

Kew Heritage Gap Study  
31-37 Heather Grove, Kew

Expert Witness Statement to Panel  
Amendment C294 to the Boroondara Planning Scheme

Bryce Raworth

Conservation Consultant and Architectural Historian

October 2019

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1.0 Introduction

1. This statement of evidence has been prepared for the owners of the properties at 31, 33, 35 and 37 Heather Grove, Kew. I have been asked to comment on the proposal to introduce a new Heritage Overlay to the subject buildings under Amendment C294 to the *Boroondara Planning Scheme*. This statement addresses the significance of the subject buildings and the precinct in which they are located, and the appropriateness of Heritage Overlay controls.
2. By way of background, Amendment C294 is a result of the recommendations of the *City of Boroondara Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study: Volume 4 Kew* (the Kew Heritage Gap Study) prepared by Context Pty Ltd (revised 21 January 2019). The Amendment proposes to include twenty individual heritage places, nine heritage precincts and six precinct extensions in the Heritage Overlay of the *Boroondara Planning Scheme* on a permanent basis.
3. My office was engaged by the owner of 33 Heather Grove to assess the merits of the proposed overlay at the end of 2017. At the time advice was provided that the dwelling was removed from the main streetscapes, and that the precinct is not one of the finer or more important interwar precincts in Boroondara.
4. This statement has been prepared with assistance from Fiona Erskine of my office. The views expressed are my own.

2.0 Sources of Information

5. The analysis below draws upon inspections of the buildings in question, and a review of the relevant Amendment C294 documentation. Reference has also been made to the following:
  - Advisory Committee Report: Review of Heritage Provisions in Planning Schemes (August 2007)
  - Victoria Planning Provisions Practice Note: Applying the Heritage Overlay (July 2015 and August 2018)
  - Heritage Issues: Summaries from recent Panel Reports, Planning Panels Victoria, Issue 2 March 2018

### 3.0 Author Qualifications

6. A statement of my qualifications and experience with respect to urban conservation issues is appended to this report. Note that I have provided expert witness evidence on similar matters before the VCAT, Heritage Council, Planning Panels Victoria and the Building Appeals Board on numerous occasions in the past, and have been retained in such matters variously by municipal councils, developers and objectors to planning proposals.

### 4.0 Declaration

7. I declare that I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate, and that no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryce Raworth', with a period at the end.

**BRYCE RAWORTH**

## 5.0 Brief History and Description

8. The subject properties are located on the west side of Heather Grove in Kew, near to the intersection with Argyle Road. The properties have an elevated position on the high side of the street, with the outer circle trail, a shared pedestrian and bicycle path, located in the former rail reserve downslope on the opposite side.
9. Occupying 31 Heather Grove is a brick dwelling in the Old English style, constructed c.1938<sup>1</sup> with corbelled gable and gabled entry porch. Dormer windows have been added to the street facing slope of the roof to create an attic storey. The front fence has been altered, while the driveway and garage door have been replaced.
10. 33 Heather Grove, constructed c.1939, is a double storey dwelling of clinker brick with a hipped tiled roof punctuated by two brick chimneys. The facade features a projecting bay to its southern end and a central cantilevered concrete balcony with wrought iron balustrade over the arched entry way, reached via a staircase with another wrought iron balustrade. An original or early low brick fence lines the street boundary and concrete driveway, leading to a brick double garage of similar age in the north-west corner of the property.
11. The property at 35 Heather Grove is a c.1938 attic storey dwelling of rendered and face brick construction. The hipped roof is tiled and punctuated by two chimneys. The windows to the southern bay of the facade have been replaced with larger French doors and the render has been overpainted in a mid grey tone.
12. 37 Heather Grove is a single storey dwelling with a hipped tiled roof and chimney constructed c.1938. The lower sections of the walls are face brick while the upper are of overpainted render. As built, the property featured a central projecting bay with flanking recessed bays to either side. A projecting hipped roof pavilion has been added to the east end of the facade detailed to match the original house with brick and render walls and multi-paned windows. The west end of the facade has also been altered with French doors leading onto a raised deck with pergola roof.

<sup>1</sup> Construction dates for the subject properties have been established from examination of a number of *Sands & McDougall Directories* between the years 1938 and 1970. The properties at 25, 27, 29 & 31 Heather Grove were renumbered 31, 33, 35 and 37 Heather Grove between 1960 and 1965.



*Figure 1* 31 Heather Grove as viewed from the south-east.



*Figure 2* The frontage of 31 Heather Grove.



*Figure 3* 33 Heather Grove as viewed from the north-east.



*Figure 4* The garage at 33 Heather Grove.



*Figure 5* 35 Heather Grove as viewed from the east.



*Figure 6* The north-east corner of 35 Heather Grove.



*Figure 7 The eastern end of the front of 37 Heather Grove.*



*Figure 8 The addition at the west end of the facade is visible at left.*

## 6.0 Heritage Status

13. The subject properties are included in the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct, an interim Heritage Overlay identified as HO803 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the *Boroondara Planning Scheme*. No external paint controls, internal alteration controls or tree controls apply under the provisions of this overlay. Outbuildings and fences that are not exempt from the notice and review requirements under Clause 43.01-4 include 'Front fences at 53, 59, 61, 88 Argyle Rd; 60 Campbell St; 4, 7, 9, 10, 14, 15, 19, 20, 26 Goldthorns Ave; 31, 33 Heather Gv; 11 Lady Lochs Drive; 66, 70 Normanby Rd' and 'Garages at 59, 88 Argyle Rd; 4, 7, 19, 22, 24, 26 Goldthorns Ave; 33 Heather Gv'.
14. After consideration of submissions following the exhibition of the Amendment, it is proposed that outbuildings and fences that will not be exempt from the notice and review requirements under Clause 43.01-4 will include 'Front fences at 59, 88 Argyle Rd; 60 Campbell St; 7, 9, 10, 15, 20, 26 Goldthorns Ave; 11 Lady Lochs Drive; 66, 70 Normanby Rd' and 'Garages at 59 Argyle Rd; 7, 19, 22, 24, 26 Goldthorns Ave; 33 Heather Gv'.

