Place Citation HOXX the Main Building, Benalla High School, BENALLA

Address	41 – 55 Church Street BENALLA		
Heritage Overlay	*HO number to be allocated*		
Heritage Overlay Map **(*proposed)***			
Designer/s	Percy Everett Romberg and Boyd architects; consulting architects Robin Boyd & Berenice Harris	**Dates**	1936-37 1966-69
Significance	Local	**Builder/s**	J. C. 'Jock' Willoughby
Heritage Overlay Map		**Survey Date**	March 2024



Figure 1 View to north elevation Boyd Science Wing (c1970s)



Figure 2 View to north elevation Boyd Science Wing (Dawn Studio images)



Figure 3 View to north elevation Boyd Science Wing (c1970s)



Figure 4 View to north elevation Boyd Science Wing (c1970s)



Figure 5 Percy Everett wing (date unknown)

Assessment against criteria

The following analysis is based on Victorian Government Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay (August 2018).

Criterion A: Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or natural history (historical significance).

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).

Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to understanding our cultural or natural history (research potential).

Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

The Benalla High School complex which includes the 1914 red face brick classrooms, the two storey Percy Everett wing (c1936) and the Romberg and Boyd Science wing (1968 – 69) is significant.

The context as provided by the setting which includes the former school grounds within which the three developmental stages of the former high school are located is significant.

Significant features as found at c1914 classroom complex include, but are not confined to:

- evidence of the original layout of the classrooms and the quadrangle;
- the face red brick classrooms and their corrugated and galvanised metal roofing and timber sash windows.

Significant features as found at c1936 Percy Everett wing include, but are not confined to:

- All of the features that together create the Art Deco façade and this includes the: rendered walling and inscribed detailing, contrasting brick tower; entrance door and flanking walls; fenestration design and materiality; the canopy and parapet and the rendered fins.

Significant features as found at 1968 – 69 Robin Boyd Science wing include, but are not confined to:

- Evidence of the structural system which expresses the architectural intent; the portal frames that are encased in concrete; the design of the structural elements which include the 'knee joints'; the sun shade planks; the infill brickwork and the cantilevered concrete staircase; the fenestration pattern; the external staircases and the internal layout which includes concrete staircases, the internal passage ways flanked by the classrooms – all of which have internal windows.

The buildings are substantially intact and have largely retained their original form.

Alterations from the c1990s and later are not significant.

How is it Significant?

The former Benalla High School complex is of local historical, rarity value, representative, aesthetic, associative and social cultural heritage significance to the Benalla Rural City.

Why is it Significant?

The former Benalla High School is of historical significance as it provides evidence of the development of the key phases of secondary education development in Benalla. This includes the turn of the twentieth century with the introduction of secondary education in Benalla at this site, the interwar period and the mid twentieth century buildings. The c1914 former Benalla High School is historically significant as it provides evidence of the growing population and the requirement for larger school institutions in Benalla. (Criterion A)

The c1936 Percy Everett building is of historical significance as it provides evidence of what is a key period in the development in Benalla, the Interwar period. It contributes to a significant group of commercial and residential buildings that were constructed during this period. (Criterion A)

The c1936 Percy Everett wing is of historical significance as it provides evidence of one of Everett's earlier and more substantial expressions of his particular 'internationalist moderne' style, exemplified in the later Chemistry School at the University of Melbourne (1938). (Criterion A)

The former Robin Boyd science wing is of historical significance as it provides evidence of a key period of growth in Benalla. The mid twentieth century is a period that is characterised by growth, prosperity in Benalla. This period has been expressed in Benalla in the form of some very fine and architecturally significant post war buildings and the Robin Boyd classroom building contributes to this group of buildings. (Criterion A)

The former Robin Boyd science wing is a rare example of a large institutional government project that was strongly influenced and managed by a significant female architect (Berenice 'Missy' Harris). This project reflects her design input more than any other work that she was associated with (Criterion B)

The Benalla High School complex is a rare example of the work of two of the most significant twentieth century Australian architects within the one site: Percy Everett and Robin Boyd. (Criterion B)

The 1914 Benalla High School classroom wing is representative of educational architecture from the early twentieth century. Features of the school building which express the typical characteristics of its class include the quadrangle layout, the red face brick walling, the regular fenestration, the timber framed sash windows and the hipped roof form clad with corrugated galvanised metal. (Criterion D)

The Percy Everett addition to the original school building is of aesthetic significance as a substantial expressions of his particular 'internationalist moderne' style. Significant features include: the two storey masonry façade; rendered walling; the face brick deco-styled brick tower block with four rendered projecting fins that rise over the front entry; the curved entry canopy and the low parapet which forms the base for the fins; the entrance doors with reeded rendered panels the flanking wings with horizontal banks of windows, grooved horizontal lines, render finish; the horizontal lines of the face brick plinth. The proportions of the windows echo typical classical principles. The ground floor windows and the banks of horizontal windows.

