
Name	House	Reference No	
Address	87-87A Bowen Street, Camberwell	Survey Date	2 September 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	1934 ¹	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Intactness Good Fair Poor

Heritage Status HV AHC NT Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

Miss Alice Payne, the daughter of John Payne founder of Payne's Bon Marche (q.v.), commissioned N.P. Anderson to build this house in 1934². It was a two storey, brick house of eight rooms and was estimated to cost £1,775. Ms Payne did not reside at this address until some ten years after its construction.³ John Patrick Walker, an engineer, was listed as occupant in 1936, with Alice Payne and her brother Herbert James Payne, a gardener, taking up residence from the mid-1940s⁴.

The house was converted to flats in 1950 at an estimated cost of £2,500⁵. The first floor flat comprised five rooms and the ground floor flat six rooms.

(G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, additional research by Lovell Chen, 2005)

Description & Integrity

Stratford, the house at 87-87A Bowen Street, Camberwell is broadly intact, externally, and has been maintained in general sympathy with its original materials and form. The house is double-fronted and bracketed, compositionally, with two tall cement-rendered chimneys. The roof is steeply pitched and clad in terra cotta Marseilles pattern tiles over its main and projecting wings, with a shallower skillion tiled roof over a ground floor bedroom and entry hall. The porch is formed by a gabled pavilion jutting from this skillion, and is entered through a stilted segmental arch dressed in tapestry brick. Similar brick dresses the bedroom window lintels, a semicircular panel over the ground floor lounge window, and six corbels under the larger gables. The west wing windows both have shutters, but the other windows were all plain insets, most with modernist horizontal glazing bars.

The house was divided into flats in 1950,⁶ when a flat roofed bedroom was added to the ground floor at the south-east corner. The drawing for these works shows a new external stair to be constructed on the north elevation providing access to the first floor flat.

The fence is in clinker brick and may be original (albeit altered); an inlay of Roman tapestry brick laid in curves frames the gate and appears to be later, possibly dating from when the house was converted into flats in 1950. The concrete drive looks to be of a similar age.

Historical Context

Camberwell underwent intensive residential development in the interwar period, particularly in the 1930s. In many streets, including Bowen Street, this phase of development overlaid existing building stock from the Edwardian period or even earlier.

Comparative Analysis

Stratford is a neatly composed, crisply finished essay in the steep pitched roof and cement rendered idiom of the area, and of other parts of Camberwell such as the Reid or Hassett Estates. It is distinct from other Boroondara examples, though, by its combination of this eclecticism with the modernism—clearly perceptible in 1934—of plain cement rendered walling and a determinedly modern glazing detail. Modernism and eclectic references were not an unusual combination in the early 1930s. *Home Beautiful* and other journals emphasised how modern technology's *men of action* often had Tudor and other highly eclectic houses.

In its combination of modernist and eclectic references, and in materials usage, *Stratford's* most direct local counterpart is 177 Glen Iris Road Glen Iris (q.v., B-graded), a slightly larger two-storied house completed in 1935, and the flats at 948 Burke Road, Deepdene. Both those designs were much more imposing and sumptuous visually, with heavily textured and patterned walling, terra cotta shingles, conical or half-conical wing roofing and more extensive use of wrought iron. But *Stratford's* comparative restraint makes it a more individual design in this company. In its combination of steep roofs, shuttered windows and combination of stuccoed brick walling and glazed brick trim it parallels some earlier houses in the Camberwell area, such as Otto Yuncken's own house in Highton Grove, and Keith Klingender's Ian McEachran house; both of these were in Balwyn.⁷

Assessment Against Criteria

Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria

CRITERION D: The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as a part of a class or type of places or objects.

In its size and general form, *Stratford* is typical of a comfortable middle-class house in Camberwell in the 1930s.

CRITERION E: The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.

While fairly staid compositionally, *Stratford's* combination of modern and eclectic detail is bold and carried through with some assurance. Compared with most early 1930s houses in this area, the surface texture is plain, and the placement of windows and doors is sparing, deliberate and careful.

Stratford is unusual in combining eclectic 1930s design—vertical proportions, steep pitched roof, tapestry brick combined with cement rendering, arched entry and main window—with a general plainness in exterior finish and a conscious modernism in its emphatically horizontal glazing bars. (A similar combination appears in Glen Iris Primary School's north wing, completed c. 1937.) In this combination of details the house is distinct from more consistently historicist cement-rendered and tapestry bricked houses elsewhere in the area. The use of emphatically horizontal glazing frames lends a machine aesthetic to the house; this not out of place in an otherwise eclectic design, as the two were not generally thought incompatible in the early 1930s.⁸

Statement of Significance

Stratford, the house at 87-87A Bowen Street Camberwell, is of local historical and architectural significance. In terms of its size, form, and general composition the house is typical of many comfortable middle-class interwar Camberwell residences. It is distinguished from other examples, however, by its combination of typical 1930s eclectic design with a restrained plainness of exterior finish, sparing placement of doors and windows, and consciously modernist horizontal glazing bars.

Grading Review

Unchanged.

Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

Identified By

G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991.

References

General: G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991.

Specific:

¹ G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991, vol. 4, p. 31; Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, #4003, dated 19 April 1934.

² Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, # 4705, dated 27 April 1950.

³ Electoral Roll, 1936, 1945.

⁴ Electoral Roll, 1945; *Sands and McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1945; 1950.

⁵ Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, #4705, dated 27 April 1950.

⁶ Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, #4705, dated 27 April 1950.

⁷ 'When an Architect Builds Him a Home', *Australian Home Beautiful*, 1 August 1930, p. 19; 'An Interesting Home at Balwyn', *Ibid.*, 1 June 1929, p. 15. Details sourced by

⁸ Critics really only began to separate eclectic and conspicuously modernist design only in the late 1930s, with the publication of Robin Boyd's *Smudges* broadsheet and the appearance of Walter Bunning's regular architectural criticism in Ure Smith's *The Home*. Both Boyd and Bunning intended to purify architectural Modernism to make the aspects of it *they* preferred aspects easier for others to read and follow.