PhD thesis, Department of Visual Arts, Monash University, 2007.

Judith O'Callaghan and Charles Pickett, *Designer Suburbs: Architects and Affordable Housing in Australia* (Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2012).

Thematic Context:

City of Moonee Valley Thematic Environmental History, 2012

6. Building towns, cities and the garden state

6.7 Making homes for Victorians

Comparative Analysis:

The following is a list of notable architect-designed houses in the City of Moonee Valley from 1966 to 1970

- Overall Residence, 110 Roberts Street, Essendon North (Clarke, Hopkins & Clarke, 1966) – *demolished*
- Sims Residence, 463 Pascoe Vale Road, Strathmore (Albert Ross, 1966) – *demolished for freeway*
- Mirabella Residence, 38 Henry Street, Keilor East (Ermin Smrekar, 1966) – *individually listed as HO333*
- Landgren Residence, 4 Aroona Court [formerly Janfred Court], Aberfeldie (Max Chester, 1967) – *extant; no HO*
- Parker Residence, 1 Woorite Place, Niddrie (designer unknown, circa 1967) – *previously identified; demolished*
- Mason Residence, 36a Forester Street, Essendon (Ian Napier, 1968) – *extant; no HO*
- Tomlinson Residence, 6 Patrick Court, Airport West (Chancellor & Patrick, 1968) – *included in this study*
- Pirotta Residence, 18 Beryl Street, Essendon West (Anton Vukosav, 1970) – *previously identified but no HO*
- Bowlen Residence and Villa Units, 16 Leslie Road, Essendon (Daryl Jackson Evan Walker, 1970) – *extant; no HO*

It is noted that only one of the example listed above is currently included on the heritage overlay (HO) schedule.

During the 1960s, architects gradually moved away from the more conventional strain of modernism that characterised domestic architecture of the 1950s, embracing a broader range of influences that included emerging new styles and allusions to older traditions. While the houses listed above all date from the late 1960s, they are stylistically diverse and perhaps only broadly linked by a more expressive use of materials. Some hark back to conventional modernism, or to even earlier traditions, while others embrace emerging influences that would continue to define residential architecture into the 1970s. The only one that is especially comparable to the subject building is 110 Roberts Street, which similarly invoked the vernacular tradition of Australian homesteads (a briefly fashionable sub-theme of the late 1960s and early '70s). This house, which has since been demolished, referenced these traditions through its use of a low hipped roofline, prominent return verandah and tall windows complete with louvred shutters. This perhaps represented a more stylised interpretation of historical precedent that the more overtly homestead-like character seen at 6 Patrick Court.

Other local buildings by Chancellor & Patrick:

A review of the near-comprehensive list of Chancellor & Patrick projects in Winsome Callister's thesis reveals that the house at 6 Patrick Court, Airport West, is one of only four projects known to have been undertaken by the firm in what is now the City of Moonee Valley. Of these four projects, the three others have all been demolished. Of those, two were non-residential projects that are not particularly comparable: two phases of alteration and addition to the McCraith Brothers coolstore at 390 Keilor Road, Essendon North (1955, 1958) and a small office building for the Murray Gray Society at the RAS Showgrounds in Ascot Vale (1970). The other demolished project was a small house, commissioned by the McCraith Brothers and erected at the rear of their coolstore complex, fronting Elstone Court.

