Attachments 3-15: Revised Citations

3. Beddison/Swift House, 5 Crown Road, Ivanhoe

4. Lindsay Edward House, 149 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty

5. Willis House, 10 Gruyere Crescent, Ivanhoe East

6. Royd, 61-63 Mount Street Eaglemont

7. Mother of God Church, 56 Wilfred Road, Ivanhoe East

8. Graceburn, 38 Quinn Street, Heidelberg

9. Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and Diamond Valley Learning Centre, 1 Diamond Creek Road, Greensborough

10. Welsh House, 4 Eton Court, Heidelberg

11. Purcell House, 17 Hartlands Road, Ivanhoe East

12. Crittenden House, 30 Longstaff Street, Ivanhoe East

13. St George Peace Memorial Church, 47 Warncliffe Road, Ivanhoe East

14. English House, 50-52 Philip Street, Lower Plenty

15. Okalyi House, 66 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty

BEDDISON/SWIFT HOUSE

Address	5 Crown Road, Ivanhoe
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1963
Period	Late 20th century
Date Inspected	January 2021, June 2022

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Beddison/Swift House at 5 Crown Road, Ivanhoe is significant. It was designed in 1962 by the architectural practice of (Guilford Marsh) Bell & (Neil) Clerehan to a brief provided by the related Beddison and Swift families, joint owners of the property, for a multi-generational dwelling. Construction occurred the year after.

The significant elements are the cuboid and interlinked single-storey 'unit' and rear two-storey 'block', flat roofs with replacement steel decking cladding, slightly recessed timber fascia, white-painted fasciaeaves gutter, the sunken courtyard, carport with stained timber square posts and composite beams, walls of 'Jay Besser' (concrete) Roman brick, rear double-height timber 'verandah', and original fenestration (mainly timber-framed full-height French windows and sheeted Mountain Ash plywood doors with circular entrance handles).

The Lemon-scented gum (*Corymbia citriodora*) in the courtyard and front garden (north) are significant trees as is likely the mature Prickly-leaved Paperbark (*Melaleuca styhelioides*), also in the front garden (south). The native/indigenous'bush' garden whole-site landscape treatment, compact gravel driveway, post box, concrete panel crossover and basalt kerbing complement the significant aesthetic of the *Beddison/Swift House*.

Some original elements in the interior are also of significance, specifically hardwood timber floorboards, internal walls lined with timber battens or plastered, and the open timber staircase.

Later additions, including the rear timber deck and metal roof cladding, are not significant.

How is it Significant?

Beddison/Swift House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Beddison/Swift House is of historical significance as one of the relatively small numbers of designs undertaken by the progressive – if uneasy and fleeting – partnership of Bell & Clerehan. Their architectural response to the atypical request of the clients for multi-generational living was elegantly simple and direct, revolving around a one-storey 'unit' for the older Beddisons at the front of the property with an attached two-storey 'block' for the younger Swifts family to the rear. Neil Clerehan, then consolidating his reputation as one of Melbourne's leading modernists and architectural commentators, was largely responsible for the design. Such architect-crafted expressions of a 'modern' lifestyle still compromised only a minority of developments in the municipality during the early 1960s and are emphatic illustrations of the lifestyle and aesthetic shifts occurring at the time. More broadly, *Beddison/Swift House* reflects the pronounced engagement with professional architects by owners of undeveloped, sloping property along the *Birrarung*/Yarra River banks in the Ivanhoe area, commencing in the postwar years, which endowed the locale with a distinctive layer of modernist design. (Criterion A)

Beddison/Swift House is of aesthetic significance as a refined and largely intact example of Bell & Clerehan's work, which exemplified the classicised and minimalist currents of international modernism in the early 1960s. It is now the foremost example of their oeuvre in Banyule. The two finely proportioned, pared-back cuboid forms that comprise the plan share an urbane carport and sunken courtyard with feature gum. The distinct volumes of the residences are offset from each other, an aspect heightened by contrasting solid-to-void ratios, with the frontage of the 'unit' featuring symmetrically arranged full-height French windows against the planar backdrop of the rear 'block', which is only punctured by a single entrance door. This relationship is reversed to the rear, with more generous glazing provided to the 'block' to capitalise on the available views. *Beddison/Swift House's* material palette of pale brown brick and ~~darkly stained~~ timber unifies the design and harmonises the building within its well-landscaped site. Overall, the effect is serene and understated, attributes that continue into the interior. (Criterion E)

Description

Beddison/Swift House occupies the centre of a large rectangular allotment that falls away from Crown Road, providing it with a roughly similar sized front and rear garden. Its siting responds to both the natural gradient of the allotment and the brief of its first occupants for a dwelling that allowed multigenerational living. The outcome was two individual but interlinked cuboid forms – a single-storey 'unit' to the front of the site, accommodating the Beddisons (a couple) with a two-storey block for the Swifts (husband-and-wife and children) to the rear. The latter took advantage of the natural and contrived incline to reduce its height and presence to the street. The front 'unit' has a narrow side setback from the west boundary, which is largely mirrored by the rear building's relationship to the east boundary.

Views to *Beddison/Swift House* from Crown Road are ~~heavily~~ screened by landscaping, a purposeful aspect of the original design. Accordingly, this description partially based on photographs in the public domain, submitted plans and the original specifications.[1]

Beddison/Swift House's composition is distinctive, presenting as two geometric volumes offset against each other, each contrasted by their solid-to-void ratio as discernible from the street. Such a considered but simplified form was true to type for its main designer, Clerehan:

> I was and still am intrigued with living patterns, actual and possible, and the architectonic expression was and is to me only a frame for those patterns. Therefore I never produce intriguing forms.[2]

Both parts of the house have a flat roof, initially clad in '24-gauge Brownbuilt steel decking', which has been replaced with similar. ~~which may remain~~. The roof framing of the front unit continues over the carport. A slightly recessed timber fascia and ~~W~~white painted ~~fascias~~ metal eaves gutter serves to accentuate the impression that both parts are 'capped' and provide a marked shadow line. Broad eaves with mostly steel-lined soffit are evident to the Beddisons' unit and allow for the strong

1   Woodards, '5 Crown Road, Ivanhoe, January 2019, www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-vic-ivanhoe-129746342; Guilford Bell & Neil Clerehan Architects, *Dual House at 22 Crown Road, Ivanhoe*, Drawing nos 1 and 2, September 1962, City of Banyule, planning archive; and Guilford Bell and Neil Clerehan, *Specification of Materials and Workmanship To Be Used In The Erection Of A Brick Veneer Dual House, Lot 1, Crown Road, Ivan, For Messrs. O.R. Beddison and D. Swift*, September 1962 (City of Banyule, planning archive)
2   Neil Clerehan, letter to Philip Goad, 10 November 1984 in Philip Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne, September 1992, chapter 6, pp62/3

interplay of light and shadow across the façade. Eaves to Swifts' block are close-fitting, except to the rear elevation. Small skylights (three per occupancy) are original.
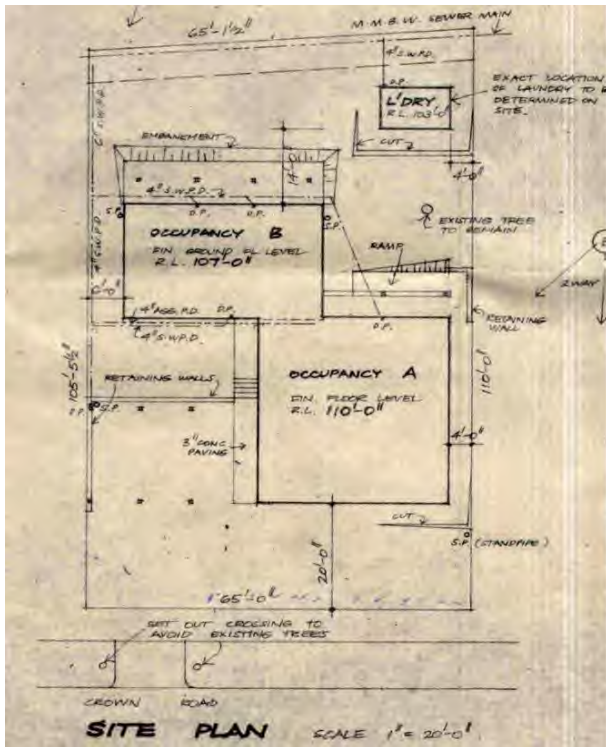
Close-up of original site plan
Occupancy A (single storey, Beddisons) and Occupancy B (two storey, Swifts)
(Source: Guilford Bell & Neil Clerehan Architects, *Dual House at 22 Crown Road, Ivanhoe*, Drawing no 1, September 1962, City of Banyule, planning archive)

The residence was of reinforced concrete construction with veneer walls of pale, ~~earthy/brown~~ light grey coloured 'Jay Besser' (concrete) Roman bricks (long/thin dimensions) set in a stretcher bond. Mortar was tinted to match the brickwork, bestowing the impression of a singular, cohesive plane to the walls. A 'Nonporite' damp course was also specified. Such a minimal palette of materials and finishes is commensurate with much of Clerehan's work (as well as Bell's).

View to carport with the two-storey Swift's block, behind the sunken courtyard, evident to the rear

A shared double carport – both stylish and practical – forms a key component of the house's streetscape presentation, defining the entrance to both parts of *Beddison/Swift House*. 'Fine sawn Oregon' timber was employed for the slender square posts (x6) and hefty ~~double~~ composite beams (x3). This timber appears to have originally been stained rather than painted, preserving its intrinsic character. However, it has now ~~displays~~been painted a dark brown paint (along with timber frames to openings). Previously, the timberwork is reported to have been painted a dark grey, conceivably an early change at the place. The carport's roof was clad in 22-gauge galvanised steel 'Mondeck', but has been replaced with similar~~appears to remain~~. It was left exposed underneath, juxtaposing the metal bays against the timber beams. The floor of the carport is of compacted crushed gravel, which also surfaces the driveway, which terminates with the precast concrete panelled crossover. The post box on the west side of the driveway – a horizontal timber box raised on a circle pole – is also original.

Similar to Clerehan's *Box House* (see Comparative Analysis), the ~~dark timber of the~~ carport's posts and beams, when viewed against the backdrop of the rear block's solid brick wall, provides for a subtle play of line and plane.

The front unit is accessed from the carport, with the entry a tall solid door (sheeted Mountain Ash plywood, clear finish) set in the east elevation. The rear unit entrance (door obscured) is situated over the compact and pebbled sunken courtyard that separates the Swifts' block from the carport. It is accessed via a short descending staircase and tiled path set against the front wing's east elevation. The projecting eave provides shelter (note timber soffit) to the path. Both doors are original and retain the low circular handle favoured by Modernist designers at the time.

A mature Lemon-scented gum (*Corymbia citriodora*) defines the courtyard. From the street, this tree looks to be growing through the building's envelope. While not shown on the original plans (others are), it is evident as a juvenile specimen in a Peter Wille photograph, likely dating from the mid-to-late 1960s (see Site-specific), which suggest it was planted at an early stage.

Full height, recessed openings in the form of timber-framed glazed French windows/doors (sills of 'selected jarrah') are utilised to both the front and rear of the occupancies, chiefly in groups of three. There are also three double casement windows to the first-storey of the block's rear elevation. Such fenestration allows for garden views, spatial flow between the inside and outdoor and provides benefit for the dwelling's living spaces. The symmetry of these openings is resolute. Bell reportedly 'insisted' that a glazed French door be used for the street-fronting bathroom of the Beddison unit so as not to disrupt the balance, despite the issue of privacy.[3] ~~Timber-framed flyscreens are original throughout.~~ A narrow open drain runs the front of this elevation, crossed by brick sill thresholds.

Windows to the side elevations are timber-framed casements with square proportions. Two tall doors were also apparent to the eastern elevation. Some of these elements have been altered or ~~removed~~ infilled with similar brick~~(see below, Summary of Modifications)~~.

At the rear of the Beddison unit is a raised porch (brick retaining wall), surmounted by a section of the main roof that is supported by two square timber posts. An L-shaped ramp connects it to the backyard. Its lower section has been removed. The roof of the Swifts' block breaks forward of the rear (south) elevation creating a double-height 'verandah'. It comprises four timber posts affixed midway up the wall by bolted horizontal beams, articulating the design's interest in a well-resolved balance and subtle gestures to expressed structure. The small terrace it covered has recently been ~~extended~~ replaced with ~~as~~ a timber deck.
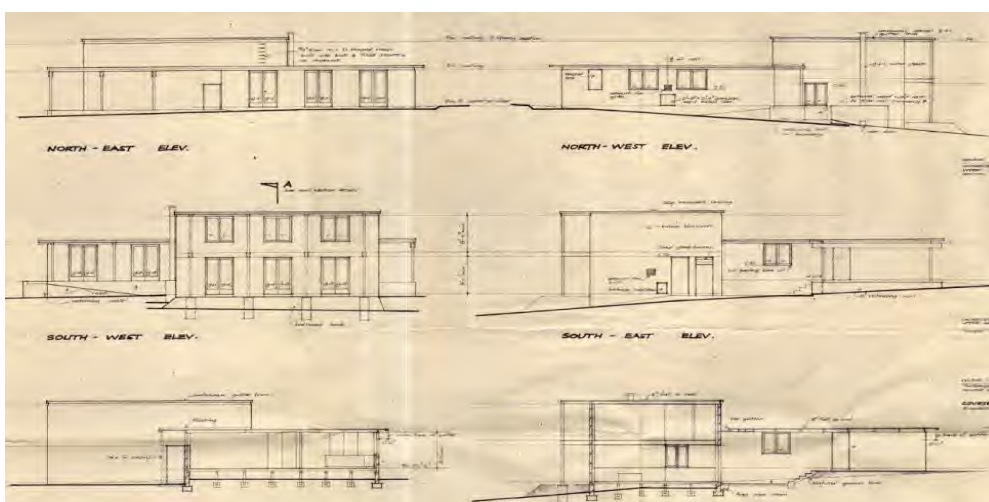
Extract of original elevations and sections of *Beddison/Swift House* (Source: Guilford Bell & Neil Clerehan Architects, *Dual House at 22 Crown Road, Ivanhoe*, Drawing no 2, September 1962)

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3   Edquist, 'Neil Clerehan: A Melbourne Practice', p38

Beddison/Swift House was erected in the grounds of a former garden, and efforts were made to preserve the various trees (original site plan instructions, 'set out crossing to avoid existing trees'). Such specimens were likely considered attractive and useful in maintaining privacy. Accordingly, the pair of mature trees that dominate the front garden – another Lemon-scented gum (north) and what is likely a Prickly-leaved Paperbark (*Melaleuca styhelioides)* (south) – likely precede the dwelling. This landscape buffer has a verdant undergrowth and is mulched to the basalt kerbing of Crown Road. There is no front fence. Rear and side fencing appear to be later additions. In general, both the front and rear garden is landscaped with natives/indigenous plantings and some scattered boulders evident. Such an embrace of the Australian 'bush garden' was an emergent trend over the early 1960s.

Beddisons' unit, filtered through the landscaped front garden – trunk of north Lemon-scented gum apparent left of frame

In the north-west part of the rear garden is a detached single-roomed and flat-roofed laundry room. Its materials mirror that of the primary dwelling, including reinforced concrete floor slab. The laundry is situated at the bottom of an artificial 'cut' (detailed on the original site plan). The site plan also details that an existing tree between the laundry and the rear of the front unit be retained. It is likely the extant specimen, which may be an English Elm (*Ulmus procera*). This tree is believed to predate European development in the area. There is a non-original shed in the south-west corner of the backyard.

Beddison/Swift House interior has undergone some recent alterations and additions (circa 2020), which have affected the original internal layout.[4] The latter was characterised by a stripped-back aesthetic and free-flowing, uncluttered space. Key internal elements that appear to remain are hardwood timber floorboards,[5] plain timber skirting, unbroken timber batten lining to some walls, thin cornices with mitred corners, white-painted fibrous plaster walls and ceilings ('all fixings disguised'), mosaic tiling pointed with white cement (kitchens and bathroom), open timber staircase and balustrade, solid full-height timber Mountain Ash doors, and built-in furniture.

The hearth of the original brick fireplace (living room/Swifts' block) appears to have been infilled. Other changes to the two-storey block include the removal of some internal walls, provision of new partition walls, infill of some side elevation openings with matching brick and replacement of one door (south elevation) with a new glazed insert, creation of a new entry (south-west common wall) between the Beddisons' and Swifts' wings (sliding door) with new steps and landing from the single-storey unit (Beddison), and replacement of joinery in kitchen and laundry.

The design of *Bedddison/Swift House* is deliberately understated and discrete. Clerehan's underlying goal, consistent throughout his work, was to provide a 'calm backdrop for everyday living'.[6] Bell's design aims were similar. In the wake of the 1950s – Victorian architecture's 'heroic' decade – such qualities stood it apart from mainstream modernism, which stressed the creation of bold visuals and/or structural exhibitionism. *Beddison/Swift House* illustrates a mature application of the International Style, particularly Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's minimalism, reformulated to local conditions, where it was characterised by a ; a softened severity and 'highly sophisticated arrangement of unpretentious elements'.[7]

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4   JaneCameronArchitects, *5 Crown Road Ivanhoe* (series of plans), permit number P34/2020, provided by the City of Banyule
5   'T & G Hardwood floor' 'in long lengths' with 'punched nails' and 'sand finish'   *Specifications*
6   Goad, 'Foreword', in Harriet Edquist and Richard Black, *The Architecture of Neil Clerehan*, RMIT University Press, 2005, p9
7   Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne*, chapter 6, p62

Original site and floor plan, *Beddison/Swift House*
(Source: Guilford Bell & Neil Clerehan Architects, *Dual House at 22 Crown Road, Ivanhoe*, Drawing no 1, September 1962)

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[8] The lightly wooded grasslands of what became known as 'Ivanhoe' were quickly targeted for sheep runs and by timber-cutters from the 'illegal squatter camp' downstream of the *Birrarung*/Yarra at Melbourne (est. 1835).[9] However, as part of the 'Heidelberg' district in the Parish of Keelbundora, this area passed rapidly into private hands via an auction in Sydney Town in 1838.[10]

Over the following decade, a patchwork of 'prestige' estates emerged, along with a surveyed township – *Warringal* (possibly 'eagle's nest'), later 'Heidelberg' – on the river's west bank.[11] Productive river flats, and the demands of the gold diggings further afield, encouraged market gardening, orchards and (gradually, due to soil exhaustion and flooding) dairying; activities mostly undertaken by tenant farmers.[12] This perceived rural idyll enticed *plein air* artists to the district during the 1880s, fixing the 'Heidelberg School' within Australia's artistic consciousness.[13]

Ivanhoe – its name stemming from Archibald Thom's 'Ivanhoe Estate' – remained a sparsely populated agricultural area until Melbourne's 'Land Boom' in the late 1880s.[14] 'Picturesque' terrain, varied outlooks and the high repute of the broader district drew affluent newcomers. By the turn of the century, 'Beautiful Ivanhoe' was routinely portrayed as a 'fashionable', 'exclusive locality' of 'model homes'.[15] An improved railway connection to Melbourne in 1901 supported further middle-class growth, instigating 'four decades of slow and relatively affluent suburban sprawl' in the vicinity of Ivanhoe, Eaglemont, and Heidelberg train stations.[16]

During the interwar years, suburban Ivanhoe solidified, although its southern and eastern reaches remained primarily locked up by the expansive 'Hartlands', 'Charterisville', and 'Chelsworth' estates.[17] To navigate the complexities that accompanied the subdivision of these areas (sloping land, curving streets, views) in the postwar period and galvanised by the swelling influence of modernism, many of the new, generally affluent proprietors sought the services of an architect.[18] By the early 1960s, distinct enclaves of upmarket, modernist design culture were apparent in the southern reaches of Ivanhoe and Ivanhoe East, with the aesthetic and lifestyle reverberations of the modern movement also shaping infill development in the more established environs of the locale.

View near Heidelberg in Victoria, pen and ink drawing, circa 1858
(Source: Eugene von Guérard, National Gallery of Victoria)

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8   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online
9   James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne & The Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc., 2011, pxi
10   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of Kulbundora – the name of the eldest son of the important Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') Billibellary. ('Suburban Native Names', Argus 28 April 1906, p5). One of the earliest manifestations of local governance in the Port Phillip District (1840), the fluctuating borders of municipal Heidelberg mirrored its growth, as it was reformatted into a Road District (1860), Shire (1871) and then City (1934). It was amalgamated as the City of Banyule in 1994.
11   Donald S Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p13
12   Robert P Whitworth, *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer*, F F Bailliere, 1879, pp237
13   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.5, and 2.3.10
14   Thom's estate designation was inspired by a novel of the same name by Sir Walter Scott (1819).
15   Ivanhoe & Alphington Progress Society, *Beautiful Ivanhoe: the suburb of model homes and scenic charm*, Model Studio, 1900, SLV
16   Ivanhoe Station opened in 1888; however, inefficiencies in the Heidelberg-Melbourne railway line initially bedevilled growth.
17   Ivanhoe grew from roughly 2,000 residents in 1913 to nearly 8,000 by 1933 (*Victorian Year Books*, Australian Bureau of Statistics).
18   Don Garden, 'Ivanhoe', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008

Site-specific

The subject land derives from Portion 1 (510 hectares) of the Parish of Keelbundora, purchased (along with portions 2 and 3) by Thomas Walker in 1838. A Sydney-based Scottish banker and philanthrope with an eye for marketable land across the colony, Walker's intention in the Port Philip District was speculative from the start. He commenced subdividing his acquisitions as early as mid-1839, amassing enormous profit.[19]

The western half of Portion 1, which incorporates the subject site, was subdivided into multiple parcels and advertised as the 'Glanville Estate' from October 1839: 'Suburban Farms and Villa Sites … the fertility and beauty of which are not to be surpassed in that region of Fertile Soil and Beautiful Landscape Scenery'.[20] Around 1856, the Essex-born pastoralist and investor Francis Clark purchased about 22 hectares of the Glanville Estate (loosely, Heidelberg Road to Darebin Creek and the Yarra).[21] He erected a commodious stone residence (near the southwest corner of Elphin Street and Waterdale Road, demolished in 1956), designating this holding the 'Fairy Hills Estate'.[22] The name, referring to the part of Ivanhoe between Darebin Creek and Chelsworth Park, was current throughout the 20th century and remains in popular and official usage.
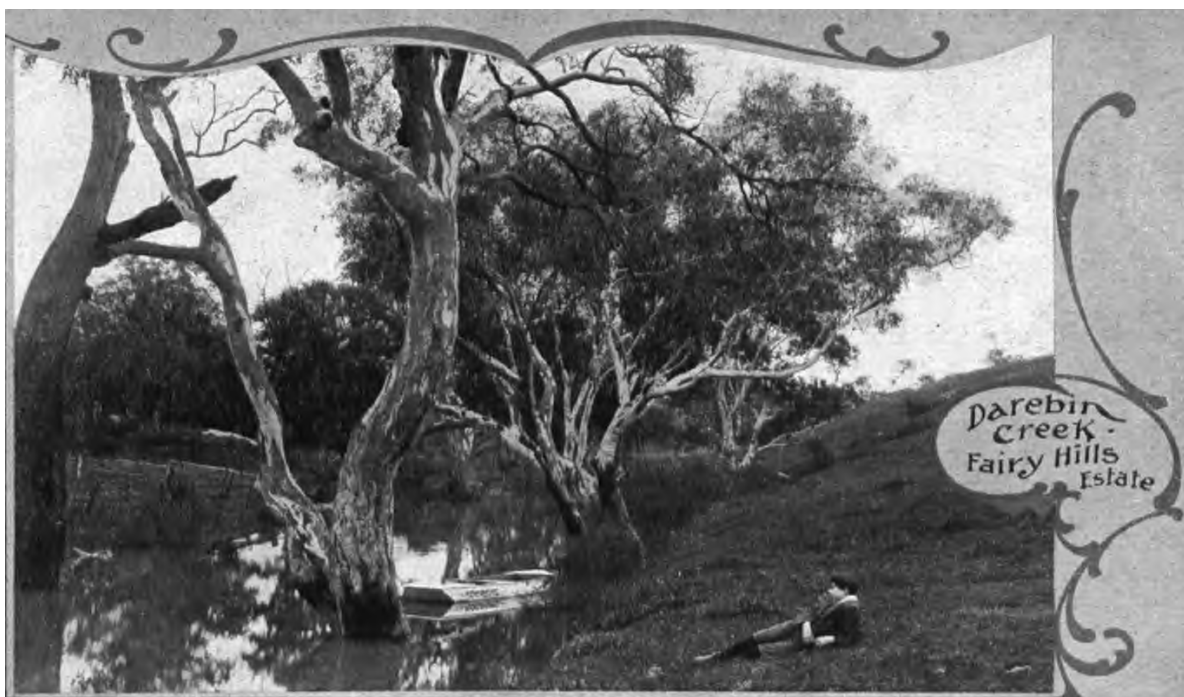
Photograph of Darebin Creek, which formed the western and southern boundary of the Fairy Hills Estate
(Source: Ivanhoe and Alphington Progress Society, *Beautiful Ivanhoe: the suburb of model homes and scenic charm*, early 1900s, SLV)

Clark's widow, Henrietta, remained in occupation of the estate's original residence until 1930. At her death, the *Argus* remarked that her life 'recalls days when the district of Fairy Hills was a single estate and not the garden suburb it has since become', noting that her family had been progressively subdividing the property during her lifetime.[23] By the late interwar years, the Fairy Hills locale had become more defined as a housing precinct, including in the vicinity of the subject land, where two houses associated with celebrated artists had arisen – the *McGeorge House* (1911), by leading society architect Harold Desbrowe Annear, at 25 Riverside Road (VHR H2004, HO51) and the *Waller House* (1922) for Napier and Christian Waller at 9-9A Crown Road (VHR H0617, HO22).

As part of the Clark family's subdivision of Fairy Hills Estate, the land west of Riverside Road to Darebin Creek and, roughly, south of Crown Road was excised in 1911.[24] Further subdivision took place. In 1917 Eliza C Clements of 'Fairy Hills Ivanhoe Married Women' purchased just over a quarter of a hectare at the intersection of Crown and Riversdale roads (now 1 and 5

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19   W Joy, 'Walker, Thomas (1804-1886)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1967, available online
20   'Sale by Auction: Land at Port Phillip', *Commercial Journal and Advertiser*, 5 October 1839, p4
21   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, p15, pp80-1
22   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, p81; and Graeme Butler, *Heidelberg Conservation Study: Part 1 – Heidelberg Historic Buildings & Areas Assessment*, November 1985, p25
23   'Mrs. Francis Clark', *Argus*, 28 September 1938, p2
24   Certificate of Tile, vol 3475, folio 817

Crown Road, 24 and 25 Riversdale Road).[25] The Clements were living there soon after, at a house set well back from Riversdale Street.[26] The balance of the site appears to have been cultivated as a garden.
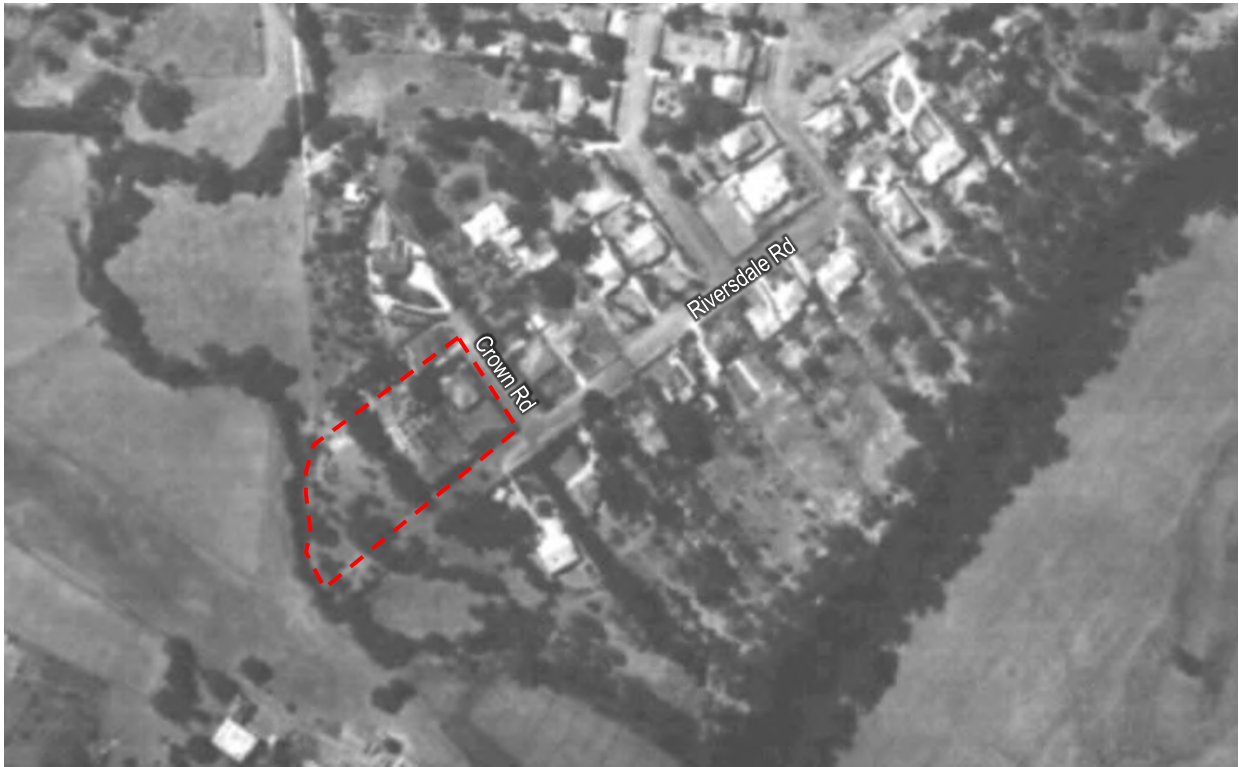
1945 aerial photograph of the southern part of Fairy Hills, Ivanhoe with the Clements property, incorporating the subject land, outlined in red (Source: Ringwood AIC, Zone 7, Photo-map 849-a1, The University of Melbourne)

Eliza's death in 1959 triggered a re-subdivision of the property, resulting in the creation of the subject allotment (Lot 1).[27] Around this time, the Clements' house was also demolished, seemingly to facilitate more intensive development.

In January 1963, David and Brenda Ivy Swift and Oliver Rex and Ivy Augusta Beddison were registered as the joint proprietors of Lot 1.[28] Oliver (1897-1968) and Ivy (*nee* Sapel, 1898-1983) had married in 1921. Brenda (1926-?), their daughter, had married David (1917-2012) at the Unitarian Church, East Melbourne in 1948.[29]

Since the early 1930s, Oliver Beddison had directed a firm – variously known as Beddison and Staples, Beddison & Sapel – that manufactured 'small wood ware', with a factory in Fairfield and later Clifton Hill.[30] His operation was one of the first in Victoria to produce timber (Queensland hoop pine) ice cream spoons and sticks, which apparently gained him a sizable market share.[31] Some iteration of this firm (O.R. Beddison Pty Ltd) may have continued into the late 20th century, directed by Oliver's son (Douglas Rex Beddison) in South Australia.[32]

David was a public servant of Jewish ancestry who served in the Australian Army during the Second World War.[33] He had a lengthy career in the public service, starting in the Victorian Mines Department in 1935 (aged 17) and rising to 'officer in charge' of State Film Centre (1957-79), an innovative public organisation described as a 'film library for the whole community… [a]

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25   Certificate of Title, vol 4073, folio 424

26   *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria*, 1918

27   LP 56011, Certificate of Title, vol 4073, folio 424

28   Certificate of Title, vol 8364m folio 894

29   'Weddings Celebrated', *Argus*, 13 November 1948, p7

30   'Ice-cream Spoons. Outlet for Local Timbers', *Age*, 24 November 1939, p12. From the mid-1940s, Oliver was listed as the co-director of Lignum [Latin for wood] Trading Company Pty Ltd (*Argus*, 15 April 1946, p21)

31   Tariff Board, *Spoons and Sticks for Ice Cream*, Commonwealth of Australia, 5 February 1940, p3

32   'Plywood Sales Officer', *Age*, 14 July 1984, p82

33   Australian Military Forces, *Service and Casualty Form*, undated, via Ancestry.com

magnificent collection of 16 mm films, rivalling in variety even that of the National Library'.[34] He was the author of many a letter to the editor, particularly in *The Age*, which ranged from matters concerned with television and the ABC to issues of culture and governance.[35] In 1979, David received an Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his public service.[36] Brenda was often described as an 'actress' in electoral rolls, although in what medium is unknown.[37]

David Swift, Chief Executive Officer of the State Film Centre
(Source: Colin Bennet, 'At The Cinema', *Age*, 15 October 1960, p19)

The Beddisons and Swifts planned to live together at Lot 1 in a 'dual house' – David, Brenda and children to the rear in the two-storey block, with grandparents Oliver and Ivy in the front unit.[38] Evidently, this idea had been in germination prior to the formal acquisition of the land (January 1963), as the plans submitted to the City of Heidelberg by their engaged architectural practice, Bell & Clerehan, were dated September 1962.[39] Before their land acquisition on Crown Road, they appear to have lived at the same address in Griffiths Street, Reservoir.[40]

Construction of *Beddison/Swift House* (initially listed at 3 Crown Road) occurred during 1963, undertaken by C Burnett & Sons, contractors based in Ashburton with costs estimated at £12,943 – a reasonably large sum in the period for a private house.[41] Existing trees along the Crown Road frontage of the site, planted by the Clements' were retained as part of the Beddison/Swift redevelopment.[42] The Swifts remained at the house until at least the early 1980s.[43]

No details of the relationship between the Beddisons/Swifts and the architects, Guilford Bell and Neil Clerehan, have come to light. The Bell & Clerehan partnership had only formed in 1962, something of a forced union due to the 'credit squeeze' of 1961. Conceivably, the public attention garnered by their lauded first joint project, the *Simon House* (33 Daveys Bay Road, Mount Eliza) attracted the Beddisons/Swifts. Equally, as likely, it could have been either Clerehan or Bell's mounting individual reputations as deft designers of elegantly modern liveable houses, which differed from the bulk of dwellings under construction at the time, memorably dismissed by Clerehan in his *Best Australian Houses* (1961):

> … the vernacular Australian House of 1960 was a rather pathetic, inadequate answer to any problem it might have set out to solve… On its hardwood frame would hang external weatherboarding, a veneer of brickwork or a skin of asbestos. On its roof (hipped) would lie tiles (in Marseilles pattern of terra cotta or cement pressed to look like terra cotta). On either side of its central hall would be a bedroom and a living

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34   Swift, 'Take our hands from your pockets', *Age*, 13 May 1991, p10 and 'Minister's mistaken', *Age*, 21 October 1981, p12

35   For instance, 'Unhappy innuendoes about migrants', *Age*, 3 November 1972, p8 and 'Jolly gets the sums right but the human equations wrong', *Age*, 15 April 1987, p12

36   'The New Year Honours List', *Canberra Times*, 31 December 1979, p8

37   Ancestry.com

38   Edquist, 'Neil Clerehan: A Melbourne Practice', p38

39   Guilford Bell & Neil Clerehan, *Dual House at 22 Crown Road, Ivanhoe: Messrs O. R. Beddison & D. Swift*, September 1962, Drawing nos 1 and 2, City of Banyule planning archive

40   Certificate of Title, vol 8364m folio 894

41   In 1951, the average cost of building a five-roomed house was £3,000. (Robin Boyd, *Australia's Home*, Melbourne University, 1961, p102). Construction details sourced from 'City of Heidelberg Building Permit' (collection of various applications), City of Banyule, planning archive

42   Edquist, 'Neil Clerehan: A Melbourne Practice', p38

43   'Subdivision of Ivanhoe', Electoral Roll, 1980, p57; and Certificate of Title, vol 8365, folio 894

room … All these compartments were contained in a shape which rarely deferred to site, sun, suitability or beauty. It was as simple as a bewildered industry dared offer to customers who abhorred simplicity.[44]

Clerehan is credited with being primarily responsible for *Beddison/Swift House* design, with Bell playing a lesser role. Architectural historian Harriet Edquist describes their short-lived office as operating 'more or less as two identifiable practices', responsible for about twelve houses.[45] Clerehan and Bell's union was not congenial. Despite an ostensibly shared desired aesthetic, both held divergent design philosophies and handled clients differently:

> Clerehan's concerns with living patterns, the almost objective framing of human habitation, was quite different from Bell's highly formal and aesthetic approach which seemed to restrict habitation to a sort of hermetic 'ritual'.[46]

In 1965, two years after construction, *Beddison/Swift House* was published in the widely read magazine *Australian Home Beautiful* (AHB) in a two-page spread, entitled 'Two Families Share View':

> This dual house, at 3 Crown Road., Ivanhoe, was designed by Guilford Bell and Neil Clerehan Pty. Ltd., to house a family and grandparents.
>
> The site sloped to the rear overlook Merri Creek [*misidentified?*] and the Latrobe golf course. The family is Mr and Mrs O. R. Beddison and their children, and the grandparents are Mr and Mrs D. Swift.
>
> As the unit was two-storeyed, the slope was graded to varying levels to minimise the contrast between the rear unit and the single-storeyed front unit occupied by the grandparents. These units were off-set and main rooms placed to the rear to the get the view. Both bedrooms and bathrooms of the front flat overlook the garden, so these rooms were given full-height glazed double doors. Toilet and passage of this unit were lit and ventilated by a dome-light, and the kitchen, living and dining rooms open planned.
>
> Hall, large living-dining room and kitchen are on the ground floor of the rear unit, and three bedrooms and a store-dressing room are on the first floor. The store room can convert to an additional shower room later. All necessary pipes and vents have been built in. This storey's hall and dressing room are lit and ventilated by plastic roof domes.
>
> All internal timber is limed natural-finish mountain oak. Wall construction is Besser sandstone veneer. Both units draw hot water and heating from an oil-fired system. There are many built-ins and shelves. Roof is steel decking with fibreglass insulation.
>
> A common soundproofed hatch in the dividing wall between the two units houses the telephones for both units so either phone can be answered from either unit.
>
> Garden paths, and approaches to the terrace at the rear of the front unit have been ramped instead of stepped between the different levels for easy negotiation by Mr and Mrs Swift.[47]

The published floorplan and photographs of *Beddison/Swift House*, extracted from the AHB article, are reproduced below.
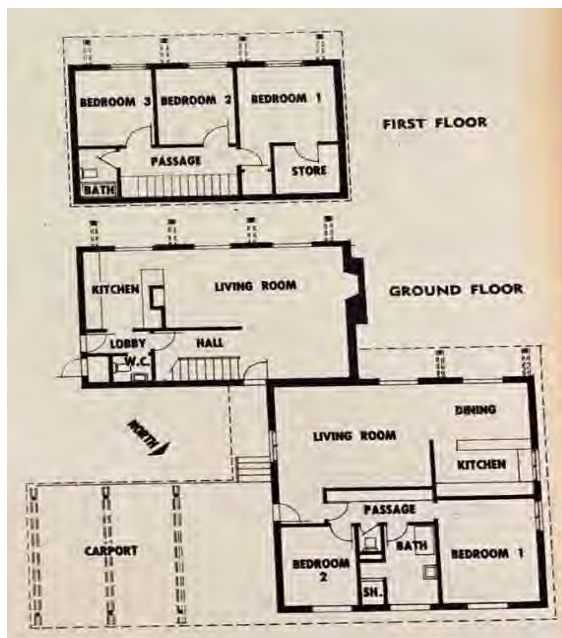
'Entry to the rear unit is through the carport and down steps to a lower level. So the architects designed a small courtyard in the space between the carport and the front wall of the unit.'
(Source: 'Two Families Share View', *AHB*, April 1965, p23)

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44   Neil Clerehan, *Best Australian Houses: recent houses built by members of The Royal Australian Institute of Architects*, F W Cheshire, 1961, introduction

45   Edquist, 'Neil Clerehan: A Melbourne Practice', p38; and Philip Goad, 'A Very Private Practice: The Life and Work of Guilford Bell', in Leon van Schaik, ed, *The life work of Guilford bell, architecture 1912-1992*, Bookman Transition Publishing, 1999, p119

46   Edquist, 'Neil Clerehan: A Melbourne Practice', p37

47   'Two Families Share View', *Australian Home Beautiful*, April 1965, pp23-4

Photograph of carport and façade of *Beddison/Swift House* from Crown Road
Note horizontal timber post box, which is extant, circled
(Source: 'Two Families Share View', *AHB*, April 1965, p23)

Photograph of internal front courtyard to carport ceiling
(Source: 'Two Families Share View', *AHB*, April 1965, p23)

Original Rrear frontage of the two-storey unit from back yard
(Source: 'Two Families Share View', *AHB*, April 1965, p23)

(Above) Photograph of the Swift kitchen
(Source: 'Two Families Share View', *AHB*, April 1965, p23)

(Left) Photograph of the Beddison living room, looking towards the kitchen (Source: 'Two Families Share View', *AHB*, April 1965, p23)

The modernist enthusiast Peter Wille (1931-71) also photographed *Beddison/Swift House*, presumably during the 1960s.[48]

Beddison/Swift House from Crown Road
(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91/244/1569)

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48   Wille was employed as a draftsman by the firm Smith, Tracey, Lyon & Block. In his own time, he compiled an extensive record of modernist designs in Melbourne, predominantly in its southeast (he resided in Mount Waverly).

Close-up of the entrance of the two-storey block from the carport (Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1566)

Rear elevation of the Swift's two-storey block – ~~deck since expanded~~a new timber deck has been constructed (Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91/244/1567)

Rear of the Beddison's front unit – note the lower section of the ramp has been removed (Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91/244/1565)

Neil Clerehan (1922-2017)

'One of Melbourne's great architectural figures', Clerehan emerged as a leader of Australia's modern movement during its heyday over the 1950s/1960s.[49] Through his gregariousness, talent for domestic design, sharp architectural and social commentary, and various other roles in education and advocacy, Clerehan played an influential role in shaping postwar architecture, propagating a new 'modern' vision for living. His body of work has been subject to recent major academic study.[50]

Melbourne born, Clerehan completed his architectural studies at The University of Melbourne in 1950, after war service with the AIF in New Guinea during the Second World War (1942-44). A year before graduating, he commenced solo practice and collaborated with friend Robin Boyd to establish the ground-breaking RVIA Small Homes Service (SHS). Deeply interested in American culture and technology (and ''chutzpah'), Clerehan spent 1952 travelling and working in the USA.[51] Upon returning, he resumed designing houses, which remained Clerehan's enduring passion. Through the SHS directorship (succeeding Boyd, between 1953 and 1961), including a weekly column in *The Age*, he cultivated a public profile as a notable architect.[52] In 1955, Clerehan married Sonia Cole, a painter.

After resigning the directorship of the SHS, Clerehan entered into a partnership with another modernist architect, the reserved Guilford Bell (refer to Citation 8, *Purcell House*, for biography). The brief Clerehan & Bell practice (1962-64) produced a small number of important designs, including *Beddison/Swift House*, but creative differences led to an eventual parting of ways.[53]

Clerehan continued to design, whether solo or in partnerships, in a determinedly modernist manner into his 90s.[54] A committed member of the profession, his work was routinely honoured by the fraternity. He was made a Life Fellow of the AIA (1977) and received the President's Prize from the RIA (Victorian Chapter) in 2004. The University of Melbourne bestowed an honorary Doctorate of Architecture upon Clerehan in 2008.[55]

Clerehan (left) and Robin Boyd (right) photographed organising a SHS exhibition, 1953
(Source: Geoffrey Serle, *Robin Boyd* Life, 1996, p99)
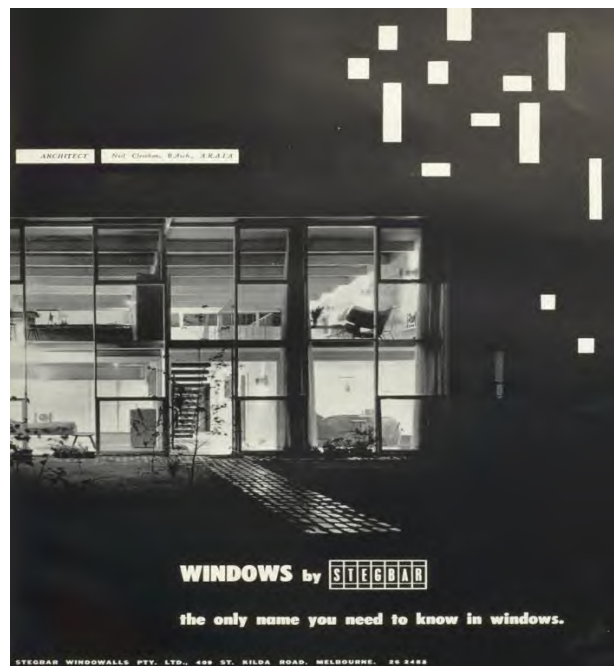
'Stegbar' advertisement, showing Clerehan's first house, slipped into the back end of the book – his work did no feature elsewhere within it (Source: *Best Australian Houses*, F W Chesire, 1961)

Thematic Context

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[49]   Goad, 'Vale Neil Clerehan, 1922-2017', para 1; and Goad, *The Modern House*, Chapter 6, pp61-4

[50]   Harriet Edquist, 'Neil Clerehan: A Melbourne Practice', in Edquist and Richard Black, *The Architecture of Neil Clerehan*, RMIT University Press, 2005

[51]   Goad, 'Vale Neil Clerehan', para 12

[52]   Philip Goad, 'Clerehan, Neil', in Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p154

[53]   Edquist, 'Neil Clerehan: A Melbourne Practice', p41

[54]   Goad, 'Vale Neil Clerehan, 1922-2017', para 3

[55]   Philip Goad, 'Clerehan, Neil', p155

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

- 6.4 Post-War Residential Development

Comparative Analysis

Two other designs by Bell & Clerehan were constructed in the municipality:

- *Box House*, 2 Glenard Drive, Eaglemont (part of HO1, identified within the precinct as 'significant') – a single-storey dwelling built in the Griffins'-planned 'Glenard Estate' in 1962 and generally accredited to Clerehan. It has an L-shaped plan based around an internal courtyard, a stepped flat-roof, broad overhanging and boxed eaves, and is constructed of concrete bricks. It features a pared-down aesthetic and highlights an integrated carport supported by four slender pipes with a timber batten ceiling, which confers an ultra-modern character. An important instance of the practice's work but now unsympathetically modified, including the rendering of external walls and alterations to fenestration.

Box House – before modifications
(Source: Mark Strizic, *Cross-Section*, no 142, August 1964)

- *Purcell House*, 17 Hartlands Road, Ivanhoe (recommended for a HO by this Study) – overseen solely by Bell and also constructed in 1963. It has several design similarities with *Beddison/Swift House* but is better understood in the context of Bell's body of work, encapsulating his studied interest in presenting classicised, composed, minimalistic visuals.

Clerehan does not appear to have been undertaken any individual commissions in Banyule.

An array of architect-designed modernist houses are included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay for Banyule. Most originate in the 1950s and reflect the multiplying version of mid-century modernism. The dominant influence of the International Style is prevalent, particularly its preference for rectangular footprints, cuboid forms and stripped-down aesthetic; for instance, 10 Alexandra Street, Greensborough (HO136) by Moore and Hammond, 1957. Others reveal the period's growing interest in the modular derivation of the plan, with steel or timber framing and lightweight panelling and bands of glazing. A key example of specific geometry is the 1954 *Snelleman House* (HO36 + VHR H2282) in Ivanhoe East by architects Peter and Dione McIntyre, often referred to as the 'Coil House'.

Beddison/Swift House is on par with Banyule's other accomplished examples of rationalist/'classical' modernism, distinguished by its ability to illustrate Clerehan's particularly self-effacing design approach and aspiration to reform daily 'living patterns'.

Collectively, these varied examples of modernism provide insight into the forces of modernity that shaped the district following the Second World War, particularly shifting sociocultural and economic factors and the willingness of some residents to interact with then unconventional design culture and novel lifestyle patterns.

Condition
Good

Intactness
Largely intact

Previous Assessment
- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommend for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	Yes (brick walls and timber elements)
Internal Alteration Controls	No ~~Yes (timber floorboards, internal walls with timber battens or plastered, open timber stair)~~
Tree Controls	~~Yes~~ No ~~(Lemon-scented gum in courtyard and front garden + likely Prickly-leaved Paperback in front garden)~~
Outbuildings and/or fences	No

Extent of Heritage Overlay
The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, November 2020)

LINDSAY EDWARD HOUSE

Address	149 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1950-52
Period	Postwar
Date Inspected	January 2021, June 2022

(Source: Street-facing elevation, March 2016, realeaste.com.au)

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Lindsay Edward House at 149 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty is significant. It was constructed between 1950 and 1952 as a family home and studio for the artist and educator Lindsay Maurice Edward. Alistair Knox was the designer and builder. During the long occupation by the Edward family (until 2016), the house was enlarged on multiple occasions and a series of external and internal modifications undertaken. ~~The property was also subdivided Knox may have been involved in implementing some of the early changes that his original plan has envisioned.~~ Lindsay Edward is understood to have been generally responsible for ~~most of~~ the ~~sympathetic~~ modifications undertaken subsequent to the initial Knox phase (i.e, ~~.~~ over the late 20th century).

The significant element is the original U-shaped/'butterfly' and split-level plan of *Lindsay Edward House*, including the cuboid form of the three connecting sections, flat ~~and skillion~~ roofs, wide ~~moderate~~ eaves overhang with, exposed rafters to timber soffits, ~~chimney or flue (south wing),~~ walls of mud-brick, ~~vertical timber cladding,~~ timber-framed window walls, casement windows, fixed glazing, timber-framed/glazed entrance door, and rear patio of multicoloured cement block pavers (random pattern).

Internally, the 'hanging' timber stair in the entrance hall and ground-floor ceilings of exposed timber beams to the original section are significant.

The original bathroom and laundry section to the west side is much altered and not significant.

~~The natural slope of the property and its general 'natural' landscaping enhances the setting of Lindsay Edward House.~~

~~Internally, the 'hanging' timber stair in the entrance hall and ground-floor ceilings of exposed timber beams to the original section are significant.~~

The late 20th-century (post-1952) additions and alterations to both levels are not significantbroadly sympathetic with the original plan and design philosophy of *Lindsay Edward House*. Their complementary elements are flat roofs, walls of mudbrick and window walls, and timber pergolas.

How is it Significant?

Lindsay Edward House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Lindsay Edward House is of historical significance as an early and commodious example of a postwar mud-brick residence in the municipality. It has an association with Lindsay Edward – a well-regarded art teacher at Melbourne RMIT, whose output of semi-abstract paintings and murals achieved national attention over the second half of the 20th century – as his long-standing family home and, for a while, studio. The original house was designed and constructed, with Edward's assistance, by Alistair Knox, then in the formative stage of his career as an acclaimed practitioner of 'environmental building' and Victoria's foremost proponent of adobe. The design's employment of a vernacular earth construction technique, while likely a conscious aesthetic decision on the part of the client, is illustrative of the postwar scarcity of conventional materials that persisted into the early 1950s and the instinct to innovate brought about by the contemporary housing 'crisis'. More broadly, *Lindsay Edward House* is illustrative of the emergence of a postwar community in the Lower Plenty area, associated with Eltham at the time, distinguished by its creativity and embrace of 'alternative' environmental living. (Criterion A)

Lindsay Edward House is of aesthetic significance as the most substantial and architecturally ambitious flat-roofed Modernist mud-brick design completed by Alistair Knox in the municipality. It conveys his organic/Wrightian-influenced interest in the vernacular, although at a scale and level of architectural refinement that was then only beginning to define Knox's practice, especially evidenced in the fenestration pattern. The solar responsive split-level 'butterfly' plan – spreading naturally across the property's slope – combined with its volumetric expression encapsulates a distinctive local interpretation of postwar Melbourne regionalism. The evolving form of residence under the hands of the Edward family is also reflective of a common circumstance for postwar houses, which were often limited in their original manifestation by various factors (especially materials and size constraints). In this case, however, additions to the design undertaken by its long term occupants have occurred in broad harmony with the original design and aesthetic. (Criterion E)

Description

Lindsay Edward House is situated at a deep set back from Old Eltham Road on a large, irregular allotment that slopes to the east. Due to repeated subdivision, the residence is now situated close to its east boundary. Initially, it occupied the central part of a larger property made up of nos 147 and 151. The site's frontage is unfenced and lined with a hedge, behind which are informally arrayed several tall trees, a mixture of exotics and indigenous/native species. A curved driveway paved in brick leads from the street to the house. The tall timber palisade side fences are non-original. The side and rear portions of the garden are similarly landscaped and feature several mature indigenous/native trees.

The distance of the dwelling from the street (approximately 25 metres), combined with its orientation and the screening of existing vegetation, conceals or obscures views of the place from the public realm. As such, this assessment depends in part on aerial photographs, contemporary real estate photographs and historical images/architectural plans.[1]

Lindsay Edward House's footprint and form evolved over the lengthy occupation of the Edward family (early 1950s to 2016), reflecting their changing needs. In general, these alterations and additions were undertaken in a manner that adhered to the essence of Alistair Knox's original design and, in line with much early postwar development (hampered by size restrictions/material shortages/finance), are likely to have been contemplated or intended.

The core of the house is Knox's early 1950s east-facing, split-level, U-shaped footprint, sprawled lengthwise across the property, perpendicular to the street. Originally, this plan was single-room in width and comprised of three cuboid forms – the central single-storey living section with wings spreading either side (two-storey in the south and single-storey in the north). Its 'butterfly' plan responds to the natural landfall and gestures to Wright's interest in organic/biomorphic shapes. The orientation also responded to Melbourne's solar cycle, allowing morning light to penetrate the principal part of the building, while sheltering bedrooms from the harshness of the western sun. The majority of this plan, while modified in parts, remains interpretable.

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[1] '149 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty', realestate.com.au, March 2016, **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**; Leslie H Runting, 'Down to Earth in Housing, Section 1, *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1953; and Keith Bennetts, 'Did The House Live Up To Expectations', *Australian Home Beautiful*, March 1969

The central section of the residence faces onto a patio – initially raised, the ground level has since increased – paved in multicoloured (greys, browns, reds, white) cement blocks in a random geometrical pattern, which largely remain. Natural stone blocks located at its south end are original, performing as ad hoc seating and marking a drop in ground level (the south wing is situated below that of the main living space).
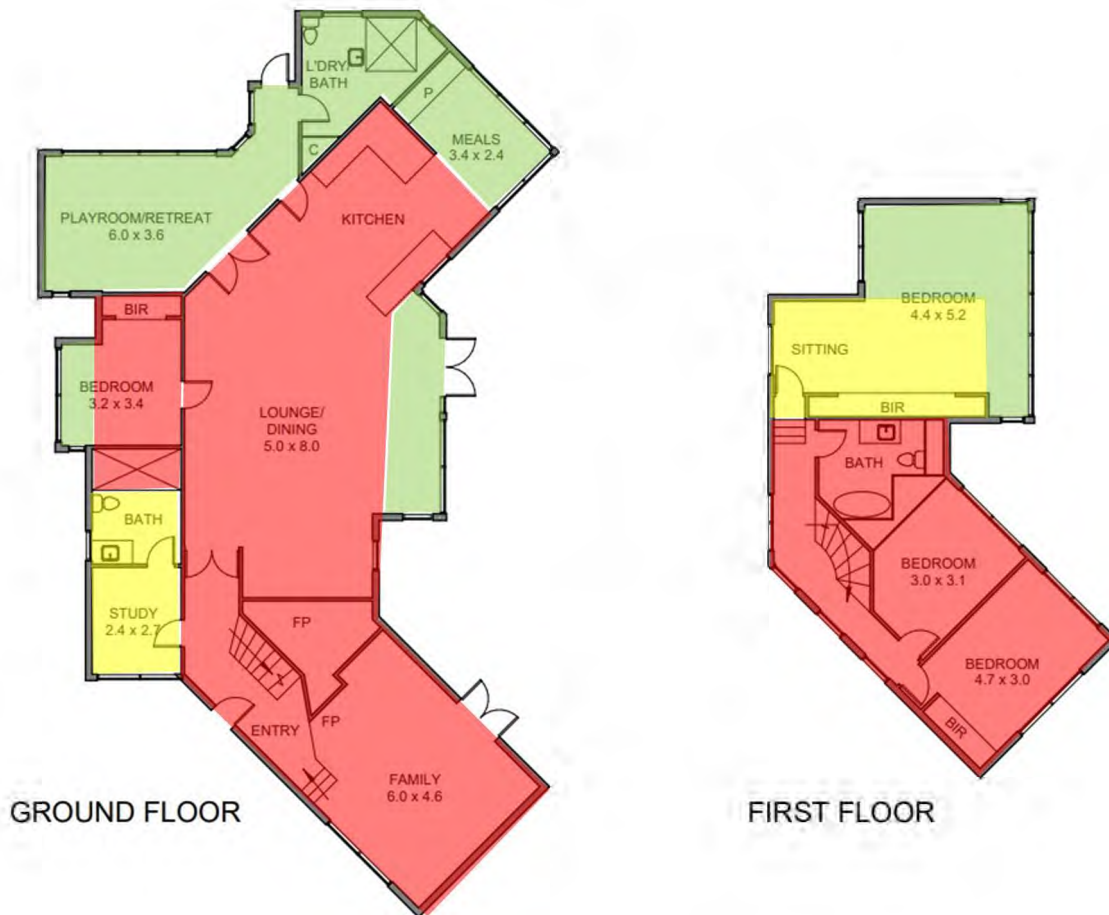
Current floor plan, adapted from realestate.com
Original section shaded red
First additions (yellow), later additions (green)

Lindsay Edward House's three wings were capped with flat roofs. Initially, these were covered in a layer of Malthoid (bituminous felt) and creek gravel. This finish has perished – probably due to UV exposure – and roofs are now clad in corrugated metal sheeting. There is a widen eaves overhang with a dark-painted metal fascia with . Rafters appear exposed rafters to the soffit. A chimney or metal flue (obscured) is evident to the southern wing. Skylights to the north wing are likely contemporary.

Later additions utilised flat or skillion roofs. To the ground floor, these are generally situated below that of the original eaves, allowing the original 'butterfly' plan to remain distinct, particularly when viewed from the west, where the house's footprint has expanded.

The original section of the house is constructed of load-bearing walls of adobe, colloquially mud bricks, likely on a concrete-on-ground slab. The latter is assumed but was Knox's general approach, which was still novel for early 1950s Melbourne at the level of a private dwelling. Walls present as planar, textured surfaces built of large sun-dried bricks (dug and produced on-site). These were initially either bagged in oil paint or rendered in a mud mixture. Currently the walls are painted., The nature of the existing coating is not known; however, it allows for the character of the mud bricks to be discerned.

The varied forms of earth construction have ancient roots and were practised by settler communities across Australia, becoming a well-known vernacular building technique over the 19th century. During that period, in Victoria, adobe construction was especially common in the Central Goldfields and some of Melbourne's outer-suburban areas.[2] Knox's use of mud bricks at *English House* – inspired by his experience of *Montsalvat* (see Site-Specific) – came on the back of a minor revival of the tradition from the mid-1930s, concentrated in the Eltham area.[3] Mud brick was integral to Knox's design philosophy, which he would later refer to as 'environmental building' and has been referred to as the 'Eltham style'. An interview with Knox soon after the original *Lindsay Edward House* was completed encapsulates his view on the material:

> With earth building, beauty can be expressed simply: natural and honest treatment of the walls so that they retain some of the primeval quality of earth; a true sense of topography through the proper handling of the site; a strong sense of shelter by deft use of the thick walls so that they cast deep shadows at the reveals; the use of simple masses, moulded or curved walls to show the pliancy of the medium; proportions that are unpretentious and fundamental, not frivolous.

> No material is more responsive to human expression than mud, provided the initial objectives are not lost sight of — retention of its primeval character, and absolute avoidance of nonsense. [4]

The original plan included a small single-storey, flat-roofed mud-brick volume (with a laundry) attached to the central section's west elevation. It was set back with a timber carport in front, facing the driveway. By the late 1960s, the carport was replaced with a bedroom which has adobe wall to the front and vertical timber boards to the side. Whether the extant timber entry attached to its south face was erected at this time is not known. Another timber carport was installed at the end wall of the south wing.

On the west side, sections of mud brick have been incorporated into It appears that all of the ground-floor additions at *Lindsay Edward House* , however the non-original walls are generally either brick or clad in vertically orientated timber boards. have incorporated walls of mud brick. These elements have mainly been concentrated to the west elevation of the central section and north wing.

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2   Julie Willis, 'Earth Construction', in Philip Goad and Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University, 2012, p220

3   Miles Lewis, 'Section Three: Earth and Stone – 3.2 Adobe or Clay Lump', *Australian Building: A Cultural Investigation*, p19, available online

4   'Down to Earth in Housing: He Crusades For Mud', Section 3, *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1953, p7

The original plan included a small single-storey, flat-roofed mud-brick volume (with a laundry) attached to the central section's west elevation. It was set back with a timber carport in front, facing the driveway. Between the mid-to-late 1950s andBy the late 1960s, the carport was enclosed replaced with a bedroom which has adobe walls to the front and vertical timber boards to the side to create a new room. Whether the extant timber entry pergola attached to its south face was erected at this time is not known. Another timber carport was installed at the end wall of the south wing.

After 1969 (see Site-specific), a sizable 'sunroom' was built off part of the west wall of the north wing and connected to the original western volume, which was enlarged. Both new spaces appear to have employed a combination of mud-brick walls and window walls. This arrangement is notable in the 'sunroom' with a solid west wall of adobe and a north-facing window wall mounted on a brick plinth. This space faces a sunken courtyard paved with brick (herringbone pattern) and sheltered by walls of bagged brickwork. The north wall sits above a retaining wall of random cut stone.

Likely at the same time, anAn opening was created in the end wall of the north wing – by removing a tripartite timber-framed casement bank but retaining some of the former wall as mud-brick nibs – and a small 'sunroom' provided. Its northern return wall is constructed of adobe, with the remainder formed from window walls. Further, a new triangular volume (bathroom and laundry) was constructed behind the north wing, seemingly mud-brick.

In 1955, an vertical addition (master bedroom) with a skillion roofed addition was erected above the central wing. IThists addition was apparently anticipated as part of the original design and is the likely reason why the north wall of the upstairs bathroom was built of vertical timber boards (more readily removable) and not mud-brick. The master bedroom addition was also - clad in vertical boards (internally as well, removed). Whilst the railing was removed, there was a door to the deck from the new bedroom. This modification appears to have terminated the use of the central and northern wing roof as a terrace with timber rail.

This addition was enlarged Another room was provided north of the 1955 addition after the late 1960s. It continued the roofline and timber board cladding and was connected to it via a window-wall walkway, which extended the area of the master bedroom eastwards (requiring the deletion of most of the 1955 timber east wall). The footprint of this extension was matched on the ground floor by a new window wall projecting from the central wing's mud-brick wall. This modification (essentially a new section of external wall) required that the original window wall and double-leafed French doors be removed to enable free internal movement. However, it appears that the original French doors – with each leaf divided into three units by a pair of slender glazing bar – were reclaimed and reused as the entrance to the new window wall. The mud-brick external wall remains to the interior (without windows/doors).

Fenestration is largely unchanged from its various phase of construction, although some original openings have been removed. All openings are timber-framed (stained or painted) and chiefly window walls of varying extents. These are commonly divided into tall vertical dimensions comprised of casements or fixed glazing, some with a toplight. The east face of the south wing has not been altered, retaining its original balanced arrangement of ground-floor double-leafed French doors with a pair of tripartite casements above (central pane may beis fixed). Likewise, fenestration to its south elevation remains, including the grouping of a thin rectangular opening flanked by a pair of larger rectangular windows (fixed) to the upper wall. Set in the lower part of the wall is the primary entrance with an original door (glazed with a timber frame) and adjacent (east) window wall.

It is likely that, at least, all timber frames at the place – almost certainly of Oregon timber – were produced at a joinery workshop operated from the rear of Knox's second family home in York Street, Eltham.[5]

Lintels appear to beare concrete or timber (painted) with sills possiblylikely of mud brick. There are also two rows of three small square windows in the upper floor of the west elevation towards the front of the house. , which appear to be a late 20th century alteration (solar control).

As discussed, the floor plan of *Lindsay Edward House* has evolved since construction. In general, the underlying philosophy of free-flowing space, the centrality of the living room and a strong indoor/outdoor relationship established in Knox's first iteration have remained prevalent.

The carefully controlled spatial experience of the entrance sequence, established by Knox in the initial plan, also endures. That is, admission to the residence via a narrow door (west elevation, timber-framed/glazed) straight into the compressed space of a small hall – dominated by a curved 'hanging', open riser timber stair (likely extant) – leading naturally into the open, light-filled central living area. Such a 'revelatory' entry sequence (dark to light) is a favourite Wrightian device, which Knox also viewed as evoking a 'cave-like' effect.

