

Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

RSTCA No: R019

Name of Place: Westridge House

Other/Former Names: Tudor House, Australian Forestry School Principal's Residence

Address/Location: Banks Street YARRALUMLA 2600
Block Section 4 of Yarralumla

Listing Status:	Registered	Other Heritage Listings:	
Date of Listing:	1984	Level of Significance:	Local
Citation Revision No:	1	Category:	Residential/ Governmental
Citation Revision Date:	August 1987	Style:	Arts and Crafts

Date of Design:		Designer:	Harold Desbrowe Annear
Construction Period:	1928	Client/Owner/Lessee:	CSIRO
Date of Additions:		Builder:	

Statement of Significance

An important residence as an example of the tempered eclecticism of one of Australia's notable architects of the early twentieth century. The house is an austere but finely proportioned residence which features innovative detailing. Annear has been acclaimed as a proto-functionalism although it seems more likely that he was an exponent of the Arts and Crafts style who was increasingly influenced by the abstract arts development in the early part of the century. The design of this house follows this style, drawing on vernacular Tudor architecture. It is also an uncommon example of the transitional period between Federation and the Modern Movement which was at a time of architectural diversity. The residence is of historical interest for its association with the development of the Australian Forestry School, in particular as the residence of its Principal.

Description

Annear's design for the Canberra residence of the Principal of the Australian Forestry School, makes some reference to the English Tudor vernacular in its half-timbered, jettied upper floor, the association of forestry possibly being in his mind. The way Annear balances the eccentric mass of the hipped roof with a gabled, dormer-like element is particularly successful. The half-timbering allows windows to vary in their spacing on the first floor, according to the need to light the rooms, without having an uncontrolled appearance. Window heights on both floors generally are low enough to provide height for the disappearing sashes, but where the function dictates, their height varies. This is a departure from the then current precepts of fenestration design, derived from Beaux-Arts and Georgian Revival thinking. The house features inventive details including the integral counter-balanced windows and flyscreens that slide into the wall cavities, and chimneys with side flues and a stepped form that helps to ventilate the building. The house is currently used by the CSIRO for offices (1987). The garage behind the house is included in the listing as a sympathetic part of the original design.

Condition and Integrity

The building is generally intact and in good condition. Also known as Tudor House.

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

(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

(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

(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

(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

References

Other Information Sources