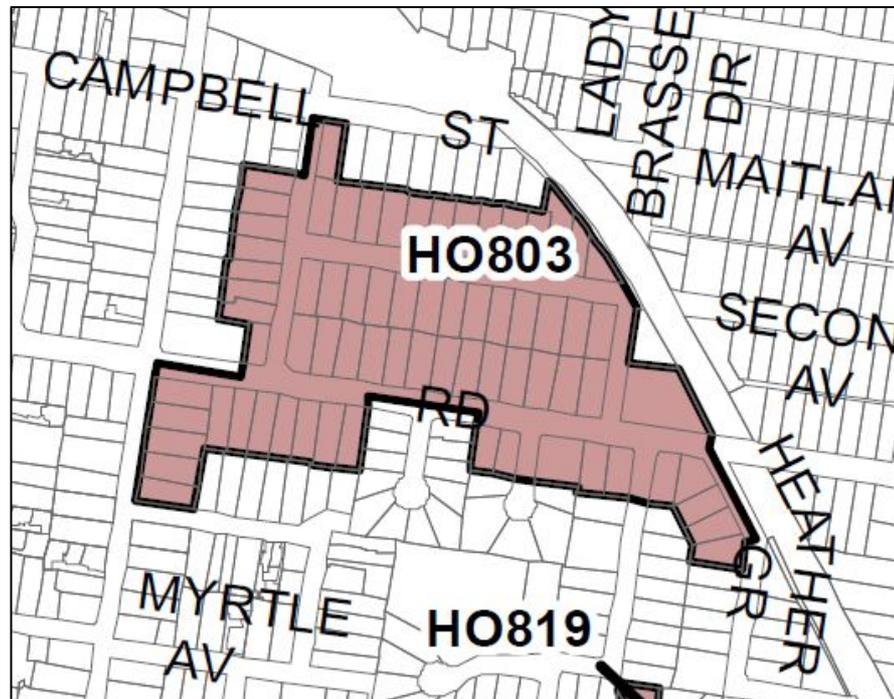


Figure 9 Map of the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct.

15. The Kew Heritage Gap Study identified that the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct meets the threshold for local significance under the following criteria:

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

*The Goldthorns Hill and Environs precinct is historically significant for the evidence it provides of the pattern of settlement in this part of Kew during the interwar period, which were subdivided from the grounds of larger estates with grand mansions. The subject precinct is comprised of several subdivisions: the Monterey Estate, the Goldthorns Hill Estate, the Normanby Heights Estate, Goldthorns Estate, the Argyle Hill Estate, and a subdivision of land in Argyle Road and Royston Court. Not all the subdivisions resulted in immediate land sales until the interwar period, in particular the 1888 Monterey Estate.*

*Other precincts in Kew tell the story of the evolution of Kew as a residential suburb, but only the Goldthorns Hill and Environs Precinct, through its concentration of interwar housing stock in an eclectic range of house designs, has the ability to demonstrate the interwar part of the story of Kew's suburban growth and development so comprehensively.*

*The scale of many of the houses, and the 'respectability' epitomised by their architectural styles and associated elements, remain as important evidence of these historical processes and themes in the growth and development of Kew.*

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

*Architecturally, the Precinct is significant as a compact collection of domestic interwar architectural styles from the mid-1920s to the early 1940s of high architectural quality. The Precinct retains a comparatively high level of intactness and integrity, including a number of original front fences, garages, and landscaping in front gardens (typically, garden and retaining walls, gates, concrete paths and driveways). Through this mix and its integrity, the Precinct exemplifies the notion of Kew's built heritage as 'a compendium of domestic architecture in Melbourne', especially of interwar domestic architecture.*

*The houses in Goldthorns Avenue are typically large double storey brick homes built in the Old English revival and Moderne architectural styles, although smaller family homes in these same styles contribute cohesion to the Precinct. Goldthorns Avenue also includes a smaller number of homes from the early 1950s, in these same styles, which are additionally of note.*

*The use of interwar revival styles such as Old English, Spanish Mission, and Mediterranean, architectural styles which intentionally referenced other cultures whose history and architectural traditions were highly valued, quickly lent a sense of establishment and permanence to the new suburb...*

16. The comparative analysis section of the citation cites six existing precincts in Kew and one in Camberwell as comparable to the Goldthorns Hill and Environs Precinct. These are:

- HO157 Oswin Street Precinct, Kew
- HO162 Sackville Street Precinct, Kew
- HO158 Walmer Street Precinct, Kew
- HO143 Barry Street Precinct, Kew
- HO142 Barrington Avenue Precinct, Kew
- HO525 Clutha Estate Precinct, Kew

- HO1 Golf Links Estate, Camberwell



Figure 10 HO157 Oswin Street Precinct

- The statement of significance for the Oswin Street Precinct indicates that the area comprises an intact concentration of 1920s and 1930s housing, largely State Bank and Burridge Leith designs. There is a high concentration of original fences and outbuildings.

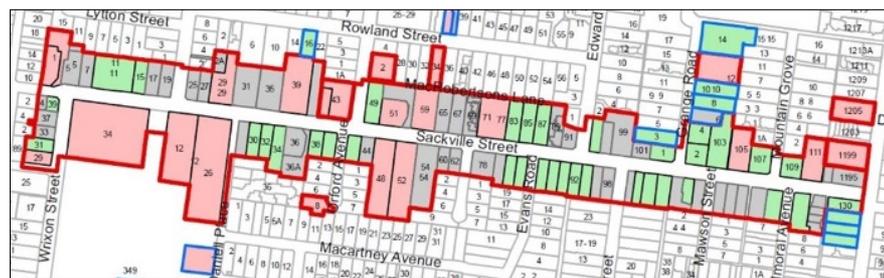


Figure 11 HO162 Sackville Street

- The statement of significance for the Sackville Street Precinct indicates that the area contains a number of Individually significant Victorian mansions, as well as a series of smaller Victorian, Federation, interwar and postwar dwellings.

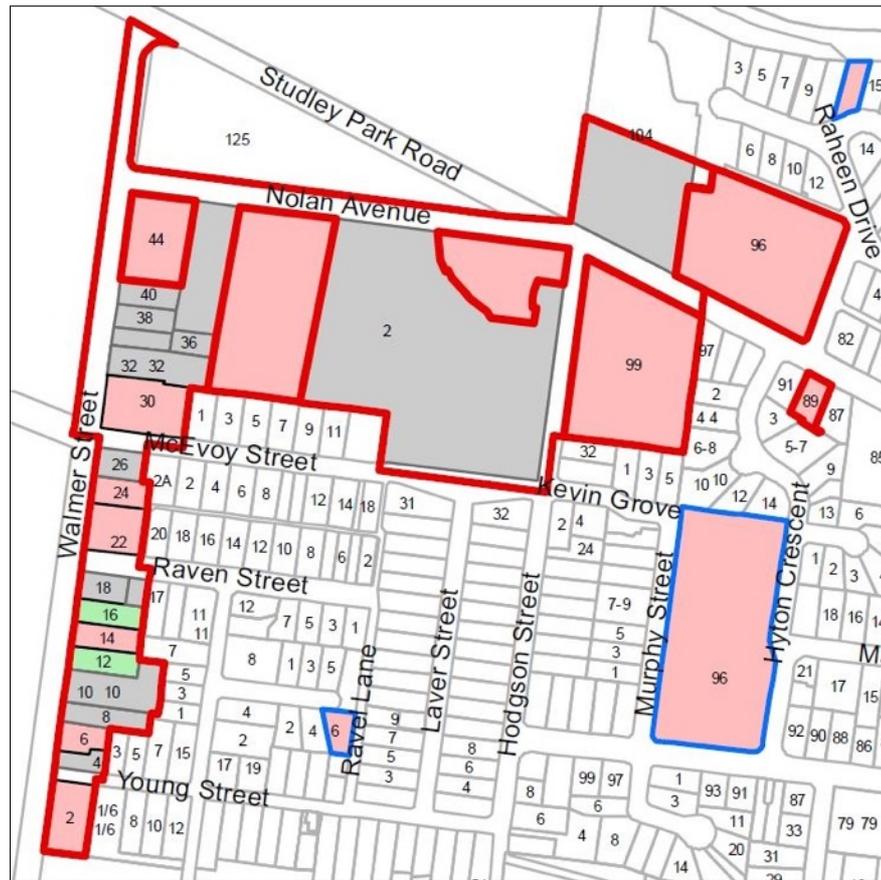


Figure 12 HO158 Walmer Street Precinct.

19. The statement of significance for the Walmer Street Precinct indicates that the area contains a series of individually significant mansion houses from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, along with a line of Victorian and Federation houses playing a supporting role.

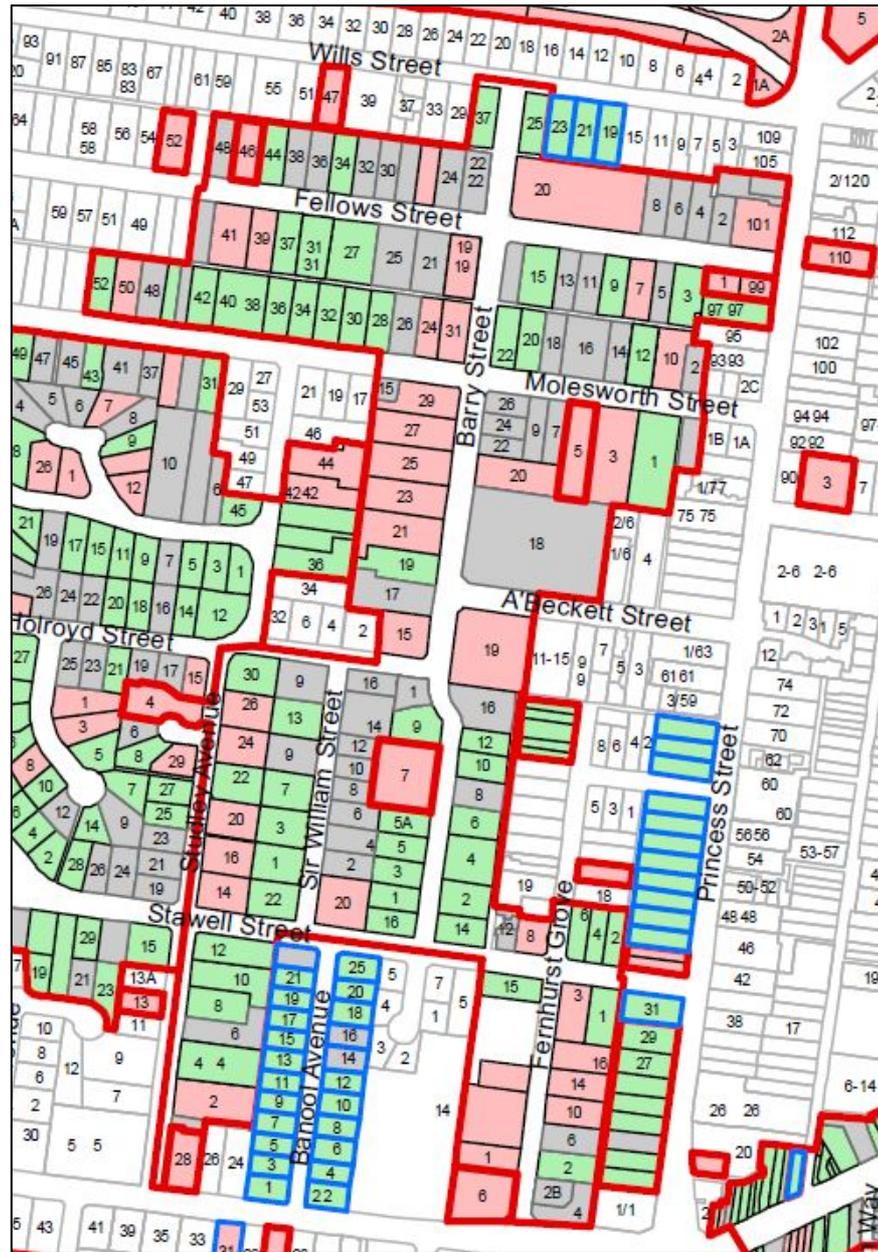


Figure 13 HO143 Barry Street Precinct

20. The statement of significance for the Barry Street Precinct indicates that the area has a concentration of architect designed, highly graded buildings, including large late Victorian and Federation designs. There are also a number of distinctive interwar designs.



