

## House

**Prepared by:** GML Heritage

**Address:** 17 Trentwood Avenue BALWYN NORTH

<b>Name:</b> House	<b>Survey Date:</b> December 2021
<b>Place Type:</b> Residential	<b>Architect:</b> A V Jennings Architectural Department (design architect: Taddeusz Karasinski)
<b>Grading:</b> Individually Significant	<b>Builder:</b> A V Jennings
<b>Extent of Overlay:</b> To title boundaries	<b>Construction Date:</b> 1958-59



Figure 1 Street presentation of 17 Trentwood Avenue. (Source GML 2021)



Figure 2 Oblique view of principal facade. (Source: GML 2021)



## Historical Context

This place is associated with the following historic themes taken from the *Boroondara Thematic Environmental History* (2012):

### *6.3.4 Suburban infill after Second World War*

#### *9.3.2 Designing fine buildings*

Balwyn North is a residential suburb situated 10 kilometres east of central Melbourne. To its south is Balwyn, which is separated from Balwyn North by Belmore Road. It is bounded on the north by Koonung Creek and the Eastern Freeway. The suburb was formerly part of the City of Camberwell and from 1994 has been part of the City of Boroondara.

#### *1940s and postwar development*

There had been a scattering of new housing development in the area north of Belmore Road from the late 1930s, but this area was developed significantly from the early 1940s as the new suburb of North Balwyn. Occupied with orchards and small farms, this was the one of the last remaining expanses of undeveloped land relatively close to the city. Balwyn North became the suburb of choice for many young married couples building new homes in the 1940s and 1950s (a proportion of which included returned servicemen). The suburb developed as quintessentially middle class, with a high proportion of brick homes and a notable absence of industrial activity. The ridge that ran along Doncaster Road was an advantage to house blocks in the adjoining streets, providing sought-after views to the distant ranges and encouraging the building of often grandiose double-storey homes. Public transport was provided with the extension from the electric tram from East Kew to North Balwyn in 1938, along High Street and Doncaster Road. A large shopping centre, known as North Balwyn Village, developed along Doncaster Road.

In the 1950s, the potential for large-scale residential development in North Balwyn was recognised by a private company, A.V. Jennings Pty Ltd, which proposed the Trentwood Estate on a large tract of land off Doncaster Road (Built Heritage 2015:12). From 1947, Balwyn and Balwyn North were acknowledged not only as epicentres for the Small Homes Service but also for Modernist architect-designed homes in general. A number of notable architects, including Robin Boyd, designed Modernist homes in Balwyn in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly in the streets east of Balwyn Road, including the elevated area around Beckett Park.

This new residential expansion in Balwyn North, which included the Greythorn area in the 1950s, in turn brought commercial development. Several local retail strips appeared in the north of the study area, including in Bulleen Road at Dorado Avenue, in Balwyn Road between Lucifer and Echo streets, and, most notably, the prominent strip on Doncaster Road, just down from the Trentwood Estate. In 1960, G.J. Coles opened a large store on the corner of Doncaster Road and Burke Road, which was Melbourne's first American-style self-service drive-in supermarket complex. New schools and churches also appeared during this period of development. Balwyn High School, located in Balwyn North, opened in 1954, followed by Greythorn High School in 1959. Several new churches were constructed, extended or rebuilt to provide for burgeoning congregations (Built Heritage 2015:12). This included new Catholic churches at Deepdene, Balwyn and Balwyn North.



Since the 1990s, a significant influx of new immigrants into the area has seen the extensive replacement of interwar and 1940s homes with new residential development. The suburb of Balwyn North today is favoured by many new home-owners for access to Balwyn High School—a co-educational government secondary school with nearly 2000 students.

Broadly, this house is associated with a heyday of postwar homebuilding in Balwyn North – the period from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s, but at a time when. This phase emerged from the more tentative settlement of the area in the late 1940s and early 1950s, subsequently burgeoning at such an intense rate that, by the mid-1960s, vacant allotments in Balwyn North were already becoming much becoming harder to come by.

## History

The land at 17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North, originally formed part of Elgar's Crown Special Survey purchased and surveyed by Henry Elgar in 1841.

Elgar did not reside on the land as he was based in the West Indies, employing an agent to manage his investments in Australia. The survey was subdivided into small farms and grazing runs and leased out for several years. After financial difficulties forced Elgar to sell his land, the majority was purchased by a shipowner named Brooks, while a third of the survey remained in the possession of Mrs Dyce, the widow of one of Elgar's business partners.

John Wiese, Orchardist purchased approximately seventy-two acres of Elgar's land in 1909. Wiese died in 1920 however the land did not change hands until 1941 when Sidney James Philpotts, Dairyman became the proprietor. The land stayed in the Philpotts family until July 1956 when it was purchased by Alfred Curphey, Manager who immediately on sold the land to the AV Jennings Construction Company Pty Ltd in October 1956.

