

57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn

Prepared by: GML Heritage

Address: 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn

Name: House	Survey Date: November 2021
Place Type: Residential	Architect: Neil Clerehan of Clerehan Cran Architects Pty Ltd
Grading: Significant	Builder: C & A Morris
Extent of Overlay: To title boundaries	Construction Date: 1986



Figure 1 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn. (Source: GML Heritage 2022)

Historical Context

The area of Wattle Road, Hawthorn, is on the traditional Country of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung.

Pastoralists moved into the Boroondara district in the 1830s. In 1837 John Gardiner took up a pastoral licence over an extensive area that encompassed much of Hawthorn, including present-day Wattle Road. The land occupied by Wattle Road and adjacent streets was surveyed as Crown allotments 45 and 46 in the Parish of Boroondara and was offered for sale in 1843; these allotments were first acquired by Matthew Hughes (McWilliam 1997:20).

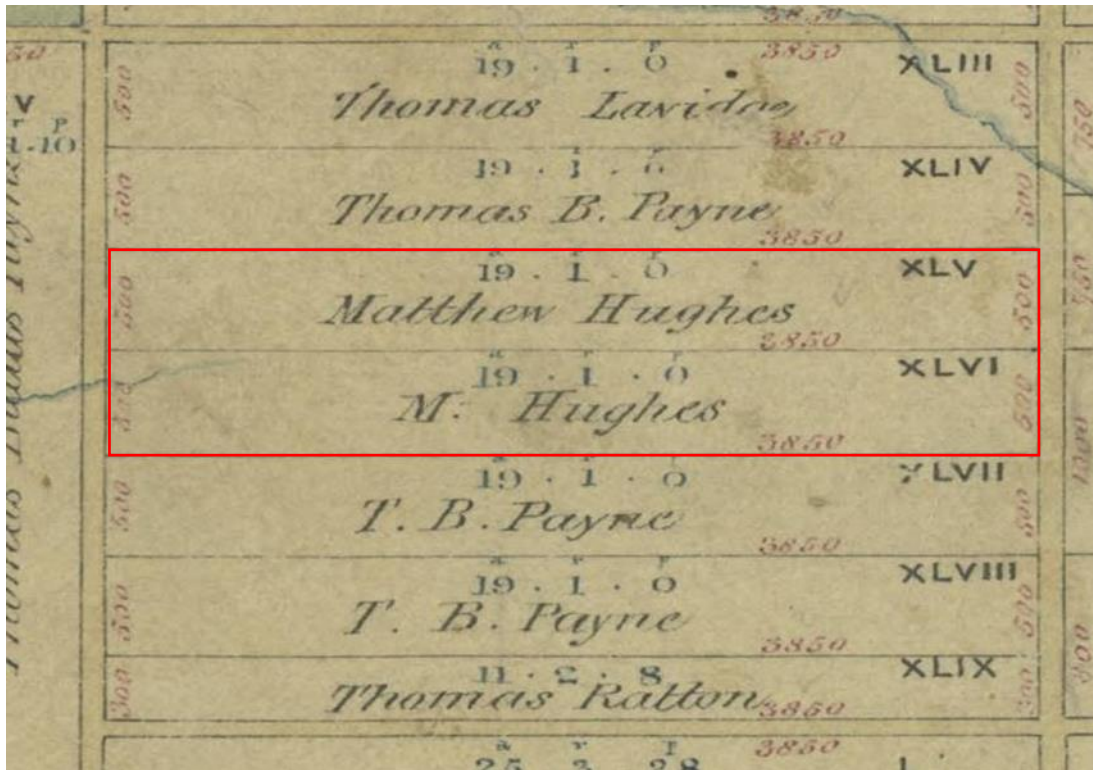


Figure 2 1855 cadastral plan showing Crown allotments 45 and 46, Parish of Boroondara. The extent of land fronting Wattle Road is outlined in red. (Source: PROV, VPRS 8168/P0002 339 with GML overlay)

The first residents in Hawthorn were an eclectic mix that included farmers, as well as those in trades, business, politics, and the military (Context 2012:4). While Hawthorn was developed primarily as a residential area, by the early 1850s agriculturalists constituted a quarter of its population. Viticulture proved a successful early enterprise, with Boroondara being the third-richest grape growing region in Melbourne (after Coburg and Bundoora) led by French, English and German communities that cultivated small plots with grape vines (Context 2012:5, Peel et al 1993:20).

Five German families (headed by Christian Finger, Gustave Kobelke, Gottlieb Aurisch, Johann Fankhauser and Karl Roemer) arrived in the Hawthorn area in 1850 (McWilliam 1978:7). A contemporary account claims that the German immigrants purchased 40 acres of land at £10 per acre (*Argus*, 29 November 1884:4). In 1851 Hughes sold allotments 45 and 46 to Edward Kobelke, who then sold one-third of the land to Christian Finger and one-third to Johann Fankhauser (McWilliam 1997:30). The German settlers also purchased land in areas surrounding Wattle Road. Christian Finger purchased part of Crown allotment 64 at the corner of Glenferrie Road and Oxley Road in 1852. The same year, his son Henry Finger purchased part of Crown allotment 67, situated south of Liddiard Street (McWilliam 1997:21). Finger's property was divided by a lane (today's Wattle Road). He planted a vineyard on the site as the land was on a gentle slope, and close to the Yarra River, which provided a ready water supply.