Figure 14 HO142 Barrington Avenue Precinct

21. The statement of significance for the Barrington Avenue Precinct indicates that the area features predominantly Federation and interwar building stock, with a concentration of graded buildings of high quality design.

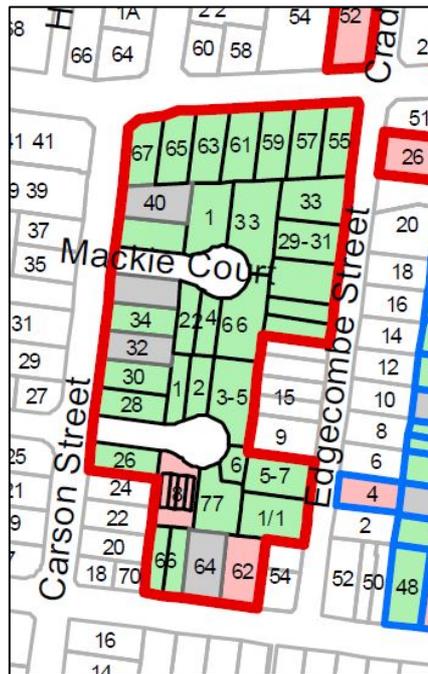


Figure 15 HO525 Clutha Estate

22. The statement of significance for the Clutha Estate Precinct indicates that the area is a 1940 subdivision of a large mansion estate, significant as a compact microcosm of architectural styles from the 1940s to the 1950s, which retains a comparatively high level of intactness. The aesthetic significance is enhanced by remaining original low brick fences and garages.

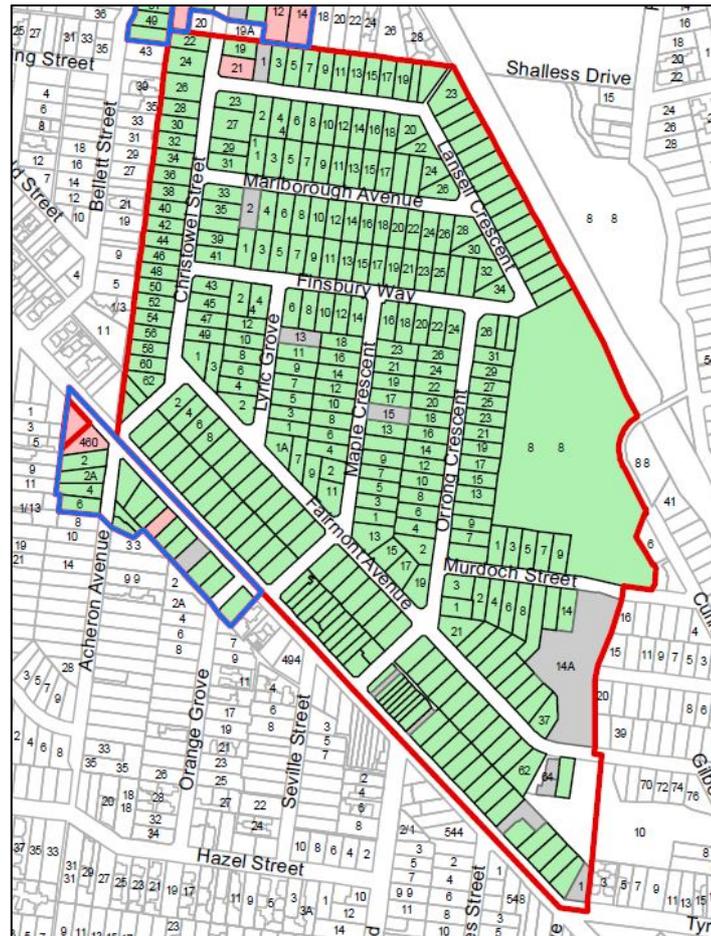


Figure 16 Golf Links Estate

23. The statement of significance for the Golf Links Estate indicates that the area comprises a particularly intact and notable collection of vernacular housing styles of the late 1920s to the early 1940s, including interwar Mediterranean, Old English and Californian Bungalow. It also contains a significant number of Art-Deco and Moderne flavoured houses.

- 24. As exhibited, the Goldthorns Hill & Environs precinct included 71 properties, of which 4 were graded Significant, 49 were graded Contributory and 18 were graded non-contributory.



Figure 17 The precinct grading map as exhibited.

- 25. During the exhibition period, a number of submitters provided statements regarding alterations and additions that have been made to their properties. It is currently proposed that 3 properties will be graded Significant, 47 graded Contributory and 21 graded non-contributory.



Figure 18 The precinct grading map currently under consideration.

26. The revised statement of significance for the proposed Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct, as included in the Urban Planning Special Committee Agenda dated 5 August 2019, is as follows:

*What is Significant?*

*The Goldthorns Hill and Environs Precinct comprises 60 Campbell Street; 1-25 and 2-26 Goldthorns Avenue; 1-11 Lady Lochs Drive; 47-97 and 52-88 Argyle Road; 66-74 Normanby Road; ~~and~~ 31-37 Heather Grove; and 20 Victor Avenue, Kew. The Precinct is comprised of several subdivisions: the Monterey Estate (1888), the Normanby Heights Estate (1919), the Goldthorns Hill Estate (1925), the Goldthorns House Estate (c.1925-40), the Argyle Hill Estate (c.1936), and a subdivision of land in Argyle Road and Royston Court (c.1939). It includes a range of large to smaller family homes built in the 1920s, 1930s and early 1940s in a mix of interwar domestic architectural styles. The first houses in the precinct were built in the mid-1920s in the fashionable California Bungalow idiom. The majority of the houses in the Precinct were however built during the 1930s, many in the popular but conservative Old English, Georgian and Mediterranean revival styles, while many others were built in the more daring Moderne style.*

*Places of individual significance within the Precinct are ~~88,~~ and 97 Argyle Road, and 20 and 26 Goldthorns Avenue.*