AV Jennings subsequently subdivided the land creating the Trentwood Estate in 1958.

Amongst of the first residents of the estate, Keith and Barbara Crawford acquired Lot 78 at the intersection of Tudor Court and Trentwood Avenue. Initially, its street address was designated as the former rather than the latter. The working drawings for their house, dated September 1958, simply attribute the design to A V Jennings Construction Company Ltd, without naming the architect individually. While the title block bears the initials of a delineator (AEDH, as yet unidentified), the slick European modernist stylings of the house, with its elevated box-like form, window wall and massive stone chimney, would suggest that the actual design was the work of *emigre* architect Tad Karasinski. A building permit for the house (stated to be worth £4,500) was issued by the City of Camberwell in February 1959. Construction commenced in early March and was completed in October. In April, while construction was still underway, the house was profiled in the property columns of the *Herald* newspaper. The writer praised the effective use of vertical timber cladding and the integration of a double carport underneath the house and noted that "the massive stone chimney has been carried through the front entrance porch and gives the feeling of stability to the whole house". It was also observed that the open-planned interior discloses a convenient room layout with a minimum of passages".

The Crawford's remained living at 17 Trentwood Avenue for almost twenty years. During that time, they undertook only one significant phase of expansion: the construction, during 1967-68, of two projecting rear wings. One contained two additional bedrooms, and the other provided an enlarged



kitchen and laundry with a new family room. Designed by local architect R E (Ted) Gillies, the additions were designed to merge with the existing building, with matching face brick walls and low skillion roofs. After the couple sold the house in 1976, the new owner, Anna Stratos made one minor alteration, in the form of a small wedge-shaped verandah that partially infilled the space between the two rear wings.

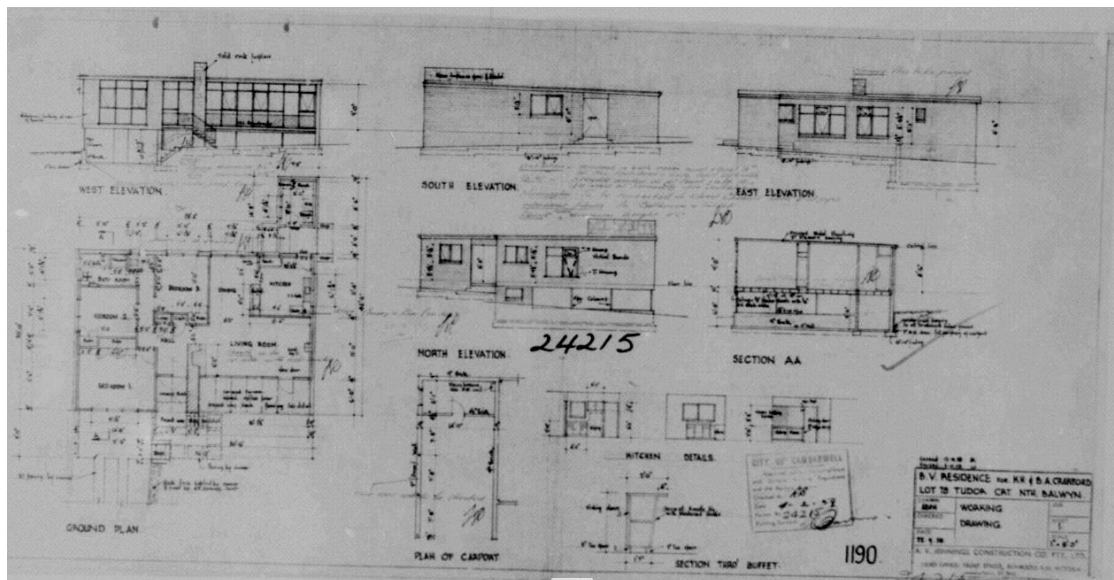


Figure 3 Working drawing for 17 Trentwood Avenue, North Balwyn showing plan and elevations. Note drawing is title blocked AV Jennings and the address is Tudor Court. (Source: BP 24212)

