
Name	House	Reference No	
Address	54 Berkeley Street, Hawthorn	Survey Date	26 April 2006
Building Type	Residence	Grading	C*
Date	1918-19	Previous Grading	C*3



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Intactness ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

Heritage Status ☐ HV ☐ AHC ☐ NT ☒ Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

The allotment associated with 54 Berkeley Street, Hawthorn, was created in a subdivision of c 1916, when 27 allotments were formed.¹ Mr and Mrs John Ashworth were recorded as the owners of several lots in the area according to rate records for the 1918-19 rate cycle. With regard to the subject site, a house was described as 'being built' on the corner of Callantina Road and Berkeley Street, in the 1922 edition of the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*.² The owners were the Ashworths, and the brick house of nine rooms was rated at £105 in the 1919-20 rate cycle. The Ashworths did not retain their new home for long – by the 1925-26 rate cycle the property was owned and occupied by Sir Robert and Lady Best. Sir Robert Best (1856-1946), originally a solicitor, was the Federal Member for the seat of Kooyong between 1910 and 1922.³ After the death of Sir Robert, Maud, Lady Best remained at the property for only a few years, before it was acquired and occupied by Ernest Johns.⁴ Mr and Mrs Johns resided at the property until the mid-1960s, at which time it was acquired by W R Gould.⁵ A car port, fence and a swimming pool were all added to the property before the end of the decade.⁶

(G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote Places (draft)*, 2000; additional research by Lovell Chen, 2006)

Description & Integrity

No 54 Berkeley Street, Hawthorn, is an attic-style, overpainted, rough-cast, stucco-clad masonry house in the general bungalow mode. It is composed around two large gables (on the north and east elevations) with four-light, awning-style, attic window rows in each gable end; the gable eaves are supported on diagonal bracing struts and slatwork screens. The roof has been re-clad with non-original charcoal-grey concrete tiles, and the attic windows are not original (although the window opening is), but the other materials in the house exterior are basically original. These include a flat-roofed porch-verandah, conceived as a sealed pergola with projecting scroll brackets and a minimal fascia, supported on paired timber posts on stuccoed pedestals. The verandah balustrade is a solidly detailed masonry structure with stucco coating, and the front steps are bracketed by two heavy

stuccoed concave balustrades. The ground floor windows are timber-framed, double hung sashes with diamond-pattern lead lighting in the upper panes. The front fence is a picket structure in concave loops, added in 1990⁷ with a recent lich-gate at the Berkeley Street/Callantina Road corner, possibly in an original pattern.

Historical Context

The site of 54 Berkeley Street was formed as the result of a subdivision of lands lying south-west of Callantina Road and Berkeley Street, to Gardiners Creek, in c 1916. This area of Hawthorn, north of Gardiners Creek, was used for abattoir purposes in the 1840s, but began to be developed residentially after the 1870s, when large lots were made available for sale.⁸ These lots were later subdivided further, to create the pattern of development evident today.

Comparative Analysis

No 54 Berkeley Street, Hawthorn, is a relatively early example of the emergence of bungalow and attic bungalow modes in Melbourne. In Boroondara it compares, chronologically, with 1 Threadneedle Street and 127 Winmallee Road, both of Balwyn, and of 1915 and 1917-19 respectively (graded C and B). It follows the earliest known Melbourne examples at 17 Threadneedle Street, Balwyn (1907, graded B),⁹ and the Harry Martin bungalow in Malvern of 1908 (believed demolished),¹⁰ by ten or twelve years. However, the onset of clearly bungalow designed dwellings in Melbourne had been held up by the advent of the First World War and by a slow fusion with the Federation style, so the simple lines evident at 54 Berkeley Street in fact appear as one of Melbourne's first real bungalows. Its combination of stuccoed brickwork with bungalow form was effective and well-rounded, and part of a general adaptation to masonry construction in bungalow design that was just starting to occur in Australia. The inclined indentations in the front gable walling were a motif repeated widely in the Melbourne area during the 1920s, and the box-frame windows became general bungalow usage. The simple diamond-pattern leadlighting in the upper sashes of the original windows was also a characteristic in later 1920s houses, as was the heavy stuccoed brick balustrade around the verandah and front steps. The verandah, with Japanese-flavoured timber framing and exposed rafters, resembles those on later houses in Boroondara, such as 16 John Street, Kew (1923, graded B).¹¹ These details all became more widespread as the decade wore on. No 54 Berkeley Street therefore reads as one of the prototypes for a range of later bungalow forms, although it appears contemporary with some similarly innovative bungalows in other municipalities. Its bracketed gable resembles a chalet form seen in other, earlier houses, such as Harold Desbrowe-Anne's Eyrie trio in Eaglemont (1899-1903), and more contemporarily at 12 Grange Road, Kew (c. 1920, graded B), and *Parkview* at 512 Racecourse Road, Flemington (1924).¹² Houses such as this also marked out a clearly different trajectory from Burrigge Leith's State Savings Bank bungalow designs, published in the period 54 Berkeley Street was being built.

