City of
STONNINGTON

Wynn House

Prepared by: GJM Heritage (March 2025)

Address: 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra

Name:	Wynn House	**Survey Date:**	July 2024
Place Type:	Residential	**Architect/Designer:**	Bernard Evans & Associates
Grading:	Significant (HO796)	**Builder:**	E O Lundgren & Son
Extent of the Overlay:	To property boundaries	**Construction Date(s):**	1963



Figure 1. 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra (GJM Heritage, July 2024)

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra, constructed 1963.

Elements that contribute to the significance of the place include:

- Single-storey brick house in a post-war Modernist style

- Pale brick construction
- Site-specific orientation with U-shaped plan and north-facing internal courtyard
- Low rectilinear form with horizontal emphasis
- Low-pitched slate-clad hipped roof terminating at north-facing gable ends
- Prominent integrated double carport formed by broad gable which extends to the front of the site, supported on a single undressed bush pole
- Asymmetrical principal elevation with dividing wing wall
- Recessed main entry through carport
- Prominent broad chimney with floating concrete crown
- Fully glazed timber-framed sliding doors to courtyard
- Bands of timber-framed highlight windows
- Timber slat detailing to entry doors and window screening
- No front boundary fence.

How is it significant?

Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra is of local historical, representative (architectural) and aesthetic significance to the City of Stonnington.

Why is it significant?

Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra, designed by noted architectural firm Bernard Evans & Associates in 1963, has a strong association with post-war suburban development in the City of Stonnington, when a number of architect-designed Modernist houses were constructed across the municipality for those with an appreciation of Modernist architecture and its design principles. The affluent suburbs of South Yarra and Toorak were particularly attractive to wealthy residents and architects interested in the Modern aesthetic and refined examples of Post-War Modernist houses replaced existing houses in well-established streetscapes. As an architect-designed Modernist house constructed in the post-war period, Wynn House clearly demonstrates this important phase in the development of the City of Stonnington (Criterion A).

Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra is a fine and highly intact representative example of a Modernist house constructed in the post-war period. It displays the principal characteristics of Modernist housing of the post-war period, including site-specific orientation around an internal courtyard to maximise the northern aspect, rectangular planning, low-pitched roof which extends to form a prominent integrated carport, wing wall and recessed main entry, prominent broad chimney and bands of timber-framed highlight windows and glazed doors to the northern courtyard (Criterion D).

Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra is of aesthetic significance as an assured and finely executed example of a house constructed in the Modernist style of the post-war period. Designed by noted architect Bernard Evan, the house is characterised by its courtyard form, its simple palette of materials, its use of an undressed bush pole to support the carport roof, and interpretation of Japanese architectural forms and detailing. Its U-shaped plan form creates a substantial private landscaped courtyard that occupies the centre of the property. The Wynn House demonstrates the key aesthetic qualities of Modernist design in the City of Stonnington to a very high standard (Criterion E).

Historical Context

This place is associated with the following historic theme(s) taken from the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History* (2009):

8 Building suburbs

- 8.4.2 Functional, eccentric, and theatrical – experimentation and innovation in architecture

It is also associated with the following historic theme(s) taken from the *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History: Post-war Addendum (Draft, December 2024)*:

6.0 Building towns, cities and the garden state

- 6.7.1 Post-war houses as a symbol of wealth, status and fashion
- 6.7.2 Functional, eccentric, theatrical: post-war experimentation and innovation

Contextual History

Modernism in Melbourne

The post-World War II period was intrinsically linked to the concepts of progress, prosperity and expansion. This notion of progress became increasingly associated with a Modern aesthetic in art, architecture and design. European and American influences on architecture in particular became an optimistic expression of post-war recovery – a vision of progress towards a brighter and better future (Lewi & Goad 2019:22-24).

