
Name	House	Reference No	
Address	452 Warrigal Road, Ashburton	Survey Date	20 September 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	1932	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Note that this would include the rear section of the block, now developed for a detached dwelling.

In the event a subdivision has been effected, only the front section of the block need be included.

Intactness Good Fair Poor

Heritage Status HV AHC NT Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

The architect, P.J. O'Connor, was the designer and first owner of this seven room stuccoed brick house when it was constructed in 1930-2.¹ A later long-term owner-occupier was Harold J. Coy.²

O'Connor was a devotee of the Spanish Mission style, particularly as applied to Catholic churches. His best known works are the Catholic churches at 305 Wendouree Pde, Ballarat (1938) and Our Lady of Lourdes, Werrimull (near Mildura, 1933). His practice continued as O'Connor & Brophy with works such as Our Lady Star of the Sea at HMAS Cerberus, Hastings (1948).³

Few major alterations appear to have been made to the building. Approval was sought for a new fence and pergola in 1994.⁴

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

Description & Integrity

452 Warrigal Road Ashburton has a hipped roofed double-front facing Warrigal Road, augmented by a pyramidal-roofed tower over the front entrance. The rear elevation breaks up into a more casual array of parallel wings including a large laundry and toolshed wing, and at the rear of the site a galvanized iron shed appears of fairly long standing. Apart from the tower, the front-facing roofs are hipped with cement tiles in a Marseilles pattern. The north-eastern front has a stuccoed wall-screen with three arches, possibly an open loggia originally. The tower has an arched entry and two flanking spiral colonnettes, giving a note of ornamental flourish, albeit a frugal one. A small grilled window punctuates the tower higher up. The rear wings have straight pitches running to shallow gables.

A high front fence of cement-rendered piers and red brick panelling has been built to screen the Warrigal Road frontage in recent years (replacing the original fence noted in the 1991 Camberwell Conservation Study).

A free standing two-storey red brick house of unusual design is under construction on the south side of the property, with access to this building from Lancaster Street through a double garage.

Historical Context

No. 452 would have been a major element in the pre-WWII Warrigal Road streetscape, with no houses immediately opposite or to either side, and the contemporary Gardiner Creek Bridge as the nearest major design undertaking. Lancaster Street to the immediate south came later, part of a Housing Commission subdivision where the streets were all named after major campaigns or aircraft of World War II.

Comparative Analysis

Considered in the context of architect P J O'Connell's work, 452 Warrigal Road appears a substantial, albeit relatively staid effort, particularly by comparison with his delightful Werrimull Church, executed in a verandahed Lombardic mode, which commenced the following year.⁵ Its triple arch was common in Spanish Mission housing of these years, as with 22 Cookson Street Camberwell (ungraded), for example. The entry tower was impressive for what it achieved with limited means.

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.

454 Warrigal Road is a competent and relatively externally intact application of the Spanish Mission styling to a mid-sized suburban house of the early 1930s, successfully achieving an assertive open character. The house suffers to a degree from the alteration of its setting, including the replacement of the original fence and the development of the rear of the block.

CRITERION G: The importance of the place or object in demonstrating social or cultural associations

The association of this house with original owner and architect, P J O'Connor, is of interest, with its adoption of the Spanish Mission style reflecting the architect's own interest in the idiom.

Statement of Significance

452 Warrigal Road, Ashburton is of local historical and architectural significance as a competent and relatively externally intact of the application of Spanish Mission styling to a mid-sized suburban house of the early 1930s, successfully achieving an assertive open character. The house suffers to a degree from the alteration of its setting, including the replacement of the original fence and the development of the rear of the block. The association of this house with original owner and architect, P J O'Connor, is of interest, with its adoption of the Spanish Mission style reflecting the architect's own interest in the idiom.

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.

¹ MMBW Drainage Plan Application # 168359 examined 1930, carried out 7.1932, P J O'Connor of 371 Collins St, Melb. Miles Lewis lists O'Connor in *Victorian Churches*, National Trust, Melbourne, 1991, as J O'Connell (pp. 42, 136, 169).

² *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1952, 1962.

³ Refer Royal Australian Institute of Architects, 20th Century Register.

⁴ Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, #20427, dated July 1994.

⁵ See Miles Lewis, *Victorian Churches*, National Trust of Victoria, Melbourne, 1991, p. 136. Lewis dates it at 1933-4 and names the architect as J O'Connell.