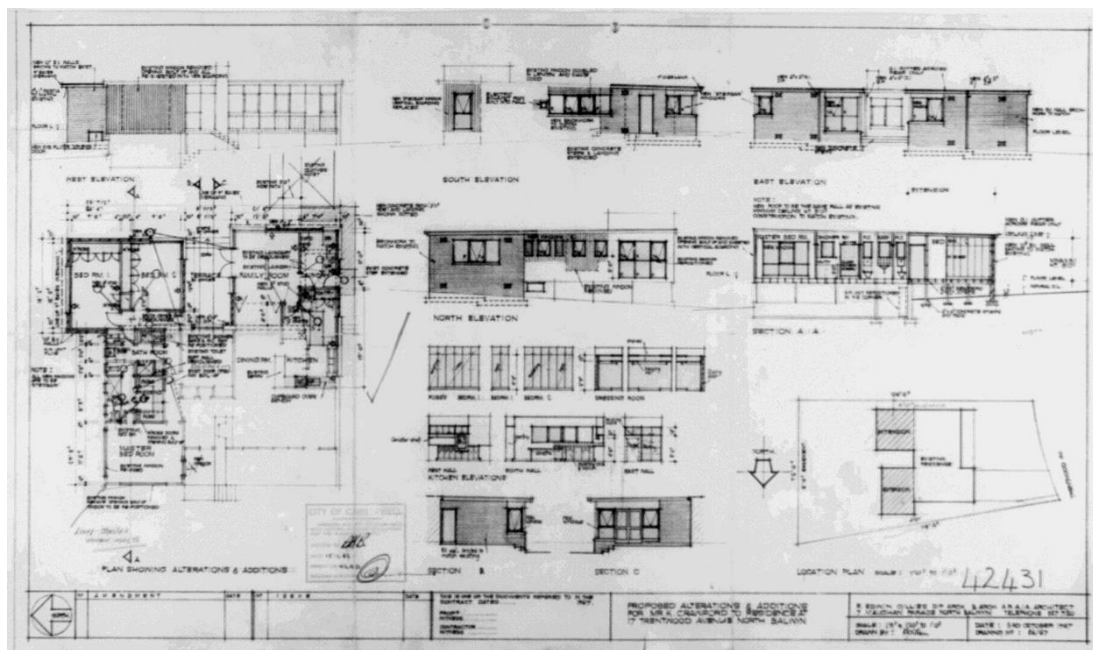


Figure 4 Working drawing for rear additions to 17 Trentwood Avenue, North Balwyn by Edwin Gillies (Source: BP 42431)

Anna Stratos died in 2004 and the property sold the following year. It has changed hand several times since, the last time in 2021. The carport under the house has been enclosed to create a store room and a new carport added in front of it. This new carport was added before 2009 (Nearmap).



Nearmaps imagery shows that the area between the two rear wings was infilled in 2016 and an outdoor alfresco area added to the eastern end of the southern wing. Google streetview imagery shows that the semi-circular wall at the base of the specimen tree in the front garden was constructed between 2009 and 2018. Real estate advertisements from 2021 show that some recent interior alterations have also been made.

### **AV Jennings Industries and the Trentwood Estate, North Balwyn**

As recorded by Don Garden in the official history of AV Jennings, in 1955 managing director Sir Albert Jennings first noticed 25 acres of blackberry-covered land on the north side of Doncaster Road, in which, despite its steep slope, he saw the potential for a housing estate to cater for the “middle and higher income groups” (Garden 1992:153-54).

In the mid-to-late 1950s a number of ambitious residential estates were conceived by A V Jennings Industries, in Mount Waverley, Glen Waverley, Syndal and Balwyn North. Of these, *Trentwood Estate* at North Balwyn stood out as specifically geared towards the high-end market, incorporating such innovations as the provision of an integrated retail strip and other community facilities. While the estate experienced only mixed success, the lessons learnt paved the way for some of the company's successful post-war projects, such as the 600-acre *Karingal Estate* at Frankston (1962) (Garden 1992:153-54).

The land for the Trentwood Estate was acquired and subdivision plans drawn up, creating a long central curving roadway (Trentwood Avenue), four new culs-de-sac (Earls Court, Lynne Court, Tudor Court and Glamis Court) and an extension to existing Fintonia Street. The new estate comprised 100 allotments, including several along Doncaster Road earmarked for strip retail development (set back to provide off-street parking) and community facilities such as a kindergarten, infant welfare centre and RSL club.

The final subdivision plan was gazetted in February 1958, and land released for sale soon afterwards. Initially, new houses were the responsibility of the company's own architectural department, with individual examples designed by Cecil Baldwin and Tadeusz ‘Tad’ Karasinski. The first houses comprised two fully furnished display models. Development was aimed at a more up-market clientele, yet land sales were initially slow – reportedly because the blocks were too small and awkwardly shaped, and the display homes were ‘unappealing’ (Garden 1992:153-54). Later, the design office was taken over by another Jennings employee, Roy Edwards, who introduced a broader range of house styles. Interest in the estate subsequently burgeoned, with most of the lots being sold and developed by 1960. The following year, the few remaining vacant lots were sold off for private development.

