

Name	<i>Mount Ephraim; Edgecombe; Mount Edgecombe</i>	Reference No	
Address	24-26 Edgecombe Street, Kew	Survey Date	August 2005
Building Type	Residence, Private Hospital	Grading	B
Date	c.1868-9	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries of No 26 only.

Intactness	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor		
Heritage Status	<input type="checkbox"/> HV	<input type="checkbox"/> AHC	<input type="checkbox"/> NT	<input type="checkbox"/> Rec.	BPS Heritage Overlay

History

Originally known as *Mount Ephraim*, this property was constructed for Henry Fisher in c.1868-9.¹ No architect has been identified for the building. Fisher remained in residence until late 1881, when the *Argus* published a notice of the auction sale of his furniture, on site at *Mount Ephraim*, Studley Park Road.² At this time, the property was acquired by Mrs. Charlotte Elizabeth Anderson, for her ladies' school, Ruyton, which had outgrown previous premises in Bulleen Road.³ In August 1881 the architect George Wharton called for tenders to construct additions to the residence for this purpose.⁴ Ruyton School was sold and relocated to A'Beckett Street, Kew around 1888 (it was relocated to its current site in Selbourne Road, Kew in c. 1920).⁵ Renamed *Edgecombe*, the house in Studley Park Road remained with the Anderson family until the early to mid-1890s.⁶

The *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria* indicates that street numbers were allocated to properties in Studley Park Road from 1893 with *Edgecombe* listed as 119 Studley Park Road. By 1903 the property had been renumbered 115 Studley Park Road and was occupied by a Mrs. Whalley by which time the house was referred to as *Mount Edgecombe*.⁷ Surgeon, Dr J. Murphy, was listed at the address in 1913 and the subject property was numbered 51 Studley Park Road from 1916. It is thought that in c. 1913, concurrent with Dr Murphy's term of residence, the westernmost portion of the property, comprising the tennis court and part of the garden, was subdivided to form Edgecombe Street. Edgecombe Street was listed in the 1914 edition of the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria* for the first time. In that year's edition, it appeared in the Studley Park Road listing, between Carson Street and Howard Street. By the following year's edition, Edgecombe Street had its own listing with two houses completed, one of which was listed as vacant.⁸

Returning to *Mount Edgecombe*, later residents of the house included Mrs. Alice Figuerola, a dancing teacher in residence between c. 1930 and 1936; the prominent 'tonalist' painter Alma Figuerola, in residence between c. 1937 and 1939, and a Norman Halo from 1941 until 1953.

In 1954, *Mount Edgecombe* was converted for use as the *Studley Park Private Hospital*.⁹ In c.1967 the Studley Park Road frontage of the property was developed with a block of flats being constructed on the property's front garden and driveway (51 Studley Park Road). The subject property was renumbered to 26 Edgecombe Street from this date.¹⁰

In 1982 major extensions were constructed to the south and east of the original house as the private hospital was converted to a nursing home for the elderly.¹¹ In 2004, an application to demolish the 1982 extensions and construct a new two-storey building (comprising two units) on the southern section of the block was approved.¹² In 2005, the new building, designed by Onoff Architects, was under construction to the south of the original building.

(Lovell Chen, 2005)

Description & Integrity

24-26 Edgecombe Street, Kew, is a large double-storey mid-Victorian villa in the Italianate style. The simple hipped roof is clad with glazed terracotta tiles and penetrated by multiple rendered chimneys with moulded caps. The walls are of overpainted ruled ashlar rendered brickwork on a bluestone plinth with moulded string courses. A c.1920s¹³ porte-cochère with parapeted balcony and squared columns defines the main entrance to the building which has always been from the north, reflecting the original Studley Park Road address. The north and west elevations are divided into bays by regular and repetitive fenestration; each opening has moulded architraves and contains timber-framed double-hung sashes.

As well as the 1880s additions to the building and the 1920s porte-cochère, more recent alterations include the addition of wrought iron gates to the porte-cochère, the inclusion of a permanent vent into two of the first floor windows of the north elevation, the replacement of the original slate roof cladding with glazed terracotta tiles, the removal of the original fence and landscape and changes to the south and east elevations related to the 1982 nursing home additions. The 1980s additions have recently been demolished and a new residential building is under construction on the southern half of the allotment.