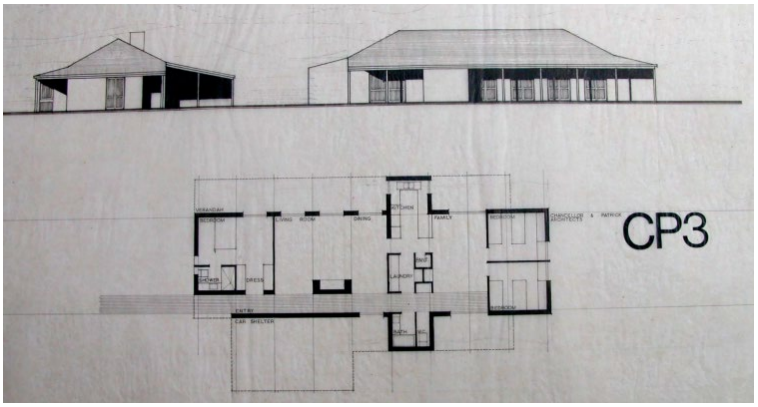
Residence for McCraith Brothers, 1 Elstone Court, Essendon North (1955) A small detached dwelling built at the rear of the McCraith Brothers coolstore fronting Keilor Road. Typical of Chancellor & Patrick's early residential work, it had a broad low-pitched roof with exposed rafters, wide chimney and projecting wing wall. Winsome Callister's PhD thesis includes a photograph of the house (right) that she took in April 2004. The house was demolished the following year.	 *Source: Winsome Callister, April 2004*

In the absence of other surviving local houses by Chancellor & Patrick, one might draw attention to the similarity between 6 Patrick Court and other buildings by the same architects that utilised a similar Australian vernacular expression. The late John Rouse (1935-2022), a longtime member of the firm (and manager of the Frankston branch office from 1958 until its closure in 1970), was known to be particularly interested in this theme; he was responsible for two earliest examples in this list and would go on explore the theme further in his sole practice in the early 1970s:

- MacDonald House, 14 Glen Shian Lane, Mount Eliza (1963)
- Schubert Residence, Humphries Road, Mount Eliza (1967) – demolished
- Purcell Residence, 7 Purcell Court, Werribee (1967)
- Display house "CP3 Farmhouse" for Vindin Suares Pty Ltd, 793 Ferntree Gully Road, Wheelers Hill (1969)
- Display house, "The Stockade" for Eliza Homesteaders, 15 Gannett Street, Mount Eliza (John Rouse, 1969)
- Display house, "The Sundowner" for Eliza Homesteaders, 17 Gannett Street, Mount Eliza (John Rouse, 1969)
- Display house, "The Settler" for Eliza Homesteaders,19 Gannett Street, Mount Eliza (John Rouse, 1969)
- Display house, "The Squatter" for Eliza Homesteaders, 1291 Nepean Highway, Mount Eliza (John Rouse, 1969)
- Baker Residence, 33 Alison Road, Mount Eliza (John Rouse, 1970-71)
- Weate Residence, 1 Millbank Drive, Mount Eliza (John Rouse, 1971-73)

These houses are all comparable in their long, low rectilinear plan forms and low rooflines, variously hipped, gabled or gambrel, clad in cement tiles or slate, and simple elevations with repetitive fenestration. Some have external chimneys with simple capping and sloped sides, typically located to the end wall. While the earlier houses tend to be more stylized in their vernacular allusions, the later ones become more explicit, with tumbled brick (rather than concrete block), full-width or return timber-posted verandahs and segmental arched openings. The partially two-storey house at 7 Purcell Court even incorporated louvred shutters to the upstairs windows.

Some comment should be made on the apparent correlation between the Tomlinson Residence (1968) and the *CP3 Farmhouse* (1969, below). The designs are similar but not identical: the earlier house has a simpler plan (lacking the projecting bays) and a tile-clad gabled roof rather than a slate-clad hipped roof; it also has no chimney. While Callister speculated that the house at Airport West may have been an example of the *CP3 Farmhouse*, the designs differ in too many ways. She evidently overlooked the clue in the list of works that conclusively identifies the project as a private commission from Tomlinson in 1968, thus predating the *CP3 Farm*house. It is likely that the *CP3 Farmhouse* was a development or themes explored in the earlier Tomlinson House, but the two should be considered as separate projects.

Chancellor & Patrick, *CP3 Farmhouse for Vindin Suares Pty Ltd* *Presentation drawing by Ian Banner,* *Chancellor & Patrick Archive* *Source: Winsome Callister, "Anchoring Identity"*	

Recommendation:

That the whole of 6 Patrick Court, Airport West, be included in the Heritage Overlay schedule.

Schedule:

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Solar Energy Controls	Yes
Fences and Outbuildings	Yes (brick fence)
Prohibited Uses	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place	No