

HOUSE

26-27 Palmer Place

This building is of great architectural interest as it is the only structure designed in South Australia by the architect Robin Boyd who achieved international renown.

Born in Melbourne in 1919 into a family of well-known artists, Boyd became renowned as an architect of the 'new breed' of the 1950s who aspired to develop a functional style suited to the Australian climate and lifestyle.

He wrote several widely acclaimed books including *Australia's Home* (1952), and his attack on unimaginative architecture, *The Australian Ugliness* (1960). Between 1947 and 1954, Boyd was the founding director of the Small Home Service of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects. He furthered his studies in England and Europe in 1951, and was visiting professor of architecture in Massachusetts 1956-57. Boyd was appointed to the National Capital Planning Committee Canberra in 1967. In 1969 he was awarded the Royal Australian Institute of Architects gold medal for ' . . . outstanding contribution to the improvement standards and reputation of the profession' and was created CBE in 1971.



(CD Ref 1724/82)

Adelaide hills view and the existing site. Walkley wrote in *Architecture in Australia*, April 1973:

In 1955 when it was designed, and in 1956 when it was built, there were many aspects of the design, including the steel frame, that were very new, especially to South Australia. The builder had a rather worrying time coping with unfamiliar construction, but he did a very good job in the end. The neighbours all disapproved of it; they had never seen a house that looked like that before. Pietro Belluschi, in Adelaide for an RAI A Convention, made the enigmatic remark that 'it was a very definite statement'.

While on a lecture visit to Adelaide in the early 1950s Robin Boyd stayed with the architect Gavin Walkley at his Palmer Place home. Walkley's 1840s stone house, once occupied by well-known Adelaide architects Henry Stuckey and Edmund Wright, was suffering the usual ills of old age in houses, requiring unceasing maintenance so Walkley decided to demolish it. Boyd had shown such enthusiasm about designing a new house to suit the Palmer Place site that Walkley asked Boyd to design a house which would take into consideration the magnificent



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The house is a highly significant example of the 'International Style' and is stylistically linked to the work of notable overseas architects such as Philip Johnson's Glasshouse and Mies Van Der Rohe's Farnsworth House, both completed in the late 1940s in the USA. The mushroom-shaped form of the house enhances the way the upper floor appears to float above the ground, as well as its horizontality. Its integrity is high and, while the building has nothing in common with its neighbours, it is of small scale and unobtrusive.

Boyd, R., *Australia's home*, 1952; Boyd, R., *The Australian ugliness*, 1960; Emanuel, M. M. (ed), et al., *Contemporary architects*, New York, 1980, pp. 114-5; Phillips, V., *1000 famous Australians*, 1978, p. 64; Walkley, G., 'Walkley house' in *Architecture in Australia*, April 1973, p. 66, see also pp. 54-5.

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The property described in this Information Sheet is included in the Register of State Heritage places. A heritage listing does not mean or imply right of access by the public to such properties.

The heritage related Principles of Development Control as well as the Precinct specific objectives and Principles of Development Control are contained in the Adelaide (City) Development Plan. These should be referred to in whole when contemplating any development.

Further information on the Heritage Incentives Scheme, an initiative of Council to sponsor timely and appropriate conservation action is available upon request of the Customer Service Centre.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	HOUSE	Building No
Address	26-27 Palmer Place, North Adelaide	31/0803-1
		CT 2451/120

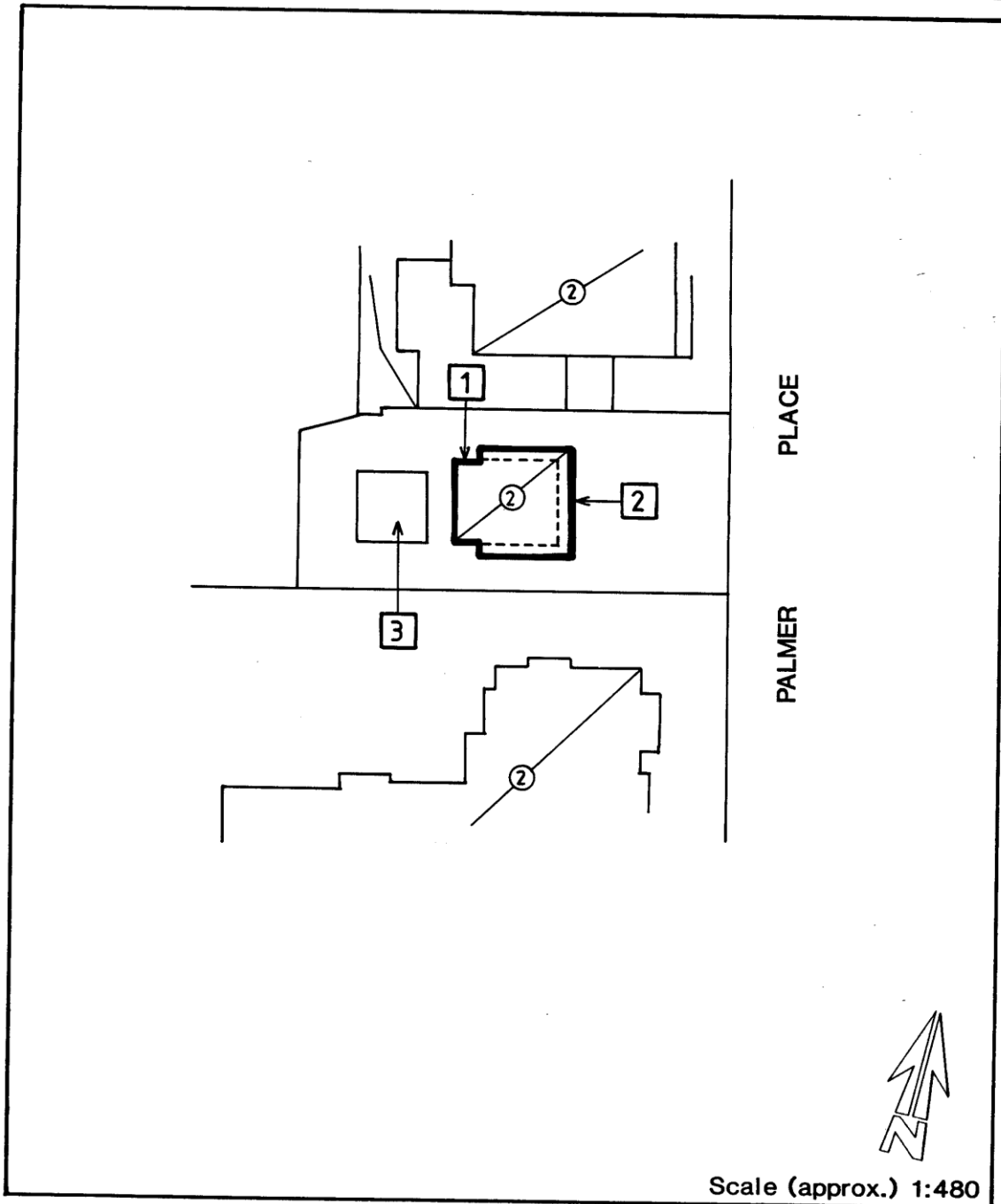


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NOTES:

1. Brick construction.
2. Note glass front elevation at ground and first floor levels.
3. Carport.