

## CITY OF DONCASTER & TEMPLESTOWE HERITAGE STUDY.

### 9 ERA COURT, DONVALE. A21.

**HISTORY :** Purpose-built as Australia's first alternative secondary school by the Education Reform Association, probably the most ambitious of its type then in Melbourne, in 1971-72.<sup>1</sup> ERA School opened in 1972. Dr Fearon was first president. The architect of the buildings is not known. Initially planned as a secondary school for Preshil, it soon broke away, and Preshil developed its own secondary school in Hawthorn. Era School failed in 1987. Its last principal, Peter Gough said, "It was probably too free. I believe in some structure."<sup>2</sup> The site was acquired by Carey as a separate campus in April 1987 and re-opened the school in March 1989. Carey has developed the site since with various additions and alterations over 1988-90.<sup>3</sup>

**VISUAL DESCRIPTION :** A group of skillion-roofed, concrete block buildings, which step down the hillside. Walls are now painted light green, with stained sawn timbers. The structure is mild steel parallel curved? trusses and laminated beams on telegraph poles, supporting steel deck roofs. The Library is a steeply pitched octagon, with a central skylight. The caretaker's residence is a log cabin. The complex is set in remnant bushland on a steep site, within a basin of hills.

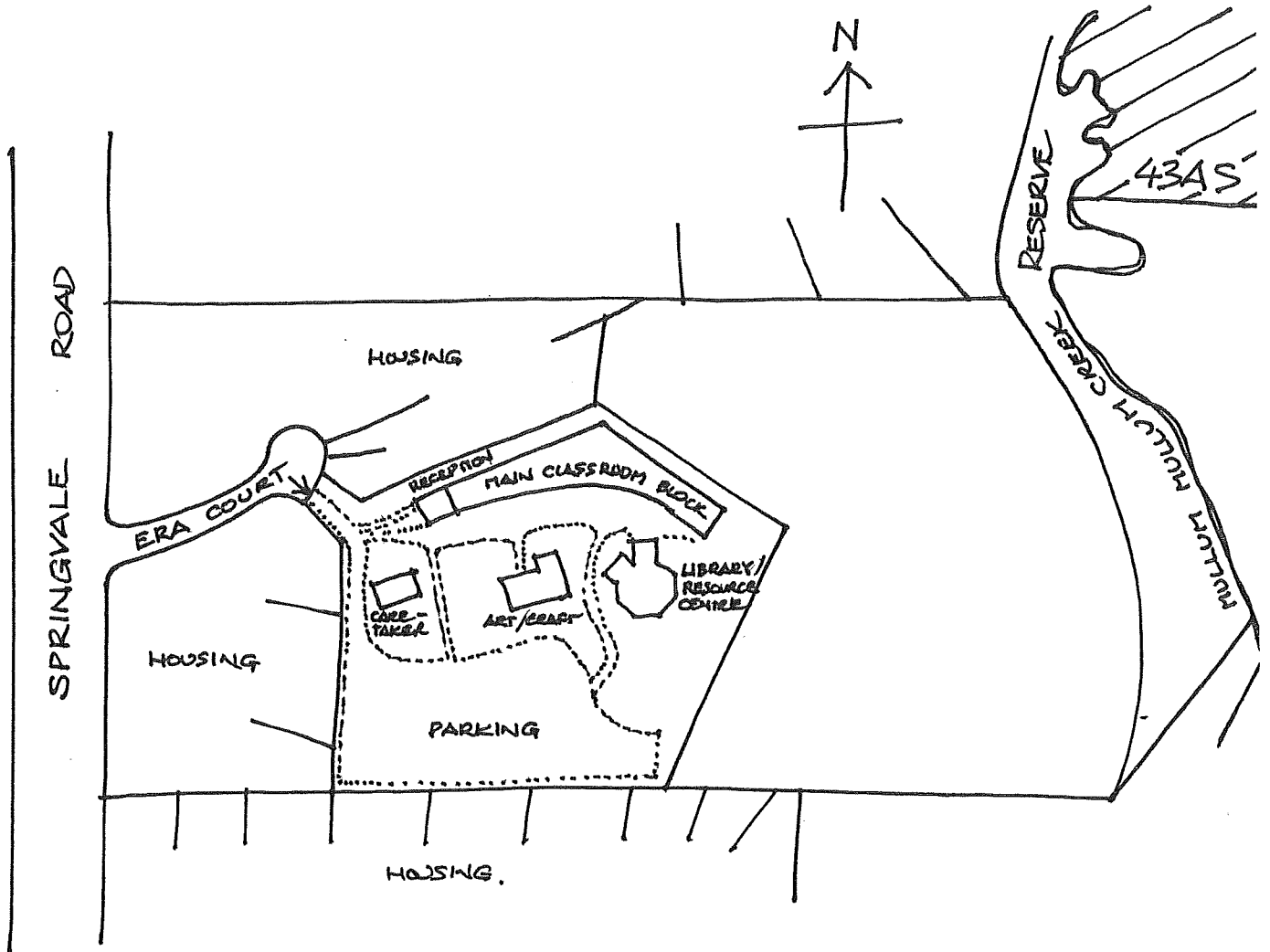
**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS :** Other purpose-built alternative schools in Melbourne include : "Koorngong School", Warrandyte North (c1940, now derelict?), Preshil The Margaret Lyttle Memorial School, 395 Barkers Road, Hawthorn, Kevin Borland Architect (c1960-c1975); Melbourne Steiner School, 213 Wonga Road (cnr Warranwood Road), Warranwood (c1985-90) and Montessori Schools (an early education centre adjoins). Warrandyte Kindergarten, John Hipwell (1957) is also comparable. Doncaster Campus, Box Hill College of TAFE, Deep Creek Drive, Doncaster East is later and broadly comparable in form, if not quite in function.

**SIGNIFICANCE :** Carey Baptist Grammar School Donvale Campus is a purpose-built alternative secondary school of local historical significance and architectural interest, built in about 1971-72 by the Educational Reform Association as Australia's first alternative secondary school. It was probably the most ambitious of several such schools in Victoria.

**INTACTNESS :** Good, with later up-grading to present requirements by Carey.

**CONDITION & THREATS :** Excellent condition.

**REFERENCES :** 1. City of Doncaster and Templestowe Building Application & Rate records : no building permit was obtained for the buildings and no rates paid.  
2. Peter Wilmoth, "The Class of '79", The Age, 7 August 1993.  
3. David Lord, Development Manager of Carey, in conversation with Richard Peterson, 6 August 1993.  
Building Application records, op.cit : BA 13694, July 1988 brick alterations and additions, builder Bowdon Fraser, 1 Rooks Road, Nunawading; BA 16251, October 1989 alterations to library, entry and deck; BA 17849, November 1990, timber classroom alterations, builder, T. Booher.



CAREY BAPTIST GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
ERA COURT, DONVALE. 30.9.91