The former Robin Boyd science wing is of aesthetic significance as a particularly distinctive and unusual example of mid twentieth century architecture. The building is a demonstrates a synthesis of Japanese Brutalist architecture, the architecture of Kenzō Tange and the Louis Kahn's predilection for mass and formalised planning as created by one of Australia's great modernist architects – Robin Boyd and executed by Berenice 'Missy' Harris. Significant features include: the two side-by-side portal frames of steel encased in concrete; the central hallway (mirrored upper and lower storey); the bracing to the portal frames with knee-joints (diagonal props, upper and lower storey); the reinforced concrete 'sunshade planks' raw aluminium framed windows and the cantilevered concrete staircase.

Significant features include: the internal staircases at either end of the wide hallway, steel balusters and timber handrails; the banks of aluminium framed windows as part of the internal walls, light-weight room dividers and sliding doors and the layout of the classrooms. (Criterion E)

The former Robin Boyd science wing is of social significance as there are many long standing Benalla families who have had family members as attendees. The large numbers in attendance at the 2012 Public Education Centenary Celebrations and the large numbers on the Benalla High School Action Group Facebook page which advocates for the preservation of the buildings demonstrate the strong cultural connections that the Benalla community have with this place. (Criterion G)

The Percy Everett Wing is of associative significance as it is an example of the work of Percy Everett during his earlier 'internationalist moderne' style period. (Criterion H)

The former Robin Boyd science wing is of associative significance as it is an example of the work of Robin Boyd and (Berenice 'Missy' Harris). (Criterion H)

Additional Controls

External paint controls apply	Yes
Internal alteration controls apply Internal controls apply to the internal staircases at either end of the wide hallway, steel balusters and timber handrails; the banks of aluminium framed windows as part of the internal walls, light-weight room dividers and sliding doors and the layout of the classrooms.	Yes
Tree controls apply	No
Outbuildings or fences not exempt under Clause 43.01-4	No
Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017	No
Prohibited uses permitted	Yes
Aboriginal heritage place	No
Solar energy system controls apply	Yes

History

The following history has been prepared by Dr Jacqueline Durrant with assistance from architects Norman Day (who worked at Romberg & Boyd), and Melbourne architect Jonathan Russell, both of whom provided archival material gathered from the State Library of Victoria and the RMIT archives and contributed their analyses; along with Professor Phillip Goad, (University of Melbourne School of Design) and Tony Isaacson of the Robin Boyd Foundation.

Benalla High School — (1914, 1936-1938 & 1967-1969)

The Benalla High School precinct features two significant buildings, each designed by heavy-weights of twentieth century Australian architecture: Percy Everett and Robin Boyd. The Main School Building by Percy Everett (1936) was designed in the Internationalist-style to have a strong street presence, with a west-facing two-storey facade addressing Barkly Street, unimpeded by visual clutter. Conversely, the Metabolist-inspired Science Wing, which is perpendicular this Main building, designed by Robin Boyd and Berenice Harris (1967-1968), presents a minimalist western elevation to Barkly Street so as not to detract from the centrality of Everett's design. Despite this front-facing modesty, Boyd and Harris's 'science wing'

is a thoroughly muscular piece of architecture, reserving its main visual impacts for the north and south facades. These facades feature rows of monumental knee-jointed concrete columns that stand proud of the building itself, supporting horizontal 'sun visors' — structural elements which cast strong shadows in Benalla's bright and comparatively continuous sunlight. Whereas Everett created a bold, Modernist 'public face' for Benalla High School, Boyd responded with a concrete and brick behemoth, which took its design cues from the leading edge of Japanese architecture of the period. Some of the concrete sunshades from the original construction are missing.

New Science Wing ('South Wing'), Benalla High School (1967-1969)

Commissioned from Romberg and Boyd architects; consulting architects Robin Boyd & Berenice Harris.

