

## Mitchell House (former)

Prepared by: GML Heritage

**Address:** 2 Salford Avenue BALWYN

<b>Name:</b> Mitchell House (former)	<b>Survey Date:</b> December 2021
<b>Place Type:</b> Residential	<b>Architect:</b> Taddeusz (Tad) Karasinski
<b>Grading:</b> Individually Significant	<b>Builder:</b> Angelo Sist
<b>Extent of Overlay:</b> To title boundaries	<b>Construction Date:</b> 1963-64



Figure 1 Detail of the 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 is a residential suburb situated 10 kilometres east of central Melbourne. To its south are Canterbury and Surrey Hills and to the north is Balwyn North, which is separated from Balwyn by Belmore Road. Deepdene, historically forming part of south-west Balwyn, became a separate suburb in 2008.

In the late 1940s, the Housing Commission of Victoria acquired land at the south-west corner of Balwyn and Belmore roads, which was developed into an estate of 200 detached and semi-detached red brick dwellings. Many of these houses were dedicated as public housing for war widows. A small group of shops at the corner of Hilda Street and Tivey Parade was also built to serve this new neighbourhood.

From 1947, Balwyn (and the new suburb of Balwyn North) were acknowledged not only as epicentres for the Small Homes Service but also for modern-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. Several new churches were also constructed, extended or rebuilt in the postwar period to provide for burgeoning congregations (Built Heritage 2015:12). This included new Catholic churches at Deepdene and Balwyn.

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 today is favoured by many new home-owners for access to Balwyn High School—a co-educational government secondary school with nearly 2000 students.

The period from the mid to late 1960s, when 2 Salford Avenue was built, is associated with what might be termed the latter phase of postwar homebuilding in Balwyn. The home building that occurred in Balwyn was representative of a broader boom in suburban residential development that had resumed after the lull caused by the economic downturn of the early 1960s. In Balwyn and (especially) Balwyn North, new and established subdivisions had already significantly filled out by that time, and, by the mid-1960s, choice vacant allotments were starting to become more difficult to obtain. By the early 1970s, there were very few left.

## **History**

The land at 2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn, 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.

Edgar Charles Bell, Shipping Clerk purchased one acre of Elgars Special Survey facing Balwyn Road in 1881. Bell built a large house set back off Balwyn Road named Vailma. Bell died in 1919 with the property being purchased by Ada Mylius in 1923.



Figure 2 Part of MMBW detail plan No 1998 dated 1927 showing original one acre allotment purchased by Edgar Bell in 1881 (outlined in red). Note that by this time Salford Avenue existed and was extended in 1962. (Source: SLV with GML overlay)

Bell's one acre allotment was subdivided into 2 lots in 1945 with lot 1 facing Balwyn Road being sold in 1945 and lot 2 facing Salford Avenue in 1950 to William Mackay (CT V7616 F047). Mackay sold his land to William and Doris Wachsmann in 1962 who in turn subdivided the land into four lots. George and Ellen Mitchell purchased lot 2 of this subdivision (subject site) in 1963.

The Mitchells commissioned Polish-born *emigre* architect Taddeusz (Tad) Karasinski to design their new house. In an interview with architectural historian Simon Reeves, Mrs Ellen Mitchell recalled that she and her husband both had an interest in modern architecture and design. Growing up in Berlin before migrating in 1955, she was keenly aware of postwar reconstruction in that city, and she wanted their new house in Balwyn to reflect 'German influences' – both the progressive open-planned flat-roofed houses of the Bauhaus as well as the more traditional vernacular architecture. (Mitchell pers. comm 2012.) As shown in the working drawings, dated May 1963, the new house satisfied both criteria: a modern flat roofed house on a C-shaped courtyard plan, with a street frontage incorporating a room with a steeply-gabled A-framed roof to evoke traditional German rural houses. While designated on the original plans as a study, the space was intended as a music room for George Mitchell, an amateur violinist and an admirer of classical music. The City of Camberwell issued a building permit on 11 September 1963 and the house was completed in August 1964. (BP 33716)

Just before completion, the house was published in the *Herald* property column, which drew attention to its unusual integration of features inside and out: tinted glazing, hand-carved timber screens, opaque Japanese sliding doors, and rough marble tiling to the refrigerator alcove. (*Herald*, 3 July 1964:20). A more extensive write-up followed in the *Australian Home Beautiful* in 1967, with a cover photograph showing the inside of the A-framed music room. The central courtyard was landscaped by

landscape designer Ellis Stones and included an informal pond with flagstone surround, a creeper-clad trellis, pergola and 'strategically placed floodlights'. (*Australian Home Beautiful*, September 1967:18-21)

The Mitchells undertook two phases of later addition to accommodate their growing family. In 1967, a small rear wing was added to provide a rumpus room and third bedroom, and this was further extended in 1974 with a fourth bedroom, enlarged rumpus room and cellar. These extensions were designed by a drafting service. An inground pool and detached cabana room were also added at this time. The Mitchells owned the property until 2008 when they sold it. It was resold in 2021 (CT V8967 F413).