With its roots in the early twentieth century, Modernism in Melbourne emerged with force in the post-war period aided by overseas and local publications, post-war migration and 'rite of passage' overseas travel by young architects. Rejecting historic styles and applied decoration, architects and designers were instead inspired by a broad range of trends from overseas, including the United States, Europe, Japan and Great Britain, which embraced the principles of functionalism, simplicity and rationality.

Graphic design, popular culture, art and photography contributed to the promotion, dissemination and reception of Modernism, while publications such as *Australia Home Beautiful* and *Architecture and Arts* and weekly articles by leading Modernist architects, Robin Boyd and Neil Clerehan, in *The Age* played a key role in facilitating the development of a new kind of architecture in Australia (Lewi & Goad 2019:22).

The Modernist house type

> *'The modern home was to be seen as the culmination of the latest in modern ideas of planning, detail and finish and the sources for these elements were to be utterly contemporary and progressive' (Goad 1992:5/109).*

As noted by Goad in his 1992 doctoral thesis, *The Modern House in Melbourne 1945-1975,* 'ideas of progress, modernity, contemporary social and living patterns were to be seen to be embodied in the architect-designed home' (Goad 1992:5/9) and Modernist architecture became 'the hallmark of good taste and aesthetic refinement' for the 'discerning wealthy client' (Goad 1992:5/106).

The Modernist house type offered a radical alternative to the conventional post-war housing type. Driven by young architects and designers, they shunned the conservative house forms and seized the opportunity to address housing demands in a contemporary manner. Architects and designers experimented with lightweight materials and simple construction methods, and utilised materials such as brick, timber, steel, concrete and glass to design buildings that were responsive to their setting, functional and characterised by unadorned surfaces, devoid of the applied decoration of earlier architectural styles

The Modernist house type, with its flat or low-pitched roof, simple rectilinear forms and generous glazing, flourished in Melbourne during the 1950s and 1960s, and came to embody the forward-looking optimism of the post-war era. Modernist principles continued to influence housing design through to the present day.

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Modernist architecture in the City of Stonnington

The City of Stonnington has a strong tradition of patronage of leading architects by wealthy residents (Context 2006:134). This culture of patronage has existed from the earliest times of settlement and provided architects with the resources to explore ideas and innovation in design and construction (Context 2006:134-138). This continued in the post-war period with a new generation of architects and designers – including Robin Boyd, Neil Clerehan, Bernard Joyce and Roy Grounds – designing houses in the former municipalities of Prahran and Malvern in the 1950s through to the mid-1970s. Influenced by local and overseas architectural trends, these architects embraced the functional ideals and aesthetics of Modernism.

The affluent suburbs of Toorak and South Yarra attracted both Modernist architects and residents with an interest in Modernist design, and examples of post-war Modernist houses replaced existing houses in well-established streetscapes. Architects including Roy Grounds, Robin Boyd and Neil Clerehan contributed to the growing number of Modernist houses in the municipality, designing residences for themselves in these suburbs (Grounds House, 24 Hill House, Toorak – VHR H1963 & HO60 City of Stonnington; Robin Boyd House II, 290 Walsh Street, South Yarra – VHR H2105 & HO453 City of Melbourne); Neil Clerehan House II, 90 Walsh Street, South Yarra – HO443 Melbourne Planning Scheme); while progressive clients commissioned well-known, influential architects including Yuncken Freeman Bros, Griffiths & Simpson and Bernard Joyce in addition to those listed above to design innovative Modernist residences to respond to the often challenging topography or otherwise constrained nature of these inner-city sites (Extent Heritage 2023:5).

