

Identification and location

Name of place:

Other Name

Address

Place Identifier

Heritage Significance

Creation date(s) **Map (Melway)**

Boundary description

Local Government Area

Ownership Type

Description

Site Type:

Physical Description

Another extraordinary Californian Bungalow design for the Whitehill family ownership, this example draws heavily on the Far Eastern inspirations of the style, with its Chinese/Japanese horn-shaped verandah brackets, pergola porch, pergola entry portal, and stepped metal trellis fence panels. Contrasted with these linear details are the solid elements, including textured stucco wall surfaces, fence piers and the distinctive quartz (?) pebble piers which support its verandah and gateway. Otherwise the contra-posed gabled roof forms (with cement Marseilles pattern tile), slim attic window slots, name sign, and privet hedges are all typical elements of the style.

Condition

Probable painting over of natural pebble finish, reputed internal alterations < verbal from owner: painted timber panelling, fireplaces altered >

Integrity

Context

Adjoins timber Bungalows (602 former doctor's surgery, 598) and, further east, relates to the gabled roof forms of brick detached houses. Otherwise, it is set in a contemporary commercial area.

Threats:

Increasing development pressure, unrelated external changes.

History

Historical background

In the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, many of Footscray's industrial and retail employers or managers lived within the community, often building quite substantial villas for their families. In the early years, these houses tended to be placed relatively near to work sites, thus the location of some old substantial houses near the river at Footscray and Yarraville. Later a trend developed of erecting such homes on major roads, such as Somerville Road, Geelong Road and Ballarat Road, especially at the eastern end of the latter two.

Despite the frantic subdivision of land in the late nineteenth century, most of the residential development of the City of Maribyrnong has occurred in the twentieth century. In the first two decades of the century housing spread out through Seddon, between Geelong Road and Somerville Road and at West Footscray.

Specific History

Ernest H. Whitehill, Footscray contractor, had this prestigious five-room Bungalow built in 1924-5 to a distinctive design by Schreiber & Jorgenson. Whitehill had previously lived at nearby 97 Gordon Street and had come from a family long associated with north Footscray, initially via their dairy and later their residential subdivisions. Whitehill lived here into the 1960s, the house being a vehicle for gala social occasions during that period { Butler, 1989}.

Nearby at 57A Droop St, Whitehill's Dairy was the precursor of another exotic Bungalow design. Three Whitehills, Ernest, Francis A. and Francis G., resided and worked at 61 Gordon Street, on the west side, south of Ballarat Road. It was Francis George Whitehill who shifted into this five-room bungalow from Gordon Street, in 1920, having commissioned architects, Schreiber & Jorgenson, to design it. Rate book descriptions of George's occupancy changed from 'dairyman' in 1920-1 to 'gentleman' in 1922-3 { Butler, 1989}.

Thematic context

Australian Principal Theme Building settlements, towns and cities

PAHT Subtheme Making suburbs

Local Theme(s) Employers' Housing

Cultural Significance

Nundah is significant to Victoria because:

- architecturally, Nundah is an exemplary and unusual Californian Bungalow design, judged within the State, with its Arts & Crafts and Asian influences clearly expressed in the detail, form and use of field stone (Criterion F1);

- it possesses a distinctive Chinese/Japanese character and thus expresses clearly the Californian Bungalow style's origins as well as the skill of design execution within the idiom (Criterion A4, B2, F1);

Its distinctive style and external preservation, including its unusual boundary fence, provides a strong expression of one of the region's strong growth eras, after WW1 (Criterion A4);

- it is the design of noted architectural firm, Schreiber & Jorgenson who have been also associated with other outstanding Californian Bungalow examples (Criterion H1) ; and

- historically, the house is closely linked with the locally prominent Whitehill family whose community presence extended from the provision of basic services (milk) to the creation of large residential subdivisions in the region and related leased housing (Criterion H1).

Comparative Examples:

The Japanese influence through the North American architects, Greene & Greene, was at the basis of the evolution of the Californian Bungalow design late in the 19th century and early 20th century. This type of Bungalow became internationally known, paralleling the intense interest in Japan by the Aesthetic and Arts & Crafts Movements in the late 19th century. Examples of this prototypical design are rare in the State and nationally, The Pebbles in Droop St (Schreiber & Jorgenson) being another Melbourne example.

Recommendations

Heritage Victoria Register

Register of the National Estate:

National Trust Register:

Other Heritage Listings

Planning Scheme Protection

External Paint Controls Apply?:

Internal Alteration Controls Apply?:

Tree Controls Apply?:

Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Act:

Are there Outbuildings or Fences not Exempt?:

Prohibited Uses may be Permitted

Recommendations:

Conserve and enhance the identified significant fabric, with emphasis on fabric from the 1920s and the Whitehill occupation (1920s-60s), with enhancement including reinstatement of missing original elements, colours and finishes.

Conserve the public view of the significant fabric.
Promote the continuing original use of the place and its amenity.
Continue historical research into the place and provide public access to the findings.
Assess the interior for significant elements.

Australian Heritage Commission Criteria

A4 Importance for their association with events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation, state, region or community.

Its distinctive style and external preservation, including its unusual boundary fence, provides a strong expression of one of the region's strong growth eras, after WW1

B2 Importance in demonstrating a distinctive way of life, custom, process, land-use, function or design no longer practiced, in danger of being lost, or of exceptional interest.

distinctive Chinese/Japanese character is rare among house designs

F1 Importance for their technical, creative, design or artistic excellence, innovation or achievement.

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H1 Importance for their close associations with individuals whose activities have been significant within the history of the nation, state or region.

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historical significance architectural significance social significance scientific significanc

Documentation

References

Butler, Graeme 1989, City of Footscray urban Conservation Study cites:
- Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) Cover files (CF)
- Municipal rate books (RB)
- Sands and MacDougall Victorian Directories (D)
- Owner's comments, 1989;
Barnard, J 2000. Maribyrnong Heritage Review Volume 2 Environmental History City of Maribyrnong.

Data recording

Assessed By:

Assessed Date: