
Name	Formerly <i>Wymond Girls School</i>	Reference No	
Address	180 Cotham Road, Kew	Survey Date	23 December 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	C
Date	1889-90	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Intactness ☐ Good ☒ Fair ☐ Poor

Heritage Status ☐ HV ☐ AHC ☐ NT ☐ BPS Heritage Overlay

History

180 Cotham Road, formerly 178 and later 210 Cotham Road, described as a brick residence of six rooms, was constructed in c.1890, for Alexander Hall, a dentist, originally from Scotland.¹ Alexander Hall had emigrated to Australia in 1852, first settling in New South Wales before moving to work the diggings around Beechworth and subsequently Castlemaine and Rushworth for the next ten years, to moderate success. He later returned to his original profession as a dentist and chemist, working and residing in Gippsland and subsequently in Williamstown, before settling in Kew.² Hall did not remain at this address for more than a few years; the *Sands & McDougall Melbourne Directory* listed Mrs Phillip Turner in residence during 1896, followed by Ambrose Warden, an electrical engineer, who had acquired the property by the late 1890s.³

From 1903, Miss Florrie Wymond operated a girls school at the property, and a timber schoolroom building was constructed at the rear of the property.⁴ During the 1930s, the school was known as the Clarence Primary School, and operated by Misses F L and M Wymond. While the listing of the property as a primary school had ceased by 1947, the Wymond family owned the property until the mid 1960s.

During their period of ownership, an addition, comprising a new sitting room and bedroom, was constructed to the rear of the main wing and adjoining the western side of the house. The date of these works is not known.⁵ Subsequently, the property was owned by Mrs M Branchflower, and by 1974, a new owner, R E Swanson, commissioned architect Charles Duncan to construct a new kitchen and eating area at the rear of the property in 1974. Plans lodged with the City of Kew detailing the works, showed a timber schoolroom building, described as an exercise room, was still extant. The 1974 works converted it into a bungalow.⁶

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

Description & Integrity

180 Cotham Road is a double-fronted single-storey late Victorian house, of overpainted rendered brick with a slate roof and galvanized iron ridge capping. The front elevation is asymmetrically planned with a projecting gable-ended bay with scrolled bargeboards and incorporating a canted bay with slate roof. The windows to the canted bay have large sashes, and do not appear to be original (new windows were approved in 1979).⁷ At the time of site inspection the marble paving to the verandah floor was in the process of being renewed. The original plan form of the house is shown on the MMBW Detail Plan No. 65 of 1904 (with later overlay). It shows the main wing of the original house with verandahs facing both north and south, and a service wing extending towards the rear of the site.

The south-facing verandah has since been removed, and the rear sections of the house have been substantially remodelled and extended. These alterations include – from an unknown date – a large addition (possibly originally on one level but now two-storey) set flush with the original rear wall of the front wing and projecting out to the western boundary of the site. The 1974 works focused on this wing as well as the rear sections of the original house.⁸ The two-storey addition is visible in photographs from the early 1980s and in the 1988 photograph in the Kew Urban Conservation Study. Since this time the wing appears to have been altered again, receiving a period window treatment (unspecified alterations were approved in 1993).⁹

The transverse steel car port at the rear of the site, installed in 1970,¹⁰ was replaced by a timber carport in 1996.¹¹

At the front of the site, the high timber paling fence seen in 1982 photographs by John Collins¹² was replaced in 1995 by a new rendered masonry fence.¹³ There appear to be remnants of early paving down either side of the site. Two large pines are located in the front garden; it is believed these were planted by children when the house functioned as a school.¹⁴

Historical Context

Development occurred along the south side of Cotham Road, in the vicinity of the subject site, during the late nineteenth century. At the turn of the twentieth century the area was generally characterised by detached brick villas sited on generous allotments with uniform setbacks.¹⁵ Some later development occurred during the interwar years, especially on the northern side of the street and to the east.

Comparative Analysis

Given its 1890 completion date, 180 Cotham Road recalls an earlier era. In its original planning and form, 180 Cotham Road was broadly typical of the mid-Victorian period. Its external treatment - overpainted stucco with scrolled bargeboards - was common in Victorian Gothicizing designs of the middle nineteenth century, such as *Invergowrie* and its gatehouse in Coppin Grove and Palmer Place, Hawthorn, 1846-69, the two-storey *Hawthorns* in Creswick Street Hawthorn, 1846-7. More contemporary designs such as *Tay Creggan*, 30 Yarra Street Hawthorn, of 1891-2, include a variety of terracotta and late nineteenth-century Free Style elements not seen here.¹⁶ The principal façade is plain and relatively conservative, more typical of the 1850s and 1860s than the 1890s.

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 use of the property as a combined residence and small day-school from c.1903 until the late 1940s is of historical interest in the local context.

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.

180 Cotham Road is an interesting, though altered, example of a rendered brick Victorian house with Gothic styling. It is stylistically conservative for the date of its completion, having more connection with Boroondara houses of the 1840s than with contemporary forms in 1890.

Statement of Significance

180 Cotham Road is of local historical and architectural significance as an interesting, though altered, example of a rendered brick Victorian house with Gothic styling. It is stylistically conservative for the date of its completion, having more connection with Boroondara houses of the 1840s than with contemporary forms in 1890. The use of the property as a combined residence and small day-school from c.1903 until the late 1940s is of historical interest in the local context.

Grading Review

Downgrade to C. The presentation of the house to Cotham Road is significantly altered by the two-storey rear addition. Though set back, this wing adds a third 'front' to the house and rises close to a full-storey height above the original roof line.

Recommendations

Not recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

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 Borough of Kew Rate Books, 1889-90, #1945, Cited in G Butler & Associates, *Kew B-graded places study* (draft), 2001.

² Sutherland, Alexander. *Victoria and its metropolis: past and present*, 1888, vol. IIB, p. 672.

³ Borough of Kew Rate Books, 1897-98, #1191; 1900-1, #1263, cited in G Butler & Associates, *Kew B-graded places study* (draft), 2001.

⁴ Borough of Kew Rate Books, 1919-20, #2722, cited in G Butler & Associates, *Kew B-graded places study* (draft), 2001. Note that the timber schoolroom does not appear on the MMBW Plan no. 65, Municipality of Kew, scale 160':1", dated c.1904 with 1933 overlay.

⁵ This wing – at least at ground floor level – is shown as existing on 1974 drawings by Charles Duncan, Charles Duncan, working drawings, dated 8 May 1974, sourced from City of Kew Building Index, #4665, dated 26 June 1974.

⁶ Drawings and details sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, #4665, dated 26 June 1974.

⁷ See the City of Kew Building Index, #8164, dated 17 September 1979.

⁸ Charles Duncan, working drawings, dated 8 May 1974. Drawings sourced from City of Kew Building Index, #4665, dated 26 June 1974.

⁹ 'Additions and alterations', City of Boroondara Building Index, #93/6662. These are not specified.

¹⁰ Details sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, #1796, dated 19 March 1970.

¹¹ Details sourced from the City of Boroondara Building Index, #SP1303/96/0003. dated 19 January 1996.

¹² Three 1982 photographs by John Collins of the house at 180 Cotham Street are held by the State Library of Victoria.

¹³ Details sourced from the City of Boroondara Building Index, #5491, dated 21 September 1995.

¹⁴ The property was visited on 23 December 2005. Discussions with the present owner, Mr Levine.

¹⁵ MMBW Plan no. 65, Municipality of Kew, scale 160':1", dated c.1904 with 1933 overlay.

¹⁶ See Philip Goad, *Melbourne Architecture: a Guide*, Watermark, Sydney, 1999, p. 83.