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5   'Design and Building Career', *Biography*, Alistair Knox Foundation, available online, https://alistairknox.org/

~~The fireplace core behind the stair, another key Wrightian/organic planning element – the ancient hearth at the heart of the home, anchoring the building to the land – also remains. However, the living room fireplace (originally random stone and adobe) has been removed. This concept of marrying the structure to the site is also conveyed by the robust mud-brick wall and the lack of a plinth, connecting the 'organic' walls directly to the landform. The south fireplace (bedroom) character, initially low, broad and mud brick, is not known.~~

The exposed structure of the ceiling to the ground floor – the visible arrangement of primary beams, secondary rafters and floorboards – is original.

Several months after Knox finished his first simplified mud-brick house (*English House*), the influential architect and commentator Robin Boyd (an acquaintance of Knox) discussed within his popular 'Small Homes' newspaper column the lack of design innovation exhibited by practitioners of the mud-brick movement:

> Adobe can be built to any plan, and can have almost any finish. Therefore it can be given almost any appearance and any architectural treatment. Perhaps this is its greatest danger. With one or two notable exceptions, Victorian adobe builders have been either lamentably unimaginative little villas or have wallowed in confused romanticism … If the material is treated with common sense and discretion, but naturally so that it is not forced to imitate normal brick structure, then it must look "different". There is no reason why this different look should not be as modern and as beautiful in its own way as anything ever made of brick, wood, stone or steel.[6]

Whether this specific message resonated with Knox or not, the subsequent mud-brick houses he constructed in its wake over the late 1940s and early 1950s – referrable within his broader design/building career as his 'first phase' – were generally more substantial and ambitious in the visual effect sought. In this period, 'beauty' in mud brick was paramount for Knox:

> Beauty requires a sense of order, of fitness, of co-relation of the parts to the whole. It must express an idea that makes itself felt to the beholder, either consciously or otherwise.[7]

In the context of postwar Melbourne design, characterised by its crop of 'hero' architects boldly exploring the structural and aesthetic possibilities of universal, industrially produced materials, Knox's dogged return to the vernacular stood out.[8] Latent within his concept of environmental building were the principles of organic architecture, as shaped by the work and writings of the American master, Frank Lloyd Wright. In particular, the latter's pared-down Usonian houses (oversailing eaves, robust wall to the street, large opening to the internal garden, focal fireplace/hearth) proved influential for Knox, who seems to have been aware of Wright by the immediate postwar years.[9] However, *Lindsay Edward House's* 'butterfly' plan demonstrates a more explicit interaction by Knox with the organic excesses of the Wrightian approach (taken to extremes in his much publicised crescent-shaped *Periwinkle House* in Eltham, 1950).

Knox's also cites as influential the cohesive formwork, 'visual totality' and engagement with light/shadow seen in the work of the first government architect, the emancipist forger, Francis Greenway, and Walter Burley Griffin (although not appearing to recognise the important contribution made by Marion Mahony Griffin to her husband's practice).[10] While never communicated in his writings, Knox's debt to the entrenched Arts & Crafts movement – particularly its political idealism and valorisation of craftsmanship – is also clear.

In line with the majority of Knox's work, *Lindsay Edward House* is decidedly modernist.[11] The core doctrines of the postwar modern movement (then far from mainstream), ranging from sensitive site and solar responsiveness to an emphasis on strong indoor/outdoor relationships, floor plans that prioritised spatial flow, and the eschewing of unnecessary detail, are all conveyed by its design. His ability to merge modern living with adobe and a bushland block (natural or contrived) underpins the development of an authentic regional idiom, colloquially the 'Eltham style', which became intimately tied to Knox and the wider district over the late 20th-century.

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6   Robin Boyd, 'Make it of mud!', *Age*, 17 March 1948, p3.
7   'Down to Earth in Housing: He Crusades For Mud', p7
8   Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, chapter 3, p58
9   Alistair Knox, *We are what we stand on: A Personal History of the Eltham Community*, Adobe Press,1980, p11
10   Knox, *Living in the environment*, chapter 67, https://alistairknox.org/chapters/67; and Knox, *A Middle Class Man*, chapter 22
11   Peterson and Kuzyk, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986): modernism, environment and the spirit of place', p21

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-William people, who inhabited and managed the landscape for millennia and remain culturally connected. The fertile confluence of the Plenty River and the Yarra River/*Birrarung* and adjoining stringy-bark forests hosted squatters from 1837 and was soon after referred to as the 'Lower Plenty'. Much of this area had been alienated by the close of the decade and considered to be of better quality than land elsewhere in the Parish of Nillumbik.[12]

Sizable land parcels and absentee owners predominated over the 19th century, with a small community of tenant farmers responsible for clearing the emergent locality. The rough track linking Heidelberg and the Village of Eltham, which passed through the Lower Plenty, was proclaimed a road in 1840 (now Old Eltham Road), and the Plenty River bridged two years later.[13] The present-day Main Road (initially called Eltham Road) was laid in 1869.[14]

More intensive subdivision followed in the wake of the First World War, although the locale remained sparsely populated and a 'semi-suburban and rural area' into the 1950s.[15] Reminiscing about the postwar years, Alistair Knox described cycling through the area, alongside the émigré architect Frederick Romberg, describing the Lower Plenty at that stage as a 'wide undulating … savannah landscape' dotted with 'Primeval redgums of enormous size'.[16] The suburb's geographic connection with and administration by the District (later Shire) of Eltham meant that the Lower Plenty was also shaped by the vibrant, vigorous, environmentally-conscious community that materialised in postwar Eltham.[17] From the late 1940s, mud-brick dwellings (built or influenced by Knox) arose (alongside conventional houses) as well as other designs that displayed a clear organic/regional expression:

> Twelve miles from Melbourne, the … [Lower Plenty] is still largely covered with scrub gums and since the housing is nearly all contemporary, the natural appearance of the locality has not been obliterated. More often than not, the modern house has been built to blend, rather than stand apart from its surroundings.[18]

From the early 1960s, residential development was prominent, as was a fashion towards substantial, up-market houses situated on largescale allotments. Open spaces and a general natural/rustic setting remain prevalent throughout Lower Plenty, with a peri-rural feel remaining predominant in its southern reaches.


Photograph from a land sale brochure showing the rural landscape west from the old Lower Plenty Bridge, dated 1920s (Source: Eltham District Historical Society, *Victorian Collections*, 00180)

Site-specific

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[12]   'Nillumbik' may stem from the Indigenous word *nyilumbik*, meaning 'bad, stupid or red earth'. (Jill Barnard, 'Nillumbik Shire', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, available online; and Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online)

[13]   The Plenty River was named in 1835 by Joseph T Gellibrand. Its designation as a river was more warranted before the formation of the Yan Yean Reservoir in the mid-19th century, which reduced its flow. Hoddle referred to it as the 'Yarra Rivulet'.

[14]   The 1843 bridge was replaced in 1865 by the existing 'Old Lower Plenty Bridge' (HO106).

[15]   Alan Marshall, *Pioneers & Painters: One Hundred Years of Eltham and its Shire*, Thomas Nelson, 1971, p84

[16]   Alistair Knox, *We Are What We Stand On: a personal history of the Eltham Community*, Adobe Press, 1980

[17]   The Lower Plenty and Montmorency were transferred to the newly formed City of Banyule in 1994. ('Lower Plenty', *Victorian Places*, 2014, available online; and Andrew Lemon, 'Lower Plenty', *eMelbourne*, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, available online; and Context, BTEH, p37)

[18]   Rick Campbell, 'Suburban Living, but with hills and bush', *Age*, 9 November 1968, p23.

The subject land derives from the roughly 384-hectare purchase (Portion 2, Parish of Nillumbik) made in 1840 by the Corkonian, Benjamin Baxter.[19] He had arrived in Sydney Town in 1837 as a Captain in the 50th (Queen's Own) Regiment of Foot, charged with escorting a convict transport. Sensing opportunities in the embryonic Port Phillip District, Baxter acquired a Depasturing Licence, ran cattle at Emerald Hill and St Kilda, and held various civil appointments. Around the time Baxter procured his estate in what became the Lower Plenty and Montmorency, he also established a 6,000-hectare pastoral run known as *Carrup Carrup* at Baxter's Flat (Baxter), which became his permanent residence.[20] In 1927, a large part of Portion 2 was acquired for use by the Heidelberg Golf Club.[21]

In 1869, the northern three-quarters of Portion 2, including the subject land, was acquired by the affluent Scot and pastoralist, Doctor Robert Martin (onetime occupant of *Viewbank Homestead* and owner of the *Banyule Estate*).[22] Following Martin's death in 1874, the holding passed in toto through several hands. In 1919, the parcel – bound mainly by the Main Road (north), Old Eltham Road (south) and Bolton Street (east) – was brought by George Guthrie McColl, a wealthy Bendigo resident.[23] McColl's intentions appear speculative and his purchase, carved up into sizeable blocks, was promoted for sale that year as the Plenty River Estates – 'Lovely Week-End Blocks', 'suitable [for] cultivation (with irrigation), poultry, fruit growing or nursery'.[24] As part of this subdivision, Panorama Avenue was established, although it remained an 'unmade road … in a bad state' into at least the 1930s.[25]
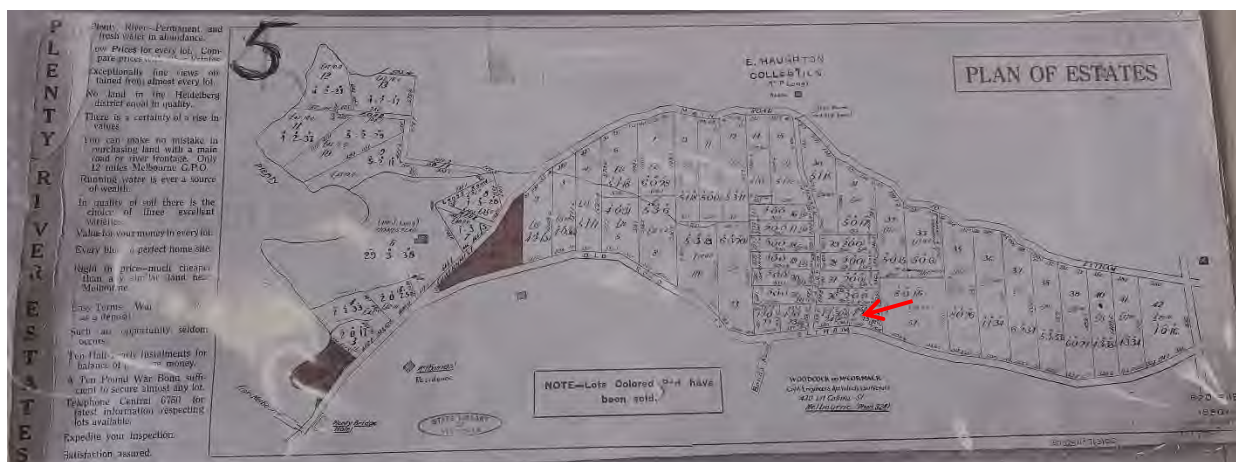
Plenty River Estates, 1919
The approximate location of the subject land, part of lot 25, is indicated by the red arrow
(Source: SLV)

The subject land was encompassed within Lot 25 (about half a hectare) of the Plenty River Estates subdivision, which was purchased along with the larger Lot 34 in 1924 by a local, Elsie Norma Graham. She sold off the latter in 1929 to the Heidelberg Golf Course Company limited.[26] In 1941, Marcus J Macartney, a 'woolclasser' from Leongatha, acquired Lot 25. An aerial photograph taken soon after depicts a largely cleared site with a compact structure (later removed) near the current location of *Lindsay Edward House*.[27] Macartney sold the entire property in 1950 to Lindsay M Edward, an artist and then teacher at RMIT.[28]

Edward had seemingly purchased the land to establish a family home, engaging Alistair Knox to undertake the design and build. Knox, then a few years into his career as a builder/designer, was the uncle of Edward's wife, Janet (*née* Knox). Knox and

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19   Refer to *Plan of the Parish of Nillumbik*, Office of Lands and Survey, 1866, SLV, available online
20   'Death of Captain Baxter: An Old Colonist and Pioneer', *Mornington Standard*, 19 May 1892, p3; and Marshall, *Pioneers & Painters*, pp82-4
21   *Heidelberg Golf Club*, 'History', available online
22   Certificate of Title, vol 289, folio 706
23   'Lieut.-Colonel G. G. McColl', *Argus*, 15 June 1938, p11; and Certificate of Title, vol 233, folio 523
24   'Advertising', *Herald*, 16 September 1912, p7; and 'Advertising', *Age*, 19 February 1919, p4
25   'Lower Plenty Progress Association', *Advertiser* [Hurstbridge], 7 March 1930, p4
26   Certificate of Title, vol 4905, folio 996
27   Melbourne 1945, Photo-map, 839-c3d, The University of Melbourne, https://maps-collection.library.unimelb.edu.au/historical/1945melb/l_sheets/839c3d.jpg
28   Certificate of Title, vol 6474, folio 623 (28 April 19150)

Edward had known each other since at least the 1930s, as Knox and his first wife had occupied a boathouse owned by Edward's parents during the 1930s in Fairfield.[29]

Lindsay Edward House was erected both by Knox and his crew (unknown) and Edward. The timing of the construction lay between the acquisition of the property in April 1950 and the completed house being photographed in 1952 for a feature article in the *Australian Home Beautiful* (see below).

Knox's first mud-brick project was a small house north of the subject place (*English House*, 52 Philip Street, Lower Plenty), completed over 1947. The publicity generated fuelled postwar interest in mud-brick construction, enabling Knox to resign from his day job at the State Bank of Victoria and take up design/building full-time. A series of mud-brick Knox projects followed over the late 1940s, many noteworthy.[30] Between 1950 and 1952, however, Knox returned briefly to chiefly building in timber, driven by the 'scarcity of labour and the high premiums above awards' required to hire workers for his 'mud brick programme'.[31] In line with Knox's view, Robin Boyd declared at the time, 'The mud bubble has burst' lamenting that 'Earth has grown out of the reach of the ordinary man. Pise and adobe have moved into the luxury class'.[32] *Lindsay Edward House* was likely one of the first mud-brick developments Knox returned to or, as it was for a familiar family, a project for which he was prepared to wear higher costs.

The broader socioeconomic backdrop of postwar Melbourne was instrumental in encouraging the interest of Knox and Edward in the vernacular earth tradition. During the Second World War, many aspects of life had become regulated to an unprecedented degree by the state, a situation that continued across the postwar years. As civil and private construction had practically ceased during the conflict, the nation faced an acute housing shortage during reconstruction. A 'crisis' magnified by a general shortage in materials, high labour costs, stringent finance and continuing government restrictions. Until the early 1950s, such austerity conditions required major concessions on the part of most aspiring homeowners, with thousands of low-cost, self-built 'mean' timber or brick veneer dwellings the outcome.[33]

Between 1940 and August 1952, Victorian houses were subject to fluctuating size regulations. The original *Lindsay Edward House* was likely affected by the 1,400 square foot (130 square meters) maximum extent allowed since July 1948 for a dwelling of any construction method.[34]

A further complication in the immediate postwar period, which lingered into the early 1950s, was severe material shortages. The expense and time required to access conventional construction materials – timber and brick – was prohibitive. Some prospective homeowners and builders turned to alternatives. In Victoria, interest and knowledge in earth construction, once a common 19th-century mode of construction, had renewed in the late Interwar period. The 1934 founding of *Monsalvat*, an artist colony in Eltham, by the patrician artist Justus Jorgensen, with its adobe/pisé 'Great Hall' proved influential in this regard. Knox himself gained his introduction to mud-brick from regular interactions with this utopian commune during the late 1940s.

Consequently, from the late Interwar period, a handful of earth buildings arose in the Eltham area, including a pisé (rammed earth) house by the journalist/writer John M Harcourt.[35] Notwithstanding this nascent pre-war revival, it appears the spartan conditions of the late 1940s proved critical in popularising earth construction. As Knox notes, 'Had there been no war, there would have been no shortages, and if there had been no shortages there would have been no mud brick building.'[36]

The 'alternative' and creative milieu that developed in the Eltham area – a 'sleepy outer suburb surrounded by remnant bush' including the Lower Plenty – over the postwar period also proved important in allowing for experimentation and engagement with earth structures.[37] Affordable land and semi-rural surroundings drew those interested in living 'simpler' lifestyles (many apparently influenced by Thoreau's *Walden*). Writers, artists, filmmakers, designer, academics and teachers flocked to Eltham:

29   Alistair Knox, *A Middle Class Man: An Autobiography*, unpublished, undated, chapter 1, https://alistairknox.org/chapters/15
30   Notably, the William Macmahon Ball Studio, 1948; the curved *Periwinkle House*, 1948; the first phase of the *Busst House*, 1948-49; the *Downing/Le Gallienne House* complex (1948-58); and *Murphy's Creek Homestead*, 1949
31   'Down to Earth in Housing: He Crusades For Mud', Section 3, *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1953, p7
32   ''One man who did much to develop the idea of adobe as a modern building material, and who infected hundreds with his own enthusiasm, was Mr. Alistair Knox, designer and builder. He now says: "I never want to build in it again. It is still practical if you have plenty of space and the right equipment … And if people are strong enough and healthy enough to do it themselves." Costs finally turned Mr. Knox from adobe. Four years ago the big problem was the shortage of material, rather than labor.' (Robin Boyd, 'The "Free" Material That Costs Too Much', *Age*, 13 November 1951, p4)
33   Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, chapter 1, p1
34   Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, chapter 3, p3
35   John M Harcourt, 'Natural earth as a Building Material: Pise-de-terre, Cob and Mud Brick Methods Explained', *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1946, pp8-10. The same journal ran an article on a mud-brick house near Wandin in Victoria a few years later (Charles Simms, 'Hand-made in mud-brick', *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1949, pp24-5, 75)
36   Knox, *We are what we stand on*, chapter 45
37   Gordon Ford in Ford with Gwen Ford, *Gordon Ford: the natural Australian garden*, Blooming Books, 1999, p9

'We were young, enthusiastic idealists, keen to avoid becoming Thoreau's "men who lead lives of quiet desperation".'[38] Some became interested in unconventional construction techniques or turned to them by necessity; as noted by Boyd, many of the mud-brick builders 'had little money for building and they liked rustic simplicity. They looked to the earth for materials.'[39] Edward appears particularly indicative of this postwar trend. Knox often extolled the postwar dynamics of the Eltham locale:

> The Shire of Eltham has achieved a remarkable reputation as a district of artists, writers, environmentalists and other eccentric inhabitants during the past forty years. It has gradually become recognised as the most creative local community in Australia. At the end of the Second World War, polite Melbourne still regarded it as a place of non-confirming fringe dwellers who lived in dubious artists' colonies, drank large quantities of dry red wine, built mud-brick houses and opposed all forms of civic progress and suburban development. It fought running battles with the State Electricity Commission and other authorities over the retention of indigenous, roadside tree growth and formed societies to promote the unrestrained and promiscuous planting of native trees at a time when they were still persona non grata in other localities.[40]

Lindsay Edward House was selected to headline a lengthy article on the mud-brick movement for the widely distributed *Australian Home Beautiful* (AHB) in early 1953, entitled 'Down to Earth in Housing':

> Looking east to a Dandenong's view on a gentle slope of Lower Plenty, Victoria is the adobe house of artist Lindsay Edward and his wife. The designer, Alistair Knox, formed earth from the site into mud-brick to make the walls. The patio is welded into the plan so that it became an integral part of it. The building cost about £150 a square. The soil was mixed into a well-balanced proportion of 60 per cent. sharp sandy soil and 40 per cent. clay. The artistry of the owner went into the finishing work, and this was done with vitality, colour and discretion.[41]
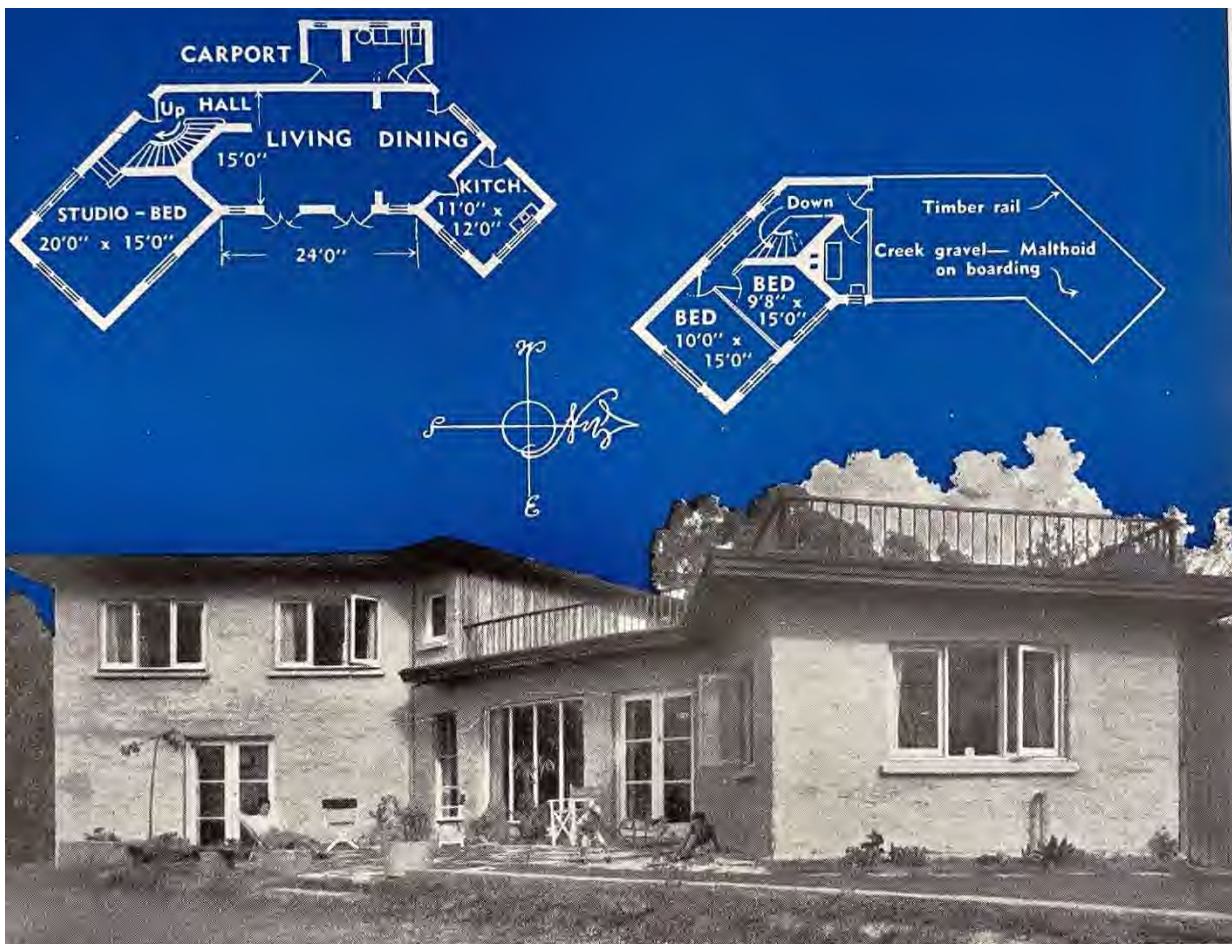
Original *Lindsay Edward House*, photographed 1952, showing east elevation – note members of the Edward family, Janet reclining in the chair and young children playing on the patio. (Source: Leslie H Runting, 'Down to Earth in Housing', *AHB*, January 1953, p7)

The caption for the photograph of the house's east elevation read:

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38   Ford, *Gordon Ford: the natural Australian garden*, p9
39   Robin Boyd, *Australia's Home: Its Origins, Builders and Occupies*, Melbourne University Press, 1961, p201
40   Alistair Knox, *Alternative Housing: Building with the head, the heart and the hand*, Albatross Book, 1980, chapter 'The Mount Pleasant Road Story', available at https://alistairknox.org/chapters/90
41   Leslie H Runting, 'Down to Earth in Housing, Section 1, *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1953, p7

All the rooms look out on to the patio which is paved with cement blocks colored sandstone reds, grey, blue-grey and off-white. They are bounded by a low sitting wall which extends beyond the kitchen wing and returns to the terrace behind the house. A triangular sand pit is situated immediately outside the kitchen window, enabling children to be supervised. [42]

Based on the number of internal photographs (six – not all are reproduced below), the *AHB* was keen to highlight the 'tasteful' and considered interior, perhaps to stress the sophistication that mud brick could achieve. Other mud-brick projects previously published by the magazine, including Knox's *English House*, had all depicted relatively basic internal spaces.

'Lindsay Edward's studio is his workroom, but still provides comfort around a broad fire-place', 1952 – north wall of the (now) ground-floor bedroom (south wing) (Source: *AHB*, January 1953, p6)

'Entering the living room, one is immediately aware how the house merges with patio and view' – original east elevation, central wing, windows since removed, French doors reused (*AHB*, January 1953)

'At the front entry, the three levels are catered for with a hanging stairway of sweeping design', 1952 – stairs are believed extant, main entrance pictured left of frame (*AHB*, January 1953, p6)

Living room and random stone fireplace (built by Edward), 1952 – fireplace since changed, replaced with brick
(Source: Source: *AHB*, January 1953, p15)

Until likely the mid-1960s, the ground-floor wing in the south wing functioned as Edward's art studio. The Edward family was probably responsible for the replanting and landscaping of the subject property in the wake of construction.

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42   Leslie H Runting, 'Down to Earth in Housing, Section 1, *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1953, p7

Knox composed a detailed explainer about earth construction as part of the *AHB's* 'Down to Earth in Housing' article. His writing yields insight into what was, in the early 1950s, still a distinct and progressive design approach in Melbourne and an early signpost of an evolving philosophy of what Knox would later term 'environmental building':

It is basically important to regard a mud wall as a mud wall and as nothing else. This is no slur on the material. Good architecture gives it an individual beauty and history confirms its capacity to survive. To this day more than half of the world's dwellings are built of mud. Only Western society has turned away from mud, because of new methods and machinery. But the house-hungry post-war world saw a renewed interest in the medium …

The objective of the designer of a mud brick building is to co-relate his plan to the possibilities of the site, soil, etc., as economically as he can while giving due regard to the aesthetics of his problem. Earth is required for the walls. If the site slopes, the plan should exploit the levels so that what is removed for levelling purposes will suffice to build the walls. It is cheaper to cut into the ground to a reasonable distance than to build it up. Because of this, it is better to use concrete slab floors over which timber, tiles, or any other flooring may be laid.

The cost of the excavation and concrete is more than compensated for by the saving in wall heights, the flexibility of the building, its relationship to its environment, temperature control, durability and beauty. Preconceived notions of what the house should be must be held in reserve until one determines what the site will allow. A plan that defers prejudice to topography is half way to success …

Tradesmen do not relish completing work that has not a straight beginning. They generally regard mud somewhat balefully, for it does not show off the quality of their craft as well as many other surfaces. For this reason it is an ideal medium for the enthusiastic amateur to complete …

I never use cement for rendering mud brick walls. Internal walls are rendered with mud or merely bagged down on paint. External walls are pointed up where necessary with mud and bagged down so that all gaps are filled. They are then painted with oil paint, Cementone, or any similar water-proofing material which will not destroy the homely character of the mud bricks …

[*It is*] hard work in plenty—for there is no easy method of building—but there is a lot of satisfaction in co-operating with Mother Earth in making a building grow.[43]

Some details of 'typical footing and wall sections', presumably prepared by Knox's small office, accompanied his article, and some extracts are reproduced below. These likely depict the construction method utilised for the single and two-storey components of *Lindsay Edward House*.
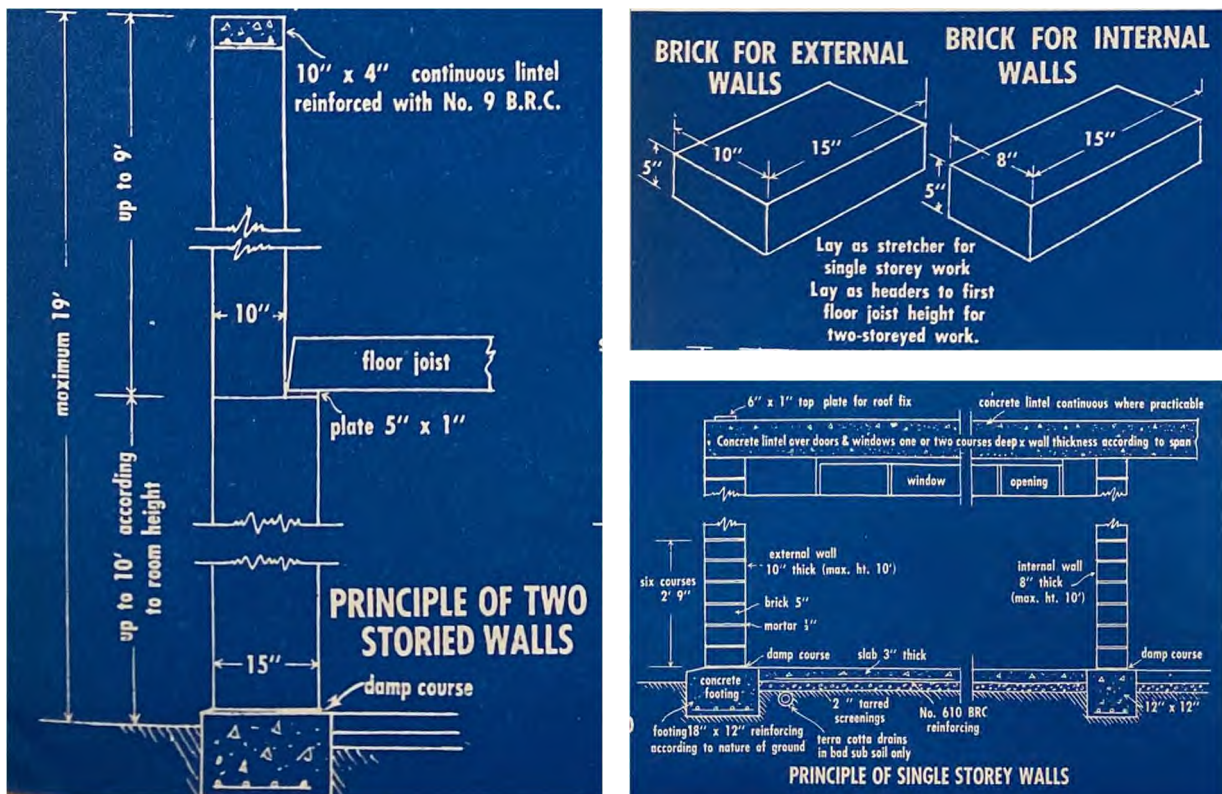
Extracts from Knox prepared footing drawings and wall sections, likely indicative of the approach he adopted for the original *English House* (Source: Knox, 'Down to Earth in Housing: Builder's "How To" Story', section 2, *AHB*, January 1953, p9)

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43   Alistair Knox, 'Down to Earth in Housing: Builder's "How To" Story', Section 2, *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1953, pp9-10, 13

In 1954, Edward subdivided his sizable property, selling the western quarter to Rennie Beale Edward, his brother (now 147 Old Eltham Road).[44] Soon after, Rennie, a builder, is believed to have commissioned Knox to design a mud-brick house and studio on this allotment.[45] The 1956 aerial photograph, taken a few years after construction, depict both the 'butterfly' plan of *Lindsay Edward House* and Rennie's new dwelling.

1956 aerial photograph of *Lindsay Edward House* (circled in dashed red) and its immediate environs
The house immediately west of the subject place is Rennie's circa 1954 dwelling, also mud-brick and constructed on land excised from the original extent of the subject place
(Source: Landata, Project no 2, Run 16A, Frame 53)

Lindsay Edward House was awarded further attention from the *AHB* in 1969 as part of a series re-examining previously discussed designs to see how plans had 'worked out in practice' and grown over time. The article introduced the house as 'designed by Alistair Knox, "high priest" of the mud-brick movement'. It also noted that 'hundreds' of mud-brick homes had appeared in the Lower Plenty and Eltham since its construction, 'giving the district a character all its own'. The main built changes highlighted by the article was the provision of a vertical timber-clad addition at the centre of the 'butterfly' plan (above the ground-floor living space) – noted as envisioned for in Knox's original plan – and the enclosure of a carport to form a new bedroom (west elevation, near main entrance). A new carport was also attached to the end of the southern wing.

> Built of earth dug from the site, the house had right from the start the look and feel of a mellow, established home — in spite of the comparative bareness of its immediate surroundings. Today, sheltered and shaded by a heavy growth of trees and shrubs, it exhibits that "timeless" quality to an even more marked degree …

> Like most houses we've revisited, it has changed and expanded to meet the demands put upon it by a growing family. But the changes were pretty painless — and because of the form of construction, fairly inexpensive. Mr Edward says its growth has been dictated by three principal requirements: the size of the family … the need for a larger painting studio; and "aesthetic" needs — met in part by the development of terraces and outdoor living facilities.

> First major alteration came in 1955 … It consisted of a new timber-clad master bedroom, built in the space allowed for it on the flat roof over the living room …

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44   Certificate of Title, vol 8069, folio 724
45   Frequent Knox collaborators John Pizzey and Clifton Pugh may have been involved in the construction. The house has undergone successive changes, including a conventional two-storey addition by Knox's office in 1980, which have compromised its mud-brick character (*Cullen Extension*, SLV, Job no 1100, YLTAD28 605).

[*Later, unspecified date*] the original carport on the western side was walled in to make a fourth bedroom. A new carport was added on the south-east wall. Meanwhile, Mr Edward's original studio on the lower level of the ground-floor became a secondary living area. With its brick floor and thick earth walls, it's a delightfully cool retreat in hot weather. A new mud-brick studio was built a little away from the house on high ground to the north.[46]

The 1960s small mud-brick studio discussed above survives on a battle-axe property excised from the subject place in 2015. It is now utilised as a private dwelling (151 Old Eltham Road).[47]

March 1969 cover of the *AHB* with the Edwards' daughter posing in the patio with the east elevation in the background
Note vertical timber-clad addition (1955), since extended
(Source: Eltham District Historical Society, Victorian Collections, 06149)

Ground-floor plans showing modifications – north is right of frame
(Souce: Bennetts, 'Did The House Live Up To Expectations', *AHB*, March 1969, p6)
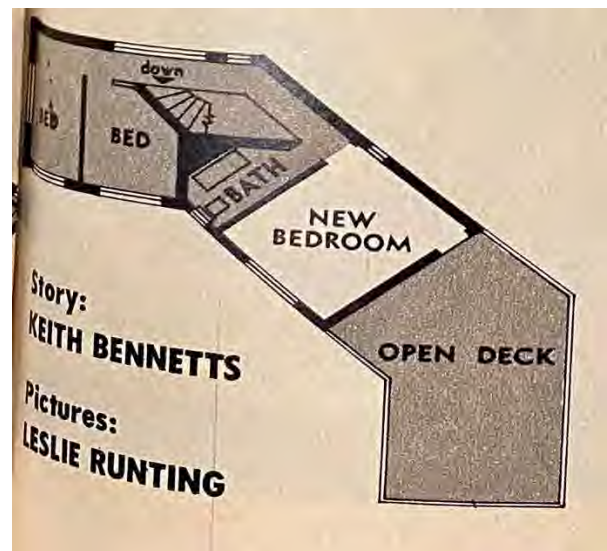
Ground-floor plans showing modifications – north is right of frame
(Souce: Bennetts, 'Did The House Live Up To Expectations', *AHB*, March 1969, p7)

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46   Keith Bennetts, 'Did The House Live Up To Expectations', *Australian Home Beautiful*, March 1969, pp6-8
47   Landata, Plan of Subdivision, PS 649779J

Photograph of the east elevation, note that the page crease obscures the extert of the south wing
The north wing (left of frame) was later extended (Souce: Bennetts, 'Did The House Live Up To Expectations', *AHB*, March 1969, pp6-7)

The 1969 *AHB* article does not identify who was responsible for the alterations and additions up to that point. However, it is understood that Edward was responsible for undertaking much of the works, particularly those sections that involved mud brick. It is possible ~~likely~~ that Knox guided or assisted in this early phase of modifications, as he remained on close terms with the Edward family until the late 1960s. Edward is also believed to be behind the late 20th-century ground-floor north~~wee~~east additions (sunroom and ~~and bedroom~~kitchen extension) and alterations (conversion of laundry to bedroom), as well as ~~to~~ the northern extension/addition of the first-floor master bedroom.[48]

The Edward family retained ownership of the place until 2016. Note that, until relatively recently, *Lindsay Edward House* was referred to as 151 Old Eltham Road, Plenty.

Lindsay Maurice Edward (1919-2007)

Born in Melbourne, Edward studied at the National Gallery Art School (1938-41). In 1942, he enlisted with the Australian Military Force at age 22, serving overseas in New Guinea and New Britain.[49] After demobilisation as a Lance Sergeant in 1945, Edward married Janet Beatrix (*née* Knox) (1925-2015), the daughter of William Dunn Knox (also an artist), in 1946 and toured postwar Europe and the United Kingdom (1947-48). Afterwards Edward began a long association with RMIT where he taught and led the painting school and Department of Fine Arts until 1979, emerging as a prominent art educator.

Concurrently, Edward developed a national profile for his perceptive semi-abstract/cubist paintings and held a score of solo exhibitions in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth. Much of his work explored various Australian landscapes, employing dynamic organic form and a robust 'earthy' palette. Edward characterised his approach as a desire 'to place sequences of shapes, colours and tones on a surface in an abstract manner, like the notes of a Bach fugue'.[50] His painting style was well-suited for larger mural designs and Edward's best-known artwork was a giant glass mosaic at the (former) State Library of Queensland (1958). He also undertook mural commissions for the Victorian Housing Commission and various churches.[51]

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48   Personal correspondence with Edward family, November 2020
49   Service Record, B883, VX87540, National Archives of Australia
50   Jenny Zimmer, 'Teacher's fine art traverse life of his city and times, *Age*, 2 June 2007, p10
51   Alan McCulloch, *Encyclopedia of Australian art*, revised by Susan McCulloch, Allen & Unwin, 3 ed, 1994 p316
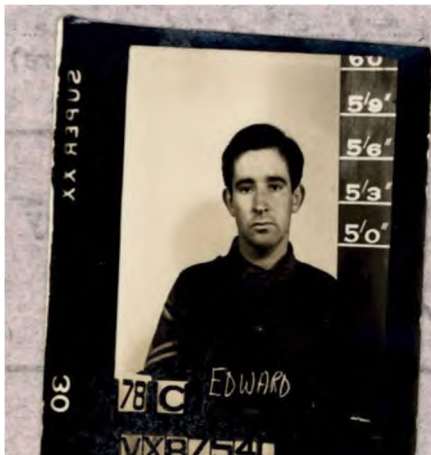
Photograph of Edward at enlistment, aged 22
(Source: Service Record, B883, VX87540,
National Archives of Australia)

Edward's 1958 glass mosaic mural at the (former) State Library of Queensland (159
William Street, Brisbane) (foreground)
(Source: Queensland Heritage Register, no 600177)

Alistair Samuel Knox (1912-86)

… it is difficult to establish whether Eltham made Knox or whether he was the making of it – of mud bricks and sturdy timbers …[52]

A charismatic figure, Alistair Knox was the leading proponent of Victoria's postwar mud-brick 'revival', an ardent movement that became entwined with a specific Eltham-based identity and a broader rise of eco-consciousness. Through his postwar building and landscape work and his writing and activism, Knox was instrumental in popularising the concept of 'environmental building' over the late 20th century.[53]

Knox, born and raised in Melbourne by an evangelical family, started a clerkship with the State Savings Bank of Victoria in his late teens and a family soon after. At the outbreak of the Second World War, he joined the Volunteer Defence Corps, ultimately serving on the waters around Papua New Guinea. Discharged in 1945, Knox took advantage of the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme to begin, but not complete, a Diploma of Architecture and Building Construction at Melbourne Technical College. Weary of the bank, his postwar ambitions turned to building and design.

Over the late 1940s, Knox – his first marriage having broken down – began circulating within Melbourne's avant-garde/bohemian circles. He made regular forays out to Eltham to visit *Montsalvat*, experiencing the complex's array of adobe/pisé buildings. The 'primitive' aesthetic and harmonising qualities of earth construction drew Knox, although his first two commissioned houses, both in the Glenard Estate (Eaglemont) in 1946, were of weatherboard. The public interest in the completion of the mud-brick *English House* (1947) encouraged Knox to quit the bank and embark on a string of adobe projects. He relocated permanently to Eltham in 1949, marrying Margot (*née*) Edwards, a well-known painter, in 1954. Knox became a fixture of postwar Eltham, a place and community he considered unparalleled within Australia.[54]

Knox's four-decade career in building and landscape design/construction was prolific despite commercial ebbs and flows. It is loosely dividable into four phases. The first, a pared-back, heavily organic, mud-brick phase, was characteristic between the late 1940s to the mid-1950s. The second phase witnessed the adoption of a modular design approach, with low-key modern houses utilising more conventional materials and new products, such as 'Stramit'. The 'credit squeeze' of 1960/61, instigated a return to mud-brick and reclaimed materials, albeit the designs remained generally modular (third phase). From the early 1970s (fourth phase), a sequence of mature and dramatic adobe and landscape projects was initiated, which coincided with the peak of Knox's public profile and the wider resurgence of earth construction in Eltham.[55] Underlying the various phases was a deep appreciation

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[52]   Anne Latreille, 'Awards for know-how and a flair for original', *Age*, 14 September 1982, p23

[53]   Peterson and Kuzyk, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986): modernism, environment and the spirit of place', p5; Fay Woodhouse, 'Knox, Alistair Samuel (1912-1986)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 2007, available online; and Philip Goad, 'Knox, Alistair', in Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture* Cambridge University, 2012, pp387-8

[54]   Knox, *We are what we stand on*, xiii and p47

[55]   Peterson and Kuzyk, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986): modernism, environment and the spirit of place', passim; and 'Design and Building Career', *Biography*, Alistair Knox Foundation, available online, https://alistairknox.org/

of the subtlety of the Australian landscape – the embrace of a site's sense of place and exigencies – and consistent engagement with the principles of the modern movement.

Knox's interests in environmental design and social concerns both mirrored and drove a broader escalation of conservation politics, particularly in Victoria, where he became a household name over the 20th century. Between 1973 and 1975, Knox served on Eltham Shire Council, including as president in his last year. He was also a founding member (1967) and later fellow (1983) of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects. In 1984, Knox received an honorary Doctor of Architecture from the University of Melbourne for his unique contributions to the field of design.

The breadth of Knox's influence was notable: 'His work was key to the next generation of builders and designers, including John Pizzey, artist Clifton Pugh, architects Morrice Shaw and Robert Marshall and countless owner builders [*particularly in the Eltham area*].'[56] The Alistair Knox Park in Eltham, which he assisted in converting from a rubbish tip in the mid-1970s, is dedicated to him.

Clay caricature of Alistair Knox, 1953, by John Frith
(Source: *AHB*, January 1953, p14)

Clay bricks in production, undated, unspecified site
(Source: Alistair Knox, *Living in the environment*, 1978)

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

- 6.4 Post-War Residential Development

Comparative Analysis

Knox's practice was responsible for approximately 1,260 buildings, principally houses. The majority of his mud-brick projects are now situated in Nillumbik Shire, predominantly in Eltham, Kangaroo Ground, and Diamond Creek. The presence of a small cluster of his first phase projects in the Lower Plenty and Montmorency – now part of Banyule – reflects these areas' associations with the former Shire of Eltham, the 'cradle' of mud brick and environmental design in Melbourne during the second half of the 20th century. Another score or so of Knox's houses, chiefly dating from the 1960s and 1970s, survive elsewhere in Banyule; however, while often distinct within their immediate settings, these places generally present as more typical, even conventional, examples of his second and later phases of work.[57]

The only known example of Knox's work in the municipality affected by a HO is:

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56   Goad, 'Knox, Alistair', p338
57   For instance: 43 Alexander Street, Montmorency (mud brick construction, façade of random stone cladding); 30 Gilbert Road, Ivanhoe (courtyard house, mud-brick, carport modified); Sunday School Hall for St Andrews Church at 1-3 Mountain View Road, Montmorency (1955); 8 Rowell Street, Rosanna (1960s brick house with an International Style expression); and *Fowler House*, 60 Adam Crescent, Montmorency (late 1970s mud brick). See Alistair Knox website, section 'Buildings', http://alistairknox.org/directories/2

- *Brynning House*, 37 Glenard Drive, Eaglemont (part of the Walter Burley Griffin Glenard Estate, HO1) – a restrained gable-roofed, U-shaped, timber house, Knox's first commercial project, built in 1946.[58] Since modified.

~~Two~~ One other earlier instance~~s~~ of Knox's work in Banyule ha~~sve~~ been recommended for a HO by this Study:

- *English House*, 50 Philip Street, Lower Plenty – Knox's first mud-brick project, an austere and small skillion-roofed residence, constructed in 1947. It was subsequently extended and altered, although its principal elements remain intact and interpretable. Indicative of Knox's first phase, albeit in a compact manner.

- ~~*Vera Knox House*, 46 Panorama Street, Lower Plenty – a single-storey house, constructed between 1958 and 1960, likely from salvaged Mount Gambier limestone, as a retirement home for a relative of Knox by marriage. Illustrative of Knox's second phase of work (modernist modular design based around window-walls), although this instance is set apart by its use of stone.~~

There are also a limited number of other mud-brick buildings in the municipality:

- *Woodburn House*, 1/11 Hughes Street, Montmorency (HO159) – a modest mud-brick house on a reinforced concrete slab with front 'window wall' (northern outlook, originally louvred) and skillion roof designed/built by an architectural student, William J Woodburn, in 1949. An austerity induced instance of the International Style in adobe recognised as innovative at the time, along with the neighbouring house at no 9 by Sydney Smith (no HO), which attracted attention for its utilisation of hollow concrete block walls.[59]

- *Adobe Houses and Dam (Peck's Dam)*, Napier Crescent and Grand Boulevard, Montmorency (HO101) – a serial listing of single and two-storey mud-brick houses in a naturalised setting, most houses are heavily screened from the streets by native/indigenous vegetation. Skillion or gable roofs, timber-framed windows and salvaged/recycled elements appear to abound. Built over the postwar period on low-cost land in the Panorama Heights Estate, many by their owners (characterised as an eclectic array of creatives), some of whom were evidently influenced or advised by Knox.[60]

In Banyule, a small group of architect-designed houses included in the Schedule of the Heritage Overlay or recommended for a HO by this Study reflect the organic/Wrightian and regionalist strain of modernism in which Knox practised. [61] These places, however, date from the late 1950s or 1960s, at least several years after *Lindsay Edward House*. They also seek to evoke a regional/organic character with more 'earthy' variants of conventional materials (timber and brick) as opposed to Knox's design, which celebrate their organic nature with heavy-set mud-brick walls and reclaimed 'bush' timber.

Intactness
Generally intact

Previous Assessment

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommended for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	Yes
Internal Alteration Controls	Yes ('hanging' timber stair, exposed timber ceiling beams)
Tree Controls	No
Outbuildings and/or fences	No

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[58]   Knox was also behind the *Moore House* on Glenard Drive (since demolished) – a flat roofed, timber building with a U-shaped footprint which enabled the retention of pre-existing trees, with extensive glazing and a stone paved patio.

[59]   Robin Boyd, 'Small Homes Section: A Lesson From Montmorency', *Age*, 28 December 1949, p4; and *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1950, pp23-5

[60]   12-16, 59, 68, 67-71, 72, 73-75 Napier Crescent and 134 Grand Boulevard. Refer to Peterson and Kuzyk, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986): modernism, environment and the spirit of place', p11

[61]   *V Walker House*, 209 Main Road, Lower Plenty (HO163), 1958; and *Williams House*, 4 Glenard Drive, Eaglemont (HO146), 1963; and *Elliston Estate*, Rosanna (HO92), late 1960s. Recommended by this Study – *Okalyi House*, 66 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty, 1968-70; *Yann House*, 21 Keam Street, Ivanhoe East, 1960-63; and *Welsh House*, 4 Eton Court, Heidelberg, 1965-72

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, January 2021)

WILLIS HOUSE

Address	10 Gruyere Crescent, Ivanhoe East
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1950
Period	Postwar
Date Inspected	January 2021

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Willis House at 10 Gruyere Crescent, Ivanhoe East is significant. The area remained essentially rural well into the 20th century and the site derives from the Charteris Estate subdivision of 1939, which was mostly developed after WWII. The extant house was constructed in 1950 as a family home for and likely by Albert Alexander Willis, to a design by the architect Robin Boyd, then in solo practice as well as directing the Small Homes Service. Albert and his wife, Rosalind, a singer, remained in residence into at least the late 20th century.

The significant elements are its cuboid form, including painted brick walls with extensive section of grille ('hit and miss') brickwork to the lower level of the façade, screened entry, stained timber boards to the entry canopy, large timber-framed windows, and timber front door. The small laundry block to the rear is also original and significant.

The cream-brick garage with concrete lintel, associated wall and timber pedestrian entry to the rear boundary along Gruyere Lane and cypress trees to the front west boundary both likely date to the late 1950s. These elements contribute to the significance of *Willis House*, as do key landscaping elements in the front gardens, such as the lava rocks – to both low retaining walls and garden bed edging – and random stone paving.

How is it Significant?

Willis House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Willis House is of historical significance as an early postwar design by Robin Boyd, one of postwar Australia's foremost architect and design commentators. Its 1950 construction in the southern reaches of Ivanhoe East foreshadowed the emergence of this locale – which had remained sparsely developed farmland into the postwar period – as a notable concentration of architect-designed modernist residences over the mid-to-late part of the 20th century. The circumstances of *Willis House's* construction demonstrate the high cost and/or difficulty to procure labour in the years immediately following the Second World War as it was likely constructed by its owner Albert Alexander Willis, a (former) Master Builder who at the time of purchase of the land in 1948 was employed as a leather merchant. (Criterion A)

Willis House is of aesthetic significance as a fine, earliest modernist house in the municipality. An array of its elements, such as its cuboid form, near-flat roof, partly screened entry, unusually extensive areas of glazing (near fully glazed band to the main level), restrained articulation and lack of decoration, represent a dramatic break with the mass of pre-war suburban housing characterised by pitched roof forms and elaborately detailed exteriors. The design also takes considered advantage of its site and location – a prerequisite of good modernist design – in that, while south-facing, there are large windows with minimal framing divisions to the front living areas that capture fine views of the river valley opposite. (Criterion E)

Description

The *Willis House* is located in the central part of Gruyere Crescent, a gravel road that defines the southern edge of the residential part of Ivanhoe East. The house is located at the southern end of an elongated block, which overlooks the *Birrung*/Yarra River near Burke Road. The parcel of land has an area of about 808m^2 but is narrower at the north end, where it backs onto Gruyere Lane (about 13 metres as compared to about 19 metres at the southern end). The land also slopes about 5 metres across the length of the site (about 51 metres).

Willis House is widely visible and is set back about 10 metres from the front boundary, which is defined by a low, loosely configured wall of lava rocks. Much of the front yard is a lawn with a eucalypt to the east end within a garden bed primarily consisting of agapanthus, similarly edged with lava rocks. There is a part concrete driveway with a central section of crazy paving to the west end (likely Castlemaine slate or the like, lain in an irregular formation) adjacent to a row of five established cypresses. A similar stone has been employed to the garden bed in front of the house and the adjacent stairs and edge of the lawn area.

The house's overall footprint (including the front porch and rear patio) is rectangular, but the internal plan is T-shaped.[1] Due to the slope, there is a partial basement/lower level with a garage (roller door), workshop, and storerooms that has an extensive grille ('hit and miss' brickwork). The latter is a common feature of Robin Boyd's work, and other architects during the postwar period, though rarely utilised in such an extensive and prominent manner as in this instance. Three piers are visible behind the screen.

The form of the house is essentially cuboid with a near flat or low skillion roof. The roof is clad in metal sheeting behind a wide timber fascia with a squat chimney at the east end. It projects over the entrance to form a tapered canopy, with a soffit lined in stained timber boards. The walls are brick and painted white, as are the timber-framed openings, though the original wall finish not known. The brickwork was possibly bagged, a finish which Boyd commonly employed during the early 1950s (for instance, at the nearby *Stone House*, HO110). The entry stairs are concealed behind a wall that extends out from the grilled section.

The main upper-level front wall of *Willis House* is almost entirely glazed. The extent to which would have been noteworthy at the time of construction. Under the influence of postwar modernism, there was a general preference with contemporary planning to have a relatively blank façade, primarily as a means of creating privacy. The employment, at this stage, of such large panes of glass (that is, comprising few glazing bars) was less typical for a private residence. In this case, Boyd combined these elements to provide unimpeded views of the Yarra corridor, creating a picture window of the landscape while achieving some privacy with the screened entry wall for the stair. The fact that Gruyere Crescent is (now at least) a no-through road also likely factored into his decision-making. The visible part of the entry above the screen wall consists of a painted timber board door with sidelights.

While not evident from the public domain, there are four small square windows along the west elevation and a door to the east side. The rear/north wall is mostly glazed in a similar manner to the façade.

Front, showing extent of concrete paving, and areas of random stone/crazy paving

The floor plan has bedrooms along the western side with living areas to the east end, opening onto a rear patio. The central fireplace, with cut corner, has a curved rear wall and hearth clad in bricks. Walls and ceilings are lined with plaster sheeting,

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[1]   '10 Gruyere Crescent, Ivanhoe East', realeaste.com.au, August 2015, www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-vic-ivanhoe+east-120309157

though there are likely original stained timber elements, including partition walls and cabinetry and/or joinery in some areas. The kitchen cabinetry likely dates to the later part of the 20th century.

An original, separate laundry block is located in the rear yard near the eastern boundary. It is designed in a similar mode to the house and to the south side features a large, fixed window with a band of louvres.

Extending most of the rear boundary (Gruyere Lane) length is a non-original cream brick wall, which has a concrete lintel over the double-width garage door and a timber board pedestrian door. To the weeast is a section of metal sheetingfencing, set back from another skillion roof structure.

Gruyere Lane
(Source: Google Street View)

Willis House is an early example of a modernist house defined by its flat/low pitched roof form, which represented a distinct break with the typical suburban norm of a gabled and or hipped roof. Other key aspects of the postwar modern movement illustrated by the house is its conscious response to the site conditions, such as solar access, privacy and views.

Around 1950, Boyd employed some varied or compartmentalised footprints before exploring a more regimented and modular approach to planning under the sway of the prevalent International Style. The inclusion of an unusually large window without/minimal divisions is reminiscent of the Wood House at 12-14 Tannock Street, North Balwyn (1949-50), which was extended twice by Boyd in 1959 and 1971.

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[2] The lightly wooded grasslands of what became known as 'Ivanhoe' were quickly targeted for sheep runs and by timber-cutters from the 'illegal squatter camp (est. 1835) downstream of the *Birrarung*/Yarra at Melbourne.[3] However, as part of the 'Heidelberg' district in the Parish of Keelbundora, this area passed rapidly into private hands via an auction in Sydney Town in 1838.[4]

Over the following decade, a patchwork of 'prestige' estates emerged, along with a surveyed township – *Warringal* (possibly 'eagle's nest'), later 'Heidelberg' – on the river's west bank.[5] Productive river flats, and the demands of the gold diggings further afield, encouraged market gardening, orchards and (gradually, due to soil exhaustion and flooding) dairying; activities mostly undertaken by tenant farmers.[6] This perceived rural idyll enticed *plein air* artists to the district during the 1880s, fixing the 'Heidelberg School' within Australia's artistic consciousness.[7]

Ivanhoe – its name stemming from Archibald Thom's 'Ivanhoe Estate' – remained a sparsely populated agricultural area until Melbourne's 'Land Boom' in the late 1880s.[8] 'Picturesque' terrain, varied outlooks and the high repute of the broader district drew often well-off newcomers. By the turn of the century, 'Beautiful Ivanhoe' was routinely portrayed as a 'fashionable', 'exclusive locality' of 'model homes'.[9] An improved railway connection to Melbourne in 1901 supported further middle-class growth, instigating 'four decades of slow and relatively affluent suburban sprawl' in the vicinity of Ivanhoe, Eaglemont, and Heidelberg train stations.[10]

During the interwar years, suburban Ivanhoe solidified, although its southern and eastern reaches remained primarily locked up by the expansive 'Hartlands', 'Charterisville', and 'Chelsworth' estates.[11] To navigate the complexities that accompanied the subdivision of these areas (sloping land, curving streets, views) in the postwar period and galvanised by the swelling influence of modernism, many of the new and generally moneyed proprietors sought the services of an architect.[12] By the early 1960s, distinct enclaves of upmarket, modernist design culture were apparent in the southern reaches of Ivanhoe and Ivanhoe East, with the aesthetic and lifestyle reverberations of the modern movement also shaping infill development in the more established environs of the locale.

View near Heidelberg in Victoria, pen and ink drawing, circa 1858
(Source: Eugene von Guérard, National Gallery of Victoria)

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2   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online
3   James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne & The Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc., 2011, pxi
4   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of Kulbundora – the name of the eldest son of the important Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') Billibellary. ('Suburban Native Names', Argus 28 April 1906, p5). One of the earliest manifestations of local governance in the Port Phillip District (1840), the fluctuating borders of municipal Heidelberg mirrored its growth, as it was reformatted into a Road District (1860), Shire (1871) and then City (1934). It was amalgamated as the City of Banyule in 1994.
5   Donald S Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p13
6   Robert P Whitworth, *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer*, F F Bailliere, 1879, pp237
7   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.5, and 2.3.10; and Janine Rizzetti, 'Heidelberg', in Richard Broome et al, eds., *Remembering Melbourne 1850-1960*, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 2016, p282
8   Thom's estate designation was inspired by a novel of the same name by Sir Walter Scott (1819).
9   Ivanhoe & Alphington Progress Society, *Beautiful Ivanhoe: the suburb of model homes and scenic charm*, Model Studio, 1900, SLV
10   Ivanhoe Station opened in 1888; however, inefficiencies in the Heidelberg-Melbourne railway line initially bedevilled growth.
11   Ivanhoe grew from roughly 2,000 residents in 1913 to nearly 8,000 by 1933 (*Victorian Year Books*, Australian Bureau of Statistics).
12   Don Garden, 'Ivanhoe', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008

Site-specific

The subject allotment derives from Portion 2 of the Parish of Keelbundora, a roughly 420-hectare holding purchased (along with portions 1 and 3) by Thomas Walker in 1838. A Sydney-based Scottish banker and philanthrope with an eye for marketable land across the colony, Walker's intention in the Port Philip District was speculative from the start. He commenced subdividing his acquisitions as early as mid-1839 to enormous profit.[13]

In the resulting sales, Portion 2 was carved up into multiple large estates. The subject land formed part of a roughly 33-hectare farm purchased by one of the first surveyors of the district, William Wedge Darke, and known as 'Waverly'. Darke appears to have developed this property rapidly, for at its sale in December 1839, it was noted as cleared, fenced, and under cultivation with a weatherboard residence.[14] Ultimately, Waverly was incorporated into Captain Sylvester John Brown's (the original spelling was 'Brown', the 'e' was added later by his son) considerable 'Hartlands' estate. Brown was a onetime shipmaster in the East India Company who had made a small fortune in Sydney through whaling and trade.[15] (He was also the father of multifarious Thomas Alexander Browne, celebrated during the late 19th century as the novelist 'Rolfe Boldrewood'.) He made Hartlands his familial seat in 1840, cultivating the flats and socialising with the area's gentry.[16]

However, within a few years, the colonial economy's worsening conditions forced the foreclosure of Hartlands – the stress of which shattered Brown Snr. A fortunate marriage between his daughter and a relative of Walker (the mortgage holder) enabled the debt to be cleared through the partial sale of the estate in 1853 (namely, the western portion, establishing Maltravers Road) and the 'Brownes of Hartlands' were able to reoccupy the remainder of the traduced estate.[17] They remained there until the mid-1860s, departing in the wake of their residence's destruction by arson, after which the holding was leased agriculturally.[18]

The infamous 'Land Boom' syndicate, the Trustees, Executors & Agency Company, acquired most of the southeast segment of Portion 2 in 1889, including a large section of the former Hartlands estate, instigating intensive subdivision but sluggish development.[19]

By June 1928, a holding consisting of about 6 hectares had been acquired by the Trustees Executors & Agency Company and the viticulturist, François Robert de Castella, then an occupant of *Chartersville*.[20] This property included all the land between Burke Road North (west), Gruyere Crescent (south), The Boulevard (east), and McArthur Road (north). It was advertised as the 'Charteris Estate' and split into two subdivisions. A few lots gradually sold from September. The subject property formed part of the larger section.[21] At this time, according to a contemporary aerial photograph, much of Burke Road North had yet to be laid out and the area between Lower Heidelberg Road and the Yarra presented as cleared farmland.[22]

The subject allotment (no 10) was one of 40 home sites offered for sale in March 1939. The location was noted as the 'finest hill on the river boulevard'. [23] A description of the sale follows:

> Good prices were obtained at the auction sale of 40 allotments in the Charteris Estate, East Ivanhoe … About 600 persons attended …. The estate is bounded by the Boulevard, on the north side of the Yarra River, opposite Burke road bridge, and has an extensive outlook over Camberwell and North Balwyn.[24]

All 40 lots were sold at auction.[25] In May 1939, the subject land was transferred to Ernest William Capuano, an engineer and (company) director of Elizabeth Street.[26] Around this time, the City of Heidelberg had issued a by-law allowing for the construction of brick veneer houses (previously frowned upon) in the area provided the floor area exceeded the prescribed

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| 13 | W Joy, 'Walker, Thomas (1804-1886)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1967, available online |
14	Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and its People*, p34
15	He was also the father of multifarious Thomas Alexander Browne, celebrated during the late 19th century as the novelist 'Rolfe Boldrewood'.
16	Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and its People*, pp31-2
17	Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People*, pp41-2
18	'Incendiarism', *Australasian*, 15 April 1865, p6
19	Certificate of Title, vol 2142, folio 233
20	Certificate of Title, vol 5435, folio 947
21	LP12704. The SLV has several holdings relating to the Charteris Estate, most of which are not available on-line. The name of the estate was being used by 1916 for sales of land west of Burke Road North.
22	Landata, Project no 131, Run 17, Frame 3328, December 1931
23	*Age*, 11 March 1939, p3
24	'East Ivanhoe Sale', *Argus*, 27 March 1939, p2
25	'The Week in Real Estate', *Herald*, 29 March 1939, p22
26	Certificate of Title, vol 6302, folio 247

minimum by 15 per cent. [27] However, the official declaration of war in September and the virtual cessation of private building from December 1940, together with postwar restrictions and rationing, appear to have delayed development at the property.
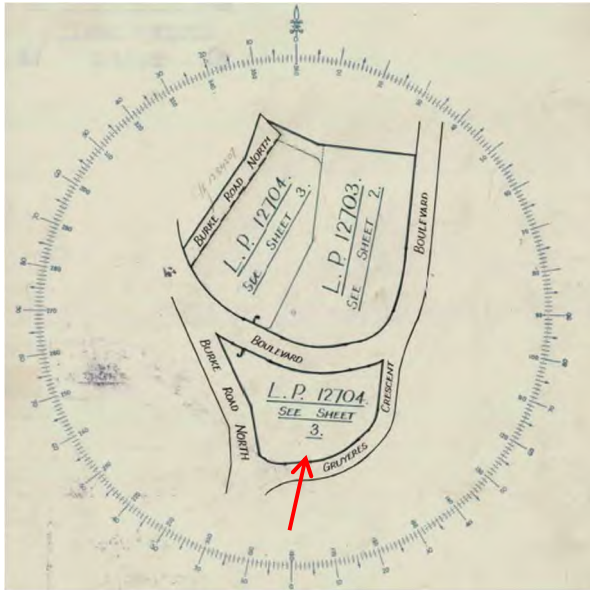
Charteris Estate subdivision, 1928, showing the two distinct parts
Approximate location of *Willis House* is indicated by the red arrow
(Source: Certificate of Title, vol 5435, folio 947)

A 1941 MMBW plan shows that no construction had occurred along Gruyere Crescent, which in reality had not even been established (see 1945 aerial photograph below), although a few lots to the north had been developed. Construction in Gruyere Crescent only started in earnest during the late 1940s, possibly buoyed by the provision of sewerage in Ivanhoe East in mid-1949. [28]
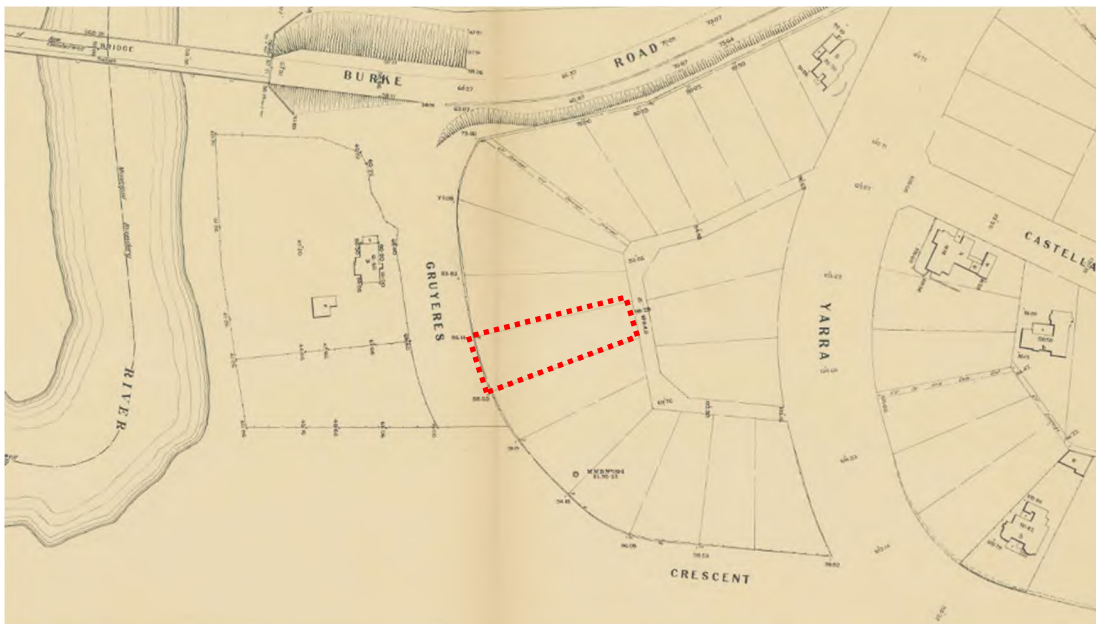
MMBW detail plan 4825, dated 1941
Subject allotment outlined in dashed red – north is to right of frame
(Source: SLV)

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27   'Brick Veneer Houses', *Recorder* (Port Pirie, SA), 6 June 1940, p4
28   *Argus*, 13 July 1949, p20

1945 aerial photograph, showing approximate location of subject site
(Source: Ringwood AIC, Zone 7, Photo-map 849-a1, The University of Melbourne)

In November 1948, the title was transferred to Albert Alexander Willis of Dickens Street, Elwood, then a married leather merchant.[29] Willis had been born in 1909 in Clifton Hill. He had served in the Militia Forces from 1926 to 1934, enlisting in the Citizen Air Force of the RAAF in October 1942. At that time, he described himself as a 'Master Builder':

> with six years practical experience in the construction of all types of domestic structures from timber framed dwellings to three storey brick residences including the preparation of plans and specifications.[30]

Willis was awarded the Pacific Star for his service in 1945. His wife, Rosalind, was a singer who had studied at the Sydney Conservatorium. References to her activities were frequently noted in the 'Society' sections of the daily newspapers.