Place History

The house at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra was constructed in 1963 to a design by architects, Bernard Evans & Associates for David and Patricia Wynn (*The Age,* 27 July 1963:33; Stonnington Council Building Permit Files). The house was constructed by builder, E O Lundgren & Son (Stonnington Council Building Permit Files). The single-storey brick house, comprising nine rooms, a basement and carport, replaced a large 10-roomed brick villa which had previously been on the site (encompassing both 82 and 84 Caroline Street; Figure 2, *Argus,* 22 March 1954:12). The site was advertised as a 'premier hilltop position' on a 'tree lined street' in 1960 (*The Age,* 26 May 1960:2)

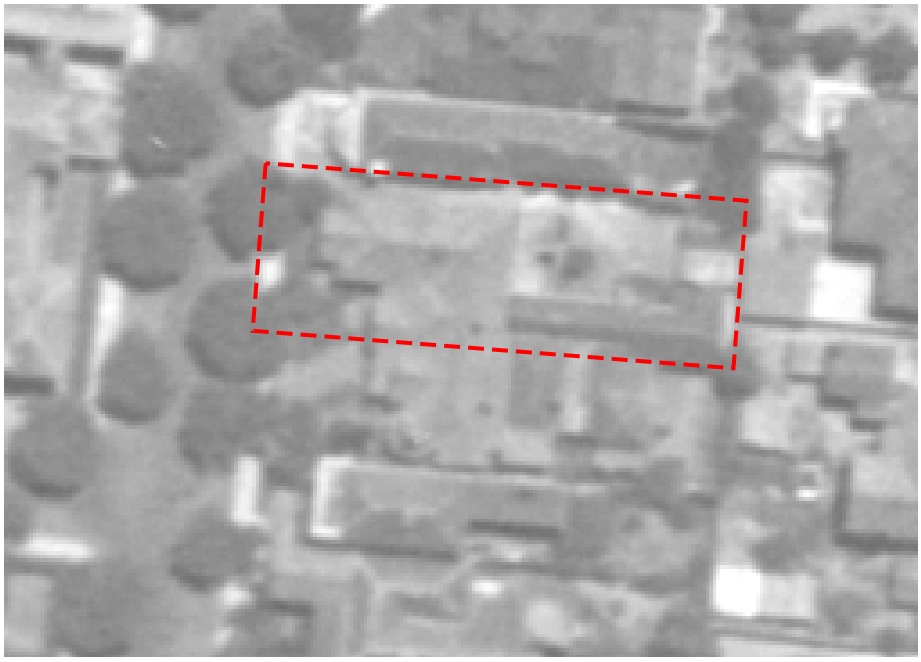


Figure 2. Aerial photograph showing the previous house at 84 Caroline Street prior to demolition, 1945 (Source: Landata Victoria)

Evans called for tenders for the erection of the single-storey brick residence in July 1963 (*The Age,* 27 July 1963:33), to be designed in a Modernist architectural style. Evans' design for 84 Caroline Street comprised a shallow U-shaped plan designed around a large courtyard, accommodating four bedrooms, family room, a study, kitchen, dining and living room. Expansive glazing to the northern elevation was designed to maximise light, and the street elevation incorporated an integrated carport supported on a single undressed bush pole (Stonnington Council Building Permit Files, Figures 3 to 5).

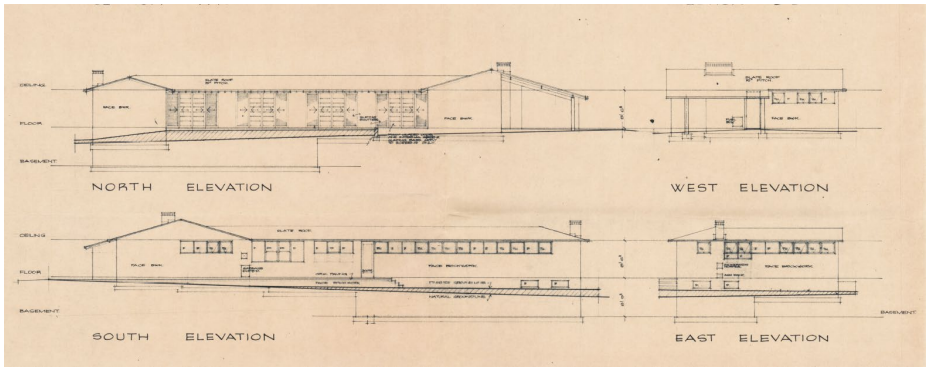


Figure 3. Working drawings for Wynn House, 84 Caroline Street, showing the proposed elevations, 1963 (Source: Stonnington Council Building Permit Files)

