
Name	House	Reference No	
Address	2 Gellibrand Street, Kew	Survey Date	22 November 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	c.1885	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Intactness Good Fair Poor

Heritage Status HV AHC NT Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

The two-storey brick house at 2 Gellibrand Street, Kew, was constructed in c.1885 for William Finlayson.¹ The Finlayson family occupied the house until the early 1900s, during which time it was 101 Gellibrand Street.² During the 1910s Duncan McGregor took up occupancy and in 1915 the house was renumbered to become 51 Gellibrand Street.³ John H James lived in the house from the mid 1920s to the early 1930s, before Michael F Sheehan became the occupant.⁴ It was during 1932 that the house became 2 Gellibrand Street, Kew.⁵ Sheehan lived in the house until the early 1950s, before George Cassidy, traveller, next purchased the property.⁶ From the late 1950s Drs Bryan and Una O'Day were the owners and occupants of the house.⁷

A number of alterations have been undertaken to the building including the erection of a steel and timber carport in 1961, and an additional carport in 1966.⁸ More recently, building permits have been issued for additions and alterations in 1991 and the construction of a garage and studio in 2000.⁹ The original verandah has been removed.

(Lovell Chen, 2005)

Description & Integrity

The house at 2 Gellibrand Street, Kew, is a large Victorian Italianate villa of brick construction and an asymmetrical composition. The hipped and gabled slate roof has bracketed eaves and overpainted brick chimneys with moulded caps. The gable end contains a circular vent with decorative cast iron cover. The façade comprises a break-fronted composition of two bays, one projecting. The recessed bay was originally screened by a verandah which has since been removed. Though the original form of the verandah is not clear, physical evidence suggests that the original verandah was single storey which was subsequently remodelled as a two-storey structure, but by 1988 was single-storey with balcony above. This was then removed altogether and replaced with a small porch.¹⁰ The bluestone

entrance steps remain and the verandah floor is bordered by a simple non-original balustrade comprising the truncated bases of turned timber posts and timber handrail. The façade is of overpainted render which originally had a ruled ashlar finish and is embellished with tooled motifs and moulded string courses, while the side elevations are of overpainted brickwork. The entrance contains a half-glazed panelled timber door with matching leadlight surrounds and non-original wrought iron screen door. The fenestration varies with tripartite groupings at both floor levels of the projecting bay and paired and single openings elsewhere; all have segmental arched heads and timber-framed double-hung sashes.

A garage and studio constructed on the southern side of the house date from 2000.¹¹ Other alterations and additions may have been carried out at the rear of the property¹² but are not visible when viewed from Gellibrand Street. The house is fronted by a non-original cast iron palisade fence and gates and the landscape contains some mature trees.

Historical Context

With their close proximity to the Kew retail hub and the Kew railway station at Denmark Street, allotments in Gellibrand Street and the surrounding area increased in desirability from the late 1880s. At the turn of the twentieth century development in the street included a number of modest brick and weatherboard residences on the western side and a few larger brick villas to the south.¹³ Further infill development occurred during the early decades of the twentieth century.

Comparative Analysis

In its scale and overall form, the house at 2 Gellibrand Street, Kew, is comparable with a small number of large villas in the area.

Otira, at 73 Walpole Street, Kew (A-graded), is a more handsome, architect-designed example constructed around two years later with similar form, detail and integrity, albeit on a grander scale and addressing two street frontages. Of more equivalent scale, the house can be compared to 6 A'Beckett Street, Kew (B-graded, recommended in this review to be downgraded to a C), which has undergone substantial renovation including reconstruction of the front verandah. The house at 71 Stevenson Street, Kew (B, also recommended in this review to be downgraded to a C), was also constructed in 1875 and is similar in scale, form, detail and integrity, with a non-original single-storey front verandah. *Kiora*, at 11 Redmond Street, of 1888 (q.v., B-graded), has a similar insistent verticality in its proportions, augmented by a tower and a (rebuilt) verandah. Nearby, 6 Gellibrand Street (B-graded) is somewhat more intact, though of a different plan.¹⁴

In considering the standing of 2 Gellibrand Street amongst its contemporaries, while the removal of the original verandah does alter the presentation of the building, it is noted that other examples variously have altered or rebuilt verandahs. Setting aside the loss of the verandah, the building does exhibit more individuality than the more conventional of its contemporaries; the projecting bay adopts a more interesting flat gable-ended form as opposed to the more common canted bay and hipped roof, and the curved drip moulding over the front wing windows is of interest, recalling those of the earlier *Myrtle Hill*, of 1873-4, at 14 Vista Avenue, Kew.

Assessment Against Criteria

Amended Heritage Victoria Criteria

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.

2 Gellibrand Street, Kew is a fine example of a substantial two-storey boom-style Victorian Italianate residence, which has been altered through the removal of its original verandah.

CRITERION E: The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.

The house deviates from the more conventional examples of two-storey asymmetrical Italianate residences of the period through the use of a flat gable-ended treatment to its projecting bay (as compared with the more common canted bay and hipped roof form). The curved drip moulding over the front wing windows is of interest.

Statement of Significance

2 Gellibrand Street, Kew is of local historical and architectural significance as a fine example of a substantial two-storey boom-style Victorian Italianate residence, albeit altered through the removal of its original verandah. The house deviates from the more conventional examples of two-storey asymmetrical Italianate residences of the period through the use of a flat gable-ended treatment to its projecting bay (as compared with the more common canted bay and hipped roof form). The curved drip moulding over the front wing windows is also of interest.

Grading Review

Unchanged.

Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

In addition, it is recommended that Council undertake a detailed review of the broader area which contains substantial numbers of C-graded Victorian, Federation and interwar houses of various form and scale. The area would include the area bounded by Cotham Road, Gellibrand Street, Fenton and Stratford Avenues and Xavier College's northern boundary. Depending on the outcome of this review, consideration should be given to identifying a Heritage Overlay precinct.

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 Book, 1885-86, #989, nav £105.

² *Sands and McDougall Directory of Victoria* 1905.

³ *Sands and McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various dates.

⁴ *Sands and McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various dates.

⁵ *Sands and McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1932.

⁶ *Sands and McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various dates; City of Kew Rate Book, 1951, #4993, nav £93.

⁷ City of Kew Rate Book, 1957, #4405, nav £172.

⁸ Details sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, #61/493, dated 13 September 1961 & #66/632, dated 1 April 1966.

⁹ Details sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, #91/5873, dated 17 December 1991 & City of Boroondara Building File, Permit No. 20000034/0, dated 2 February 2000.

¹⁰ There is evidence in the render of a concave profiled flashing abutting the wall at both the ground and first floor levels, something which could not have occurred concurrently. The 1988 Conservation Study indicates that at the time the verandah was single storey but with a balcony arrangement at first floor level (no roof). Drawings submitted to council in 1991 indicate that reconstruction of a double-storey verandah was approved as part of a larger works program but was not carried out (Building Permit #91/5873, dated 17 December 1991).

¹¹ Building Permit #0034/0, dated 2 February 2000, City of Boroondara Building File 40/408/15558.

¹² Building Permit #91/5873, dated 17 December 1991, sourced from the City of Kew Building Index.

¹³ MMBW Plan no. 65, Municipality of Kew, scale 160':1", dated c.1904.

¹⁴ As seen in the City of Kew Urban Conservation Study, 1988, Grade B listings.