The *Willis House* was constructed in 1950.[31] The residence was an early commission for the eminent architect Robin Boyd,[32] then in his early thirties and in solo practice while also running the RVIA Small Homes Service which provided a wide range of inexpensive architect-designed plans. It seems likely that *Willis House* was designed during 1949 as Boyd spent much of 1950 travelling in Europe with his wife.[33]

No drawings or other documentation relating to this project has been unearthed.[34] This lack makes it probable that *Willis House* was neither documented to working drawings nor supervised by Boyd. This circumstance may have arisen as Willis – a former/current (unclear) contractor – likely undertook the build himself. Owner-builders were widespread in the postwar years, as professional builders were expensive and difficult to procure.

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29   Certificate of Title, vol 6302, folio 247. Willis had married Rosalind Mary Spriggs in Balmain (Sydney) in 1932 in what appears to have been a military ceremony. One contemporary description ran: 'an arch of swords was formed by fellow-officers as the bridge and groom left the church'. ('Arch of Steel', *Sun* (Sydney), 24 December 1932, p7)

30   NAA, series A9300 (RAAF Officers Personnel Files, 1921-1948), barcode 5241738, Service Number – 119623

31   Valuation record provided by the City of Banyule.

32   This claim was made in the 2015 sale notice. Correspondence with the Robin Boyd Foundation, 10 March 2021. An inspection by noted authorities on Boyd – Tony Lee and Phillip Goad – at the time of the sale confirmed it was likely.

33   Geoffrey Serle, *Robin Boyd: A Life*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1995, pp108-111

34   Banyule Council have no drawings, etc. No record of this house is evident in the *Grounds, Romberg and Boyd collection*, MS 133363, [SLV] or is held by the Robin Boyd Foundation (Correspondence with RBF, 10 March 2021)

Albert Alexander Willis
(Source: NAA, series A9300)

Miss Rosalind Spriggs
(Source: *Sydney Mail*, 18 January 1933, p20)

Neither Alexander or Rosalind Willis was listed at the subject address in the Victorian electoral rolls until 1955 or in the *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria* until at least 1960.[35] However, the extant footprint of *Willis House* is evident in a 1954 aerial photograph, along with the laundry block, although the garage to the rear lane ~~appears absent~~is not evident. The residence's primary roof shows a dark colouring, suggesting it was surfaced with 'Malthoid' (bituminous felt), a material Boyd utilised extensively in the absence of steel sheeting that could clad flat/low-pitched roofs. Malthoid became notorious for its failure under Melbourne's intense UV radiation. This aerial photograph also depicts several other completed houses in Gruyere Crescent. Most of these remain but are of a markedly different ilk to the Willis House, illustrating more conventional and common cream-brick veneer designs with pitched roofs.

1954 aerial photograph
Willis House is indicated by the red arrow
Note the unformed nature of Gruyere Crescent
(Source: Landata, Project no 174, Run 15, Frame 75)

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35   Victorian electoral roll, Division of Batman, Subdivision of Ivanhoe. Neither Albert or Mary Willis were listed along Gruyere Crescent in 1952 or 1953. The 1954 edition was not available at the SLV. *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria*, various editions.

The garage to Gruyere Lane was likely built during the latter part of the 1950s (or soon after) as suggested by the cream brick palette. Both the garage and Similarly, the cypress trees to the front west boundary are also not evident on the 1954 aerial but as the trees are well-established specimens, were likely planted soon after. The lava rock walls and edging to the front garden was introduced during the 1970s.[36] The metal gates and fencing date to the late 20th century and early 21st century, as does the rooftop air-conditioning units.[37]

No other major changes are known to have been undertaken at the *Willis House*.

The residence appears to have been envisioned as the permanent postwar family home for Albert and Rosalind, after raising their two children at the site, remained in occupation until at least 1990.[38]

Robin Boyd (1919-71)

Robin Gerard Penleigh Boyd was one of Australia's pre-eminent architects, cultural critics and public educators. His prominence and influence were such that he was one of the few architects to have become a household during and after the postwar period, attaining a broad reputation – rare for his profession – as a public intellectual. His life and work have been subject to comprehensive academic review.[39]

Born into the famous Melbourne artistic family, Boyd's father Penleigh was a highly regarded landscape painter who designed and built the family home, *The Robins*, in North Warrandyte in 1913. His mother Edith Susan (*née* Anderson) was also an accomplished artist, especially at drawing.[40]

After Boyd's father's death in 1923, the family moved to a flat in Toorak then a brick bungalow in East Malvern from where he undertook his secondary school education. He studied architecture at Melbourne Technical College (now RMIT) and the University of Melbourne before being articled to the leading practice of A & K Henderson. Boyd's burgeoning interest in modernism often put him at loggerheads with the conservative forces in the profession, especially through his nascent critiquing activities in *Smudges*. Boyd worked as an assistant for (Sir) Roy Grounds during the late 1930s.

In 1941, Boyd married Patricia (née Madder) and served in Queensland and Papua New Guinea during the Second World War. Subsequently, he began solo practice and entered into a short-lived, unofficial partnership with Kevin Petherbridge and Francis Bell as Associated Architects. Between 1947 and 1953, he became the founding director of the pioneering and inventive RVIA Small Homes Service, which provided contemporary architectural outcomes to the public at an affordable price. The services support by the *Age* newspaper provided Boyd with a popular weekly column and, over hundreds of pithy but pointed articles, he projected his vision of urban design, taste and 'modern' living into the public discourse.[41] At this time, Boyd designed his first house in Camberwell in 1947 and published the first of several provocative books, *Victorian Modern*. Other publications now regarded as classics include *Australia's Home* (1952) and *The Australian Ugliness* (1960).

In 1953, Boyd formed the partnership of a generation – Grounds, Romberg & Boyd – with Roy Burman Grounds and Swiss-trained émigré architect Frederick Romberg, though they tended to work separately. This resolutely modernist practice dissolved in 1962 with the bitter wrangle over the National Gallery of Victoria and Cultural Centre commission, which was taken by Grounds. Romberg & Boyd continued until Boyd's sudden death.[42] His awards and honours were numerous.

Boyd's celebrated architectural output was prodigious and was almost exclusively residential. Several of his houses are seminal modernist works and he explored a range of ideas about enclosure with them. He is famed for the singularity of many of his designs, including his second home in Toorak of 1957, which has been purchased as museum/design foundation.

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

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[36]   Information provided by owner from recollections of the neighbour at 9 Gruyere Crescent.
[37]   Information provided by owner
[38]   Albert and Rosalind became joint proprietors in 1963 (Certificate of Title, vol 6302, folio 247). After Rosalind's death in 1989, Albert appears to have remained at the site (Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, Registration no. 17003/1989, ancestry.com.au).
[39]   The literature on Boyd is extensive - Serle, *Robin Boyd: A Life* is the definitive biography; see also 'Robin Boyd: Special Issue', *Transition*, no 38, 1992; and Goad, 'Boyd, Robin', in Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp100-2
[40]   Marjorie J Tipping, 'Boyd, Theodore Penleigh (1890–1923)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1979, available online
[41]   Neil Clerehan, 'Boyd, Robin Gerard (1919–1971)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1993, available online
[42]   Philip Goad, 'Grounds, Romberg & Boyd', *Melbourne Architecture*, 1999, pp250-1

- Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol. 1, July 1999:

- 6.4 Post-War Residential Development

Comparative Analysis

Four houses designed by Boyd are currently included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overly in Banyule. Three of these heritage places date to the mid-1950s when he was part of the practice of Grounds, Romberg and Boyd (HO110, HO148, HO160). The other, *Featherston House* (HO65), was constructed in 1968 and represented a different phase of his output.

Willis House pre-dates the mid-1950s group by about four years and is representative of Boyd's postwar work as a solo practitioner. Boyd's other known projects in the municipality are shop/supermarket at 73 Haig Street, West Heidelberg (1954, since demolished) and *Burgess House*, Ivanhoe (1965), which alterations have severely compromised.

The following HOs are broadly comparable to *Willis House*:

- *Victor & Peggy Stone House*, 22 Mount Eagle Road, Ivanhoe, 1954 (HO110) – obscured from the street with a garden designed by Ellis Stones, this two-storey house is also located on a sloping site. Much of the façade is blank with a combined entry canopy and carport. The brickwork was bagged and there were brise-soleil (sunscreens) to the large rear window wall, which took in the views to the east.

- *Holford House*, 14 Hardy Terrace, Ivanhoe, 1955 (HO148) – also located on a steep slope, *Holford House* explored a combination of key ideas or formats he explored at this time, encompassing a parasol roof with a U-shaped pod beneath about a central courtyard. This house similarly has a carport to the front and incorporates breeze block grille/screens into the bagged brick walls.

- *Joseph Simpson House*, 35 Douglas Street, Rosanna 1958 (HO160) – located on a tapering corner site and partly obscured, it similarly has an elongated form with salmon brick walls to the most visible parts of the site and is largely glazed otherwise. The beams of the roof framing are less prominent, with a fascia across their ends and a panel to the upper part of the wall so while the walls are tall, they are not full height and have a different unit configuration.

- *Featherston House*, 22 The Boulevard, Ivanhoe (HO65) – designed by Robin Boyd in 1968 for Grant and Mary Featherstone, notable industrial and furniture designers, it received a posthumous citation in the RAIA (Victoria) awards of 1972. This iconic house of tan brick with reinforced concrete floors is defined by a series of elevated platforms to a large 'garden room' featuring a full, double-height window wall to the rear. From the street, it has an unassuming presence, with a garage effectively screening it.

An array of architect-designed modernist houses are included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay for Banyule. Most originate in the 1950s and reflect the multiplying version of mid-century modernism. The dominant influence of the International Style is prevalent, particularly its preference for rectangular footprints, cuboid forms and stripped-down aesthetic; for instance, 10 Alexandra Street, Greensborough (HO136) by Moore and Hammond, 1957. Others reveal the period's growing interest in the modular derivation of the plan, with steel or timber framing and lightweight panelling and bands of glazing. A key example of specific geometry is the 1954 *Snelleman House* (HO36 + VHR H2282) in Ivanhoe East by architects Peter and Dione McIntyre, often referred to as the 'Coil House'.

Only one example – *Woodburn House*, 1/11 Hughes Street, Montmorency (HO159) – predates the *Willis House*. It designed in 1948 by architecture student William Woodburn in mudbrick on a concrete raft slab (an early example thereof) and was praised for its approach to the materials shortages by Boyd. It has a flat roof with large banks of windows.

Collectively, these varied examples of modernism provide insight into the forces of modernity that shaped the district following the Second World War, particularly shifting sociocultural and economic factors and the willingness of some residents to interact with then unconventional design culture and novel lifestyle patterns.

Intactness

Highly Intact

Previous Assessment

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommended for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls   Yes (bagged brickwork)
Internal Alteration Controls   No
Tree Controls   No
Outbuildings and/or fences   Yes (laundry block)No

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, March 2021)

ROYD

Address	61-63 Mount Street, Eaglemont
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1901
Period	Federation
Date Inspected	January 2021, June 2022

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Royd at 61-63 Mount Street, Eaglemont is significant. It was constructed in 1901 on an allotment in the Eaglemont Estate for husband-and-wife Henry Vines Champion and Christiana Champion. Henry was a civil engineer, then in partnership with his younger brother, Alfred Champion, an architect. The Champion brothers were almost certainly responsible for *Royd's* design. In 1938, the property was sold by Henry's daughter to Dr Edgar Alexander North, a medical scientist with the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories at Parkville. He and his wife remained in residence until the mid-1960s.

Royd's significant elements are its remaining original footprint front hipped roof section and with three gables gambrel roof, clad in slate, terracotta cresting and finials, exposed rafter ends (to the side elevations), and red-brick chimney. The façade with its three-street facing gable ends with bargeboards, timber screens and ventilators, as well as return hipped-roof verandah with red-brick plinth (including three arched openings) and timber decoration (turned timber posts with moulded capitals, triangular brackets and balustrade with crosses), weatherboard cladding, and three front tripartite bay windows, and multi-panelled door with sidelights (if original) are also significant.

The several mature exotic trees that characterise the front garden, specifically the Lebanon cedar (*Cedrus Deodara*), Algerian oak (*Quercus canariensis*) and the row of Pencil Pines (*Cupressus Sempervirons*), are complementary to the garden setting of the place.

Later alterations to the front including the infill section at the southern end of the façade, projecting bay of the verandah (north end) and extant stair, and multi-panelled entry door with sidelights (on northern return of verandah) are not significant.

Later additions, including the rear, mainly-hipped roof section with wings to the west and verandah, garage/workshop, retaining wall to front boundary, and garden paths and steps, are also not significant.

How is it Significant?

Royd is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Royd is of historical significance as a commodious timber villa from the early Federation period. It illustrates the gradual emergence of the Eaglemont Estate as an early 20th-century pocket of affluence within the municipality, typified by residences of architectural pretension in established gardens that attracted professionals like the original occupant, the well-regarded civil engineer Henry Champion. *Royd's* role as the Melbourne-residence of Dr North, a leading postwar medical researcher, who, amongst other advances, pioneered the introduction of the triple antigen vaccine is also of some associational note. North and his wife were ardent gardeners and are likely responsible for many, if not all, of the mature exotics in the front garden. (Criterion A)

Royd is of aesthetic significance as a substantial and generally intact, architect-designed weatherboard example of the Queen Anne style from the early Federation period. The more formal roof composition and restrained picturesqueness of the gable and verandah with pronounced geometric timber detailing are distinguishing, reflecting a less typical variant of Federation architecture. Such considered design emphasises the prominence of the return verandah – its presence also underscored by the red-brick plinth with arches – and the villa's elevated ridgeline siting and deep setback from the street. Together with the informally planned garden, resplendent with mature exotic trees, sSuch attributes endow *Royd* with a sense of distinction and exclusivity, indicative of a historic and continuing architectural trend in Eaglemont. It is the principal known timber example of its idiom in the municipality. (Criterion E)

Description

Royd is a large-scale, single-storey residence, situated parallel to the ridgeline, at the rear part of a substantial rectangular allotment on the west side of Mount Street (split-level in the vicinity of the site). The deep setback and elevated siting confer a prominence to the residence.

The sizeable front garden slopes in an undulating manner to the footpath and includes lawn and an array of mature exotics, including a Lebanon cedar (*Cedrus Deodara*), Algerian oak (*Quercus canariensis*) and Pencil Pines (*Cupressus Sempervirens*).

These tall exotic trees likely stem from the planting efforts of the second occupants, the Norths., and contribute to *Royd's* stately character and garden setting. It is unknown if the existingThe low drystone retaining wall (volcanic rock) at the front of the placeto the front boundary also dates to the mid-20th century, replacing a stringed wire fence.[1] is original or early; however, there was likely always some masonry breast wall at this location. There is no evidence that the front of the property has ever been fenced. The brick steps at the front of the property and splayed stairs (dwarf walls) forward of the house are contemporary additions.

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[1]   Information provided by the owners derived from a conversation with the son of the former owner, Dr North, 20 June 2022

The drystone retaining wall to the front boundary dates to the North period of ownership (circa mid-20th century)

At the rear, the allotment abuts an unnamed concrete right of way. A double gabled and weatherboard garage/workshop was constructed to the rear boundary in the late 1990s. Rear and side timber paling fences are non-original.

A series of architectural drawings prepared by Andrew Fedorowicz for modifications to *Royd* (dated May 1998) inform this assessment and are referred to below.[2]

Royd's original footprint was capped by a low-peaked ~~gambrel~~ hipped roof (partly altered, see below) incorporating three street-facing gables.[3] The latter arrangement is comprised of a central gablet (small gable) flanked by a pair of larger gables. This symmetrical composition imparts a formality to the design, one less common for its type and idiom (see below), albeit still picturesque in intent. The gable ends feature timber decorative elements, consisting of bargeboards that break forward with timber screens, behind which are louvred ventilators. The smaller central gable is surmounted by a timber finial whereas the larger flanking gables are surmounted by terracotta ball finials. The restrained, geometric detailing to the verandah and gable ends is striking and in conjunction with its elongated form, readily distinguishes *Royd*.

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[2]   Andrew Fedorowicz, ARAIA, *Proposed Alterations for Mrs Sheehan at 63 Mount Street, Eaglemont*, dated 11 May 1998 – provided by the City of Banyule

[3]   ~~In Australia, a gambrel roof is generally defined as a hip with small gablets under the ridge.~~

The main part of the roof is clad in slate, which was replaced during the late 1990s. Drawings note that the original terracotta cresting (faceted and pierced to the ridgeline) were re-used or substituted like-for-like 'if necessary'. Rafter ends are exposed to the primary roof (mainly to the side elevations). There is also a tall red-brick chimney with strapwork, pronounced corbelling and dual terracotta pots to the east roof plane.

A hipped roof verandah that returns to the north defines the frontage of *Royd*. It is clad in non-original corrugated metal sheeting and supported by turned timber posts with distinctive moulded/stepped capitals and triangular brackets. Saltire (Scottish) crosses are included in the timber balustrade. The verandah is raised above a red-brick plinth, characterised by three evenly spaced rounded arches (with voussoirs) to the remaining original section, with timber batten infill (possibly doors providing access to the subfloor). To the southern return is a bricked in window with a basalt sill.

In the late 1990s, the verandah was extended forward in the northwest via a faceted-like projection (a 'balcony/patio') and adjacent timber stairs provided (the stair was originally at the southern end, and later in the middle). The hipped roof was also extended partly over the projection. Posts, brackets and balustrade matched the original. Despite this not altogether unsympathetic modification, the original character of the long return verandah and its key role in the facade's composition remains readily interpretable.

As part of an extension to the south elevation, a small part of the verandah return was lost (where the original main entry was likely located) and the. non-original central timber stair has also been removed. The extent of change to the northern return is largely as it was unclear, but it appears that at leastand the verandah posts/detailing was replaced like-for-like. *Royd's verandah original* non-original central timber stair has also been removed. The extant type of the verandah deck is not knowntimber.

Royd's 1901 extent is of timber-framed construction and clad in painted weatherboard. The current off-white colour scheme is sympathetic to the style of the building.

Royd, 1980s, showing the original verandah with <u>later</u> central timber stair – plinth screened by vegetation
(Source: Graeme Butler, survey images, *Heidelberg Conservation Study*, 1985 – used with permission)

Royd's extant façade, north end showing the forward extension of the verandah, new stair, and the rear additions (behind the northern return of the verandah)

Additions were constructed at *Royd* in the late 1990s, replacing some of its original rear wing and back verandah (refer to undated MMBW plan in Site-Specific). The design and scale of the rear additions were relatively respectful, echoing the established character and continuing the high-quality material palette. An original gable – facing the backyard – was partly retained in this later scheme. As part of this modification, the southern section of the primary gambrel hip roof (likely a mirror design of the intact north part) was altered into a hipextended.

Aerial photograph of *Royd*, viewed obliquely from the south, with original primary and verandah roof approximately indicated by the red shading (Source: Nearmap, November 2020)

Beneath the gables, set in the verandah wall, are three large timber-framed, tripartite bay windows. The flanking pair are faceted with long double-hung sashes~~., while the~~The central ~~c~~ bay is ~~a~~ squared ~~bay~~ with toplights and paired casement outer windows and ~~-~~a fixed central pane. Below the outer windows are panels with ~~toplights. Its base did have~~ shingled boards, whereas the central panel has weatherboards. The ~~prescence~~presence of a threshold indicates that there was likely a door to the centre of this ~~pair~~bay originally, which has been infilled (hence the different detailing). ~~(in the 1980s).~~ A likely non-original door to the right of the central window has been infilled. The extant main entrance unit (panelled timber door with sidelights) at the north end of the return verandah is not original however there may have been a door in this location originally. ~~What appears to have always been the main entrance remains in the north elevation of *Royd*, at the end of the verandah's return. Its panelled timber door with sidelights is assumed original.~~

Other windows at *Royd*, mostly timber-framed double-hung sashes or casements grouped to the rear, are the outcome of changes in the late 1990s.

Royd is classifiable as Queen Anne revival in style, notwithstanding the malleability of the descriptor. This label primarily derives from the red-brick, terracotta-tiled houses with rendered trim and white-painted sashes designed in England by Richard Norman Shaw and others during the 1870s that often incorporated Dutch motifs but bore little similarity with the architecture of Queen Anne's chiefly 17th-century reign. With its transfer to Australia by London-trained architects and proliferating architectural/building journals over the 1880s, the English Queen Anne was dramatically recast, particularly around the turn of the century. Several architectural historians suggest it is better understood as a 'broad agreement' in architectural principles than a style.[4]

In Melbourne, the Queen Anne idiom signalled a radical departure from the 'boom time' excesses of the late Victorian era. The 'Free' and eclectic red-brick or timber 'villas' that emerged abandoned academic imitation or formalism, instead emphasising irregularity in planning/massing and reducing applied (or non-functional) ornamentation. Before petering out with the First World War, such a design scene was vibrant and transformative. Underlying its expression was a profound embracement of the English Arts & Crafts movement, the Ruskinian vision that materials should be employed with regard to their nature and valorisation of labour. This belief was paired with a then permeating Anglo-Saxon national sentiment; the desire that buildings should say something of the new nation and their local context.[5]

Royd is indicative of the 'broad agreement' that characterised progressive architecture in the Federation period, although its overall aesthetic is comparably restrained for a Queen Anne-style residence. Such repose is distinctive and likely arises from the natural advantages of the site. In that, the careful siting of the villa high on its ridgeline, combined with the scope for a well-planted deep front garden and multiple viewpoints of the place from the lower street, afforded an essential 'drama' that obviates the need for a bolder facade. Such allotments were not typical for Melbourne suburban subdivisions at the time. The linear return verandah at *Royd* and its simplified primary roof form also reflects the tendency of some Queen Anne-designs to subtly integrate aspects of the vernacular homestead, both as a necessary climatic device and a gesture to regional antecedents.

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[4]   Julie Willis and Philip Goad, 'A Myth in its Making: Federation Style and Australian Architectural History', in Andrew Leach, Antony Moulis and Nicole Sully, eds, *Shifting Views: Selected Essays on the Architectural History of Australia and New Zealand*, UQP, 2008, p133

[5]   Conrad Hamann, 'Against the mainstream: the inclusive tendency in Victoria's architecture, 1890-1984', in Alan G L Shaw, ed, *Victoria's Heritage*, 1986, chapter 8

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[6] The lightly wooded grasslands of what became known as 'Ivanhoe' and 'Heidelberg' were quickly targeted for sheep runs and by timber-cutters from the 'illegal squatter camp' downstream of the *Birrarung*/Yarra at Melbourne (est. 1835).[7] Much of the area, surveyed and ordered as the Parish of Keelbundora, passed rapidly into private hands via an auction in Sydney Town in 1838.[8]

Over the following decade, a patchwork of 'prestige' estates emerged, along with a surveyed township – *Warringal* (possibly Wurundjeri for 'eagle's nest'), later 'Heidelberg' – on the river's west bank.[9] Productive river flats, and the demands of the gold diggings further afield, encouraged market gardening, orchards and (gradually, due to soil exhaustion and flooding) dairying; activities mostly undertaken by tenant farmers.[10]

The neat area of hilly terrain between Heidelberg and Ivanhoe, dominated by 'Mount Eagle' and generally referred to as Eaglemont from the 1900s, remained relatively embryonic during the first several decades of settlement. From the 1840s, it was divided between a pair of expansive agricultural estates, 'Leighton' (north) and 'Hartlands' (south), attracting attention for its rustic and scenic qualities and panoramic views. Following the partial breakup of Hartlands in 1853, a residence was constructed at the summit of Mount Eagle for the politician John Henry Brooke. The name of the peak was adopted for Brooke's landscaped estate, which he reforested with then-fashionable conifers (the variety of such trees in the suburb today may originate from this 'pinetum').[11] The holding passed through multiple hands, and the house accommodated some of the celebrated *plein air* artists in the late 1880s, fixing the 'Heidelberg School' within Australia's artistic consciousness.[12]

Suburban growth, characterised by a generally 'high class of homes', advanced steadily over the ridges and hillsides of Eaglemont over the early 20th century, particularly in the north-western part of the locale (formerly Leighton, subdivided as the 'Eaglemont Estate'). In 1914, Peter E Keam – an avid town planning enthusiast – commissioned Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin to design a progressive Garden City Movement-infused subdivision for the Mount Eagle estate. The Griffins innovative plan retained trees and featured contour responsive curvilinear streets, common reserves and generous allotments, and was advertised as 'Eaglemont'. Two years later, on lower land to the northeast, again at the behest of Keam, the Griffins prepared a similar subdivision at the Glenard estate, previously a farm. The presence and associations of artists, the Griffins (who lived at Glenard at *Pholiota*, a self-designed Knitlock house for five years) and other creative types, such as the architect Harold Desbrowe-Annear, instilled Eaglemont with something of a bohemian, even alternative reputation.[13] The opening of the Eaglemont railway station in 1926 supported intensified suburban growth over the late Interwar period.

Site-specific

The subject land derives from Portion 2 (420 hectares) of the Parish of Keelbundora, purchased (along with portions 1 and 3) by Thomas Walker in 1838. A Sydney-based Scottish banker and 'philanthrope' with an eye for marketable land across the colony, Walker's intention in the Port Philip District was speculative from the start. He commenced subdividing his acquisitions as early as mid-1839, amassing enormous profit.[14]

The northern part of Portion 2, some 146 hectares, including the subject property, was purchased by the 'overlander' Joseph Hawdon – the founder of the 'Banyule Estate' (part of Portion 6) – and became known as the Leighton. Hawdon sold it to

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6   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online

7   James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne & The Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc. 2011, pxi

8   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of Kulbundora – the name of the eldest son of the important Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') Billibellary. ('Suburban Native Names', *Argus*, 28 April 1906, p5). One of the earliest manifestations of local governance in the Port Phillip District (1840), the fluctuating borders of municipal Heidelberg mirrored its growth, as it was reformatted into a Road District (1860), Shire (1871), City (1934), and amalgamated as the City of Banyule (1994).

9   Donald S Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p13; and Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, p15

10   Robert P Whitworth, *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer*, F F Bailliere, 1879, pp237

11   Fox Paul, *Clearings: six colonial gardeners and their landscapes*, Melbourne University 2004, p183

12   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.5, and 2.3.10; and Janine Rizzetti, 'Heidelberg', in Richard Broome et al, eds., *Remembering Melbourne 1850-1960*, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 2016, p282

13   Don Garden, 'Eaglemont', *eMelbourne*, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, available online

14   W Joy, 'Walker, Thomas (1804-1886)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1967, available online

members of the Bolden family, important cattle breeders in Port Phillip District, in 1840.[15] By the end of the decade, it was being leased to a handful of tenant farmers. In 1885, at the outset of Melbourne's 'Land Boom', local representatives for the Boldens put Leighton up for sale as two large-scale lots divided by Lower Heidelberg Roads. The subject place formed part of the 81-hectares western offering, acquired by a wealthy Fitzroy draper, John Christopher – it seems likely as a front to a syndicate who had previously been rebuffed from purchasing Leighton for subdivision.[16]

Besides selling a strip of land for the railway (1888), Christopher retained the holding until 1890, when it was transferred to the recently formed 'Eaglemont Estate Company', of which he was a key stakeholder.[17] By this stage, the western part of Leighton was routinely referred to as the 'Eaglemont Estate', while the adjoining eastern section (previously 'Glenard Farm') had been rechristened the 'Mount Eagle Estate'. The company had procured the latter in 1888, with the intention to oversee a pair of high-status (and lucrative) residential subdivisions. Accordingly, wide roads were laid (such as Mount Street, initially Main) and well planted with English trees. Provisions were also stipulated on contracts as to the expenditure and quality of prospective housing.[18] By at least 1913, the estates were described as one 'where the streets are planted with English trees, now in all their umbrageous beauty, and which differentiates the land to be offered from that in other parts'.[19] Opening sales, however, were disappointing as the overheated Melbourne market had entered a phase of contraction. The onset of the 1890s Depression proved terminal, with none of the lots offered as part of the Eaglemont Estate bought between 1893 and 1899.[20]
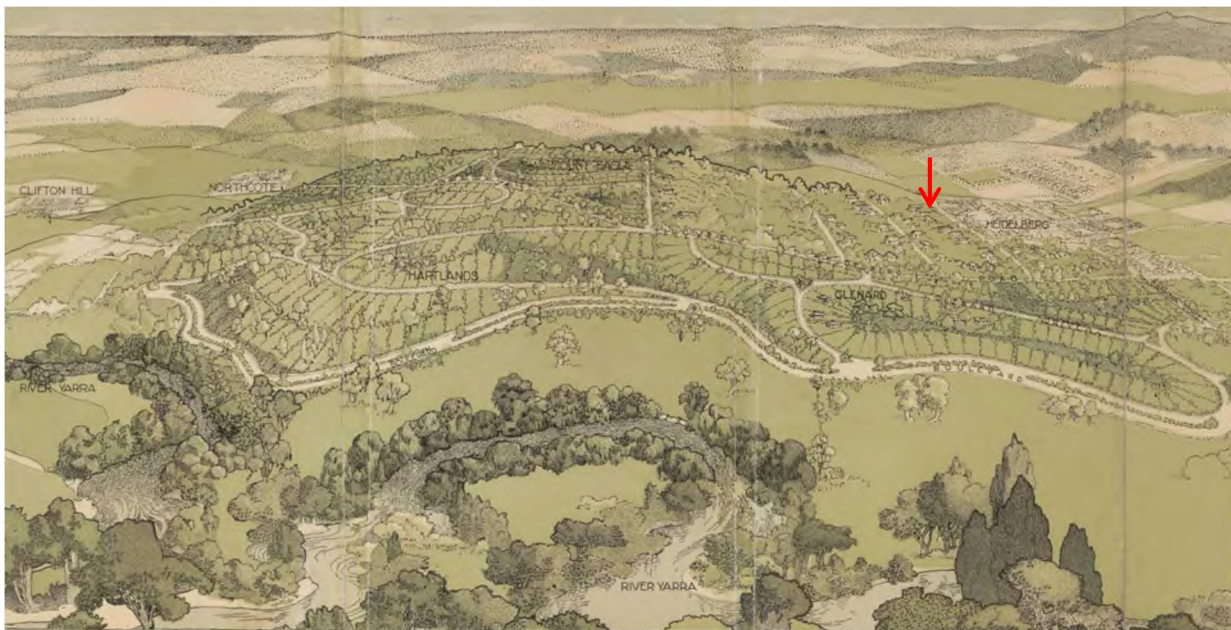
Extract from an artist's impression of the Eaglemont area in 1916
Approximate location of *Royd*, immediately south of the township of Heidelberg, is identified by the red arrow
(Source: *Sale brochure for Glenard Estate, Mount Eagle, Victoria*, Eric Milton Nicholls collection, NLA, Bib ID 3701541)

The pace of sales picked up in the Eaglemont Estate with the turn of the century. At this time, Christian Hall Champion – the wife of a well-regarded civil engineer, Henry Vines Champion – purchased the subject allotment in August 1901. A covenant attached to the title stated:

> no dwelling – house building or erection whatsoever (exclusive of fences outbuildings and stables relating---thereto or to be used therewith) to cost less than £500 may be erected … [no] brickmaking quarrying fellmongering … butchering or other noisome offensive or … dangerous pursuits operations or manufactures ...[21]

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[15]   P L Brown, 'Bolden, Armyne (1817-1843), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1966, available online
[16]   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, 28-31, 92, 141-3
[17]   Certificate of Title, vol 220, folio 900
[18]   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, p151-2
[19]   'Charming Heidelberg', *Herald*, 11 December 1913, p5
[20]   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, pp182-3
[21]   Certificate of Title, vol 2832, folio 336

Subdivision map of the block bound by Castle
Street (north), The Righi (west), Odenwald
Road (south), and Main/Mount Street (east)
Subject allotment is outlined in dashed yellow
(LP 4245)
Note presence of the existing right of way to
the rear (identified as a 'Road')
(Source: Certificate of Title, vol 220, folio 900)

The Champions appear to have brought the property with the intention of establishing it as their personal residence. At the time, Henry was in partnership with his younger brother, Alfred Champion, a registered architect, practising under the name 'H.V. and A. Champion, Architects, Civil Engineers & Licensed Surveyors'. The Champion brothers were almost certainly responsible for the design of *Royd* (a name that descends from Old Norse for forest clearing).

A press article concerning the supply of drainage mains for Main/Mount Street in July 1901 noted that:

> The purchasers—Messrs M. Omerod, G.A. Evans, and H. V. Champion—intend building at once. The houses, with land will cost from £1200 to £1500 each.[22]

Such a figure was well above average in the Federation period. Interestingly, it was also noted that Henry's advice as a civil engineer was sought by the Eaglemont Estate Company for the best means of 'cut[ing] down' and 'fix[ing]' the levels of the thoroughfare itself. It is plausible he may have had a role in the split-level format of Main/Mount Street.

In late August 1901, the Champions' practice issued a tender notice for the 'Erection of a Wooden Villa and Stabling, &C., at Heidelberg' in *The Age* (just days after the formal transference of the land), which was almost certainly for *Royd*.[23] Another newspaper in September that year noted that contracts for 'new villas on Eaglemont, Heidelberg' had been signed, including by one of the Champions, suggesting that construction was imminent.[24] The City of Heidelberg rate book records Henry in residence at the property in 1901.[25] The *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria* lagged, not listing any Champions in occupation until its 1904 edition.[26]

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[22]   'Heidelberg Council', *Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 12 July 1901, p2
[23]   'Advertising', *Age*, 17 August 1901, p3
[24]   'Buildings on Eaglemont', *Mercury and Weekly Courier*, 6 September 1901, p2
[25]   City of Heidelberg rate book, 1901, p121 (Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Places Study: Building Citations*, vol 2, part 1, Banyule City Council, July 1999, p290)
[26]   *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria*, 1904, p355. During the preparation of this study, RBA has repeatedly noticed instances of a longer lag time than typical for *Sands* in the Study Area, sometimes between two and four years between known building activity or occupancy changes being listed.

MMBW, Municipality of Heidelberg, no 2578, undated but~~ty~~ likely 1940s
The original footprint of *Royd* is circled. The stair (arrow) at that time was at the southern end of the verandah. Rear outbuildings have been removed.
(Source: PROV, VPRS 8601, P0002, Unit no 7)

After previous lodgings in Williamstown, Hawthorn and the township Heidelberg,[27] the decision of Henry and Christian Champion to establish their new residence in leafy Eaglemont – then gradually metamorphosing into a well-heeled commuter suburb – on an elevated and large lot is telling of the potency of the suburban ideal in the early 1900s. Such a setting was where the successful middle-class professional was supposed to establish the family household. Since the late 19th-century, the concept of the villa 'suburb' as a refuge from the social and sanitary maladies of the city had remained for many a decidedly 'modern' mindset, one underset by several prevalent contemporary beliefs: 'evangelicalism, which sanctified domestic privacy; sanitary science, which preached the importance of fresh air; Romanticism which inculcated a reverence for nature; and class-consciousness, which fed the demand for exclusive bourgeois neighbourhoods.'[28] The home was framed as a place where the male breadwinner could find refugee from the public realm and domestic architecture a vessel for delivering an 'authentic' life.[29]

Royd's development is a microcosm of such broader forces in Eaglemont during the early 1900s when the pace of construction was slowly renewing in the wake of the 1890s Depression and attempts were made via restrictive covenants and planning to create more 'exclusive' locales.

In 1904, the Champions (again under Christiana's name) expanded *Royd's* grounds, purchasing the vacant lot (no 4) adjacent to the south.[30] At the back, on the high ground, they built a tennis court (still extant) – a sport then the preserve of the privileged – and incorporated the remainder of the land into their garden. A 1931 aerial photograph, reproduced below, depicts the property, still occupied by the Champions, as well-treed with an expansive lawn.

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27   *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria*
28   Graeme Davison, 'Suburbs', in Davison, John Hirst, Stuart Macintyre, eds. *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, Oxford University Press, rev 2001, p623
29   Harry Margalit, *Australia: modern architectures in history*, Reaktion Books, 2019, pp24
30   Certificate of Title, vol 3017, folio 202

1931 aerial photograph
Subject site, then encompassing lots 3 and 4, is outlined in dashed red
(Source: Landata, Project no 1931, Run 17, Frame 3328)

Following Henry's death (1918), Christiana remained at *Royd* until her passing in 1935. It then passed to their only child, Elizabeth Mary Champion. She promptly advertised the house and grounds for auction:

ROYD, No. 63 Mount-Street, Heidelberg.

One of the Most Beautiful Sites on THE FAMOUS EAGLEMONT ESTATE, With Glorious Uninterrupted Easterly Aspect Across to the Dandenong and Dividing Ranges.

Under Instructions from Miss Elizabeth Champion.

The House is a COMMODIOUS AND SUBSTANTIAL TIMBER VILLA, With Slate Roof. Having Extensive Verandahs, and Containing 8 Splendid Rooms &c. The Outbuildings Include Stables and Sheds. There is An Asphalt Tennis Court.

The LAND Has Frontage to MOUNT-STREET of 218 ft. 5 In. by Depths of 280 Ft. and 340 Ft.

The Situation is Ideal. It is Only a Few Minutes' Walk from Heidelberg and Eaglemont Railway Stations. A Great Feature of This Property is the Magnificent Panoramic View Which is Obtainable from Any Part.[31]

Royd – on its existing allotment – was ultimately sold in 1938 to Dr Edgar Alexander North (1896-1970), a medical scientist, who had recently arrived in Melbourne to take up an appointment to the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories at Parkville, where he ultimately rose to be the chief of the research division (1950).[32] North was an erudite medical authority, involved during the Second World War with the manufacture of the smallpox vaccine and of the tetanus toxoid. He was also later part of the vaccine improvements for pertussis (whooping cough), the production and distribution in Australia of the *Bacillus Calmette-Guérin* vaccine (to prevent tuberculosis), and in the early 1950s, pioneered the introduction of triple antigen vaccines. Both Edgar and his wife were avid gardeners. It is likely that some of the place's plantings stem from their activity, particularly those along the northern perimeter and in the southeast corner of the property.[33]

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31   'Advertising', *Age*, 23 November 1935, p2
32   'Principle at Stake, says Counsel', *Evening News* (Rockhampton), 8 March 1934, p1; and 'Personal Notes', *Argus*, 16 February 1939, p12
33   Anthony Proust, 'North, Edgar Alexander (1896-1970)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 2000, available online. The *Herald* noted soon after the Norths had moved into *Royd* that Mrs North had 'thousands of sprays of lily of the valley at present in full bloom' at the property. (Sale of Flowers for Comforts Funds', *Herald*, 23 October 1939, p13).

The Norths remained at *Royd* into the mid-1960s, afterwards retiring to Tasmania (Edgar's birthplace).[34]

Lot 4 – along with the tennis court – was ultimately sold by Elizabeth to different owners in 1940. A new residence followed within a few years (now 59 Mount Street).[35]

1945 aerial photograph of *Royd*, outlined in dashed red, then owned/occupied by the Norths
(Source: Landata, *Melbourne and Metropolitan Area Project*, Run 30, Frame 59706)

Henry Vines Champion (1859-1918) and Alfred Champion (1872-1913)

A leading practitioner of engineering science in Melbourne during the Federation period, Henry V Champion was remembered at his sudden death as 'one of the most brilliant civil engineers the Melbourne University had turned out'.[36] His younger brother, Alfred Champion, also had a public profile and formed an active design/engineering partnership with Henry during the Federation years.

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34   Certificate of Title, vol 6187, folio 331
35   Certificate of Title, vol 3017, folio 202
36   'Engineer's Death Regretted', *Herald*, 8 January 1918, p1

Henry Champion was born in Victoria, the oldest boy of thirteen children. His parents had immigrated to Victoria in the mid-1850s, his father from Cornwell and his mother, the Channel Islands.[37] Educated at Wesley College, Henry attained 'the then coveted degree of Master of Civil Engineering' from the University of Melbourne in 1886.[38] Municipal positions as surveyor/engineer followed, notably at Williamstown and Port Melbourne, with Henry cultivating a reputation as an 'energetic admirer of order' and 'innovator of things that practical'.[39] He was considered a particular authority on sewerage schemes, on which he was widely consulted.[40] Closely involved with the Victorian Institute of Engineers, Henry was also admitted as an associate of the prestigious London-based Institute of Civil Engineers – possibly the first Australian-born engineer to be so – and made a life member of the Society of Engineers.[41] Henry married Christin Hall Inglis (1852-1935), a Scottish immigrant, in 1889. At the time of his death, he was a reserve officer with the Australian Field Artillery and held the rank of major.[42]

Alongside providing engineering services to public and private clients, particularly rural shires and Victorian/Tasmanian mines, Henry also entered into a partnership with his younger brother, Alfred Champion, a trained and registered architect.[43] Alfred had completed an articled education under Peter Matthews, 'who in his day had a very large architectural practice in Melbourne', and soon after was elected an associate of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects (RVIA) in the early 1890s. At that time, the slackness of the Victorian economy saw Alfred emigrate to Perth and later Fremantle (Western Australia), where he was involved with multiple architectural offices, after which he returned to Melbourne.[44]

The brothers' partnership – 'H.V. and A. Champion, Architects, Civil Engineers & Licensed Surveyors' – operated between 1897 and 1903 from offices in Queen Street, Melbourne.[45] It undertook various architectural projects as well as the measurement and layout of subdivisions (such as the local 'Hillsley Estate' in Ivanhoe, 1908). The obituary for Alfred in the RVIA's journal described the Champions' office as having 'designed and supervised the erection of many buildings in Melbourne and suburbs, including new buildings in Russell-street for the "Herald", Malt Store and Brewery, Carlton, Civil Service Stores in Flinders-street, Roycroft's Building, and Massina's Warehouse and Shops in Swanston-street, and other important works.'[46] Alfred had married Florence Clark in 1905 and died in his early 40s.

At Henry's death, aged 58, from 'Brights' disease' (Glomerulonephritis), his obituary was widely published in metropolitan and rural newspapers, and flags lowered to half-mast at a few town halls – 'His sudden demise created quite a gloom in municipal circles'.[47] Champion Road in Williamstown is named after him.[48]

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

- 6.3 Residential development 1900-1940s

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37   As the long-time licensee-holders for the Queens Arms Hotel at the corner of Swanston Street and Flinders Lane (demolished), both parents, Benjamin and Elizabeth Champion, were familiar figures ('Crossed the Bar. Mrs. Elizabeth Champion', *Herald*, 27 April 1911, p8; and Ancestry.com.au)

38   'Men of To-day', *Williamstown Chronicle*, 14 November 1896, p3

39   'Men of To-day', *Williamstown Chronicle*, 14 November 1896, p3

40   Henry V Champion, 'The Benefits of Sewerage: To the members of the Victorian Engineers' Association', *Williamstown Chronicle*, 10 March 1888, p2

41   'Complimentary Dinner', *Williamstown Chronicle*, 31 August 1912, p3

42   Henry obtained a commission in the Garrison Artillery at Williamstown as a lieutenant in 1862. He was promoted to captain in 1895 and major in 1904, attached to the Australian Field Artillery. During the First World War, he was placed i n the reserve of officers. ('Obituary, Major H. V. Champion', *Ararat Chronicle*, 8 January 1918, p2)

43   Henry V Champion's application to 'The Institution of Civil Engineers', dated 1890-91 (UK Civil Engineer Records via Ancestry.com.au)

44   'The Late Alfred Champion (A)', *The Royal Victorian Institute of Architects: Journal of Proceedings*, September 1913, p204

45   UK Civil Engineer Records via Ancestry.com.au

46   'The Late Alfred Champion (A)', p204

47   'Death of Mr. Champion', *Williamstown Advertiser*, 12 January 1918, p3; 'Late Mr. H. V. Champion', *Port Melbourne Standard*, 12 January 1918, p3; and 'Obituary', *Ararat Chronicle*, 8 January 1918, p2

48   'Obituary', *Footscray Chronicle*, 12 January 1918, p2

Comparative Analysis

There are various substantial Queen Anne-style residences included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay for Banyule, either as individual HOs or in precincts, with clusters in Ivanhoe and Eaglemont. These examples, however, are nearly all of red-brick construction and – in an Arts & Crafts-influenced manner – rather decorative. Comparatively, there are few timber residences dating from the Federation period in the municipality affected by HOs, particularly those of a grander, more understated type like *Royd*. In Eaglemont, the three picturesque timber/roughcast residences from the early 1900s known as the 'Chadwick Houses' by the inventive architect Harold Desbrowe-Annear are singular in design, reflecting the marked fusion of design sources and reformulation occurring in the Federation period.[49]

There is only one other timber example of the Queen Anne in Banyule affected by a HO:

- 3 St Helena Road, Greensborough (HO143) – an elongated gabled roof 'homestead' constructed in the 1890s with an elevated hillside siting. It has a return verandah embellished with Queen Anne fretwork and a projecting rotunda-shaped feature on the corner. The residence has been altered, though the extent of which is unclear.

There are also several Federation Bungalow-style or transitional timber dwellings, for instance:

- 137 Waterdale Road, Ivanhoe (HO156) – a modest timber villa, built about 1905. Its hip roof, bracketed eaves, bullnose verandah roof and mixture of timber and cast-iron decoration make it a good example of a transitional Victorian/Federation design.

- 2 Rockbeare Grove, Ivanhoe (HO114) – a later example of an eclectic Federation Bungalow-style residence, built 1915. It displays the simplified bungalow roof form but is embellished with common Federation detailing and incorporates at the corner a square, hipped-roof 'tower' (timber/roughcast).

- *Mollison Lodge*, 32 Old Lower Plenty Road, Viewbank (HO47) – a symmetrical example of the Federation Bungalow-style with a dominant hipped roof (slate) and wrap-around verandah, erected on a rural property in circa 1915.

Whilst outside the municipality, the subject site has some similarities with another notable house also presumed to be designed by the Champions – *Alloa* at 168 Hall Street, Spotswood of 1908. [50] This commodious house also features a symmetrical façade with three gables to the main roof, as well as another to the central entry bay attached to the return verandah.

Intactness

Mostly intact

Previous Assessment

- Graeme Butler, *Heidelberg Conservation Study*, part 1, Heidelberg City Council, 1985 (provided with a 'C' rating)[51]

- Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Places Study: Building Citations*, vol 2, part 1, Banyule City Council, July 1999 (provided with a 'C' grade)[52]

- Context, *Banyule Heritage Review*, March 2012 – recommended for a future HO

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommended for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	Yes (walls of weatherboard)
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	Yes (front garden – Lebanon cedar, Algerian oak, Pencil Pines)No

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[49] 38 The Eyrie, Eaglemont (HO67 + VHR H1009); 55 Outlook Drive, Eaglemont (HO48 + VHR H2082); and 32-34 The Eyrie, Eaglemont (HO66 + VHR H1156). See also 234 Rosanna Road, Rosanna (HO55) and *East View*, 16 Martin Street, Heidelberg (VHR H1033 + HO43) and all the *Former Heidelberg Shire Offices and Library* (HO171), all designs by Annear.

[50] VHD, HO141 (City of Hobsons Bay)

[51] C grade: 'Regional importance architecturally and/or historically significant'

[52] C grade: 'places that contribute to the architectural or historical character and cohesiveness of the City of Banyule and as such are either of local importance or interest … While they do not warrant individual protection under the planning scheme, they should nevertheless be retained.'

Outbuildings and/or fences   No

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, April 2020)

MOTHER OF GOD CATHOLIC CHURCH

Address	56 Wilfred Road, Ivanhoe East
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1957
Period	Postwar
Date Inspected	January 2021

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Mother of God at 56 Wilfred Road, Ivanhoe East – a Roman Catholic Church – is significant. It was designed in 1956 by Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell for an eponymously named new parish that covered Ivanhoe East and constructed the following year. John Mockridge was likely the primary designer, as was the usual practice in the firm.

The significant sections of *Mother of God* are its lozenge-shaped plan/form, narthex and original flat-roofed ancillary wing (west and part south elevation). Significant elements are the gable roof, slate cladding, ridge vent, concrete frame, copper crosses, flat roof (concrete slab), the cantilevered section of the porch roof, pair of tapered porch columns, remnant (or covered) tiling to the porch floor, barrel vaulting (west elevation), concrete-framed window walls (including mullions and muntins), all stained glass, exposed concrete-cased steel framing, wall panels of silica bricks, and all original openings (rectangular slots and cruciform windows).

Internally, the exposed black-matt painted steel beams and timber-lined ceiling are significant.

The arrangement of the front garden – driveway, triangular lawn and placement of a central tree (not the planting itself, which is a replacement) – as well as the nearby Atlas Cedar (*Cedurs atlantica 'Glauca'*) and sunken rear courtyard (southwest), are original landscape elements that contribute to the setting of *Mother of God*.

Later additions are not significant.

How is it Significant?

Mother of God is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Mother of God is of historical significance as the earliest modernist church constructed in the municipality and the first religious commission by the then young postwar architectural practice of Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell. It represents a noteworthy juncture in the design oeuvre of this well-regarded architectural firm, which went on to be responsible for a number of other notable 'modern' churches in Victoria and an important event for the local Roman Catholic community. The construction of *Mother of God* is illustrative of Ivanhoe East's suburban energetic consolidation in the postwar period as well as the pronounced modernist undercurrents latent in this development. Its nonconventional character is highly evocative of the necessity felt by the church and congregation to respond to the rapidly shifting and different socio-cultural landscape of the mid-1950s with a new built image of their faith. Father Bernard Joseph Geoghegan, who was appointed the first parish priest, was instrumental in its development. (Criterion A)

Mother of God is of aesthetic significance as a generally intact, distinctive instance of 'modern' church design. Its progressive architects, Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell, took bold advantage of novel postwar construction techniques (steel framing) and materials (precast concrete, silica bricks) to convey a modernist expression, chiefly through its lozenge-shaped form, exaggerated gable and dramatic but welcoming cantilevered porch, then elements all unfamiliar for places of worship in Victoria. Christian architectural traditions were not completely eschewed, with the utilisation of slate cladding, highlighting of mullions and muntins, colourful stained glass, and employment of cruciform openings in the design of the church demonstrating contemporary interests in integrating simplified, abstracted ecclesiastical elements and symbols; resulting in a balance between stability and provocation. The interplay of expressive modernity and traditional continuity is indicative of the first phase of 'modern' postwar suburban church design in Victoria. (Criteria E)

Description

Mother of God is a large church that occupies the majority of its gently sloping kite-shaped corner allotment. The building is situated at a moderate setback from Wilfred Road (north) and slightly below the street level of Robinhood Road (east). In the west and south, the property is bordered by private residences. The triangular front garden is characterised by an area of lawn with a centrally planted tree (existing is a replacement) and bisected by a driveway of pre-cast concrete panels (initially 'Lilydale Topping'). Other original landscaping includes the tall Atlas Cedar (*Cedurs atlantica 'Glauca'*) situated northwest of the facade and a small sunken courtyard garden in the southeast corner, ~~compromised of brick paving and planter beds.~~[1] currently compromised of brick paving and planter beds (the original detailing is not clear). A non-original timber paling fence extends along the south and west perimeter.

The church consists of several distinct volumes. The key components are the principal form (nave and sanctuary) with attached narthex (north) and ancillary wing, which runs most of the west elevation and part of the south. The small volume to the east elevation provides access to and from the sunken courtyard is also original. Other projections from the main footprint are later additions (see below).

The main volume – comprising the nave and sanctuary – has a lozenge-shaped plan and form. This bold geometry is most visible and best appreciated from the east (Robinhood Road). The lozenge roof form, clad in its original slate, tapers to a gable at each end and has an elongated original ridge vent. Surmounting the apex of both gable ends are copper crosses. The concrete frame, painted white, is most evident to both side elevations, where it includes boxed gutters. The frame also defines the edge of the façade. The north-facing gable end – traverse to Wilfred Road - has a stained-glass wall of green, blue, red, orange with three narrow cantilevered canopies (in a stepped configuration).

Mother of God's façade (to Wilfred Road) features a narthex (a vestibule/antechamber) situated well below the gable end. It has a flat concrete slab roof initially sheeted with asbestos felt (which may remain). The narthex roof extends to the side cantilevering upwards over the footpath to create a canopied porch to Robinhood Road. This extended roof includes four plastic dome skylights, which are original. The porch has been partly enclosed with glazing and double timber doors. Its original floor of 'Carborundum' (silicon carbide stone) panels with contrasting 'English grey-blue quarry tiles has been carpeted over, although a

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[1]   Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchel, 'Garden Layout', *Memorial Church of the Mother of God*, 21 August 1957, drawing no 382/77 in *Collection of architectural drawings from the firm Mockridge Stahle & Mitchell*, SLV, YLATD 16

small strip remains evident in front of the tapered concrete columns.[2] It is possible that this tiling survives beneath the carpet. Despite these modifications, the porch – at the time of construction, an ultramodern flourish – remains readily interpretable within the place's design schema.

Mother of God from opposite Robinhood Road, the skillion-roofed volume right of frame is a later addition (porch out of frame)

Extending along the west and part of the rear (south) elevations of the nave and sanctuary is a return wing (one room in width). It was designed to accommodate separate vestries for the priests, boys and women, as well as the 'Chapel of Our Lady' and toilets. This wing is roofed in the same manner as the narthex, except that it features tunnel (barrel) vaulting (four) at its mid-section with projecting concrete mullions that terminate at the ground level and large arched windows (permitting light to the chapel). The front part of the wing's western section, behind the narthex, has been replaced by a skillion-roofed and tan brick addition. There is an original section of perforated brickwork to the rear of the south wing (airflow for laboratories).

The flat-roofed volume attached to the southern portion of the east elevation is an original component of the design; however, it underwent some modification during the earlier stages of planning and was initially envisioned with a curved stone feature wall. It includes a porch entered via recessed timber-framed, glazed double-leafed doors with toplight (south face) and enclosed the organ console and cleaner cupboard.

A small skillion-roofed, tan-brick volume has been built to the east elevation in line with the porch's piers. There is a similarly designed addition attached to the (south) elevation behind the sunken courtyard garden.

Mother of God is constructed of a steel frame (welded on site), cased in precast concrete. The infill walls – recessed well back from the framing to emphasise its expression – are of pink-fawn silica (cement 9 in. by 4½ in. by 3 in.) bricks in a stretcher bond course.[3] The floor is presumably a concrete slab. The designers, Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell, were quick to embrace postwar advances in construction techniques and materials, such as the steel frame and truss systems and precast concrete, recognising their cost and time effectiveness and capacity to create large, unhindered interiors and a vast array of forms/spatial experiences. The light toned brickwork also appear to be part of an effort to harmonise the church with its immediate residential context.

[2]   Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell, 'Porch 1. Paving Setout', *Memorial Church of the Mother of God. E. Ivanhoe*, 9 August 1957, drawing no 382/76 in *Collection of architectural drawings from the firm Mockridge Stahle & Mitchell*, SLV, YLATD 16

[3]   'Church of the Mother of God East Ivanhoe, Victoria: Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell, Architects', *Architecture and Arts*, December 1957, p29

The north wall of the narthex displays five rows of alternating rectangular slots with stained glass infill (some windows are divided into panes, others three with an openable middle pane). At the lower centre is a metal plaque.[4] The slot windows were carried through to the front part of the west wing but have been mostly deleted by the skillion-roofed addition.

View to porch, from Robinhood Road
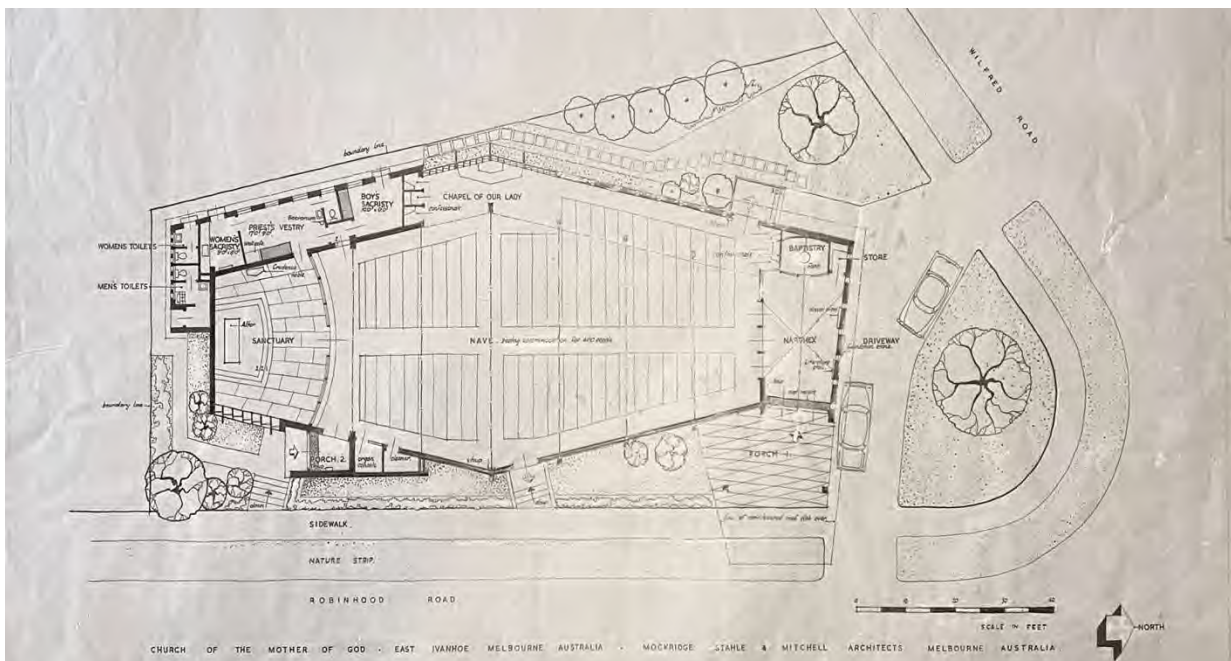
Resolved original floorplan, undated but likely 1957

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[4]   '+Church of the Mother of God+ The Archbishop of Melbourne Most Reverend Daniel Mannix Blessed and Place this Stone
       Eleventh Day of November 1956 Father Bernard Geoghegan PP'

(Source: *Collection of architectural drawings from the firm Mockridge Stahle & Mitchell*, SLV, YLATD 16)

The upper part of the east elevation's middle four bays is punctured by rows of small cruciform openings with clear glass infill. There is also a concrete-famed section of window wall at the southern end of the east elevation with 'randomly' spaced muntins and stained glass. The ground-floor opening near off centre in the east elevation is original but the double door is not.

South (rear) elevation with later addition skillion volume in the foreground and section of window wall with 'random' mutin bars on right of frame

The interior of *Mother of God* was not inspected and is known to have undergone a succession of modifications. However, based on contemporary photographs in the public domain, some elements designed or specified by Mockridge, Stahle and Mitchell remain.[5] These include the exposed steel roof beams, painted matt black and timber-lined ceiling. The plastered walls and vertical timber-lined dado are also apparent. In the recent past, the Hermann Hohaus-designed and produced timber altar crucifix was also evident (relocated to the side of the altar war), as were his Stations of the Cross bas-relief panels (both sidewalls).

Until the Second World War, the preponderance of churches constructed in Victoria were historicist in style, chiefly drawing from British antecedents. After the lifting of building restrictions and increased availability of materials/labour, a small number of pared-down, innovative churches began to appear in the early 1950s.

From about the middle of the decade, an increasing number of new churches – like Mother of God – adopted the language of architectural modernism in their new geometries and avoidance of conventional ecclesiastical reference. Yet, while the aim was to convey an authentic image of modernity, traditional design was not eschewed entirely in most cases at this phase. As demonstrated by the subject place, 'modern' places of workshop in the 1950s still often sought a level of continuity with pre-war idioms. Accordingly, established elements such as the longitudinal plan, semi-circular sanctuary, a pitched roof, insistent verticality, stained glass, emphasised mullions and muntins, and cruciform openings were all utilised to reveal the building as a place of worship, albeit in a simplified and abstracted manner.[6]

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5   For instance, see 2013 images of Melissa Webb at *Starkitecture*, http://starkitecture.blogspot.com/2013/07/sneaking-up-on-mother-of-god.html, accessed 10 February 2021
6   Philip Goad, 'Churches', in Goad and Julie Willis, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp185-87

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[7] The lightly wooded grasslands of what became known as 'Ivanhoe' were quickly targeted for sheep runs and by timber-cutters from the 'illegal squatter camp (est. 1835) downstream of the *Birrarung*/Yarra at Melbourne.[8] However, as part of the 'Heidelberg' district in the Parish of Keelbundora, this area passed rapidly into private hands via an auction in Sydney Town in 1838.[9]

Over the following decade, a patchwork of 'prestige' estates emerged, along with a surveyed township – *Warringal* (possibly 'eagle's nest'), later 'Heidelberg' – on the river's west bank.[10] Productive river flats, and the demands of the gold diggings further afield, encouraged market gardening, orchards and (gradually, due to soil exhaustion and flooding) dairying; activities mostly undertaken by tenant farmers.[11] This perceived rural idyll enticed *plein air* artists to the district during the 1880s, fixing the 'Heidelberg School' within Australia's artistic consciousness.[12]

Ivanhoe – its name stemming from Archibald Thom's 'Ivanhoe Estate' – remained a sparsely populated agricultural area until Melbourne's 'Land Boom' in the late 1880s.[13] 'Picturesque' terrain, varied outlooks and the high repute of the broader district drew often well-off newcomers. By the turn of the century, 'Beautiful Ivanhoe' was routinely portrayed as a 'fashionable', 'exclusive locality' of 'model homes'.[14] An improved railway connection to Melbourne in 1901 supported further middle-class growth, instigating 'four decades of slow and relatively affluent suburban sprawl' in the vicinity of Ivanhoe, Eaglemont, and Heidelberg train stations.[15]

During the interwar years, suburban Ivanhoe solidified, although its southern and eastern reaches remained primarily locked up by the expansive 'Hartlands', 'Charterisville', and 'Chelsworth' estates.[16] To navigate the complexities that accompanied the subdivision of these areas (sloping land, curving streets, views) in the postwar period and galvanised by the swelling influence of modernism, many of the new and generally moneyed proprietors sought the services of an architect.[17] By the early 1960s, distinct enclaves of upmarket, modernist design culture were apparent in the southern reaches of Ivanhoe and Ivanhoe East, with the aesthetic and lifestyle reverberations of the modern movement also shaping infill development in the more established environs of the locale.