In 1964, renowned architectural firm Romberg & Boyd were placed on the list of consulting architects for the Public Works Department.[1] By the late 1960s, although Robin Boyd was Australia's most recognised architect — both nationally and internationally, this success was not being borne out in Romberg & Boyd's financial situation. By mid-1968, the major commission of Menzies College (1965-70) at La Trobe University had run into difficulties, and residential commissions had fallen away.[2] Thus, all forms of work remained a commercial imperative.

Frederick Romberg had taken a position of Foundation Professor of Architecture at the University of Newcastle in 1965, where he would also expand the architecture practice with Romberg & Boyd's accomplished director, Berenice 'Missy' Harris. Despite being based in Newcastle, in 1967 Romberg had been in contact with Chief Architect Mr Bottoms of the Victorian Public Works Department (hereafter 'PWD'), who had agreed to contract Romberg & Boyd to designed a new wing for the Benalla High School. Romberg visited the site in May of 1967.[3] Bottoms retired, and so, in mid-August, Romberg communicated with Mervyn Cook, Senior Architect at the PWD, to see if the arrangement made with Bottoms would be honoured, which it was.[4]

Although Romberg had seeded the project, it was Robin Boyd and Missy Harris who, as joint 'consulting architects', met the PWD architects and engineers,5 to establish the general intent of the commission, on 31 August 1967.[6] Romberg & Boyd were to be employed for design and documentation only, and the project would be novated back to the PWD.[7]

[1] Letter from Romberg and Boyd to J. H. Aldred, Secretary, Public Words Department, 3 July 1964, Papers and correspondence of Robin Boyd, MS 16312, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.
[2] Geoffrey Serle, *Robin Boyd*, Miegunyah Press, Mellbourne, p.308.
[3] See correspondence: J.H. Aldred, Secretary Public Works Department, Victoria, to Romberg & Boyd, 13 August 1967, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.
[4] Memorandum, 18 August, 1967, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[5] R. G. Wilson, Acting Chief Architect, G. K. Williams, Chief Mechanical and Electrical Engineer, M. V. Cook, Superintending Architect Design (Schools).

[6] Notes for record, 7 September 1967, of a meeting held at the Chief Architect's Office, PWD, on 31 August, 1967, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[7] per comm. Norman Day, to Jacqui Durrant, 4 June 2024. note: Norman Day is referring to documents viewed in the Frederick Romberg Archives at RMIT.

Boyd and Harris visited the site a week later (7 September 1967),[8] and submitted initial plans for a building based around twin portal frames of reinforced concrete.

Norman Day, who was working in the Romberg & Boyd office with Missy Harris at the time, reflects that 'It is my view that Boyd would have produced a quick esquisse concept drawing, as he always did, and very rapidly; showing the principles of the design which would have been handed over to the project architect (Missy, in this case), to interpret, develop and document. That is the way the office functioned for all projects.'[9]

Although Robin Boyd made the initial sketches, archival documents demonstrate that the project itself was under the sole control of Missy Harris.[10] She produced most of the documents associated with the building (with some input on one sheet by Linley Vellacott.)[11] Norman Day notes that 'Missy had huge impact on many design developments in the practice reaching back to the days of Stanhill [ie: flats, designed by Romberg, and completed in 1950]. She was a very accurate and quick documenter, which made for good economics. She was dogged and absolutely committed to enhancing the visions of the male 'heroes'.'[12]

With initial plans in place, the PWD's liaison architect, S. Varga, citing concerns (detailed 20 October 1967) regarding the use of reinforced concrete, and, in particular, concerns over 'reliance on local labour' to do so, urged Romberg & Boyd to consider a steel-framed construction instead. Of the existing plan, Varga noted,

'… the structural framing is to be in reinforced concrete with a bold treatment of the separated external columns including pronounced knee braces as a feature and means of supporting sun visors. [However] For a number of reasons, some of which arise from the intention to ultimately extend the building by one story, steel framing would be a preferable basic form of construction, which would still allow the same architectural treatment to be given.'

