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# House



House

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## Location

12 Forster Court PASCOE VALE SOUTH, MERRI-BEK CITY

## Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

## Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO591

## Heritage Listing

Merri-bek City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 12, 2023

### What is significant?

The house and landscaping at 12 Forster Court, Pascoe Vale South is significant. The form and materiality of the architect designed International Style house is significant, in particular the timber framed floor to ceiling glass, external unpainted Californian Redwood wall cladding, internal wall timber cladding, and the low-pitched flat roof with internal exposed beams. The landscape architect designed garden, originally designed in the Australiana theme, is significant.

### How is it significant?

The house is of local representative, aesthetic and associative significance. The landscaping is of local associative significance.

### Why is it significant?

The dwelling demonstrates principle characteristics of the postwar International style, in particular the floor to ceiling glass windows to maximise views of the garden, timber windows, external unpainted wall cladding, and internal wall cladding, and the low-pitched flat roof which cantilevers over the balcony. It is considered to be an intact and representative example of this style. (Criterion D)

The dwelling has aesthetic significance as an intact postwar International style house which has high quality features and design, in particular the flat roof which cantilevers over the balcony, windows, layout in relation to site landscaping, external Californian Redwood timber cladding and internal timber detailing. (Criterion E) The dwelling is associated with mid-century architect Peter Hooks, an English born architect who designed many Modernist dwellings in Melbourne. The site is also associated with mid-century landscape designer Ellis Stones, known as one of the founding figures of the Australian landscaping style. The landscaping has an Australian bush character, with several mature Eucalyptus plantings evident amongst other native plantings. (Criterion H)

Heritage Study/Consultant Moreland Heritage Nominations Study, Extent Heritage, 2022;

Construction dates 1964,

Architect/Designer Stones, Ellis, Public Works Department,

Hermes Number 206795

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

Although the subject site was not readily visible from Forster Court, a review of images of the building presented by realestate.com.au in 2015 shows that 12 Forster Court, Pascoe Vale South contains a two-storey mid-century postwar Modernist dwelling in the International style, as well as contributory landscaping. The dwelling is located on an irregularly shaped block.

The International style is a class of modernist architecture which is characterised by rectilinear forms, surfaces such as glass, metal and timber that have been stripped of ornamentation and decoration, open interior spaces, extensive use of glass to allow for views and vistas into the site surrounds, and visually weightless quality engineered by cantilever construction. With focus on creating views, the landscape setting of a dwelling of this style becomes an important feature to the meaning and character of the place.

The dwelling itself is rectangular in shape and has a flat roof. The building is clad in thin vertical timber slats in Californian Redwood. The dwelling has a large amount of floor to ceiling timber framed windows. These provide open views of the bush landscaping on site. A garage has been included on the ground floor level. Above the garage is a timber balcony. Key internal features include exposed timber rafters and several internal walls which are clad in thin vertical timber slats. The dwelling has not been extended since it was first constructed.

In 2015 the site was described by Docomomo:

Its natural timber exterior is vertically fixed Californian Redwood inspired by the forests of giant Sequoia sempervirens and the modernist architecture of 1950s California. It nestles into the slope and provides natural light and views from every room of a garden designed by renowned mid-century landscape designer Ellis Stones. The house is in completely original condition and the family is wishing to sell the property to someone who appreciates its history and modernist design, and who is able to continue the restoration of the garden. (Docomomo, 2015)

The property sits adjacent to, but below, a major road. Though, you would not know the road is there due to topography of the site and dense landscaping. The landscaping has an Australian bush character, with several mature Eucalyptus plantings evident amongst other native plantings. Views out of all windows at the site would take in this landscaping. As described above, this Australiana landscaping was originally designed by Ellis Stone (refer to history for more on Ellis Stones).

The property is connected to Forster Street via a gravel driveway lined with a stone retaining wall. The driveway contains a large amount of refuse.

There was a lack of visibility of the dwelling from Forster Court. While it is unclear what the current condition of the dwelling is, the driveway and entry leading up to a portion of the house which is visible appears very unmaintained. Based on this visible lack of maintenance, the dwelling likely has fair integrity overall, which is different from the high integrity attributed to the site in the 2015 images.

## **Integrity**

No alterations or additions have been identified for this property.

While the fieldwork did not allow for a comprehensive inspection of the property from the public domain, due to low visibility, 2015 images of the property available through realestate.com.au show that the site is likely to have high integrity overall. This has been used as a reference for the integrity grading.

## **Physical Conditions**

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*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*