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7   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online
8   James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne & The Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc., 2011, pxi
9   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of Kulbundora – the name of the eldest son of the important Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') Billibellary. ('Suburban Native Names', Argus 28 April 1906, p5). One of the earliest manifestations of local governance in the Port Phillip District (1840), the fluctuating borders of municipal Heidelberg mirrored its growth, as it was reformatted into a Road District (1860), Shire (1871) and then City (1934). It was amalgamated as the City of Banyule in 1994.
10   Donald S Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p13
11   Robert P Whitworth, *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer*, F F Bailliere, 1879, pp237
12   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.5, and 2.3.10; and Janine Rizzetti, 'Heidelberg', in Richard Broome et al, eds., *Remembering Melbourne 1850-1960*, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 2016, p282
13   Thom's estate designation was inspired by a novel of the same name by Sir Walter Scott (1819).
14   Ivanhoe & Alphington Progress Society, *Beautiful Ivanhoe: the suburb of model homes and scenic charm*, Model Studio, 1900, SLV
15   Ivanhoe Station opened in 1888; however, inefficiencies in the Heidelberg-Melbourne railway line initially bedevilled growth.
16   Ivanhoe grew from roughly 2,000 residents in 1913 to nearly 8,000 by 1933 (*Victorian Year Books*, Australian Bureau of Statistics).
17   Don Garden, 'Ivanhoe', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008

View near Heidelberg in Victoria, pen and ink drawing, circa 1858
(Source: Eugene von Guérard, National Gallery of Victoria)

Site-specific

The subject land derives from Portion 2 of the Parish of Keelbundora, a roughly 420-hectare holding purchased (along with portions 1 and 3) by Thomas Walker in 1838. A Sydney-based Scottish banker and philanthrope with an eye for marketable land across the colony, Walker's intention in the Port Philip District was speculative from the start. He commenced subdividing his acquisitions as early as mid-1839 to enormous profit.[18]

In the resulting sales, Portion 2 was carved up into multiple large parcels. The subject land was incorporated into the eastern reaches of a roughly 215-hectares property – a combination of portions 1 and 2 of the Parish of Keelbundora. It was purchased by the well-heeled Captain George Brunswick Smyth and christened the 'Chelsworth Estate'. His respectable 1860s homestead, overlooking the *Birrarung*/Yarra, is now utilised as the Ivanhoe Golf course clubhouse (HO185). By the late 1870s, most of the estate was occupied by tenant farmers.[19]

Around 1900, the majority of the Cheslworth Estate was acquired by Philip Champion de Crespigny, an official for the Bank of Victoria, and William Lawson Davidson, an accountant.[20] Their survey was responsible for establishing much of the existing road layout in the area bound loosely by Studley Road (north), Marshall Street (west), Hopetoun Grove (east), and the river. A series of subdivisions occurred up until the First World War. In 1913, Carl Otto Marschner, an Ivanhoe-based importer, acquired the triangular block now bound by Wallis Avenue, Wilfred Road, and Robinhood Road (originally View Street) – a parcel including the subject land.[21] Marschner organised its subdivision into differently sized allotments, advertised under the banner of the 'Warwick Estate':

> No district has made such remarkable advancement in recent years than this beautiful spot [*Ivanhoe*], which has been aptly named the Garden Suburb of Melbourne. The railway returns evidence the wonderful increase in traffic year by year. A large quantity of land has been subdivided, and so far, every subdivisional sale has been a marked success. The Warwick Estate is situated south from the Lower Heidelberg road, is very high, and commands beautiful views. The new boulevard, which will run along the river through to Melbourne passes immediately in front of the estate.[22]

The rate of sales from the wider estate was slow and continued into the postwar period. However, the first sale in 1917 was of the kite-shaped allotment at the intersection of Wilfred and Robinhood Road (now 50 and 56 Wilfred Road), which encompassed the subject place. The buyer was a foreman, Percival Herbert Austin.[23] Soon after, he constructed a residence at the centre of the double allotment.[24]

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18   W Joy, 'Walker, Thomas (1804-1886)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1967, available online
19   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, pp27-28, 41, 92
20   Certificate of Title, vol 344, folio 777 (note the front title has largely perished, making the date of transfer indecipherable)
21   Certificate of Title, vol 3784, folio 741
22   'Ivanhoe', *Herald*, 26 February 1914, p5
23   Certificate of Title, vol 4015, folio 924
24   Review of *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria*

Late 1920s photograph across Ivanhoe East from Maltravers Road with the junction of Lower Heidelberg and McArthur roads (East Ivanhoe Village) visible in the centre – Mother of God Church would be constructed out of frame left. (Source: Cyril Cummins, *A pictorial history of Heidelberg Since* 1836, Heidelberg Historical Society, 1982, p71)

Austin's dwelling, along with the interwar house of John W Bainbridge, a Department of Agriculture official, that was situated opposite Robinhood Road (since demolished) were some of the earliest dwellings in the immediate area.[25]

1931 aerial photograph of the rough centre of Ivanhoe East
Austin's house, then occupying the subject place, is circled in dashed red
(Source: Landata, Project no 1931, Run 17, Frame 3328)

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[25]   'Mr. J. W. Bainbridge', *Age*, 9 August 1940, p10

In 1951, new owners subdivided the corner allotment, creating the subject allotment.[26] A couple of years later, in January 1956, the Roman Catholic Trusts Corporation for the Diocese of Melbourne purchased the subject property, at which time Austin's residence was demolished.[27]

Behind the decision of the Diocese to acquire the corner site was the rapid suburban transformation of Ivanhoe East over the late 1940s and early 1950s, which equated with a growing flock that outstripped existing religious facilities.[28] The activist English immigrant, Father Bernard Joseph Geoghegan (1894-1977), then the inaugural priest of the fledgling (established 1940) Immaculate Conception Parish, appears to have played a principal role in advocating and planning for a new church and parish for the burgeoning locale of Ivanhoe East. Both the former and latter were to be known as 'Mother of God'.[29] News of a new church had been in public circulation as early as 1954, with the Catholic weekly newspaper, *The Advocate*, reporting:

> As a result of the meeting held at the home of Mr. Frank Galbally, Withers-street, East Ivanhoe, recently, the forty or so present unanimously decided that a church should be erected in the vicinity to meet the needs of the Catholics of this rapidly growing residential suburb who find that they are too remote from the churches at Heidelberg and Ivanhoe. Plans for the new building are in the course of preparation and as soon as they are finalized, the church will be commenced. It will be erected at the intersection of Maltravers-street and Ormond-road. Father J. Geoghegan, P.P., Immaculate Conception parish, Ivanhoe, is in charge of the district embraced by the proposed church.[30]

1954 aerial photograph, with the undivided subject property, still occupied by Austin's residence, circled in red
(Source: Landata, Project no 174, Run 15, Frame 75)

Evidently, the later purchase of the subject property superseded the site noted in the *Advocate*. The identity of the architect/s noted in the article is also not known. Nonetheless, by at least early 1956, Fr Geoghegan (likely aided by a building committee) had engaged the young, progressive practice of Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell. *Mother of God* – titled 'Memorial Church of the Mother of God' on the drawings – was to be the firm's first religious commission. The commemorative aspect of this title was to be conveyed in the plaque to the narthex, dedicating the building to those that died during the world wars (and specifying the architects); however, its wording does not appear to have been ever installed (see existing plaque).[31]

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26   Certificate of Title, vol 4015, folio 924
27   Certificate of Title, vol 8103, folio 611
28   The wider growth of Banyule's Roman Catholic community, including its increasing middle-class complexion from the interwar years, and the impact of southern European (particularly Italian) postwar immigration (challenging the monolithic Irish-Catholic character of the church), is discussed in the *Banyule Thematic Environmental History* (Context, October 2018, pp42-3)
29   The Ivanhoe area initially fell within the boundaries of the Heidelberg Parish (established 1851). In 2005, Banyule's three postwar Catholic parishes (St Bernadette's, Immaculate Conception, Mother of God) were formally consolidated into the 'Mary Mother of the Church – Ivanhoe Parish'.
30   'New Church for Ivanhoe East', *Advocate*, 1 April1 1954, p2
31   'Church of the Mother God – This Church is Erected to the Memory of Those Australians Who Gave Their Lives During World War I and II – 15 September 1957 – Architects Mockridge Stahle & Mitchell' (*Amended Set out of Lettering*, undated, drawing no 382/79A', SLV, YLATD 16)

In the mid-1950s, such a decision to 'go modern' was still bold, only becoming more typical (particularly for new suburban parishes) later in the decade as Victoria witnessed a veritable surge in church construction that continued into the early 1970s. A myriad of factors likely underpinned such a determination, including issues of economy and the reforming Liturgical movement, and a desire to appeal and remain relevant to younger generations and new families by adopting a 'modern' architecture – one more in character with the swiftly modernising and different landscape of 1950s Australia.[32] The British architect, Edward Mills, captured this influential aspect in the design of postwar religious building in his much-publicised 1956 book, *The Modern Church*: 'If we do not build churches in keeping with the spirit of the age we shall be admitting that religion no longer possesses the same vitality as our secular buildings'.[33]

In general, the Christian churches were 'expansionist in outlook' across the postwar years,[34] assured in their capacity to meet mainstream contemporary desires for social stability and cohesion, a renewed focus on home and the nuclear family, and trepidation towards moral decline and international tension.[35] Church authorities and local lay leadership routinely perceived the building of modernist churches as essential (and exciting) activities – a fundamental investment in their spiritual claim to the expanding footprint of the suburbs and highly visible stake in a coalescing postwar civic realm.[36]

The foundation stone for *Mother of God* was blessed by Archbishop Mannix with much fanfare on 11 November 1956. The *Advocate* carried a detailed description of the church, then under construction:

> The church will be a steel framed building with the structural members clothed in pre-cast concrete to facilitate speedy erection and precision finish. Infill walls will be of pink-fawn Colortone bricks and the roof is to be of slate.

> The architects, Mockridge, Stahle and Mitchell, have pursued an unusual lozenge form which was suggested by the wedge-shaped site. The exaggerated perspective produced by this shape will lead the eye directly to the high altar. Extensive use of plain stained glass will be made in the large window over the entrance, in the lady chapel, and in the large window at the side of the sanctuary which will flood this area with light and form an interesting pattern on the painted brick altar wall. Subdued general light will be provided by panels of small cruciform windows high up in the east wall. The church which is designed to seat 450, will sit on a concrete mat to be covered with lino tiles.

> Rich colour will be introduced on the plastered walls whilst dado and ceilings will be in hardwood lining boards waxed in their natural colour. Pews also will be constructed of this timber. Italian glass mosaics will be used to sheath four columns which occur between the nave and the aisle.

> The Lady Chapel, which is part of the nave, will be emphasized by the barrel vaulting of the ceiling, and plastic domes in the flat roof will flood the baptistry and the centre of the narthex with light. A priest's vestry, boys' sacristy and women's sacristy for flower arranging are also provided.[37]

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[32]   The 20th-century international Liturgical movement called for liturgical and theological reforms, culminating in the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council of 1962-65 (Vatican II).

[33]   Edward D Mills, *The Modern Church*, Praeger, 1956, p15

[34]   David Hilliard, 'Popular Religion in Australia in the 1950s: A Study of Adelaide and Brisbane', *Journal of Religious History*, vol 16, no 2, December 1988, p235.

[35]   Graeme Davison, 'Religion', Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre, *The Cambridge History of Australia*, vol 2, Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp227-28

[36]   As noted by Richardson, the 'far-reaching influences of modernity' (individualism, female participation in the workforce, new avenues for self-improvement, etc) gradually came to compete with the centrality of the church to Australia and fuelled a rising secularisation (*The untold story of modernism*, pp63-4).

[37]   'New Church at East Ivanhoe', *Advocate*, 8 November 1956, p3

November 1956 photograph of the foundation stone blessing
Mother of God's steel frame visible left of frame
(Source: 'Parish History Project', *Mary Mother of the Church*,
undated, available online)

Archbishop Mannix (mitra hat) and clerics bless *Mother of God's*
foundation stone
(Source: 'Parish History Project', *Mary Mother of the Church*,
undated, available online)

The appointed contractors for the church were the prominent Melbourne building firm of Clements Langford Pty Ltd (1868-1960s), with the total construction costs reported as £40,000 – a substantial sum in line with the middle-class complexion of the congregation and area.[38] Another £10,000 was expended on furnishing *Mother of God*.[39]

The first mass was celebrated at *Mother of God* in September 1957. Archbishop Mannix, again in attendance, praised Fr Geoghegan's for the 'beautiful church' and 'magnificent site', while also hinting at a note of unease from another (unnamed, imaginably conservative) clerical speaker with the modern nature of the design.[40]

The *Age* carried a photograph of the 'New Roman Catholic Church at East Ivanhoe' in October (reproduced below).
A few months later (November), the clinker-brick Tudor revival-style residence opposite the church at 63 Wilfred Road was purchased as the presbytery.[41]

Fr Geoghegan was appointed parish priest at the formal constitution of Mother of God in January 1958.[42] While the broad-ranging religious, social and religious activities of this church have not been researched in-depth, a phrase common in the 1950s and 1960s was the 'seven-day-a-week' church, which speaks to the vigour of congregational life in this period and the myriad of happenings that occurred in suburban buildings like *Mother of God*.

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38   *Cross-Section*, December 1956, no. 50, np; and November 1957, no. 61, np – The University of Melbourne, digitised items
39   'Beautiful Church on Fine Site at East Ivanhoe', *Advocate*, 26 September 1957, p7
40   'Beautiful Church on Fine Site at East Ivanhoe', *Advocate*, 26 September 1957, p7
41   *The Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe: A Brief History*, Catholic Parish Ivanhoe, undated, refer to parts 1 and 4, available online
42   *The Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe: A Brief History*, part 4
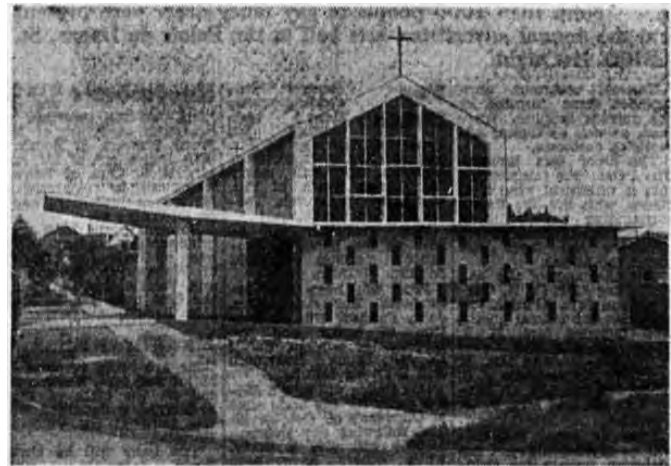
(Above) *Mother of God* church and entrance hall
(Source: *Age*, 12 October 1957, p8)

(Left) Fr Geoghegan (rear) photographed conducting the first mass at the Mother of God Church, 1957
(Source: 'Parish History Project', *Mary Mother of the Church Catholic Parish Ivanhoe*, available online)

The polemical *Cross-Section*, a newsletter prepared by the Department of Architecture at the University of Melbourne, had published a sketch of *Mother of God* in late 1956, during its construction. Its brief coverage highlighted Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell's design as an uncommon departure from church design, which it castigated as 'architecturally, the most backward building-type' in Australia' ('the artistic sacrilege rests with the church committees, notorious for being "Sunday architects').[43]

Sketch of *Mother of God*, presumably from the office of Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell
(*Cross-Section*, December 1956, no. 50, np, The University of Melbourne)

The modernist enthusiast Peter Wille (1931-71) photographed *Mother of God* – north and west elevation – during construction.

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43   *Cross-Section*, December 1956, no. 50, np, The University of Melbourne

View to frontage and along west elevation, during construction
(Source: Peter Wille, undated, SLV, no a22359)

View to west elevation, during construction – note barrel vaulting
(Source: Peter Wille, undated, SLV, no a22359)

The Melbourne-based *Architecture and Arts* journal, which editorialised in support of modern design, published an in-depth article on *Mother of God* in its December 1957 edition:

This Roman Catholic church was completed in September.

It is a steel-framed building with precast concrete column casings and gutters painted white. Panel walls are pink-fawn silica (cement 9 in. by 4½ in. by 3 in.) bricks and the main roof is slate. Concrete slabs sheeted with asbestos felt roof the lower areas and barrel vaulting defines the Lady Chapel.

Located in a high-class residential area requiring special permission to build, the church has been designed as far as possible not to obtrude on its surrounding houses. The plan shape was adopted in order to take full advantage of the unusual and restricted site and to give all worshippers a clear view of the altar. The exaggerated perspective produced by the slowly rising springing line (of the roof) further dramatises the white-painted altar wall.

The church seats 450. It also contains a Priest's Vestry, Boys' Sacristy and a Women's Sacristy for flower arranging, etc.

The confessionals have been planned so that they do not project into the nave, and the electronic organ is installed in a recess near the sanctuary.

The building cost about £A40,000, exclusive of furnishings.

Consulting Engineers, J. L. & E. M. Daly, Melbourne.

Builders, Clements Langford Pty. Ltd.

Timber dado, pews and ceilings are of Australian mountain ash treated with a white filler and satin plasticised finish.

Side walls of the nave are painted deep blue-green and the altar walls is white painted bagged brickwork. Exposed steel roof beams are painted matt black and the walls and ceilings of the Lady Chapel are white. Italian glass mosaics in grey-green, blue-green and copper clothe the columns to the Lady Chapel, which has a mahogany altar matching the "floating" Stations of the Cross panels, which also mask the regulation inlet vents. As yet unfinished, the Stations will have bas reliefs in Australian mountain ash now being carved by Hermann Hohaus, a New Australian sculptor, who also carved the Crucifix.[44]

Several photographs of church's exterior and interior taken by the noted architectural photographer, Wolfgang Sievers, accompanied the *Architecture and Arts* article. Some are reproduced below.

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44   'Church of the Mother of God East Ivanhoe, Victoria: Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell, Architects', *Architecture and Arts*, December 1957, p29

Mother of God from Robinhood Road, Wolfgang Sievers
(Source: *Architecture and Arts*, December 1957, p28)

Mother of God from Wilfred Road
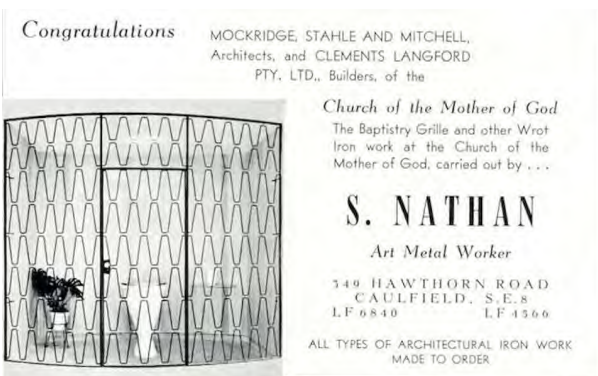(Source: *Architecture and Arts*, December 1957, p28)

Arrangement of original altar, since modified, and rail (removed) (Source: *Architecture and Arts*, December 1957, p49)

Original nave showing 'starburst' light fittings (replaced) and steel beams (Source: www.ivanhoecatholics.com/parishhistory.htm)

The *Architecture and Arts* article, along with the copious archived drawings related to *Mother of God*'s construction, illustrate the 'total design' approach increasingly adopted by modernist architects in the postwar period, with Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell responsible for nearly a myriad of aspects at the place, including much of the original internal furnishing, ritual objects and landscaping. The commissioning of the modernist German-born sculptor Hermann Hohaus (1920-90) to design/handmake the altar crucifix and Stations of the Cross panels (of native timber) speaks to contemporary efforts in integrating art and architecture.[45]

Advertisement showing baptistry grille at *Mother of God*, since removed (Source: *Architecture and Arts*, December 1957, p58)

Advertisement of timber pews at *Mother of God*, still extant (Source: *Architecture and Arts*, December 1957, p58)

Mother of God was Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell's first completed religious commissions. Its generally positive critical and public reception appears to have been important for the development of the office and gave rise to additional church building projects, including in Banyule (see Comparative).

The 'Mother of God Primary School' opened in 1963 on recently acquired land opposite the new church (across Robinhood Road).[46]

In response to Vatican II, liturgical alterations were undertaken in 1968 and included the raising of the sanctuary floor to create a mass-facing altar – itself renewed – as well as the carpeting of the floor. Further modifications, overseen by the locally-based architect, Vito Cassisi, occurred in 1987. These resulted in the removal of the baptistery grille, internal division of the nave with timber-framed glazing and the enclosure of the porch.[47]

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[45]   Hohaus later prepared two bronze Madonna and Child sculptures at the Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell-designed *Mary Immaculate Church*.
[46]   The parish school was closed at the end of 2017.
[47]   *The Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe: A Brief History*, pp19-20

Close-up of cantilevered porch, mid-1980s – soon after partly enclosed with glazing, mid-1980s
Note original floor of white Carborundum (silicon carbide stone) panels and 'English' grey-blue quarry tiles
The mature tree central to the triangular front garden (background) has since been replaced
(Source: courtesy of Graeme Butler)

Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell (1948-83)

The Melbourne-based architecture practice of Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell emerged as leading practitioners of an ascetic yet refined and humane interpretation of the modern movement over the postwar period.[48] The range of their work was wide but is chiefly associated with residential, ecclesiastical and educational designs, both in Victoria and the ACT. As noted by the architectural historian Philip Goad, their important mid-century contribution has been 'significantly under-researched', and their principal designer, John Mockridge, should be considered one of the State's 'pre-eminent architects of the 1940s' and 'one of the outstanding designers of the 1950s'.[49]

John Pearce Mockridge (1916-94), James Rossiter ('Ross') Stahle (1917-2000), and George Finlay Mitchell (circa 1916-2006) founded the practice in 1948, after a collective stint at Buchan Laird & Buchan. All were relatively young, returned service members who had attended the University of Melbourne Architectural Atelier during the late 1930s – then an incubator of architectural experimentation in Melbourne.[50] The partnership's dynamics emerged quickly and proved potent:

> While all [the] partners collaborated on basic design decisions, early on in their association, each found his forte in the burgeoning practice. Mitchell handled relationships with clients and officialdom. Mockridge, at his drawing board, slaved over the elegant details that were the signature of the new firm's work, while Stahle, the administrator, supervised staff benevolently and building contracts meticulously.[51]

The firm's initial string of houses and embrace of the new structural and material possibilities of the postwar period established its strong modernist credentials.[52] Beyond the readily identifiable 'modern' imagery of their buildings, Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell are also distinguished for the contextual sensitivity of their design work and response to 'New Empiricism', a term coined

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[48]   Winsome Callister, 'Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell', in Philip Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedias of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp461-62.

[49]   Goad paraphrased in David Yencken, 'A Tale of Two Motels: the times, the architecture and the architects', *La Trobe Journal*, no 93-94, September 2014, p154, available online

[50]   Julie Willis, 'The Melbourne University Architectural Atelier, 1919-1947', *Journal of Architectural Education*, vol 58, no 3, February 2005, p13

[51]   Neil Clerehan, 'Schools were 'in' for designer', *Age*, 5 July 2010

[52]   The practice's early work featured prominently in the special 1954 issue of *Architecture in Australia* alongside other leading postwar architects (Harry Seidler, Yuncken Freeman Brothers, Roy Grounds, Hassell and McConnell).

in Europe during the late 1940s to describe a more humanist interpretation of the modern movement.[53] Their ecclesiastical design was avant-garde, particularly in its examination of geometrical plans and shapes.[54] Notable places of worship by the practice beyond Banyule include St Faith's Anglican Church, Burwood, 1956-58 (VHR H2254), Whitley College and Ridley College Chapel at Parkville, 1962-65, and the multifaith Religious Centre at Monash University, Clayton, 1967-68 (VHR H2188).

Left to right, Mockridge, Stahle and Mitchell
(Source: *Architecture and Arts*, February-March 1953, p17)

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

- Theme 6: Community and cultural life

Comparative Analysis

There are nine churches included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in Banyule.[55] Of these, only one dates from the second half of the 20th century. Its details follow:

- *St Bernadette's Church*, 89-91 Bond Street, Ivanhoe (HO181) – a modernist Catholic church designed by Robert O Ellis and constructed 1961-62. It has a prow-like form and curved sidewalls of cream brick with concrete structural elements. Some design components, particularly the elliptical tower and random window configuration (sidewalls), reflect the influence of Le Corbusier's seminal *Chapel of Notre Dame du Haut* at Ronchamp (1955). *St Bernadette's* has a traditional interior, consisting of a long nave and remote sanctuary.

As noted, *Mother of God* was the first of three distinctive, modernist places of worship constructed in the Ivanhoe area for the Catholic Church. Alongside *St Bernadette's*, the other is *Mary Immaculate Church* at 2-6 Waverley Avenue, Ivanhoe (1961-62), also designed by Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell.[56] Situated on a corner site, *Mary Immaculate* has a kite-shaped nave capped by a pair of triangular roof planes clad in blue Cordova tiles and is constructed of dark-grey, rough-faced concrete bricks. Notable to the southern plane is a steel-framed triangular spire clad in copper, surmounted by a cross. At the time of assessment, a number of alterations and additions were being undertaken that will compromise its original aesthetic.

In the municipality, Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell were also responsible for designing the small chapel at Ivanhoe Grammar School (1981).[57] It has a slate-clad domed roof with a cross at the apex and appears to be constructed of light-tinted concrete blocks with sections of window walls.

St George's Anglican Church at 47 Warncliffe Road, Ivanhoe East (chiefly 1963-64) – designed largely by the noteworthy Swiss-trained émigré architect Frederick Romberg, then of Romberg and Boyd – is also recommended for a HO by this Study. It is

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[53]   Mockridge himself later highlighted as influential the work of Californian William Wurster and Richard Neutra alongside Miles van der Roche and Le Corbusier. (Mockridge interviewed by Hazel de Berg, 1973, sounding recording, NLA, Bib ID 2327182)
[54]   Refer to collection 'Records of the architectural practice of Mockridge Stahle and Mitchell, ca. 1962 – ca. 1985', SLV, MS 12496
[55]   HO14, HO78, HO86, HO88, HO108, HO115, HO181, HO182, and HO183
[56]   Refer to 'Mary Immaculate Church', *Recommendation of the Executive Director and assessment of cultural heritage significance under Division 3 of the Heritage Act 2017*, 17 November 2017, available online
[57]   The chapel is located adjacent to the east side of The Ridgeway, roughly mid-way between Latham and Rose streets, but is largely obscured by fencing and foliage. See Norman Day, 'School Chapel', *Age*, 15 December 1981, p10

situated east of *Mother of God* and incorporates a section of a late interwar and 1950s hall. Romberg's main modernist complex is relatively grand and unique, distinguished by its cuboid form, strict geometric footprint with prominent courtyard and unusual melding of urban expression with vernacular detailing.

There are several other known instances of church design from the second half of the 20th century in Banyule.[58] Of these, only *Greensborough Baptist Church (former)* is believed to date from the 1950s; however, its clinker brick walls and terracotta tile-clad gable roof reflect an instance of the continuation of traditional/conservative design in the postwar period. Other modernist designs of potential note – namely, *Bread of Life Uniting Church*, *All Saints Anglican Church*, *St Martin of Tours Catholic Church*, and *St Mary's Catholic Church* – all date from the 1960s/1970s. While individualistic and of potential heritage significance, their designs reflect a more established phase of 'modern' ecclesiastic design when compared to *Mother of God*.

Mother of God is the first definitive instance of postwar modernist church design in Banyule. More broadly, it is classifiable as an early example of 'modern' church design in Melbourne.[59]

Together with *St George's Anglican Church*, the subject place is a key non-residential example of the postwar modern movement in Ivanhoe East, a largely postwar locale with a relatively high proportion of modernist architecture.

Intactness/Integrity

Generally intact

Previous Assessment

- Ian and Roslyn Coleman (with Eleanor Bridger and Joanna Wills), *Twentieth Century Churches in Victoria: A Study for the Historic Building Council*, January 1996 – *Mother of God* is identified as 'Secondary Significance'

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommended for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	Yes (brick walls)
Internal Alteration Controls	No~~Yes (exposed matt-black steel roof beams and timber-lined ceiling)~~
Tree Controls	No ~~Yes (Atlas Cedar, front garden)~~
Outbuildings and/or fences	No

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58   Greensborough Baptist Church (former), 520 Greensborough Road, Greensborough (1950s); *Bread of Life Uniting Church*, 321 Lower Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe East (1961, Bates Smarts and McCutcheon, proposed for demolition); *All Saints Anglican Church*, 1 Main Street, Greensborough (circa 1966, Blyth and Josephine Johnson); *Living Faith Church* (formerly Methodist), 35-37 Grimshaw Street, Greensborough (Alexander Harris & Associates, 1966); *St Martin of Tours Catholic Church*, 2 Silk Street, Rosanna (architect unknown, late 1960s/early 1970s); *St Francis Xavier Catholic Church*, 84 Mayona Road, Montmorency (1965); and *St Mary's Catholic* Church, 210 Grimshaw Street, Greensborough (Max Chester, 1971).

59   Refer to Ian and Roslyn Coleman (with Eleanor Bridger and Joanna Wills), *Twentieth Century Churches in Victoria: A Study for the Historic Building Council*, January 1996

Extent of Heritage Overlay
The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, depicting December 2019)

GRACEBURN

Address	38 Quinn Street, Heidelberg
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1905-6
Period	Federation
Date Inspected	January 2021, May 2022

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Graceburn at 38 Quinn Street, Heidelberg, is significant. The house was constructed between 1905 and 1906, likely by Charles Rouch for its long-term original occupants, Edward and Alice Rouch.

The significant elements are the house's broadly symmetry, gambrel roof, red-brick chimney, raised return verandah with small central gable and squared timber posts, projecting gable wing (north), walls of painted weatherboard, entrance door, timber-framed and double-hung sashes, faceted bay windows, and all external timber decoration.

Later additions to the house are not significant.

~~The general garden setting is complementary to *Graceburn*; however, specific landscape elements, including plantings, garage and tennis court, are not significant.~~

How is it Significant?

Graceburn is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Graceburn is of historical significance as a commodious timber residence constructed during the early Federation period for, and likely by, the Rouch family – locally well-known owners of a Heidelberg timber mill. It illustrates an important pattern in the growth and consolidation of Heidelberg; the establishment of large-scale, often distinctive, dwellings within sizable holdings by the affluent that were subdivided decades later, particularly as the area underwent more intensive growth in the wake of the Second World War. The survival of *Graceburn* following the 1956 sale of its originally expansive grounds and their subsequent development appears uncommon for Banyule. In most cases, the original house was demolished as part of the breakup. More generally, few timber buildings from the early 1900s remain in the municipality, particularly those that illustrate the Federation Bungalow style, of which the residence is a relatively early example. *Graceburn's* continued prominence to the public realm, engineered as part of its subdivision, assists in marking it out as a building of some note. When viewed within the broader context of surrounding postwar and contemporary dwellings, the house's Federation character can evoke contemplation of an earlier phase in the evolution of the locale, allowing for an interpretation of the residence as the erstwhile centrepiece of a large property. (Criterion A)

Graceburn is of aesthetic significance as a largely intact and considerable instance of the more infrequently seen Federation Bungalow style, which referenced established and emergent domestic design trends – prefacing the wholesale embracement of the bungalow over a decade later. Its overall restrained character is indicative of the more relaxed bungalow mode, while the still widespread penchant for the picturesque is met subtly in the pleasing composition of the façade and north elevation. In combination, the dominant gambrel roof, raised verandah and (the less typical) near symmetry of the façade endow *Graceburn* with a stately character. An effect heightened by the employment of solid decorative timber elements to the verandah creating a screen-like effect, which encourages the strong interplay of light and shadow to the façade. The pronounced utilisation of timber throughout the house also reflects the pervading influence of the Arts & Crafts movement in the period and its interest in 'honest' and 'natural' materials. (Criterion E)

Description

The single-storey residence is situated at a moderate setback from the east side of Quinn Street on a large and irregularly shaped allotment, which rises gently towards the rear of the property. The house is situated near the southern boundary with a concrete driveway, open area and small gabled/timber shed to the north side, and a tennis court to the rear. It is likely that the hitch in Quinn Street, laid to facilitate the subdivision and development of *Graceburn*'s former grounds, was included to preserve sightlines to and from the dwelling's north elevation.

Graceburn has an attractive garden setting, although existing landscaping stems from late 20th-century activity. Outside the mature Golden Elm (*Ulmus glabra*) and Golden Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) that flank the driveway (left and right, respectively), plantings are generally low, which allows for broad views to the dwelling from the street.

View to rear garage and north elevation with projecting gabled wing

The house is of timber-framed construction with walls clad in painted weatherboard. It is capped by a prominent high-pitched gambrel roof clad in short-length corrugated metal sheeting.[1] The original roof cladding is unclear, terracotta tiles, slate, or metal sheeting are all possibilities. A gabled wing is present to the north elevation (half-timbering and roughcast end). The hipped wing to the rear is original, although it has a skillion-roofed addition attached to its eastern face. The adjacent rear verandah has been enclosed with weatherboard and boxed windows.[2] Only one of the three tall red-brick and corbelled chimneys with rendered cap remains on the south side.

The main roof encompasses the verandah with a 'broken back' (change from a steeper to lower pitch). A small gable with horizontal timber boards surmounts the central part of the verandah, emphasising the entry sequence to *Graceburn*. The allusion to symmetry is disrupted by the northern gable wing, which is visible within the frontage of *Graceburn*.

The verandah is raised and extends across the full width of the façade and returns on the south side. It is supported by squared timber posts in pairs (three at the corners) and detailed with a mostly solid, arched (depressed) frieze with small cut-out motifs and ogee profile brackets interspersed with slatted sections. A short set of stairs, clad in later addition bricks, leads to the front door. The latter, which is obscured by a contemporary metal screen, features timber-framed sidelights with toplights and a transom window.

Flanking the entrance are faceted tripartite bay timber-framed windows, composed of a central casement with toplight and double-hung sashes. At the north end of the verandah wall is a double-hung sash. A pair of sashes are also evident to the face of the north wing. Views to windows on the south elevation are unavailable.

Graceburn is broadly indicative of the Federation Bungalow style, a transitional design mode that intermixed the older homestead and bungalow (adopted from the Indian subcontinent) tradition with the emergent contemporary bungalow designs arriving from North America. Concurrently, it synthesised was a continuing interest in the picturesque, although tempered from its often-elaborate Queen Anne renderings. The hybrid design outcomes, more generally seen in the years on either side of the First World War, varied but generally manifested as unpretentious and assertive, revolving around uncomplicated massing, commanding roofs, and pared-down decoration. The relative challenge of successfully reconciling different idioms meant the Federation Bungalow style was less popular with speculative designer/builders and is more often associated with higher-end development. As with most design currents in the Federation years, the Arts & Crafts movement was influential. A fact reflected at *Graceburn* by its utilisation of material palette – timber and some roughcast – that would have been perceived as 'honest' and 'natural' by its contemporaries (compared to the machine-made metal ornamentation of the Victorian period).[3]

View to north elevation and northwest corner of front verandah

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[1]   In Australia, a gambrel roof is generally defined as a hip with small gablets under the ridge.
[2]   '38 Quinn Street, Heidelberg', realestate.com, August 2020, <www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-vic-heidelberg-133378322>
[3]   Richard Apperly, Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*, Angus & Robertson, 1994, pp144-8

Since the original inspection, changes were undertaken to the front of the building. The principal modification was the window configuration to the room at the north end of the front verandah – the single window to the west (front) elevation has been removed and infilled, and the paired windows to the north elevation (side) have been replaced with a single window (with a multi-paned upper sash). In addition, the original upper single pane sashes to the northern bay window of the façade and the paired windows to the gable end on the north elevation have been replaced with a multi-paned type (potentially reversible). The timber frieze and associated elements between the posts have been mostly removed (possibly on a temporary basis) from the front verandah.

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[4] The lightly wooded grasslands of what became known as 'Ivanhoe' were quickly targeted for sheep runs and by timber-cutters from the 'illegal squatter camp' downstream the *Birrarung*/Yarra at Melbourne (est. 1835).[5] However, as part of the 'Heidelberg' district in the Parish of Keelbundora, this area passed rapidly into private hands via auction in Sydney Town in 1838.[6]

Over the following decade, a patchwork of 'prestige' estates emerged, along with a surveyed township – *Warringal* (possibly 'eagle's nest'), later 'Heidelberg' – on the river's west bank.[7] Productive river flats, and the demands of the gold diggings further afield, encouraged market gardening, orchards and (gradually, due to soil exhaustion and flooding) dairying. Activities all mostly undertaken by tenant farmers.[8] This perceived rural idyll enticed *plein air* artists to the district during the 1880s, fixing the 'Heidelberg School' within Australia's artistic consciousness.[9]

Intensive residential development was curbed by poor communications with Melbourne until 1901, when an improved railway line was laid, initiating 'four decades of slow and relatively affluent suburban sprawl', predominantly in and around the Heidelberg township as well as Eaglemont and Ivanhoe train stations.[10] The broader locality of Heidelberg underwent a postwar development as tracts of pastoral land in its western reaches were transformed into mostly low-scale public housing estates. Heidelberg West, notably, also accommodated the Olympic Village (an Australian innovation) for the 1956 games (some 841 individual dwellings).[11] Throughout, the established environs of Heidelberg – undulating and river-orientated – consolidated as a middle-class area, characterised by single-family, detached housing.

4   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online
5   James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne & The Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc., 2011, pxi
6   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of Kulbundora – the name of the eldest son of the important Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') Billibellary. ('Suburban Native Names', Argus 28 April 1906, p5). One of the earliest manifestations of local governance in the Port Phillip District (1840), the fluctuating borders of municipal Heidelberg mirrored its growth, as it was reformatted into a Road District (1860), Shire (1871) and then City (1934). It was amalgamated as the City of Banyule in 1994.
7   Donald S Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p13
8   Robert P Whitworth, *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer*, F F Bailliere, 1879, pp237
9   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.5, and 2.3.10; and Janine Rizzetti, 'Heidelberg', in Richard Broome et al, eds., *Remembering Melbourne 1850-1960*, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 2016, p282
10   Don Garden, 'Heidelberg', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, available online
11   Geoffrey Ballard, 'Olympic Village', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, 2008, available online

View of semi-rural Rosanna, circa 1914 (Source: Cyril Cummins, *A pictorial history of Heidelberg Since* 1836, Heidelberg Historical Society, 1982, p71)

Site-specific

The subject land formed part of Crown Portion 5 in the Parish of Keelbundora. This roughly 388-hectare holding was purchased by the wealthy investor James Watson, of the pastoral company Watson & Hunter, in 1840. The delayed sale, relative to other Crown transactions in Heidelberg, was reputedly due to the holding's poor agricultural prospects, particularly lack of water access. However, noting its proximity to the nascent *Warringal* (Heidelberg) township, Watson proceeded to subdivide and sell his acquisition within weeks of purchase, advertising it as the 'Rosanna Estate'.[12] It appears that these early land dealings were confused and may not have been official. As the colonial economy slackened over the early 1840s, the majority of these purchases reverted back to Watson & Hunter. When this company had declared insolvency in 1843, the Rosanna Estate – after much legal wrangling – was transferred to James Brown (d. 1849), who leased it to multiple small-scale tenant farmers.[13]

The Brown family retained ownership of the majority of Portion 5 into the late 1870s when notices announcing its breakup began to appear:

> The Rosanna Estate, Heidelberg, comprising 870 acres [*note this figure varies*] of valuable freehold land, suitable for agricultural, dairy farm, and other purposes, delightfully situated in one of our most rapidly increasing suburbs. It is at present distant only eight miles, but will doubtless be very shortly brought within railway connexion with the metropolis, whereby its value must be immensely increased.[14]

By November 1881, the Rosanna Estate had been acquired by the Heidelberg Land Company, formed by Matthew Henry Davies and Charles Henry James, both later infamous 'land boomers' who owned vast tracts of land across Melbourne. James consolidated ownership of the estate, which had been 'land banked', around 1885.[15] He initially campaigned for a private railway between Heidelberg and Eltham to run through this holding. When that fell through, James then backed the government line to nearby Heidelberg (est. 1888). Yet the sharp economic downturn of the early 1890s curtailed any wholesale speculative intentions for the Rosanna Estate. By 1897, it had passed into the hands of the liquidators.[16]

The subject allotment formed part of an approximately 4.5-hectare rectangular parcel that had been excised from the Rosanna Estate in 1889, just before the commencement of James' spectacular crash. Although its buyer, John Marshall, a Collins Street-based 'merchant'. He also appears to have fared poorly during the collapse of the Melbourne property/development market. Marshall's Heidelberg property was foreclosed and transferred to the mortgagee, Thomas Wilson of Brighton, in 1892.[17]

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12   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, pp21-2, 43
13   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, p93
14   'Preliminary Notice', *Argus*, 10 June 1879, p2
15   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, pp139-41
16   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, p181
17   Certificates of Title, vol 2207, folio 221; and vol 2452, folio 347

Some years later, between 1905 and 1906, the subject building was constructed to the southern reaches of the large property – still owned by Wilson – seemingly as a home for the newlyweds Edward Charles Rouch and Alice Maud (*née* Hughes).[18] Edward, then a clerk, was first recorded residing in Rosanna Road (the property's original address) in the 1906 electoral roll, having the previous year resided elsewhere in the locality.[19] The 1910 edition of the *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria* provided the name 'Graceburn' to the Rouch's residence.[20]

It seems likely that *Graceburn* had been built by Edward's father, Charles Rouch, a well-known local contractor and owner/operator of a major timber mill in Heidelberg.

In August 1914, ownership of the property was conveyed from Wilson to Alice Rouche, presumably via sale.[21] Just prior to the purchase, Edward and Alice appear to have moved to nearby Cartmell Street for about a year before returning to *Graceburn*, where they remained into the 1950s.[22]

A 1945 aerial photograph of *Graceburn* shows a curved tree-lined driveway leading from Rosanna Road to the northern elevation of the sizable residence within a fenced/hedged yard. Immediately south appears to be an orchard. The remainder of the property is comprised of a paddock dotted with a few trees. While well set back from Rosanna Road, *Graceburn*'s elevated position on the high side would have made it a prominent built feature from this key local artery.

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18   Ancestry.com.au
19   *Australian Electoral Roll*, Division of Bourke, 1905 (p12) and 1906 (p8)
20   Listings for the east side of Rosanna Road, between Brown Street and Plenty Road, first appear in the 1906 *Sands Directory*. In the 1910 edition, seven occupants are identified in this stretch. The *Directory* was not produced in 1908 and 1909. Research undertaken during this study has routinely demonstrated extensive lag time between known occupancy/construction changes and the *Directory*. It is possible that more expedient information gathering techniques were excised in then largely rural Heidelberg than more established urban or suburban areas.
21   Certificate of Title, volume 2452, folio 347
22   Certificate of Title, volume 2452, folio 347; and *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria* editions for 1914, 1915, 1916

1945 aerial photograph of *Graceburn*, its then boundaries approximately outlined in dashed red
The house and its immediate garden setting is circled in dashed yellow
(Source: Landata, Project no 5, Run 31, Frame 60256)

Following Alice's death in December 1954, her will granted *Graceburn* to her children Alan Edward Charles Rouch and Eileen Ruth Hoban.[23] This transfer, along with the encroaching urban footprint of Heidelberg, seems to have triggered considerations of subdivision.

In March 1956, after weeks of advertisements, the subdivisional sale of the long-held 'Graceburn Estate' was held. Seven sites for shops and 59 residential allotments, fronting Rosanna Road and newly created streets (St James Road, Quinn Street, Hodgson Street), were offered:

Every allotment in elevated position, with delightful aspect. Bus along Rosanna Road. Water and electricity at the estate; close schools, churches and shops. This is the most outstanding land available in the district and is surrounded on all sides by attractive homes.[24]

Over 1,000 people flocked to the on-site auction, during which all the lots were sold for a combined total of £69,700.[25]

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23   Certificate of Title, volume 4926, folio 169; Edward Charles Rouch died ten years after his wife in 1964.
24   *Argus*, 17 March 1956, p25
25   *Argus*, 19 March 1956, p7
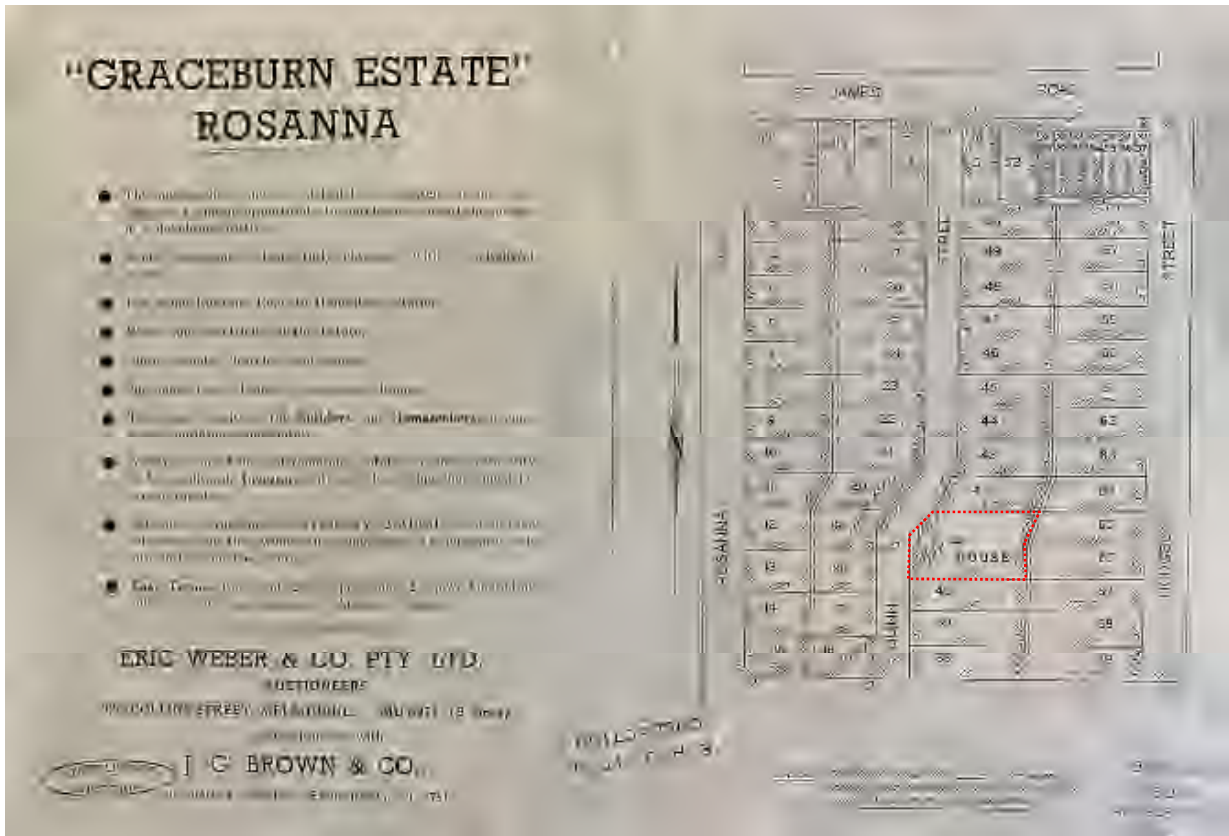
Promotional auction map of the subdivision with the existing subject allotment (no 41) with house outlined in dashed red
(Source: *Graceburn Estate, Rosanna*, 1956, SLV, MAPS 820 BJE 1880?)

Graceburn, specified as containing seven rooms, was also sold at this time for £5,000, retaining an allotment about twice the size as the others in the subdivision.[26] As part of the subdivision, Quinn Street was provided with a bend at the subject property, seemingly to provide additional opportunities for viewing the residence from the public realm. Photographs of *Graceburn* taken around its 1957 sale, possibly for promotional purposes, are reproduced below. These show a front garden planted with ornamental palms and bushes surrounded by a post and rail fence. None of these elements remain. The residence has a light colour scheme with window frames and timber battening to the gable end picked out in a dark shade.

Graceburn, viewed from the Quinn Street, circa 1957
(Source: courtesy of Heidelberg Historical Society)

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26   *Argus*, 19 March 1956, p13

Graceburn, view from the north along Quinn Street, circa 1957
The outbuilding (red arrow) may be the extant timber garage in its original position
(Source: courtesy of Heidelberg Historical Society)

Graceburn, north-west corner, circa 1957
Note two chimneys on north side, since removed, and likely original colour scheme
(Source: Heidelberg Historical Society)

Ownership was formally transferred to the new owners in 1957, who occupied the property for over 50 years.[27] During their tenure, the front and rear garden's existing landscape character was cultivated, and tennis court provided. The existing garage, which dates from at least the 1950s, was also relocated to its current position.[28]

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[27]   Certificate of Title, vol 4926, folio 169
[28]   Correspondence from owners to Banyule City Council, dated 4 November 2010

Rouch family

The close association of the Rouchs with Heidelberg commenced in 1890 when the Collingwood-born Charles Rouch – an experienced builder, then in his early forties – became foreman at a steam sawmill and timber yard in Burgundy Street. Nine years later, he purchased the mill, founding Charles Rouch Pty Ltd. The business was flourished, its sawn timber providing the raw material for an expanding Melbourne. Additional premises were established in Peel Street, West Melbourne, and the business became one of the largest importers of timber in Victoria.[29] His son, Edward Rouch of *Graceburn*, was also involved in the business, continuing it after Charles death.[30] The sharp sound of the steam whistle from Roch's complex, which closed in 1964, and its tall industrial brick chimney (demolished in 1972), are still well-remembered locally.[31]

1920s photograph, from the corner of Lower Heidelberg Road and Burgundy Street
The Rouch's chimney dominates the skyline
(Source: Picture Victoria, ID 7381)

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

• Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

• 6.3 Residential development 1900-1940s

Comparative Analysis

There are few timber residences included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay for Banyule that date from the Federation period, particularly those of a grander type like *Graceburn*. In general, the transitional Federation Bungalow idiom, either in timber or brick, is less frequently seen in the municipality. The Queen Anne style is far more prevalent, albeit largely constructed of red brick. In Eaglemont, the three picturesque timber/roughcast residences from the early 1900s known as the 'Chadwick

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29   'Mr. Charles Rouch', *Argus*, 12 September 1934, p6
30   *Argus*, 4 October 1934, p16; and *Argus*, 11 February 1939, p2
31   Discussion with the Heidelberg Historical Society

Houses' by the inventive architect Harold Desbrowe-Annear are singular in design, reflecting the marked fusion of design sources and reformulation occurring in the Federation period.[32]

The main comparable Federation Bungalow timber house affected by a HO in Banyule is *Mollison Lodge* at 32 Old Lower Plenty Road, Viewbank (HO47). It was built after *Graceburn*, in circa 1915, on a large holding (since truncated) and exhibits a more standard array of attributes associated with the style, such as a simplified form and dominant slate-clad hipped roof that incorporates a wrap-around verandah (turned timber posts). *Mollison Lodge* is more reflective of its more unassuming role as the primary residence of a working property. *Graceburn*, while also initially set within a semi-rural setting, was positioned on a key route outside the township of Heidelberg and accommodated the locally well-known and socially respectable Rouch family, factors that likely compelled its more architecturally considered composition.

Other broadly comparable timber residences in Banyule affected by a HO include:

- 3 St Helena Road, Greensborough (HO143) – an elongated gabled roof 'homestead' constructed in the 1890s with an elevated hillside sitting. It has a return verandah embellished with Queen Anne fretwork and a projecting rotunda-shaped feature on the corner. The residence has been altered, but the extent to which is unclear.

- 137 Waterdale Road, Ivanhoe (HO156) – a modest timber villa, built about 1905. Its hip roof, bracketed eaves, bullnose verandah roof and mixture of timber and cast-iron decoration make it a good example of a transitional Victorian/Federation design.

- 2 Rockbeare Grove, Ivanhoe (HO114) – a later example of an eclectic timber residence, built 1915. It displays the simplified bungalow roof form but is embellished with common Federation detailing and incorporates at the corner a square, hipped-roof 'tower' (timber/roughcast).

This Study has also recommended another timber residence for a HO – *Royd* at 61-63 Mount Street, Eaglemont. It is of commensurate size with *Graceburn* but had been constructed several years earlier (1901). While it also has a broad frontage, original gambrel roof (altered), prominent return verandah and similarly retrained detailing, *Royd* is more expressive of the Queen Anne design mode.

Overall, *Graceburn* presents as the principal timber instance of the Federation Bungalow style in Banyule.

Intactness
Largely intact

Previous Assessment

- Context Pty Ltd, *Banyule Heritage Review*, prepared for the City of Banyule, 13 March 2012 – 'Places recommended for a future HO'

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommended for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	Yes (timber elements)
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Outbuildings and/or fences	No

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[32]   38 The Eyrie, Eaglemont (HO67 + VHR H1009); 55 Outlook Drive, Eaglemont (HO48 + VHR H2082); and 32-34 The Eyrie, Eaglemont (HO66 + VHR H1156). See also 234 Rosanna Road, Rosanna (HO55) and *East View*, 16 Martin Street, Heidelberg (VHR H1033 + HO43) and all the *Former Heidelberg Shire Offices and Library* (HO171), all designs by Annear.

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, November 2020)

LOBBS' TEAROOMS (FORMER) AND DVLC

Address	1 Diamond Creek Road, Greensborough
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1925
Period	Interwar
Date Inspected	January 2021

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and Diamond Valley Learning Centre (DVLC) at 1 Diamond Creek Road, Greensborough is significant. It was constructed in 1925 at Greensborough Park, likely to design the City of Heidelberg for use as a tearoom, caretaker's residence and changing facility. The place continued in this role into the late 1960s, operated by a succession of lessees. The building appears to have been officially known as the 'Greensborough Park Tearooms; however, the lengthy occupancy of the last commercial tenants, William and Olive Lobb, saw the name 'Lobbs' Tearooms' popularly adopted. Since 1974, the building has accommodated the DVLC.

The significant elements are the gabled-roofed structure perpendicular to the main thoroughfare and immediately north of the car park's driveway and the latter's exposed rafters, gable ends (timber lattice and weatherboarding), front-gabled porch (excluding non-original weatherboard enclosure), walls of painted weatherboard, and timber-framed, double-hung sashes.

~~The pair of mature English elms (both likely *Ulmus procera*) that frame the porch are early plantings associated with the place's former role as a tearoom and complement its setting.~~

Other elements, including the car park, while illustrative of the DVLC's late 20th-century growth and development, are not significant.

How is it Significant?

Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and DVLC is of local historical, rarity, representative and social significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and DVLC is of historical significance as a reasonably intact example of a purpose-built 1920s tearoom/kiosk. It is illustrative of Greensborough Park's early and continuing role as a centre for leisure, sport and recreation, serving light refreshments for visitors, change room facilities for sporting teams and accommodation for the caretaker. More broadly, the building's role as a tearoom reflects the early-to-mid 20th-century reputation of Greensborough as a pleasing landscape frequented by Melbourne excursionists and day-trippers. Many of the tearooms' operators were women. Their association with the building speaks to a layer of often-overlooked female experience during the interwar and postwar years, that of entrepreneurial women running local businesses. The building is also closely associated with the ~~DLVC~~DVLC, which had set up at the former tearoom within a year of their formation. This non-profit organisation was one of Victoria's first community education centres and an influential pioneer in facilitating adult female vocational education during the 1970s and 1980s. (Criterion A)

Lobbs' Tearooms (former) and DVLC has significance for its rarity as the only known purpose-built tearoom/kiosk remaining in the Greensborough area, where such a typology was once more common. More broadly, the survival of such large interwar timber buildings in the municipality is also uncommon. The pleasant, home-style design of the weatherboard building is also likely representative of the design of outer-suburban tearooms in the Interwar period. (Criterion B and D)

The former tearoom is of social significance for its use by the DVLC. The important, life-changing educational role played by this organisation is valued by a large community of current/former users and is closely tied to the building, out of which the DVLC has operated for over four decades. Such attachment is demonstrated through the continued lively engagement of the diverse array of learners with the place. (Criterion G)

Description

Lobb's Tearooms (former) and DVLC is situated on the eastern boundary of Greensborough Park, between the oval and Diamond Creek Road.

1925 façade – note distinctive fenestration and retention of signage panel

The Interwar period footprint of the single-storey building is formed by two intersecting sections that are orientated diagonally to the nearby thoroughfare, which it addresses at a small setback. Both wings have gabled roofs, clad in replacement corrugated sheet metal, with exposed timber rafter ends. The front wing's ridgeline – initially, over the kiosk/tearoom – sits above the rear, which housed the operator and changerooms. Originally, the latter was narrower but was expanded with the addition of flanking skillion-roofed extensions that appear to date from the late 20th century. The original footprint is depicted in the aerial photograph at the end of this citation.

Eastern elevation – note the skillion-roofed extension, left of frame

1925 rear – flanking skillion volumes are later additions

The two brick chimneys, evident in historical photographs, are no longer extant, although the timber-lined soffit remains.

Gable ends are finished in weatherboard with a small section of lattice to the apex. The primary front gable has timber brackets and now blank signage panel, which previously accommodated a painted sign ('Greensborough Park Tearooms').

This central gabled porch defines the symmetrical façade and operated as the public entrance to the tearooms. It was previously open and characterised by two groups of paired timber square posts, a low waisted timber/glazed door bordered by high waisted sidelights and raised deck. In recent times, the porch has been enclosed with weatherboarding and no longer functions as an entry. The weatherboard finish with a central notched band to the porch's gable end is likely original.

The gable end and roof form of the porch are likely original

Original fenestration, note 'corner' window

The building is timber-framed and clad in painted weatherboard. Based on historical photographs, the colour scheme has always been light (possibly cream with detail picked out in earthy hues), as it remains.

Original windows are timber-framed double-hung sashes arranged in pairs, including those at the corners of the front (north) elevation. Such 'corner windows' are distinctive (note thick mullion). While an efficient and practical means of bringing light into the tearoom's interior, such fenestration was not typical for the mid-1920s. Such corner windows are more associated with the late Interwar period, raising the possibility that these windows were introduced or modified in the 1930s. Aluminium-frames or horizontal windows elsewhere at the place represent later alterations.

Stylistically, the building's rugged realism and 'natural' and 'honest' material palette of timber reflects the still then prevalent expression of the Arts & Crafts movement. The design, while relatively utilitarian, is also influenced by the homely character of the 1920s bungalow, a case illustrated in particular by the gable arrangement.

The pair of English elms (both likely *Ulmus procera)* situated either side of the north elevation are mature specimens that were likely purposefully planted to enhance the aesthetic of the entrance to the building.

English elm, south of the porch

Attached to the west elevation of the 1925 section of the building are two interconnected gable-roofed weatherboard wings, which were added during the late 20th-century. Their detailing (gable ends, porches, windows, rafter ends) largely mimic the former tearoom, while their siting allows for the legibility of the former tearoom to remain interpretable. A bitumen finished driveway and car parking edge the building to its east and south.

View to later additions from the rear carpark – the former tearoom is situated right of frame

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[1] The undulating open woodlands, threaded by the River Plenty, which later became known as Greensborough (initially 'Keelbundora',[2] after the parish), were mostly purchased in 1838 by the Sydney-based speculator Henry Smythe.[3] He sold it two years later to Edward Bernard Green (1809-61), a shrewd English entrepreneur.[4]

Seeking to capitalise on the contract he held for the overland delivery of Melbourne-to-Sydney mail, Green manoeuvred to alter the route during the mid-1840s. He proposed running the mail through his undeveloped holding at Keelbundora/Greensborough, surveying a private township – grandly named 'La Trobe' (after the lieutenant-governor) – on the high ground overlooking the river flats in preparation.[5] Green's heady expectations for the location were dashed when the riled authorities publicly endorsed the official route. While the surrounding district was progressively cleared over the remainder of the decade to make way for market gardens and orchards, 'Green's town' languished. In the early 1900s, the township (population 270) was still classed as a 'pretty little village'.[6]

The promotion of Greensborough's 'picturesque' river banks and scenery to day-trippers and 'excursionists' from Melbourne – arriving via rail (the station opened in 1902), charabanc and, later, private motor vehicles – conferred a noted recreational and leisure reputation upon the locale, which continued well into the postwar period.

However, the area's residential profile only rose markedly in the 1920s, chiefly along the railway corridor. The 'live' Greensborough Progress Association proclaimed it 'Melbourne's premier rural suburb', with 'Neat bungalows, of every conceivable design, both brick and hardwood … springing up everywhere'.[7] Less effusive assessment classed the area as something of an outer-ring 'backwater'.[8]

Broader Greensborough remained primarily rural – a belt of family-run orchards, dairies and poultry farms – into the late 1950s, before receding in the face of rapid suburban expansion.[9] The consolidated township continued as the commercial and service hub of an extensive peri-urban district administered as the Diamond Valley Shire (1964-94). From the late 1980s, the town itself underwent an intensive multi-phased redevelopment, transforming into 'Greensborough Plaza', a regional retail/employment centre.

Site-specific

The River Plenty denoted the boundary between the parishes of Keelbundora (west) and Nillumbik (east), the extent of contemporary Greensborough traversing both.[10] The subject land – on the east bank of the river – derives from Portion 13 of the Parish of Nillumbik, a 259-hectare purchase of 'good pastures timbered with Gum & Box' made in 1840 by the Scottish merchant John Alison, who set up the earliest commercial flour mill in the Port Phillip District (King Street, Melbourne).[11]

Around 1907, a group of residents – concerned at the lack of reserved Crown land in the area – 'manfully' organised to raise funds that were used to procure approximately 5 hectares of Portion 13 for the establishment of a public park.[12] Trustees and a committee were appointed and beautification efforts initiated. By the following year, *The Evelyn Observer* described the result:

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1   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online
2   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of 'Kulbundora' – the name of the eldest son of Billibellary, the *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') of the Wurundjeri-willam clan. ('Suburban Native Names', *Argus* 28 April 1906, p5)
3   Gary Presland, *The Place for a Village: how nature has shaped the city of Melbourne*, Museum Victoria, 2008, pp122-23
4   'Pastoral Pioneers: E. B. Green. No. 60', *Australasian*, 9 February 1935, p4
5   Dianneh H Edwards, *The Diamond Valley Story*, The Shire of Diamond Valley, 1979, p111
6   *The Australian Handbook*, Gordon & Gotch, 1905, p449
7   'Greensborough's Beautiful Hills & Valleys', *Herald*, 2 July 1924, p15
8   Edwards, *The Diamond Valley Story*, p175
9   'Greensborough', *Victorian Places*, 2014, available online
10   Nillumbik originates from the Aboriginal world *nyilumbik*, thought to mean bad, red or no good earth.
11   (Description of Portion 13) *Plan of the Lands in the Parish of Nillumbik*, 1 March 1841, M62, Landata, Put-away map; (purchase) 'Port Phillip', *Sydney Herald*, 24 February 1840, p2; and (Alison) 'Family notices', *Herald*, 1 February 1864, p2; and *Give us this day our daily bread – millers and mills in Port Philip*, Port Philip Pioneers Group Inc, available online
12   'State Schools' Picnic At Greensborough', *Evelyn Observer*, 6 December 1907, p2; and 'Greensborough', *Heidelberg News*, 31 January 1914, p2

The Greensborough Park … is picturesquely and conveniently situated close to the township, and is bounded on two sides by the River Plenty [*and the Diamond Creek Road to the east*]. The land was obtained for £260 … improvements, such as levelling, erecting wire netting fence twelve feet high along the bank of the river … It is a public Park, open to the public free, that is as far as foot traffic is concerned, a small fee is charged for the admittance of vehicles.[13]

In the early 1920s, ownership of Greensborough Park passed to the Shire of Heidelberg.[14] The park, well utilised by locals and sporting bodies, was also considered a destination for tourists within the broader sylvan landscape of Greensborough by this point:

Five miles from Heidelberg is GREENSBOROUGH, on the Plenty River, and within easy reach of the station are many beautiful picnic spots along the course of the stream, or in the hills farther back. There is good fishing to be had, and hares and rabbits are plentiful in the vicinity. Good hotel accommodation is available, consequently Greensborough is a favourite week-end resort.[15]

The Shire undertook upgrades at the park, including the construction of the subject building in 1925:

The pretty sports ground and park here is rapidly approaching completion … The caretaker's residence, a handsome structure, to which is attached two dressing rooms, showers, etc, and the kiosk have been completed.[16]

The structure – initially known as the 'Greensborough Kiosk' – was likely erected by a contractor to plans prepared by the Shire's engineer, as was typical for projects of this ilk throughout the Interwar period in the area.[17]

In the context of the 1920s, the descriptor 'kiosk' (from the Turkish word köşk) carried vaguely exotic overtones but were generally understood as a modest building that sold light food and drinks, particularly tea, that were found at parks, the beach and shopping arcades. The classification of kiosk/tearoom was interchangeable across the period. The fashionable practise of public tea-drinking in Australia followed soon after the emergence of specialised tearooms in the United Kingdom from the 1870s, a phenomenon that held strong links with the temperance movement.[18] The influential Sydney-based Chinese merchant Mei Quong Tart (1850-1903) is attributed with popularising tearooms as an attractive commercial enterprise in Australia. In building type, tearooms varied widely, ranging from sophisticated urban operations to small-scale, basic timber pavilions and structures in suburbs and country towns.

