

Collins House Statement of Significance

Heritage Place: 45 Bronte Street, Heidelberg

PS ref no: HO204



What is Significant?

Collins House at 45 Bronte Street, Heidelberg is significant. It was constructed in 1954 on the Adamson Estate, established during the late 19th century but which remained largely undeveloped until after the Second World War. It was likely designed by Robin Boyd for carpenter John Morgan Collins, who presumably constructed it, and his wife Joan Patricia Collins (*née* Fitzgerald).

The significant elements are the front (north) wing, attached west wing, the skillion roofs, soffit/s lined in slatted timber boards, walls clad in weatherboards and canted window wall to the front wing.

The front garage and bungalow located in the southwest corner are not significant.

How is it Significant?

Collins House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Banyule.

Why is it Significant?

Collins House is of historical significance for its likely connection with Robin Boyd, one of the foremost architects and design commentators of postwar Australia, when he was a principal of Grounds, Romberg and Boyd – Melbourne's leading architectural practice of the 1950s and early 1960s. *Collins House* is among the earliest examples of a boldly designed 'modern' postwar house in the municipality, which are particularly uncommon in this locale and provides a stark contrast from its contemporary neighbours. (Criterion A)

Collins House is aesthetically significant for being a largely intact and distinctive timber example of an early modernist house in the municipality. Its character is broadly indicative of progressive design currents in the mid-1950s, including some of Boyd's key interests in this phase, such as the bold articulation and clear volumetric expression achieved via the broad skillion roofs and expansive canted window, which is orientated to take in views. Such elements are evocative of the postwar modern movement, especially the Melbourne variant of the type. (Criterion E)

Primary source

Banyule Heritage Study 2020 (RBA Architects & Conservation Consultants)