Historical Context

The subject property is located in an area of Kew which was developed over a long period of time, initially with large villas and mansions in the late nineteenth century,¹⁴ and then with more modest residences in the early twentieth century and inter-war years. This type of staggered development was largely due to the lack of transport links in this part of Kew.¹⁵

Comparative Analysis

Edgecombe (formerly *Mount Ephraim*) is one of a relatively limited group of substantial pre-1870s villas and mansion houses in Kew, most of which have undergone some degree of alteration. It is significantly later than the A-graded *Turinville* at 53 Barnard Grove, of c.1847, or *Roseneath* at 37 Pakington Street, of the mid-1850s. In demeanour it is more comparable with the original *Studley House* at 15 Nolan Avenue, of c.1857-1875, and in size and Greek Revival suggestions with Kerr and Knight's *D'Estaville*, at 7 Barry Street. That was completed in coursed basalt with accentuated quoins, in contrast to the rendered walling and quiet detail of *Edgecombe*. *Edgecombe* looks similarly conservative and restrained alongside 1860s counterparts such as the single-storey *Wimba* at 235 Cotham Road, or Charles Vickers' vigorous and Gothicized *Ivy Grange* at 3 Malmsbury Street.¹⁶ Its plain form and early Victorian appearance compare with several other B-graded Kew houses: the single-storey 241 Cotham Road (q.v.), *Rohese* at 15 Barry Street, 6 A'Beckett Street, 1 Selbourne Road and 67 Wellington Street. But those are all Italianate and No 241 Cotham Road is much later, having been constructed in 1887. *Edgecombe* is also broadly comparable with *Como House* in Toorak: the 1855-74 sections primarily,¹⁷ though *Edgecombe* lacks *Como*'s striking parapet.

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.*

Edgecombe (formerly *Mount Ephraim*) is of local historical significance as one of a relatively limited group of substantial pre-1870s villas and mansion houses in Kew. It is also of historical interest in the local context for its association in the 1880s with Ruyton, one of the better known girls' schools in the area.

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.*

Though altered through the addition of the porte-cochère around the 1920s and the replacement of the original slate roof cladding, *Edgecombe* remains a fine example of a substantial brick villa of the late 1860s.

Statement of Significance

Edgecombe (formerly *Mount Ephraim*) is of local historical and architectural significance as one of a relatively limited group of surviving substantial pre-1870s villas and mansion houses in Kew. Though altered through the addition of the portico in the c. 1920s, the replacement of the original slate roof cladding, and rear additions, *Edgecombe* remains a fine and relatively externally intact example of a substantial brick villa of the late 1860s. It is also of historical interest in the local context for its association in the 1880s with Ruyton, one of the better known girls' schools in the area.

Grading Review

Unchanged.

Recommendations

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.

Specific:

¹ Borough of Kew Rate Books 1869, #28, person rated H. Fisher, house and land, nav £54.

² *Argus*, 29 October 1881, cited in *Melbourne Mansions* database entry.

³ Rogers, Dorothy. *A History of Kew*, 1973, p. 110.

⁴ *Argus*, 24 August 1881, cited in *Melbourne Mansions* database entry.

⁵ Rogers, Dorothy. *A History of Kew*, 1973, pp. 110-111.

⁶ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1893, Borough of Kew Rate Books 1895, #2120, person rated G S Caldwell, owner Hill, house, £145.

⁷ MMBW Detail Plan # 1293, Borough of Kew, dated 1904.

⁸ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1914 and 1915.

⁹ List of occupiers compiled from the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years.

¹⁰ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1966-1974.

¹¹ City of Boroondara Planning File, 40/409/02437, Parts 1 & 2.

¹² Planning Permit no. 03/01064, dated 7 April 2004, City of Boroondara Planning File, 40/409/02437, Parts 1 & 2.

¹³ Miles Lewis, *Melbourne Mansions Database*, 'Mount Ephraim'.

¹⁴ MMBW Plan No. 40, 1895.

¹⁵ Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, City of Kew Urban Conservation Study, vol. 1, p. 3/21.

¹⁶ Details sourced from Pru Sanderson, City of Kew Urban Conservation Study 1988, Designation A section, Citations 1-4, 6, 7.

¹⁷ Dating from Philip Goad (ed., contrib.), *Melbourne Architecture: a Guide*, Watermark, Sydney, 1999, p. 19.