The change rooms were utilised by the locally celebrated Greensborough Football Club (established 1905). Their spectators, along with 'picnickers' and hikers from Melbourne formed the kiosk/tearoom's key customer base.[19] Mr and Mrs Roy of Greensborough, granted a 12-month tenancy in 1925, the year of construction, were the first lessees of the kiosk and park caretakers. Their lease held an option for three years, on the condition that for three annual 'carnivals', they would not 'sell soft drinks, confectionery, etc.'[20] Wider park improvements in the next few years further increased the park's use and recognition:

It is pleasing to note the increased patronage that our pretty park and reserves are receiving from visiting picnic parties. Some important large societies and sections of unions, viz., the Railway Guards' and Transport branches, have held their picnics at the park. The bathing sheds (men's and women's), tennis courts (three), cricket pitches, and kiosk help to make the park equal to anything anywhere.[21]

In 1928, the Shire announced via a tender that a 'larger scheme' of works to the 'Greensborough Park Kiosk' was envisioned. At the same time, Mrs Roy was reconfirmed as the tenant at an annual rent of £25 and promise to spend £500 'on improvements'.[22] The substance of these works is unclear or whether they took place is unclear (possibly there were focused on the interior).

The Roys had to request a rent abatement in 1930, likely due to the onset of a severe economic contraction brought about by the Great Depression. By early the following year, a new lessee – Mrs Leed – was accepted.[23] She too, it seems, struggled to keep the kiosk economical. Both 'kiosk and residence' were again offered to let in 1933. Soon after, Mr and Mrs McGeorge were noted as both operators and occupants.[24] Their tenure, coincided with the uneven economic uptick of the mid-to-late thirties and may

13   'Bazar at Greensborough', *Evelyn Observer*, 4 December 1908, p2
14   'Heidelberg Shire Council', *Advertiser* (Hurstbridge), 18 May 1923, p2. The chronically under-resourced local body, the Greensborough Road District (formed in 1858) had requested annexation to the Shire of Heidelberg in 1875.
15   *Visitor Guide to Melbourne*, Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, circa 1925, p39
16   'Greensborough', *Advertiser*, 7 August 1925, p4
17   'Greensborough Park Kiosk', *Advertiser*, 20 July 1928, p1
18   Jane Pettigrew, *A social history of tea*, National Trust (London), 2001, passim
19   'Greensborough', *Advertiser*, 10 June 1938, p1
20   'Shire of Heidelberg', *Advertiser*, 22 May 1925, p3
21   'Greensborough', *Advertiser*, 6 January 1928, p2
22   'Heidelberg Council', *Advertiser*, 20 June 1928, p1
23   'Heidelberg Council', *Advertiser*, 19 September 1930, p6; and 'Heidelberg Council', *Advertiser*, 13 February 1931, p4
24   *Age*, 3 May 1933, p5; 'Greensborough', *Advertiser*, 9 March 1934, p10

have benefited from the 1937 decision of the park committee to permit games on the Sabbath, 'provided they are conducted without undue noise and barracking.'[25]

It appears that during the tenure of the McGeorges the kiosk was renamed the 'Greensborough Park Tearooms' (see photograph below).

Late 1930s photograph of the Greensborough Park Tearooms (Source: Greensborough Historical Society)

1973 sketch by Roy Reynolds, inscription: 'Mrs Lobbs Kiosk, Lwr. Park' (Source: Turvey, Greensborough and Greenhills)

Beyond representing a shift in the public consumption of food and drink, tearooms were also considered 'decent' venues that, due to their associations with domesticity and even femininity (strong counterpoints to the masculine drinking culture of public houses), offered a rare social sphere for women to interact and engage freely. As reflected in the number of known female operators and proprietors at the place, tearooms were also – in the highly gendered domain of the early 20th-century business world – one of the few 'respectable' enterprises that women could run. The presence of interwar businesswomen runs counter to the dominant interpretation of women in the period as constrained to the private realm, focused on charitable activities or forced into lower-order work, such as domestic service and factories.

The tearooms entered the public discourse during 1938 when A J Fahle – then the owner of the Greensborough Hotel – made an offer to the City of Heidelberg to spend £500 on the building if he was granted a ten-year lease. Fahle's proposed improvements included a 'new dining hall, new training rooms for the home team and visitors, and the provision of a hot-water service and showers.' Fahle exclaimed at a council meeting that discussed his proposition, 'It would help the town on. No one could get a meal in the town to-day except at his hotel. In other public parks people could get what refreshments they required at the kiosks'. The offer, however, had been rejected as the current tenant, Mrs McGeorge, upon interview by the Parks and Garden committee, made it clear she had no interest in relinquishing the lease. At the same meeting, the prominent councillor John C Jessop commented:

> he did not think the buildings in the park were in a bad state. One hour's work in cleaning them out would make them all right. The object of the park was not to make a profitable business for one person, but for all the convenience of all the people. No other park in the present football competition was as well fitted as the Greensborough Park insofar as rooms for the players were concerned. The rooms cost £700 and were in a very good state of repair …[26]

The McGeorge family relinquished the lease in 1940 and tenders were invited by the municipality for the 'Dwelling and Kiosk'.[27] Husband and wife, William and Olive Lobb took over the tenancy at the end of the year, after negotiating 'certain renovations' for the kiosk:

> The health inspector to arrange for covering of garbage at the rear of the park; trucks and lines to be removed; troughs in laundry to be renewed; stiff brooms and phenyle to be supplied as required; three new windows and new material for seven blinds to be supplied in the shop and power point installed for refrigerator; the stove in the residence to be re-set and verandah outside kitchen door to be completed.[28]

During the Second World War, as part of civil defence air-raid precautions, wardens and other members of the local Volunteer

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25   'New Park Committee', *Advertiser*, 19 November 1937, p2
26   'Greensborough Affairs', *Advertiser*, 24 June 1939, p3
27   *Age*, 25 May 1940, p6
28   'Greensborough: Council Matters', *Advertiser* [Eltham], 18 October 1940, p5

Defence Crops met and trained at tearooms.[29]

The Lobb family lived at the site into the late 1960s.[30] Their presence gave rise to its designation as 'Lobb's Tearooms', although photographs dating from their tenure show the retention of 'Greensborough Park Tearooms' to the front signage panel. Lobb's Tearooms, however, appears to remain favoured locally in references to the place.

1945 aerial photograph with the subject building identified by the red arrow – note Diamond Creek Road has been re-aligned
(Source: Department of Lands and Survey, *Aerial Survey of Victoria*, Adastra Airways, 839 C3B, Zone 7, The University of Melbourne)

1950s photograph of the rear of the Greensborough Park Tearooms, looking north across the oval
(Source: Victorian Places, courtesy of Greensborough Historical Society)

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29   Irene Turvey, *Greensborough and Greenhills*, Cypress Books, 1973, np
30   Information supplied by the Greensborough Historical Society

Photograph of the façade (left of frame) and northern elevation in the early 1960s
(Source: courtesy of Greensborough Historical Society)

Photograph of the Greensborough Park Tearooms from Diamond Valley Creek Road, in 1978, prior to additions
(Source: wikinorthia)

In 1974, the Diamond Valley Shire made available the tea rooms – 'known locally as Lobbs' kiosk' – for the Diamond Valley Learning Centre (DVLC), then just recently incorporated as a non-profit organisation after having been found the previous year by the Centre for the Study of Innovation at La Trobe University.[31] Its formative history and fluid purpose, function and survival has been comprehensively detailed and discussed in Michele Lonsdale's publication, *Insistent voices: the story of the Diamond Valley Learning Centre* (1993).

The DVLC emerged from various shifting cultural currents of the late 1960s, particularly the women's liberation movement and a radical 'progressivism' that had begun to characterise Australian education. The women-centre, flexible and participatory learning and social environment it fostered was, at the time, radical:

> … the innocuous appearance of the Centre is deceiving. At various times in its history, the Diamond Valley Learning Centre has been seen as a refuge for the distressed, a Church-like body with an all-encompassing spirituality; a hotbed of militant lesbian socialists; and a scaled-down equivalent of the average suburban secondary school … One of its most fundamental principles is to affirm the experience of women…

> The Diamond Valley Learning Centre has been a pioneer in the field of adult education. It has proved to be the inspiration for hundreds of other, similar, community-education centres throughout Australia. Its emphasis on a non-threatening, informal learning environment, and in its recognition of childcare, the Centre has influenced the ways in which bodies like the Council for Adult Education (CAE) and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) have operated.[32]

DVLC class, front room of the former tearooms, 1970s
(Source: Michelle Lonsdale, *Insistent voices*, 1993, p74)

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31   Michele Lonsdale, *Insistent voices: the story of the Diamond Valley Learning Centre*, Diamond Valley Learning Centre, 1993, p24
32   Lonsdale, *Insistent voices*, p2

In the late 1970s, council concern at the former tearooms physical condition raised the spectre of demolition. In response, the DVLC's management committee and others campaigned for its conservation, arguing that 'Lobbs's Kiosk is worth looking after as a part of Old Greensborough and hopes some plan to preserve it can be produced.'[33] Seemingly in response to this call, the building was maintained and expanded, with two interconnected weatherboard wings constructed to the west elevation of the original footprint over the late 20th century. The DVLC remained in occupation at the time of this assessment.

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

- Theme 6: Community and cultural life

- Theme 8: Parks and gardens and the urban landscape

Comparative Analysis

No former kiosks/tearooms are known to be subject to a heritage overlay in the City of Banyule nor – at least in Greensborough – are known to remain.[34] In general, few early timber buildings from the interwar years, particularly those related to parks or recreation/leisure, survive in the municipality.

The only other heritage-listed timber building in Greensborough is the 1890s Arts & Crafts-style residence at 3 St Helena Road (HO143), roughly opposite the subject place.

Intactness

Reasonably intact

Previous Assessment

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommend for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	~~Yes (pair of English elms)~~ No
Outbuildings and/or fences	No

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[33] 'Call to Keep Lobb's Kiosk', *Diamond Valley News*, 19 September 1978, np in Lonsdale, *Insistent voices*, p75
[34] Known examples, since demolished, include 'Hutt's Tearooms' (Greensborough Historical Society, Victorian Places, object registration 1482) and various newspaper references to tearooms, such as 'Millan's', to Main Street in the township.

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
The original extent of the interior building is approximately outlined in dashed yellow
(Source: Nearmap, April 2020)

WELSH HOUSE

Address	4 Eton Court, Heidelberg
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1965-1972
Period	Late 20th century
Date Inspected	January 2021

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Welsh House at 4 Eton Court, Heidelberg is significant. It was designed around 1965 by the architect Charles Duncan and then built chiefly by its initial owners, Graham and Adele Welsh, over several years.

The significant elements are the three interlinked wings, bellcast hipped roofs, broad eaves, white sheeted-soffits, chimney, exposed recycled brick walls with raked joints, arrangement of the piers, double carport, and timber-framed fenestration (floor-to-ceiling windows, casements, hinged doors).

~~The central courtyard and terraced 'bush style' front garden complement the overall aesthetic of the place.~~

Some original elements to the interior are also significant, specifically the long passageway in the east wing and main spaces (lounge and living room), including internal walls of exposed brick and shiplap timber boarding, slate paved floors, ceilings of white-painted plaster sheeting, redwood-lined pyramidal ceiling, the brick fireplace (lounge), and the channelled timber panelling to the kitchen island (pier and related element).

The central courtyard and terraced 'bush style' front garden complement the overall aesthetic of the place.

Later addition elements are not significant.

How is it Significant?

Welsh House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Welsh House is of historical significance as a notable example of the neo-Wrightian organic design mode by the architect Charles Duncan. This approach evolved as a striking variant of Melbourne's modern movement, reflecting an aspiration among a relatively small group of architects to develop a regionalised, more humanist version of international modernism. While Duncan was celebrated in his heyday, his role in advancing and popularising a convincing regional idiom in Melbourne is now less generally recognised. *Welsh House*, awarded *The Age*/RAIA Citation (no 9) at its completion in 1972, offers a fine opportunity to examine Duncan's distinctive and considered design approach, reflecting contemporary ideas of living and a new interest in local landscapes and conditions. As a largely owner-built residence, *Welsh House* is an impressive and later instance of the Do-It-Yourself phenomenon, a trend that was integral in shaping the municipality's built environment in the decades after the Second World War. (Criterion A)

Welsh House is of aesthetic significance as a substantial and largely intact example of 1960s organic/regional modernism. The residence has a distinct, robustly massed composition, with three interconnected wings arranged around a central courtyard and terraced garden. The hipped roofs with bellcast profile that cap each wing are elegant and distinguishing elements within the municipality. *Welsh House's* design evokes an intimate connection to place, an aspect uncommon within its well-established suburban context. This design attribute is reinforced by the limited, recycled palette of Hawthorn bricks, slate and timber, both externally and internally, which bestows a rugged and 'earthy' character upon *Welsh House*. Grounding the residence into the landscape are the carport's hefty columns and the slender piers that articulate the gallery of the east wing. Generous glazing allows for ready views of the encompassing 'bush style' garden from within the meticulously detailed ~~and plush~~ interior. (Criterion E)

Description

Welsh House is located at the southern end of Eton Court – a short cul de sac – on a large, irregularly shaped allotment. Relatively thick perimeter plantings partly obscure the residence and courtyard from the public domain.[1]

The residence is formed by three interlinked single-storey rectangular wings, each situated on a different level, arranged around a courtyard and terraced front garden. This siting responds to the allotment's moderate east-to-west slope, locating the house comfortably within the contours of the site and orientating the living spaces to take advantage of the solar cycle. It also reflects the desire of the architect and client to 'wrap' the house around a pre-existing and prominent red gum near the centre of the lot.[2] However, this tree has since been removed.

As depicted by the original floorplan, the arrangement of *Welsh House* lent itself to coherent internal zoning, namely a carport and storage rooms in the west wing (nearest the street), public living space in the central wing (living and family rooms), and bedrooms branched off a long passageway in the east wing. Such site-specific siting facilitated climatic control and a strong visual/spatial relationship between the majority of rooms and the surrounding garden – a design more concerned with sensible planning than streetscape presence.

Each of the wings is capped by a prominent hip with a bellcast profile. The architect of *Welsh House*, Charles Duncan, frequently explored hipped roofs in his work. He viewed them as a regional element popularly associated with protective/homely qualities; however, Duncan's hipped roofs were readily interpreted as 'modern', an impression created at the subject place by their unusual bellcast shape (slight curve resulting in a lower pitch at the termination of the roof slope) and the manner in which the roofs appear to 'float' above the walls. The effect of the latter supported by the broad eaves and underlying piers. Soffits are clad in white-coloured sheeting (possibly the original 'hardiflex'[3]) with a timber fascia. The existing glazed terracotta tiles are replacements, the original (experimental) cedar shingle cladding (see Site-specific) having perished or proved vulnerable to water ingress. A short and broad brick chimney punctures the roof of the central wing. Solar panels are a later addition.

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1   This description is also informed by public realm photographs, see '4 Eton Court, Heidelberg', https://www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-vic-heidelberg-116772603, May 2014, available online
2   John Barker, '"Do-it-yourself" house is a winner', *Age*, 11 December 1972, p14
3   Barker, '"Do-it-yourself" house is a winner', p14

Welsh House is constructed from recycled Hawthorn bricks (presumably salvaged from historic buildings) laid in a stretcher bond with raked joints. The 'rough side' of the bricks purposefully face the exterior to endow a robust and 'earthy' quality, a key aspect of the design that helps the residence harmonise with the site.[4]

Articulating the western elevation of the northern wing and its central counterpart's front and rear elevations are bays created by narrow brick piers, which ground the house within the terrain. The bays display well-recessed timber-framed openings, either floor-to-ceiling windows or square casements. The use of the former and the latter correspond with the need for internal privacy. The majority of the floor-to-ceiling windows are fixed or hinged doors and feature a broad timber band to their lower part, dividing each glass sheet into two unequal sections.
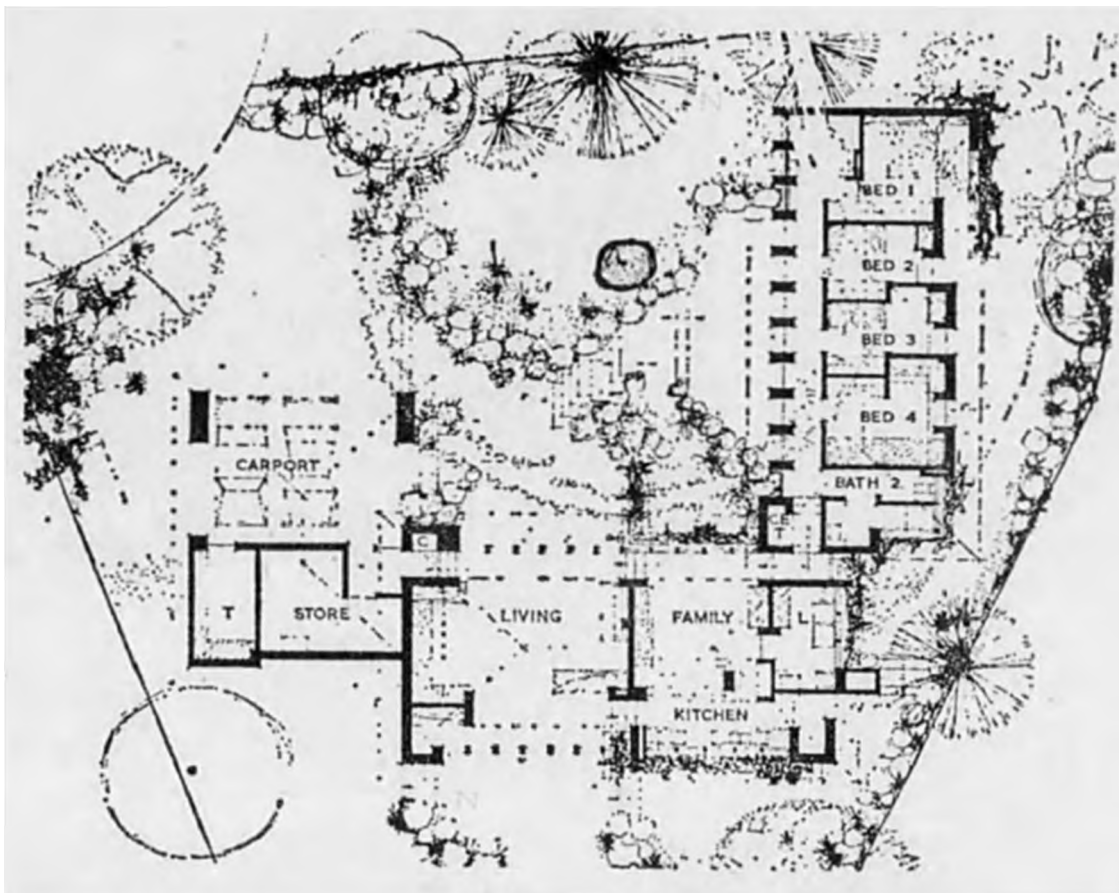
Published original floor plan for *Welsh House* – north is top of frame
(Source: John Barker, '"Do-it-yourself" house is a winner', *Age*, 11 December 1972, p14)

The double carport defines the public presentation of *Welsh House* and accommodates the main entry (obscured), providing a 'direction connection between the house and the car, a drive-in domesticity'.[5] The dominant roof and hefty rectangular columns (x3) suggest a cavernous space beneath. The floor and driveway are surfaced in variously sized square or rectangular concrete pavers. This finish possibly replaced the packed dirt of early site photographs or was always intended.

Contemporary real estate photographs depict *Welsh House's* interior as generally intact.[6] The free-flowing and logical overall layout appears to remain, although the rear half of the carport wing, initially a store and toilet, has been adapted into an additional bedroom and ensuite with new openings created in its rear elevation. Important internal elements are walls of exposed brick and shiplap timber boarding (clear finish); slate paved floors; ceilings of white-painted plaster sheeting with concealed fixtures/services and recessed lighting; geometric brick fireplace (living room); redwood-lined pyramidal ceiling (living room); and channelled timber panelling to the kitchen island (pier and and related element, the benchtop may be a later addition).

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4   Barker, '"Do-it-yourself" house is a winner', p14
5   Geoffrey London, Philip Goad and Conrad Hamann, *An Unfinished Experiment in Living: Australian Houses 1950-65*, UWAP Publishing, 2017, p17
6   Realesate.com.au, '4 Eton Court, Heidelberg', May 2014, <www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-vic-heidelberg-116772603>

The existing whole-site naturalistic indigenous/native landscaping treatment is indicative of the 'bush garden' style that grew in acceptance from the postwar period. It also serves to screen the private world of the courtyard from the street. While the focal red gum has been removed, other formative elements appear to endure, such as the terrace sections of lawn and garden beds in the front part, volcanic rock retaining walls, brick planter boxes and basalt pavers. It is likely that mature trees are associated with the formative phase of *Welsh House*. The front garden has never been fenced. Timber paling fences to the side and rear are non-original. Located in the southern extremity of the property is a brick and hipped-roof workshop, which is original.

Landscaped filtered view to west wing from street, note different bay treatment with casement windows/ ow brick wall (left) and floor-to-ceiling windows (right)

Welsh House is classifiable as an example of what architectural historian Philip Goad describes as the 'Wrightian survival'.[7] A vein of postwar modernism that turned away from the perceived anonymity of the International Style to draw from the American master Frank Lloyd Wright's ideas of 'Organic Architecture'. These complex principles were typically translated as an intimate response to site, low-slung and vaguely biomorphic forms, humble materials, and an embrace of 'primitive' – albeit readily modern – notions of space and shelter (the cave). From the 1970s, many aspects of the neo-Wrightian approach pioneered by architects entered the vernacular of mainstream builders.[8]

Alongside some Melbourne architect's fascination with Wright and his body of work – generally reconceived to suit local conditions (reduced scale, detail and cost, and climate specifics) – were other important interests, such as a re-evaluation of Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin and the humanism of Alvar Aalto. Less articulated but deeply rooted were the influences of traditional eastern design and the Arts & Crafts movement. The organic design mode, gathering pace over the 1950s, illustrated a more profound engagement of modernist architects with the local landscape and search for an authentic regional built expression.[9] In contemporary circles, organic/regional versus rational/international modernism proved the central architectural dichotomy.

The organic/regional design mode, alongside the other variants of the modern movement, should also be recognised as indicative of major shifts in daily life for the wider population, particularly from the mid-1950s, driven by rising prosperity, technological advances and changing societal attitudes. The enthralment of many avant-garde architects with domestic design

7   Goad, *The modern house in Melbourne, 1945-1975,* Chapter 6, pp31-32
8   Philip Goad, 'The Australian House in the 1960s', in Paula Whitman, Tracey Avery and Peta Dennis, eds, *Cool: The 1960s Brisbane House*, School of Design and Built Environment, QUT, 2004, p8
9   Goad, 'Regionalism', in Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p589

both reflected and reinforced such transformations, encouraging lifestyles revolving around intensifying consumerism, increased car ownership and more relaxed outdoor-orientated mindsets. 'Good-life Modernism' for those who could attain it.[10]

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[11] The lightly wooded grasslands of what became known as 'Ivanhoe' were quickly targeted for sheep runs and by timber-cutters from the 'illegal squatter camp' downstream the *Birrarung*/Yarra at Melbourne (est. 1835).[12] However, as part of the 'Heidelberg' district in the Parish of Keelbundora, this area passed rapidly into private hands via auction in Sydney Town in 1838.[13]

Over the following decade, a patchwork of 'prestige' estates emerged, along with a surveyed township – *Warringal* (possibly 'eagle's nest'), later 'Heidelberg' – on the river's west bank.[14] Productive river flats, and the demands of the gold diggings further afield, encouraged market gardening, orchards and (gradually, due to soil exhaustion and flooding) dairying. Activities all mostly undertaken by tenant farmers.[15] This perceived rural idyll enticed *plein air* artists to the district during the 1880s, fixing the 'Heidelberg School' within Australia's artistic consciousness.[16]

Intensive residential development was curbed by poor communications with Melbourne until 1901, when an improved railway line was laid, initiating 'four decades of slow and relatively affluent suburban sprawl', predominantly in and around the Heidelberg township as well as Eaglemont and Ivanhoe train stations.[17] The broader locality of Heidelberg underwent a postwar development as tracts of pastoral land in its western reaches were transformed into mostly low-scale public housing estates. Heidelberg West, notably, also accommodated the Olympic Village (an Australian innovation) for the 1956 games (some 841 individual dwellings).[18] Throughout, the established environs of Heidelberg – undulating and river-orientated – consolidated as a middle-class area, characterised by single-family, detached housing.

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[10]   Mark Jarzombek, '"Good-Life Modernism" And Beyond: The American House in the 1950s and 1960s: A Commentary", *The Cornell Journal of Architecture*, vol 4, 1990, pp77-93

[11]   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online

[12]   James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne & The Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc., 2011, pxi

[13]   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of Kulbundora – the name of the eldest son of the important Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') Billibellary. ('Suburban Native Names', Argus 28 April 1906, p5). One of the earliest manifestations of local governance in the Port Phillip District (1840), the fluctuating borders of municipal Heidelberg mirrored its growth, as it was reformatted into a Road District (1860), Shire (1871) and then City (1934). It was amalgamated as the City of Banyule in 1994.

[14]   Donald S Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p13

[15]   Robert P Whitworth, *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer*, F F Bailliere, 1879, pp237

[16]   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.5, and 2.3.10; and Janine Rizzetti, 'Heidelberg', in Richard Broome et al, eds., *Remembering Melbourne 1850-1960*, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 2016, p282

[17]   Don Garden, 'Heidelberg', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, available online

[18]   Geoffrey Ballard, 'Olympic Village', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, 2008, available online

Early 1900s view of Heidelberg township (Source: Picture Victoria, ID 14363)

Site-specific

The subject allotment derives from the Portion 6 (approximately 372 hectares) of the Parish of Keelbundora, procured by Richard Henry Browne, then a Yass-based pastoralist, at the 1838 Sydney auction of Crown land in the district. Browne is now considered a key promoter, if not the originator, of the name 'Heidelberg'. In 1843, Browne sold about a third of this purchase to his cousin, the lionised 'overlander' Joseph Hawdon (1813-71), who integrated it within his extensive 'Banyule Estate'. A prominent figure in Port Phillip/Melbourne society, Hawdon oversaw his myriad of interests from the estate, residing in 'Banyule Homestead', a commodious, white-rendered Elizabethan/Gothic-style mansion (1846) perched on the lip of ridge overlooking the river flats.[19]

Pencil drawing of *Banyule House* from the river banks, possibly 1850s
(Source: George Alexander Gilbert, SLV, H6638)

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[19]   Refer to *Plan of the Parish of Nillumbik*, Office of Lands and Survey, 1866, SLV, available online; and Victoria Heritage Database, 'Banyule: 60 Buckingham Drive, Heidelberg', available online

1945 aerial photograph of the subject place (approximately identified the red star), then part of the Banyule Estate
(Source: Department of Lands and Survey, *Aerial Survey of Victoria*, Adastra Airways, 849 AIB, Zone 7, University of Melbourne)

Despite several different owners and some truncation, the Banyule Estate remained a considerable tract of predominantly cleared rural land at its purchase by the Stanley Korman-headed company, Stanhill Estate Pty Ltd, in 1958. Korman, a self-made and controversial businessman, organised the purchase to subdivide the roughly 110-hectare property residentially.[20] This proposition attracted local pushback and various complications (zoning, green space, service provisions) arose between Heidelberg Council, the MMBW and Korman. Ultimately, Banyule Pty Ltd – a Stanhill subsidiary – received permissions for a staged subdivision, with sales beginning in 1963.[21]

Graham Gladstone Welsh (1927-2007) – a professional photographer for the *Herald* – and his wife, Adele Margaret Welsh, both of Northcote, acquired the subject allotment (lot 137) from Banyule Pty Ltd in 1965.[22] Eton Court developed rapidly, with nearly all of the existing properties listed as occupied in the 1970 edition of the *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria*.[23] This record included Graham and Adele, although, as discussed below, their residence had not been completed.[24]

In December 1972, *Welsh House* received The Age/RAIA Citation Award (no 9), then a recognised architectural prize with widespread reach. The article spelled their name as 'Walsh', resulting in some incorrect architectural/heritage references to the subject place. The accompanying article, written by the Architects' Housing Service director, John Barker, provides an array of insights into the development of place, including its unorthodox development.

In the wake of their land purchase, Graham and Adele engaged the architect Charles Duncan to design a family home. At the time, Duncan – then a few years into solo practice – was emerging as a confident practitioner of a Wrightian/organic-influenced modernism. The plans were finalised soon after; however, to reduce costs, the couple decided to undertake the build on their own. Seemingly, they lived at the site during this process, which the article specifies as taking seven years. With 'the exception

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20   In the midst of financial turmoil and accusations of financial malfeasance, Korman was charged with 'authorising the issue of false prospectus' in 1964 and convicted two years later. Beyond his multifield Melbourne property, hotel and commercial/industry interests, Korman also played a key role in developing Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coas(Peter Spearritt and John Young, 'Korman, Stanley (1904-1988)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 2007, available online)

21   Refer to 'The Shrinking Banyule Estate', *Banyule Homestead*, nd, available online; 'Banyule Estate Subdivision Affair of 1958', *Heidelberg Historical Society*, available online; 'Stanhill Housing Plan Finally Approved by Heidelberg Council', *Age*, 15 July 1958, p3; ''Banyule Estate Work to Begin Soon', *Age*, 7 September 1960, p6; and '1000 at Banyule For First Land Sale', *Age*, 4 March 1963, p10

22   Graham was registered as the proprietor in March 1965 with Adele becoming the joint owner in December that year. (Certificate of Title, vol. 8452, folio 459; and 'Bottles Hurled at Stadium', *Age*, 28 April 1958, p3)

23   Nos 1, 2, 4 and 5 were listed. (*Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria*, 1970, p160)

24   The Welsh family retained ownership of the site until 2014. (Certificate of Title, vol. 8462, folio 459)

of plumbing and electrical works', *Welsh House* was built by members of the Welsh family and their friends. Duncan remained 'in close contact' with the project throughout.[25]

The article further outlines how the Welsh family undertook the herculean task of selecting and transporting some 60,000 second-hand Hawthorn bricks from 'various demolition sites around Melbourne' to Eton Court, where they were cleaned by hand over the course of 'almost a year':

> The bricks were laid rough side out with deeply raked joints to add to the textured of the walls. In keeping with the rugged character, cedar random-width shingles were chosen for the roof and were nailed directly to an underlay of second-hand floor boards. Usually battens are used for this purpose but the flooring made the task easier for the volunteer family labour.[26]

> The technique is imported from America where cedar shingles are reputed to last a lifetime, but no long term tests have been carried out under Australian conditions. But the Walsh's are optimistic. "Anyway", said Mrs. Walsh, "they can always be renewed by nailing a new layer over the existing shingles. They have a greater resistance to falling branches than tiles, and each time it rains they give off the magnificent smell of cedar, even after several years". Floors throughout the house are concrete paved with Welsh roofing slates. The Walsh's were fortunate to find unused slates without the usual nail holes to detract from the appearance. An Acrylon finish on the slate stands up to the harsh conditions provided by their two young children.

> The dominant element in the design is a large river red gum in the centre of the site. Consequently the house wraps around the tree while adapting to the levels of the sloping ground. Three different floor levels with separate hip roofs allow a logical grouping of sleeping, living and car accommodation closely related to the site. Internal dropped ceiling panels incorporate electric elements in the plaster sheet to provide heating and conceal strip lighting. A long glazed gallery connecting the bedrooms utilises a repetition of brick piers to break the hot afternoon sun and give privacy from the street.

> Brick planting boxes outside windows are used to retain the ground where the house has been cut into the high side of the site. Walking around the house it is possible to reach out and touch the weathered shingle roof, which at times comes within four feet of the ground. Bluestone paving combined with volcanic rock has been sued to create a terraced native garden around the house. [27]

The DIY (Do-It-Yourself) phenomenon had peaked in Victoria between the late 1940s and mid-1960s, a response to postwar austerity measures, rising construction costs and the much-publicised 'housing crisis'. Nationally, about one-third of all new homes were owner-built during the 1950s, typically by young couples. Those constructed with the involvement of a professional designer or utilisation of architect-composed drawings, such as commercially supplied by the RVIA Small Homes Service, formed a significant minority.[28] The Welsh's building efforts, at the tail end of the principal DIY phase, highlights the longevity of such activity in suburban Melbourne. Simultaneously, the sheer scale and detail of *Welsh House* – a reflection of its more affluent context – is a far departure from the modest/austere houses that typified the owner-built movement of the postwar years.

Photographs of *Welsh House* in 1972 and their accompanying captions, extracted from the Baker article, follow.

25   John Barker, '"Do-it-yourself" house is a winner', *Age*, 11 December 1972, p14
26   Barker, '"Do-it-yourself" house is a winner', p14
27   Barker, Barker, '"Do-it-yourself" house is a winner', p14
28   Nanette Carter, 'DIY (Do-It-Yourself'), in Philip Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p208
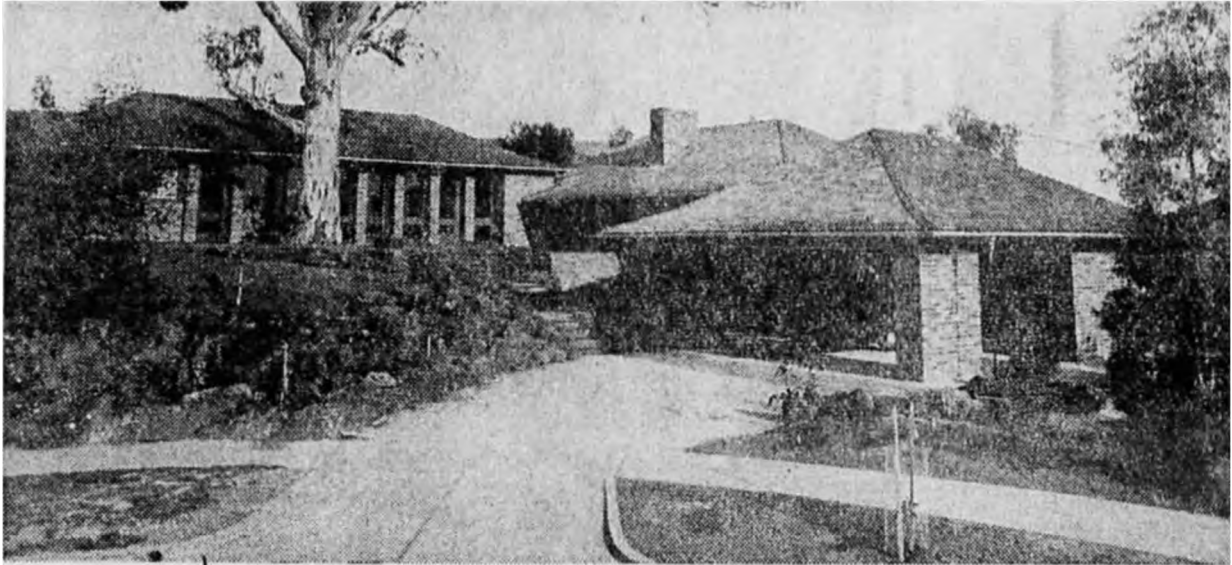
'Three different floor levels with separate roofs allow a logical group of sleeping, living and car accommodation of this impressive Heidelberg home.' (Source: Baker, Barker, *Age*, 11 December 1972, p14)
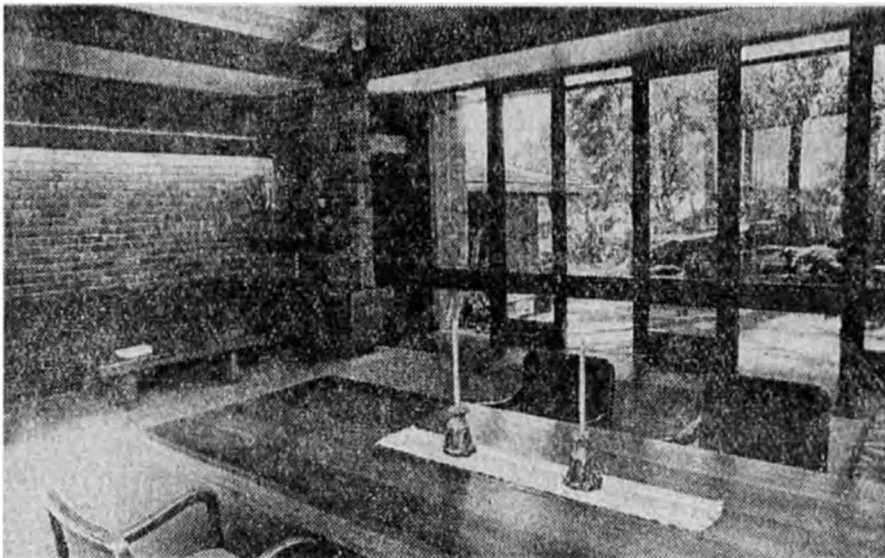
'Hand – made bricks and natural timber are used in the living area.'
(Source: Baker, *Age*, 11 December 1972, p14)
Welsh House was also photographed by the modernist enthusiast Peter Wille (1931-71), seemingly during final landscaping.[29]

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[29]   Wille was employed as a draftsman by the firm Smith, Tracey, Lyon & Block. In his own time, he compiled an extensive record of modernist designs in Melbourne, predominantly in its southeast (he resided in Mount Waverly).

Welsh House from Eton Court – note central tree since removed
(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1681)

View across central garden towards *Welsh House*, facing south
(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1697)

Eastern wing from carport
(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1702)

Central wing left of frame
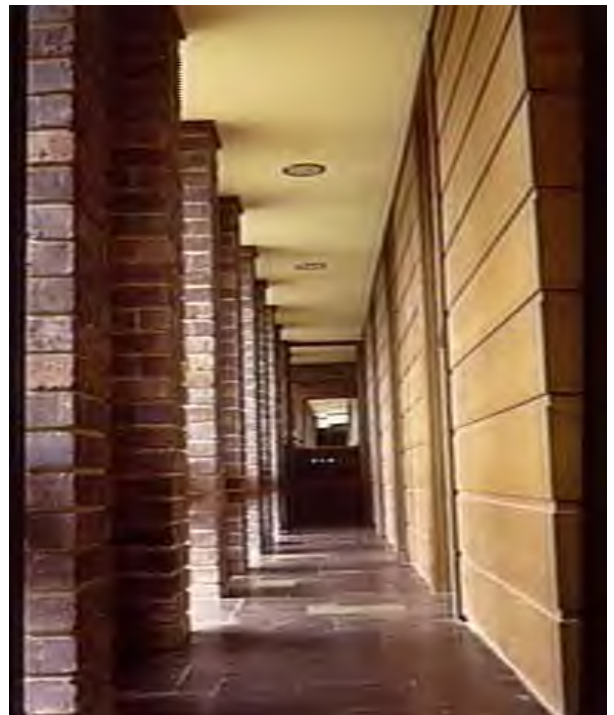(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1689)

Central wing, mid frame
(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1696)

Rear elevation carport (note initially solid wall) and central wing
(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1686)

View across courtyard towards carport
(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1688)

Internal gallery – northeast wing
(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1692)

Charles Frederick Duncan (1933–)

Over the 1960s and 1970s, Duncan was responsible for a large, chiefly domestic body of work throughout Victoria that expressed a 'highly original' and personalised interpretation of the Wrightian tradition.[30] His organic design approach represented a different strain of the postwar modern movement in Australia. One more responsive of the landscape and decisive in eliciting a poetic/evocative effect. During the 1960s and 1970s, Duncan was widely recognised as one of the neo-Wrightian idiom's more talented and successful practitioners in the state. Yet despite multiple awards, a relatively prolific output for a small practice, and published acclaim – the *Age* referred to him as 'one of the best-known architects in Victoria' in 1970 – Duncan has yet to receive sustained scholarly attention.[31]

Between 1951 and 1959, Duncan was enrolled in the Diploma of Architecture course at the Royal Melbourne Technical College (now RMIT). He finished his architectural studies at the University of Melbourne, a member of a postwar generation of architects moulded by a rebooted curriculum, provocative tutors, the zeal of 'multiplying modernisms' and a dynamic broader context.[32] Both during and after his studies, Duncan worked for a range of leading architectural offices, namely Chancellor & Patrick, Peter Jorgensen, McGlashan Everist, and Hassell and McConnell.[33] Many of these firms and practitioners were themselves exploring Wrightian/organic/regionalist design modes, which resonated through much of Duncan's subsequent practice. In his own words:

> My feelings are strongly orientated to the organic approach where a house is closely linked to its surroundings and extends from them as part of it not on it.[34]

In 1962, the 29-year-old Duncan commenced his solo architectural career. His first commission – the *Williams House* in the Griffins-designed Glenard Estate (Eaglemont) – received the prestigious RAIA Victoria Architecture Medal (single house category) in 1965. The often-acerbic magazine, *Cross-Section*, described it as:

> One of the few houses by Melb. Archts, young or old, that seems to have deep-seated convictions about architecture as a lively and vigorous art — you can tell the year an architect graduated by his response to this house.[35]

The first two decades of Duncan's solo practice were particularly productive, with at least seven high-end designs constructed in Banyule, mostly across its peri-urban, bushland fringes – optimal settings for Duncan's characteristic organic/regional approach. Outside the municipality, *Tozer House* in Beaconsfield (1964), a 'pinwheel' plan 'recalling a de Stijl painting' constructed of recycled materials (brick, timber, slate), drew popular/critical attention.[36] The *Eltham South Kindergarten* (HO202/Nillumbik Shire), built in 1970, was rare departure from his mostly residential work. Duncan continued operations as an architect into the 1990s.

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

- 6.4 Post-War Residential Development

Comparative Analysis

One Duncan-designed residence in Banyule is currently affected by a HO:

- *Williams House*, 4 Glenard Drive, Eaglemont (HO146) – an 'aggressive play of clinker brick walls and hefty roof planes edged by deep-facias of stained timber', built in 1963.[37] It was later the recipient of the RAIA Victoria Architecture Medal (1965) and consists of a series of overlapping volumes with stepped flat roofs and extensive window walls. While displaying

30   Goad, *The modern house in Melbourne, 1945-1975*, Chapter 6, p30.
31   Ray Davie, 'It's a grand winner' *Age*, 7 February 1970, p25
32   Geoffrey Serle, *Robin Boyd: A Life*, Melbourne University Press, 1996, p104
33   Built Heritage, *Survey of Post-War Built Heritage in Victoria. Stage Two: Assessment of Community & Administrative* Facilities, Heritage Victoria, 31 May 2010, p133; and Winsome Callister, 'Duncan, Charles', in Philip Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p216
34   *Merchant Builders; Towards a new archive*, Melbourne School of Design, 2015, p19
35   *Cross-Section*, The University of Melbourne Department of Architecture, issue no 142, 1 August 1964
36   *Tozer House/Kenilworth*, 6 Coach House Lane, Beaconsfield (part of HO53/Cardinia Shire Council) – see Geoffrey, Philip and Hamann, *An Unfinished Experiment in Living: Australian Houses 1950-65*, p358
37   *Cross-Section*, The University of Melbourne Department of Architecture, issue no 142, 1 August 1964, np

a similar robust external palette and courtyard plan as *Welsh House*, the latter's employment of a hipped bellcast profile roofs engenders it with a more pronounced regional character indicative of Duncan's maturing design approach.

There are also some instances of Duncan's residential work within the *Elliston Estate* (HO92) in Rosanna. This innovative Merchant Builder development precinct (1969-71), based on Radburn planning principles and integrated landscaping by Ellis Stones, featured progressive, individualised house designs by multiple prominent architects (Graeme Gunn, Daryl Jackson, McGlashan Everist). Most featured common characteristics, particularly solar-responsive orientation, generous glazing and 'earthy' palettes. Duncan was responsible for the 'D group', but individual addresses for these are not known.

Several Duncan-designed houses have also been identified in Banyule as part of this Study.[38] Of those known, all date from the 1960s or 1970s – his most architecturally productive period – and are representative of his particular approach. However, these vary in their intactness and/or level of distinctiveness. *Welsh House* stands apart from other instances of his work in the municipality for the continuing integrity of its design, size and bellcast profile of the primary hipped roofs. It is also likely one of the more substantial and ambitious examples of the DIY phenomenon in Banyule.

An array of architect-designed modernist houses are included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay for Banyule. Most originate in the 1950s and reflect the multiplying version of mid-century modernism. The dominant influence of the International Style is prevalent, particularly its preference for rectangular footprints, cuboid forms and stripped-down aesthetic; for instance, 10 Alexandra Street, Greensborough (HO136) by Moore and Hammond, 1957. Others reveal the period's growing interest in the modular derivation of the plan, with steel or timber framing and lightweight panelling and bands of glazing. A key example of specific geometry is the 1954 *Snelleman House* (HO36 + VHR H2282) in Ivanhoe East by architects Peter and Dione McIntyre, often referred to as the 'Coil House'. While the neo-Wrightian organic undertones of *Welsh House* are faintly detectable in some of these designs, only one is especially reflective:

- *V Walker House*, 209 Main Road, Lower Plenty (HO163) – a two-storey cream-brick residence with an unusual, some organic trapezoidal form created by slanted sidewalls and a 'folded' gabled roof, by Hipwell, Weight & Mason, 1958.

Collectively, these varied examples of modernism provide insight into the forces of modernity that shaped the district following the Second World War, particularly shifting sociocultural and economic factors and the willingness of some residents to interact with then unconventional design culture and novel lifestyle patterns.[39]

Intactness

Largely intact

Previous Assessment

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommend for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	Yes (brick walls and timber elements)
Internal Alteration Controls	Yes (east wing passageway, living room, and family room, including walls of exposed brick/timber boarding, slate paved floors, ceiling, and brick fireplace, and channelled timber panelling to the kitchen island [pillar and related element])
Tree Controls	Yes (front garden – mature native/indigenous species) No
Outbuildings and/or fences	No

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38   Existing Duncan designs in the municipality include *Reade House*, 14 Lorraine Drive, Briar Hill (1966); *Woollogorang/Bucknell House*, 8 Woodfull Road, Lower Plenty (1967); 56 Buckingham Drive, Banyle; *Knott House*, 21 Castle Street, Eaglemont (1968-9); and *Wynkara*, 17 Stawell Road, Lower Plenty (undated). The Duncan-designed *Host House* at 27 Seymour Road, Viewbank, has recently been demolished/replaced.

39   Geoffrey London, Philip Goad and Conrad Hamann, *An Unfinished Experiment in Living: Australian Houses 1950-65*, UWA Publishing, 2017, passim

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, April 2020)

PURCELL HOUSE

Address	17 Hartlands Road, Ivanhoe East
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1963
Period	Late 20th century
Date Inspected	January 2021

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Purcell House at 17 Hartlands Road, Ivanhoe is significant to the City of Banyule. It was designed as a family home for Noel Brian Purcell and Margaret Therese Purcell in 1962 by Guilford Bell, then in partnership with Neil Clerehan (Bell & Clerehan). The house, carport and eastern boundary wall were constructed in 1963. At this time, Gordon Ford designed and laid out the front garden. Bell later designed the rear courtyard, including pool and changeroom, and east elevation canopy above the entrance when in solo practice in 1971.

The elements of significance are the H-shaped plan, the west-facing internal courtyard, flat roof and steel decking cladding, boxed eaves, timber-lined soffit, brick chimney, skylights, box gutters and concealed downpipes, walls of unpainted Monier Besser concrete blocks, timber pergola, all timber-framed external openings (sliding doors, fixed glazing), entrance door and cantilevered canopy, white painted/vine-covered brick wall to the east perimeter, and rear carport.

The original layout is generally <u>intact, with the hall, study, living, and family rooms considered</u> significant, as are some internal finishes and elements <u>in these spaces</u> – specifically mountain ash ceilings and walls of exposed concrete blocks or vertically laid timber boarding, and a coverable fireplace in the living room.

Also significant is the layout of the 'bush style' front garden – namely, the arrangement of lawn, front and side boundary plantings, rockery situated forward of the dwelling's façade, and side-situated gravelled driveway <u>(although it is not clear how</u>

much of Ford's original landscape design remains). ~~Some specific landscape elements are significant, particularly individual or grouped weathered boulders and the Spotted Gum (*Corymbia maculata*), flanked by Lemon-scented gums (*Corymbia citriodora*) situated to the front boundary.~~ ~~The pair of Lemon-scented gums to the west boundary of the front garden are contributory to the setting.~~

The rear courtyard, including swimming pool, paving, enclosing timber screen, and change room, designed by Bell in 1971, are complementary to *Purcell House*.

Changes instigated by designers other than Bell are not significant, including contemporary additions to the 1971 changeroom at the rear of the site.

How is it Significant?

Purcell House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Purcell House is of historical significance as a noteworthy residential design by the architect Guilford Bell, the elusive, pre-eminent practitioner of an urbane 'classical' modernism over the second half of the 20th century in Australia. While the commission of the clients, Noel and Margaret Purcell, for a family home was modest, the precisely resolved design that Bell produced was important in the arc of his career – showcasing Bell's then-ongoing commitment to domestic privacy, anonymous street frontages and repose. With its courtyards, bespoke landscaping, double carport, and the later addition of a swimming pool, the well-appointed house reflects the relative prosperity of the 1960s and the new lifestyle possibilities enabled by engagement with avant-garde design. At a broader scale, *Purcell House* is illustrative of the consolidation of Ivanhoe East over the 1960s as a focal point for the modern architecture in the municipality. (Criterion A)

Purcell House is of aesthetic significance as a remarkably intact and cohesive embodiment of the personalised design approach of the designer, Guilford Bell. Its elegant visual and rigidly formal plan demonstrate his distinctive integration of classical principles with a minimalist/modern sensibility, the visual outcome of which situated Bell well outside mainstream modernism in the early 1960s (and subsequently). An array of unusual attributes – the monumental character of the house, its sense of retreat and employment of a perimeter wall and courtyards – signal Bell's atypical source material, particularly his passion for traditional Middle Eastern architecture; while the classicised symmetry and restrained material palette of *Purcell House* also hint at colonial and neo-Georgian interests in purity and decorum. Geometric walls provide a backdrop for the bold bush-style garden and the interplay of line and plane. The considered interior illuminates Bell's belief in total design and the importance of refined spatial composition. The employment of modular dimensions for all openings at *Purcell House* is also quintessential Bell, fusing the indoors and outdoors. *Purcell House* is the only instance of Bell's essentially solo work in the municipality and, in any context, evocative of his *parti*. (Criterion E)

Description

Purcell House is a single-storey building situated approximately at the centre of its elongated and deep rectangular allotment, which slopes markedly east-to-west. In combination, its sizable setback and the screening role played by existing vegetation obscures views to the residence from the public realm. Such 'hiding' of the residence from the street was an intentional facet of Guilford Bell's original design. Accordingly, this description is partially based on contemporary and historic photographs and original architectural drawings.[1]

The house, constructed in 1963, has a H-shaped plan composed of two parallel and slim wings arranged around a west-facing courtyard.[2] Another courtyard, also designed by Bell, was provided to the rear of the *Purcell House* in 1971.[3] Internally, the three wings feature discrete zoning, with the front containing dining and loungeroom, the middle the kitchen and family, and the rear bedrooms. Bell had experimented with the 'H-shaped courtyard typology' over the late 1950s on the Mornington Peninsula, that stemmed from his profound interest in ancient Middle Eastern architecture. In the wake of *Purcell House*, it became increasingly central to Bell's approach. He viewed the H-shaped plan as advantageous, particularly for suburban and urban contexts,

[1]   '17 Hartlands Road, Ivanhoe East', *realestateview*, September 2005, www.realestateview.com.au/real-estate/17-hartlands-road-ivanhoe-east-vic/property-details-sold-residential-630117/; and various drawings, *Purcell House, Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111

[2]   Guilford Bell & Neil Clerehan Pty Ltd Architects, 'House at Lot 187 Hartlands Road East Ivanhoe, for Mr & Mrs Noel Purcell + 'New Carport', October 1963, drawing nos 1 and 2 – *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111

[3]   Guilford Bell, 'Additions to House at 17 Hartlands Road, East Ivanhoe for Mr & Mrs Noel Purcell', drawing nos 1 and 2, October 1971 – *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111

enabling a high degree of concealment/privacy while also facilitating view framing, including from within the dwelling (allowing surrounding landscaping – via slot openings – to become an internal decorative element).[4]
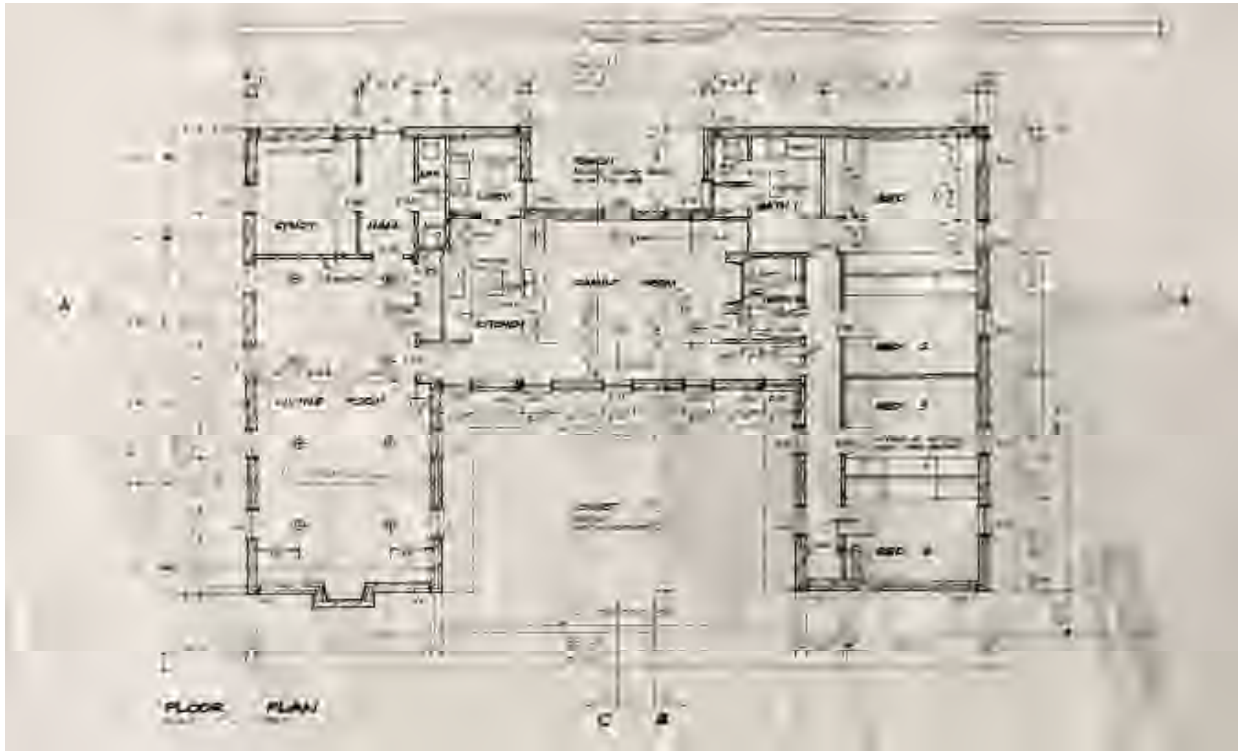
Original (1962) floorplan of *Purcell House* – north (Hartlands Road) is left of frame
(Source: Guilford Bell & Neil Clerehan Pty Ltd Architects, 'House at Lot 187 Hartlands Road, East Ivanhoe, for Mr & Mrs Noel Purcell', Working Drawings, October 1962, Drawing 1 – *Purcell House*, *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111)

At *Purcell House*, horizontality is stressed in the form of the three connected wings; a Wrightian gesture pronounced in Bell's work over the 1950s. However, unlike Wright's preference for dynamic asymmetry, Bell pursued fixed planes that emphasised balance and regularity.

Purcell House has a flat roof, clad in 'Brownbuilt' steel decking, which appears to remain. Eaves to the front (north), courtyard and east elevation are wide and boxed with timber-lined soffits. Six original compact skylights are evident to the roof of the middle wing, corresponding with internal service rooms. There is a squat and geometric brick chimney to the front part of the west elevation. Box gutters connected to downpipes concealed in the walls are present to the side elevations.

The building is constructed of unpainted Monier Besser concrete blocks (light-sandstone colour) in stretcher bond on a reinforced concrete slab. The internal floor is flat throughout.

The north elevation, facing the street, is defined by six slender, evenly placed Oregon timber posts that project at right angles over a paved deck.

In 1993, the westernmost beam was infilled with horizontal timber slats as a privacy measure following the development of the neighbouring allotment.[5]

An integral component of *Purcell House* and hallmark of Bell's approach is the embracement of modular fenestration. Every opening at the design shares the same dimensions – that of a thin, timber-framed (Jarrah sills) floor-to-ceiling window or door

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[4]   Anne T Pettus and Garth Paterson, 'Guilford Bell's Landscapes: Controlled Nature' in Leon van Schaik, ed, *The life work of Guilford bell, architecture 1912-1992*, Bookman Transition Publishing, 1999, p153

[5]   This alteration was designed in the wake of Bell's death and undertaken by his professional partner, Graham Fisher. (Guildford Bell & Graham Fisher Architects, 'New Timber Screen & Fence at 17 Hartlands Road east Ivanhoe for Mr & Mrs Purcell, drawing no A1a, June 1993, *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111)

('windows that were doors and never windows').[6] These openings are either fixed or operate as a sliding door. These openings are arranged symmetrically to front, rear and internal courtyard walls.

Close-up of north elevaton, circa 2005
(Source: National Trust of Australia (VIC), *Classification Report: Purcell House*, B7 351)

The east elevation is treated differently and is only punctured by three doors. A small cantilevered ('hovering') canopy to the front portion of the east elevation, added by Bell in 1971, marks the main entrance.[7] Its door, original of solid timber, was later replaced with a glazed door to allow light penetration in the hallway.[8] Back from the entrance/canopy is a recessed patio, including a sliding door to the laundry and family room.

Opposite the east elevation is a three-metre-high brick perimeter wall, painted white and covered in *Ficus pumila* (climbing fig), an original design component required for privacy from the adjacent property. It extends slightly forward of the building line and continues through a gate towards the rear double carport. The latter was designed during October 1963, probably as a late-stage addition during construction of the primary dwelling. The carport – which is not visible from street – was drawn as a lightweight beam and post structure with a skillion roof. The twelve posts were identified as 'Redgum'.[9]

The internal courtyard is surfaced in concrete pavers and edged with garden beds. A timber screen and trellis – provided by Fisher in 1993 – runs its western boundary.

The three bedrooms of the south (rear) elevation face and open out onto a second paved courtyard that features a lengthwise and rectangular swimming pool. The latter element, designed by Bell as part of his 1971 modifications, is situated nearly in line with the house's western side and separated from the driveway and rear of the property by a high timber screen of horizontal timber slats. As part of this new work, he also attached a small change room to the west side of the carport situated in the southeast corner of the property. The former appears to have been enlarged later (not by Bell).

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6   Bell disliked conventional windows to such an extent that he includes none in his post-1960 houses. (Philip Goad, 'Bell, Guilford', in Goad and Julie Willis, *The Encyclopedia of Australian* Architecture, Cambridge University, 2012, p77)
7   Bell, 'Additions to House at 17 Hartlands Road, East Ivanhoe for Mr & Mrs Noel Purcell'
8   Pettus and Paterson, 'Guilford Bell's Landscapes: Controlled Nature', p151
9   Bell & Clerehan, 'House at Lot 187 Hartlands Road, East Ivanhoe, For Mr & Mrs Noel Purcell', October 1963, 'New Carport' – *Purcell House*, *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111

South (rear) elevation, circa 2005
(Source: National Trust of Australia (VIC), *Classification Report: Purcell House*, B7 351)

Bell's internal planning appears to remain essentially unchanged at *Purcell House*. He typically shied away from the open plan, preferring the spatial/circulatory experiences brought about by discrete zoning, entrance halls ('ritualised entry'), corridors, and closed doors, an approach reflected in *Purcell House*.

The existing meticulous and minimalistic finishes and detailing of the house were key to Bell's design philosophy. The main internal elements include the employment of mountain ash for ceilings, joinery/cabinetry, and vertically laid boarding to the interior of the west wall of the bridging wing. Most internal walls were of exposed concrete blocks. In 'wet areas' white mosaic tiles were utilised. Original floorboards in the front and rear wings likely remain but have been carpeted. The pavers (geometric pattern) in the kitchen and family room are also original. White laminate was used for kitchen and bathroom surfaces (unclear if surviving).

Built-in furniture – the height of fashion in the early 1960s – at *Purcell House* include fitted cupboards, shelves, benches, study desks and wardrobes, most with elegant brass handles and pins. These were all designed by Bell. Other elements, such as concealed toilet cisterns/lighting and coverable fireplace (living room), testify to Bell's desire to hide service aspects wherever possible.

Bell was in his early fifties when he designed *Purcell House*, maturing as a designer of highly resolved discrete houses, but at the tail end of a productive but challenging partnership with Neil Clerehan.[10] Visible then at the subject building is the main architectural concepts (*partis*) that Bell went on to re-interpret/perfect over his long career. These range from the continuation of the H-plan/courtyards to an interest in creating 'bastions of privacy',[11] accomplished in this instance by a deep setback and screening vegetation (unlike at other designs, where Bell often utilised blank walls set straight to the street). Recognisable also is Bell's highly considered manipulation of 'open' and 'closed' spaces – the interplay of full-length slot glimpse/views to the encompassing landscaping – and commitment to 'total design'. In Bell's mind, the orchestration of the latter was the only means of cultivating the sublime/serene living experiences he sought to provide for clients.[12]

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10   Philip Goad, 'A Very Private Practice: The Life and Work of Guilford Bell', in Leon van Schaik, ed, *The life work of Guilford bell, architecture 1912-1992*, Bookman Transition Publishing, 1999, p115
11   Goad, 'Bell, Guilford', p77
12   Allan Powell, 'Guilford Bell: The Sensibility', in Leon van Schaik, ed, *The life work of Guilford bell, architecture 1912-1992*, Bookman Transition Publishing, 1999, p88

Living room, c2005 – fireplace is identifed by the red arrow
(Source: National Trust of Australia (VIC), *Classification Report: Purcell House*, B7 351)

Kitchen and family room, c2005 – laminate surface in foreground
(Source: National Trust of Australia (VIC), *Classification Report: Purcell House*, B7 351)

Bedroom 4, circa 2005
(Source: National Trust of Australia (VIC), *Classification Report: Purcell House*, B7 351)

Underlying such personalised design principles was Bell's idiosyncratic melding of classical principles with tenets of the modern movement, an aesthetic that placed him beyond the main currents of postwar and late 20th-century modernism.[13] His work was further distinguished by his view that the accomplishment of visual beauty was of overriding importance. Such practises and objectives made his designs 'somewhat alien in their reserve',[14] and earned him the epithet (sometimes dismissive) of Melbourne's 'supreme architect of manners' during the 1960s and 1970s.[15] Bell's characterisation of this individualised design mode is telling:

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13   Goad, 'A Very Private Practice: The Life and Work of Guilford Bell', pp130-1
14   Goad, 'A Very Private Practice: The Life and Work of Guilford Bell', p113
15   Philip James Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, PhD Thesis, Department of Architecture and Building University of Melbourne, September 1992, chapter 6, p64

I aim to create architecture that is humanist, in that it recognises the fundamental importance of man; Classical, in that it recognises his need for order; essentially functional. It seeks to provide environments in which the person is always the predominant feature in climates of severity, designed to enhance and encourage self awareness.[16]

Bell drew from an array of source material, including an abiding interest in traditional Middle Eastern and Japanese architecture and, subtly articulated, colonial and neo-Georgian notions of order and repose.[17] Often cited is Frank Lloyd Wright's site responsiveness and tightly controlled entry sequences, the refined minimalism of Mies van Rohe and Philip Johnson, and sculptured freestanding composure of the Mexican modernist Luis Barragan. Domestically, the interest of (Sir) Roy Ground – who Bell, atypically, considered a colleague – in reserved and tranquil exteriors may also be evident.[18]

The front garden was designed and constructed by Gordon Ford in the native/bush style in which he was an early advocate and innovator. Ford's landscape approach, the crafting of a naturalistic setting (albeit artificial in this case), was central to the *Purcell House's* carefully honed sense of place. Bell routinely embraced native/indigenous planting as complements to his modern houses and employed them in a 'screening' manner.[19]

The general ethos and format of Ford's front garden design remain interpretable. Original landscape elements include the lawn area and mature trees, particularly the Spotted Gum (*Corymbia maculate*) flanked by Lemon-scented gums (*Corymbia citriodora*) situated to the front boundary and the rockery of weathered boulders situated in front of the façade, which accommodates various shrubs, grasses, and small trees, and side garden beds. There are also two Lemon-scented gums planted to the west boundary. The eastern gravelled driveway is another prominent feature. The small timber letterbox is also likely original. Side timber paling fences are likely later additions.

