
Name	House	Reference No	
Address	6 Gellibrand Street, Kew	Survey Date	22 November 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	c.1891	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Refer also to Recommendations.

Intactness Good Fair Poor

Heritage Status HV AHC NT Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

George Peake purchased allotment 130 in Crown Portion 80 in the Parish of Boroondara in 1888.¹ Peake was the organist at Holy Trinity Church, Kew, as well a conductor for the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Society between 1889 and 1911.² The house was built in c1891 for Peake, who, despite retaining ownership until 1915, only lived there until 1903.³ Subsequently, it was let to Victor Wischer from this date. Wischer purchased the house in 1915, and lived there until 1933.⁴ Dr Henry Smith later owned and occupied the house until 1956.⁵ Later occupants included V. T. Ward (c. 1956-60), R. Gamble (c.1961- 68) and Dr E. H. Byrne from the late 1960s until at least 1974.⁶

Description & Integrity

The house at 6 Gellibrand Street, Kew, is a large two-storey double-fronted late Victorian Italianate villa of brick construction and asymmetrical form. The hipped slate roof has bracketed eaves and rendered chimneys with moulded caps. The rendered façade and side wall returns display a ruled ashlar finish with overpainted brickwork elsewhere and the otherwise straight elevation is relieved by a double-height canted bay. An impressive double-height cast iron verandah screens the front elevation, following the form of the canted bay and returning on the south side to the main entrance. The verandah has a bullnose corrugated galvanized steel roof supported by Corinthian columns with cast iron balustrades at both levels, frieze and brackets and timber floor.⁷ The frieze and brackets are not original; these elements were missing at the time of the Kew Conservation Study survey in 1987-8 and have been reinstated. The main entrance, located in the south elevation, contains a panelled timber door with glazed surround and a non-original screen door. Windows have moulded architraves with keystones with timber-framed double-hung sashes; the ground floor windows have segmental arched heads.

Extensive rear additions and a garage to the north of the house were constructed in the 1960s and 1970s⁸ and the bluestone and wrought iron front fence and gates were constructed around 1963.⁹

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. By the turn of the twentieth century, a few large brick villas on modest allotments had been constructed in the southern section of the street, whilst the northern section boasted a number of modest brick and weatherboard residences on the western side.¹⁰ Further infill development occurred during the early decades of the twentieth century.

Comparative Analysis

The house at 6 Gellibrand Street, Kew, can be compared with a number of large Victorian villas located in Kew and in the broader study area. *Berrington*, 29 Sackville Street, Kew (A-graded) was constructed at a similar time and is otherwise comparable in scale, form and detail, albeit retaining its complete cast iron ornamentation. Similarly, *Lancewood*, 880 Glenferrie Road, Kew (A-graded) was constructed two years prior and exhibits similarities in form, scale and stylistic detail. All three are relatively late examples of the Italianate, though such houses continued to be built into the 1900s. 6 Gellibrand Street is enlivened by the extension of its verandah around its canted bay, where on the other two houses the verandahs are simply straight. In this it compares with the single-storey Italianate villas appearing in Camberwell at this time, as with *Hazledene*, 8 Balwyn Road Canterbury, of 1889 (q.v., B-graded), or 25 Alma Road Camberwell (q.v., B-graded), completed the same year.¹¹

The design is in contrast to Italianate designs of the period that were starting to incorporate Queen Anne and early Federation detail, such as Hyndman and Bates' 1889 *Mahlam* at 9 Selbourne Road, Kew.¹²

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.

6 Gellibrand Street is a fine and externally relatively intact example of a substantial two-storey Italianate residence, featuring an elaborately decorated two-storey 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 has an impressive and richly decorated two-storeyed verandah which extends to follow the alignment of the projecting canted bay and returns around the south side of the house, giving it a distinctive rambling quality.

Statement of Significance

6 Gellibrand Street, Kew is of local historical and architectural significance as a fine and externally relatively intact example of a substantial two-storey Italianate residence, featuring an elaborately decorated two-storey verandah. The house has an impressive and richly decorated two-storeyed verandah which extends to follow the alignment of the projecting canted bay and returns around the south side of the house, giving it a distinctive rambling quality.

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 City of Kew Rate Book, 1888, #1269, nav £52.

² Graeme Butler and Associates, Heritage Report Kew B-graded Places: selected site, March 2003, p. 2-3.

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

⁴ City of Kew Rate Books, 1915-16, #2230, nav £85.

⁵ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various dates.

⁶ Pattern of occupation derived from listings in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years between 1950 and 1974.

⁷ The datasheet produced in 1988 for the Kew Urban Conservation Study indicates that the frieze and brackets had been removed at the time.

⁸ Details sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, #164, dated 13 November 1962 (garage), #2588, dated 27 May 1971 (kitchen alterations and additions), #3126, dated 10 March 1972 (BV additions).

⁹ Details sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, #345, dated 12 March 1963.

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

¹¹ Graeme Butler, City of Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, pp. 15-16.

¹² City of Kew Urban Conservation Study, 1988, Designation A, Citation 24.