
Name	House	Reference No	
Address	1297 Toorak Road, Burwood	Survey Date	15 September 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	1940	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundary

Intactness Good Fair Poor

Heritage Status HV AHC NT Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

Theodore G. Macintosh, an engineer, commissioned Canterbury builder, E.W. Saunders, to construct this two-storey residence in 1940.¹ The building was designed by the architectural practice of Leith and Bartlett (refer discussion below). Estimated to cost £2,750, the brick and timber dwelling was of eight rooms.² Theodore Macintosh owned and occupied the property with Queenie Macintosh until after 1952.³ By 1962 F. Williams was the owner-occupier.⁴

A number of alterations have been made to the house in recent years (refer Description & Integrity below) and approval was achieved in 2002 for the development of the rear of the site for a separate residential building.⁵ The rear of the site was subsequently subdivided off from its original allotment.⁶

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

Description & Integrity

The Macintosh house, 1297 Toorak Road, formerly 345 Toorak Road, was designed by Leith and Bartlett, later prominent as a large corporate firm and including G Burrige Leith, the former architect to the State Savings Bank of Victoria and notable in developing the suburban bungalow style and later eclectic styles.⁷ The Mackintosh house was simply massed in a rectangular cube, though in plan the stair well and garage roof suggest a triple-front. The house is of two storeys, with a shallow hipped roof emphasizing its rectangular massing towards Toorak Road. The garage, dug down into the site, projected at a lower level and had a broad pergola originally, giving it the appearance of a carport. This was used as the frame for an actual carport front added later, in 1962.⁸ The house was originally in cream clinker brick, but this has been painted in white more recently as part of an extensive series of alterations. These are mostly on the north and west sides, and apart from the painting, are either inconspicuous or unseen from the Toorak Road frontage. The carport in the lower front is still in

place, as are the tubular balustrade and plate-glass fronted stair hall, the dominant compositional elements of the principal elevation. A tennis court originally filled the back yard space. The architect Rhys Hopkins, later of Clarke, Hopkins and Clarke, added a louvred laundry as a lean-to in 1952.⁹ A new fence was added in 1992, and in 1998 the architect Graeme Jones designed a series of alterations to the house.¹⁰ He also designed two units in a separate but similar-looking building over the tennis court. Though these were not given a permit initially they were allowed on appeal in 2004.¹¹

Historical Context

By the interwar period, this area of Toorak Road had developed as a predominantly residential area. A small strip shopping centre had developed to the east at Toorak Road and Melton Avenue in the 1920s and 1930s.

Comparative Analysis

No. 1297's cuboid massing, shallow hipped roof, dramatized stair hall window and spare, elegantly placed windows compare with a set of houses in Camberwell built at the time, such as in Mont Albert Road (now demolished), c. 1938, 113 Yarrbat Avenue Balwyn, 1940¹², and 56 Riverside Avenue (q.v.) and 46 The Boulevard, Balwyn North, of 1940 and 1941 respectively.¹³ A similar surface detailing, in multi-winged houses appears in AK Lines' 136 Whitehorse Road and *Clovelly*, 26 Reid Street, both Balwyn, both of 1938,¹⁴ 1 Mountain View Road, Balwyn North, of 1939,¹⁵ *Guelo*, 5 Salisbury Street Camberwell, 1941.¹⁶ No. 1297 also represents a distillation of earlier cuboid types such as the King brothers' 35 Balwyn Road Canterbury and the related 1292 Toorak Road, diagonally opposite, both of 1931,¹⁷ and the simply cubed, consciously regal designs of an even earlier period, such as Gawler and Drummond's 158 Mont Albert Road, of 1919.¹⁸ These connections put the house partly within the emerging modernism of Melbourne suburban houses. The south side, which is elegantly composed and strongly planar in its external reading, resembles Roy Grounds' better known but slightly later houses and flats of 1940-1, particularly the COR Fenner house at Moralla Road, Kooyong, and the *Quamby* flats at Glover Court, Toorak, though these both had flat roofs.¹⁹ This elegance sets 1297 apart from more usual Camberwell stock of the period, where details and wall expression tends to be solid or quite heavy. 1297's plain brick walls and shallow hipped roof also link it to some of Leighton Irwin's houses of the early and mid-1930s. Houses like this one were discussed in *Home Beautiful* in these years, and the design has equal importance in the emerging suburban style now known as Postwar Vernacular. One of the partners in 1297's design firm, G Burridge Leith, had already produced several single-storey houses, published in *Home Beautiful*, that are prototypes for the more general suburban style. 1297 also has some significance as a recognizably Camberwell 'type'. The entry path is up from Toorak Road through a rough rockery.

