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# Kennedy House



B5647 Kennedy House 13  
Fairview Ave Glen Waverley



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## Location

13 Fairview Avenue,, GLEN WAVERLEY VIC 3150 - Property No B5647

## Municipality

MONASH CITY

## Level of significance

State

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant? The Kennedy house, designed for the Kennedy family in 1963 by the Victorian architect, David Godsell, is located on a large corner block which slopes down gently to the north and has views to the east towards the Dandenong Ranges. The design, based on the geometric device of a series of semi-circles and arcs, uses a convex curve facing towards the north and east for the house and opposes this with a concave curving wall which faces south. This concave wall is partially buried when viewed from the south (main road), and encloses a sunken courtyard garden at the same lower level of the house. It provides privacy for the internal glazed walls of the living areas as well as a secure environment for young children. Full height windows in both the external and internal walls of the living area create a feeling of transparency and link the house to the spectacular garden in the north and the internal courtyard garden in the south.

The single storey house is built on a concrete slab and, along with the courtyard garden, it has been partially

hollowed out of the gentle slope. A long curving gallery of polished slate leads across the back of the living area and connects the kitchen/dining room/ study at one end with the bedrooms/bathrooms and laundry at the other. The Kliplok steel roof slopes slightly towards the internal arc of the curve and was originally designed to drain through hidden gutters and pipes. Wide projecting eaves help to regulate solar gain. All rooms are formed as segments of the semi- circle and all internal walls, radii, are straight. Natural finishes are used throughout: honey coloured brick work, Californian Redwood for doors, fittings and window frames, mountain ash ceilings, and polished slate on floors.

The roof extends to the west to form a large carport and a small workshop and completes the semi-circular plan. A large, mature garden, planted in the 1960s, surrounds the house, with spotted gums, casuarinas and other native shrubs and plants.

How is it significant? The Kennedy house is significant for aesthetic and architectural reasons at a State level. Why is it significant? Aesthetically the Kennedy house, like Godsell's own house in Beaumaris, achieves a perfect "organic" relationship with its site. This harmonious relationship with the landscape is created by the curving design, the low profile and the use of naturally finished timber, soft toned bricks and reflective glazing. It encompasses many of the advanced design values of the 1960s.

Architecturally the Kennedy house is innovative and exploits a clever geometric form to maximize the potential of its site. The design owes much to the work of the American architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, a lifelong influence on Godsell. In particular it shows similarities with the Jacobs house 2 in Wisconsin, USA, which is described as a 'solar hemicycle' because of its clever use of orientation and glazing to maximize solar potential. Other young Victorian architects also adapted Wright's designs, notably Robin Boyd in houses such as the Haughton James house (1956) and Lloyd house (1958).

Godsell's design, in which the house is formed by large arc shaped segments of a semi-circle with living areas glazed on both sides, is a unique variation on this theme. The use of another arcing brick wall to oppose the shape of the house and create a private courtyard/garden space is a perfect design solution for the site. This solution results from the successful collaboration of architect and client to satisfy their needs and personal philosophy.

Classified; 17/08/2009

Hermes Number 112489

Property Number

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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/>*