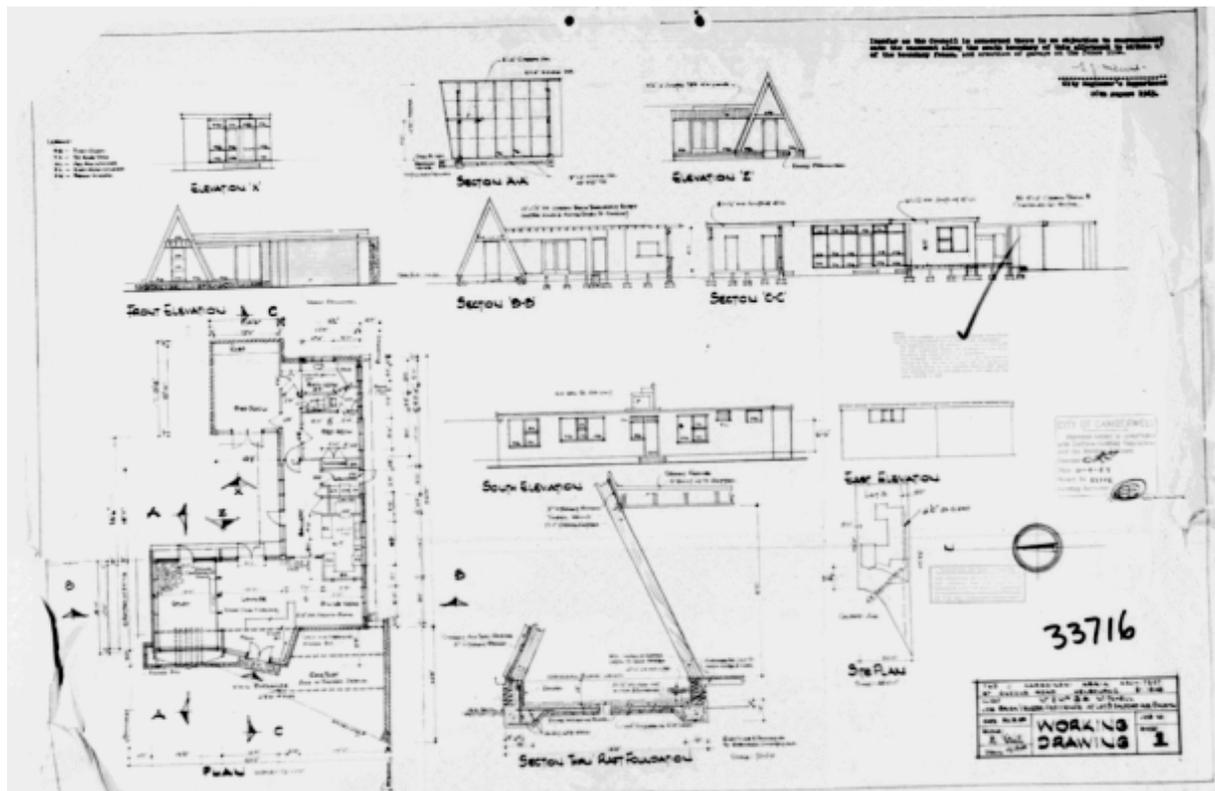


Figure 3 Original working drawing for house at 2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn designed by Taddeusz (Tad) Karasinski. (Source: BP33716)