### **Tadeusz (Tad) Karasinski**

Tadeusz ‘Tad’ Josef Karasinski was born in Zakopane, in southern Poland, in 1903. He moved north-east, to the Polish city of Lwów (now Lviv, in Ukraine), where he completed a four-year degree in architecture and engineering at the University of Lwów. After graduating in 1931, Karasinski was employed as an architect to the City of Lwów for four years, during which time he was involved in the design and construction of sports fields, stadiums and swimming pools across the city. In 1934, he became the District Architect to the city of Luck (now Lutsk, also in Ukraine), and was promoted to Director of the Technical Board for the City of Luck (Built Heritage).



Following the Second World War, Karasinski moved to Germany and open his own practice in Stuttgart. In 1948 he migrated to Australia arriving in Melbourne in 1949. After spending two years working as a carpenter for the State Electricity Commission, he obtained a position with AV Jennings Construction Company, where he designed houses for the Trentwood Estate amongst other projects. He remained at Jennings for two and a half years. In 1954 he worked for a time with prominent architects Godfrey, Spowers, Hughes, Newton & Lobb however by 1957 he moved back to AV Jennings, designing houses for the Trentwood Estate in North Balwyn. From the late 1950s until his death in 1968 he undertook many private commissions including houses, blocks of flats and residential additions. (Built Heritage)

## **Description**

The house at 17 Trentwood Avenue is a single-storey flat-roofed brick and timber house in the Modernist style, expressed as a box-like volume that is elevated above the ground on a recessed cream brick plinth. Occupying a sloping site, the house incorporates a carport underneath, where the land falls away to the north (left) side of the block. The elongated street facade is double-fronted and asymmetrical, comprising a broad recessed deck that takes up about two thirds of the width, with a projecting bay to the north (left) side, in alignment with the carport underneath. The recessed portion of the facade contains a full-height window wall, made up of tall timber-framed windows and glazed doors with highlights above. The porch is enclosed at the far (right) end by a cream brick wing wall and is otherwise interrupted by a massive slab-like chimney-breast in uncoursed random stonework (re-mortared in parts). The deck has a simple metal balustrade, which continues down a flight of concrete steps to the garden level. The main entrance, at the top of the steps, is set into an alcove defined by the stone chimney and the side wall of the adjacent projecting bay above the carport.

The external walls of this projecting bay are clad with vertical timber boarding, with a painted finish. On its street facade, it incorporates a wide rectangular window containing three bays of timber-framed sashes (alternately awning and fixed) with narrow highlights above. An original carport underneath, which was depicted as being entirely open on the 1959 perspective drawing, has been enclosed to create a store room under the house. A separate carport, with a flat roof on metal pipe columns has been erected directly in front of it. A small flight of concrete steps, set between cream brick retaining walls, connects to a concrete path leading up to the main entry steps. These elements, along with the random coursed stone retaining wall across the street boundary of the property and lining the driveway, would be early landscape features. .

## **Integrity**

17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North, is largely intact with some changes visible to original or early fabric. The house retains its original built form, flat roof, exposed rafter ends, glazed window walls, door openings, timber joinery, recessed front porch with metal balustrade, massive slab-like chimney-breast in uncoursed random stonework and early landscape elements. . Alterations include the enclosing of the original open carport under the house and the addition of a new carport in front of it. This change does not overly impact on the integrity of the house and the ability to appreciate its original design and innovation

Additions to the rear of the house are not visible from the street and therefore do not detract from the overall integrity and 1950s character of the house.

Overall, the place has high integrity.

## Comparative Analysis

Throughout the middle decades of the twentieth century there was rapid suburban growth around the fringes of metropolitan Melbourne. Increased access to the motor car, growing prosperity in the postwar period, and the desire for the suburban lifestyle resulted in the push for new housing and services in the suburbs of Melbourne.

Despite various subdivisions in the late 1800s and in the early twentieth century, the vast majority of the housing stock in Balwyn North was not built until the postwar period. The area north of Belmore Road, where large tracts of land were taken up with orchards and small farms, was one of the last remaining areas of extensive undeveloped land close to the city. Balwyn North became the suburb of choice for many young married couples in the 1950s and 1960s with many using architects to design their homes. Many of these architects were influenced by the International style that had emerged in Europe between the wars. They approached house design with optimism and innovation, despite the material shortages and other restrictions that had been imposed during the war years.

Modernism offered an alternative to many of the postwar styles offered at the time, many of which were simply scaled-down versions of the 1940s prototypes. The informality of open floor plans, and the relationship between interior spaces and the landscape setting, fitted comfortably within the Australian context, and this, coupled with a simplicity of structure and minimisation of decoration, worked at a time when demand for housing was high, building materials were in short supply, and money short to spend on housing.

Consequent to the circumstances of its initial development, the Trentwood Estate at Balwyn North does not exhibit an especially strong sense of architectural cohesion but, rather, contains a more diverse mix of houses from the late 1950s and early 1960s (as well as some houses of later origin). The first dwellings on the estate, dating from 1958, were designed by architects Cecil Baldwin and Tad Karasinski and comprised two display houses (which have not yet been conclusively identified) as well as others for private clients. When sales proved disappointing, Roy Edwards introduced a broader range of simpler designs.

