

Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

RSTCA No: R078

Name of Place: Royal Australian Institute of Architects Headquarters

Other/Former Names:

Address/Location: 2a Mugga Way RED HILL ACT 2603

Block 1 Section 13 of Red Hill

Listing Status:	Registered	Other Heritage Listings:	
Date of Listing:	1989	Level of Significance:	National
Citation Revision No:	1	Category:	Educational
Citation Revision Date:	December 1990	Style:	Sydney Regional

Date of Design:	1967	Designer:	Bryce Mortlock of Ancher Mortlock Murray and Woolley Pty Ltd
Construction Period:	1968-70	Client/Owner/Lessee:	RAIA
Date of Additions:	1983	Builder:	Leighton Constructions

Statement of Significance

A significant example of the work of prominent Sydney architect Bryce Mortlock, then of the practice Ancher Mortlock Murray and Woolley Pty Ltd. The innovative design solution combines a house and offices with a low key domestic character, on a difficult island site. The gentle integration of roof forms and landscape berms conceals a beautifully detailed design, with wide overhangs and louvred windows for privacy, sun protection, and security; and the landscaped berms providing privacy and noise protection from the passing traffic. The building complements the surrounding environment, with a domestic scale which does not intrude on the surrounding residential character of the suburb. Its high standard of architectural design reflects the aspirations of the architectural community. The building is a fine example of the Sydney Regional Style of architecture.

Description

A single storey building combining a house and offices, with landscaped berms on two sides following the roof line. The entrance leads to a brick paved courtyard, where covered verandahs run past the house and offices. Sited on an island the design has little concern for the facade as presentation front. The house is planned around two separated circulation zones; the 'private' zone includes bedrooms, family room and kitchen; the 'visitor' zone comprises entrance hall, living room and dining room; and the study can be part of either zone. The ceiling in the main living area is raked, and a built-in side board with overhead shelving acts as a room divider.

The house looks onto small and large courts, with wide eave overhangs. An additional highlight provides light for the kitchen. The director's office provides a pivotal link between house and headquarters, which appear as a single building of domestic character, with the council chambers to the north-west and the general offices and local ACT Chapter office the south-west.

A louvred highlight provides additional light in the council room, and the raked ceiling gives great volume. Double doors lead to a landscaped court, accessible from the house. The building is of domestic construction, with load bearing bagged brick walls painted white. The gable and skillion roof forms are tiled in terracotta tiles, with timber lined ceiling and eaves. Windows and joinery are

oiled mountain ash throughout the building. The floors are brick paved and carpeted. Additions and alterations to the building are in keeping with the original design.

The house has recently been converted to additional office space and a meeting room.

Condition and Integrity

Excellent

Background/History

Analysis against the Criteria specified in Schedule 2 of the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991

(i) a place which demonstrates a high degree of technical and/or creative achievement, by showing qualities of innovation or departure or representing a new achievement of its time

Significant example of the work of Bryce Mortlock.

(ii) a place which exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group

(iii) a place which demonstrates a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function which is no longer practised, is in danger or being lost, or is of exceptional interest

(iv) a place which is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations

Innovative design solution combining offices and house, with domestic character on difficult island site.

(v) a place which is the only known or only comparatively intact example of its type

(vi) a place which is a notable example of a class of natural or cultural places or landscapes and which demonstrates the principal characteristics of that class

The building solves its functional and siting problems in a significant manner, with the creation of landscaped berms, and integration of house and offices.

(vii) a place which has strong or special associations with person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history

The quality of the building in terms of detailing and siting make an outstanding contribution to their environment.

(xi) a place which demonstrates a likelihood of providing information which will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site

Socially and historically important as the national headquarters of the RAIA.

References

Other Information Sources