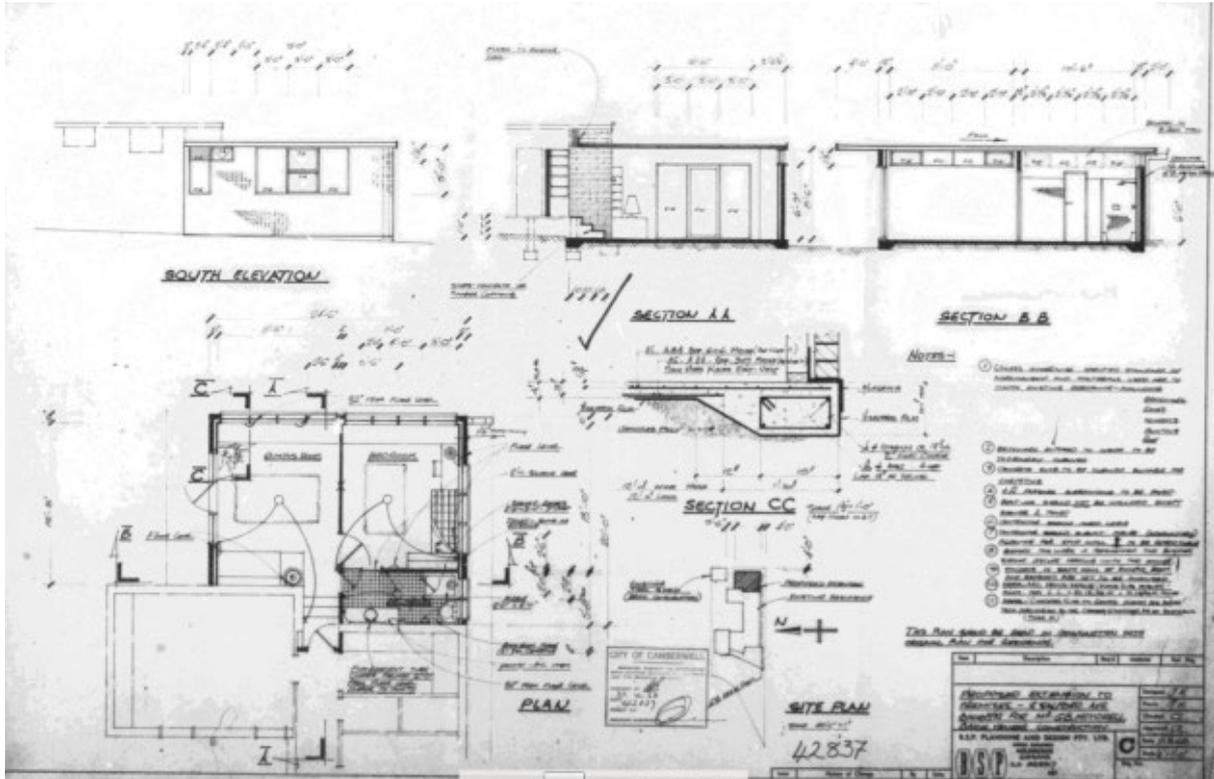


Figure 4 Working drawing of extension undertaken in 1967 adding a bedroom and rumpus room to the rear of the house. (Source: BP 42837)