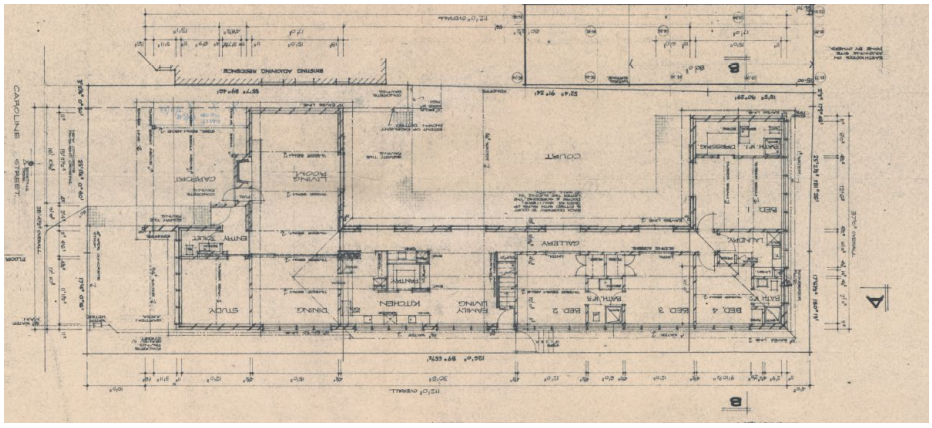


Figure 4. Working drawing for the Wynn House, 84 Caroline Street, showing the proposed floor plan, 1963 (Source: Stonnington Council Building Permit Files)



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Figure 5. The carport and front elevation of Wynn House during construction, 1964 (Source: State Library of Victoria)

The property was advertised for sale in 1974, at which time it was described as a ‘compact modern architect designed 10-roomed home’ (*The Age,* 31 January 1974:19). The sales notice also highlighted the ‘delightful Japanese courtyard garden on which ‘all rooms opened on to’ (*The Age,* 31 January 1974:19). The property was sold to Frank and Sarah Steen in 1974. The house remains highly intact to its original design.



Figure 6. Aerial photograph showing the footprint of Wynn House, 84 Caroline Street, 1974 (Source: Landata Victoria)

Sir Bernard Evans, architect

Sir Bernard Evans was born in 1905 in Manchester, England. In 1913, his family migrated to Melbourne, settling in St Kilda where Evans attended primary school. After completing his secondary education at Prahran Technical School, he studied architectural drawing at the Working Men’s College at night while working for his father and as a designer and builder for Albert Weston, a timber merchant in Box Hill. In 1928, Evans established Hampton Timber & Hardware Pty Ltd and the Premier Building Co Pty Ltd.

By the late 1920s, Evans was building speculative villas in Brighton and Hampton. He also designed and oversaw the construction of houses for the State Savings Bank of Victoria and hospitals for the Victorian Bush Nursing Association. He registered as an architect in Victoria in 1940 following several years in England. At this time, Evans was appointed to the Australian Imperial Force as a temporary Lieutenant Colonel. He served in the Middle East in the defence of Tobruk, Libya and in the Battle of El Alamein, Egypt during World War II.

Evans returned to civilian life in the mid-1940s. He formed Bernard Evans & Associates, which became one of Victoria’s largest architectural firms, developing shared-ownership buildings and ‘own-your-own’ flats. The firm designed several large office buildings in Melbourne, including AMPOL House, Carlton (HO55 Melbourne Planning Scheme), the CRA Building, 95 Collins Street, Melbourne (1962, demolished 1988) and the Former Legal and General House at 375-383 Collins Street, Melbourne (1967), as well as Sheridan Close apartment block (1950-53, HO6 Melbourne Planning Scheme) and several office buildings in St Kilda Road. The firm was also responsible for several large suburban subdivisions, including Witchwood Close, South Yarra, and industrial estates at Moorabbin.

