
Name	House	Reference No	
Address	171 Cotham Road, Kew	Survey Date	13 December 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	1916-7	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

Recommend that Council consider the inclusion of this site and others in Cotham Road in the existing HO142, Barrington Avenue HO precinct (Panel for Amendment C64, Boroondara Planning Scheme)

Intactness Good Fair Poor

Heritage Status HV AHC NT Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

171 Cotham Road, constructed by and for Frederick Ratten, a builder and prominent member of the Kew community, who served as a Councillor and later Mayor of the then Borough of Kew in 1915-16.¹ Frederick Ratten was a descendant of one of Kew's most prominent families, who first settled in the district in the 1850s. Brothers Richard and Thomas Ratten farmed land in the vicinity of the subject property. Richard Ratten built a large home, *Barrington*, and in 1916-7, his son Frederick constructed the subject property, described as a brick house of seven rooms, in the municipal rate records for the 1917-18 rate cycle.² Frederick Ratten's younger brother Ernest who lived nearby at 219 Cotham Road, also constructed on a portion of the Ratten family's land holding. That property is also assessed in this Review.

The house was occupied by Frederick and Emmeline Ratten until c. 1921.³ After this date it was owned and occupied by Charles Evan, until 1945, when it was sold to Desmond Kennedy.⁴ Like Frederick Ratten, Kennedy was socially prominent and served as a Councillor and Mayor of the City of Kew in 1963.⁵ The Kennedy family resided at the property until at least 1974.⁶

(G Butler & Associates, Kew B-graded buildings study (draft), 2001, additional research by Lovell Chen, 2005)

Description & Integrity

The house at 171 Cotham Road, Kew, is an attic-storey double-fronted Federation-style villa of brick construction and essentially symmetrical planning. The gabled slate-clad roof has exposed rafters and brick chimneys and the distinctive bracketed flying gable ends feature carved barge boards roughcast rendered infill and ornate pressed cement cartouche. The façade displays tuckpointed red face brickwork and comprises a pair of projecting bays, each of which contains a bow window, flanking a central recessed porch. The porch floor is tiled in a combination of encaustic and tessellated tiles and

is entered via a bold archway which is embellished by a brick moulding; it leads to the main entrance which comprises a semi-circular arched opening with glazed panelled timber door with leadlight surrounds. The flanking porch walls each have a rendered inset white-painted niche.⁷ The porch extends upwards to the attic level to provide a balcony to the central attic dormer, which has been infilled with timber-framed sashes. Fenestration elsewhere comprises groups and singular timber-framed double-hung sashes with diaper leadlight glazing.

Overall, with the exception of the glazing to the attic balcony, and notwithstanding that alterations and additions may have been undertaken at the rear of the property in 1957, 1977 and 1980⁸, as viewed from Cotham Road, the house appears to be substantially intact, externally.

The property is fronted by a non-original paling fence and was subdivided to the north in 2003.⁹

Historical Context

The north side of Cotham Road and surrounding streets, east of Barrington Avenue, were predominantly developed during the early years of the twentieth century, except for a few pre-existing detached brick villas.¹⁰ In contrast the western section of Cotham Road was substantially developed prior to the turn of the twentieth century with commercial buildings, as well as some residential buildings.¹¹

Comparative Analysis

The house at 171 Cotham Road, Kew, typifies many of the examples of Federation period houses which are transitional between the Federation and attic bungalow styles in this section of Kew and the broader municipality from the 1910s and '20s. Architecturally, the house comes towards the chronological end of the period and is a relatively conservative, albeit competent, composition for its day. Its symmetrical massing and prominent central porch and dormer are repeated in a number of comparable examples including nearby *Marsden*, 11 Barrington Avenue, Kew, which is remarkably similar in form and detail and was apparently constructed by the same builder as the subject property,¹² and 8 Denmark Street, Kew (both B graded, and of marginally larger proportions). This second property has previously been compared with two others, 14 Studley Avenue and 17 Selbourne Road, Kew, which are also located in the study area, both of which are graded A and are considered better examples.¹³

Assessment Against Criteria

Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria

CRITERION A: *The historical importance, association with or relationship to Boroondara's history of the place or object.*

The house at 171 Cotham Road, Kew is of significance for its historical association with Frederick Ratten, builder (including builder of this house) and prominent member of the Kew community, who served as a Councillor and later Mayor of the then Borough of Kew in 1915-16. It is also associated with a second Mayor, Desmond Kennedy, who served as Mayor of the City of Kew in 1963 and whose family had the house between c. 1945 and 1974.

CRITERION D: *The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as a part of a class or type of places or objects.*

171 Cotham Road, Kew is a representative and externally relatively intact example of a brick attic-style residence of the late Federation period, which features distinctive bracketed flying gable ends with carved barge boards, roughcast rendered infill and ornate pressed cement cartouche.

Statement of Significance

171 Cotham Road, Kew, is of local historical and architectural significance. A representative and externally relatively intact example of a brick attic-style residence of the late Federation period, it features distinctive bracketed flying gable ends with carved barge boards, roughcast rendered infill and ornate pressed cement cartouche. It is of historical significance in the local context for its association with two prominent local residents, Frederick Ratten, builder and Mayor of the Borough of Kew in 1915-16 and Desmond Kennedy, Mayor of the City of Kew in 1963.

Grading Review

Unchanged.

Recommendations

Not recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme (Panel for Amendment C64, Boroondara Planning Scheme, December 2008).

Recommended that in a review of heritage precincts the Council consider the inclusion of this site and the adjoining individual heritage sites in Cotham Road in the existing heritage precinct overlay No 142 – Barrington Road [Avenue]. (Panel for Amendment C64, Boroondara Planning Scheme, December 2008)

Identified By

Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, Kew Urban Conservation Study, 1988

References

General: Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, Kew Urban Conservation Study, 1988, G Butler & Associates, Kew B-graded places study (draft), 2001.

Specific:

¹ Rogers, Dorothy. *A History of Kew*, 1973, pp. 25-27.

² Borough of Kew Rate Books, 1917-18, #1372, brick, seven rooms, Cited in G Butler & Associates, *Kew B-graded places study* (draft), 2001; Rogers, Dorothy. *A history of Kew*, 1973, p. 26.

³ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1921.

⁴ City of Kew Rate Books, 1945-6, #2840, nav £96.

⁵ *The Xavierian*, 1976, p. 50, Cited in G Butler & Associates, *Kew B-graded places study* (draft), 2001.

⁶ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1974.

⁷ Additional detail relating to the porch flooring and the inset porch niches is taken from the peer review by RBA Architects and Conservation Consultants, October 2008.

⁸ City of Kew Building Index, #603, dated 3 October 1957, #7091, dated 12 December 1977 and #8657, dated 4 August 1980.

⁹ Planning Permit No. BOR/01/01453, dated 25 April 2003, City of Boroondara Planning File 40/409/08711 Parts 1 & 2.

¹⁰ MMBW Plan no. 65, Municipality of Kew, scale 160':1", dated c.1904 with 1933 overlay.

¹¹ MMBW Plan no. 65, Municipality of Kew, scale 160':1", dated c.1904 with 1933 overlay.

¹² Correspondence to Council dated 24 April 2007, Mr M Mileo and Mrs A Winters-Mileo.

¹³ Raworth, Bryce, *8 Denmark Street, Kew, Review of Significance* (report to council), p.6.