By the end of the 1850s Weinberg Road was referred to locally as 'German Lane' and 'German Paddock' due to the number of German migrants who had settled there. In 1860 a group of residents, including Finger, Kobelke, Fankhauser, Schober, Aurisch, Gottke, Bruse and Bonwick appealed to the Hawthorn Borough Council to have the road developed and named. The residents asked that the road



be formally named Weinberg Road, *weinberg* being the German word for vineyard (McWilliam 1997:21).

This is believed to be the first officially named road in Hawthorn (McWilliam 1997:1). The narrow width of the road today is suggestive of early references to the road as a lane. Water from Yan Yean was laid on in 1868 (*Argus*, 1868).

The 1860s was a decade of transformation and prosperity for Hawthorn. Suburban development was spurred by the election of Hawthorn's first municipal council in 1860, making it the geographic centre of the city, alongside the opening of the railway to Hawthorn in 1861 (Context 2012:10). The coming of the railway led to an influx of middle-class residents who were able to commute between Melbourne and the suburbs. A surge of development of public and private buildings followed, including various churches and schools, to cater to the growing population (Context 2012:10).

The residential composition of Hawthorn shifted again in the 1870s as the subdivision of larger estates gathered momentum when, following the death of some leading district pioneers, large properties were sold to developers, who divided them into residential lots (Context 2012:10). While a pattern of selling off portions of larger properties was true of Weinberg Road in the 1870s, no evidence has been found (such as estate subdivision plans) that indicates the land was sold to developers to be subdivided. Nevertheless by 1875 over 40 homes had been constructed on Weinberg Road, which was nearly double the number built in the 1860s.

The Melbourne land boom of the 1880s greatly stimulated speculative subdivision and residential development in Hawthorn. This period of economic buoyancy in Hawthorn was further stimulated by the extension of the railway from Hawthorn to Lilydale in 1882 and the spur railway from Hawthorn to Kew in 1887. The pattern of speculative subdivision continued in many parts of Hawthorn as the number of large private estates declined to accommodate the growing professional middle class who were settling in Hawthorn at this time (Context 2012:5). The German families sold off portions of their land through the 1880s in a more ad hoc way and, by 1890, 50 houses had been built on Weinberg Road (Poole 2018). During the 1880s the German presence in Hawthorn began to dissipate, and many of the original farming families relocated their vineyards and orchards elsewhere. The Fankhausers, for example, moved to Balwyn, where they lived south of Belmore Road.

Wattle Grove (formerly Weinberg Grove) was created in 1885 when land owned by Walter Bonwick was subdivided into sixteen allotments (twelve facing Wattle Grove and four facing Wattle Road). The street developed over the next twenty years and was fully built out by 1906.

The early 1900s brought new prosperity and the return of suburban and commercial development after the economic depression of the 1890s. The electric tramlines built between 1913 and 1918 in Burke Road, Camberwell Road and Riversdale Road provided improved public transport, connecting local residents with Hawthorn's commercial centres and providing ready access to the city (Context 2019:1). The City of Hawthorn changed the name of Weinberg Road to Wattle Road during World War I due to growing anti-German sentiment (Built Heritage 2012:37).

The early part of the twentieth century saw a number of Wattle Road's large land holdings subdivided, creating new streets and courts.



The east side of Vivian Grove was developed from 1911 after the Schober family, who had owned the land at the western end of Wattle Road since 1860, subdivided. The west side of the street appears to have been developed from 1920 when property owners along Power Street sold off their rear yards.

In 1910 Hawthorn Council resolved to provide through streets between Burwood Road and Riversdale Road subsequently creating Drill Street, New Street, Burton Avenue and Through Street by 1919. (*The Reporter* 16 September 1919:2)

The east side of Burton Avenue first appears in Sands and McDougall Directories in 1913 when 12 vacant homes were listed. The street was formed by the demolition of 62 Wattle Road and 45 Lisson Grove and incorporated the western garden of 66 Wattle Road and vacant land on Lisson Grove (MMBW 1902). The houses were built by Aaron Wyatt. Of the original 12 houses built by Wyatt on this side of the street only five remain (Nos 1, 3, 5, 17 and 21).

New Street was created in 1923 from subdivided land off 'Harlech', 53 Wattle Road. Making the street also appears to have involved the demolition of 44 Manningham Street. Six building allotments with frontages to New Street and Wattle Road were available (*Herald*, 5 September 1923:16). Four houses remain from this subdivision with three addressed to Wattle Road (Nos 45, 47 and 49) and one addressed to New Street (No.1).

The 'Beulah' Estate was subdivided in 1924 forming Carson Crescent. The subdivision was created out of the combined land of 50 Wattle Road and 54 Wattle Road. 13 allotments in total were created with three allotments facing Wattle Road (Nos 48A, 50 and 54) and three facing Lisson Grove. The original 1876 house at 50 Wattle Road remains as does its much altered coach house at 8 Carson Crescent.

Finchley Court was created from land which had remained undeveloped into the twentieth century, since the land was first sold to Matthew Hughes in 1843, Having changed hands numerous times in the preceding century, the land was purchased by Florence Craig, an unmarried women in 1941. Florence Craig had built six blocks of flats on the newly formed Finchley Court, subdividing and selling the land and flats between 1942 to 1949. All six blocks of flats remain today.

The early postwar period saw significant change in Wattle Road. This resulted in the demolition of a number of its early houses which, up until this time, had retained their substantial allotments, and the construction of large unit developments. Unit development continued throughout the late twentieth century and into the twenty first. As with the earlier postwar period, in recent years there has been the continued demolition of early Victorian houses and the construction of multi-unit developments and more recently substantial blocks of apartments.

In the postwar period, prominent Melbourne architects and firms undertook many well-known and highly regarded commissions in Boroondara. While developing suburbs of Balwyn North and Studley Park emerged as epicentres for some of the most important architect-designed modernist buildings in Australia, localities such as Hawthorn (and other suburbs in Boroondara) contain some notable individual examples (Built Heritage 2012: 230).

Place History

57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, is situated on the north side of Wattle Road, between New Street and Finchley Court.

The land occupied by Wattle Road and adjacent streets was surveyed as Crown Allotments (CA) 45 and 46 in the Parish of Boroondara which were first offered for sale in 1843. In 1851, allotments 45 and 46 were sold to Edward Kobelke, who then sold one-third to Christian Finger and one-third to Johann Fankhauser (McWilliam 1997:30).

The subject site at 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, is built on land that was originally owned by Christian Finger (McWilliam 1997:210). By about 1863 a large house and estate known as 'Harlech', which is still extant at 5153 Wattle Road, was constructed on part of Finger's larger site (Figure 3). In the early twentieth century, the 'Harlech' estate was owned by the Catholic Order, The Faithful Companions of Jesus and operated as St Mary's Convent and School (McWilliam 1997:213–215). After closure of the convent the property was subdivided into smaller land parcels which were sold off between 1924 and 1927. The subject site sits across two of these 1920's allotments, and was formed in 1985 after the 1920s houses at 57 and 59 Wattle Road were demolished and their land amalgamated (CT: V4836 F7108 CT V5223 F410; CT V5315 F2936).

Both properties changed hands numerous times between 1927 and 1984 at which time they were put up for sale together and advertised as a development site. (*Age*, 30 November 1985:68)

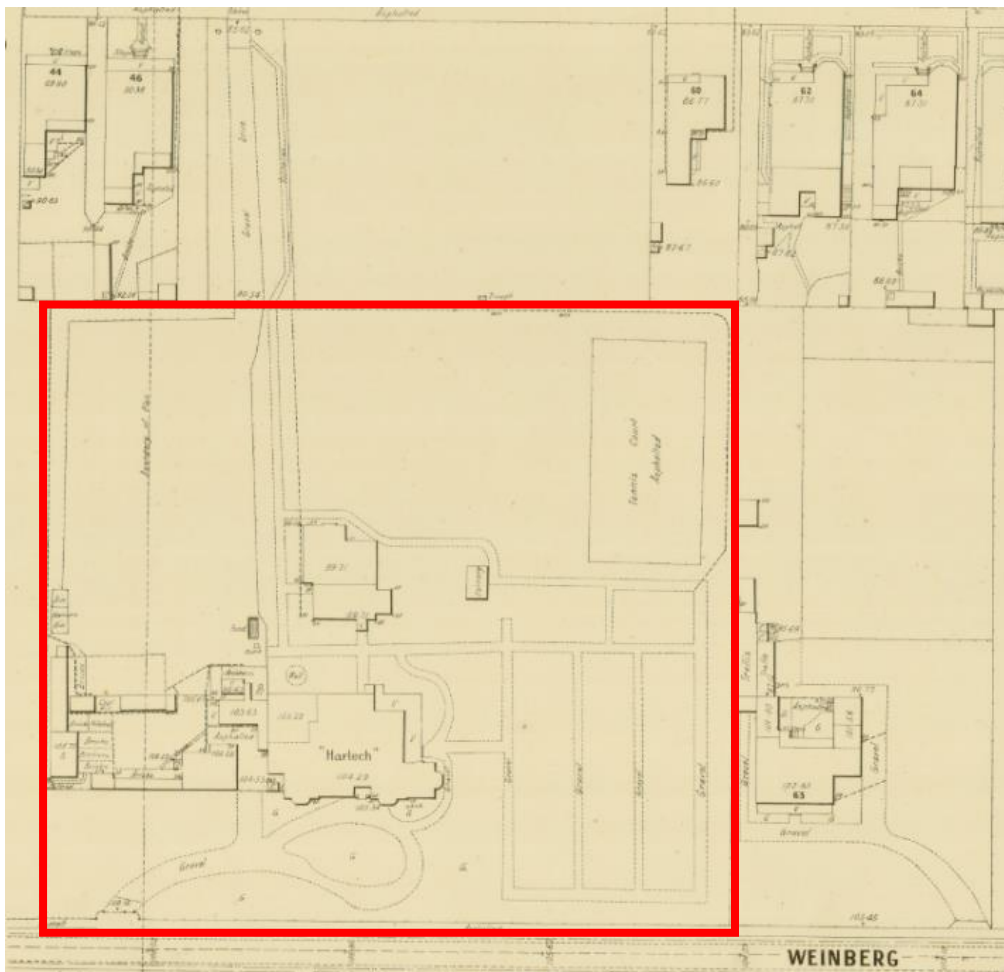


Figure 3 Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Detail Plan No. 1486 City of Hawthorn, dated 1902, showing 'Harlech' house and grounds (marked in red). (Source: State Library Victoria with GML overlay)

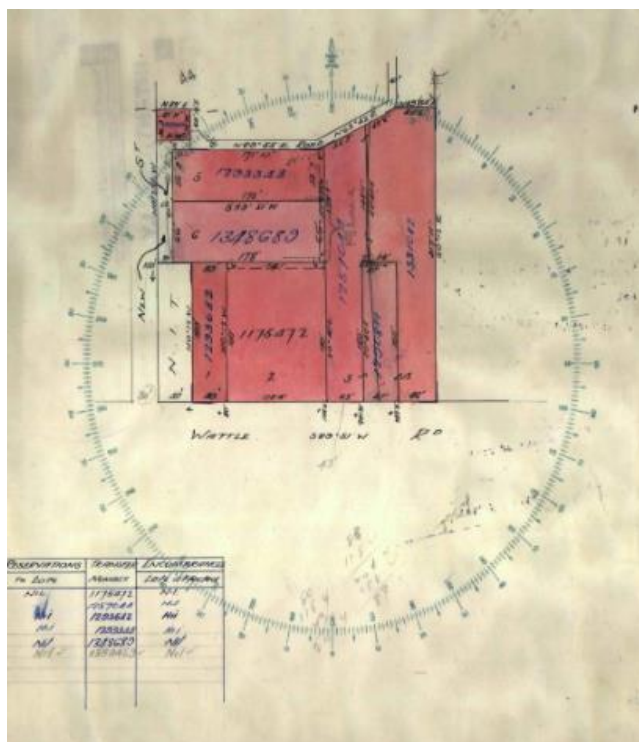


Figure 4 Plan of subdivision of Harlech in 1924, The subject site sits across allotment 1290811 and 1331082. (Source: CT4836 F7108)

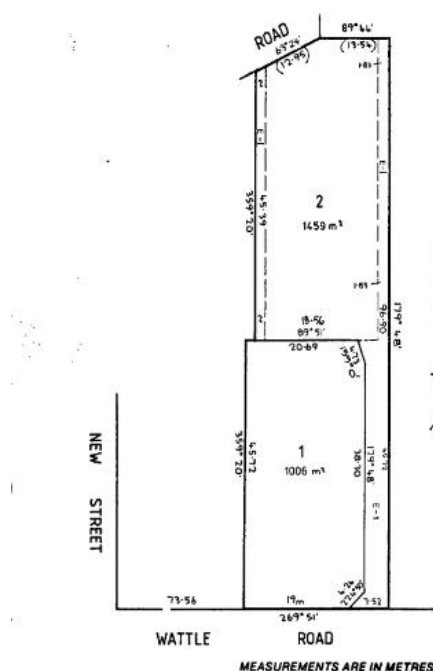


Figure 5 Plan of subdivision in 1985 of combined site of 57 and 59 Wattle Road showing realigned boundaries of the subject site (lot1) (Source: CT V9663 F669)

The combined site was acquired in June 1985 and a permit obtained to demolish the two existing brick dwellings in August 1985 (CT V9663 F669; BP 1985). The newly combined vacant site was re-subdivided enlarging the original frontage of number 57 to Wattle Road and providing an easement along its eastern boundary allowing access to 59 Wattle Road behind. (see Figure 8). The owners (Lilley) built a two storey brick house designed by architect Wayne Gillespie at 59 Wattle Road. They sold the vacant land at 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn to Christopher and Ann Morris, who commissioned prominent Melbourne architect Neil Clerehan of Clerehan Cran Architects Pty Ltd to design a two-storey brick dwelling and garage (BP 1986, Figure 9).

57 Wattle Road was sold in 1996 prior to being conveyed to its current owners in 2015 (CT V9663 F669). An inground swimming pool and side fences were installed at the property in 1987 and a pool 57 m2 cabana constructed in 1989.



Figure 6 1945 aerial image of 57 and 59 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, showing two brick dwellings on the land which were demolished in 1985 to allow for a re-alignment of the property boundaries. (Source: Landata with GML overlay)

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Figure 7 Advertisement for the sale of vacant land at 57-59 Wattle Road, Hawthorn. Note the drawing on the left incorrectly marks the easement on the west side of Lot 1. (Source: Age, 30 November 1985:68)



Figure 8 57 Wattle Road, with easement boundary visible on the east side of the property. (Source: Nearmap 2022)

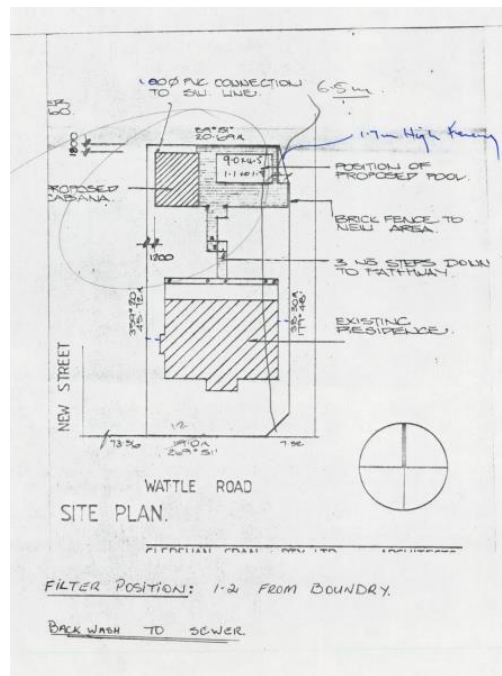


Figure 9 Design for addition of swimming pool and outbuilding (cabana). (Source: BP 1986, BH_86_4260)

Neil Clerehan (1922–2017)

Neil Clerehan was a quintessential Melbourne architect, primarily recognised as a modernist residential architect and writing as an architectural critic. He trained as an architect at RMIT and later The University of Melbourne under Brian Lewis, graduating in 1950. As an undergraduate he worked in the office of Martin & Tribe and was involved in the house designs of Marcus Martin. As a recent graduate, Clerehan worked with Robin Boyd in the office of Myer's store architectural office. In 1946 Clerehan assumed the editorship of *Smudges*, the monthly news sheet of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects. This publication was highly influential in the promotion of modern architecture, and often scathing of some buildings. Both Clerehan and Boyd became the voices for modern architecture, railing against post war housing shortages, leading to the establishment of the Small Homes Service (Edquist and Black 2005:17). This influential programme provided architects plans for well-designed small houses for a small fee thus allowing many more people to build functional low-cost modern houses.

Clerehan established a solo practice in 1949. Soon after he spent a highly influential few months travelling and visiting buildings in the United States, meeting some of the finest residential architects. His residential work developed along the lines of straightforward planning and an economy of means. (Edquist and Black 2005:35).

By the 1960s the principles of Clerehan's architecture were well established—formality, symmetry, and outdoor living spaces that were central to the layout. Guildford Bell joined with Clerehan in 1962 and the pair continued to design and build characteristic formal modernist houses. Clerehan set up his own practice from South Yarra, operating as Neil Clerehan & Associates from 1964–1980. Pettit & Sevitt, an influential building firm commissioned Clerehan to design some project homes, which won an award in 1970. From 1980, Clerehan's practice was joined by David Cran, becoming Clerehan Cran (1980–1996) and, after the premature death of David Cran, Neil Clerehan Architects from 1996. Clerehan was awarded a President's Award from the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 2004 (Edquist and Black 2005:41).

Description

57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, is a two-storey brick house built in 1986 to a design by architect Neil Clerehan of Clerehan Cran Architects Pty Ltd . The house is situated on the north side of Wattle Road on a rectangular plot with an adjoining easement on its east boundary. A mature, landscaped garden setting complements the house, which is set back from the southern (front) boundary of the site.

A modernist design ethos is expressed throughout the house with an emphasis on linear massing, a simple material palette and the employment of a flat roof concealed behind a straight parapet. The front façade consists of a painted bagged masonry wall with a projecting central glazed entry with a flat roof and deep fascia. Accessed via a tiled path from the street, the entry is demarcated by two dwarf brick piers originally painted bright red. Entry to the house is via a pair of solid timber doors. These doors sit within aluminium framed glazed entry walls that feature two concrete pillars (also originally painted red) and butt glazed corners. The only other penetrations in the street facing wall of the house are two vertical grills of hit-and-miss brickwork either side of the projecting entry which provide natural ventilation to service areas of the house behind. (Figure 12).

Across the north facing rear of the house, a large wall of floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors leads to a tiled terrace and garden beyond. Five freestanding concrete pillars are spaced evenly across the rear

edge of the terrace providing sculptural elements that extend the design of the house into the landscape. This visual connection of linking indoor and outdoor spaces is employed elsewhere within the house, with the provision of an indoor garden in the entry hall that abuts a glazed wall with views to a landscaped courtyard beyond. Views to the garden are provided from every room of the house and are accentuated by its open floor plan and double storey void in the hall. Windows and generally clear anodised aluminium framed with minimal divisions that allow views to be framed by large expanses of glass, and includes a part glazed ceiling in the kitchen. The swimming pool is complemented by a freestanding pool house and gym constructed of bagged brick walls, flat roof with deep fascia and eastern wall of glazing. An integrated double garage is accessed off the shared easement along the properties eastern boundary and is adjacent to a large, bagged brick slab chimney that rises above the single storey height of the living room.

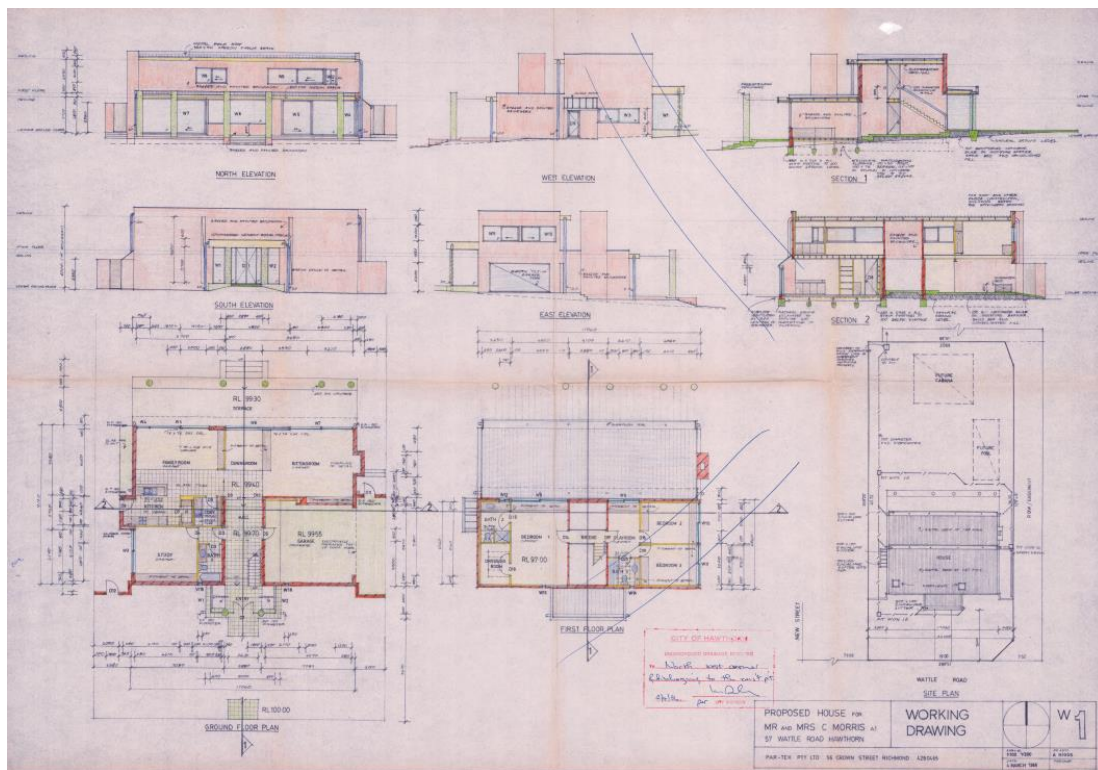


Figure 10 Working drawing sheet for 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn by Clerehan Cran Architects Pty Ltd. (Source: City of Boroondara)



Figure 11 57 Wattle Road in 2021, with dwarf entrance piers and columns painted red but since overpainted in grey. (Source: GML Heritage 2021)



Figure 12 Street-facing south elevation of 57 Wattle Road, showing a stark, bagged wall of masonry with vertical a grill of hit-and-miss brickwork and fully glazed entry. (Source: GML Heritage 2022)



Figure 13 North-facing rear elevation of 57 Wattle Road, showing fully glazed rear wall of house (ground floor) and five concrete columns along the outer edge of the terrace. (Source: realestate.com)



Figure 14 East elevation of 57 Wattle Road, with inbuilt garage facing the easement. (Source: GML Heritage 2022)

Key features of the building and landscape include:

- painted brick masonry walls with a bagged finish
- symmetrical built form with flat roof concealed behind a straight parapet form
- projecting glazed entry with flat roof, deep fascia, and a pair of concrete columns either side of the entry doors
- tiled entrance walkway flanked by dwarf bagged brick piers
- internal garden in entry hall
- original pattern of fenestration and door openings included the glazed entry with butt glazed corners, vertical risers of hit-and-miss brickwork, extensive walls of floor to ceiling glazing and glass ceiling to the kitchen
- five freestanding concrete pillars along the rear edge of the northern terrace
- swimming pool with pool house and gym
- double garage accessed off the eastern easement adjacent to a large, bagged brick slab chimney.

Integrity

57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, is highly intact; very few changes are visible to original or early fabric. The building retains its original built form, roof form and pattern of fenestration and door openings and other key features.

Overall the place has very high integrity.



Comparative Analysis

Most of the postwar Modernist houses that are currently in the Heritage Overlay in Boroondara are representative of the early Modernism that developed in Melbourne during the 1950s. They generally exhibit starkly expressed rectilinear floor plans with flat or low-pitched skillion roofs and large walls of uninterrupted glazing. After 1960, residential architecture in Melbourne became more humanistic as local architects departed from the pure Modernism that had defined the so-called Melbourne Regional School and began to embrace more diverse influences from Europe, the USA and Asia.

Neil Clerehan's residential designs sit prominently within the Modernist movement, with several notable residential examples constructed across Melbourne. Architectural historians Edquist and Black describe Clerehan's modernist approach as

... not a style but a structural approach, the validity of which endured. This attitude was exemplified in works throughout the 1980s. His formal vocabulary, always rather minimalist, was remarkably adaptable and never wavered from its concern with structural rationality and clarity of plan. (Edquist and Black 2005:50)

Despite being widely regarded as one of the most significant architects of Melbourne's post-war period, only two of Neil Clerehan's Modernist houses are currently listed in heritage overlays within Melbourne, both dating from his earlier design period in the 1960s:



Figure 15 'Fenner House', 228 Domain Road, South Yarra (VHR H2350, City of Melbourne HO6), constructed in 1964. (Source: VHD/Heritage Victoria 2016)

'The Fenner House', 228 Domain Road, South Yarra, is architecturally significant as one of the most celebrated and innovative modernist houses built in Melbourne in the 1960s. The highly influential townhouse design sits on a confined suburban site, and emphasises privacy, restrained detailing and the use of minimal building materials and finishes. The house has been designed with a windowless front façade, with light entering through internal courtyards and roof domes, to maximize privacy. 'The Fenner House' was awarded the RVIA Architectural Medal in 1967.



Figure 16 'Craigmill', 13 Raheen Drive, Kew, constructed in 1969. Included as an individually significant place within HO821. (Source: VHD/Trethowan 2017)

'Craigmill', 13 Raheen Drive, Kew, is a key example of late twentieth-century domestic architecture. The double-storey residence is constructed in an elongated rectilinear plan with a minimal material palette and slender flat roof. The design employs a large front setback, a generous open carport and elongated forms which follow the site's topography.

An additional place, 'The former Weate House' at 11 Summerhill Road, Beaumaris, was recommended for inclusion in the Bayside City Heritage Overlay as part of the City of Bayside interwar and postwar heritage study 2007:



Figure 17 'The former Weate House', 11 Summerhill Road, Beaumaris (HO818 interim) built in 1958. (Source: GJM Heritage 2021)

'The former Weate House' at 11 Summerhill Road, Beaumaris, is the only remaining example of Clerehan's work in the City of Bayside. The double-storey flat-roofed house is an example of the 'beach house' typology, with an elevated box-like structure containing the primary living area accessed via a flight of steps and protruding balcony. The street and side elevations of the upper storey feature large areas of glazing which take full advantage of the site orientation. Material detailing includes precast concrete panelling and vertical timber boarding.

Clerehan's second family home, 'Clerehan House II' at 90 Walsh Street, South Yarra, is currently significant within HO6 (City of Melbourne) and has been recommended for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register.



Figure 18 'Clerehan House II', 90 Walsh Street, South Yarra, constructed in 1968. Included as an individually significant place within HO6 (GML Heritage 2021)

'Clerehan House II', 90 Walsh Street, South Yarra, was designed by Neil Clerehan for his family and constructed in 1968. The flat roofed townhouse is situated on a narrow site and accommodates two separate dwellings, a two-storey dower house at the front originally built for Clerehan's mother-in-law, and his own family house slightly offset behind. The townhouse façades employ a simple material palette of grey brick. Clerehan's design incorporates a high courtyard wall offset from the front door of the dower house, with a long carport on the alternate side leading to the main residence at the rear.

The Boroondara Thematic Environmental History identifies the municipality as being a notable epicentre of fine architect-designed buildings (Built Heritage 2012:225). In the postwar period, prominent Melbourne architects were commissioned and produced award-winning work for residential houses and public buildings in Boroondara. However, to the best of our knowledge only three architect designed houses from the late twentieth century are in the Heritage Overlay—Edmond and Corrigan's McCartney House at 19 Rockingham Close, Kew (1982; Boroondara HO117) and Peter McIntyre's Summer House (1996) and Cliff House (1999) (Boroondara HO937), the latter of which are not directly comparable to the subject place as they are of aesthetic significance for their specific site responsive design to expansive views in both directions along the Yarra River. Notable late twentieth-century architect-designed houses include Sean Godsell's own House, 8 Hodgson Street, Kew (1997: Hermes ID 194878) and John Wardle's Kitamura House, 123 Pakington Street, Kew (1996; Hermes ID 194886) both of which were identified in the 2007 Boroondara Thematic History (Built Heritage Pty Ltd: 145-6, 233), assessed in 2012 but not recommended for inclusion in the Boroondara Heritage

Overlay due to their then-recent build date. Other than the McCartney House (HO117) and the two Peter McIntyre houses (HO937) there are few later twentieth century houses in the Boroondara Heritage Overlay.

Other notable examples of late twentieth century architect designed houses that are more directly comparable to 57 Wattle Road include Edgard Pirrotta's 9 Seattle Street, Balwyn North (recommended for the Heritage Overlay) and John Davey's 15 St Helen's Road, Hawthorn East.



Figure 19 'McCartney House', 19 Rockingham Close, Kew (HO117), constructed c1982. (Source: VHD Pru Sanderson Design 1988)

'McCartney House', 19 Rockingham Close, Kew, designed by Edmond & Corrigan Architects and constructed c1982, reflects an experimental postmodern design with a strong theatrical quality. The two-storey house features a central octagonal tower clad in red mosaic tiles with a large hexagonal roof. 'McCartney House' was awarded a housing merit award in 1982 by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.



Figure 20 9 Seattle Street, Balwyn North, constructed in 1975. Recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay (Source: GML Heritage 2021)

9 Seattle Street, Balwyn North, is a concrete block house that shows influences of the postwar Brutalist style. The asymmetrical design incorporates a living room wing to the north and a flat-roofed double carport to the south, with a large fanlight surmounting the front entrance door. The house has a stark external form with walls of bagged concrete blocks and an irregular roofline. A tall concrete-block retaining wall with curved corner walls at the driveway entry marks the property boundary and also reflects the curved corner wall of the house.



Figure 21 15 St Helens Road, Hawthorn East. (Source: GML Heritage 2022)

15 St Helens Road, Hawthorn East was designed by architect John Davey for his own family in 1984. The asymmetric dwelling features exposed concrete blocks and black steel framed windows, with modular single-storey sections leading to an open-plan, two-storey section at the rear. Postmodern design elements such as corrugated iron columns on the front facade reference industrial designs like The Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Discussion

Neil Clerehan's 1960s modernist houses, typified by his celebrated 'Fenner House' at 228 Domain Road, South Yarra, and second family home 'Clerehan House II' at 90 Walsh Street, South Yarra, reflect the extreme skill of the architect in employing a simplicity of design and detail and use of a limited material palette to create family homes centred around private outdoor spaces. Like Clerehan's earlier celebrated works from the 1960s, 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn employs a similar restrained material palette and a number of recognisably modernist elements including a simple rectilinear plan that presents as a sheer wall to the street and opens up to private internal garden spaces, via large expanses of glazing. What distinguishes this later work by Clerehan is his playful introduction of elements that contradict the puritanism of his otherwise modernist approach. This is evidenced in his use of brightly coloured columns and dwarf piers at the entry which are repeated across the rear of the terrace with the five freestanding columns. These columns appear almost as a fragmented structure of the house defining the outdoor space without enclosing it. In this way Clerehan appears to be playing with some of the concepts of post-modernism in which classical elements such as the column are introduced for their aesthetic rather than structural purpose.