In the absence of supporting documentation, the earlier houses on the estate can be identified through stylistic analysis. Four extant houses have elements in common with 17 Trentwood Avenue, including two in Fintonia Street (Nos 40, 41), one in Tudor Court (No 1) and one in Earls Court (No 4). These houses tend to exhibit a consistent stylistic vocabulary, with flat or low-pitched skillion roofs, stark rectilinear expression, large full-height multi-paned windows and sometimes a stone-clad chimney or feature wall (e.g. 1 Tudor Court) and/or an open sub-floor carport (e.g. 40 Fintonia Street, 4 Earls Court). These overtly modernist-styled houses, amongst which 17 Trentwood Avenue stands out as the most resolved and striking example, certainly contrast with the more conservative designs that emanated subsequently from the A V Jennings architectural department in 1959-60, which had conventional hipped or gabled roofs and conventional double-fronted or triple-fronted facades. The estate also contains other architect-designed modern houses that date from the early 1960s, built after remaining vacant blocks were sold off for private development. Most notable of these is the flat-roofed brick house at 8 Earls Court (designed by Alexander Harris, 1961), with a long double-fronted facade incorporating a rendered balcony with double garage underneath.

In spite of the dominance of houses built in the years following World War II, Heritage Overlay coverage of postwar houses in Balwyn and North Balwyn is limited. The house at 17 Trentwood



Avenue, Balwyn North can be compared broadly to a number of contemporaneous houses in the Balwyn and Balwyn North area. These include:



Figure 5 6 300 Balwyn Road, Balwyn North designed by Robin Boyd in 1949 (HO616) (Source: GML 2022)

'Bunbury House', 300 Balwyn Road, Balwyn North is of local historical, architectural, aesthetic and social significance. It represents a significantly early and intact example of modernist architecture by prominent Australian architect, theorist, author and critic Robin Boyd. 'Bunbury house' displays clear associations in its design and detailing with the designs of Robin Boyd that were developed as part of the Small Homes Service, an initiative that sought to provide cost effective, architecturally designed homes to a wider audience. 'Bunbury house' incorporates design elements that are recognisable and important in Boyd's design work, including the design of efficient floor plans, floor to ceiling glazing, projecting eaves and suspended sun shading devices constructed from timber slats.



Figure 7 8 Gillson House 43 Kireep Road, Balwyn designed by Robin Boyd in 1952 (HO177) (Source: GML 2022)

'Gillson House', 43 Kireep Road, Balwyn is of local historical and architectural significance. Architecturally its design epitomizes Boyd and other Melbourne Modernists' approach to design, with a minimalist external cuboid expression adorned only by 'structural decoration' as implied by the triangular bracing to windows. Like the nearby 'Stargazer house', (designed by Peter McIntyre architect in 1951-52) at 2 Taurus Street, Balwyn North, it also took the form-follows-function dictum to a visual extreme, in the design of the writer's study.





Figure 9 10 12-14 Tannock Street, Balwyn North designed by Robin Boyd in 1948-49 with alterations by Boyd in 1959 and 1971 (HO928) (Source: Built Heritage 2020)

12-14 Tannock Street, Balwyn North is of local architectural and technical significance. Architecturally, the house is an early and notably intact example of the work of the eminent designer and writer Robin Boyd. It remains as one of relatively few surviving examples from this seminal phase of Boyd's career, prior to his celebrated partnership with Roy Grounds and Frederick Romberg. Along with the Gillison House in Kireep Road, Balwyn (1951), and the Dunstan House in Yandilla Road (1950), it is one of three outstanding early and substantially intact houses by Robin Boyd in the area. Considered collectively, these provide rare and valuable evidence of the innovation, boldness and fresh design approaches of a young architect on the cusp of an illustrious career.



Figure 11 'former Mann House' 39 Inverness Way, Balwyn North designed by Montgomery, King & Trengove (Neil Montgomery) in 1954 (recommended as an individually significant place in this study) (Source: GML 2021)

'former Mann House' 39 Inverness Way, Balwyn North is of local historical and aesthetic significance. It is of aesthetic significance as a notable example of a house designed in the International Modernist style. The house, cut from a cube, has a striking architectural composition, with its raised first floor expressing apparent weightlessness, bold Mondrian-style fenestration and internal courtyards epitomises modernism's stylish departure from postwar vernacular houses of brick veneer and hipped terracotta tiled roofs.

There are also several postwar houses on the Heritage Overlay in the broader Boroondara context that are comparable to 17 Trentwood Avenue Balwyn North. Examples include:



Figure 12 'Robin Boyd House I', 664-666 Riversdale Road, Camberwell designed by Robin Boyd in 1947 (VHR H0879; HO116) (Source: National Trust of Australia (Victoria))

'Robin Boyd House I', 664-666 Riversdale Road, Camberwell is of local historical and architectural significance. The house is considered by Boyd's contemporaries as the prototype Post-War Modern house which took up new ideas about spatial flow, both inside and outside the building, revealing in the minimalism required by the war's materials conservation program and the challenges posed by the near impossible site. It extended the leading architecture of its time and strongly influenced an emerging group of architects. The house demonstrates innovative design with regard to response to site, informality in planning, flowing spatial arrangements, innovative use of materials and incorporation of built-in features. These are all aspects of domestic design which have now become common.



Figure 13 'former Hirsch House and Office' at 118 Glen Iris Road, Glen Iris, designed by Grigore Hirsch (CONARG Architects) in 1954-55 (HO897) (Source: Trethowan Architecture 2018)

The former Hirsch House and Office is of local historical, architectural, aesthetic and associative significance. The building and its response to the landscape and climate demonstrates the contemporary approach to local conditions favouring good orientation and functionalist planning

The residence is an intact example of a post-war Émigré architect's house and office and illustrates European Modernism as it was translated into a Melbourne context. The double-storey dwelling of the 1950s illustrates the Post-War Melbourne Regional style, demonstrating key characteristics of the style in the simplicity of the forms, low-pitch butterfly roof, textured clinker brick cladding and large areas of glass to the north. The bold forms are further expressed through the delineation of materials across the upper (clinker brick) and lower (concrete tile) levels and exposed steel structure. More broadly, the use of steel frame



construction throughout, further allows the illusion of the upper level to dominate the architectural composition.

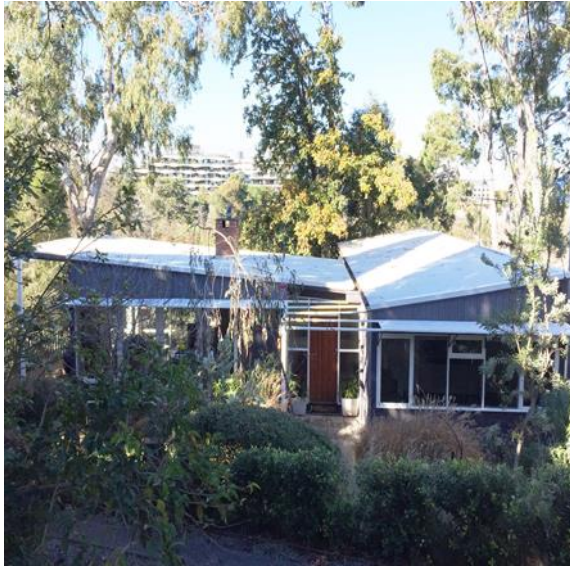


Figure 14 6 Reeves Court, Kew designed by Ernest Milston in 1955 (HO822) (Source: Trethowan 2017)

'Milston House', 6 Reeves Court, Kew is of local historical, architectural, aesthetic and associative significance. The house is a lightweight, timber framed house designed by architect Ernest Milston. The plan is formed of two rectangles reflective of the zones; the kitchen and living area are aligned with the street and run across the slope, while the bedrooms, bathroom and laundry are at right angles. Each wing has a separate skillion roof sloping to the other wing, creating an asymmetrical butterfly roof. A concrete driveway leads up from street level to a garage and studio, connected with the house by a pergola-covered path. A separate open pergola covers the entry. The building features extensive modular timber framed glazing. Horizontal awnings provide shade to the north, echoed in the open timber framing over the windows to the south that allow light penetration.



Figure 15 Guss residence, 18 Yarra Street, Kew designed by McGlashan & Everist in 1961 (Significant within HO530) (Source: Hermes)

'Gudd Residence' 18 Yarra Street, Kew (Significant within HO530) is a good example of the inventive, spare, and environment-responsive designs of McGlashan & Everist. Built in 1961, the Guss residence consists of three pavilion forms around a central courtyard staggered up the sloping site. Utilising thin steel framing and light materials to reduce the bulk of the pavilions, glazed walls float above the driveway and provide views down the site.



Figure 16 Dickie House, 6 Fairview Street, Hawthorn  
c.1961-64 HO784 City of Boroondara (Source:  
Context in association with Trethowan 2017)

'Dickie House', 6 Fairview Street, Hawthorn is of local historical, architectural and aesthetic significance. The house is representative of the post-war design ethos, sense of optimism and architectural modernisation pioneered by Robin Boyd and others. The high-quality house-design features honesty of structure and material, clean lines, deep eaves and an overall sense of innovation in design. The integration of the house with the landscape, with its 'floating' appearance over the banks of the Yarra is characteristic of Modernist integration of architecture with natural context.



Figure 17 Cukierman Residence, 29 Leura Grove,  
Hawthorn East designed by Hayden & Associates  
(attributed to Anthony Hayden) in 1966 (HO857)  
(Source: Context in association with Trethowan 2018)

'Cukierman Residence' 29 Leura Grove, Hawthorn is of local historical, architectural, aesthetic and technical significance to the City of Boroondara. The residence derives its aesthetic appeal from its unusual and striking architectural composition with references to the International Style. Interest is created through the floating curved massed form fronting the street and subtle but evocative detailing of materials. The horizontal articulation of the window sets with their green mosaic tiled spandrel panels is applied with effect. Slender circular columns support the raised form, creating an open undercroft, and the use of textured cream brick is continued in the landscaping elements such as the low walls and planters

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17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North exhibits key elements of the postwar Modernist housing typology; most notably in its response to its site, informality in planning, flowing spatial arrangements and innovative use of materials. It compares to the earlier (1947) 'Robin Boyd House I' (VHR H0879; HO116) which is widely recognised as the prototype for postwar modern homes, in its clever adaptation to a difficult site, use of new ideas regarding the spatial flow between inside and out and the innovative use of materials in a time of postwar austerity.

Robin Boyd first introduced the concept a regional Melbourne style in 1947 calling for an architecture that was simple, light and fresh with an unpretentious elegance. Apperly, Irving and Reynolds (1989) describe the typical characteristics of the style as a house with a flat or low-pitched roof with wide





eaves, long unbroken roof lines with exposed rafters or joists, vertical or horizontal boarding and large areas of glass with regularly spaced timber mullions. Examples of Robin Boyd's work in Boroondara that demonstrate these qualities and are comparable to the subject place include: 300 Balwyn Road, Balwyn North 1949 (HO616), 43 Kireep Road, Balwyn, built in 1952 (HO177) and 12-14 Tannock Street, Balwyn North, built in 1948-49, 1959, 1971 (HO928).

17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North embraces these characteristics with a sophistication of design and planning that reflects the skill of a trained architect (most probably Taddeusz 'Tad' Karasinski who, with Cecil Baldwin, was working as an architect at AV Jennings at the time). The house is comparable to the works of other notable Modernist architects including 'former Hirsch House and Office' (118 Glen Iris Road, Glen Iris, 1954-55, HO897), Ernest Milston (6 Reeves Court, Kew, 1955, HO822), McGlashan & Everist (18 Yarra Street, Kew, 1961 Significant within HO530), and Hayden & Associates (Cukierman Residence, 29 Leura Grove, Hawthorn East, HO857). Similar characteristics across all these houses include the use of a bold roof plane that appears to hover above the building, an expressed structural modularity in their design with an integration of the house into their site-specific landscapes, large walls of glazing that connect the interior with the exterior, simple unadorned planar wall surfaces and a simple rectilinear planning.

17 Trentwood Avenue falls into a subset of houses developed in the 1950s that responded to its site by hovering over the landscape on a platform. The strategy was used primarily as a means of placing houses on sloping sites and to capture views, imposing a rational solution to the irregularities of nature (London et al 2017:63). In this way the subject house is comparable to 39 Inverness Way, Balwyn North, by Montgomery, King & Trengrove (assessed as significant in this study). Like 39 Inverness Way and other Modernist houses in Boroondara and across Melbourne, the house at 17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North reflects the profound influence of the International style, which in the 1950s became actively tested by Melbourne architects to achieve a regional adaptation of the International idiom.

Overall, the subject house is a good representative example of an early Modernist house. It exhibits key characteristics of the style and is most likely the work of respected émigré architect Taddeusz 'Tad' Karasinski.

### **Assessment Against Criteria**

Criteria referred to in *Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay*, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, August 2018, modified for the local context.

*CRITERION A: Importance to the course or pattern of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (historical significance).*

17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North, is of local historical significance for the evidence it provides of Boroondara as a locus for leading architect-designed public and private buildings from the 1850s into the postwar period. Built in 1958-59 to a design by A V Jennings Architectural Department (design architect: Taddeusz Karasinski) the house displays a sophisticated design approach to its elevated site, appearing to hover above the landscape and yet anchored to it by its massive slab-like chimney-breast in uncoursed random stonework. The house exemplifies the high concentration of architect designed modernist houses built in Balwyn and North Balwyn during the 1950s and 1960s.



Historically, the house is also significant as one of the first houses to be erected on the *Trentwood Estate*, an ambitious residential estate conceived in the late 1950s by industry stalwarts A V Jennings (Melbourne's leading homebuilding company since the 1930s) as a high-end development of prestigious dwellings with community facilities (shops, infant welfare centre, medical clinic) provided. The estate was not an immediate success, with only a relatively small number of blocks sold and developed (including this one) in 1958-59. It was not until 1960, when the company introduced a broader range of more conventional house designs, that the estate finally filled out. One of the most intact, evocative and architecturally sophisticated of the houses dating from the initial (pre-1960) phase of development, the house at 17 Trentwood Avenue illustrates the company's original intent to provide elegantly-designed high-end modern residences.

*CRITERION B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (rarity).*

N/A

*CRITERION C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (research potential).*

N/A

*CRITERION D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).*

N/A

*CRITERION E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).*

17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North is of aesthetic significance as a notable house designed in 1958 in the Modernist style. With its stark rectilinear massing, its expression as a partially elevated box-like volume, and its wide bay of full-height windows interrupted by a massive projecting stone chimney breast, the house shows the influence and regional expression of International modernism. This particular house is a fine and evocative surviving example of this type of residential architecture that was built (and of fewer still that survive largely intact) in the Trentwood Estate. Its aesthetic significance is enhanced by the retention of early landscaping including the front random coursed retaining wall that matches the chimney.

*CRITERION F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).*

N/A

*Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).*

N/A

*CRITERION H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the City of Boroondara's history (associative significance).*

N/A



## Statement of Significance

### What is significant?

17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North, built to a design by A V Jennings Architectural Department (design architect: Taddeusz Karasinski) in 1958-59, is significant.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not limited to):

- elongated street façade which is double-fronted and asymmetrical
- flat roof with deep overhang and exposed timber rafter ends
- walls clad with vertical timber boarding
- broad recessed street facing deck and simple metal balustrade
- projecting bay to the north
- original pattern of fenestrations and door openings and original joinery including a full-height window wall (comprising tall timber-framed windows, glazed doors and highlights above).
- massive slab-like chimney-breast in uncoursed random stonework.
- concrete steps to the front door
- uncoursed random stone retaining walls

### How is it significant?

The house is of historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

### Why is it significant?

17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North, is of local historical significance for the evidence it provides of Boroondara as a locus for leading architect-designed public and private buildings from the 1850s into the postwar period. Built in 1958-59 to a design by A V Jennings Architectural Department (design architect: Taddeusz Karasinski) the house displays a sophisticated design approach to its elevated site, appearing to hover above the landscape and yet anchored to it by its massive slab-like chimney-breast in uncoursed random stonework. The house exemplifies the high concentration of architect designed modernist houses built in Balwyn and North Balwyn during the 1950s and 1960s. (Criterion A)

Historically, the house is also significant as one of the first houses to be erected on the *Trentwood Estate*, an ambitious residential estate conceived in the late 1950s by industry stalwarts A V Jennings (Melbourne's leading homebuilding company since the 1930s) as a high-end development of prestigious dwellings with community facilities (shops, infant welfare centre, medical clinic) provided. The estate was not an immediate success, with only a relatively small number of blocks sold and developed (including this one) in 1958-59. It was not until 1960, when the company introduced a broader range of more conventional house designs, that the estate finally filled out. One of the most intact, evocative and architecturally sophisticated of the houses dating from the initial (pre-1960) phase of development, the house at 17 Trentwood Avenue illustrates the company's original intent to provide elegantly-designed high-end modern residences. (Criterion A)



17 Trentwood Avenue, Balwyn North is of aesthetic significance as a notable house designed in 1958 in the Modernist style. With its stark rectilinear massing, its expression as a partially elevated box-like volume, and its wide bay of full-height windows interrupted by a massive projecting stone chimney breast, the house shows the influence and regional expression of International modernism. This particular house is a fine and evocative surviving example of this type of residential architecture that was built (and of fewer still that survive largely intact) in the Trentwood Estate. Its aesthetic significance is enhanced by the retention of early landscaping including the front random coursed retaining wall that matches the chimney. (Criterion E)

### Grading and Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme as an Individually Significant place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Boroondara Planning Scheme:

<b>External paint controls</b>	
<i>Is a permit required to paint an already painted surface?</i>	No
<b>Internal alteration controls</b>	
<i>Is a permit required for internal alterations?</i>	No
<b>Tree controls</b>	
<i>Is a permit required to remove a tree?</i>	No
<b>Outbuildings and fences exemptions</b>	
<i>Are there outbuildings or fences which are not exempt from notice and review?</i>	Yes Front retaining wall
<b>Victorian Heritage Register</b>	
<i>Is the place included on the Victorian Heritage Register?</i>	No
<b>Prohibited uses may be permitted</b>	
<i>Can a permit be granted to use the place for a use which would otherwise be prohibited?</i>	No
<b>Aboriginal heritage place</b>	
<i>Is the place an Aboriginal heritage place which is subject to the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?</i>	No
<b>Incorporated plan</b>	
<i>Does an incorporated plan apply to the site?</i>	No

Identified by:

Built Heritage Pty Ltd 2012.





## References

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