


Name	Duplex	Reference No	
Address	1-3 Edgecombe Street, Kew	Survey Date	23 August 2005
Building Type	Duplex	Grading	C
Date	c.1942	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

Refer to Recommendations

Intactness ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

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

History

The Victorian residence, *Clutha*, was constructed in 1856 for John Carson on a large site facing Studley Park Road (bounded by the present-day Edgecombe, Stevenson and Carson Streets). Just a few years later, in 1863, Carson became the first Mayor of the Borough of Kew. *Clutha* remained in the Carson family until 1939, when it formed part of the estate of his descendant Marion Mouat Carson.¹ The property was subsequently acquired by builder, Alex M Younger and William Younger, who subdivided the property, forming Mackie and Younger Courts to provide access from Carson Street to the newly-created allotments at the centre of the subdivision.² A subdivision plan advertising the auction of 40 allotments on the *Clutha* estate on 6th April 1940, is held in the State Library of Victoria.³ Interestingly, William Younger lived at 74 Studley Park Road, at the corner of Coombs Avenue, nearly across the road from *Clutha*. By 1944 he had moved onto the estate, taking up residence in a new home at 1 Mackie Court.⁴

The *Clutha* estate was progressively developed from this time. New houses were under construction on the Studley Park Road frontage in 1941 and one house was under construction in Edgecombe Street. By 1942, street numbering commenced at 13, with three further properties under construction, one of which is thought to have been the subject property (1-3 Edgecombe Street).⁵ The property was constructed for Miss Marie Vida Archibald, and consisted of three residences - two flats, presumably one above the other at 1 Edgecombe Street and a two-storied duplex at 3 Edgecombe Street.⁶ Miss Archibald resided at 1 Edgecombe Street, until at least 1974.⁷ The other flat appears to have been tenanted. 3 Edgecombe Street was tenanted by Mrs. Edith Geddes from 1943, and subsequently by Basil Geddes until c. 1960. From then until at least 1974, 3 Edgecombe Street was occupied by M J Richardson.⁸

At some time during the 1970s, the property was acquired by Mrs. Ida Lawrie, who also acquired 5-7 Edgecombe Street at this time. Mrs. Lawrie subsequently resided at 7 Edgecombe Street.⁹

(Lovell Chen, 2005)

Description & Integrity

1-3 Edgecombe Street, Kew is an attached pair of double-storey inter-war flats, designed to read as a single large house. The simple hipped roof form is clad with terracotta tiles and is penetrated by a pair of clinker brick chimneys with tapestry brick caps and banding. The building generally comprises clinker brick construction but includes a projecting bay of tapestry brick which defines the entrance to No.3, and tapestry brick soldier course. The entrance doors and some window openings are further defined by cream tapestry brick dressings. The asymmetrical façade of No.1 includes a recessed bay containing the entrance flanked by a broad projecting bay to the north. Further north, the remaining façade is divided in two by the double-height break-fronted bay which extends past the eaves line, containing the entrance to No. 3 above which is a single doorway to a small balcony retaining original wrought iron balustrade. Fenestration between floor levels is regular and repetitive and all but one opening contains timber-framed double-hung sash windows with fixed and casement sashes; the exception is the window above the entrance to No. 1 which comprises glass blocks. The timber sashes may have replaced earlier steel-framed sashes. Many retain original wrought iron screens. Both flats have timber entrance doors with wrought iron screen doors, however a non-original canvas awning has been fixed above the entrance to No.1.

Brick garages were constructed at the rear of each flat in the late 1950s / early 1960s and in 1977 an application was made for brick additions to the rear. The property is screened by a high textured grey brick wall with two sets of wrought iron gates (which appear to be non-original). A non-original palisade fence divides the front garden and each garden is lit by a cast iron coach lamp.

Historical Context

Edgecombe Street was formed as a result of the partial subdivision of the grounds of *Mount Edgecombe*, thought to have occurred in c.1913. At this date Edgecombe Street is first listed in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, with properties listed on the eastern side of the street.¹⁰ The western side of the street was not developed until after 1940 when it was developed as part of the subdivision of the *Clutha* estate.

Comparative Analysis

The most obvious comparisons can be drawn between 1-3 Edgecombe Street, Kew and the neighbouring flats at Nos. 5-7, Nos. 21-23, Nos. 25-27 and Nos. 29-31. All of these buildings comprise attached pairs of inter-war double storey flats, many of which have similar detailing.

The treatment of these duplexes to appear as detached houses follows a pattern established in the 1920s, as at *Sheringham*, 208 Cotham Road, of 1920 (q.v., B-graded). It is less common, however, to find flats configured as detached houses as late as the 1940s.

With their pelmet fascias and hipped tile roofs, the flat blocks resemble the Jessica MacFarlane and AK Lines houses that appeared in Balwyn and Balwyn North in the middle to late 1930s, such as 136 Whitehorse Road (q.v., B-graded), and other modern hipped roof designs, such as Leith and Bartlett's 1297 Toorak Road Surrey Hills (q.v., B-graded), also of 1940.

Assessment Against Criteria

Not completed, refer Recommendations.

Statement of Significance

Not completed, refer Recommendations.

Grading Review

B/C, refer discussion below, under Recommendations.

Recommendations

The western side of Edgecombe Street was developed in the early 1940s, with a series of duplexes (flats) constructed between c.1941 and c.1943. While not confirmed, it appears likely that all were developed by builder Alex M Younger, who acquired the land in 1940. Of the properties on the western side of the street, three (1-3, 5-7, and 21-23) were graded B in the 1988 Kew Urban

Conservation Study, with another three (19, 25-27, 29) graded C. While not identical, all these buildings are all similar in overall form, design, materials and detailing, and on face value, it would be difficult to distinguish the C-graded buildings within this group from those graded B. While perhaps not of great individual distinction, when considered together, the duplexes form an interesting interwar grouping that is potentially of some significance in the local context.

It is not recommended that 1-3 Edgecombe Street be included as a site-specific Heritage Overlay in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

Notwithstanding, it is recommended that the properties on the west side of Edgecombe Street be further investigated and assessed with a view to considering the introduction of a single precinct-based Heritage Overlay over the group.

Identified By

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

References

General: Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, Kew Urban Conservation Study, 1988.

Specific:

¹ Rogers, Dorothy. *A history of Kew*, 1973, pp. 41-2.

² *Clutha* entry in the *Melbourne Mansions* database, which gives the *Age*, 19 December 1934, p. 4 as the source.

³ Batten & Percy Collection, State Library of Victoria.

⁴ Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria, 1937-1944/5.

⁵ Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria, 1939-1942.

⁶ City of Kew Rate Books, 1946, #7253-55, describes the property as consisting of two four room brick flats and one five room brick flat, nav £83 and £104 respectively.

⁷ Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria, various years, 1944-1974.

⁸ Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria, various years, 1944-1974.

⁹ Owner's name derived from the City of Kew Building Index.

¹⁰ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1913.