View to front garden, facing south west – right of the drive way is the Lemon-scented gum and Spotted Gum

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16   Attributed to Bell in Bill MacMahon, ed, *The Architecture of East Australia*, Axel Menges, 2001, p70
17   Goad, *Modern Melbourne*, chapter 6, pp72-3
18   Conrad Hamann, 'In Stillness at the Centre: Guilford Bell's Two Mainstreams', in Leon van Schaik, ed, *The life work of Guilford bell, architecture 1912-1992*, Bookman Transition Publishing, 1999, p40
19   Pettus and Paterson, 'Guilford Bell's Landscapes: Controlled Nature', p154

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[20] The lightly wooded grasslands of what became known as 'Ivanhoe' were quickly targeted for sheep runs and by timber-cutters from the 'illegal squatter camp (est. 1835) downstream of the *Birrarung*/Yarra at Melbourne.[21] However, as part of the 'Heidelberg' district in the Parish of Keelbundora, this area passed rapidly into private hands via an auction in Sydney Town in 1838.[22]

Over the following decade, a patchwork of 'prestige' estates emerged, along with a surveyed township – *Warringal* (possibly 'eagle's nest'), later 'Heidelberg' – on the river's west bank.[23] Productive river flats, and the demands of the gold diggings further afield, encouraged market gardening, orchards and (gradually, due to soil exhaustion and flooding) dairying; activities mostly undertaken by tenant farmers.[24] This perceived rural idyll enticed *plein air* artists to the district during the 1880s, fixing the 'Heidelberg School' within Australia's artistic consciousness.[25]

Ivanhoe – its name stemming from Archibald Thom's 'Ivanhoe Estate' – remained a sparsely populated agricultural area until Melbourne's 'Land Boom' in the late 1880s.[26] 'Picturesque' terrain, varied outlooks and the high repute of the broader district drew often well-off newcomers. By the turn of the century, 'Beautiful Ivanhoe' was routinely portrayed as a 'fashionable', 'exclusive locality' of 'model homes'.[27] An improved railway connection to Melbourne in 1901 supported further middle-class growth, instigating 'four decades of slow and relatively affluent suburban sprawl' in the vicinity of Ivanhoe, Eaglemont, and Heidelberg train stations.[28]

During the interwar years, suburban Ivanhoe solidified, although its southern and eastern reaches remained primarily locked up by the expansive 'Hartlands', 'Charterisville', and 'Chelsworth' estates.[29] To navigate the complexities that accompanied the subdivision of these areas (sloping land, curving streets, views) in the postwar period and galvanised by the swelling influence of modernism, many of the new and generally moneyed proprietors sought the services of an architect.[30] By the early 1960s, distinct enclaves of upmarket, modernist design culture were apparent in the southern reaches of Ivanhoe and Ivanhoe East, with the aesthetic and lifestyle reverberations of the modern movement also shaping infill development in the more established environs of the locale.

View near Heidelberg in Victoria, pen and ink drawing, circa 1858
(Source: Eugene von Guérard, National Gallery of Victoria)

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20   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online
21   James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne & The Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc., 2011, pxi
22   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of Kulbundora – the name of the eldest son of the important Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') Billibellary. ('Suburban Native Names', Argus 28 April 1906, p5). One of the earliest manifestations of local governance in the Port Phillip District (1840), the fluctuating borders of municipal Heidelberg mirrored its growth, as it was reformatted into a Road District (1860), Shire (1871) and then City (1934). It was amalgamated as the City of Banyule in 1994.
23   Donald S Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p13
24   Robert P Whitworth, *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer*, F F Bailliere, 1879, pp237
25   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.5, and 2.3.10; and Janine Rizzetti, 'Heidelberg', in Richard Broome et al, eds., *Remembering Melbourne 1850-1960*, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 2016, p282
26   Thom's estate designation was inspired by a novel of the same name by Sir Walter Scott (1819).
27   Ivanhoe & Alphington Progress Society, *Beautiful Ivanhoe: the suburb of model homes and scenic charm*, Model Studio, 1900, SLV
28   Ivanhoe Station opened in 1888; however, inefficiencies in the Heidelberg-Melbourne railway line initially bedevilled growth.
29   Ivanhoe grew from roughly 2,000 residents in 1913 to nearly 8,000 by 1933 (*Victorian Year Books*, Australian Bureau of Statistics).
30   Don Garden, 'Ivanhoe', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008

Site-specific

The subject land derives from Portion 2 of the Parish of Keelbundora, a roughly 420-hectare holding purchased (along with portions 1 and 3) by Thomas Walker in 1838. A Sydney-based Scottish banker and philanthrope with an eye for marketable land across the colony, Walker's intention in the Port Philip District was speculative from the start. He commenced subdividing his acquisitions as early as mid-1839 to enormous profit.[31]

A 126-hectare property, acquired by Captain Sylvester John Brown (the original spelling was 'Brown', the 'e' was added later by his son, the famed novelist 'Rolfe Boldrewood') and named 'Hartlands' incorporated the subject property. Brown, a onetime shipmaster in the East India Company, who had made a small fortune in Sydney in whaling and trade, set up Hartlands as his familial seat around 1840. From a commodious weatherboard homestead overlooking the *Birrung*/Yarra, the Browns cultivated the flats and socialised with Heidelberg's gentry.[32]

The idyll was brief. Worsening economic conditions forced the foreclosure of Hartlands – the stress of which shattered Brown Snr. However, a fortunate marriage between his daughter and a relative of Walker (still the mortgage holder) enabled the clearing of the debt through a partial sale of the estate in 1853, and the 'Brownes of Hartlands' returned.[33] They remained in occupation until the mid-1860s, departing after their residence was destroyed by arson.[34] Hartlands was leased for farming until the mid-1880s, when it was offered for sale as one lot:

> It is admirably adapted to subdivisional purposes, the position being unequalled in the district, which is undoubtedly the most charming and picturesque suburb around Melbourne. It is only seven miles from the MELBOURNE POST-OFFICE. Tenders for the completion of the railway from Alphington to Heidelberg are shortly to be called for, and when the line is completed the value of the land in this delightful locality must necessarily increase enormously. The views to be obtained from this noble estate are TRULY MAGNIFICENT, and must be seen to be appreciated.[35]

The chief buyer was the Trustees, Executors, and Agency Company (TEA), acquiring roughly 65 hectares of Hartlands in 1889.[36] This holding stretched southeast from Lower Heidelberg Road to The Boulevard, bounded by Warncliffe Road in the west. The arrival of bleaker economic conditions in the early 1890s saw little sales activity at the estate, which continued to accommodate agricultural uses, including a horse stud in the early 1900s.[37] In 1916, the renowned viticulturist, François Robert de Castella, then in residence at *Chartersville* (HO15 + VHR H1140), became a joint proprietor with TEA.[38] His presence triggered the progressive subdivision of much of the locality that became known as Ivanhoe East over the postwar period.

The south side of Hartlands Road (established as part of the TEA/de Castella subdivision) comprised one of the later releases sold in the 1940s and 1950s.[39] The subject allotment (no 187) was transferred in 1944 to George T Fillmore, a storeman from Parkville, and passed undeveloped through multiple hands. In June 1961, it was acquired by a solicitor, Noel Brian Purcell (1933-2021) and his wife Margaret Therese Purcell, then nearby residents of a conventional hipped roof cream-brick residence at 3 Withers Street.[40]

In the early 1960s, Philip Purcell approached Neil Clerehan, the well-known recently departed director of the RVIA Small Homes Service seeking an introduction to Guilford Bell, whose work he had become familiar with through design publications (possibly the *Simon House* in Mount Eliza). Whether Purcell knew or not, Clerehan was in an architectural partnership with Bell, so an introduction was readily arranged, followed by a commission for Bell & Clerehan to prepare a modest, cost-effective family home at the Purcell's Hartlands Road property.[41]

31	W Joy, 'Walker, Thomas (1804-1886)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1967, available online
32	Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and its People*, pp31-2
33	Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People*, pp41-2
34	'Incendiarism', *Australasian*, 15 April 1865, p6
35	'Advertising', *Argus*, 20 February 1886, p2
36	TEA (1879-1983) was Australia's first trustee company. (Certificate of Title, vol 2142, folio 233)
37	'The Champion Trotting Stallion Almont', *Leader*, 5 September 1903, p16
38	Certificate of Title, vol 2142, folio 233
39	TEA and de Castella were registered as the joint proprietors of the irregular holding (lots 140 to 191) bound by Hartlands Road (north), Burke Road North (east), McArthur Road (south/west) in September 1940. (Certificate of Title, vol 6413, folio 567)
40	Certificate of Title, vol 8087, folio 522 – Noel's parents Philip and Caroline Purcell had acquired the allotment in June 1955 before selling it two years later. ('Noel Brian Purcell', *Age*, 13 February 2021)
41	National Trust of Australia (Victoria) [NT], *Classification Report: Purcell House*, B7 351 – this information appears to stem from an interview with Noel Purcell

The Bell & Clerehan partnership had formed in 1962, something of a forced union due to the 'credit squeeze' of the previous year. Architectural historian Harriet Edquist describes their short-lived office as operating 'more or less as two identifiable practices', responsible for about twelve houses.[42] Clerehan and Bell's union was not congenial. Despite an ostensibly shared desired aesthetic, both held divergent design philosophies and handled clients differently:

> Clerehan's concerns with living patterns, the almost objective framing of human habitation, was quite different from Bell's highly formal and aesthetic approach which seemed to restrict habitation to a sort of hermetic 'ritual'.[43]

1954 aerial photograph
Showing undeveloped and seemingly treeless subject allotment (outlined in dashed red)
(Source: Landata, Project no 174, Run 15, Frame 75)

In line with this assessment, Purcell's interactions with the practice appear to have been predominantly with Bell, who was the primary (if not only) designer of the resulting *Purcell House*. Both architect and client characterised the process and their 'rapport' as harmonious.[44] Imaginably, though, such concord rested on the Purcells – like many of Bell's clients – being prepared to follow his design direction.[45]

The design of *Purcell House* was resolved over 1962. Bell initially proposed a square form for the residence, punctured by a central courtyard; however, it was deemed too small in light of the Purcell's growing family. By October, the extant H-shaped plan had been drawn up.[46] As was to become customary for Bell, his design reach was total, even extending to specifying the selection of furniture (dining and coffee table, upholstered seating in lounge and 'Danish' dining chairs).[47]

Construction of *Purcell House* occurred over 1962. The Purcell family remained in occupation until late 2005.[48]

Bell nearly always prepared his own landscape plans and strategy, placing great emphasis on harmonising site and design. However, in tackling *Purcell House*'s decidedly suburban context – a rarity for Bell – he sought outside expertise. Gordon Ford (1918-99), a local of Eltham, then in the vanguard of the bush/native style garden movement, was engaged to design and construct the front garden.[49]

While *Purcell House* coalesced in a sensitive professional context – the fraying of the Bell/Clerehan collaboration – the design proved influential for Bell. Its classicised yet clear modern aesthetic was an expression Bell pursued doggedly moving forward.

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42   Edquist, 'Neil Clerehan: A Melbourne Practice', p38; and Philip Goad, 'A Very Private Practice: The Life and Work of Guilford Bell',
        in Leon van Schaik, ed, *The life work of Guilford bell, architecture 1912-1992*, Bookman Transition Publishing, 1999, p119
43   Edquist, 'Neil Clerehan: A Melbourne Practice', p37; see also
44   NT, *Classification Report: Purcell House*
45   Goad, 'A Very Private Practice', p122
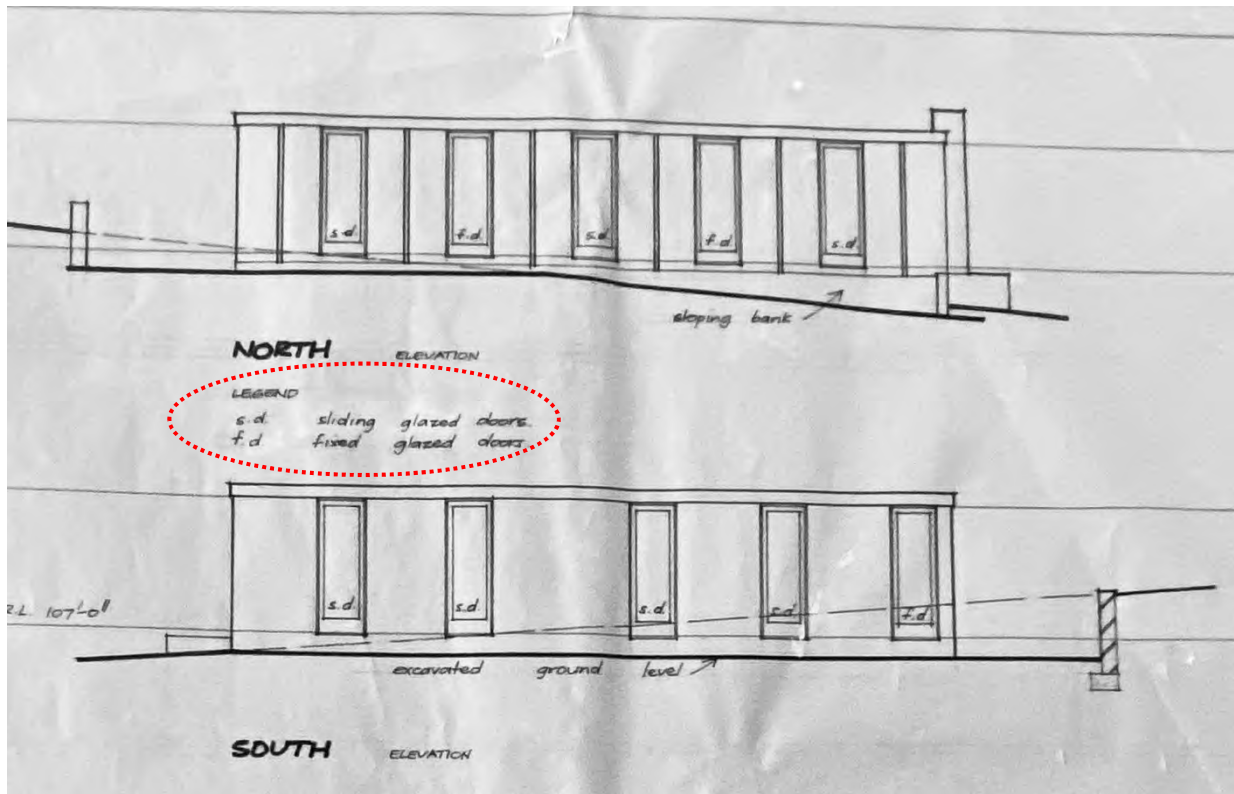46   NT, *Classification Report: Purcell House*
47   NT, *Classification Report: Purcell House*
48   NT, *Classification Report: Purcell House*
49   Pettus and Paterson, 'Guilford Bell's Landscapes: Controlled Nature', p154

His later architectural partner, Graham Fisher, recalled Bell's lasting personal satisfaction with the design.[50]

Extract from Working Drawings for *Purcell House*, dated October 1962
Showing front (north) and rear (south) elevations
(Source: Guilford Bell & Neil Clerehan Architects, 'House at Lot 187 Hartlands Road East Ivanhoe, for Mr & Mrs Noel Purcell', Drawing no 1 – *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111)
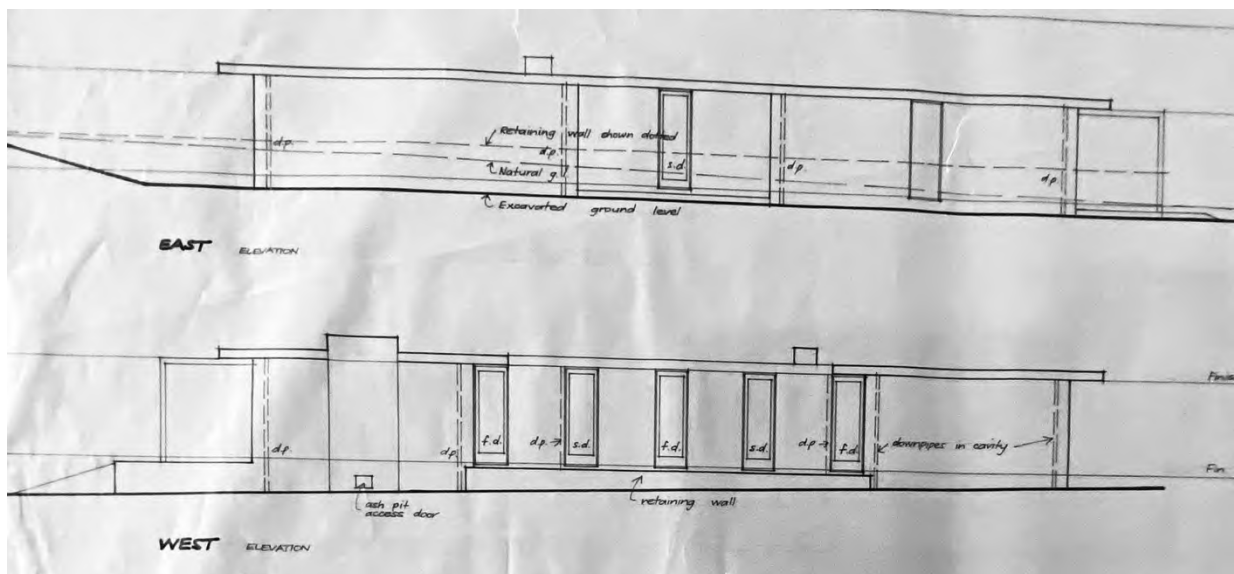
Extract from Working Drawings for *Purcell House*, dated October 1962
Showing east and west elevations
(Source: Guilford Bell & Neil Clerehan Architects, 'House at Lot 187 Hartlands Road East Ivanhoe, for Mr & Mrs Noel Purcell', Drawing no 1 – *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111)

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50   NT, *Classification Report: Purcell House*

Purcell House, sketch of courtyard
(Source: *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111)

Such an architect's rendering of contemporary living, like *Purcell House*, was a far departure from the majority of residential construction occurring in Melbourne at the time. A reality touched on by the highbrow Robin Boyd, writing in the early 1960s, when he dismissed the prevalence of 'commonplace workday design':

> We must remember that more than the half the buildings under construction today have not been favoured with the attention of a professional architect. Moreover, about half of what remains has been designed in a rather casual way by architects who are no better than they ought to be. Thus most buildings follow some routine pattern or are based loosely on a magazine illustration presented by a determined client … The small proportion that remains may be called serious architecture …[51]

Purcell House does not appear to have drawn any published contemporary commentary. However, it did attract the lens of Peter Wille (1931-71), a 'modern' enthusiast who traversed Melbourne photographing – in his view – notable examples of the modern movement.[52]

Purcell House – north elevation from front lawn, showing rockery
(Source: Peter Wille, 1960s, SLV, H91.244/4290)

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[51]   Robin Boyd, *The new architecture*, Longmans, 1963, pp3-4
[52]   Wille was employed as a draftsman by the firm Smith, Tracey, Lyon & Block. In his own time, he compiled an extensive record of modernist designs in Melbourne, predominantly in its southeast (he resided in Mount Waverly).

In 1971, Bell – then in solo practice – designed a swimming pool and changing facilities for the rear of the property. The pool, initially proposed to be arranged horizontally across the site, was ultimately installed lengthwise.[53]

Purcell House plan by early 1980s, following the Bell-designed addition of a pool and changeroom
'1 Hall, 2 Living, 3 Dining, 4 Study, 5 Kitchen, 6 Family, 7 Bedroom, 8 Dressing, 9 Change, 10 Swimming pool'
(Source: Bell, *1952-1980 Architecture of Guilford Bell*, 1982, p30)

Purcell House was one of the designs highlighted by Bell in his book, *1952-1980 Architecture of Guilford Bell* (1982):

This was designed as a family house, arranged so that it is possible for family life to proceed uninterrupted when visitors are being entertained. This was achieved by placing the kitchen and large family room between the living-dining wing and the bedroom wing. All bedrooms look onto a swimming pool in an enclosed garden. The building of 240 square metres is of unpainted beige-coloured concrete blocks. Floors are reinforced concrete and the flat roof is steel deck. The house is set well back from the street and the front is screened by native trees and plants.[54]

Façade (Source: Bell, *1952-1980 Architecture of Guilford Bell*, 1982, p30)

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[53]   Guilford Bell, 'Additions to House at 17 Hartlands Road, East Ivanhoe for Mr & Mrs Noel Purcell', drawing nos 1 and 2, October 1971 – *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111
[54]   Guilford Bell (and Joseph Burke), *1952-1980 Architecture of Guildford Bell*, Proteus Publishing, 1982, p30

Living room
(Source: Bell, *1952-1980 Architecture of Guilford Bell*, 1982, p30)

Shortly after Bell's death, in 1993, his partner Graham Fisher – who continued the office – designed a timber screen for the west side of the courtyard and pergola, enclosing it in response to contemporary development on the adjacent block (no 19).[55]

Guilford Marsh Bell (1912-92)

[*He*] never sought professional acclamation. He had little contact with his peers or the organised profession. He was virtually unknown to the younger generation of architects although his classical, symmetrical buildings struck a chord with the reawakening interest in Neo-Classicism in the 1980s. Like so many long term artists he had the mixed blessing of being re-evaluated later in his career by a new generation with new values.[56]

Compared to many of his peers, Bell's enigmatic life and body of work have been subject to a relatively high degree of study and review.[57] The collective portrayal, as put by Norman Day, is of 'no ordinary architect'.[58] The up-market and mainly domestic body of work produced by Bell over the late 20th century, which traversed the eastern seaboard of Australia, from foreshore to dry plains, is generally considered singular in its design mode; the individual cannon of one of the nation's 'longest practising, most uncompromising hard-edge modernists.'[59]

Born into a patrician pastoral family in the southern tablelands of Queensland, Bell's formative life was privileged.[60] He boarded at The King's School in Sydney and was later articled to the Brisbane architect Lange L Powell. After gaining his diploma in architecture from the Brisbane Central Technical College (1935), Bell spent an influential decade in England, studying at London University and working under the strict neo-classicist (Sir) Albert E Richardson – gaining an appreciation for order, symmetry and

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55   Guildford Bell & Graham Fisher Architects, 'New Timber Screen & Fence at 17 Hartlands Road east Ivanhoe for Mr & Mrs Purcell, drawing no A1a, June 1993, *Collection of architectural drawings by Guilford Bell*, SLV, YLTAD 111
56   Neil Clerehan, 'Guilford Marsh Bell, OBE, FRAIA, 1912-1992', *Transition*, vol 38, 1992, p245
57   Bell, *1952-1980 architecture of Guilford Bell*; Philip James Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, PhD Thesis, Department of Architecture and Building University of Melbourne, September 1992; Leon van Schaik, ed, *The life work of Guilford bell, architecture 1912-1992*, Bookman Transition Publishing, 1999; Goad, 'Bell, Guilford', in Goad and Willis, *The Encyclopedia of Australian* Architecture; and Goad, 'Bell, Guilford Marsh (1912-1992)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 2020, available online
58   Norman Day, 'Guilford Bell — cover to cover', *Age*, 5 October 1982, p24
59   Clerehan, 'Guilford Marsh Bell …', p246
60   Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, chapter 6, p64,

meticulous detailing, but largely rejecting his teacher's historicism.[61] Bell also accompanied two archaeological expeditions to Syria (1938) with Sir Max Mallowan – the husband of the English crime write (Dame) Agatha Christie (his first commission was the renovation of their Georgian house in Devon, 1938) – establishing a lifelong interest in vernacular and ancient Middle Eastern architecture. While in England, Bell passed the examination of the prestigious Royal Institute of British Architects (1939). Returning to Australia at the outbreak of the Second World War, Bell enlisted in the RAAF in 1943 and was employed as an architect in Darwin and works officer in the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia).

On discharge in 1946, Bell reconnected with a former employer (from briefly before the war), Ansett Transport Industries, overseeing the design and construction of a tourist resort at Hayman Island on the Great Barrier Reef (1949-52). Such an opportunity, rare in the austerity conditions of postwar Australia, exposed Bell to a base of cosmopolitan and wealthy potential clients. He set up a solo practice in Melbourne in 1952, commencing an unwavering commitment to the production of discrete and urbane houses or spreading but balanced homesteads.[62] A striking exception was the boldly symmetrical five-storey Feltex House (1957-59, since demolished). He continued to design until his death, either independently or in partnership (Bell & Clerehan, 1961-64 and Guilford Bell and Graham Fisher Architects, 1983-92, ongoing as Bell Fisher Architects).

In the late 1950s, Bell met his life partner, Denis Kelynack. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects in 1962 and awarded an Order of the British Empire in 1982. From the mid-1960s, Bell had purposefully withdrawn from professional view. His reluctance to engage with architecture circles and discourses, combined with a 'blue-chip' clientele, conferred a quality of elusiveness, even mystical quality, upon Bell's person and work, but also curtailed any broader influence on public attitudes towards design.[63]

Guilford Bell, photographed in late thirties on the Hayman Island
(Source: *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 7 October 1950, p38)

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

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61   Joseph Burke, in his forward to *1952-1980 architecture of Guilford Bell* described Bell, 'He has a profound love of the classical. A classical artist seeks to attain an impersonal style of perfection and total order. At the same time he retains a personal style or character of his own' (p11).

62   Bell's signature residences include *Windagal*, Point Piper, NSW (1956 – since demolished); Flinders *House*, Flinders (1958); Bardas *House,* South Yarra (1958, since demolished); *Simon House*, Mount Eliza (1963, substantially altered); *Russell Drysdale*, Bouddi National park Farm, Killcare Heights, NSW (1965, *House*); Fairfax *Pavilion*, Bowral, NSW (1969 – Retford Park Mansion, local heritage item); *Seccull House*, Brighton (1972, recently recommended for inclusion on the VHR as a registered place, March 2021); *Willy House*, Toorak (1972); and *Grant House*, Officer (1986 – Cardinia Shire, HO130). Relatively few Bell designs are affected by HOs and about a quarter of his houses are believed to have been demolished.

63   Goad, *Modern Melbourne*, p74 (chapter 6); and Norman Day, *Heroic Melbourne Architecture of the 1950s*, RMIT Publication, 1995, p17

- 6.4 Post-War Residential Development

Comparative Analysis

Two other designs by Bell & Clerehan were constructed in the municipality:

- *Box House*, 2 Glenard Drive, Eaglemont (part of HO1, identified within the precinct as 'significant') – a single-storey dwelling built in the Griffins'-planned 'Glenard Estate' in 1962 and generally accredited to Clerehan. It has an L-shaped plan based around an internal courtyard, a stepped flat-roof, broad overhanging and boxed eaves, and is constructed of concrete bricks. It features a pared-down aesthetic and highlights an integrated carport supported by four slender pipes with a timber batten ceiling, which confers an ultra-modern character. An important instance of the practice's work but now unsympathetically modified, including the rendering of external walls and alterations to fenestration.

Box House – before modifications (Source: Mark Strizic, *Cross-Section*, no 142, August 1964)

- *Beddison/Swift House*, 5 Crown Road, Ivanhoe (recommended for a HO by this Study) – a multigenerational cuboid and brick residence designed by Bell & Clerehan and built in 1963. Clerehan was the primary designer, although Bell is understood to have insisted on utilising floor-to-ceiling windows throughout the frontage and may have influenced its perfect symmetry.

Box House and *Beddison/Swift House* are the other principal examples of rationalist/'classical' modernism in Banyule. However, both are subtly more expressive of Clerehan's low-key design mode and penchant for stylish carports. *Purcell House*, the only design in Banyule in which Bell's hand was dominant (if not entirely unaccompanied), is a complete encapsulation of what became his remarkably consistent, formalised design approach. Viewed more widely in his oeuvre, it is one of the few Bell residences from his mature, increasing complex phase (after 1960) that incorporates a front garden or had a suburban setting.

An array of architect-designed modernist houses are included on the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in Banyule. Most originate in the 1950s and reflect the multiplying version of mid-century modernism. The dominant influence of the International Style is prevalent, particularly its preference for rectangular footprints, cuboid forms and stripped-down aesthetic; for instance, 10 Alexandra Street, Greensborough (HO136) by Moore and Hammond, 1957. Others reveal the period's growing interest in the modular derivation of the plan, with steel or timber framing and lightweight panelling and bands of glazing. A key example of specific geometry is the 1954 *Snelleman House* (HO36 + VHR H2282) in Ivanhoe East by architects Peter and Dione McIntyre, often referred to as the 'Coil House'.

Collectively, these varied examples of modernism provide insight into the forces of modernity that shaped the district following the Second World War, particularly shifting sociocultural and economic factors and the willingness of some residents to interact with then unconventional design culture and novel lifestyle patterns.

Intactness

Highly intact

Previous Assessment

- Context, *Banyule Heritage Review*, March 2012, p39 – 'researched but not recommended [*for a HO*]' (NB – Context were not aware that Guilford Bell was the designer)
- National Trust (VIC), File Number B7351, nominated for State heritage listing

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommend for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls   Yes
Internal Alteration Controls   Yes (general floorplanhall, study, living and family rooms, specifically mountain ash ceilings, walls of exposed concrete blocks or vertically laid boarding, and coverable fireplace)
Tree Controls   Yes (Lemon-scented and Spotted gums, front garden) No
Outbuildings and/or fences   Yes (original carport)

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, September 2020)

CRITTENDEN HOUSE

Address	30 Longstaff Street, Ivanhoe East
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1961
Period	Postwar/late 20th-century
Date Inspected	January 2021

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Crittenden House at 30 Longstaff Street, Ivanhoe East is significant. It was designed in 1961 by David Chancellor of the architectural practice Chancellor & Patrick for Jack Maxwell Crittenden, the director of a chain of high-end grocery/liquor stores in Melbourne, and his wife Mavis Oswin Critenden (*née* Morgan).

The significant elements are the house and attached carport with their gable roofs, clad in slate, wide soffits with stained timber to the outer part, walls of salmon brick and contrasting area of render (north elevation), and painted timber-framed windows. Retaining walls of basalt to the rear parts of the site are also significant.

The swimming pool (1964) situated in the north part of the grounds is a contributory element to *Crittenden House*.

How is it Significant?

Crittenden House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Crittenden House is of historical significance as one of several substantial modernist houses in this part of Ivanhoe East, where there is a high preponderance of postwar architect-designed dwellings, especially concentrated in an enclave primarily east of

Burke Road North. Land in this part of the suburb was relatively expensive and so attracted a well-heeled demographic, while the challenging topography of many sites demanded the services of an inventive architect. Leading designers were responsible for many houses in the area, although *Crittenden House* may be the only one in the municipality undertaken by the acclaimed architectural practice of Chancellor & Patrick. It dates from a phase in their career when their 'classic' or most-recognisable work was produced and evolved from the celebrated *Freiberg House* in Kew (1958-60). (Criterion A)

Crittenden House is of architectural significance as a remarkably intact and distinctive design dating from the end of the postwar period. The interplay of massing, often monumental, primarily brick with cantilevered concrete elements, under prominent gable roofs are recognisable elements of Chancellor & Patrick's oeuvre. The complex roof is clad in slate, has an unusual box gutter detail, includes a clerestory, and has wide soffits, which are part timber-lined. The banks of windows are timber-framed; however, framing has been avoided to the corner, amplifying the fineness of the detailing. The most dramatic intersection of forms and planes is at the carport, whose roof seems to balance precariously on a broad brick pier. (Criterion E)

Description

Crittenden House is located at the southwest end of a large triangular site, whose area is 1,337m2. The corner site equally addresses both Longstaff Street and Streeton Crescent and slopes steeply to the north by some 7 metres. The residence is visible to both streets, more so to Longstaff Street as there is a planted edge, which includes various shrubs and a few tall eucalypts, to Streeton Crescent. There is also a retaining stone wall to Streeton Crescent. There is no fence to the front/Longstaff street; however, the largely blank wall provides the requisite level of privacy. The long front garden includes a central area of lawn defined by garden beds with various plants, shrubs and some trees. The timber letterbox is not original. A high ti-tree fence conceals a service yard in the southwest corner.

The house has a stepped, elongated plan with a shorter central-northern wing (effectively a squat T-shaped footprint). The two long elevations, north and south (Longstaff Street), have very different character due to the specific site conditions – an exposed, irregular corner allotment with a steep slope. Orientated to the north but located at the southern end with a largely blank wall to Longstaff Street. The carport is a prominent element of the front elevation whose roof hinges on a broad brick pier separating it from the main entrance, which is recessed and somewhat concealed, a common approach at this time. Two painted steel poles support the carport roof, which abuts the return of the ti-tree fence. The path to the entry is mainly surfaced with salmon bricks.

The broad, low-pitched gable roofs are clad in slate with square chimney (with grille-like brickwork to the side faces) to the ridge above the carport. The carport roof extends upwards to form a clerestory to the north side of the building. To the front at least (and probably to the rear, based on aerial photographs), there are no eaves gutters as the latter are recessed behind an outer band of slate, which overhangs a timber fascia (painted or stained). The detailing to the deep soffits varies, consisting of an outer band of stained, slatted timber boards with an inner section of white sheeting, which is continuous with the adjacent ceilings of the interior.

Carport and entry – Longstaff Street

East wing - Streeton Crescent

Junction of east and north wings - Streeton Crescent

North elevation, central part with cantilevered deck – Streeton Cres

The walls, consisting principally of staggered planes of brickwork to the front (Longstaff Street) though interposed with broad piers/pylon sections, are variegated salmon/orange brick in stretcher bond. The largest or most prominent pylon is that to the junction of the east and north wings. To the visible part of the rear (north-east part), the projecting/cantilevered sections have a rendered finish (presumably over a concrete substrate), including the north wing's cantilevered deck. The west end, not visible from the public domain, has brick walls extending upwards to form planter boxes to a broad terrace with some balustrading sections.[1]

The diverse character of each long/primary elevation relates to the fenestration pattern. While banks of timber-framed windows are employed across the building, there are narrow highlights (comprised of alternating openable/awning and fixed panes) to the front/Longstaff Street elevation, where they are located immediately below the eaves of the east wing. Elsewhere to this side, there are no windows. There is no timber framing element (muntin/glazing bar) to the corner windows, where the glass is mitred, a detail developed by the Austrian/American architect Richard Neutra.[2]

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[1]   With sections not visible from the public domain, there has been a reliance on historic photographs – see Peter Wille and Commercial Photographic Co in Site-Specific.

[2]   Philip Goad, 'Modern House in Melbourne 1945-1975', PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1992, chapter 5, p96

The elongated plan has resulted in corridors being located along the south/front elevation with living areas clustered to the north and west and bedrooms to the east. There are ancillary rooms to the part lower level.

The time of construction of this house (1961) was a highly productive period for Chancellor & Patrick.[3] An iconic example of their output – the Freiberg house in Kew – featured on the cover of a seminal contemporary architectural publication, *Best Australian Houses,* in the same year.[4] The practice's design language, evolving over the 1950s, had consolidated in the next decade, becoming distinguished by an 'emphasis on the extension of the building out into the landscape'.[5] This principle is highly evident at *Crittenden House*, with the central deck of the north wing thrusting forwards over the garden. Their palette during the 1960s shifted to a mostly 'natural' array of materials evident at the subject place by way of the use of slate and brick flooring employed internally to the corridors. Slate was only employed as roof cladding on a few of their projects, with one of the earliest examples being Chancellor's own house in Box Hill (no II) during 1957, where brick was also employed to the entry area floors.[6]

Chancellor & Patrick were probably the architectural practice in Melbourne most indebted to the 'organic architecture' espoused by Frank Lloyd Wright, where the emphasis was given linking the building with landscape. They were part of a coterie of like-minded architects practising in Melbourne during the 1950s and 1960s, including Charles Duncan, David Godsell, and Geoffrey Woodfull. Some examples of their work survive in the municipality. Among the most recognisable elements of this Wrightian organic approach was a textural use of materials – especially brick, timber, stone – in conjunction with tile-clad gable or hipped roofs and massive fireplaces.[7] *Crittenden House* is a prime example of this influence, though in a way made distinctively their own.

William Head was responsible the original landscape at *Crittenden House*, but it is not clear what remains of his original scheme. There are no available landscape drawings, although early photographs document some of the plantings, including eucalypts and coniferous trees along the Streeton Crescent boundary. Of these, the extant tall eucalyptus near the stair in the retaining wall is likely original. Agapanthus currently defined this street edge but are not evident in early images. Other distinctive elements of the planting were those to the planter boxes to the rear deck at the west end of the site; however, these areas are not visible from the public domain. These planter boxes are among many elements, are reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie-style residences, such as the *Robie House* (1909, Chicago, USA).

1985 photograph of *Crittenden House* from Streeton Crescent, facing west
(Source: courtesy of Graeme Butler)

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3   W Callister, *Anchoring Identity – the Architecture of Chancellor and Patrick 1950-1970*, vol. 1, p198. Between 1958 and 1962, the practice received commissions for over 80 new houses.
4   Neil Clerehan (editor), *Best Australian houses:* recent houses built by members of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, Melbourne 1961
5   W Callister, *Anchoring Identity – the Architecture of Chancellor and Patrick 1950-1970*, vol. 1, p198; vol 2, figure 298. A photograph taken by David Chancellor shows a brick floor to one of the passageways.
6   W Callister, *Anchoring Identity – the Architecture of Chancellor and Patrick 1950-1970*, vol 2, figures 184-189
7   P Goad, 'Modern House in Melbourne 1945-1975', pp6/30-34

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[8] The lightly wooded grasslands of what became known as 'Ivanhoe' were quickly targeted for sheep runs and by timber-cutters from the 'illegal squatter camp (est. 1835) downstream of the *Birrarung*/Yarra at Melbourne.[9] However, as part of the 'Heidelberg' district in the Parish of Keelbundora, this area passed rapidly into private hands via an auction in Sydney Town in 1838.[10]

Over the following decade, a patchwork of 'prestige' estates emerged, along with a surveyed township – *Warringal* (possibly 'eagle's nest'), later 'Heidelberg' – on the river's west bank.[11] Productive river flats, and the demands of the gold diggings further afield, encouraged market gardening, orchards and (gradually, due to soil exhaustion and flooding) dairying; activities mostly undertaken by tenant farmers.[12] This perceived rural idyll enticed *plein air* artists to the district during the 1880s, fixing the 'Heidelberg School' within Australia's artistic consciousness.[13]

Ivanhoe – its name stemming from Archibald Thom's 'Ivanhoe Estate' – remained a sparsely populated agricultural area until Melbourne's 'Land Boom' in the late 1880s.[14] 'Picturesque' terrain, varied outlooks and the high repute of the broader district drew often well-off newcomers. By the turn of the century, 'Beautiful Ivanhoe' was routinely portrayed as a 'fashionable', 'exclusive locality' of 'model homes'.[15] An improved railway connection to Melbourne in 1901 supported further middle-class growth, instigating 'four decades of slow and relatively affluent suburban sprawl' in the vicinity of Ivanhoe, Eaglemont, and Heidelberg train stations.[16]

During the interwar years, suburban Ivanhoe solidified, although its southern and eastern reaches remained primarily locked up by the expansive 'Hartlands', 'Charterisville', and 'Chelsworth' estates.[17] To navigate the complexities that accompanied the subdivision of these areas (sloping land, curving streets, views) in the postwar period and galvanised by the swelling influence of modernism, many of the new and generally moneyed proprietors sought the services of an architect.[18] By the early 1960s, distinct enclaves of upmarket, modernist design culture were apparent in the southern reaches of Ivanhoe and Ivanhoe East, with the aesthetic and lifestyle reverberations of the modern movement also shaping infill development in the more established environs of the locale.

View near Heidelberg in Victoria, pen and ink drawing, circa 1858
(Source: Eugene von Guérard, National Gallery of Victoria)

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8   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online
9   James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne & The Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc., 2011, pxi
10   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of Kulbundora – the name of the eldest son of the important Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') Billibellary. ('Suburban Native Names', Argus 28 April 1906, p5). One of the earliest manifestations of local governance in the Port Phillip District (1840), the fluctuating borders of municipal Heidelberg mirrored its growth, as it was reformatted into a Road District (1860), Shire (1871) and then City (1934). It was amalgamated as the City of Banyule in 1994.
11   Donald S Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p13
12   Robert P Whitworth, *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer*, F F Bailliere, 1879, pp237
13   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.5, and 2.3.10; and Janine Rizzetti, 'Heidelberg', in Richard Broome et al, eds., *Remembering Melbourne 1850-1960*, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 2016, p282
14   Thom's estate designation was inspired by a novel of the same name by Sir Walter Scott (1819).
15   Ivanhoe & Alphington Progress Society, *Beautiful Ivanhoe: the suburb of model homes and scenic charm*, Model Studio, 1900, SLV
16   Ivanhoe Station opened in 1888; however, inefficiencies in the Heidelberg-Melbourne railway line initially bedevilled growth.
17   Ivanhoe grew from roughly 2,000 residents in 1913 to nearly 8,000 by 1933 (*Victorian Year Books*, Australian Bureau of Statistics).
18   Don Garden, 'Ivanhoe', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008

Site-specific

The subject allotment derives from Portion 2 of the Parish of Keelbundora, a roughly 420-hectare holding purchased (along with portions 1 and 3) by Thomas Walker in 1838. A Sydney-based Scottish banker and philanthrope with an eye for marketable land across the colony, Walker's intention in the Port Philip District was speculative from the start. He commenced subdividing his acquisitions as early as mid-1839 to enormous profit.[19]

A 126-hectare property, acquired by Captain Sylvester John Brown (the original spelling was 'Brown', the 'e' was added later by his son, the famed novelist 'Rolfe Boldrewood') and named 'Hartlands' incorporated the subject property. Brown, a onetime shipmaster in the East India Company, who had made a small fortune in Sydney in whaling and trade, set up Hartlands as his familial seat around 1840. From a commodious weatherboard homestead overlooking the *Birrung*/Yarra, the Browns cultivated the flats and socialised with Heidelberg's gentry.[20]

The idyll was brief. Worsening economic conditions forced the foreclosure of Hartlands – the stress of which shattered Brown Snr. However, a fortunate marriage between his daughter and a relative of Walker (still the mortgage holder) enabled the clearing of the debt through a partial sale of the estate in 1853, and the 'Brownes of Hartlands' returned.[21] They remained in occupation until the mid-1860s, departing after their residence was destroyed by arson.[22] Hartlands was leased for farming until the mid-1880s, when it was offered for sale as one lot:

> It is admirably adapted to subdivisional purposes, the position being unequalled in the district, which is undoubtedly the most charming and picturesque suburb around Melbourne. It is only seven miles from the MELBOURNE POST-OFFICE. Tenders for the completion of the railway from Alphington to Heidelberg are shortly to be called for, and when the line is completed the value of the land in this delightful locality must necessarily increase enormously. The views to be obtained from this noble estate are TRULY MAGNIFICENT, and must be seen to be appreciated.[23]

From 1903, large parcels of Hartlands were excised for sale and subdivision.[24] The final transaction, in 1921, encompassed the core of the estate – approximately 30 hectares of sloping and cleared land between Lower Heidelberg Road and The Boulevard, including the subject allotment. This procurement was made by one of the nation's most recognised real estate agents and Catholic lay leaders, Thomas Michael Burke.[25] His 'Hartlands Estate' subdivision featured memorably named curvilinear roads,[26] presenting as a diluted version of the nearby Mount Eagle (1914) and Glenard estates (1916), both avant-garde Garden Suburb designs by Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin. The specific planner for the Hartlands Estate is unknown.[27] Initial sales of the offered lots continued into the mid-1930s and the building of residential homes was scant and sporadic until the postwar years.

Photograph extracted from a subdivision promotion for the Glenard Estate in 1916 with the Hartlands estate captured left of frame (Source: *Sale brochure for Glenard Estate, Mount Eagle, Victoria*, Eric Milton Nicholls collection, NLA, Bib ID 3701541)

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19   W Joy, 'Walker, Thomas (1804-1886)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1967, available online

20   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and its People*, pp31-2

21   Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People*, pp41-2

22   'Incendiarism', *Australasian*, 15 April 1865, p6

23   'Advertising', *Argus*, 20 February 1886, p2

24   Certificate of Title, vol 1844, folio 676

25   Certificate of Title, vol 4480, folio 831; and Tony Hannan, 'Burke, Thomas Mitchell (1870-1949)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1979, available online

26   Streeton, McCubbin, Longstaff, and Mackennel were all Australian artists, while Keam Street was the namesake of a prominent local farmer and town planning advocate, Peter Keam, the developer behind the Mount Eagle and Glenard estates.

27   In interwar Melbourne, beyond the Griffins, breaking with the typical gridiron subdivision was the calling card of the progressive surveyor, Saxil Tuxen (1855-1975).

Extract from a subdivision map for the Hartland Estate, dating from 1940s, with the subject allotment (no 59) outlined in red
(Source: SLV, MAPS 820 BJE 1880)

Hazel Alice Heather acquired the subject allotment in August 1921 and held it for 30 years, during which time no development of the site occurred.[28] A covenant was placed on the site with the sale, and presumably others in the subdivision, that only a single residence could be erected on the site and prohibiting other building types, including commercial/industrial, educational or religious-affiliated. Furthermore, a tile or slate roof was required, no paling or close iron fences could be erected, and construction cost was to be not less than £500.

A 1931 aerial photograph (below) shows that Burke Road North not laid been out yet and that the land between Lower Heidelberg Road and the *Birrarung /Y*arra River was paddocks or farmland associated with the former Hartlands Estate. The Boulevard is evident, but none of the roads within the subdivision had been formed.

Ten years later, the 1942 MMBW plan (following) depicts the construction of only a single house in the subdivision east of Burke Road North on Keam Street, with only a few, had been constructed nearby on Burke Road North. The same circumstance is evident in a 1946 aerial photograph.[29]

John Leslie Smith, a Commonwealth public servant from Caulfield, became the proprietor of the subject land in April 1953.[30] He, too, undertook no works at the site as indicated in a 1954 aerial photograph. At this time, the northern section of Longstaff Avenue had not been laid out, nor had a section of Burke Road North. In addition, few houses had been constructed east of Burke Road North in this part of Ivanhoe East.

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[28]   Certificate of Title, vol 4486, folio 012; Hazel Alice Heather died on 3 December 1956 at Portland, three years after selling the site
         (*Argus*, 4 December 1956, p24)
[29]   Adastra Airways, Photo-map Ringwood_849A1B, https://services.land.vic.gov.au/DELWPmaps/historical-photomaps/
[30]   Certificate of Title, vol 4486, folio 012

1931 aerial photograph, showing approximate location of subject place (star)
Hartlands is the large house to the south-west (circled)
(Source: Landata, Project 1931, Run 17, Frame 3328)

MMBW detail plan no 2601, dated 1942
Subject site is outlined in dashed red
(Source: SLV)

March 1954 aerial photograph, showing approximate location of subject place, indicated by the red star
(Source: Landata, Project no 174, run 15, frame 75)

In May 1959, Jack Maxwell Crittenden, then of 142 Glenferrie Road, Malvern acquired the triangular subject lot.[31]

Crittenden (1921-2002) had served in the AIF during the Second Word World, including in the Middle East and Papua New Guinea.[32] Afterwards, in 1948, he married Mavis Oswin Morgan (1927-2015),[33] and they had two children – Gavin Andrew and Megan Venetta.[34] Crittenden had taken over the family business of boutique grocery stores in 1954 on the death of his father Oscar Rupert George Crittenden, along with his brother Douglas Oscar and other long-standing employees of the company.

The Crittenden's chain, focusing on high-quality produce, often imported goods not readily available elsewhere, had been established in 1917 by Crittenden, Snr, when he opened his first store in Malvern, followed by another in Toorak in 1936. In the postwar period, the company expanded, especially the liquor outlet side, to create another five stores in other affluent suburbs, including one in Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe. Myer brought the business in 1982. They sold it to Coles in 1987, who closed most of the stores.[35]

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31   Certificate of Title, vol 4486, folio 012
32   NAA, Series B883, VX47412
33   Marriage Certificate, BDMV, registration 10445/1948. Details of the wedding were recorded in the 'Other Ceremonies', *Argus*, 9 June 1948, p8
34   Ancestry.com.au
35   'Crittendens', *Wikipedia*, available online

'The new Ivanhoe shop … Now residents of Heidelberg, Kew, Northcote and Balwyn, can join with tens of thousands in the city and other suburbs in shopping at Crittenden's by going to 185 Upper Heidelberg Road.' (Source: 'Crittenden's Now at Ivanhoe!', *Age*, 31 October 1978, p17)

Crittenden House was designed by David Chancellor of the eminent architectural firm of Chancellor & Patrick during 1961, with the landscape design by William Head, with whom the firm had previously collaborated at the equally steep site of the Freiberg House, 26 Yarravale Road, Kew (1959-60).[36] Chancellor & Patrick designed other projects for Crittenden/s, including additions to their Toorak store (1966), alterations to the Glenferrie Road, Malvern store (1968) and a holiday house on the beachfront at Brighton (1973).[37]

Preliminary sketches for *Critten House* were prepared by David Chancellor, while the detailed drawings were prepared by Ian Banner (dated 19 October 1961). Construction appears to have taken place over 1961.[38]
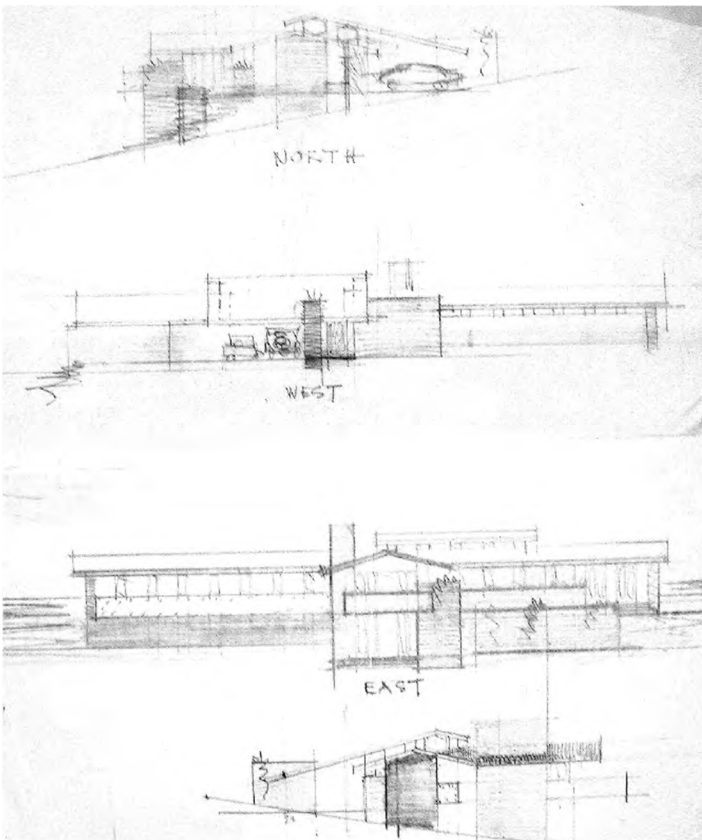
Preliminary Sketches, *Crittenden House*
(Source: Winsome Callister, *Anchoring* Identity, vol 2, figure 305)

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[36]   Winsome Callister, *Anchoring Identity – the Architecture of Chancellor and Patrick 1950-1970*, PhD Thesis, Monash University, Department of Visual Arts, vol 1, 2007, pp201, 220, 356. Elsewhere it is incorrectly said that Edna Walling was responsible for the landscaping at the Freiberg House.
[37]   Callister, *Anchoring Identity*, vol 1, pp220, 224, 253, 308, 373, 380
[38]   Callister, *Anchoring Identity*, vol 2, figure 307

The Crittendens were residing at the site by 1963,[39] and retained the property for nearly two decades (until 1977).[40]
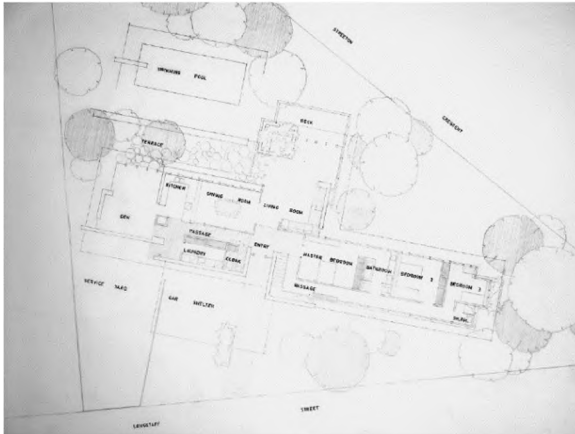
Main level plan, drawn by Ian Banner 19 October 1961
(Source: W Callister, *Anchoring Identity*, vol 2, figure 307)

View from Streeton Crescent by Commercial Photographic Co,
1964 (Source: W Callister, *Anchoring Identity*, vol 2, figure 308)

Several photographs were taken soon after the house was completed, including a series of eleven photographs by Peter Wille (1931-71), a 'modern' enthusiast who traversed Melbourne photographing – in his view – notable examples of the modern movement.[41] Wille's lens captured *Crittenden House* when the garden was partly established and the pool installed.[42] These photographs provide an opportunity to more fully appreciate the bold and intricate volumetric expression of the design, which since have been partly concealed by planting.

View from Longstaff Street by Commercial Photographic Co, 1964[43]
Note the original letterbox
(Source: W Callister, *Anchoring Identity*, vol 2, figure 306)

Other elements evident in these early photographs are the planter boxes to the rear/north and extensive terracing required to the steep slope to the garden area to the north side, with several retaining walls of coursed basalt blocks required.

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39   1963 Victorian electoral role, Division of Bateman, Subdivision of Ivanhoe, p38
40   Certificate of Title, vol 4486, folio 012
41   Wille was employed as a draftsman by the firm Smith, Tracey, Lyon & Block. In his own time, he compiled an extensive record of modernist designs in Melbourne, predominantly in its southeast (he resided in Mount Waverly).
42   SLV, H91.244/1261-1271
43   There is a copy of this image held at the SLV, H92.20/7589, and attributed to Lyle Fowler of the Commercial Photographic Co., Carlton

Crittenden House, mid-1960s, northeast end
Extant eucalypts near the stairs on Streeton Crescent are evident
(Source: SLV, Peter Wille, H91.244/1261)

Crittenden House, mid-1960s, northwest end
Note clerestory roof section and planter boxes to rear deck
(Source: SLV, Peter Wille, H91.244/1262)

The outdoor pool was installed during 1964 by Southern Cross Pools, Mentone and required the provision of another basalt retaining wall.[44] Additions to *Crittenden House* were undertaken in 1965, also by Chancellor & Patrick.[45] The latter may relate to the east end of the basement level, which was defined as 'future expansion' on the original the drawings of 1961.

Chancellor & Patrick

The practice of Chancellor & Patrick existed for a half-century, from 1954 to 2003 though Chancellor retired circa 1982, were responsible for several iconic houses. Both principals were Melbourne-born – David William Chancellor in 1926 and William Rex Patrick in 1927 – and studied at the University of Melbourne, though Patrick undertook a diploma initially at RMIT (then the Royal Melbourne Technical College). After graduating, both worked at Yuncken Freeman Bros Griffiths & Simpson, with Chancellor setting up a solo practice at Frankston in 1952.[46] Subsequently, they undertook many projects in that area.

The pair had a mutual interest in Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian and Prairie style house designs, Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony's work in Australia, and the structural logic and expressive devices employed' by Austrian émigré architect based in Los Angeles, Richard Neutra.[47]

Chancellor & Patrick 'mediated modernism with a concern for the region and site, using traditional Australian forms and materials, combined with the Melbourne post-war interest in avant-garde experiment with plan, form and structure.' The *McCraith House* (1955) on the hill overlooking Dromana and the *Freiberg House* (1958) in Kew are well-known examples. The former has a butterfly roof, and the latter a prominent extruded gable-roofed wing that was a hallmark of their work at that time. However, they also designed a range of other building types, including commercial (banks), churches, hospitals, kindergartens and during the 1960s-1970s, several halls of residence at La Trobe and Monash universities.[48]

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

- 6.4 Post-War Residential Development

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44   Council Building File, permit application Sp04/64. The estimated cost was £1683.
45   Callister, *Anchoring Identity*, vol 1, p369
46   Winsome Callister, 'Chancellor & Patrick', in Philip Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Melbourne 2012, p139
47   Philip Goad, *Melbourne Architecture*, The Watermark Press, 1999, p193
48   Callister, 'Chancellor & Patrick', p139

Comparative Analysis

Chancellor & Patrick received few commissions in the municipality. *Crittenden House* was one of only two new or greenfields projects – the other known is *Davis House* on St Helena Road, Greensborough, 1959 (not located). Another two known projects were to existing houses (additions/alterations), both in Ivanhoe.[49]

An array of architect-designed modernist houses are included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay for Banyule. Most originate in the 1950s and reflect the multiplying version of mid-century modernism. The dominant influence of the International Style is prevalent, particularly its preference for rectangular footprints, cuboid forms and stripped-down aesthetic; for instance, 10 Alexandra Street, Greensborough (HO136) by Moore and Hammond, 1957. Others reveal the period's growing interest in the modular derivation of the plan, with steel or timber framing and lightweight panelling and bands of glazing. A key example of specific geometry is the 1954 *Snelleman House* (HO36 + VHR H2282) in Ivanhoe East by architects Peter and Dione McIntyre, often referred to as the 'Coil House'.

Only two individual houses constructed in the 1960s are affected by a HO in the municipality, along with several in the Elliston Estate (HO92), though a few are recommended for listing as part of this Study. *Crittenden House*, dating to 1961, is effectively on the cusp of the postwar period and late 20th century. However, in many ways, it looks forward to approaches that emerged over the 1960s, such as an interests 'natural' or recycled/reclaimed material, flat or pitched roofs, exposed masonry (concrete, recycled or clinker bricks), stained timberwork (fascias, openings, linings) and the continuity of the materiality between the interior and exterior. As the decade progresses, such a palette became more robust under the influence of Brutalism and the natural/native landscape more integrated into the overall design.

The following HOs are broadly comparable to *Crittenden House*:

- *Williams House*, 4 Glenard Drive, Eaglemont (HO146) – designed by Charles Duncan in 1963 and awarded the RAIA Victoria Architecture Medal (1965). It consists of a series of overlapping volumes with stepped flat roofs and extensive use of window walls. At construction, the design was described as an 'aggressive play of clinker brick walls and hefty roof planes edged by deep-fascias of stained timber'.[50] While displaying a more robust external palette of clinker brick and employing flat roofs than *Crittenden House*, it also continues its stained timber-lined ceilings between the exterior and interior.

- *Featherston House*, 22 The Boulevard, Ivanhoe (HO65) – designed by Robin Boyd in 1968 for Grant and Mary Featherstone, notable industrial and furniture designers, it received a posthumous citation in the RAIA (Victoria) awards of 1972. This iconic house of tan brick with reinforced concrete floors is defined by a series of elevated platforms to a large 'garden room' featuring a full, double-height window wall to the rear. From the street it has an unassuming presence, with a garage effectively screening it.

- *Elliston Precinct* (HO92) in Rosanna – a residential development by the innovative company Merchant Builders, initiated in 1969. Four notable architectural architects/practices were engaged (Charles Duncan, Daryl Jackson and Evan Walker, David McGlashan and Neil Everist, and Graeme Gunn) to prepare multiple designs with Ellis Stone responsible for integrating the subdivision with a contrived bushland landscape. Several houses by these architects were constructed in the southern section of the estate (Bachli Court to Von Ninda Crescent). These houses are generally modestly scaled and nestled in Stone's landscaping with a palette of brown or tan brick, flat or skillion roofs, and stained finish to the timberwork (facias, windows, etc). In 1971 Merchant Builders sold the remaining parts of the estate for speculative development.

Intactness

Intact

Previous Assessment

- Australian Institute of Architects, Victorian Chapter, *Register of Significant 20th Century Architecture* (misdated)

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49   Callister, *Anchoring* Identity, vol 1, pp203, 347, 376, 379; and vol 2, figs 325-326. The other two documented projects were additions to the *Barnett House* in York Ave (1967) and alterations to the *Sidwell House*, Outlook Drive (1968). Another house seems to be incorrectly listed as being in Ivanhoe (p324, *Phillips House* – Mountain View Road, 1954) but was likely in North Balwyn.

50   *Cross-Section*, The University of Melbourne Department of Architecture, issue no 142, 1 August 1964, np

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommended for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	Yes (walls)
Internal Alteration Controls	No
Tree Controls	~~Yes (Lemon scented gums on Streeton Crescent)~~ No
Outbuildings and/or fences	~~No~~Yes (basalt retaining wall, Streeton Crescent)

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay relates to the property boundaries and is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, March 2021)

ST GEORGE PEACE MEMORIAL CHURCH

Address	47 Warncliffe Road, Ivanhoe East
Significance	Local (likely State)
Construction Date	1936/53 (remnant part of original hall) and 1963-64 (main part)
Period	Mid-20th century and late 20th century
Date Inspected	January 2021

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

St George Peace Memorial Church at 47 Warncliffe Road, Ivanhoe East is significant. It consists of significant fabric remaining from the original church/hall, built in two stages during the mid-20th century, and the principal construction phase of between 1963 and 1964, when it became known as the *St George Peace Memorial Church* as a memorial to all those who had fallen in armed conflict.

Though the site was acquired earlier (1930), the original hall to the southern boundary dates to 1936 (part, east end) and 1953 (most, west end); it has a gable roof clad in glazed terracotta tiles and ridge ventilators. The red brick walls are painted and feature buttresses with timber-framed openings. The original hall is a contributory element that has been well-integrated into the complex by the architects.

All of the original fabric of the main 1960s part is significant. It consists of tan brick walls ('Selkirk's Modular Santan' brick) and a low skillion roof following the site's slope, clad in tray deck. The most striking feature is the 70-columned colonnade of tall, bush-pole columns (now painted red-brown, though originally had a dark brown finish) with an arched fascia (originally a light colour) that extends across the front and another two sides of the courtyard as well as the raised walkway to the north side of the church and west elevation. The roof of the colonnade is steel-framed with additional bracing provided by cables, especially where open on both sides. The timber-framed openings – windows and doors – are original. Significant elements of the church interior

include the face brick walls, original timber ceiling and furniture (organ, altar, pulpit, lectern, pews), white cylindrical light fittings, baked glass (on a brick substrate) mural of 'Christ in Glory', and bronze baptismal font.

~~The four eucalypts to the north-west corner, though their condition/ULE may not be high, and the two exotics (likely Ash trees) at the south end of the courtyard are significant. The other trees are not significant.~~

How is it Significant?

St George Peace Memorial Church is of local historical, social, and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

St George Peace Memorial Church is of historical and social significance as having been the centre of local community life – both specifically for worship by the Anglican parishioners but also supporting minds, bodies and souls generally - in this part of the municipality for three-quarters of a century. Construction of all phases was substantially supported by fund-raising efforts reflecting the key role the site has played and reflects the development of the area more broadly. The first, modest building on the site, part of which survives, was erected in 1936 for the initial small but growing community and was enlarged in 1953. A decade later (1963-64), a grander vision for the site was realised to support broader uses/needs of the fully established local community. This final phase was to the design of the eminent architect, Frederick Romberg, of the renowned practice of (Grounds,) Romberg and Boyd and is also significant as being one of the few religious projects undertaken by them. (Criteria A and G)

St George Peace Memorial Church is of aesthetic significance as a highly distinguished modernist church complex that unusually incorporates most of a pre-existing church hall. The overall form is cuboid with a gently sloping roof. The main part allows the downpipes to be concentrated onto the northern elevation and integrated into the consistent bay delineation of the exterior. Its format is unique, consisting of a square footprint with a central courtyard that opens onto the street (intended as a piazza/town square with activity occurring to each side) and through a tall colonnade of bush poles that extends about much of the building. The design by Frederick Romberg is a rare instance of such a pronounced use of vernacular detailing (bush poles) on a clearly urban building, which provides a level of grandeur that softens the otherwise modernist rigour of the geometry and configuration of openings. The church's interior has a calming, muted palette and strong connection to the exterior and is open to the street, serving to demystify the church activities. It is further enhanced by artist-designed elements (mural and baptismal font) and complementary timber furniture. In any context, this design is a tour de force. (Criterion E)

Description

The nearly square site has an area of about 2770m² and gently slopes about 3 metres from the south-east to the north-west corner.