*Original front fences at ~~53,~~ 59, 61, and 88 Argyle Road, 60 Campbell Street, ~~4,~~ 7, 9, 10, ~~14,~~ 15, ~~19,~~ 20, and 26 Goldthorns Avenue, ~~31 and 33 Heather Grove,~~ 11 Lady Lochs Drive, and 66 and 70 Normanby Road are contributory. Original garages at 59 ~~and 88~~ Argyle Road, ~~4,~~ 7, ~~11,~~ ~~12,~~ 19, 22, 24, and 26 Goldthorns Avenue, and 33 Heather Grove are also contributory. Non-original alterations and additions to the houses are not significant.*

*How is it significant?*

*The Goldthorns Hill and Environs Precinct, Kew, is of local historical, architectural and associative significance to the City of Boroondara.*

*Why is it significant?*

*The Goldthorns Hill and Environs precinct is historically significant for the evidence it provides of the pattern of settlement in this part of Kew during the interwar period, which were subdivided from the grounds of larger estates with grand mansions. The subject precinct is comprised of several subdivisions: the Monterey Estate, the Goldthorns Hill Estate, the Normanby Heights Estate, Goldthorns Estate, the Argyle Hill Estate, and a subdivision of land in Argyle Road and Royston Court. Not all the subdivisions resulted in immediate land sales until the interwar period, in particular the 1888 Monterey Estate. (Criterion A)*

*Other precincts in Kew tell the story of the evolution of Kew as a residential suburb, but only the Goldthorns Hill and Environs Precinct, through its concentration of interwar housing stock in an eclectic range of house designs, has the ability to demonstrate the interwar part of the story of Kew's suburban growth and development so comprehensively. The scale of many of the houses, and the 'respectability' epitomised by their architectural styles and associated elements, remain as important evidence of these historical processes and themes in the growth and development of Kew. (Criterion A)*

*There are houses of individual significance within the Precinct, for their particularly high architectural quality and as fine and uncommon examples of their architectural style, some of*

*which are particularly notable for the high level of intactness and integrity of the property as a whole. (Criterion D)*

*20 and 26 Goldthorns Avenue are individually significant as fine examples of their interwar architectural styles Moderne, and Old English, respectively. The high level of intactness of these properties includes their front fences, landscaping, and garages, which were included as their original design for 26 Goldthorns Avenue, and appear to also have been part of the original designs for 20 Goldthorns Avenue. 'Argyle' (formerly 'Skye') at 97 Argyle Road, built by 1930, comprises a single-storey brick and roughcast render Bungalow distinguished by unusual and visually arresting detailing on two brick bays with decorative parapets. The parapets are distinguished by their striking brick and render patchwork pattern, accentuated by the contrasting colours of the cream-painted render and rich red-brown brick. The house has been extended substantially, but its core form appears to include red brick foundations, roughcast rendered walls, with a glazed terracotta tile hip roof, and timber sash windows with multi-paned upper sashes, and its distinguishing features remain legible in views from the street. (Criterion D)*

*The architectural significance of the Precinct is enhanced by the architectural quality and integrity of many of the contributory places. Many of the houses retain original associated built features, including some original garages that were integral components of the original house designs (at 59 ~~and 88~~ Argyle Road, ~~4, 7, 11, 12,~~ 19, 22, 24, and 26 Goldthorns Avenue, and 33 Heather Grove), and early and original front fences (at ~~53,~~ 59, ~~61,~~ and 88 Argyle Road, 60 Campbell Street, ~~4, 7, 9, 10, 14, 15, 19,~~ 20, and 26 Goldthorns Avenue, ~~31 and 33 Heather Grove,~~ 11 Lady Lochs Drive; and 66 and 70 Normanby Road. (Criterion D).*

## 7.0 Analysis

27. The methodology Context employed in preparing the Kew Heritage Gap Study included place survey, preparation of precinct histories and descriptions, comparative analysis, assessment against the HERCON criteria, preparation of statements of significance, and grading of properties within precincts.
28. In relation to the identification of potential precincts, the Kew Heritage Gap Study noted the following:

*... areas containing a high density of potential Contributory and Significant places in cohesive streetscapes that demonstrate a shared theme or themes (e.g., residential development of a similar built date or building type) were chosen.*

*... buildings that are not individually significant in their own right must be grouped together in large enough and consistent enough streetscapes in order to form a precinct of local significance. While there is no set definition of how large a precinct must be to warrant inclusion in the Heritage Overlay, the consultants followed the general approach that a precinct of buildings that are very 'typical' of their era should be larger than a precinct comprising an unusual grouping. (Kew Heritage Gap Study, p.5).*

29. The proposed Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct contains 71 properties, making it moderately sized in terms of the overall number of properties that it contains. While this number of properties would generally be considered 'large enough' to form a precinct, the consistency of the streetscapes is questionable. The north side of Argyle Road in particular contains more ungraded buildings than graded buildings, while the south side is visually divided into two separate sections by the ungraded buildings of the Birrell Court subdivision that occurred in the early 1970s and the non-contributory building at 78 Argyle Road.
30. The subject buildings at 31-37 Heather Grove are separated from the main body of the precinct as they extend around the corner from Argyle Road. They essentially have no visibility from within the precinct, the main view of these four properties being obtained from further east, outside of the precinct boundary.



*Figure 19 View of the south side of Argyle Road showing the non-contributory property at 78 Argyle Road (at right) as well as the Birrell Court properties.*



Figure 20 View of the Heather Grove properties from the east, outside of the precinct boundary.

31. The Kew Heritage Gap Study states, in relation to comparative analysis, that:

*Comparative analysis is an essential step to determining if a place or precinct meets the local (or State) threshold for heritage significance...*

*In this process, similar places and precincts (in terms of built-date, building type, and/or use/theme) already included in the Boroondara Heritage Overlay were used as 'benchmarks' to provide a basis for comparison. Potential heritage places and precincts were compared according to a range of criteria, including how well they represented a historical theme, their architectural design quality, intactness and rarity.*

*When the place or precinct under assessment was considered to be of equal or better quality than the 'benchmarks' it was judged to meet the threshold of local significance and considered worthy of inclusion in the Boroondara Heritage Overlay (Kew Heritage Gap Study, pp.7-8).*

32. As noted above, the citation for the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct cites six existing precincts in Kew and one in Camberwell as comparable to the proposed precinct. Of these seven precincts, it is not felt that the Sackville Street Precinct (HO162), the Walmer Street Precinct (HO158) and the Barry Street Precinct (HO143) are highly comparable to the subject precinct. The three aforementioned precincts were developed over a longer period of time, commencing in the Victorian era and continuing through the Federation period and into the interwar years. They have a high proportion of Significant graded buildings, many of which were designed by known architects, which gives these precincts a level of aesthetic significance that is not found in the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct. While interwar buildings in these three precincts play a supporting role to the larger mansion houses, they are generally not the chief focus of these precincts.

33. The Barrington Avenue Precinct (HO142), is of significance for its Federation and interwar period development, and also features a high number of Significant buildings, making it qualitatively different from the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct.
34. The remaining three precincts cited, being the Oswin Street Precinct (HO157), the Clutha Estate Precinct (HO525) and the Golf Links Estate (HO1) are comparative precincts insofar as they were wholly or largely developed in the interwar period. The proposed Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct does not compare well to these three precincts, however. These three precincts are much more cohesive, containing a higher proportion of contributory places that gives a consistency to the streetscapes and a greater sense of a distinct precinct area. It cannot be said that the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct is of 'equal or better' quality than these precincts.
35. Furthermore, there are a number of other existing precincts in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the *Boroondara Planning Scheme* that are also directly comparable to the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct in terms of the era of development. These include Hassett's Estate in Canterbury/Camberwell (HO191), comprising an intact and notable collection of prevailing styles from the 1920s to early 1940s; Reid Estate in Balwyn (HO192), the large detached houses of which adopt a range of interwar styles and demonstrate a high quality of architectural design; Holyrood Estate and Environs, Camberwell (HO228), an intact and consistent area of 1920s and 1930s housing; and Riverside Estate and Environs, Balwyn North (HO231), a cohesive interwar precinct of large detached houses built in various interwar styles of high quality. These four existing precincts all demonstrate interwar development in the municipality better than the proposed precinct, insofar as they are all larger in scale than the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct and comprise more consistent streetscapes with a higher proportion of contributory buildings.



Figure 21 HO191 Hassett's Estate Canterbury/Camberwell





Figure 24 HO231 Riverside Estate and Environs, Balwyn

36. In terms of the grading of buildings within precincts, the Kew Heritage Gap Study notes that:

*Whether a place is 'Significant', 'Contributory' or 'Non-contributory' to a precinct depends on the reasons the precinct is of heritage significance, as expressed in the Statement of Significance. A 'Significant' grading was attributed to buildings in a precinct that exhibit particular architectural merit or other distinguishing characteristics, and which have a comparatively high level of external intactness. A 'Contributory' grading was attributed to buildings of any era, i.e., Victorian, Edwardian, interwar or post-war, which follow standard designs. The majority of buildings in precincts have a Contributory grade. In some instances, an altered building (new windows, change in roof cladding, overpainting, verandah rebuilt, minor additions) may still be considered 'Contributory' if its connection to the themes of the precinct can still be understood. In addition, a very important building—that would otherwise be Significant—might be altered to a greater extent but still contribute to the significance of the precinct (Kew Heritage Gap Study, p.8).*

37. The application of a Contributory grading to altered buildings has, in some cases, included buildings with first floor additions such as at 62 Argyle Road, 1 and 19 Goldthorns Avenue. While the citation for the precinct acknowledges changes to some buildings, stating they 'have been sympathetically incorporated with the original structures in the sense they are not visually dominant in views from the streetscape', this cannot be said to be the case where first floor additions have been built over the main roof ridge and are highly visible. The Contributory grading has also been applied to buildings that have been rendered/overpainted and have large carport additions,

such as 16 and 17 Goldthorns Avenue. These buildings are only of the most marginal significance.

38. Furthermore, it is clear from the statement of significance in the citation that the proposed precinct has been identified for its interwar development, stating that *‘It includes a range of large to smaller family homes built in the 1920s, 1930s and early 1940s in a mix of interwar domestic architectural styles’* and *‘The Goldthorns Hill and Environs precinct is historically significant for the evidence it provides of the pattern of settlement in this part of Kew during the interwar period’*. Despite this, a number of houses that have been identified by Context as being constructed in the post-war period have been graded as Contributory buildings. These include 47 Argyle Road (1953), 2 Goldthorns Avenue (1952), 13 Goldthorns Avenue (1951), 3A Lady Lochs Drive (1952) and 20 Victor Avenue (post 1945). The last of these properties, that at 20 Victor Avenue, was in fact constructed in the early 1960s.<sup>2</sup>
39. The postwar dwellings are undistinguished examples of their era and cannot be said to be contributory to an interwar precinct. The inclusion of both marginal, highly altered interwar buildings, as well as a number of postwar buildings, further dilutes the consistency of what are already extremely ‘patchy’ and inconsistent streetscapes.



Figure 25 62 Argyle Road.

<sup>2</sup> The approximate date of construction for 20 Victor Avenue has been established through examination of the *Sands & McDougall Directory* for the years 1960 and 1965, as well as a 1958 aerial image which confirms that the site was vacant at this time.



*Figure 26*      *1 Goldthorns Avenue.*



*Figure 27*      *19 Goldthorns Avenue.*



*Figure 28*      16 Goldthorns Avenue.



*Figure 29*      17 Goldthorns Avenue.



*Figure 30* 47 Argyle Road, constructed 1953.



*Figure 31* 2 Goldthorns Avenue, constructed 1952.



*Figure 32* 13 Goldthorns Avenue, constructed 1951.



*Figure 33* 3A Lady Lochs Drive, constructed 1952.



*Figure 34* 20 Victor Avenue, constructed early 1960s.



*Figure 35* View of the south east end of the property at 97 Argyle Road, nearest to the Heather Grove dwellings.