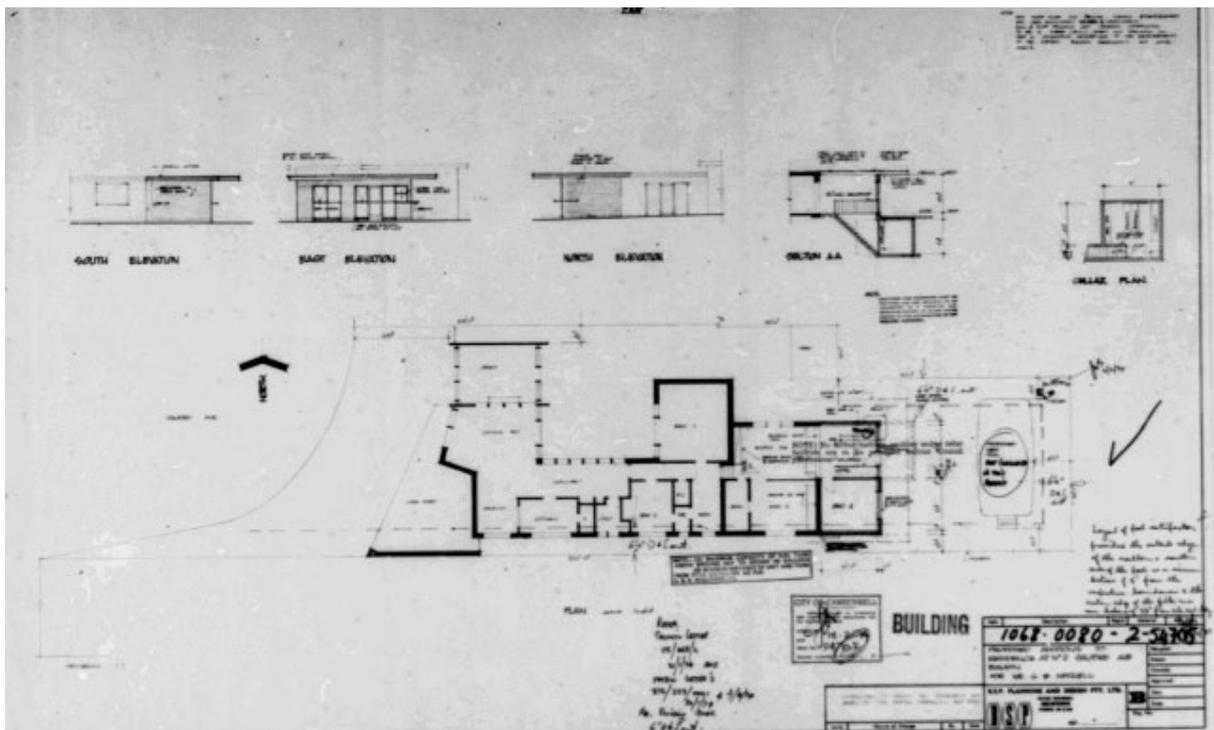


Figure 5 Working drawing showing addition of a bedroom, cellar and extension to rumpus room in 1974 at the rear of the house. (Source: BP 54705)



## **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 L'viv, 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 Lukst, also in Ukraine), and was promoted to Director of the Technical Board for the City of Luck (Built Heritage Pty Ltd).

Following the Second World War, Karasinski moved to Germany and opened 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, remaining there for two and a half years. In 1954 he undertook a short stint with prominent architects Godfrey, Spowers, Hughes, Mewton & 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 Pty Ltd)

## **Description**

The house at 2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn is a single-storey brick house designed on a courtyard plan, primarily flat roofed except for an integrated room at the far left (north) end of the street frontage, which has a steep A-framed roof. Originally C-shaped in plan, the house was extended at the rear by the original owners (in two phases of addition in 1967 and 1974) and, as a result, now has a F-shaped footprint. The house occupies an irregular shaped allotment that has parallel side boundaries and an acutely angled street boundary. This geometry is echoed in the facade, which incorporates a central angled bay containing the front door, and a flat-roofed double carport that is wedge-shaped in plan. Most of this facade is stark and windowless, realised in dark brown brickwork with only one narrow but full-height window alongside the front door. The adjacent A-framed section, however, is fully glazed, with broad raked eaves and a transom enlivened with a row of projecting (but entirely decorative) timber beams that align with the fascia of the flat roof. Internally the walls to the courtyard are all fully glazed with window walls that are regularly divided with timber mullions.

The double carport is approached by a curving crazy-paved driveway. The front garden, which extends to an acute angle in the south-west corner of the block, is otherwise densely landscaped with large spreading shrubs and small trees. It is not known whether evidence of the original 1960s landscaping to the central courtyard by landscape designer Ellis Stones remains.

## **Integrity**

2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn is highly intact with very few changes visible to original or early fabric. The house retains its original built form, built around an internal courtyard, with a flat roof except for an integrated room at the far left (north) end of the street frontage, which has a steep A-framed roof. The house also retains its walls of brown brick, original pattern of fenestrations and door openings with timber joinery and open carport that is angled to follow the line of the street.



The rear additions to the house made in 1967 and 1974 have been sympathetically designed and are not visible from the street. They do not detract from the overall integrity of the house. While it is unclear if any of the Ellis Stone landscaping survives, the use of crazy paving (both externally and internally) is consistent with landscape trends at the time and enhances the setting of the place.

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.

Landscaping adopted a distinct aesthetic relationship to architecture in this period with house design increasingly being informed by the topographic setting. Many modern houses were designed as integral components of the landscape; for example, on platforms terraced in relationship to a sloping site. This created a sense of living within the landscape rather than being removed from it (Goad 2002:253).

Departing from the traditional concept of the house as an isolated object bound by a polished front garden and more utilitarian backyard, the postwar period started to see many suburban gardens take on a less cultivated appearance. Changes to established landscaping techniques included the loss of the boundary fencing and greater tendency to leave plantings in their natural shape. Yards became zoned for outdoor living, largely focusing on comfort and leisure (Goad 2002:253).