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.

No 54 Berkeley Street, Hawthorn, is an attic-style, rough-cast stucco, bungalow house, which is considered to be a relatively early example of the emerging bungalow and attic bungalow modes in Melbourne. It is generously proportioned and substantially intact externally. The two main gables to the north and east elevations address the adjacent streets, and enhance the prominence and presentation of the dwelling to its street corner.

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.

No 54 Berkeley Street, Hawthorn, is regarded as a prototype for a range of later bungalows in Boroondara, although it appears contemporary with some similarly innovative bungalows in other municipalities. Its combination of stuccoed brickwork with bungalow form was effective and well-rounded, and part of a general adaptation to masonry construction in bungalow design that was just starting to occur in Australia. Elements and motifs which appeared in later bungalows include the inclined indentations in the front gable walls, box-frame windows, simple diamond-pattern leadlighting

in the upper window sashes, the heavy stuccoed brick balustrade to the verandah and front steps, and the Japanese-flavoured verandah with its timber framing and exposed rafters.

Statement of Significance

No 54 Berkeley Street, Hawthorn, is of local historical and architectural significance. It is a prominently located, attic-style, rough-cast stucco, bungalow house, which is generously proportioned and substantially intact externally. Architecturally, it is considered to be a relatively early example of the emerging bungalow and attic bungalow modes in Melbourne, and something of a prototype for a range of later bungalows in Boroondara. Its combination of stuccoed brickwork with bungalow form was effective and well-rounded, and part of a general adaptation to masonry construction in bungalow design which was starting to occur in Australia. It also has a number of elements and motifs which appear in later bungalows.

Grading Review

Unchanged

Recommendations

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

In addition, it is recommended that Council undertake a detailed study of the housing stock within the area bounded by Glenferrie, Riversdale and Auburn Roads, and the Monash Freeway to the south. The area, described here as the Berkeley Street/Kooyongkoot Road precinct, also includes Kembla, Illawarra and Robinson Streets, and part of Riversdale Road. The area has a comparatively high number of graded buildings.

Identified By

Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, *Hawthorn Heritage Study*, 1992.

References

General: (G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote Places (draft)*, 2000; Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, *Hawthorn Heritage Study*, 1992.)

Specific:

¹ Draft citation, G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote places (draft)*, 2000; Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works plan #56, 1901.

² *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1920-22.

³ Norma Marshall, "Sir Robert Best", *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1979, vol. 7, pp. 280-81.

⁴ City of Hawthorn Rate Books, 1948-49, #4112, cited in G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote places (draft)*, 2000.

⁵ Pattern of occupation derived from listings in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years between 1930 and 1974.

⁶ Details sourced from the City of Hawthorn Building Index.

⁷ Details sourced from City of Boroondara Planning File 40/408/04412, item 7088, dated 12 April 1990.

⁸ G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote places (draft)*, 2000.

⁹ The designs are all discussed in Lovell Chen and Associates' *Boroondara review of B-graded buildings*, 2006.

¹⁰ See Peter Cuffley, *Australian houses of the '20s and '30s*, Melbourne: Five Mile, 1989, pp. 56-7.

¹¹ See Lovell Chen, *Boroondara B-Graded Buildings Study*, 2006.

¹² See Philip Goad et al., *Melbourne Architecture*, Sydney: Watermark, 1999, p. 115 (for Parkview); 91 (the Eyrie).