40. In terms of the subject properties at 31-37 Heather Grove, their location means that they are separated from the main body of interwar properties in the precinct by a 1960s building and Victor Avenue itself. The property at 97 Argyle Road provides limited connection between the areas, given that the tall solid masonry fence and tennis court/garden area are located nearest to the Heather Grove dwellings.
41. Additionally, 37 Heather Grove is not an intact example of an interwar building. The construction of the addition at the east end of the facade has altered its main streetscape presentation, such that the symmetry of the building has changed, obscuring its original form.
42. In examining the precinct boundaries of the proposed HO803, it is unclear why some properties such as the four in Heather Grove, as well as the five in Normanby Road have been included, while other comparable nearby interwar buildings have been excluded. A 1945 aerial image shows that the streets surrounding the identified area were well developed at this time, and many of these properties remain, such as those at 25 & 29 Heather Grove, 48 & 50 Argyle Road, 6-16 Victor Avenue. The precinct boundaries can be seen to be arbitrary when nearby comparable buildings have been excluded.



*Figure 36* 1945 aerial image of the Goldthorns Hill area and surrounds.



*Figure 37*      *25 Heather Grove*



*Figure 38*      *29 Heather Grove*



*Figure 39* 48 Argyle Road.



*Figure 40* 50 Argyle Road.



*Figure 41*      *6 Victor Avenue.*



*Figure 42*      *8 Victor Avenue.*



*Figure 43* 10 Victor Avenue.



*Figure 44* 12 Victor Avenue.



Figure 45 14 Victor Avenue.

43. The recognised criteria for the assessment of heritage values of a heritage place, as set out in *Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay (July 2015)*, are as follows:

*Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).*

*Criterion B: Possession of uncommon rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).*

*Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).*

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

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

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

*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).*

*Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our -history (associative significance).*

44. To be identified as a place of local significance sufficient to warrant application of the Heritage Overlay, a place should meet one or more of these criteria to a degree that meets a threshold of local significance. This is to say, the criteria in question should be met not just in a simple or generic manner, but to a degree that is better than many or most other examples at a local level, or to a degree that is comparable to other examples that are subject to the Heritage Overlay.
45. The Advisory Committee Report: Review of Heritage Provisions in Planning Schemes (August 2007) provided guidance from some of its leading experts on the question of establishing a threshold of significance. The committee recognised that establishing whether a place is of heritage value is not merely a question of applying a blanket rule based on a place's age or period of construction. The committee defined a threshold with the clear intention of sifting places worthy of protection from a potentially large field of places that may be of a particular period or class but are nonetheless not sufficiently important to be controlled, as:

*Essentially a 'threshold' is the level of cultural significance that a place must have before it can be recommended for inclusion in the planning scheme. The question to be answered is 'Is the place of sufficient import that its cultural values should be recognised in the planning scheme and taken into account in decision-making?' Thresholds are necessary to enable a smaller group of places with special architectural values, for example, to be selected out for listing from a group of perhaps hundreds of places with similar architectural values.<sup>3</sup>*

46. The advisory committee endorsed the use of HERCON criteria for assessing heritage significance at the local level. This said, meeting one criteria such as age, period or degree of intactness does not automatically make a place significant. Instead 'a selection process based on threshold criteria and comparative assessment follows':

*As we have commented, we see the development of thresholds as something which responds to the particular characteristics of the area under investigation and its heritage resources. Nevertheless the types of factors that might be deployed to establish local thresholds can be specified State-wide. They would include rarity in the local context, condition/degree of intactness, age, design, quality/aesthetic value, their importance to the development sequence documented in the thematic environmental history. This process is essentially a comparative one within the local area. That area may not coincide with the municipal area. Its definition should be informed by the thematic environment history.<sup>4</sup>*

47. The recommendation for the application of Heritage Overlay controls to the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct is based on an assessment that the precinct is of historical and representative significance (Criteria A and D).

<sup>3</sup> Review of Heritage Provisions in Planning Schemes Advisory Committee Report August 2007, pp. 2: 41.

<sup>4</sup> Review of Heritage Provisions in Planning Schemes Advisory Committee Report August 2007, pp. 2: 44.

48. Despite this, it is noted that the statement of significance cites that the precinct is of historical, architectural and associative significance, presumably in error:

*How is it significant?*

*The Goldthorns Hill and Environs Precinct, Kew, is of local historical, architectural and associative significance to the City of Boroondara.*

49. In relation to the proposed precinct's historical value, while it possesses a degree of historical interest for demonstrating the process of subdivision and development, this is common to most areas of Kew and Boroondara more broadly. Estate subdivisions occurred throughout in late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the area, and the identified Monterey Estate, Goldthorns Hill Estate, Normanby Heights Estate, Goldthorns Estate and Argyle Hill Estate are no more significant than any other division of large mansion estates for residential use. This level of interest does not meet the threshold of significance such that would warrant a precinct.

50. The statement of significance notes that:

*Other precincts in Kew tell the story of the evolution of Kew as a residential suburb, but only the Goldthorns Hill and Environs Precinct, through its concentration of interwar housing stock in an eclectic range of house designs, has the ability to demonstrate the interwar part of the story of Kew's suburban growth and development so comprehensively. The scale of many of the houses, and the 'respectability' epitomised by their architectural styles and associated elements, remain as important evidence of these historical processes and themes in the growth and development of Kew.*

51. The comparative analysis has established that interwar development of Kew, including the Old English, Georgian, Mediterranean revival and Moderne styles, are demonstrated in other existing precincts.
52. With regard to the assessment against Criterion D and the issue of representativeness, the statement of significance notes that '*There are houses of individual significance within the Precinct, for their particularly high architectural quality and as fine and uncommon examples of their architectural style*' and '*The architectural significance of the Precinct is enhanced by the architectural quality and integrity of many of the contributory places. Many of the houses retain original associated built features, including some original garages...and early and original front fences*'.
53. Interwar dwellings are well represented throughout Boroondara, however, and while some of the dwellings within the proposed precinct have a higher level of interest (notably No. 20 & 26 Goldthorns Avenue, and 97 Argyle Road), they are broadly typical building types which contribute little that is unusual or unknown to an understanding of architectural forms within the municipality during the interwar period.
54. The comparative analysis discussion above points to other interwar precincts within both Kew and Boroondara more broadly, against which the Goldthorns Hill and Environs Precinct compares very poorly in terms of its intactness and the consistency of its streetscapes. The proposed HO803 cannot be seen to meet a

threshold of local significance as a significant example of an interwar precinct when these other examples are taken into account as benchmarks.