Despite the acclaim that Tad Karasinski achieved for his architectural career in Europe in the 1930s and '40s, little is known of his later private practice in Melbourne. Variouslly employed by the Department of Works, A V Jennings and by architectural firm Godfrey, Spowers, Hughes, Mewton & Lobb, he seems to have undertaken little or no private work until 1960. In 1958 he designed a house for himself at 13 Banksia Street, Beaumaris (demolished 2015), expressed in a pure European modernist mode: an elevated flat-roofed box with full-height windows and a projecting stone-clad feature wall. He designed some early houses on the Trentwood Estate at Balwyn North (1958-59),

while employed as design architect for A V Jennings. The best example, at 17 Trentwood Avenue (1958-59), assessed as significant in this study, has much in common with Karasinski's own house in Beaumaris. Apart from the Mitchell House, only one other Karasinski commission has been identified in Balwyn/Balwyn North – a large two-storey brick dwelling at 6 Belle Vue Road, Balwyn North (1961), which was a residence for Angelo Sist, the builder who subsequently erected the Mitchell House. The dwelling at 6 Belle Vue Road, Balwyn North is strikingly different in conception, having a rectilinear expression, large multipaned window bays and a projecting front wing (with balcony) that forms a *porte-cochere* at the lower level.

The use of the A-framed form in the Mitchell House, which was a special request from Mrs Ellen Mitchell to pay homage to her German background, is highly unusual in a suburban context. The motif first appeared in Victoria in the later 1950s, when it was used for several churches including the chapel at Geelong Grammar's Timbertop campus (Buchan, Laird & Buchan, 1959). By the early 1960s, A-frames had been adapted for residential architecture, albeit almost exclusively in the arena of holiday houses. Over the next decade, A-framed holiday houses (variously designed by architects, builders, drafting companies, project housing firms or owners themselves) had proliferated across many parts of regional Victoria, notably the Mornington Peninsula and other seaside resorts along the south-western and south-eastern coastline. So strongly associated with seasonal accommodation, A-framed houses were much rarer within the metropolitan area. While examples could sometimes be found on the outer fringe (e.g. Croydon, Eltham and Warrandyte), they were virtually unknown in the more traditional inner suburbs. No other examples have been identified in Balwyn/Balwyn North, nor in the broader City of Boroondara. Amongst the extremely few examples recorded elsewhere in the metropolitan area are an artist's house and studio at 20 Rose Avenue, Glen Waverley (Chancellor & Patrick, 1959, demolished 2014) and prototypical A-framed project house at 922 Nepean Highway, Moorabbin (Peter Hooks, 1965) also demolished.

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



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

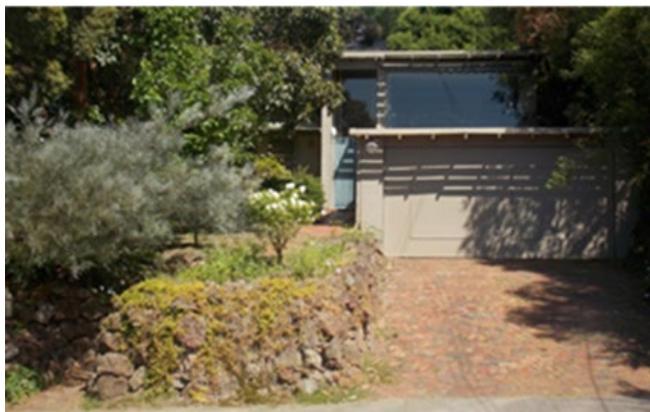


Figure 8 12-14 Tannock Street, Balwyn North designed by Robin Boyd in 1948-49 with alterations by Boyd in 1959 and 1971 (HO928) (Source: Built Heritage 2020)

'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.

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.

There are also several postwar houses on the Heritage Overlay in the broader Boroondara context that are comparable to 2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn. Examples include:



Figure 9 '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 10 '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)

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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 11 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 12 Guss residence, 18 Yarra Street, Kew designed by McGlashan & Everist in 1961 (Significant within HO530) (Source: Hermes)

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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.

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Figure 13 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 14 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 technical and associative 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

Other than the A-framed music room, the house at 2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn exhibits key elements of the postwar Modernist housing typology. It compares to the earlier (1947) 'Robin Boyd House I' (VHR H0879; HO116) which is widely recognised as the prototype for postwar modern homes, for its 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 of 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 built in 1949 (HO616), 43 Kireep Road, Balwyn, built in 1952 (HO177) and 12-14 Tannock Street, Balwyn North, built in 1948-49, 1959, 1971 (HO928).