Varga further suggested that a steel framed construction could be fabricated off-site, and that concrete features such as the 'knee brackets' [diagonal props] could be instead constructed in steel and 'dummied out' in concrete to required architectural proportions… The finish of concrete casing depends more on good carpentry than on concreting and can be very accurate and well finished even in lower grade concrete.'[13]

Varga's concerns were not well-founded. Concrete was routinely used locally in agricultural buildings and other structures like bridges; a fact of which Romberg & Boyd would have been aware. Nevertheless, another meeting was held on 25 October, 1967 at the PWD, between Varga (along with those in charge of

[8] Note in file concerning miles travelled, dated 7 September 1967, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[9] Norman Day, pers. comm. to Jacqui Durrant, 9 June, 2024.

[10] Letter to D. C. Bradbury, Chief Architect of PWD from Berenice Harris, 29 November 1971, Frederick Romberg archives, RMIT, Melbourne.

[11] per comm. Norman Day, to Jacqui Durrant, 4 June 2024. note: Norman Day is referring to documents viewed in the Frederick Romberg Archives at RMIT.

[12] Norman Day, pers. comm. to Jacqui Durrant, 29 May, 2024.

[13] Memorandum, 20 October 1967, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

structural, sewerage, mechanical and electrical areas for the PWD), and Missy Harris.[14] During this meeting Romberg & Boyd accepted the structural changes from reinforced concrete to structural steel, with a note that the working drawings would proceed pending 'information re: the sizes for steel members'.[15]

Plans were drawn at the Public Works department by 1 February 1968[16] [Figures 3-6], although these did not yet reflect the final layout of the building: twin stairwells sat at either end of the long central hallway, with external walls forming one side of each stairwell. However, this plan was added onto at a later juncture, so that the stairwells became internalised within the layout.

On 19 February 1968, the precast 'sunshade planks' and 'stairwell planks' were designed, and E.P.M. Concrete asked for a quote for supply of these items to Benalla.[17] (Architect Jonathan Russell notes that 'E.P.M. were pioneers in prestressed concrete.'[18])

By 1 March 1968, final documents for the design had been submitted with Varga for the final departmental check.[19] On 28 March 1968, a memorandum at Romberg & Boyd recorded that documentation was complete, and the documents had been sent to Mr Bradbury, Chief Architect and Mr Raymond G. Wilson at the PWD. These comprised:

- architectural workings and drawings and details, Sheet Nos. A .1 — A .27 and H .1 — H.2.
- perspective sketch
- set of coloured prints Sheet Nos. A .1 — A .27 and H .1 — H.2.
- 25 copies of bound specification.

'Note. Architect in charge of Benalla H/S for the department Dick Thomas!'[20]

[14] Memorandum, 25 October 1967, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[15] Memorandum, 25 October 1967, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[16] Frederick Romberg Archive, RMIT, Melbourne.

[17] Letter to Mr Stone, E.P.M. Concrete, Ballarat from Romberg and Boyd, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[18] per comm. Jonathan Russell to Jacqui Durrant, 27 May 2024.

[19] Letter to the Acting Chief Architect, Public Works Department, from Romberg & Boyd, 1 March 1968, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[20] 'Memorandum, March 28, 1968, Benalla High School', Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

With the design/documentation work complete, the final account for services was submitted by 14 August, 1968.[21] Construction had commenced by 9 August 1968,[22] at which point Robin Boyd advised the Building Division of the PWD that although his work was complete, he had an interest in the progress of the building. The Building Division agreed to keep him up-dated.[23]

Work was carried out by L. H. Brown Constructions (Wangaratta). As late as 7 January 1969, Romberg & Boyd were still assisting L. H. Brown with minor details, such as advising the use of 'Timba-oil' stain in the colour of 'pewter'.[24]

Norman Day notes that, although it was not Romberg & Boyd's original preference, 'The exoskeleton frame and bracket props [were] steel-framed (self-supporting, not rebar), L. H. Brown Constructions (Wangaratta) completed the construction in June 1969.[25]

In summary, the Benalla High School's new wing was constructed around two side-by-side portal frames of steel encased in concrete, linked by a central hallway (mirrored upper and lower storey). The exterior of the portal frames are braced with knee-joints (diagonal props, upper and lower storey), with these frames projecting beyond the external walls (ie: the north and south elevations) to form 'pergolas', upon which sit series of reinforced concrete 'sunshade planks'. (Early photographs from Le Dawn Studios) illustrate that there were originally five pre-cast concrete 'sun visors' or 'sun planks' on the pergolas, which sat butted together, although these have been since reduced to three and spread apart, in most places.) The outline of the portal frame is left visible on the shorter east and west elevations, infilled with brick, allowing the frame to be read as the building's 'exoskeleton'. The northern elevation also features a cantilevered concrete staircase.