55. If a precinct was to be introduced, something that is not encouraged by this analysis, it is suggested that it focus on Goldthorns Avenue as the most intact and visually cohesive streetscape; northside nos. 1 to 25 and southside 16 to 26. The property at 97 Argyle Street, which is separated from this area, could be assessed for its potential to meet the threshold of significance for an individual heritage overlay.

## 8.0 Conclusion

56. Having regard for all of the above, it is my view that the proposed Heritage Overlay control for the Goldthorns Hill & Environs Precinct is not warranted. The identified HO803, while containing a few buildings of individual interest, is otherwise largely unremarkable, has a strong representation of altered or postwar buildings, is lacking interest in terms of its built form character and compares poorly against existing precincts within the local area and broader municipality. The central block of the precinct, which forms the core of the area, is particularly inconsistent in terms of the proportion of contributory to non-contributory places. The precinct does not meet a threshold level of significance in terms of comparison against other, existing precincts.

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Bryce Raworth has worked with issues relating to heritage and conservation since the mid-1980s, and has specialised in this area since establishing his own consultant practice in 1991. **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, Conservation • Heritage**, provides a range of heritage services, including the assessment of the significance of particular sites, preparation of conservation analyses and management plans, design and/or restoration advice for interventions into significant buildings, and detailed advice regarding the resolution of technical problems relating to deteriorating or damaged building fabric.

From 2004-2011 Raworth was a member of the Official Establishments Trust, which advises on the conservation and improvement of Admiralty House and Kirribilli House in Sydney and Government House and The Lodge in Canberra.

As a member of the former Historic Buildings Council in Victoria, sitting on the Council's permit, planning and community relations committees, Raworth has been involved with the registration and permit processes for many registered historic buildings. In 1996 he was appointed an alternate member of the new Heritage Council, the successor the Historic Buildings Council, and in 1998 was made a full member.

At present he provides regular advice to architects and private owners on technical, architectural and planning issues relative to the conservation and adaptation of historic buildings, and is occasionally called upon to provide expert advice before the VCAT. He is currently the conservation consultant for the cities of Kingston, Frankston and Stonnington.

With respect to historic precincts, the company has provided detailed advice towards the resolution of heritage issues along the Upfield railway line. The company is currently contributing to redevelopment plans for the former Coburg Prisons Complex (comprising Pentridge Prison and the Metropolitan Prison) and the former Albion Explosives Factory, Maribyrnong. In 1993 Bryce Raworth led a consultant team which reviewed the City of Melbourne's conservation data and controls for the CBD, and in 1997 **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd** revised the former City of South Melbourne Conservation Study with respect to the area within the present City of Melbourne. The firm is currently completing documentation for significant heritage places and areas in the City of Stonnington.

In recent years **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd** has also provided documentation and advice during construction on the restoration of a number of key registered and heritage overlay buildings, including the Ebenezer Mission church and outbuildings, Antwerp; the former MMTB Building, Bourke Street West, Melbourne; the former Martin & Pleasance Building, 178 Collins Street, Melbourne; the former Uniting Church, Howe Crescent, South Melbourne; Heide I & II, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Bulleen; Melbourne Grammar School, South Yarra; various guard towers and other buildings, Pentridge Prison, Coburg; and Coriyule Homestead, Curlewis.

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## BRYCE RAWORTH

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<b>Professional Status:</b>	Conservation Consultant and Architectural Historian
<b>Current Positions:</b>	Conservation consultant to the cities of Kingston, Frankston and Stonnington
<b>Organisation Membership:</b>	Australian Institute of Architects
<b>Professional Experience:</b>	<p>independent practice as conservation consultant and architectural historian from January 1991 (ongoing). Services include: identification and assessment of the significance of sites and complexes; preparation of guidelines regarding the safeguarding of significant sites; provision of technical, design and planning advice to architects, owners and government on issues relating to the conservation of sites of cultural significance; expert witness advice on conservation issues before the VCAT</p> <p>member, Historic Buildings Council (architectural historian's chair) 1993-1996; member, Heritage Council (architect's chair) 1998-2002</p> <p>conservation consultant to the cities of Brighton, Northcote and Sandringham (1989 only), Essendon, Hawthorn and Kew (1989-1994), Melbourne (1992-2009) and Prahran (1992-1994)</p> <p>established the Metropolitan Heritage Advisory Service on behalf of the Ministry for Planning &amp; Environment - this service was offered to the cities of Brighton, Essendon, Hawthorn, Kew, Northcote and Sandringham in 1989-90</p>
<b>Studies:</b>	<p>Certificate of Architectural Conservation, ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property at Rome), 1994</p> <p>Master of Architecture by thesis, University of Melbourne, 1993 (thesis: <i>A Question of Style: Domestic Architecture in Melbourne, 1919-1942</i>)</p> <p>B. Architecture (First Class Honours), University of Melbourne, 1986</p> <p>B. Arts (Second Class Honours, Division A), University of Melbourne, 1986</p>
<b>Committee Membership:</b>	<p>Twentieth Century Buildings Committee, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), 1990-1994 (Chairman 1992-1993)</p> <p>RAIA Jury, Conservation Category, 1995, 1996, 1998 and 2001 Awards (Chairman 1996 &amp; 1998)</p>
<b>Awarded:</b>	<p>Henry and Rachel Ackman Travelling Scholarship in Architecture, 1987-88</p> <p>JG Knight Award, conservation of Heide 1, Royal Australian Institute of Architects, Victorian Chapter, 2003</p> <p>Lachlan Macquarie Award for heritage (commendation), conservation of Heide 1, Royal Australian Institute of Architects National Award program, 2003</p> <p>Award for Heritage Architecture, conservation of Coriyule Homestead, Australian Institute of Architects, Victorian Chapter, 2015</p> <p>National Award for Heritage, conservation of Coriyule Homestead, Australian Institute of Architects, 2015</p>