2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn demonstrates detailing typically found in other architect designed postwar Modernist houses; a simplicity of structure and a sparseness of detail, rectilinear planning, low box-like form with (in large part) a horizontal emphasis, a flat roof, simple unadorned planar wall surfaces, large walls of glazing that connect the interior with the exterior, integrated carport, recessed entry and a landscape design for the courtyard and driveway that was integral to the design of the house (although the Ellis Stones courtyard may or may not still remain). In this way it is directly comparable to the works of other notable Modernist architects, including Grigore Hirsch, CONARG Architects (118 Glen Iris Road, Glen Iris, 1954-55 HO897), Ernest Milston (6 Reeves Court, Kew HO822), McGlashan & Everist (18 Yarra Street, Kew, 1961 - significant in HO530) and Hayden & Associates (Cukierman Residence, 29 Leura Grove, Hawthorn East - HO857).

2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn stands out as an unusual and provocative modernist house which, at the request of its German born owner, successfully integrates the clean lines of Modernist design derived from the Bauhaus (evidenced by the flat-roof and courtyard) and the traditional vernacular housing of regional and alpine areas of Germany (shown by the A-framed roof).

## **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).*

2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn, 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 1963-64 to a design by Polish-born émigré architect Tadeusz Karasinski, the house displays a highly innovative and provocative design which seamlessly integrates an A-framed music room into the principal façade of what is otherwise a finely executed Modernist house. The house exemplifies the high concentration of architect designed modernist houses built in Balwyn and North Balwyn during the 1950s and 1960s.

*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).*

2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn is of aesthetic significance as one of the more remarkable and striking 1960s houses in Boroondara. Commissioned by a client of German origin, it was designed (at the client's request) to reflect 'German influences' – both the prevailing Modernist style derived from the Bauhaus (shown by the flat-roof, broad expanse of brickwork, extensive glazing and courtyard plan) and traditional vernacular housing of regional and alpine areas (shown by the A-framed roof). The unusual brief resulted in a confidently realised design by architect Tad Karasinski, who had studied and worked as an architect in Germany in the 1940s. With its unusual facade skilfully integrating a low flat roof with angled carport and the prominent A-frame at one end, the house is an 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?

The former Mitchell House at 2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn, designed by Polish *émigré* architect Taddeusz "Tad" Karasinski in 1963-64, is significant.

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

- original built form including original C-shaped footprint
- internal courtyard
- flat roof with integrated A-framed roof
- walls of brown brick
- original pattern of fenestrations, door openings and timber window joinery
- open carport that is angled to follow the line of the street.

While it is unclear, if any of the Ellis Stone landscaping to the central courtyard survives, the use of crazy paving (both externally and internally) is consistent with landscape trends at the time and enhances the setting of the place.

The rear additions to the house made in 1967 and 1974 are not significant.

### How is it significant?

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

### Why is it significant?

2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn, 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 1963-64 to a design by Polish-born *émigré* architect Taddeusz Karasinski, the house displays a highly innovative and provocative design which seamlessly integrates an A-framed music room into the principal façade of what is otherwise a finely executed Modernist house. The house exemplifies the high concentration of architect designed modernist houses built in Balwyn and North Balwyn during the 1950s and 1960s. (Criterion A)

2 Salford Avenue, Balwyn is of aesthetic significance as one of the more remarkable and striking 1960s houses in Boroondara. Commissioned by a client of German origin, it was designed (at the client's request) to reflect 'German influences' – both the prevailing Modernist style derived from the Bauhaus (shown by the flat-roof, broad expanse of brickwork, extensive glazing and courtyard plan) and traditional vernacular housing of regional and alpine areas (shown by the A-framed roof). The unusual brief resulted in a confidently realised design by architect Tad Karasinski, who had studied and worked as an architect in Germany in the 1940s. With its unusual facade skilfully integrating a low

flat roof with angled carport and the prominent A-frame at one end, the house is an 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:

<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>Solar energy system controls apply?</b>	
<i>Is a permit required for Solar energy systems?</i>	Yes
<b>Outbuildings and fences exemptions</b>	
<i>Are there outbuildings or fences which are not exempt from notice and review?</i>	No
<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 2012.



## References

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