East side

The building consists of two distinct sections about a courtyard – the larger 1960s section and part of the earlier hall (1936 and 1953) in the southwest corner. The building is located close to the south boundary but is otherwise broadly centred on the site, with setbacks in the order of 5 to 7 metres from the other three boundaries. The site is otherwise either hard paved (concrete or asphalt) or has areas of lawn (courtyard and southwest corner). In the front setback, there is a flagpole and signage.

There are several trees, including some established eucalypts in the northwest corner, two of which overhang the abutting school site to the west. Their condition/ULE may not be high as they are reported to be dropping branches. In the front courtyard are two small deciduous exotics (likely Ash trees) at the south end and a few shrubs (north side and the southwest corner).

1960s Building

The 1960s section forms about three-quarters of the building fabric about the central courtyard, which is open to the street on one side. The northern wing is occupied by the St George Peace Memorial Church, signified by an offset cross above the entrance, and the southern wing by Evans Hall, named after Jack Evans, who had established the choir among other roles.[1] The remaining western section includes offices, multi-purpose areas, kitchens, etc.

It has a low skillion roof, which follows the ground line, clad in metal sheeting and is two-storey or double-height (the church). Given the slope of the roof, the downpipes are all located to the north elevation.

The east/street side is defined by the substantial colonnade with 30-foot-tall gumtree trunks (poles), which opens onto, and extends about three sides of the courtyard. The colonnade roof is steel-framed with additional bracing provided by cables where it is open on both sides (ie in front of the courtyard). A segmental-arched fascia extends between the poles, a profile which is reflected in that of the openings across the building.

Courtyard, west elevation   Courtyard, north elevation

The walls are faced in tan bricks (Selkirk's Modular in Santan), which are laid in stretcher bond and are squarer than standard dimensions. The bricks vary slightly in colour and have been laid so that subtle areas of banding or panelling have been created. Longer (regular dimensioned) bricks have been employed to the segmental-arched lintels to the openings. Vertical cracking through the bricks and joints is evident in some areas.

The pattern of openings is consistent across the building and contain either windows or paired French doors. There are distinct zones with blank walls according to the function of each part of the building. To the nave of the church (north wing), the openings are limited to the ground level but extend across both west wing levels. Given the slope, there is a concrete sill/spandrel to the lower-level windows of the courtyard, increasing in width to the north.

The north elevation has a raised concrete deck with a timber balustrade along the length of the nave of the church, where the colonnade returns. The rhythm of the downpipes at the west end continues that of the adjacent colonnade. Openings to this elevation are either to the lower part (nave) or upper part of the wall (sanctuary).

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[1]   Bruce Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe: a golden jubilee history 1929-79*, East Ivanhoe 1979, pp32-33

North elevation

West/rear elevation

A similar colonnade extends the rear/west elevation length, which incorporates a two levelled verandah and stair at the south end. The latter has a timber deck and an original single-membered balustrade, in front of which a metal palisade railing has been installed. Along both levels of the verandah are a similar pattern of timber-framed openings as to the front part of the building. The crypt at the lower/basement level in the northwest corner is defined by a group of five openings above, which is a non-original, utilitarian timber-framed canopy clad in corrugated Perspex sheeting. It is currently employed as an opportunity shop.

Church Interior

The interior of the church is an unencumbered T-shaped space, consisting of a long nave and a wider sanctuary. It has a fine acoustic quality and is regularly used as a performance space for choirs and the like.

The walls are the same tan bricks employed to the exterior and the ceiling, recessed in part, is lined with blond timber boards. Ten tubular, white glass pendant lights hang over the pews. The floor is lined with red carpet, replacing the original blue. The three sides of the nave are mostly punctuated by large openings at ground level – either windows or paired doors.

The focal point of the sanctuary is the altar, with an organ to the south side and four high-level windows (with a cross-like glazing bar configuration) illuminating it. Purpose-designed timber furniture includes the altar, pulpit, lectern, and pews.

Other elements of note are the mosaic mural of 'Christ in Glory' by Jean Atkins behind the altar and the bronze baptismal front by Vincas Jemantis near the front entry.

Glory of Christ mural of glazed bricks

Bronze Baptismal Font

Original Church/Hall

The remaining part of the original church/hall to the southern boundary dates to 1936 (part, east end) and 1953 (most, west end). This section has a gable roof clad in glazed terracotta tiles and ridge ventilators. The stretcher bond, red brick walls are painted to the courtyard but unpainted to the rear/west elevation and feature buttresses. The openings are timber-framed, with the board-type doors likely being original; however, the windows vary – some are original (multi-paned) while others likely date to the 1960s phase (tripartite with central pointed-arched, fixed pane and flanking louvres).

Earlier Hall – north elevation

Earlier Hall – west elevation

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-willam people, who have inhabited and managed its landscape for thousands of generations and maintain an ongoing cultural connection.[2] The lightly wooded grasslands of what became known as 'Ivanhoe' were quickly targeted for sheep runs and by timber-cutters from the 'illegal squatter camp (est. 1835) downstream of the *Birrarung*/Yarra at Melbourne.[3] However, as part of the 'Heidelberg' district in the Parish of Keelbundora, this area passed rapidly into private hands via an auction in Sydney Town in 1838.[4]

Over the following decade, a patchwork of 'prestige' estates emerged, along with a surveyed township – *Warringal* (possibly 'eagle's nest'), later 'Heidelberg' – on the river's west bank.[5] Productive river flats, and the demands of the gold diggings further afield, encouraged market gardening, orchards and (gradually, due to soil exhaustion and flooding) dairying; activities mostly undertaken by tenant farmers.[6] This perceived rural idyll enticed *plein air* artists to the district during the 1880s, fixing the 'Heidelberg School' within Australia's artistic consciousness.[7]

Ivanhoe – its name stemming from Archibald Thom's 'Ivanhoe Estate' – remained a sparsely populated agricultural area until Melbourne's 'Land Boom' in the late 1880s.[8] 'Picturesque' terrain, varied outlooks and the high repute of the broader district drew often well-off newcomers. By the turn of the century, 'Beautiful Ivanhoe' was routinely portrayed as a 'fashionable', 'exclusive locality' of 'model homes'.[9] An improved railway connection to Melbourne in 1901 supported further middle-class growth, instigating 'four decades of slow and relatively affluent suburban sprawl' in the vicinity of Ivanhoe, Eaglemont, and Heidelberg train stations.[10]

During the interwar years, suburban Ivanhoe solidified, although its southern and eastern reaches remained primarily locked up by the expansive 'Hartlands', 'Charterisville', and 'Chelsworth' estates.[11] To navigate the complexities that accompanied the subdivision of these areas (sloping land, curving streets, views) in the postwar period and galvanised by the swelling influence of modernism, many of the new and generally moneyed proprietors sought the services of an architect.[12] By the early 1960s, distinct enclaves of upmarket, modernist design culture were apparent in the southern reaches of Ivanhoe and Ivanhoe East, with the aesthetic and lifestyle reverberations of the modern movement also shaping infill development in the more established environs of the locale.

View near Heidelberg in Victoria, pen and ink drawing, circa 1858
(Source: Eugene von Guérard, National Gallery of Victoria)

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2   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online
3   James Boyce, *1835: The Founding of Melbourne & The Conquest of Australia*, Black Inc., 2011, pxi
4   Keelbundora stems from a European rendering of Kulbundora – the name of the eldest son of the important Wurundjeri *ngurungaeta* (essentially 'head man') Billibellary. ('Suburban Native Names', Argus 28 April 1906, p5). One of the earliest manifestations of local governance in the Port Phillip District (1840), the fluctuating borders of municipal Heidelberg mirrored its growth, as it was reformatted into a Road District (1860), Shire (1871) and then City (1934). It was amalgamated as the City of Banyule in 1994.
5   Donald S Garden, *Heidelberg: The Land and Its People 1838-1900*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p13
6   Robert P Whitworth, *Bailliere's Victorian Gazetteer*, F F Bailliere, 1879, pp237
7   Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, sections 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.5, and 2.3.10; and Janine Rizzetti, 'Heidelberg', in Richard Broome et al, eds., *Remembering Melbourne 1850-1960*, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 2016, p282
8   Thom's estate designation was inspired by a novel of the same name by Sir Walter Scott (1819).
9   Ivanhoe & Alphington Progress Society, *Beautiful Ivanhoe: the suburb of model homes and scenic charm*, Model Studio, 1900, SLV
10   Ivanhoe Station opened in 1888; however, inefficiencies in the Heidelberg-Melbourne railway line initially bedevilled growth.
11   Ivanhoe grew from roughly 2,000 residents in 1913 to nearly 8,000 by 1933 (*Victorian Year Books*, Australian Bureau of Statistics).
12   Don Garden, 'Ivanhoe', *eMelbourne,* School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008

Site-specific

The subject land was part of a 35-lot subdivision that was formalised during October 1913 that had been part of extensive holdings in the area of Phillip Champion Cresigny, bank inspector and William Lawson Davidson, accountant.[13] The lots were generally 60 x 200 feet (18.3 x 61 metres) and the subdivision was bound by Wallis Avenue (south) and Robin Hood Road (west), originally View Street.[14] The subdivision may not have been widely advertised, if at all,[15] as it was another four years before any lots were sold. The first sale was to John William Bainbridge, who acquired eight lots in 1917, including the subject site, when he was living in Banksia Street, Heidelberg.[16] Within two years, a house had been erected for Bainbridge on lots 33-35, with an address to Wilfred Road.[17] In May 1922, he acquired nearly all of the remaining lots in the subdivision (another 23).[18]
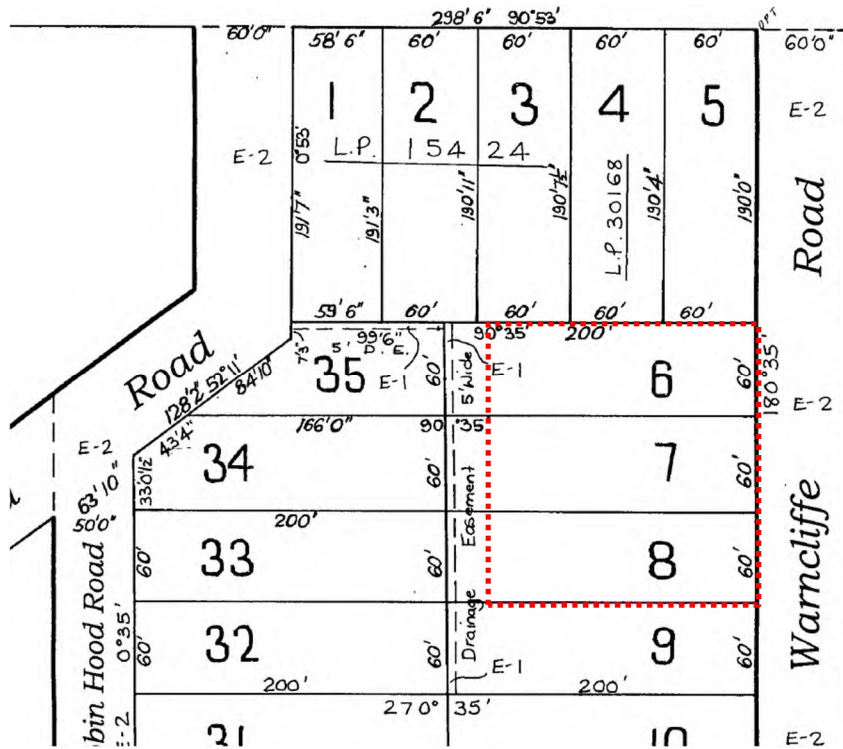
Subdivision, showing extent of subject site (Source: LP6217)

There was an extensive subdivision in this part of Ivanhoe during the 1910s, with the adjoining area to the west being the Warwick Estate, offered for sale in 1914,[19] and that to the east being the Charteris Estate during 1916.[20] A contemporary article highlights the attraction of the area.

> Land subdivision in the Heidelberg district is likely 'to be the most pronounced feature in' real estate in the near future. The 'beautiful Yarra valley, is now the one remaining segment of rural land in the metropolitan area. Air the rest/have been more or less reduced, to small paddocks and residential allotments in the past four or five years.[21]

Suburban development in the area commenced during the mid-1920s and the choice of the Education Department for a new State School in Ivanhoe East to the south on Warncliffe Road provided further impetus (acquired in 1926 from Bainbridge). At

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13	Certificates of Title, vol 2344, folio 777, and vol 3896, folio 073
14	Initially there were house allotments on the Lower Heidelberg Road frontage (Landata, LP6217).
15	Research on TROVE has not revealed any advertisements
16	Certificate of Title, vol 4043, folio 417 – lots nos 6-9 and 32-35. As such, he owned 31 of the 35 lots.
17	Bainbridge was listed in the *Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria* from 1919. He died in 1940 and eventually this land was sold to the Catholic Church to accommodate the Mother of God school.
18	Certificate of Title, vol 4573, folio 457
19	*Argus*, 14 February 1914, p2
20	Geo Parsons and Sons, 'Auction of the first section of the beautiful Charteris Estate at picturesque Ivanhoe', Haughton Collection, SLV. This brochure features contemporary images of the district.
21	'Heidelberg', *Herald*, 28 August 1913, p4

this time, the local Anglican community had to travel to St James Church at 252 Upper Heidelberg Road Ivanhoe (corner Noel Street), a considerable distance when motor cars were not widely affordable.[22]

On 12 December 1929, the Ivanhoe East Anglican community convened a meeting to organise church services and Sunday school classes in the area. Land in Warncliffe Road owned by J W Bainbridge was purchased by the Diocese in April 1930 (most of lots 6-8). Church services were initially held once a month at the recently completed East Ivanhoe State School (no. 4386) to the south from 31 August 1930. The name for the new community was adopted soon after and so the St George's Mission was established within the Parish of St James.[23] The subject site consisted of most of three lots (nos 6-8). The rural nature of the environs at this time is captured in the following photograph.

1928 view of Ivanhoe East from Maltravers Road
Approximate location of subject site indicated
(Source: Cyril Cummins, ed, *A Pictorial history of Heidelberg since 1836*, 1982, p95)

A sketch design for a hall, with a sanctuary that could be closed off, was prepared in 1931 by T E Routley of the St George's Committee and featured in a four-page pamphlet used for fund-raising:

> The Diocese has agreed that if £400 be raised it will make the deeds available in order that the necessary money may be borrowed to erect the hall, which will cost about £850, and we earnestly appeal to you to assist in making its early erection possible.[24]

A contemporary aerial photograph shows that the site was vacant at that time and that limited development had occurred in the vicinity, though mostly in Warncliffe Road – the school and five houses. The Bainbridge house, *Drumrossie*, is evident with a well-established garden and perimeter planting directly to the west of the subject place.

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22   Bruce Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe: a golden jubilee history 1929-79*, East Ivanhoe 1979, pp6-7
23   Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe*, p7; and Certificate of Title, vol 5650, folio 967
24   Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe*, pp8-9

1931 aerial, showing approximate location of subject site (dashed), *Drumrossie* (star) and Ivanhoe East State School (arrow)
(Source: Landata, Project no 1931, Run 17, Frame 3328)

The St George's Hall was opened on 1 March 1936 by the Archbishop, the Most Rev. F W Head. Designed to be extended, it consisted of two bays, both 20 x 12 feet, and was more modest in detail than the original sketch due to necessary economies. The Ladies Guild made a major contribution to the building fund, raising £260.[25]

Original hall design, 1931
(Source: B Skeggs, *St George's Anglican Church,* p9)

Completed hall, circa 1950s
(Source: B Skeggs, *St George's Anglican Church,* p13)

A Tudor Revival-style house opposite the site, which was constructed circa 1940, was acquired during the early 1960s as a vicarage. The house had initially been occupied by Mrs Martha Love for at least 15 years.[26]

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25   B Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* pp13-14
26   Sands & McDougalls directories.

The original extent of the hall, that is the eastern part, is evident in a 1945 aerial (below). More houses had been constructed adjacent on the east side of Warncliffe Road, including the Vicarage at no. 46, and street planting is evident.

1945 aerial, showing eastern half of the original hall completed.
The house now used as the vicarage opposite at no. 46 (arrow) had been constructed.
(Source: DELWP, Ringwood_849A1A, https://services.land.vic.gov.au/DELWPmaps/historical-photomaps/)

After the Second World War, the rapidly growing local population exacerbated the cramped quarters of the original section of the hall. Fundraising was undertaken from at least 1950 as the original section was capable of seating about 50 people and by May 1951, plans had been prepared for its extension and 'building was to commence soon.[27] This proposal however was not realised for another two years when the earlier building was doubled in length to the west. The original section of the hall was employed as a church – the altar was moved to the east end and furnished in a more church-like manner. Sliding doors separated the two sections but both could be used together if necessary.[28] The second part was opened by the Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Reverend Joseph Booth, on 13 December 1953.[29]

A new dedicated church however was the dream on the horizon and was noted in a contemporary article relating to the 1953 opening:

Parishioners of St. George's, Ivanhoe, have given church furnishings, costing hundreds of pounds, for the extension to St. George's hall to be used as a church. These have been designed so that they may be used in the permanent church when built.
Archbishop Booth will dedicate the extension tomorrow at 3 p.m., when the mayor of Heidelberg- (Cr. W. J. Boyd) and Mrs. Boyd will attend. The Archbishop will also unveil and dedicate a memorial stone.[30]

A 1954 aerial photograph, reproduced below, shows the full extent of the original hall and the increased development in the area including the nearby shops on the south side of Lower Heidelberg Road. *Drumbrossie* (formerly Bainbridge's house), adjoining to the west, remained in its extensive garden setting.

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27   'Work for Church and Hospital', *Age*, 11 May 1951, p5
28   Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* pp18-19
29   Foundation stone on north side of the earlier church/hall section
30   'Gifts by Parishioners', *Age*, 12 December 1953, p18

1954 aerial photograph, with full extent of original hall evident, subject place outlined in dashed red
(Source: Landata, Project no 174, Run 15, Frame 75)

With continuing growing enrolments in the Sunday School, and the newly established kindergarten, a Campaign Committee was formed in 1955 to create a separate Parish and expand the facilities at the site. The Diocese required the establishment of a vicarage as a pre-requisite to parish status being granted. To that end, the house at 46 Warncliffe Road, opposite the site was acquired in April 1957. A master plan was developed in 1958 and the noted architect Louis Williams, who was responsible for many Anglican projects, was approached to prepare drawings. The project was to be staged. However, over the next few years the priorities were changed, culminating with the appointment of the first vicar, Rev H R Bailey (1959-61) of the St Georges Parish, which was officially created on 1 December 1959. The second Rev, Norman Hill (1961-68), oversaw another shift in that applications from other architects were sought in early 1962.[31]

An initial letter to Grounds, Romberg and Boyd from the Vestry of St George's Church of England sought a submission, which was recorded as having been received by Robin Boyd on 20 March 1962. The practice responded indicating that sketches and estimates could be prepared by 13 May of that year. On 19 April 1962, Frederick Romberg met with representatives from the church when the budget was estimated at £50,000. The secretary of the Vestry of St George's Church of England wrote to Romberg on 27 April 1962 confirming his appointment and a detailed brief was prepared.[32] Among the directions given to the

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[31]   Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* pp20-27

[32]   Grounds, Romberg and Boyd Collection, SLV, MS 13363, various boxes (at the time being re-numbered and re-packaged). Other records relating to the site are contained in Box 34 (drawings), box 141 (Specification, March 1963). There also records in the public building files held at PROV relating to the site, which were not reviewed (VPRS 7882/ P1, unit 967, item 8270 and VPRS 7882/ P1, unit 1607, item 13565).

architects by the Vestry, the recent precedent of St Pauls in in Windella Avenue, Kew East (1960, Earle and Bunbury) in regard to its 'positioning of the choir, close contact between sanctuary and congregation, and use of the narthex for additional seating'.[33]

The commission was gained about the time the practice of Grounds, Romberg and Boyd dissolved in an acrimonious manner over the National Gallery of Victoria commission, which was taken over by (Sir) Roy Grounds, causing Frederick Romberg and Robin Boyd to form a separate practice. Within both practices, the principal architects are known to have generally worked on projects separately.

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND.   EAST IVANHOE.   STREET VIEW

Perspective with free-standing belltower – May 1962
(Source: RMIT design archives)

Romberg's initial drawings were well-received and adopted in principle on 29 May 1962. Authorisation was given in August to prepare the detailed plans and specifications and tenders were called in January 1963.[34]

By early-1963, the practice of 'Romberg and Boyd' was identified on the documentation. Generally, the internal correspondence includes the initials FR, but on one occasion RB was noted (presumably referring to Robin Boyd), possibly when Romberg was unavailable.[35]

The initials BGH appears on the drawings, referring to Bernice Harris, who also was a witness on the contract drawings. Bernice Harris, an associate of Romberg & Boyd, was responsible for the working sketches, detailed drawings and the specification.[36] 'Missie' Harris, as she was known, was evidently a practically minded person who generally took responsibility for contract documentation, supervision and administration, together with the general business of 'running the office'.[37]

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[33]   Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* p27
[34]   Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* pp27-28
[35]   Grounds, Romberg and Boyd Collection, SLV, MS 133363. Initials of other members of staff include BM, BC and FR. It is not known who these refer to.
[36]   Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* p31
[37]   Berenice Harris, 'Homage to Robin Boyd', *Architecture in Australia*, vol 62, no 2, April 1973, p77, reproduced in Deborah White, 'Women and Architecture Revisited', *Parlour*, 28 March 2018, available online
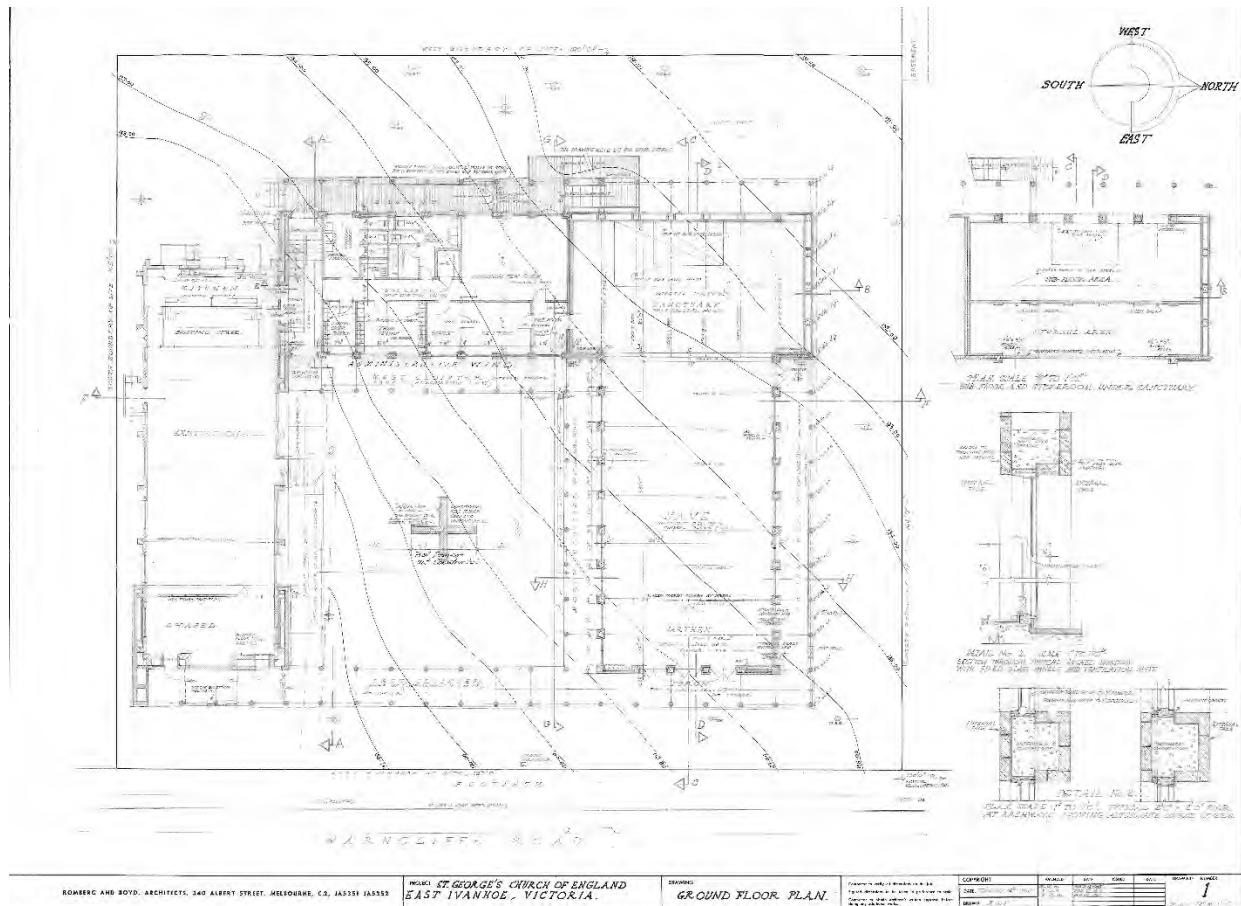
Ground Floor Plan, dated 15 January 1963
(Source: St Georges Church archives)

Over the course of 1963, the financial realities were resolved. In May, the Vestry of St George's placed a cap of £60,000 on the project and in June, approval was received from the Archbishop if the amount borrowed was less than £45,000. A loan of that amount was secured by September. The tender from R F Anderson P/L was accepted for £61,614, although excising the belltower, which would have cost another £3,081. Building work commenced in October and the foundation stone was laid on 8 December 1963.[38] The original/front part of the earlier hall was demolished to accommodate the new works.

By May 1964, the mural had been installed in the sanctuary wall and was said to be first of its kind in Australia, consisting of glass melted onto the bricks. In June 1964, preparations were underway for the opening later in the year. At that time, the brickwork of the church and crypt had been completed, and work was progressing on the rear two-storey part.[39]

The building took eleven months to complete and was dedicated by the Archbishop of Melbourne, Frank Woods, on 7 November 1964 who marvelled at the broad range of facilities incorporated and what an asset they would be to the community – 'St George's with its church, vestries, intellectual and social activities rooms under the one roof, point to the Church's mission of caring for the bodies and minds of people, as well as their souls'.[40] The complex was dedicated as 'St George's Peace Memorial Church and Parish Centre' according to the official plaque. The 'Peace Memorial' came to be officially included in the title of the new complex as several members of the church leadership group had been greatly affected by their experiences of serving in WWII and hence sought to have the whole site dedicated to peace and as a memorial to all those who had served in a time of war or conflict.[41]

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[38] Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* pp28-29. Rupert F Anderson were responsible for Royal Freemasons Homes, Horsham Base Hospital, Burnley Horticultural College, and Horsham Town Hall (1938-39).
[39] Grounds, Romberg and Boyd Collection SLV, MS 133363. Details from 'The Sword of St George', vol 4, no 4, June 1964, p1
[40] Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* p32
[41] Information provided by Rev Canon John Sanderson, 4 September 2021

Church interior, dedication plaque

The T-shaped church was 104 feet long (31.7m) and 40 feet (12.2m) wide to the nave though widening to 56 feet (17m) at the sanctuary; all sections with a ceiling height of 27 feet (8.2m). Three hundred people could be accommodated in the nave with another one hundred people in the narthex if necessary. Audio-visual equipment was concealed and a large crypt included. The two-storey section (west wing) links the new church with the remaining earlier hall section consisting of two vestries, kindergarten, storage areas at ground floor with activities hall and kitchen to the first floor.[42]

Frontage, 1964/65 (note incorrect catalogue entry at SLV)
Note the dark colour/finish of the poles, gutters and window frames with the contrasting muted colour of the arched facias
(Source: SLV, Peter Willie Collection, H91.244-4224)

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[42]   Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* pp30-32

The fabric entailed 200,000 modular bricks manufactured by Selkirk of Ballarat and a Brownbuilt steel deck roof, which follows the profile of the sloping ground. The 70 lofty columns – oiled gum tree trunks more than 30 feet high [9.15 metres] – were provided by H Beecham and Co. The church furniture was manufactured by F Fallow & Sons.[43]

A request for memorials resulted in several generous contributions, including the pulpit, sanctuary furniture, and pews, as well as the solid bronze font and towards the never-realised bell tower. The hall was named after Gwylym Jack Russell Evans, a key parishioner who died in 1963.

The mosaic mural of 'Christ in Glory' – 14 foot (4.3 metres) high in baked bricks – was designed by Jean Atkins, a member of the congregation. The design was painted in an earthenware glaze onto 244 ordinary smooth modular bricks, the bricks numbered, and then refired at 1080 degrees centigrade before being re-assembled by the bricklayers into the wall 'like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle'.[44] Jean had studied art at RMIT and although experienced with pottery, this was a new process for her. The limited tonal palette is in part a result of the high temperatures required to manufacture the bricks.[45]

The distinctive bronze baptismal front was created by Lithuanian-born sculptor Vincez Jemantis (1922-2001).[46] Jemantis emigrated to Australia in 1948, initially living in Western Australia, before moving to Victoria in 1950, where he worked variously as house painter, toy factory worker, furniture factory worker, and a draughtsman with the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission of Victoria. In 1961 he commenced working in the art/sculpture department at RMIT, where he remained until his retirement in 1987.[47]

Circa 1964/65 – Rear (north-west corner)
(Source: SLV, Peter Willie Collection, H91.244-4223)

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43   Romberg & Boyd, Press release, 3 October 1967 and 'Memorandum - St George's Church of England, East Ivanhoe', 4 October 1967, RMIT Design archives

44   Romberg & Boyd, 'Memorandum - St George's Church of England, East Ivanhoe', 4 October 1967, [held at

45   Skeggs, *St. George's Anglican Church, East Ivanhoe,* p31. Atkins' involvement included regularly overseeing the manufacturing process at Selkirk's Ballarat brickworks and assisting with the installation in order to avoid the bricklayers tossing the specially-fired bricks.

46   The spelling of his name is either Vincez Jemantis or Vincas Jomantas.

47   Biography associated with two images of the font at SLV, H2007.33/278 + 279. At RMIT, Jemantis as initially appointed as a temporary instructor in art. For two years he shared a studio with painter Leonard French in Cheltenham. In 1965 he was appointed as Lecturer in Sculpture, RMIT, becoming Senior Lecturer in Sculpture during 1973.

Photographs by Peter Willie show the eucalypts at the rear of the site must have been purposely retained. The two trees in the south side of the courtyard had also been planted. These photographs show the building essentially as it is except for the original dark colour/finish to the bush poles (colonnade), gutters and window frames and the contrasting muted colour of the arched fascias, which have all been painted in red-brown scheme.

Initially a smaller organ was concealed behind a curtain however funds were raised for the current organ, which was installed in 1989. The Fincham Pipe organ consists of 1,193 pipes and is larger/more elaborate than most employed in churches, as it is more consistent with a type used in concert halls.[48] It was built from pre-existing materials by Australian Pipe Organs of Keysborough.[49]

Some minor changes are known to have occurred such as replacement of the original blue carpet to the interior of the church.

Frederick Romberg (1913-92)

Frederick Romberg was born to Else (Elspeth) and Kurt Romberg, judge, in Tsingtao, a former German enclave in east China, during 1913.[50]

On returning to Germany, the family lived in Hamburg and Munich, but after the Nazis came to power, they left the country. Having studied both architecture and law for a while in Germany, Romberg continued with architectural studies at the ETH in Zurich from 1933. There he became familiar with the technique of reinforced concrete, especially as he was tutored by an expert in the field, Otto Salvisberg. He came to Melbourne in 1938 on a travelling scholarship to escape the political situation in Europe.[51]

In Melbourne, Romberg soon gained independent commissions. During the 1940s, he was responsible for two significant apartment buildings located near each other on Queens Road: *Newburn* at no. 30 (1939-42) with Mary Turner Shaw and *Stanhill* (1940-45) at no 34. Some of his other notable early projects are apartments: *Glenunga* at 2 Hornsurgh Grove, Armadale (1940-1) with Mary Turner Shaw and *Hilstan*, Nepean Highway, Brighton (1950), demolished during the 1970s. His work of this period has been defined as being a fusion of European modernism and 'Heimatstil', or homeland style, a Swiss movement in which it was acceptable to use traditional materials, wood and stone, in a contemporary design. The design of these buildings is multi-faceted in regards forms, and in some cases, also materials.

From the early 1940s, few private construction projects were possible, and during the Second World War most architects were seconded to work on military projects including Romberg. It was not until the early 1950s, that material shortages were alleviated and that architects were gainfully employed again. About this time, in 1953, he entered into partnership with Roy Grounds and Robin Boyd to form Grounds Romberg and Boyd, which was the most eminent architectural practice in Melbourne during the 1950s. Although in partnership, the three architects rarely collaborated and projects have been usually credited to one architect in particular. With the departure of Grounds in 1962, the practice was renamed Romberg and Boyd, which continued from East Melbourne until Boyd's premature death in 1971.[52]

Within both iterations of the practice, Romberg became the specialist in industrial, commercial, and institutional work. Leading projects included the ETA Factory, Braybrook (1957-61), which was a landmark example of modern factory design. He also began to experiment with the centrally planned, geometric architecture that Grounds had pioneered with his residential work early during the 1950s such as the Sacred Heart Girls' School, Oakleigh (1954) at and Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Canberra (1960) were both square in plan, while the Ormond College buildings Picken Court (1959), MacFarland Library (1962), and McCaughey Court (1965) were polygonal. The Microbiology building (1965) at the University of Melbourne was more overtly Brutalist.

Romberg was, however, appointed the Professor of Architecture at the University of Newcastle in 1965, where he remained for a decade before returning to Melbourne. After his return to Melbourne in 1975, he continued a small practice into the early 1980s.[53]

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48   Information provided by Rev Canon John Sanderson, 4 September 2021.
49   https://www.stgeorgeseastivanhoe.org/wordpress/organist/ , accessed 17.01.2022
50   Phillip Goad, *Melbourne Architecture*, The Watermark Press, 1999, p250
51   Conrad Hamann, 'Roy Grounds, Frederick Romberg and Robin Boyd', in Howard Tanner, ed, *Architects of Australia*, 1981, p132
52   Hamann, 'Roy Grounds, Frederick Romberg and Robin Boyd', p129
53   Hamann, 'Roy Grounds, Frederick Romberg and Robin Boyd', p139

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

- Theme 6: Community and cultural life

Comparative Analysis

There are nine churches included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in Banyule.[54] Of these, only one dates from the second half of the 20th century:

- *St Bernadette's Church*, 89-91 Bond Street, Ivanhoe (HO181) – a modernist Catholic church designed by Robert O Ellis and constructed 1961-62. It has a prow-like form and curved sidewalls of cream brick with concrete structural elements. Some design components, particularly the elliptical tower and random window configuration (sidewalls), reflect the influence of Le Corbusier's seminal *Chapel of Notre Dame du Haut* at Ronchamp (1955). *St Bernadette's* has a traditional interior, consisting of a long nave and remote sanctuary.

The above church and the other proposed for a HO by this Study (*Mother of God Catholic Church*) are more traditional, or recognisable as churches in their form as they have pitched roofs, while reflecting a contemporary design approach and detailing that indicate their period of construction.[55]

While St Bernadette's and the nearby *Mother of God* are distinctive examples at the local level, *St George Peace Memorial Church* is more distinguished and/or unique at a broader level. There are few if any major, urban buildings where bush poles have been employed on such a grand scale. Employment of bush poles has strong associations with vernacular Australian architecture, especially agricultural buildings, as well trestle bridges. Roy Grounds employed them during the 1930s on two residential projects – *Lyncroft* and *Chateau Tabilk*.[56] A tall bush pole colonnade had also previously been used by Robin Boyd at the *Black Dolphin Motel*, Merimbula (NSW) in 1958-60. Romberg himself employed them again to the wrap around verandah of the *Bangerang Cultural Centre* in Shepparton of 1978.

Employment of strict geometric footprint was a standard feature of Romberg's later work. He had employed the square plan at *Sacred Heart Girls School*, Oakleigh (1954) and the *Holy Trinity Lutheran Church*, Canberra (1960). The former includes a central courtyard and distinct areas of solid and void relating to functional requirements similar to St George and the latter is defined by a central spire. He had used a similarly exaggerated verandah consisting of tall supports at the *Lutheran College,* Croydon (1958).[57]

St George Peace Memorial Church is distinguished from many other late 20th century churches by its cuboid form and lack of an instantly recognised element associated with Christian religious buildings such as a spire-like element, although a tall belfry was proposed but not realised. Another notable example of a cuboid form being employed in Melbourne about this time is the *St James Anglican Church* at 1461 High Street, Glen Iris of 1959 by Bogle Banfield and Associates.

Intactness

Intact

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[54]   HO14, HO78, HO86, HO88, HO108, HO115, HO181, HO182, and HO183

[55]   In the municipality, Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell were also responsible for designing the small chapel at Ivanhoe Grammar School (1981It has a slate-clad domed roof with a cross at the apex and appears to be constructed of light-tinted concrete blocks with sections of window walls. The chapel is located adjacent to the east side of The Ridgeway, roughly mid-way between Latham and Rose streets, but is largely obscured by fencing and foliage. See Norman Day, 'School Chapel', *Age*, 15 December 1981, p10

[56]   Jill Sheppard Heritage Consultants, 'Penders - The Grounds & Myer Holiday Retreat, Mimosa Rocks National Park CMP', December 2002, p67

[57]   Harriet Edquist, ed, *Frederick Romberg, the Architecture of Migration 1938-1975*, RMIT Press, 2000, pp45-46, 50-54, 95

Previous Assessment

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommended for Stage 2

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls   Yes (timber elements)
Internal Alteration Controls   Yes (church interior)
Tree Controls   ~~Yes (four eucalypts to north-west corner, two exotics to courtyard)~~ No
Outbuildings and/or fences   No

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, March 2021)

ENGLISH HOUSE

Address	50-52 Philip Street, Lower Plenty
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1947
Period	Postwar
Date Inspected	January 2021

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

English House at 50 Philip Street, Lower Plenty is significant. It was constructed in 1947 for returned serviceman, 'Frank' English, to a design by Alistair Knox. The 'foreman' of the building crew was the artist and mud-brick builder Sonja Skipper, then based at *Montsalvat* in Eltham. In the mid-1960s, new owners – the eclarté weavers Edith 'Mollie' Grove and Catherine Hardess/Hardress – engaged Knox to undertake timber additions, extending the dwelling to the west and north as well as providing an additional bay in the east. Around 1996, a new wing was constructed in the west and other alterations occurred, including the rebuilding or recladding of some mid-1960s walls in mud brick.

The significant element is the original (1947) footprint of *English House*, including the skillion profile of its roof, exposed timber beams, broad eaves, adobe chimney and rendered cap, walls and piers of mud brick/adobe, tripartite full-height and triple-leafed French windows (including those relocated), timber lintel (north elevation), original entrance (south elevation), and paved rear patio.

Internally, the mud brick/corbelled fireplace and inglenook (living room), including benches and timber lintel are also significant.

Later additions are not significant, although the utilisation of mud brick for walling in the circa 1996 development complements the aesthetic of *English House.* The front and rear 'bush style' gardens enhance the setting of the place.

How is it Significant?

English House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

English House is of historical significance as the first mud brick building designed by Alistair Knox, an acclaimed practitioner of environmental building. The construction of English House was undertaken by a small amateur crew, including Knox, led by the talented Sonja Skipper, the only person involved in the project with hands-on experience with adobe. Her 'foreman' role was undoubtedly rare in the highly gendered building trade at the time. The small size and frugal/reductive character of the original *English House* is indicative of key postwar dynamics, especially austerity conditions, building restrictions and the gathering influence of the modern movement. Its mud-brick walls and utilisation of 'bush timber' attest to the problems faced by the aspirational postwar homeowner – a dire shortage of conventional materials. At completion, the small-scale *English House* attracted widespread public attention as a successful experimental model in unorthodox/austerity construction that allowed for a fluid, indoor-outdoor, 'modern' living environment. Such coverage was important in fuelling the wider mud-brick movement over the late 1940s and animating Knox's building career. More broadly, *English House* is illustrative of the emergence of a postwar community in the Lower Plenty area, associated with Eltham at the time, distinguished by its creativity and embrace of 'alternative' environmental living. This aspect is amplified by the long association of the noted eclarté weavers 'Mollie' Grove and Catherine Hardess, who are responsible for much of the tree planting at the property. (Criterion A)

English House is of aesthetic significance as a striking mud-brick design in the municipality, the original core of which remains broadly intact. Alistair's Knox's first attempt at mud-brick building reflects a bold experiment in challenging conditions dictated by lingering wartime rationing and a limited budget. At *English House*, Knox produced an inspired merging of the 'primordial' and robust aesthetic of handwork mud brick and 'bush timbers' with the core tenants of the postwar modern movement, such as careful siting, solar responsivity and a pared-down, 'honest' character. The result was a highly unusual design for the late 1940s, the underlying elements of which came to epitomise his later, influential concept of environmental building (informally, the 'Eltham style'). The bank of elegant timber-framed, triple-leafed French windows, flanked by thick mud-brick piers, are emphatic reflections of Knox's engagement with a then-nascent vein of regionalised Melbourne modernism that continued to evolve over the postwar period. The substantial adobe fireplace and inglenook at the heart of the original footprint is a noteworthy, increasingly rare feature. (Criterion E)

Description

English House is situated parallel to the contour and off centre on a double allotment that falls progressively away from Philip Street. The building is located below the level of the street on a platform excavated from the hillside. The setback between the dwelling and street has been built up considerably since construction to align with the latter and the primary residence is now reached by descending stairs. The front garden is comprised of native vegetation, low rock and timber sleeper walls, and features two gravelled car parking spaces. Another path meanders to the east, providing access to a contemporary freestanding studio residence (no 52).[1]

As *English House* is largely concealed or obscured by its siting and orientation or screened by vegetation, this assessment depends in part on aerial photography, contemporary photographs and architectural drawings.[2]

English House has undergone three known phases of alteration and additions, each of which has expanded its original footprint. These are depicted in the annotated photograph below.

The first iteration of *English House*, constructed in 1947, had a small rectangular footprint of around 84 square metres that contained an open living area/kitchen, a bedroom (which could be curtained off) and a small bathroom (left of the entrance). This size and basic layout reflected postwar economic constraints and strict size restrictions.

The 1947 *English House* was capped by a skillion roof supported by five 7.6m 'yellow box tree trunks' sourced from the Diamond Valley (likely salvaged). These beams are housed centrally in mud-brick piers of the north elevation, sloping towards the south wall, and provid wide eaves. At least three of the original beams remain and continue to be visible both externally and to the interior. It is possible that the westmost beam may still be in situ. An original exposed short beam east of the entrance may also

1   Richard Peterson and Bohdan Kuzyk, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986): modernism, environment and the spirit of place', *RMIT Design Archives Journal*, vol 4, no 1, 2014, p5

2   (Photographs) Alistair Knox website, http://alistairknox.org/buildings/214; (Available drawing) Alistair Knox, 'Additions and alterations to houses at Lots 17 & 18 (Elizabeth Street), Lower Plenty now 52 Philip Street for Miss E M Grove', *Collection of architectural drawings mostly for earth houses in Melbourne and Victoria*, SLV, YLTAD27 24; (Document) Llewellyn Pritchard (architect), *Specification of Materials to be used and worked to be performed: in the construction and completion of alterations and additions to existing residence at 52 Phillip* [sic] *Street Lower Plenty VIC 3093*, July 1993, provided by the City of Banyule (note the drawings referenced in the specification could not be located)

survive. Initially, the ceiling was of hardwood cross beams with nailed boards; however, this arrangement appears to have been replaced by new timber boards with batten-covered joints.

Close-up aerial photograph of *English House* with approximate extent of construction phases shaded
Red shading, 1947 – note the blue arrow indicates the location of the external chimney breast and related internal fireplace and inglenook
Yellow shading, mid-1960s additions
Green shading, circa 1996 additions
(Source: Nearmap, March 2021)

The original skillion roof was covered in an insulating foil and three layers of Malthoid (bituminous felt) and creek gravel. This finish presumably deteriorated, probably due to UV exposure. The roof is now clad in metal decking with a standing seam, which continues to later skillion additions and extensions. A metal fascia of similar width to its timber predecessor and incorporating guttering is now evident (originally, *English House* only had downpipes).

In the south elevation of the original section, the projecting mud-brick chimney breast and fascia-breaking broad shaft with cement rendered cap has been retained.

The walls of the 1947 *English House* were constructed of adobe, colloquially mud bricks, with concrete footings.[3] These sun-dried bricks, dug and produced on-site, were larger (about 23cm thick) than conventional bricks and rectangular in shape. Initially, the bricks were rendered with a mixture of cow dung and 'loamy soil' with either distemper or whitewashed employed inside. The 1993 *Specifications* note that both new and existing mud-brick walls were to be finished with 'mud brick render'

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[3]   Mud brick methodology – 'Take mud mixed with water the day previously … and mix with old straw … to a consistency which will stand on its own. Compress this into an iron mould which can be removed immediately. Initial drying depends on the weather, and varies from one to three days, but they should stand for at least 14 days before being placed in the building … One man, working an eight-hour day, can make 150 bricks ...' (Esmé Johnston, 'Built from the good earth', *Australian Home Beautiful*, June 1949, p29, 56)

prepared by Alan Grimes.[4] This new coat, which has presumably remained (or been renewed), allows for the rough appearance of the mud brick to remain appreciable.

The varied forms of earth construction have ancient roots and were practised by settler communities across Australia, becoming a well-known vernacular building technique over the 19th century. During that period, in Victoria, adobe construction was especially common in the Central Goldfields and some of Melbourne's outer-suburban areas.[5] Knox's use of mud bricks at *English House* – inspired by his experience of *Montsalvat* (see Site-Specific) – came on the back of a minor revival of the tradition from the mid-1930s, concentrated in the Eltham area.[6]

The majority of the mud brick utilised in the construction of the 1947 *English House* endures. At least four of the five piers remain, as does the south elevation wall. The original external east wall became an internal partition in the mid-1960s and has been progressively removed to provide a larger opening to the new kitchen (mid-1960s east bay addition), but sizeable wall nibs remain visible in the interior. The original west external wall was also transformed as part of the mid-1960s new work into an internal wall and may still be present in some form. The partition wall that divides the entrance from the partly enclosed bedroom appears to have been preserved.

A defining attribute of *English House* is its largely 'open' north elevation, which capitalised on the elevated views available from the property and the solar cycle. In contrast to the solidity of the other walls, Knox's north elevation was formed from four bays created by five thick adobe piers (approximately 91cm x 61cm) infilled with full-height, triple-leafed French windows. The latter were timber-framed, with each leaf divided into three glazed units by slender bars. The lintel was a 'primitive' beam of 'bush timber' (now overpainted). Knox would later describe his repeated use of muscular piers alternating with large glazed openings as a means of capturing a 'natural' rhythm and providing a plane for the strong interplay of light and shadow. In combination with the pronounced eave overhang, it also reflects his 'reverence' for natural caves and the Wrightian/Griffins-influenced concept of 'primitive' shelter.[7]

Close-up of the original north (rear) elevation of *English House*, showing original scale: 'Piers accentuate depth of wall near French windows.' (Source: Johnston, 'Built from the good earth', *AHB*, June 1948, p29)

The north elevation connects to a raised patio paved with random stone pavers (likely basalt or slate), which is original.

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4   Pritchard, *Specification of Materials*, p12, 14
5   Julie Willis, 'Earth Construction', in Philip Goad and Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University, 2012, p220
6   Miles Lewis, 'Section Three: Earth and Stone – 3.2 Adobe or Clay Lump', *Australian Building: A Cultural Investigation*, p19, available online
7   Philip James Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, PhD Thesis, Department of Architecture and Building University of Melbourne, September 1992, chapter 3, p58; Alistair Knox, *Living in the environment*, Mullaya, 1978, chapter 67, available at the Alistair Knox website, https://alistairknox.org/chapters/67

Beyond the substantial chimney breast, the south elevation, 'the façade' of *English House*, was largely blank – only punctured by a deeply recessed door opening in the west and a square double window bank (probably casements) to the east. This entrance still functions as such, but it is unknown whether the solid timber boarded door remains. The eastern windows were extended towards the floor in the mid-1960s (see below). Otherwise, the 1947 extent of the south elevation is largely intact.

In the mid-1960s, new occupants – 'Mollie' Grove and Catherine Hardess – engaged Knox to undertake additions and alterations at *English House*. The floor plan for this work is reproduced below. Key changes included the provision of a new eastern bay with proportions similar to the existing (encompassing a kitchen) and the extension of the bedroom via a northern projection – both in timber weatherboard. The drawings show that the original tripartite French windows of the westmost bay were to be relocated into the east face of the northern extension (allowing access to the patio), which appears to have occurred, along with the provision of timber-framed toplights (non-original).

At this time, the house's footprint was also expanded in the west with a new bathroom, WC, laundry, gallery, courtyard pergola and carport . This new work was also clad in walls of timber weatherboard and extended the primary skillion or covered it with a separate skillion (since removed). The east internal wall of the original bathroom was deleted, incorporating this space into the entrance.
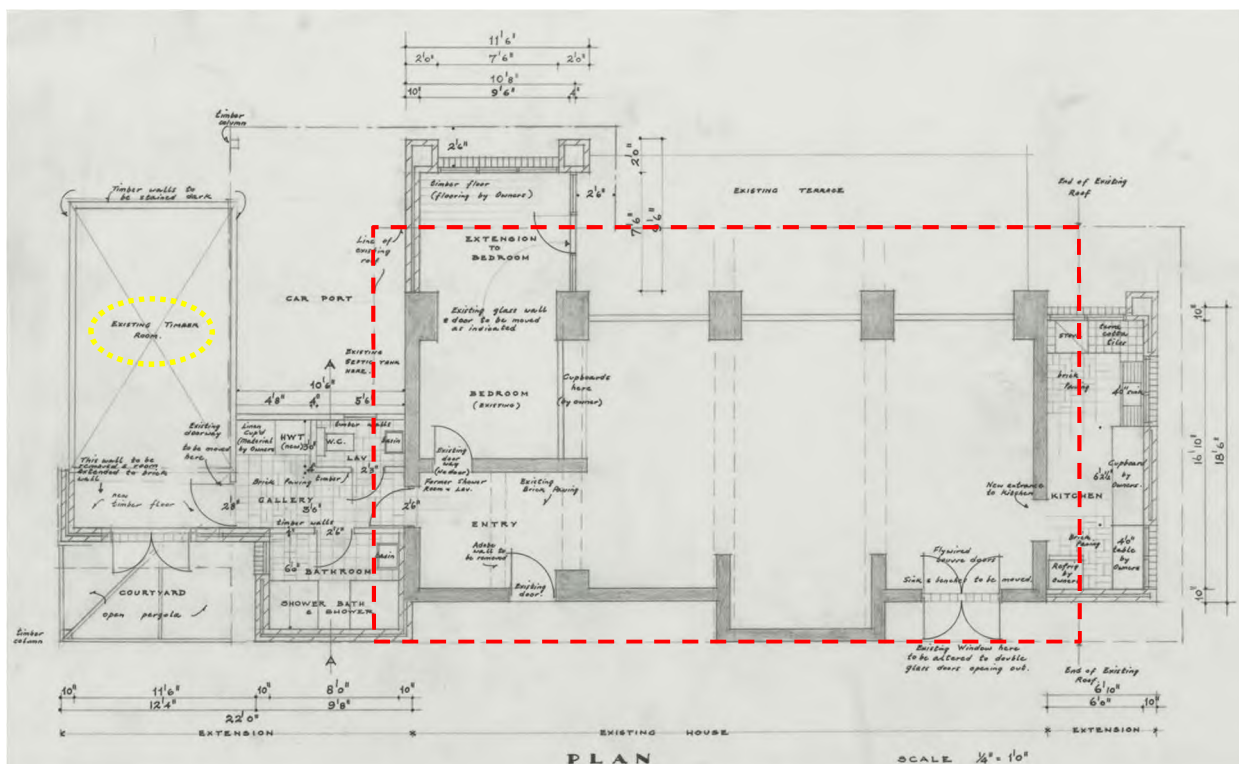
Extract from mid-1960s drawing showing alterations and additions to *English House* by Knox – north is top of image
Note some of the new work depicted was later modified or removed
The 'Existing Timber Room' (circled in yellow) west of *English House* was constructed after the mid-1950s and is no longer extant
The extent of the 1947 roof is outlined in dashed red
Dark shaded thick walls indicate mud brick
(Source: Alistair Knox, 'Additions and alterations to houses at Lots 17 & 18 (Elizabeth Street), Lower Plenty now 52 Philip Street for Miss E M Grove', *Collection of architectural drawings mostly for earth houses in Melbourne and Victoria*, SLV, YLTAD27 24)

Around 1996, *English House* underwent a third addition, designed by the Eltham-based architect Llewellyn Pritchard. A new volume was added to the west, extending the building's footprint right up to the property boundary. The mid-1960s carport and front courtyard appear to have been subsumed or rationalised as part of this development. The 1996 *Specifications* detail that this new wing was to have a base course of bagged brick with walls of mud brick ('to match the dimensions of the existing mud-brick walls from an approved manufacturer') in stretcher bond. Both new and existing mud bricks were to be rendered with 'an

approved mud render finish prepared by Alan Grimes'. New lintels were also noted as Oregon timber.[8] As part of this work, Knox's mid-1960s eastern timber bay was rebuilt or reclad in mud brick, an action that may have occurred to other mid-1960s timber walls, including (at least) the northern bedroom extension.

To the interior of *English House*, the 'massive' adobe fireplace remains a dominant feature within the 1947 footprint. This distinctive element comprises a corbelled fireplace and a rare remaining example of an inglenook (a recessed space beside a fireplace), which includes two timber/mud-brick benches and an exposed timber lintel.[9] Tiling to the hearth and deck appear to be later additions. Timber floorboards in the 1947 footprint may be original.

The back yard of *English House* slopes markedly towards the rear boundary. It accommodates numerous mature native/indigenous trees and rock/sleeper retaining walls. The place's 'natural' bush aesthetic likely stems from the residency, between the mid-1960s and early 1980s, of Grove and Hardess.[10] To the side and rear, the property is surrounded by a non-original high timber paling fence.

English House from Philip Street

As Knox's first mud-brick project, *English House* yields insight into an idiom later described by its designer as 'environmental building' – a multifarious concept that sought the close integration of structure and site and infused earth construction with rising contemporary interests in sustainability and informal/alternative modes of living.[11] Adobe was central to Knox's then-budding philosophy. A few years later, in what could have been a description of *English House*, he discussed his use of the material in the pages of the *Australian Home Beautiful*:

> With earth building, beauty can be expressed simply: natural and honest treatment of the walls so that they retain some of the primeval quality of earth; a true sense of topography through the proper handling of the site; a strong sense of shelter by deft use of thick walls so that

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8   Pritchard, *Specification of Materials*, p12, 14
9   Inglenooks were prominent features of the Arts & Crafts movement, a manifestation of traditional values associated with hearth and home. The majority of Knox's postwar mud-brick houses had inglenooks.
10   The increased acceptance of native vegetation and the absence of lawns and formal layouts was marked from the mid-1960s; popularised by influential publications, such as Betty Maloney and Jean Walker, *Designing Australian Bush Gardens* (1966)
11   Knox, *Living in the environment*, chapter 71, http://alistairknox.org/chapters/71; and Rachel Goldlust, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986) and the Birth of Environmental Building in Australia', *Arcadia*, Autumn 2016, no 18, Rachel Carson Centre for Environment and Society, available online, para 1

they can cast deep shadows at the reveals; the use of simple masses… proportions that are unpretentious and fundamental, not frivolous. No material is more responsive to human expression than mud, provided the initial objectives are not lost sight of – retention of its primeval character, and absolute avoidance of nonsense.[12]

In the context of postwar Melbourne design, characterised by its crop of 'hero' architects boldly exploring the structural and aesthetic possibilities of universal, industrially produced materials, Knox's dogged return to the vernacular stood out.[13] Latent within his concept of environmental building were the principles of organic architecture, as shaped by the work and writings of the American architectural master, Frank Lloyd Wright. In particular, the latter's pared-down Usonian houses (oversailing eaves, robust wall to the street, large opening to the internal garden, focal fireplace/hearth) proved influential for Knox, who seems to have been aware of Wright by the immediate postwar years.[14]

Knox also cites as influential the cohesive formwork, 'visual totality' and engagement with light/shadow seen in the work of the first government architect, the emancipist forger Francis Greenway, and Walter Burley Griffin (although not appearing to recognise the important contribution made by Marion Mahony Griffin to her husband's practice).[15] While never communicated in his writings, Knox's debt to the entrenched Arts & Crafts movement – particularly its political idealism and valorisation of craftsmanship – is also clear.

In other respects, *English House* (at least both the 1947 and mid-1960s modification) is decidedly modernist.[16] The core doctrines of the postwar modern movement, ranging from sensitive site and solar orientation to an emphasis on strong indoor/outdoor relationships, floor plans that prioritised spatial flow, and the eschewing of unnecessary detail, are all conveyed by its design. Knox's ensuring ability over the late 20th-century to merge modern living with adobe and a bushland block (natural or contrived) underpins the development of an authentic regional idiom, colloquially the 'Eltham style', with which he was intimately related.

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12   Alistair Knox, 'Down to Earth Housing', Section 3, *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1953, p14
13   Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, chapter 3, p58
14   Alistair Knox, *We are what we stand on: A Personal History of the Eltham Community*, Adobe Press,1980, p11
15   Knox, *Living in the environment*, chapter 67, https://alistairknox.org/chapters/67; and Knox, *A Middle Class Man*, chapter 22
16   Peterson and Kuzyk, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986): modernism, environment and the spirit of place', p21

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-William people, who inhabited and managed the landscape for millennia and remain culturally connected. The fertile confluence of the Plenty River and the Yarra River/*Birrarung* and adjoining stringy-bark forests hosted squatters from 1837 and was soon after referred to as the 'Lower Plenty'. Much of this area had been alienated by the close of the decade and considered to be of better quality than land elsewhere in the Parish of Nillumbik.[17]

Sizable land parcels and absentee owners predominated over the 19th century, with a small community of tenant farmers responsible for clearing the emergent locality. The rough track linking Heidelberg and the Village of Eltham, which passed through the Lower Plenty, was proclaimed a road in 1840 (now Old Eltham Road), and the Plenty River bridged two years later.[18] The present-day Main Road (initially called Eltham Road) was laid in 1869.[19]

More intensive subdivision followed in the wake of the First World War, although the locale remained sparsely populated and a 'semi-suburban and rural area' into the 1950s.[20] Reminiscing about the postwar years, Alistair Knox described cycling through the area, alongside the émigré architect Frederick Romberg, describing the Lower Plenty at that stage as a 'wide undulating … savannah landscape' dotted with 'Primeval redgums of enormous size'.[21] The suburb's geographic connection with and administration by the District (later Shire) of Eltham meant that the Lower Plenty was also shaped by the vibrant, vigorous, environmentally-conscious community that materialised in postwar Eltham.[22] From the late 1940s, mud-brick dwellings (built or influenced by Knox) arose (alongside conventional houses) as well as other designs that displayed a clear organic/regional expression:

> Twelve miles from Melbourne, the … [Lower Plenty] is still largely covered with scrub gums and since the housing is nearly all contemporary, the natural appearance of the locality has not been obliterated. More often than not, the modern house has been built to blend, rather than stand apart from its surroundings.[23]

From the early 1960s, residential development was prominent, as was a fashion towards substantial, up-market houses situated on largescale allotments. Open spaces and a general natural/rustic setting remain prevalent throughout Lower Plenty, with a peri-rural feel remaining predominant in its southern reaches.

Photograph from a land sale brochure showing the rural landscape west from the old Lower Plenty Bridge, dated 1920s (Source: Eltham District Historical Society, *Victorian Collections*, 00180)

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17   'Nillumbik' may stem from the Indigenous word *nyilumbik*, meaning 'bad, stupid or red earth'. (Jill Barnard, 'Nillumbik Shire', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, available online; and Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online)

18   The Plenty River was named in 1835 by Joseph T Gellibrand. Its designation as a river was more warranted before the formation of the Yan Yean Reservoir in the mid-19th century, which reduced its flow. Hoddle referred to it as the 'Yarra Rivulet'.

19   The 1843 bridge was replaced in 1865 by the existing 'Old Lower Plenty Bridge' (HO106).

20   Alan Marshall, *Pioneers & Painters: One Hundred Years of Eltham and its Shire*, Thomas Nelson, 1971, p84

21   Alistair Knox, *We Are What We Stand On: a personal history of the Eltham Community*, Adobe Press, 1980

22   The Lower Plenty and Montmorency were transferred to the newly formed City of Banyule in 1994. ('Lower Plenty', *Victorian Places*, 2014, available online; and Andrew Lemon, 'Lower Plenty', *eMelbourne*, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, available online; and Context, BTEH, p37)

23   Rick Campbell, 'Suburban Living, but with hills and bush', *Age*, 9 November 1968, p23.

Site-specific

The subject land derives from the roughly 384-hectare purchase (Portion 2, Parish of Nillumbik) made in 1840 by the Corkonian, Benjamin Baxter.[24] He had arrived in Sydney Town in 1837 as a Captain in the 50th (Queen's Own) Regiment of Foot, charged with escorting a convict transport. Sensing opportunities in the embryonic Port Phillip District, Baxter acquired a Depasturing Licence, ran cattle at Emerald Hill and St Kilda, and held various civil appointments. Around the time Baxter procured his estate in what became the Lower Plenty and Montmorency, he also established a 6,000-hectare pastoral run known as *Carrup Carrup* at Baxter's Flat (Baxter), which became his permanent residence.[25] In 1927, a large part of Portion 2 was acquired for use by the Heidelberg Golf Club.[26]

In 1869, the northern three-quarters of Portion 2, including the subject land, was acquired by the affluent Scot and pastoralist, Doctor Robert Martin (onetime occupant of *Viewbank Homestead* and owner of the *Banyule Estate*).[27] Following Martin's death in 1874, the holding passed in toto through several hands. In 1919, the parcel – bound mainly by the Main Road (north), Old Eltham Road (south) and Bolton Street (east) – was brought by George Guthrie McColl, a wealthy Bendigo resident.[28] McColl's intentions appear speculative and his purchase, carved up into sizeable blocks, was promoted for sale that year as the Plenty River Estates – 'Lovely Week-End Blocks', 'suitable [for] cultivation (with irrigation), poultry, fruit growing or nursery'.[29] As part of this subdivision, Panorama Avenue was established, although it remained an 'unmade road … in a bad state' into at least the 1930s.[30]

Plenty River Estates, 1919
The approximate location of the subject land, part of lot 30, is indicated by the red arrow
(Source: SLV)

By 1937, the Investors Land and Finance Corporation Pty Ltd had purchased about 5 hectares on the north-eastern side of Panorama Avenue, re-subdividing it into suburban lots, with most addressing the newly established Philip Street (initially, Elizabeth Street).[31] This action included the pegging out of the two lots (17 and 18) that form the subject property. In 1946, these were purchased by a 'labourer' and his wife from South Kingsville. They sold the land on to Francis ('Frank') English in July 1947.[32] He was responsible for engaging a 35-year-old aspirational designer and builder, Alistair Knox, then working a day job as a bank clerk, to erect a small dwelling.[33]

Knox recounted the events around the building of *English House* in a number of his publications. He describes Frank English as a 'quiet' returned serviceman, then working as a nurse at the Repatriation General Hospital (Heidelberg), who had first-hand

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24   Refer to *Plan of the Parish of Nillumbik*, Office of Lands and Survey, 1866, SLV, available online
25   'Death of Captain Baxter: An Old Colonist and Pioneer', *Mornington Standard*, 19 May 1892, p3; and Marshall, *Pioneers & Painters*, pp82-4
26   *Heidelberg Golf Club*, 'History', available online
27   Certificate of Title, vol 289, folio 706
28   'Lieut.-Colonel G. G. McColl', *Argus*, 15 June 1938, p11; and Certificate of Title, vol 233, folio 523
29   'Advertising', *Herald*, 16 September 1912, p7; and 'Advertising', *Age*, 19 February 1919, p4
30   'Lower Plenty Progress Association', *Advertiser* [Hurstbridge], 7 March 1930, p4
31   Certificate of Title, vol 6145, folio 934
32   Certificate of Title, vol 6917, folio 265
33   Knox, *We are what we stand on*, p12

experience of adobe buildings from his army service in the Middle East. While appreciating mud brick's 'inherent beauty', English (likely encouraged by Knox) also considered it a low-cost housing option for his newly acquired land in the Lower Plenty, 'which commanded a superb view of the Eltham Valley and the Dandenongs.' Knox agreed to a cost-plus contract, with both parties hoping that English's £600 savings in deferred military pay would cover the construction costs for a 'simple' house.[34]

The broader socioeconomic backdrop of late 1940s Melbourne was also instrumental in encouraging Knox and his client's interest in a vernacular earth tradition. During the Second World War, many aspects of life had become regulated to an unprecedented degree by the state, a situation that continued across the postwar years. As civil and private construction had practically ceased during the conflict, the nation faced an acute housing shortage during reconstruction. The 'crisis' was magnified by a general shortage in materials, high labour costs, stringent finance and continuing government restrictions. Until the early 1950s, such austerity conditions required major concessions on the part of most aspiring homeowners, with thousands of low-cost, self-built 'mean' timber or brick veneer dwellings the outcome.[35]

The small scale of *English House* was a direct reflection of postwar size restrictions for domestic buildings. Between 1940 and 1952, Victorian houses were subject to fluctuating size regulations. During the time Knox was drawing up plans for *English House*, the maximum extent allowable for a non-timber framed dwelling (excluding brick veneer) under the *Building Operations and Building Material Control Act* (1946), was just 116 square meters.[36]

A further complication in the immediate postwar period was severe material shortages. The expense and time required to access conventional construction materials – timber and brick – was prohibitive. Some prospective homeowners and builders turned to alternatives. In Victoria, interest and knowledge in earth construction, once a common 19th-century mode of construction, had renewed in the late Interwar period. The 1934 founding of *Monsalvat*, an artist colony in Eltham, by the patrician artist Justus Jorgensen, with its adobe/pisé 'Great Hall' proved influential in this regard. Knox himself gained his introduction to mud-brick from regular interactions with this utopian commune during the late 1940s.