Inside, there are internal staircases at either end of the wide hallway. Each stairwell is fire-isolated in brick, and well-lit by banks of windows in the external wall, with the staircase itself situated back from the external wall so as to present a void. The staircase balusters are in plain square mild steel, with massive timber handrails in Victoria ash. Classrooms run off either side of the hallway, which is defined by the continuous pillars for the portal frame, infilled with light-weight room dividers and sliding doors. Larger rooms are situated at either end of the complex. The classrooms are copiously lit by continuous banks of raw aluminium-framed windows, with shorter banks of windows set high into the opposing walls dividing the classrooms from the hallway — a conventional treatment for classroom wings of the era. The external staircase on the northern facade leads to a foyer which joins onto the main upper storey hallway.

In August 1969, Romberg & Boyd made inquiries with Le Dawn Studios in Wangaratta to produce 'two or three first class photographs' of the high school, adding, 'The exteriors would have to be taken on a sunny

[21] Letter to The Accountant, PWD, from Romberg & Boyd, 14 August, 1968, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[22] Letter to D. C. Bradbury, Chief Architect, PWD Victoria, from Romberg and Boyd, 14 August, 1968, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[23] Letter D. C. Bradbury, Chief Architect, PWD Victoria, to Mr Boyd, 26 August, 1968, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[24] Letter to L.H. Brown Constructions, from Romberg & Boyd, 7 January 1969, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[25] Project Status Report, L. H. Brown Constructions, report 30, period ending 11 March 1969, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

afternoon',[26] no doubt to take advantage of strong shadows which would accentuate its design. A suite of photographs, taken in 1970, appear to be those now in the State Library of Victoria,[27] and the circumstances of their creation demonstrates that Romberg & Boyd were keen to document the finished building. Missy Harris also photographed the finished building.

The new school wing was opened in May 1971 by the Minister for Education, the Hon Lindsay Thompson. It housed science labs on the top storey with general purpose classrooms and the 'Weary Dunlop Library' on the ground floor.

Clearly, the Benalla High School wing provided enough scale and scope for Robin Boyd to express some of his then current architectural interests. At the time, Boyd had been writing *New Directions in Japanese Architecture* (1969)*,* and he was interested in works of the 'Metabolist' architects, including most notably, those of Kenzō Tange. At the time, Boyd wrote, the 'Metabolists are deeply concerned with the traditional qualities of composition and unity.'[28]

Architectural historian Phillip Goad describes Boyd's use, at this time, of 'off-form concrete and massive structural gestures [as being] suggestive of Japanese Brutalist designs, but also of Louis Kahn's predilection for mass and formalised planning.' He notes in Boyd's work of this period, a 'distinct absence of applied ornament and the refutation of any need to overtly communicate meaning.'[29]

Norman Day states that 'Benalla [High School] fits in with Boyd's aesthetic in the mid-late 60s. It comprises a bower bird of references, the Japanese influence was paramount, but so was his respect for Paul Rudolph… He was a huge gatherer of information which he then developed around his assessment of simplicity, clarity and unadornment. … Tange, of course, was a link (given he'd written the book) but also other Japanese masters. His interest in purity of expression was not so much Miesian as Nipponese.'[30]

Although the project had been effectively handed-over from Romberg to Boyd, which Norman Day notes, 'would explain the tacit adoption of Boyd's architectural expression, reflecting especially [work already done on] Menzies College',[31] Day also notes that during the period in which the Benalla High School building was designed, Missy Harris was also in charge of Menzies College at La Trobe University (which Day worked on with her), and that 'the similarity of architectural expression between the two projects is no accident.'[32] Missy Harris played a key role in taking these buildings from concept stage to documentation stage, and the scholarly recognition of her role at Romberg & Boyd continues to grow. It is Norman Day's assessment

[26] Letter to Le Dawn Photographic Studios, Wangaratta, from Romberg & Boyd, 25 August 1969, Records of Grounds, Romberg & Boyd, MS 13363, Box 101, Folder 9, State Library of Victoria.

[27] Le Dawn Studios archive, State Library of Victoria.

[28] Philip Goad (1996) ROBIN BOYD AND THE POST-WAR 'JAPANIZATION OF WESTERN IDEAS', *Architectural Theory Review*, 1:2, p.116.