Evans was also a Melbourne City Councillor and was twice elected as Lord Mayor (1959 and 1960). He was also a Commissioner of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works from 1955 to 1976, during which time he advocated for taller buildings, greater open space and more people living in the city. He campaigned heavily for a city square and encouraged the construction of an underground railway and an international airport for Melbourne.

Evans was knighted in 1962. In 1970 it came to light that Evans and companies he controlled benefitted from Council decisions he was involved in making in relation to the Westgate Bridge and City Loop. He

resigned from his firm – by then known as Bernard Evans, Murphy, Berg & Hocking Pty Ltd – in 1971 before the firm disbanded in 1973. He died in 1981 in Toorak, Melbourne.

Description

Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra is located on the east side of Caroline Street, north-east of the main intersection of Punt Road and Toorak Road. The rectangular site is accessed via at-grade crossovers to the north and south of a large street tree, with a carport located at the north side. The house is built close to the rear (east) and side boundaries and has a basement at the rear south-east corner.

Constructed of pale face brickwork, the single-storey house has a U-shaped plan creating a north-facing secluded Japanese-influenced courtyard. A low-pitched, slate-clad, hipped roof terminates at two north-facing gable ends, with the street-facing plane of the western gable extending to form a double carport at the front of the site, supported on a single undressed bush pole. A wing wall divides the asymmetrical principal elevation into two parts with carport, recessed main entry and prominent broad chimney to the north and recessed wall with highlight windows behind a small garden to the south. Bands of timber-framed highlight windows line the south and east elevations with glazed timber-framed sliding doors providing access to the northern courtyard. Slatted timber doors and screens draw on traditional Japanese domestic architecture.

Key Features:

- Single-storey brick house in a post-war Modernist style
- Pale brick construction
- Site-specific orientation with U-shaped plan and north-facing internal courtyard
- Low rectilinear form with horizontal emphasis
- Low-pitched slate-clad hipped roof terminating at north-facing gable ends
- Prominent integrated double carport formed by broad gable which extends to the front of the site, supported on a single undressed bush pole
- Asymmetrical principal elevation with dividing wing wall
- Recessed main entry through carport
- Prominent broad chimney with floating concrete crown
- Fully glazed timber-framed sliding doors to courtyard
- Bands of timber-framed highlight windows
- Timber slat detailing to entry doors and window screening
- No front boundary fence.



Figure 7. Aerial photograph of Wynn House, 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra (Source: Nearmap, dated 9 October 2024)



Figure 8. Front elevation to Caroline Street (Source: GJM Heritage, June 2024)



Figure 9. Integrated carport with undressed bush timber post to Caroline Street (Source: GJM Heritage, June 2024)



Figure 10. Main entrance and integrated carport (Source: GJM Heritage, June 2024)



Figure 11. Side (southern) elevation (Source: GJM Heritage, June 2024)

Intactness and Integrity

Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra retains a high degree of intactness in fabric, form and detail to its period of construction. The house remains of high integrity and retains the ability to be understood and appreciated as an example of a 1960s post-war Modernist house.

Comparative Analysis

In the immediate post-war period through to the mid-1970s, a number of Modernist houses were constructed in South Yarra and the City of Stonnington more broadly for those with an appreciation of Modernist architecture and its design principles. Influential architects Roy Grounds, Robin Boyd and Neil Clerehan designed residences for themselves in these suburbs (Grounds House, 24 Hill House, Toorak – VHR H1963 & HO60 City of Stonnington; Robin Boyd House II, 290 Walsh Street, South Yarra – VHR H2105 & HO453 City of Melbourne; Neil Clerehan House II, 90 Domain Road, South Yarra – HO443 Melbourne Planning Scheme); and progressive clients commissioned well-known, influential architects to design Modernist residences in these prestigious inner-city suburbs.

