

# TERRA DOME HOUSE



23250 Terra Dome Bell St Balmoral 2078



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### **Location**

14 Bell Street, BALMORAL VIC 3407 - Property No 038

### **Municipality**

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

### **Level of significance**

Stage 2 study complete

### **Heritage Listing**

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - December 6, 2003

### What is significant?

The Terra Dome house, Bell Street, Balmoral was built in 1985 for the present owners, Jim and Lana Howman by Terra Dome Australia Pty Ltd. of Murtoa under licence from an American firm. The method of construction was a response to the oil crisis of the early 1970s and the subsequent rise in energy prices. This was only the second example to be built in Australia and the first after that at Murtoa built by Mr. David Peitsch, the licensee. Some forty other houses have since been built in Victoria. It is made up from domed, concrete modules poured in situ with special aluminium formwork and steel reinforcing. The whole is covered by earth. The other detailing, services and materials are relatively conventional. The building is in excellent condition and retains a very high degree of integrity.

### How is it significant?

The Terra Dome house, Bell Street, Balmoral is of architectural significance to the township of Balmoral and to the Southern Grampians Shire.

### Why is it significant?

The Terra Dome house, Bell Street, Balmoral is of architectural significance as a rare and relatively early example of design for harsh environmental conditions and as a response to the conservation of natural resources.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Southern Grampians - Southern Grampians Shire Heritage Study, Timothy Hubbard P/L, Annabel Neylon, 2002;
Construction dates	1985,
Hermes Number	23250
Property Number	

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## Physical Conditions

Excellent condition

## Physical Description 1

The Terra Dome is a single storey semi-subterranean house oriented to the north to maximise sun penetration in winter. It includes a deep overhanging parapet across the facade to create shade in summer. The facade is faced with irregular stone veneer. The large plate glass windows have anodised aluminium frames. There is a central fireplace with a field-stone chimney in the centre of the house. The house is made up from domed, concrete modules poured in situ with special aluminium formwork and steel reinforcing. The whole is covered by earth.

## Historical Australian Themes

- 3. Developing local, regional and national economies
- 3.14 Developing an Australia engineering and construction industry
- 3.14.1 Building to suit Australian conditions

Theme 4: Building settlements, towns and cities

- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia

Theme 8 Developing Australia's Cultural Life

- 8.10 Pursuing excellence in the arts and sciences
- 8.10.4 Designing and building fine buildings
- 8.10.5 Advancing knowledge in science and technology
- 8.12 Living in and around Australian homes.

## **Usage/Former Usage**

residential

## **Integrity**

Excellent integrity

## **Physical Description 2**

David Pleitsch, Terra Dome Australia Pty Ltd., builder and licence holder

*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/>*