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.

1297 Toorak Road is an externally well-preserved example of a type of house common in Camberwell in the late 1930s and early 1940s, in its simple rectangular composition, avoidance of stylistic flourishes and shallow hipped roof. As with other designs in this Camberwell group, however, the design is a distillation of earlier treatments of the two-storey house, not least the one diagonally opposite. It also looks forward to the builder-designed suburban vernacular of the post war period, 1945-70. The overpainting is a significant change, but is common to other houses of this type which used stucco wall surfacing.

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.

The house has an elegance in composition, a planar sense to its walls and a lightness in detail that sets it apart from its consistently solid and gesturally more cautious Camberwell counterparts of the period. It is among the earlier phase of suburban houses of the Melbourne area to integrate its garage as part of the frontal composition, and it does so convincingly.

Statement of Significance

The house at 1297 Toorak Road, Burwood is of local historical and architectural significance. It is fine and broadly intact example of a residential typology appearing in Camberwell in the late 1930s and early 1940s, in its simple rectangular composition, avoidance of stylistic flourishes and shallow hipped roof. As with other designs in this Camberwell group, the design is a distillation of earlier treatments of the two-storey house, but also looks forward to the builder-designed suburban vernacular of the post war period, 1945-70. The house has an elegance in composition, a planar sense to its walls and a lightness in detail that sets it apart from its consistently solid and gesturally more cautious Camberwell counterparts of the period. It is among the earlier phase of suburban houses of the Melbourne area to integrate its garage as part of the frontal composition, and it does so convincingly. While it has been altered, most of the changes that have occurred do not affect the main presentation of the house to Toorak Road.

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; Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd.

Specific:

¹ Details sourced from City of Camberwell Building Index, # 13255, dated 9 July 1940.

² Details sourced from City of Camberwell Building Index, # 13255, dated 9 July 1940.

³ Electoral Roll, 1945, *Sands and McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1952.

⁴ *Sands and McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1962.

⁵ City of Camberwell Planning File, 40/409/06356.

⁶ City of Camberwell Planning File, 40/409/06356.

⁷ See Working Drawings, 22 June 1940, held in the City of Camberwell drawing archive. Drawings sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, # 13255, dated 9 July 1940.

⁸ Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, # 31080, dated 31 May 1962.

⁹ Details and drawings sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, # 9739, dated 24 April 1952. See working drawing by Rhys Hopkins, n.d.

¹⁰ Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, # 95584, dated 24 August 1992, and Graeme Jones, working drawings, 9 July 1998. The proposal for two connected units to be built on the tennis court was initially refused by the City of Boroondara, 24 November 2000, but allowed on appeal to VCAT, approved 4 February 2002. City of Camberwell Planning File 40/409/06356.

¹¹ Details and drawings sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, # 95584, dated 24 August 1992, and Graeme Jones, working drawings, 9 July 1998.

¹² G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, Vol. 4, p. 324.

¹³ G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, Vol. 4, pp. 268-9

¹⁴ G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, Vol. 4, pp. 230, 312-3.

¹⁵ G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, Vol. 4, p. 207.

¹⁶ G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, Vol. 4, p. 255.

¹⁷ G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, Vol. 4, pp. 22, 277.

¹⁸ G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, Vol. 4, p. 201.

¹⁹ See C Hamann, *The leaders of Modern Architecture in Melbourne: Roy Grounds, Frederick Romberg*, Robin Boyd, Ph D thesis, Monash University, 1978.