These houses were often designed with a simplicity of structure, a sparseness of detail and an eye on functionality. Plans were typically rectangular, and forms were often rectilinear with a horizontal emphasis. Flat, low-pitched or chamfered roofs were clad with lightweight sheeting and walls were typically timber-framed and clad with timber, cement sheet or brick. Later (late 1960s-70s) examples were also of solid, concrete block masonry construction. Timber-framed glazing included bands of highlight windows and full-height window-walls to maximise sun penetration and to provide visual and physical connection with the outdoors.

Only a small number of Post-War Modernist homes are included in – or are proposed for inclusion in – the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme on an individual basis. These include:

Richardson House, 10 Blackfriars Close, Toorak, 1955 Robin Boyd (HO360)

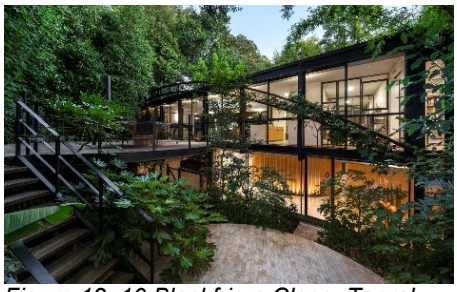


Figure 12. 10 Blackfriars Close, Toorak (Source: Domain.com.au)

35 Larnook Street, Prahran, 1959 Bernard Slawik (HO645)



Figure 13. 35 Larnook Street, Prahran (Source: Stonnington Planning Scheme)

Selwyn House II, 3 Glendye Court, Toorak, 1967 Holgar & Holgar (proposed for the Heritage Overlay as HO732)



Figure 14. 3 Glendye Court, Toorak (Source: Extent Heritage, 2021)

Lasker House, 23 Linlithgow Road, Toorak, 1970 Holgar & Holgar (Interim HO696)



Figure 15. 23 Linlithgow Road, Toorak (Source: Extent Heritage, 2021)

Gelbart House, 5 Heyington Place, 1971-72 Holgar & Holgar (Interim HO698)



Figure 16. 5 Heyington Place, Toorak (Source: Google Streetview)

Hallows House, 184 Kooyong Road, Toorak, 1975 Guildford Bell (Interim HO702)



Figure 17. 184 Kooyong Road, Toorak (Source: Extent Heritage, 2021)

Shere, 1 Theodore Court, Toorak, c1958 Roy Grounds (Interim HO699)



Figure 18. 1 Theodore Court, Toorak (Source: RealEstate.com)

Milne House, 1 Glenbervie Road, Toorak, 1970 Robin Boyd (Interim HO703)



Figure 19. 1 Glenbervie Road, Toorak (Source: Extent Heritage, 2021)

In addition to the above, two houses in the City of Stonnington – Grounds House, 24 Hill Street, Toorak (VHR H1963 & HO6) and Brett House, 3 Buddle Drive, Toorak (VHR H2396 & HO654) – have identified significance at the State-level and are included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). Grounds House is included in the VHR as 'one of the most celebrated works of modernist domestic architecture of the mid-20th century in Victoria' and as 'one of the best designs of the noted architect Roy Grounds'. Brett House, designed by Robin Boyd in 1954, is architecturally significant at the State-level as a notable example of a post-war Modernist residence and for its 'distinctive Modernist interpretation of the Georgian Revival home'.