While 57 Wattle Road shares its stark bagged masonry façade with 9 Seattle Street, Balwyn North, the latter is more Brutalist in style. This is evident in the latter's roofline that incorporates sections that are variously flat, low-pitched or more steeply raked with the house's chimney flues, rainwater heads and downpipes all exposed. At 57 Wattle Road Clerehan remains truer to his Modernist roots incorporating clean lines and a simplicity of detail.

Postmodern influences, including a playful use of columns, bright, contrasting colours, and theatrical design elements are employed at 15 St Helens Road, Hawthorn East and at 19 Rockingham Close, Kew. Both of these houses represent a major stylistic departure away from modernism, which was seen by many as lacking human connection, towards an architecture that is nostalgic and playful.

When compared to the above places 57 Wattle Road stands out as a sophisticated house designed by a highly celebrated postwar architect. Its attention to detail, planning and playful and yet restrained use of architectural motifs demonstrates the skill of Clerehan in the later part of his career.

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).

57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, is of local historical significance for the evidence it provides of Boroondara as a locus for fine, leading architect-designed public and private buildings from the 1850s into the postwar period. Built in 1986 to a design by prominent Melbourne-based architect Neil Clerehan, 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn exemplifies Clerehan's mature style which incorporates postmodern influences into his celebrated modernist idiom.

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 understanding 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).

57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, is of local aesthetic significance as a fine and notably intact example of a late Modernist house playfully incorporating postmodern influences built to a design by the celebrated architect Neil Clerehan in 1986. While 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn employs a restrained material palette and features a number of recognisably modernist elements such as simple clean lines and large expanses of glazing, it is distinguished from Clerehan's earlier work by the introduction of elements that contradict the purity of his otherwise modernist approach. This is evidenced in his use of originally brightly coloured columns and dwarf piers at the entry which are repeated across the rear of the houses north facing terrace with five freestanding columns also originally painted bright red.

Being highly intact, the house remains as a bold and eye-catching element in the streetscape.

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?

57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, designed by architect Neil Clerehan, is significant. Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include:

- painted brick masonry walls with bagged finish
- symmetrical built form with flat roof concealed behind a straight parapet
- projecting glazed entry with flat roof, deep fascia, and pair of concrete columns either side of the entry doors
- tiled entrance walkway flanked by dwarf bagged brick piers and internal garden inside the entry
- original pattern of fenestration and door openings included the glazed entry with butt glazed corners, vertical risers of hit-and-miss brickwork either side of the entry, extensive walls of floor to ceiling glazing and glass ceiling to the kitchen
- five freestanding concrete pillars along the rear edge of the northern terrace
- swimming pool with pool house and gym
- double garage accessed off the eastern easement adjacent to a large, bagged brick slab chimney.

How is it significant?

The house is of local historic, and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, is of local historical significance for the evidence it provides of Boroondara as a locus for fine, leading architect-designed public and private buildings from the 1850s into the postwar period. Built in 1986 to a design by prominent Melbourne-based architect Neil Clerehan, 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn exemplifies Clerehan's mature style which incorporates postmodern influences into his celebrated modernist idiom. (Criterion A)

57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn, is of local aesthetic significance as a fine and notably intact example of a late Modernist house playfully incorporating postmodern influences built to a design by the celebrated architect Neil Clerehan in 1986. While 57 Wattle Road, Hawthorn employs a restrained material palette and features a number of recognisably modernist elements such as simple clean lines and large expanses of glazing, it is distinguished from Clerehan's earlier work by the introduction of elements that contradict the purity of his otherwise modernist approach. This is evidenced in his use of originally brightly coloured columns and dwarf piers at the entry which are repeated across the rear of the houses north facing terrace with five freestanding columns also originally painted bright red. Being highly intact, the house remains as a bold and eye-catching element in the streetscape. (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:

External paint controls	
<i>Is a permit required to paint an already painted surface?</i>	No
Internal alteration controls	
<i>Is a permit required for internal alterations?</i>	No
Tree controls	
<i>Is a permit required to remove a tree?</i>	No
Solar energy system controls	
<i>Is a permit required to install a solar energy system?</i>	Yes
Outbuildings and fences exemptions	
<i>Are there outbuildings or fences which are not exempt from notice and review?</i>	Yes, pool house/gym at rear, brick piers either side of entry, five freestanding columns at rear
Victorian Heritage Register	
<i>Is the place included on the Victorian Heritage Register?</i>	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	
<i>Can a permit be granted to use the place for a use which would otherwise be prohibited?</i>	No
Aboriginal heritage place	
<i>Is the place an Aboriginal heritage place which is subject to the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?</i>	No
Incorporated plan	
<i>Does an incorporated plan apply to the site?</i>	No

Identified by:

GML Heritage 2021.



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