Consequently, from the late Interwar period, a handful of earth buildings arose in the Eltham area, including a pisé (rammed earth) house by the journalist/writer John M Harcourt.[37] Notwithstanding this nascent pre-war revival, it appears the spartan conditions of the late 1940s proved critical in popularising earth construction. As Knox notes, 'Had there been no war, there would have been no shortages, and if there had been no shortages there would have been no mud brick building.'[38]

The 'alternative' and creative milieu that emerged in the Eltham area – a 'sleepy outer suburb surrounded by remnant bush' – over the postwar period also proved important in allowing for experimentation and engagement with earth structures.[39] In the aftermath of the war, the presence of affordable land in the locale (in which the Lower Plenty was included) and its semi-rural surroundings drew those interested in living 'simpler' lifestyles (many apparently influenced by Thoreau's *Walden*). Writers, artists, filmmakers, designer and others flocked to Eltham: 'We were young, enthusiastic idealists, keen to avoid becoming Thoreau's "men who lead lives of quiet desperation".'[40] Some of the community-members became interested in unconventional construction techniques or turned to them by necessity, as noted by Robin Boyd, many of the mud-brick builders 'had little money for building and they liked rustic simplicity. They looked to the earth for materials.'[41]

A carefree Knox lodged a plan for *English House* with the Eltham Shire Office in 1947, not expecting much resistance, as the locality had been 'wonderfully carefree and hillbilly' and had some familiarity with earth buildings. Ominously, however, the permit application coincided with the new appointment of the Shire's first professional engineer. Undeterred, Knox 'decided not to wait on officialdom, but rather to get on with the making of the bricks, the pouring of the footings, and the erecting of the walls.'[42] Then after weeks of 'sinister' delays, Knox heard news that his application was to be refused that day. A frantic effort to convince the councillors otherwise followed:

34	Alistair Knox, *A Middle Class Man: An Autobiography*, undated, unpublished, chapter 32, available at the Alistair Knox website, https://alistairknox.org/books/1; and Knox, *We are what we stand on: a personal history of the Eltham community*, Adobe Press, 1980, chapter 42, available at the Alistair Knox website, https://alistairknox.org/chapters/42
35	Goad, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945 – 1975*, chapter 1, p1
36	*Victorian Year-Book*, 1944-45, p386
37	John M Harcourt, 'Natural earth as a Building Material: Pise-de-terre, Cob and Mud Brick Methods Explained', *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1946, pp8-10. The same journal ran an article on a mud-brick house near Wandin in Victoria a few years later (Charles Simms, 'Hand-made in mud-brick', *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1949, pp24-5, 75)
38	Knox, *We are what we stand on*, chapter 45
39	Gordon Ford in Ford with Gwen Ford, *Gordon Ford: the natural Australian garden*, Blooming Books, 1999, p9
40	Ford, *Gordon Ford: the natural Australian garden*, p9
41	Robin Boyd, *Australia's Home: Its Origins, Builders and Occupies*, Melbourne University Press, 1961, p201
42	Knox, *A Middle Class Man*, chapter 32

There was a man named [George] Middleton who worked for the Experimental Building Station, a federal body situated in Ryde near Sydney. He had been conducting tests and gaining facts for some years, and had actually written about mud brick … I realised how important it was to obtain copies of these official pamphlets in order to stimulate the six local councillors to agree to grant a permit … The Council was to hold its monthly meeting on the very day these pamphlets were to become available in Melbourne … I reached Tomb's Technical Bookshop around 11 a.m. and had to wait while the needed books were being unpacked. I bought a handful of copies and set off for Eltham once more … My train arrived back at 2 p.m., and as I walked across the road I beheld some of the worthy city fathers standing at the entrance of the Shire Office.

As I came within earshot of them I heard one say, 'My daughter lives in one of them pise houses and it's quite all right, but I wouldn't have anything to do with them mud-brick ones'. Seizing opportunity by the forelock, I stepped forward and said, 'I overheard what you were saying about mud-brick building. I have applied for a building permit which I understand you will be considering today, and I thought these government documents might assist your deliberations.' I handed one to each councillor on the steps, and those who had already returned to the Chamber also rushed out to get their copies. I heard the next day, to my great relief, that the plan had been passed and that our four-feet-high walls would remain upright … Eltham's retarded growth had opened a door for earth-building that the combined forces of progress, civic pride, and the new age could never again close.[43]

During construction of *English House*, Knox continued to work his day job at the State Savings Bank of Victoria (Swanston Street branch) and was only present at the site late in the day and weekends. To oversee the build, he engaged the 29-year-old Sonia Stark Gordon Skipper (1918-2008), a talented painter and sculptor, who he had met at *Monsalvat* (her family were foundational members).[44] In reminiscing about her appointment, Knox believed Skipper to be the 'first female foreman the trade had ever known in Australia'.[45] Accuracy of this assertion aside, Skipper was instrumental in the construction of *English House* as she was the only person present at the site who had practical experience and proficiency in adobe building. Skipper, who worked on a few of Knox's later projects, described her involvement at the subject place in her memoir:

Conventional materials were short so it ended up that many people wanted mud brick houses. Later they become the trendy type of house to live in. Knox got a team together and started the mud brick building boom. He did a great deal to promote mud brick building in the area and put a great deal of energy and inventiveness into it. The "environmental building boom" was born. I worked for him for about three years from 1947, though for the last year I mostly did the inside finishing, plastering and colouring the walls, and whitewashing the outside.

The [*English House*] job was a rather strange experience. At the beginning I was the overseer. The fellows were often difficult. I would sometimes come back to the site and find the walls all of out of square or bricks piled up in the opposite place to where I had requested. All this was rather confusing. Alistair, who was still working at his bank job, would come up late in the day to see how things were progressing and shout at me for not having got things done in the way we had planned at the weekend, as though it was my fault. I would tell him that those boys he had working for him were either perverse or plain stupid. Of course I realise now it was the gender problem. They just didn't like taking orders from a female, no matter how reasonable those orders might be. At the time I didn't know to handle the problem, in fact I didn't know what the problem was …

Sonia Skipper at *Monsalvat*, undated
(Source: *Australian Regional Building*, Alistair Knox website, http://alistairknox.org/chapters/372)

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43   Knox, *A Middle Class Man*, chapter 32
44   Sigmund Jorgensen, 'Painter who left her mark at Montsalvat', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 July 2008, available online; and
45   Knox, *A Middle Class Man*, chapter 32

The rest of the £1-a-day workforce were all returned servicemen: Larry Stevens, Tony Jackson and Gordon Ford. They 'regarded the building of the English house as a halfway stage between a holiday and a part-time health cure' and their 'knowledge of building construction was very limited, but the house was simple in design and Sonia was able to keep some sense of order and development.'[46] Ford (1918-1999), who continued collaborating with Knox, became a celebrated landscape designer and advocate of the 'bush style' garden.

The building of *English House* appears to have taken a few months, likely due to the laborious process of mud-brick production, but more so than expected, and English's savings were eventually 'exhausted' with the dwelling 'only four-fifths finished'. To Knox's incredulity, English refused to come up with additional funds in light of some of the lackadaisical/amateur efforts he had witnessed on occasion from the male workers. Knox ended up bridging the cost gap himself.[47]

It is likely the publicity generated by *English House's* completion outweighed any immediate financial loss for Knox: 'I received letters from many parts of the world concerning it and earth building generally. The stir it caused attracted a new group of people to move to Eltham'.[48] Confident in this path as a designer/builder, Knox resigned from the bank, and a series of mud-brick dwellings followed over the late 1940s, many noteworthy.[49]

A year or so after *English House* was finalised, the widely distributed *Australian Home Beautiful* (AHB) ran a feature article on the project, written by Esmé Johnston. Photographs depicting the building in various states of construction accompanied the piece:

At the cost of £770, a house with an overall area of 900 square feet has been built at Eltham (Vic.) — from earth. It was designed for Mr. Frank English by Mr. Alistair Knox, and a women — Miss Sonia Skipper — was works' "foreman," with a working crew of three men. They were Laurie Mayfield (foreman carpenter), Gordon Ford, also building his own earth-house at week-ends, and Tony Jackson taking a spell from his normal sailorly calling.

This unusual home is built on a lightly-timbered hillside with a pleasant view of hill and valley. Its main materials were mud bricks made from the earth excavated on the house site, and bush timbers, which eliminated waste, yet produced a sound building economically and from a material known and esteemed for hundreds of years.

A mile or so away stands a mud-brick house built 98 years ago. It is in remarkably good condition, and it creates an ancient local precedent for mud brick building.

Asked why he built with mud bricks rather than pise (rammed earth) Mr. Knox said he preferred mud bricks, because they were a more flexible form. In technical words they were modular rather than monolithic like a wall of rammed earth. They were more malleable and allowed greater variety of form …"In addition, pise construction requires a sand-clay proportion of about 70 to 30; adobe about 30 per cent. sand and 70 per cent. clay. Eltham soil has a preponderance of clay." Mud bricks are an answer to the building problem, Mr. Knox thinks, and they fit admirably into the Australian landscape.

His foundations are of standard construction — concrete footings, stumps, bearers and joists. The walls are really of mud brick pier and bush timber beam construction, with 9in. filling walls of mud. The piers between the glass doors are 3ft. by 2ft. This develops a sense of depth in the walls.

The rendering, of cow-dung and loamy soil, has a natural bonding quality. Floors are timber and most of the joinery work was done on the job. Twenty-five-foot long yellow box poles from Diamond Creek make effective ceiling beams. The secondary roof beams are of 5in. x 2in. hardwood. On this is a 6in. x 1in. decking. A covering layer of insulating foil reflects the sun's rays, keeping the building cool in summer and warm in winter.

Three layers of malthoid are laid as a mat over the whole roof. These are bonded together with hot bitumen and stuck to the decking at the edges only to allow for movement. A final covering is water-worn creek gravel, floated in bitumen.

The roof has a fall to the corners for drainage, which is caught in down-pipes, with a happy absence of unsightly guttering. The chimney exterior has a concrete coping for protection. "This roof will defy the elements for a lifetime," said Mr. Knox. "You could even play games on it with impunity."

The ground plan is a simple one. There is a living room 40 feet long out of which is cribbed a bedroom which can be curtained off at will. The kitchen is in an alcove beside a huge open fireplace (also built with mud bricks). Bathroom and main entrance are at the other end of the oblong layout.

Mud brick construction is so strong, says Alistair Knox, that doorways can be cut through without the need of a lintel. But, except in one instances, interior walls have been eliminated from this house, other than the bathroom surround. The front door is of rough sawn hardwood planks, suitable and weatherproof.

Practically the whole of one wall is composed of huge French windows with an east-north-west catchment of the sun. These are inlet between the substantial piers giving great depth and solidity of appearance.

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46   Knox, *A Middle Class Man*, chapter 32
47   Knox, *A Middle Class Man*, chapter 32
48   Knox, *We are what we stand on*, p28
49   Notably, the William Macmahon Ball Studio, 1948; the curved *Periwinkle House*, 1948; the first phase of the *Busst House*, 1948-49; the *Downing/Le Gallienne House* complex (1948-58); *Murphy's Creek Homestead*, 1949; and *Edwards House*, 149 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty, 1950-52

In the mud brick department Miss Sonia Skipper, art student and old hand at this form of construction, had a word to say. "Mud bricks are even more impervious to rain water than concrete," she said, "except for one thing. A constant dripping of water on one specific place will effect them. That's why you must keep the head and feet of your building dry with wide-spread eaves, and terraces rather than a built-up garden… Apart from that… you can leave your bricks out in the open during building operations and the weather won't affect them much. Earth containing more than 50 per cent. of clay is most suitable for mud bricks and the soil here is ideal."'[50]

English House near completion, from Philip Street (Source: Johnston, 'Built from the good earth', *AHB*, June 1948, p29)

'Gordon Ford stamps mud into a brick mould, while Laurie Mayfield (left), Miss Sonia Skipper, Alistair Knox and
Tony Jackson look on.' North (rear) elevation of *English House* in the background
(Source: Johnston, 'Built from the good earth', *AHB*, June 1948, p28 – courtesy of Miles Lewis, *Australian Building: A Cultural Investigation)*

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[50]   Esmé Johnston, 'Built from the good earth', *Australian Home Beautiful*, June 1949, pp28-29 and 56

'Roof and floor construction shows in this progress shot.'
(Source: Johnston, 'Built from the good earth', AHB June 1948, p29)

'Fireplace has cosy ingle seats of hewn bush timber.' (Source: Johnston, 'Built from the good earth', *AHB*, June 1948, p29)

Internal view to fireplace/inglenook with original kitchen beyond, facing east (Source: Knox, *We are what we stand on*, p27)

Internal view to French windows, facing north
(Source: Knox, *We are what we stand on*, p27)

In early 1948, Robin Boyd – an acquaintance of Knox – highlighted the emergent mud-brick phenomena in his 'Small Homes' column in *The Age*, likely with *English House* in mind:

> Adobe construction is so old, it is in danger of being considered new fangled … Earth walls are cheap, strong, weatherproof, and highly insulating… It seems that you can't dabble in adobe. Those who use it once are apt to drop all thought of building houses in timber or bricks … Because it is so easy to make terrible puns about it (mud construction is old as the hills, cheap as dirt, and down to earth) some people prefer not to take it seriously. While no one is likely to want to use it in the strictly geometrical inner suburbs, its great possibilities lie in the country and in outer parts of the bigger cities …

> The more sympathetic councils doubtless will be swayed by the glowing reports recently issued by Australia's foremost authority on building techniques. The thorough, wary Commonwealth Experimental Building Station in Sydney produced last year a report on pise, and now has published its blessing on adobe …

> One architect who is building a few places with a small team of experienced adobe builders reports that fully fitted houses are working out at about £90 a square. This is roughly half the cost of orthodox construction. Adobe can be built to any plan, and can have almost any finish. Therefore it can be given almost any appearance and any architectural treatment. Perhaps this is its greatest danger. With one or two notable exceptions, Victorian adobe builders have been either lamentably unimaginative little villas or have wallowed in confused romanticism … If the material is treated with common sense and discretion, but naturally so that it is not forced to imitate normal brick structure, then it must look "different". There is no reason why this different look should not be as modern and as beautiful in its own way as anything ever made of brick, wood, stone or steel.[51]

However, a few years later, in the same column, Boyd declared 'The mud bubble has burst', lamenting that 'Earth has grown out of the reach of the ordinary man. Pise and adobe have moved into the luxury class':

> One man who did much to develop the idea of adobe as a modern building material, and who infected hundreds with his own enthusiasm, was Mr. Alistair Knox, designer and builder. He now says: "I never want to build in it again. It is still practical if you have plenty of space and the right equipment … And if people are strong enough and healthy enough to do it themselves." Costs finally turned Mr. Knox from adobe.

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51   Robin Boyd, 'Make it of mud!', *Age*, 17 March 1948, p3. See also Boyd, 'Outer suburbs ban mud construction', *Age*, 5 May 1948, p4

Four years ago the big problem was the shortage of material, rather than labor. Adobe ingredients were on the site, and the finished cost of the house turned out to be less than timber. He built several houses and designed many more for construction by their owners. The last adobe house he built cost £4000, well over the equivalent in timber. And even if owners consider that the extra comfort was worth the extra cost, banks generally did not agree. It was difficulty in obtaining finance which finally killed commercial adobe.[52]

1956 aerial photograph of *English House*, circled in dashed red, depicting original footprint
(Source: Landata, Project no 2, Run 16A, Frame 53)

English sold the property in late 1949. It passed largely unaltered through two occupancies before its purchase by Edith 'Mollie' Grove in 1965 (then identified as 52 Philip Street).[53] A freestanding hipped roof 'timber room' had been constructed west of the mud-brick house (since demolished). Soon after, Grove commissioned Knox to design and undertake timber additions and alterations to *English House*, providing a new kitchen (east) an extension to the bedroom (north), new bathroom and gallery (west), and carport.[54] Grove remained in occupancy, initially with her personal companion Catherine Hardess (sometimes 'Hardress'), into the early 1980s.[55]

Grove (1909-96) and Hardess (1889-1970) had met during the interwar years at Swinburne Technical College and spent time working and sojourning in Europe over the 1930s. Upon returning to Melbourne in 1940 they held a successful exhibition of their fabric at the Hotel Australia and registered a weaving business: eclarté Pty Ltd. Their stylish hand-made eclarté materials, which interwove national motifs and themes, were widely popular, especially among the Australian couturiers. Their studio became 'the most successful of the mid-century studio-weaving enterprises', 'combing Grove's excellent technical skills and Hardess's design acumen'.[56] By the late 1950s, then working out of an 'old mill at Heathcote' and concentrating on designing and producing furnishing fabric, the pair were awarded a string of government and large-scale commissions and collaborated with other avant-

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52   Robin Boyd, 'The "Free" Material That Costs Too Much', *Age*, 13 November 1951, p4 – this appears a moment of peak frustration for Knox, who evidently did continue adobe construction.

53   William Roy Fletcher Harris, 'Gardner', and Bertha May Harris, owned the subject place between October 1949 and December 1965. Robert Hijner, a 'salesman', acquired it on 2 December 1965, transferring it to Grove a few days later. (Certificate of Title, vol 6917, folio 265)

54   Alistair Knox, 'Additions and alterations to houses at Lots 17 & 18 (Elizabeth Street), Lower Plenty now 52 Philip Street for Miss E M Grove', *Collection of architectural drawings mostly for earth houses in Melbourne and Victoria*, SLV, YLTAD27 24

55   Certificate of Title, vol 6917, folio 265

56   Harriet Edquist, 'eclarté and the transformation of studio weaving in Victoria', *RMIT Design Archives Journal*, vol 4, no 2, 2014, p29

garde period designers, such as Fred Ward, Boyd and (Sir) Roy Grounds.[57] After economic setbacks resulted in the closure of eclarté in 1962, Grove and Hardess moved into *English House.* They appear to have been responsible for extensive tree plantings in the back yard.[58]

Hardess (left) and Grove (right) with 'Prince', eclarté's mascot, photographed in 1956 at the opening of their large-scale production facility in Dandenong (Source: NAA, Item ID 11868711)

1975 aerial photograph of *English House*, outlined in dashed red
Note the addition of the western wing and thick tree canopy
(Source: Landata, Project no 1243, Run 24A, Frame 147)

At least one other phase of alterations and additions is known to have occurred directly to *English House* around 1996.[59]

Alistair Samuel Knox (1912-86)

… it is difficult to establish whether Eltham made Knox or whether he was the making of it – of mud bricks and sturdy timbers …[60]

A charismatic figure, Alistair Knox was the leading proponent of Victoria's postwar mud-brick 'revival', an ardent movement that became entwined with a specific Eltham-based identity and a broader rise of eco-consciousness. Through his postwar building and landscape work and his writing and activism, Knox was instrumental in popularising the concept of 'environmental building' over the late 20th century.[61]

Knox, born and raised in Melbourne within an evangelical context, started a clerkship with the State Savings Bank of Victoria in his late teens and a family soon after. At the outbreak of the Second World War, he joined the Volunteer Defence Corps, ultimately serving in the waters around Papua New Guinea. Discharged in 1945, Knox took advantage of the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme to begin but not complete a Diploma of Architecture and Building Construction at Melbourne Tech. Weary of the bank, his postwar ambitions turned to building and design.

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57   John McPhee, 'Hardess, Catherine (1889-1970)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 1996, available online

58   Knox describes 'a Miss Hardress and a Miss Groves, the Eclarte weavers' occupying it and making 'fairly extensive alterations' (Knox, *We are what we stand on*, chapter 45). See also, Edquist, 'eclarté and the transformation of studio weaving in Victoria', p33

59   Llewellyn Pritchard (architect), *Specification of Materials to be used and worked to be performed: in the construction and completion of alterations and additions to existing residence at 52 Phillip* [sic] *Street Lower Plenty VIC 3093*, July 1993, provided by the City of Banyule (note the drawings referenced in the specification could not be located)

60   Anne Latreille, 'Awards for know-how and a flair for original', *Age*, 14 September 1982, p23

61   Peterson and Kuzyk, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986): modernism, environment and the spirit of place', p5; Fay Woodhouse, 'Knox, Alistair Samuel (1912-1986)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, 2007, available online; and Philip Goad, 'Knox, Alistair', in Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture* Cambridge University, 2012, pp387-8

Over the late 1940s, Knox – his first marriage having broken down – began circulating within Melbourne's avant-garde/bohemian circles. He made regular forays out to Eltham to visit *Montsalvat*, experiencing the complex's array of adobe/pisé buildings. The 'primitive' aesthetic and harmonising qualities of earth construction drew Knox, although his first two commissioned houses, both in the Glenard Estate (Eaglemont) in 1946, were of weatherboard. The public interest in the completion of the mud-brick *English House* (1947) encouraged Knox to quit the bank and embark on a string of adobe projects. He relocated permanently to Eltham in 1949, marrying Margot (née) Edwards, a well-known painter, in 1954. Knox became a fixture of postwar Eltham, a place and community he considered unparalleled within Australia.[62]

Knox's four-decade career in building and landscape design/construction was prolific despite commercial ebbs and flows. It is loosely dividable into four phases. The first, a pared-back, heavily organic, mud-brick phase, was characteristic between the late 1940s to the mid-1950s. The second phase witnessed the adoption of a modular design approach, with low-key modern houses utilising more conventional materials and new products, such as 'Stramit'. The 'credit squeeze' of 1960/61, instigated a return to mud-brick and reclaimed materials, albeit the designs remained generally modular (third phase). From the early 1970s (fourth phase), a sequence of mature and dramatic adobe and landscape projects was initiated, which coincided with the peak of Knox's public profile and the wider resurgence in earth construction in Eltham.[63] Underlying the various phases was a deep appreciation of the subtlety of the Australian landscape – the embrace of a site's sense of place and exigencies – and consistent engagement with the principles of the modern movement.

Knox's interests in environmental design and social concerns both mirrored and drove a broader escalation of conservation politics, particularly in Victoria, where he became a household name over the 20th century. Between 1973 and 1975, Knox served on Eltham Shire Council, including as president in his last year. He was also a founding member (1967) and later fellow (1983) of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects. In 1984, Knox received an honorary Doctor of Architecture from the University of Melbourne for his unique contributions to the field of design. The breadth of Knox's influences was notable: 'His work was key to the next generation of builders and designers, including John Pizzey, artist Clifton Pugh, architects Morrice Shaw and Robert Marshall and countless owner builders [*particularly in the Eltham area*].'[64] The Alistair Knox Park in Eltham, which he assisted in converting from a rubbish tip in the mid-1970s, is dedicated to him.

Clay caricature of Alistair Knox, 1953, by John Frith
(Source: *AHB*, January 1953, p14)

Clay bricks in production, undated, unspecified site
(Source: Alistair Knox, *Living in the environment*, 1978)

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

•   Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

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62   Knox, *We are what we stand on*, xiii and p47
63   Peterson and Kuzyk, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986): modernism, environment and the spirit of place', passim; and 'Design and Building Career', *Biography*, Alistair Knox Foundation, available online, https://alistairknox.org/
64   Goad, 'Knox, Alistair', p338

- 6.4 Post-War Residential Development

Comparative Analysis

Knox's practice was responsible for approximately 1,260 buildings, principally houses. The majority of his mud-brick projects are now situated in Nillumbik Shire, predominantly in Eltham, Kangaroo Ground, and Diamond Creek. The presence of a small cluster of his first phase projects in the Lower Plenty and Montmorency – now part of Banyule – reflects these areas' associations with the former Shire of Eltham, the 'cradle' of mud brick and environmental design in Melbourne during the second half of the 20th century. Another score or so of Knox's houses, chiefly dating from the 1960s and 1970s, survive elsewhere in Banyule; however, while often distinct within their immediate settings, these places generally present as more typical, even conventional, examples of his second and later phases of work.[65]

English House, namely its 1947 core, is remarkable within Knox's total output by being his first mud-brick design. Its completion proved influential for his career trajectory and proved a catalyst in the postwar mud-brick movement.

The only known example of Knox's work in the municipality affected by a HO is:

- *Brynning House*, 37 Glenard Drive, Eaglemont (part of the Walter Burley Griffin Glenard Estate, HO1) – a restrained gable-roofed, U-shaped, timber house, Knox's first commercial project, built in 1946.[66] Since modified.

Two other earlier instances of Knox's work in Banyule have been recommended for a HO by this Study:

- *Lindsay Edward House*, 149 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty – a large flat-roofed mud-brick split-level with uncommon U-shaped, 'butterfly' plan, built between 1950 and 1952 for the artist Lindsay Edward. The most architecturally accomplished example of Knox's adobe work in the municipality.

- *Vera Knox House*, 46 Panorama Street, Lower Plenty – a single-storey house of modular design, constructed between 1958 and 1960, from likely salvaged Mount Gambier limestone and window walls as a retirement home for a relative of Knox by marriage. Illustrative of Knox's second phase of work, although set apart by its rare use of limestone.

There are also a limited number of other mud-brick buildings in the municipality:

- *Woodburn House*, 1/11 Hughes Street, Montmorency (HO159) – a modest mud-brick house on a reinforced concrete slab with front 'window wall' (northern outlook, originally louvred) and skillion roof designed/built by an architectural student, William J Woodburn, in 1949. An austerity induced instance of the International Style in adobe recognised as innovative at the time, along with the neighbouring house at no 9 by Sydney Smith (no HO), which attracted attention for its utilisation of hollow concrete block walls.[67]

- *Adobe Houses and Dam (Peck's Dam)*, Napier Crescent and Grand Boulevard, Montmorency (HO101) – a serial listing of single and two-storey mud-brick houses in a naturalised setting, most houses are heavily screened from the streets by native/indigenous vegetation. Skillion or gable roofs, timber-framed windows and salvaged/recycled elements appear to abound. Built over the postwar period on low-cost land in the Panorama Heights Estate, many by their owners (characterised as an eclectic array of creatives), some of whom were evidently influenced or advised by Knox.[68]

In Banyule, a small group of architect-designed houses included in the Schedule of the Heritage Overlay or recommended for a HO by this Study reflect the organic/Wrightian and regionalist strain of modernism in which Knox practised.[69] These places, however, date from the late 1950s or 1960s, at least several years after *English House*. They also seek to evoke a

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[65]   For instance: 43 Alexander Street, Montmorency (mud brick construction, façade of random stone cladding); 30 Gilbert Road, Ivanhoe (courtyard house, mud-brick, carport modified); Sunday School Hall for St Andrews Church at 1-3 Mountain View Road, Montmorency (1955); 8 Rowell Street, Rosanna (1960s brick house with an International Style expression); and *Fowler House*, 60 Adam Crescent, Montmorency (late 1970s mud brick). See Alistair Knox website, section 'Buildings', http://alistairknox.org/directories/2

[66]   Knox was also behind the *Moore House* on Glenard Drive (since demolished) – a flat roofed, timber building with a U-shaped footprint which enabled the retention of pre-existing trees, with extensive glazing and a stone paved patio.

[67]   Robin Boyd, 'Small Homes Section: A Lesson From Montmorency', *Age*, 28 December 1949, p4; and *Australian Home Beautiful*, January 1950, pp23-5

[68]   12-16, 59, 68, 67-71, 72, 73-75 Napier Crescent and 134 Grand Boulevard. Refer to Peterson and Kuzyk, 'Alistair Knox (1912-1986): modernism, environment and the spirit of place', p11

[69]   *V Walker House*, 209 Main Road, Lower Plenty (HO163), 1958; and *Williams House*, 4 Glenard Drive, Eaglemont (HO146), 1963; and *Elliston Estate*, Rosanna (HO92), late 1960s. Recommended by this Study – *Okalyi House*, 66 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty, 1968-70; *Yann House*, 21 Keam Street, Ivanhoe East, 1960-63; and *Welsh House*, 4 Eton Court, Heidelberg, 1965-72

regional/organic character with more 'earthy' variants of conventional materials (timber and brick) as opposed to Knox's design, which celebrate their organic nature with heavy-set mud-brick walls and reclaimed 'bush' timber.

Intactness

Generally intact (1947/original footprint)

Previous Assessment

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommended for Stage 2

- Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018 – identified as a 'place of potential heritage significance'

- Heritage Alliance, *Survey of Post-War Built Heritage in Victoria*, Stage 1, vol 2, October 2008, 027-026, p115 [NB – some details are incorrect, including address]

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	Yes (walls of mud brick only and exposed timber)
Internal Alteration Controls	Yes (mud-brick fireplace and inglenook, living room)
Tree Controls	No
Outbuildings and/or fences	No

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

Recommended extent of heritage overlay
(Source: Nearmap, January 2021)

OKALYI HOUSE

Address	66 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty
Significance	Local
Construction Date	1968-70
Period	Late 20th century
Date Inspected	January 2021

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

Okalyi House at 66 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty is significant. It was designed by the architect Charles Duncan for husband-and-wife Zoltan and Elizabeth Jane Okalyi and built between 1968 and 1970.

The significant elements are its U-shaped form, gabled roof, deep eaves, timber-lined soffit, central chimney, stained timber beams and rafters, variegated dark-brown brick walls, piers, obtuse-angled brick detailing, timber-framed and floor-to-ceiling windows, incorporated double carport, and slate-clad courtyard.

Some original internal elements to the ~~interior~~ hall, study, living, dinning and family rooms are also significant, specifically the pine-lined ceilings (raked and concealed), exposed brick walls, floors paved in slate, and brick fireplace (living).

The 'bushland' character of the garden, conceived by Gordon Ford, including the raised earth bank immediately east of the house, complements the overall aesthetic of *Okalyi House*.

Later addition elements are not significant.

How is it Significant?

Okalyi House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Okalyi House is of historical significance as an accomplished example of the neo-Wrightian organic design mode by the architect Charles Duncan. This approach evolved as a striking variant of Melbourne's modern movement, reflecting an aspiration among a relatively small group of architects to develop a regionalised, more humanist version of international modernism rooted in local landscapes and conditions. While Duncan was celebrated in his heyday, his role in advancing and popularising a convincing regional idiom in Melbourne is now less generally recognised. *Okalyi House*, which was awarded *The Age*/RAIA Citation (no 34) in 1972, provides a valuable opportunity for examining a largely intact and idiosyncratic example of Duncan's work. More broadly, the residence – with its focus on functional and flowing spaces, natural light, and enhanced indoor/outdoor relationships – reflects some of the major lifestyle shifts that defined its period. Noted landscape designer, Gordon Ford, was responsible for the original garden, and a 'bush style' character remains evident. (Criterion A)

Okalyi House is of aesthetic significance as a largely intact and outstanding instance of organic/regional modernism in Melbourne. Its horizontality and remarkable modular U-shaped form demonstrate the command exercised by its architect, Charles Duncan, over Wrightian principles and ability to reference 'natural' arrangements in built form and detail. The emphatic expression of load and support conveyed to the street by the cavernous carport is striking. Less noticeable, due to orientation and landscaping, is the deft contrast achieved between robustly massed and textured brick piers/return walls and expansive sections of full height windows. The ground-hugging quality of the dwelling, supported by its low gabled roof and extended eaves, and considered relationship with its landform, illustrates Duncan's desire to craft complete designs that sensitively anchored house to site – the building surfacing from the landscape rather than imposed on it. Reinforcing these aspects of the place are seamless transitions between inside and outdoor living spaces, especially the slate-paved courtyard and its limited 'earthy' material palette. (Criterion E)

Description

The single-storey *Okalyi House* is situated lengthwise on a large allotment at a moderate set back from the south side of Old Eltham Road. It is bordered to the west and east by residential properties and, to the rear, by the Heidelberg Golf Course. The residence is relatively concealed, with the majority of the building screened by trees and the undulating contours of the land or purposefully sited away from the street. This interest in privacy over public display was a key marker of many progressive architect-formulated houses from the early 1960s.

The footprint and form of *Okalyi House* are distinctive and modular, comprised of two hexagonal (front and centre) and octagonal (rear) wings that interlink to create a U-shape around a central courtyard. The interior has a triangular layout, with no right angles included within the floorplan.[1] Duncan explained these radical departures from the conventional as dictated by the slope of the property to the south. It also reveals his interest in organic architectural principles, particularly the aim of harmonising structure and site and orientating living spaces to take advantage of the solar cycle. Manifest also is the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright's *Hanna-Honeycomb House* (1937), although shorn of its stylistic excesses.[2]

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[1]   John Barker, 'A new angle on planning', *Age*, 15 May 1972, p11
[2]   Also noted by Philip J Goad, *The modern house in Melbourne, 1945-1975,* PhD thesis, Faculty of Architecture Building & Planning, University of Melbourne, 1992, Chapter 6, p53. The form of *Okalyi House* is elsewhere referred to elsewhere as a 'repeating polygonal module'. (Heritage Alliance, *Survey of Post-War Built Heritage in Victoria*, Stage 1, vol 2, October 2008, p183, part F)
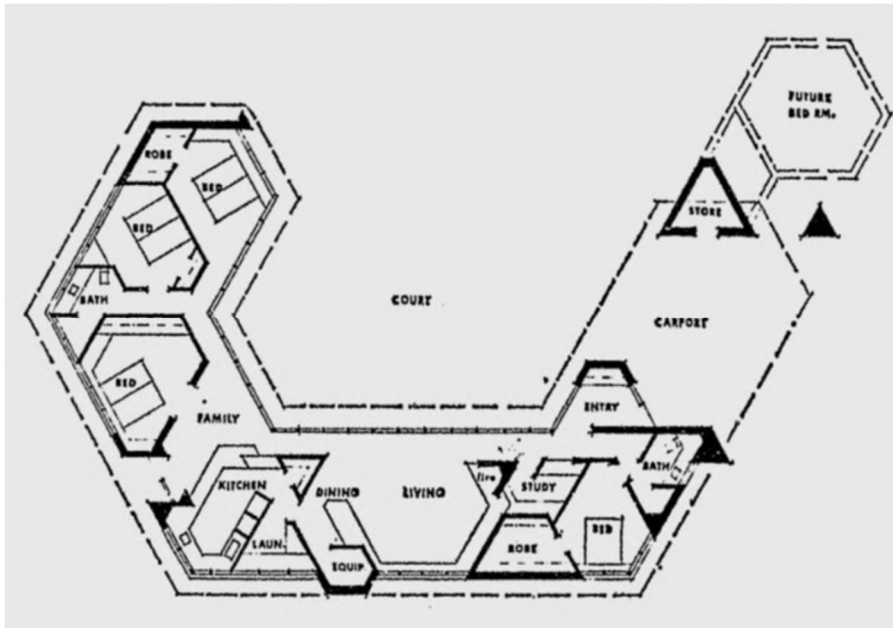
Original floor plan, note extensive 'window walls' indicated by parallel lines
The 'future bedroom' that was proposed to join the north of the carport was never constructed (Source: Barker, '"The Age" — RAIA Citation Award No. 34', *Age*, 15 May 1972, p11)

Okalyi House has a very low-pitched gable roof, now clad in later addition metal sheeting, with deep eaves and a timber-lined soffit.[3] There is a squat and geometric brick chimney to the roof of the middle wing. Skylights to the rear wing may be later additions, although Duncan was known to employ them.

An integrated double carport defines the front wing and streetscape presentation of *Okalyi House*. It is surmounted by three hefty laminated and darkly stained pine beams, which puncture or sit atop the same number of differently sized triangular piers. The inner pier, adjacent to the house's main entrance (obscured from the street), pierces the roofline. The incorporation of the entry within the carport was increasingly favoured over the 1960s, expressing a direct connection between the house and the car, a drive-in domesticity'.[4] The carport's floor is paved in brick. Sightlines through the carport to the internal courtyard are obscured by a solid timber fence, which is possibly non-original. Roof beams also project at the rear of the dwelling.

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[3]   Originally, Monier Besser brand grey-coloured cement tiles in a 'slate pattern'. (Barker, 'A new angle on planning, p11)
[4]   Geoffrey London, Philip Goad and Conrad Hamann, *An Unfinished Experiment in Living: Australian Houses 1950-65*, UWAP Publishing, 2017, p17

Carport with timber beams prominent

During construction, a roughly metre deep 'cut' was made for the dwelling into the incline. Excess soil was then arranged around the eastern side of the house, forming a 'high' side. This cut and fill activity was undertaken to accentuate the image of the house burrowing/nestling within the contours of the site. Such a relationship between the dwelling and landform remains.

The dwelling is of cavity wall construction employing variegated dark-brown stock bricks set in a stretcher bond with light brown tinted mortar. Such materials were low-maintenance and 'earthy' in aesthetic, which assists in further melding the house with the grounds. Brickwork throughout is confined to short lengths of return walls and piers of varying sizes. For the most part, banks of timber-framed floor-to-ceiling 'window walls' enclose *Okalyi House*. While predominantly not visible from the street, these elements – fundamental for the introduction of light into the interior and the creation of indoor/outdoor spatial continuity – are likely to remain.

The corners of the front piers disapply obtuse-angled brickwork, a Wrightian motif intended to invoke the appearance of honeycomb (initially experimented with at the *Hanna-Honeycomb House*). This decorative treatment is continued to some other wall corners, both external and internal.

Rear wing (south), during or soon after construction
(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/1738)

The sizable courtyard is open to the west, where it melds with the bush garden, and surfaced in recycled slate paving (possibly reused roofing slates). It contains a small in-ground pool, a future addition envisioned by Duncan.[5]

As discussed, *Okalyi House*'s original floor was triangular, presenting as a series of carefully delineated, free-flowing spaces. The interior was designed in a pared-down fashion with pine-lined raked and concealed ceilings (recessed lights), a lighted coloured ('orange-brown') brick and slate paved floors. The central living room has a small but cave-like fireplace.

Living room, facing north – note obtuse brick-detailing above the fireplace

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[5]   Barker, 'A new angle on planning', p11

(Source: Peter Wille, SLV, H91.244/173)

The house is set within a 'bush style' garden devised by Gordon Ford. The essence of his approach remains interpretable in the informal native/indigenous landscaping of the whole site, which presents from the street as genuine bushland. The relaxed placement of boulders on the on the east side of the gravelled driveway may be original and certainly reflects Ford's desired aesthetic. The retention of the earth bank at the front of the site, with a swale drain acting as public gutter, underlies the natural setting of *Okalyi House* (and is repeated elsewhere in Old Eltham Road). Fencing is not evident to the front and side of the subject place.

Views to *Okalyi House* filtered through its 'bush style' garden

Okalyi House is classifiable as an example of what architectural historian Philip Goad describes as the 'Wrightian survival'.[6] A vein of postwar modernism that turned away from the perceived anonymity of the International Style to draw from the American master Frank Lloyd Wright's ideas of 'Organic Architecture'. These complex principles were typically translated as an intimate response to site, low-slung and vaguely biomorphic forms, humble materials, and an embrace of 'primitive' – albeit readily modern – notions of space and shelter (the cave). From the 1970s, many aspects of the neo-Wrightian approach pioneered by architects entered the vernacular of mainstream builders.[7]

Alongside some Melbourne architects' fascination with Wright and his body of work – generally reconceived to suit local conditions (reduced scale, detail and cost, and climate specifics) – were other important interests, such as a re-evaluation of Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin and the humanism of Alvar Aalto. Less articulated but deeply rooted were the influences of traditional eastern design and the Arts & Crafts movement. The organic design mode, gathering pace over the 1950s, illustrated a more profound engagement of modernist architects with the local landscape and search for an authentic regional built expression.[8] In contemporary circles, organic/regional versus rational/international modernism proved the central architectural dichotomy. Duncan's creative practice within the domain of the former is notable.

The organic/regional design mode, alongside the other variants of the modern movement, should also be recognised as indicative of major shifts in daily life for the wider population, particularly from the mid-1950s, driven by rising prosperity, technological advances and changing societal attitudes. The enthralment of many avant-garde architects with domestic design both reflected and reinforced such transformations, encouraging lifestyles revolving around intensifying consumerism, increased car ownership and more relaxed outdoor-orientated mindsets. 'Good-life Modernism' for those who could attain it.[9]

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6   Goad, *The modern house in Melbourne, 1945-1975,* Chapter 6, pp31-32
7   Philip Goad, 'The Australian House in the 1960s', in Paula Whitman, Tracey Avery and Peta Dennis, eds, *Cool: The 1960s Brisbane House*, School of Design and Built Environment, QUT, 2004, p8
8   Goad, 'Regionalism', in Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p589
9   Mark Jarzombek, '"Good-Life Modernism" And Beyond: The American House in the 1950s and 1960s: A Commentary", *The Cornell Journal of Architecture*, vol 4, 1990, pp77-93

History

Context

The City of Banyule covers the unceded Country of the Wurundjeri-William people, who inhabited and managed the landscape for millennia and remain culturally connected. The fertile confluence of the Plenty River and the Yarra River/*Birrarung* and adjoining stringy-bark forests hosted squatters from 1837 and was soon after referred to as the 'Lower Plenty'. Much of this area had been alienated by the close of the decade and considered to be of better quality than land elsewhere in the Parish of Nillumbik.[10]

Sizable land parcels and absentee owners predominated over the 19th century, and the emergent locality was mainly cleared and cultivated or stocked by a small community of tenant farmers. The track linking Heidelberg and the Village of Eltham, which passed through the Lower Plenty, was proclaimed a road in 1840 (now Old Eltham Road), and the Plenty River bridged two years later.[11] The present-day Main Road (initially called Eltham Road) was laid in 1869.[12]

Subdivision in the Lower Plenty intensified during the 1920s, although the locale remained sparsely populated and a 'semi-suburban and rural area' into the 1950s.[13] Reminiscing about the postwar years, the notable mudbrick builder Alistair Knox described cycling through the area with the émigré architect Frederick Romberg, describing the Lower Plenty as a 'wide undulating… savannah landscape' dotted with 'Primeval redgums of enormous size'.[14]

Residential development increased progressively from the 1960s, with the construction of 'prestige' houses on large-scale allotments predominating.[15] Within this layer, a conspicuous minority displayed an organic/regional expression:

> Twelve miles from Melbourne, the … [Lower Plenty] is still largely covered with scrub gums and since the housing is nearly all contemporary, the natural appearance of the locality has not been obliterated. More often than not, the modern house has been built to blend, rather than stand apart from its surroundings.[16]

Open spaces and a general natural/rustic setting remain prevalent throughout Lower Plenty, with a peri-rural character predominating in its southern reaches. The Lower Plenty was administered by the District (later the Shire) of Eltham until 1994, after which municipal amalgamation led to its transfer (along with Montmorency) to the newly formed City of Banyule.

Photograph from a land sale brochure showing the rural landscape west from the old Lower Plenty Bridge, dated 1920s
(Source: Eltham District Historical Society, *Victorian Collections*, 00180)

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10   'Nillumbik' may stem from the Indigenous word *nyilumbik*, meaning 'bad, stupid or red earth'. (Jill Barnard, 'Nillumbik Shire', *eMelbourne*, School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, available online; and Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018, pp15-20, available online)

11   The Plenty River was named in 1835 by Joseph T Gellibrand, the first Attorney-General of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) and a leading figure within the Port Phillip Association. Its designation as a river was more warranted before the formation of the Yan Yean Reservoir in the mid-19th century, which reduced its flow. Hoddle referred to it as the 'Yarra Rivulet'.

12   The 1843 bridge was replaced in 1865 by the existing 'Old Lower Plenty Bridge' (HO106).

13   Alan Marshall, *Pioneers & Painters: One Hundred Years of Eltham and its Shire*, Thomas Nelson, 1971, p84

14   Alistair Knox, *We Are What We Stand On: a personal history of the Eltham Community*, Adobe Press, 1980, chapter 39

15   'Lower Plenty', *Victorian Places*, 2014, available online; and Andrew Lemon, 'Lower Plenty', *eMelbourne*, The University of Melbourne, July 2008, available online; and Context, BTEH, p37

16   Rick Campbell, 'Suburban Living, but with hills and bush', *Age*, 9 November 1968, p23. See also, various slides by Peter Wille of organic/regional architecture in the area at the SLV.

Site-specific

The subject land derives from the roughly 384-hectare purchase (Portion 2, Parish of Nillumbik) made in 1840 by the Corkonian, Benjamin Baxter.[17] He had arrived in Sydney Town in 1837 as a Captain in the 50th (Queen's Own) Regiment of Foot, charged with escorting a convict transport. Sensing opportunities in the embryonic Port Phillip District, Baxter acquired a Depasturing Licence, ran cattle at Emerald Hill and St Kilda, and held various civil appointments. Around the time Baxter procured his estate in what became the Lower Plenty and Montmorency, he also established a 6,000-hectare pastoral run known as *Carrup Carrup* at Baxter's Flat (Baxter), which became his permanent residence.[18] In 1927, a large part of Portion 2 was acquired for use by the Heidelberg Golf Club.[19]

Suburban allotments on either side of Old Eltham Road were released and developed in a seeming ad hoc fashion from the early 20th-century. In November 1968, husband-and-wife Zoltan and Elizabeth Jane Okalyi became joint proprietors of the subject allotment.[20] Then a block covered in regrowth bush. Attached to the Certificate of Title was a covenant requiring that at least $16,000 is expended for residential construction, at the time placing a new build within the middle-cost bracket.[21] Both Okalyis were accomplished international-level fencers, and Zoltan studied medicine and later practised in the district as a psychiatrist.[22]

October 1968 aerial photograph of the undeveloped subject allotment, indicated by the red arrow,
(Source: Landata, Project no 1968, Run 15, Frame 192)

Contemporaneous with the Okalyi purchase, the *Age* published a feature article that highlighted the influence of the modern movement in the Lower Plenty:

> On one stretch of the Old Eltham Road, just a few hundred yards from the Lower Plenty shopping centre, all but one or two of the houses are built around the concept of squat, angular geometry. There may be more or less glass. White surfaces may contrast with dark wood. But always roofs are flat and windows square and open…[23]

17　　Refer to *Plan of the Parish of Nillumbik*, Office of Lands and Survey, 1866, SLV, available online

18　　'Death of Captain Baxter: An Old Colonist and Pioneer', *Mornington Standard*, 19 May 1892, p3; and Marshall, *Pioneers & Painters*, pp82-4

19　　*Heidelberg Golf Club*, 'History', available online

20　　Elizabeth was initially recorded as the sole proprietor in June 1968. (Certificate of Title, vol. 8722, folio 500)
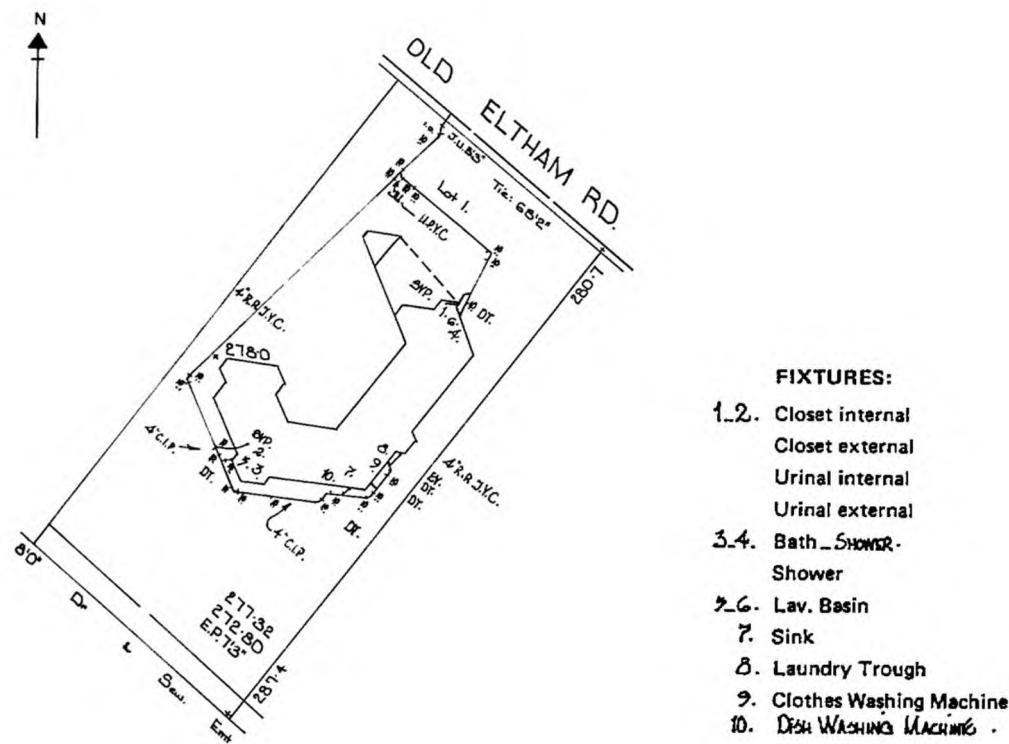
21　　Certificate of Title, vol. 8722, folio 500. Details of this covenant are supplied by Rick Campbell, 'Suburban Living, but with hills and bush', *Age*, 9 November 1968, p23. Assessment of average construction costs deduced from various sources, for instance: Daryl Jackson, 'Houses off-the-hook', *Age*, 26 June 1967, p11

22　　Born in Hungary, Zoltan represented Australia at the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome as a fencer. By at least the early 1980s, 'Liz' was being described as one of 'Australia's top women fencers'. (SR/Olympic Sports record, available online; *Age*, 30 June 1964, p1; and Peg McMahon, 'Our fencers are aiming high', *Age*, 30 December 1981, p15)

23　　Campbell, 'Suburban Living, but with hills and bush', p23

The well-established modernist architect Charles Duncan was engaged by the Okalyis to design their family home. The nature of their relationship is unknown; however, Duncan later commented that his most fruitful work stemmed from creative/positive with his clients, when both parties adopted the dogma 'every good building must have one idea'.[24] It appears that that *Okalyi House* was designed in 1968; Duncan may have commenced the process before the property was formally acquired. The residence had been constructed and occupied, at the latest, by 1970.[25] The contractors were K Soust Development Pty Ltd.[26]

During or soon after completion, *Okalyi House* was photographed by the modernist enthusiast Peter Wille (1931-71), who recorded much of Duncan's domestic work in the period.[27] In early 1972, *Okalyi House* was awarded *The Age*/RAIA 'House of the Week Citation' (no 34) – then a recognized architectural prize with widespread reach.[28]

FIXTURES:

1_2. Closet internal
Closet external
Urinal internal
Urinal external
3_4. Bath_Shower.
Shower
5_6. Lav. Basin
7. Sink
8. Laundry Trough
9. Clothes Washing Machine
10. Dish Washing Machine.

Property Sewerage Plan, *Okalyi House*, 25 February 1976 – a reflection of the slow rollout of services in the area, rather than the construction date (Source: Yarra Valley Water)

The detailed article accompanying the citation, prepared by the then director of the Architects' Housing Service, John Barker, provides several insights into the design development of *Okalyi House*:

> In an age of standardisation and modular planning, few designers depart from floor plans based on rectangular shapes. Generally this trend is promoted by the need for economy and speed of construction. An exception to the rule is provided in a 22 square house designed by architect Charles Duncan for a sloping site in Old Eltham Road.

> The plan of the house was based on triangular shapes and constructed in solid brick with heavy timber beams. Mr. Duncan justifies this design approach, not in terms of economy but in utilisation of space. "Three co-ordinate planning is useful particularly in in domestic work for creating a continuity of space and pockets of usable area not found in rectangular planning," say Mr. Duncan.

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24   Andrew Briant, *Charles Duncan Architect*, University of Melbourne, November 1983, p9

25   The design date (1968) is provided in a university essay by an author with firsthand knowledge of Duncan's practice (Briant, *Charles Duncan Architect*, p3). Zolton and Jane are first recorded at 66 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty in the 1970 edition of *Australia, Electoral Rolls*, Subdivision of Eltham (p103). However, Goad gives the construction date as 1968 (*The modern house in Melbourne*, Chapter 6, p53).

26   John Barker, 'A new angle on planning', *Age*, 15 May 1972, p11

27   Willie was employed as a draftsman by the firm Smith, Tracey, Lyon & Block. In his own time, he compiled an extensive record of modernist designs in Melbourne, predominantly in its southeast (he resided in Mount Waverly).

28   Barker, 'A new angle on planning', p11

"Rooms which are small in area may be dimensionally larger than would otherwise be possible. A release from the rigidity of rectangular planning is exciting and entirely functional when properly resolved. In this case the planning principle was not pre-conceived but developed naturally from the most desirable positioning of rooms on the site."

The site had a cross fall of about 6 feet to the north west. An excavated cut of three feet allowed the house to be set snugly into the contours using the external wall below the window sill to retain the soil. A continuous cavity ensured that dampness would not penetrate the house. The combination of a high ground line and deep projecting eaves achieves a sympathetic relationship between building and site.

Surplus soil was used to form artificial mounds which exaggerate the natural features of the wooded terrain. Walking around the high side of the site one can reach out and touch the natural grey cement roof tiles which sweep down below eye level. The ridge of the roof is supported by a 16 inch deep laminated pine beam which is carried through to the carport as a continuous structural spine.

The timber lined ceiling follows the low pitch of the roof and floating timber panels above passage ways are used to conceal the indirect ceiling lighting. Areas are articulated internally by angular elements of exposed brickwork. For example, the large living area is simply defined by the two triangular forms of the pantry and open fire-place. The continuous flow of space requires few doors as visual privacy develops from the appropriate juxtaposition of areas.

From the living section the bedroom and carport wings extend to enclose a landscaped court which receives sun throughout the day. The slate paved court is surrounded by full glass walls and contains a bluestone barbeque with provision for a future swimming pool. The carport wing is planned for future extension to provide extra accommodation.

A simple colour scheme is derived from the use of natural materials throughout the house. Exposed orange-brown bricks and pine ceilings contrast with the neutral grey floor paved in reused roofing slates. Controlled use of orange Laminex adds a touch of colour to the bench tops. The house is heated by an oil fired system with ducts laid below the concrete floor.[29]

'Heavy laminated beams supported on brick piers enclose the carport of Charles Duncan's design at Lower Eltham'
(Source: Barker, '"The Age" — RAIA Citation Award No. 34', *Age*, 15 May 1972, p11)

The article also noted that Gordon Craig Ford (1918-99) was responsible for the site's garden.[30] Ford, a local of Eltham, was then emerging as a well-regarded landscape designer in the vanguard of furthering and popularising 'bush style' gardens. He often collaborated with modernist architects, supporting many in their aim to integrate building and site.[31]

The Okalyi family occupied the subject place into at least the 1980s.[32]

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29   Barker, 'A new angle on planning', p11
30   Barker, 'A new angle on planning', p11
31   Gordon Ford with Gwen Ford, *Gordon Ford: The Natural Australian Garden*, 1999
32   Electoral rolls, Ancestry.com.au

1975 aerial photograph
The footprint of *Okalyi House*, obscured by foliage, is indicated by the red arrow
(Source: Landata, Project no 1243, 24A, Frame 147)

Charles Frederick Duncan (1933 –)

Over the 1960s and 1970s, Duncan was responsible for a large, chiefly domestic body of work throughout Victoria that expressed a 'highly original' and personalised interpretation of the Wrightian tradition.[33] His organic design approach represented a different strain of the postwar modern movement in Australia. One more responsive of the landscape and decisive in eliciting a poetic/evocative effect. During the 1960s and 1970s, Duncan was widely recognised as one of the neo-Wrightian idiom's more talented and successful practitioners in the state. Yet despite multiple awards, a relatively prolific output for a small practice, and published acclaim – the *Age* referred to him as 'one of the best-known architects in Victoria' in 1970 – Duncan has yet to receive sustained scholarly attention.[34]

Between 1951 and 1959, Duncan was enrolled in the Diploma of Architecture course at the Royal Melbourne Technical College (now RMIT). He finished his architectural studies at the University of Melbourne, a member of a postwar generation of architects moulded by a rebooted curriculum, provocative tutors, the zeal of 'multiplying modernisms' and a dynamic broader context.[35] Both during and after his studies, Duncan worked for a range of leading architectural offices, namely Chancellor & Patrick, Peter Jorgensen, McGlashan Everist, and Hassell and McConnell.[36] Many of these firms and practitioners were themselves exploring Wrightian/organic/regionalist design modes, which resonated through much of Duncan's subsequent practice. In his own words:

My feelings are strongly orientated to the organic approach where a house is closely linked to its surroundings and extends from them as part of it not on it.[37]

In 1962, the 29-year-old Duncan commenced his solo architectural career. His first commission – the *Williams House* in the Griffins-designed Glenard Estate (Eaglemont) – received the prestigious RAIA Victoria Architecture Medal (single house category) in 1965. The often-acerbic magazine, *Cross-Section*, described it as:

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33   Goad, *The modern house in Melbourne, 1945-1975*, Chapter 6, p30.
34   Ray Davie, 'It's a grand winner' *Age*, 7 February 1970, p25
35   Geoffrey Serle, *Robin Boyd: A Life*, Melbourne University Press, 1996, p104
36   Built Heritage, *Survey of Post-War Built Heritage in Victoria. Stage Two: Assessment of Community & Administrative* Facilities, Heritage Victoria, 31 May 2010, p133; and Winsome Callister, 'Duncan, Charles', in Philip Goad and Julie Willis, eds, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p216
37   *Merchant Builders; Towards a new archive*, Melbourne School of Design, 2015, p19

One of the few houses by Melb. Archts, young or old, that seems to have deep-seated convictions about architecture as a lively and vigorous art — you can tell the year an architect graduated by his response to this house.[38]

The first two decades of Duncan's solo practice were particularly productive, with at least seven high-end designs constructed in Banyule, mostly across its peri-urban, bushland fringes – optimal settings for Duncan's characteristic organic/regional approach. Outside the municipality, *Tozer House* in Beaconsfield (1964), a 'pinwheel' plan 'recalling a de Stijl painting' constructed of recycled materials (brick, timber, slate), drew popular/critical attention.[39] The *Eltham South Kindergarten* (HO202/Nillumbik Shire), built in 1970, was rare departure from his mostly residential work. Duncan continued operations as an architect into the 1990s.

Thematic Context

Context, *Banyule Thematic Environmental History*, October 2018:

- Theme 5: Suburban development

See also Allom Lovell & Associates, *Banyule Heritage Place Study: An Urban History*, vol 1, July 1999:

- 6.4 Post-War Residential Development

Comparative Analysis

One Duncan-designed residence in Banyule is currently affected by a HO:

- *Williams House*, 4 Glenard Drive, Eaglemont (HO146) – an 'aggressive play of clinker brick walls and hefty roof planes edged by deep-facias of stained timber', built in 1963.[40] It was later the recipient of the RAIA Victoria Architecture Medal (1965) and consists of a series of overlapping volumes with stepped flat roofs and extensive window walls. It is more representative of Duncan's formative organic designs, compared to the more ambitious formwork of *Okalyi House*.

There are also some instances of Duncan's residential work within the Elliston Estate (HO92) in Rosanna – a residential development by the innovative company Merchant Builders, initiated in 1969. Four notable architectural architects/practices were engaged (Charles Duncan, Daryl Jackson and Evan Walker, David McGlashan and Neil Everist, and Graeme Gunn) to prepare multiple designs with Ellis Stone responsible for integrating the subdivision with a contrived bushland landscape. Several houses by these architects were constructed in the southern section of the estate (Bachli Court to Von Ninda Crescent). These houses are generally modestly scaled and nestled in Stone's landscaping with a palette of brown or tan brick, flat or skillion roofs, and stained finish to the timberwork (facias, windows, etc.). In 1971 Merchant Builders sold the remaining parts of the estate for speculative development.

Several Duncan-designed houses have also been identified in Banyule as part of this Study.[41] Of those known, all date from the 1960s or 1970s – his most architecturally productive period – and are representative of his particular approach. However, these vary in their intactness and/or level of distinctiveness.

An array of architect-designed modernist houses are included in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay for Banyule. Most originate in the 1950s and reflect the multiplying version of mid-century modernism. The dominant influence of the International Style is prevalent, particularly its preference for rectangular footprints, cuboid forms and stripped-down aesthetic; for instance, 10 Alexandra Street, Greensborough (HO136) by Moore and Hammond, 1957. Others reveal the period's growing interest in the modular derivation of the plan, with steel or timber framing and lightweight panelling and bands of glazing. A key example of specific geometry is the 1954 *Snelleman House* (HO36 + VHR H2282) in Ivanhoe East by architects Peter and Dione McIntyre, often referred to as the 'Coil House'. While the neo-Wrightian organic undertones of *Okalyi House* are faintly detectable in some of these designs, only one is especially reflective:

- *V Walker House*, 209 Main Road, Lower Plenty (HO163) – a two-storey cream-brick residence with an unusual, some organic trapezoidal form created by slanted sidewalls and a 'folded' gabled roof, by Hipwell, Weight & Mason, 1958.

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[38]   *Cross-Section*, The University of Melbourne Department of Architecture, issue no 142, 1 August 1964
[39]   *Tozer House/Kenilworth*, 6 Coach House Lane, Beaconsfield (part of HO53/Cardinia Shire Council) – see Geoffrey, Philip and Hamann, *An Unfinished Experiment in Living: Australian Houses 1950-65*, p358
[40]   *Cross-Section*, The University of Melbourne Department of Architecture, issue no 142, 1 August 1964, np
[41]   Existing Duncan designs in the municipality include *Reade House*, 14 Lorraine Drive, Briar Hill (1966); *Woollogorang/Bucknell House*, 8 Woodfull Road, Lower Plenty (1967); 56 Buckingham Drive, Banyle; *Knott House*, 21 Castle Street, Eaglemont (1968-9); and *Wynkara*, 17 Stawell Road, Lower Plenty (undated). The Duncan-designed *Host House* at 27 Seymour Road, Viewbank, has recently been demolished/replaced.

Okalyi House stands apart from other instances of postwar or late 20th-century modernism for its atypical modular form and potent ability to epitomise a mature rendition of 1960s organic/regional design philosophy.

Collectively, these varied examples of modernism provide insight into the forces of modernity that shaped the district following the Second World War, particularly shifting sociocultural and economic factors and the willingness of some residents to interact with then unconventional design culture and novel lifestyle patterns.[42]

Intactness

Largely intact

Previous Assessment

- Heritage Alliance, *Survey of Post-War Built Heritage in Victoria*, Stage 1, vol 2, October 2008, p183 (part F)

- RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants, *Banyule Heritage Study 2020: Stage 1 report*, Banyule City Council, August 2020 – High priority, recommend for Stage *2*

Heritage Overlay Schedule Controls

External Paint Controls	Yes (brick walls and timber elements)
Internal Alteration Controls	Yes (Entry, study, living, dinning and family rooms, specifically pine ceilings, brick fireplace, exposed brick walls, slate floors)
Tree Controls	Yes (front garden – mature native/indigenous species)No
Outbuildings and/or fences	No

Extent of Heritage Overlay

The proposed extent of the heritage overlay is outlined approximately below.

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[42]   Geoffrey London, Philip Goad and Conrad Hamann, *An Unfinished Experiment in Living: Australian Houses 1950-65*, UWA Publishing, 2017, passim

Recommended extent of heritage overlay.
(Source: Nearmap, April 2020)