Grounds House, 24 Hill Street, Toorak, 1953 Roy Grounds (VHR H1963 & HO6)



Figure 20. Grounds House, 24 Hill Street, Toorak (Source: Picark, https://pikark.com/en/)

Brett House, 3 Buddle Drive, Toorak, 1955 Robin Boyd (VHR H2396 & HO654)



Figure 21. Brett House, 3 Buddle Drive, Toorak (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

Like Wynn House, the above places were constructed in what is now the City of Stonnington in the post-war period. These houses exhibit a range of characteristics representative of Modernist housing in the 1950s to 1970s, including flat, low-pitched or chamfered roofs, sparseness of detail and ornamentation (with the exception of 33 Glendye Court and 5 Heyington Place which represent more exuberant examples of the Modernist style), integrated and prominent carports, expansive glazing to maximise northern light, and courtyards to maximise natural lighting and to provide a connection between the indoors and outdoors. Like the examples above, Wynn House retains a high degree of integrity to its period of construction and remains substantially intact to clearly demonstrate a range of the principal characteristics of the Modernist architectural style and to reflect its importance in the historical development of what is now the City of Stonnington.

Assessment Against Criteria

Criteria referred to in *Planning Practice Note No. 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 Stonnington's cultural or natural history (historical significance).*

Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra, designed by noted architecture firm Bernard Evans & Associates in 1963, has a strong association with post-war suburban development in the City of Stonnington, when a number of architect-designed Modernist houses were constructed across the municipality for those with an appreciation of Modernist architecture and its design principles. The affluent suburbs of South Yarra and Toorak were particularly attractive to wealthy residents and architects interested in the Modern aesthetic and refined examples of Post-War Modernist houses replaced existing houses in well-established streetscapes. As an architect-designed Modernist house constructed in the post-war period, Wynn House clearly demonstrates this important phase in the development of the City of Stonnington.

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

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Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra is a fine and highly intact representative example of a Modernist house constructed in the post-war period. It displays the principal characteristics of Modernist housing of the post-war period, including site-specific orientation around an internal courtyard to maximise the northern aspect, rectangular planning, low-pitched roof which extends to form a prominent integrated carport, wing wall and recessed main entry, prominent broad chimney and bands of timber-framed highlight windows and glazed doors to the northern courtyard.

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

Wynn House at 84 Caroline Street, South Yarra is of aesthetic significance as an assured and finely executed example of a house constructed in the Modernist style of the post-war period. Designed by noted architect Bernard Evan, the house is characterised by its courtyard form, its simple palette of materials, its use of an undressed bush pole to support the carport roof, and interpretation of Japanese architectural forms and detailing. Its U-shaped plan form creates a substantial private landscaped courtyard that occupies the centre of the property. The Wynn House demonstrates the key aesthetic qualities of Modernist design in the City of Stonnington to a very high standard.

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

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 cultural traditions (social significance).*

N/A

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

N/A

Grading and Recommendations

It is recommended that the place be removed from HO355 'Caroline Street Precinct' as it does not share the heritage values of the precinct. It is recommended that the property be included in an individual Heritage Overlay in the Stonnington Planning Scheme as a locally significant heritage place (HO796).

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

External paint controls *Is a permit required to paint an already painted surface?*	No
Internal alteration controls *Is a permit required for internal alterations?*	No
Tree controls *Is a permit required to remove a tree?*	No

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Solar energy system controls *Solar energy system controls apply?*	Yes
Outbuildings and fences exemptions *Are there outbuildings or fences which are not exempt from notice and review?*	No
Victorian Heritage Register *Is this place included on the Victorian Heritage Register?*	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted *Can a permit be granted to use for a use which would otherwise be prohibited?*	No
Aboriginal heritage place *Is the place an Aboriginal heritage place which is subject to the requirements of the* Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?	No
Incorporated Plan *Does an incorporated plan apply to the site?*	No

Extent of Overlay

To the property boundaries, as shown in Figure 22 below:



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References

Built Heritage, *Stonnington Thematic Environmental History: Post-war Addendum (Draft),* December 2024.

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Goad, Phillip, 'Modernism' in P Goad & J Willis, The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture, 2012.

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Google Streetview.

Nearmap.

Prahran Valuation Records.

Stonnington Council Building Permit Files.

State Library of Victoria, picture collection.

The Age.