[29] ibid., p.114.

[30] pers. comm. Norman Day to Jacqui Durrant and Deborah Kemp, 8 May 2024.

[31] pers comm. Norman Day to Jacqui Durrant, 28 May 2024.

[32] pers comm. Norman Day to Jacqui Durrant, 5 June 2024.

that the Benalla High School 'may be the largest constructed building that Missy managed and reflects her design input more than any other.'[33]

This Romberg & Boyd (and Harris) building is significant for its regional location, its strong association with a significant woman architect (Missy Harris), and its uniqueness as a Romberg & Boyd school building.[34]

(Author's note: It has been possible to compile this detailed history for the design and construction of the Benalla high School science wing with the assistance from architects Norman Day (who worked at Romberg & Boyd), and Melbourne architect Jonathan Russell, both of whom provided archival material gathered from the State Library of Victoria and the RMIT archives and contributed their analyses; along with Professor Phillip Goad, and also Tony Isaacson of the Robin Boyd Foundation.)

Relevant Historic Themes as identified in the *Benalla Rural City Gaps Heritage Study: Thematic History* Prepared by Dr Robyn Ballinger

8. Building community life

8.2 Educating people

Physical Description

1914 High School buildings

The complex includes the first Benalla High School constructed in 1914. This first high school building was constructed from single storey face brick buildings and they were designed around a quadrangle. The west end of the quadrangle was altered with the construction of the two storey Percy Everett wing constructed c1936.

The surviving 1914 school buildings can be found at the rear of the Percy Everett two storey addition. These early buildings are constructed from pressed red face brick. The buildings are hipped roof (clad in corrugated metal) and quadrangle layout is still evident. The windows are timber sash windows.

The Percy Everett wing

The Percy facade is a two storey masonry wing. While the façade is not symmetrical it has a regular layout which is dominated by a face brick deco-styled brick tower block with four rendered projecting fins that rise over the front entry. The curved entry canopy has a low parapet which forms the base for the fins. The entrance doors are flanked by reeded rendered panels. The wings to either side of this striking tower are rendered and in contrast to the verticality of the tower the lines have an horizontal emphasis. The is found in the horizontal banks of windows and grooved horizontal lines with the render finish and the horizontal lines of the face brick plinth. The proportions of the windows echo typical classical principles. The ground floor windows individually have vertical proportions, but as a group create a substantive horizontal bank.

[33] pers comm. Norman Day to Jacqui Durrant, 28 May 2024.

[34] pers comm. Tony Isaacson, Robin Boyd Foundation, to Jacqui Durrant, 9 June 2024.

The first floor windows are squared individually and as a bank are horizontal and the diminutive proportions of the decorative horizontal feature under the eaves complete this classically stylised façade.

Robin Boyd Science Wing

The Robin Boyd Science Wing is constructed around two side-by-side portal frames of steel encased in concrete, linked by a central hallway (mirrored upper and lower storey). The exterior of the portal frames are braced with knee-joints (diagonal props, upper and lower storey), with these frames projecting beyond the external walls (ie: the north and south elevations) to form 'pergolas', upon which sit series of reinforced concrete 'sunshade planks'. (Early photographs from Le Dawn Studios illustrate that there were originally 5 pre-cast concrete 'sun visors' or 'sun planks' on the pergolas, which sat butted together, although these have been since reduced to three and spread apart, in most places.) The outline of the portal frame is left visible on the shorter east and west elevations, infilled with brick, allowing the frame to be read as the building's 'exoskeleton'. The northern elevation also features a cantilevered concrete staircase.

Inside, there are internal staircases at either end of the wide hallway. Each stairwell is fire-isolated in brick, and well-lit by banks of windows in the external wall, with the staircase itself situated back from the external wall so as to present a void. The staircase balusters are in plain square mild steel, with massive timber handrails in Victoria ash. Classrooms run off either side of the hallway, which is defined by the continuous pillars for the portal frame, infilled with light-weight room dividers and sliding doors. Larger rooms are situated at either end of the complex. The classrooms are copiously lit by continuous banks of raw aluminium-framed windows, with shorter banks of windows set high into the opposing walls dividing the classrooms from the hallway — a conventional treatment for classroom wings of the era. The external staircase on the northern facade leads to a foyer which joins onto the main upper storey hallway.