

Name	St Hilary's Church of England Parsonage	Reference No	
Address	34 Rowland Street, Kew	Survey Date	13 December 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	1889	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries

Intactness ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

Heritage Status ☐ HV ☐ AHC ☐ NT ☒ Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

The land occupied by 34 Rowland Street was originally part of the large land holding acquired by Captain Edward Dumaresq at sale in October 1851.¹ Many of the streets in the vicinity of the subject property are named for Captain Dumaresq's sons – Alfred, Edward, John, Thomas, and Rowland. Captain Dumaresq set aside some of the land at the northeast corner of John and Rowland Streets for the erection of St Hilary's Church of England which opened on 1 January 1889.² The 9 roomed two-storeyed brick house at 34 Rowland Street was built in 1890 as the parsonage.³ The architect was Alfred Purchas and a notice indicating that tenders were let for its construction appeared in the *Australasian Builder and Contractor's News* on 16 March 1889.⁴ The first pastor was Reverend H Stanley Mercer MA, with a long tenure by Reverend Henry Collier followed by the Reverend Charles Barnes after WW1, then Reverend A R Mace, and Reverend William V Lloyd, until the early 1960s.⁵ During Reverend Lloyd's tenure in 1950, a timber garage was constructed behind the residence.⁶

The church was rebuilt in 1939 and in 1962 a new parsonage had also been built in John Street, replacing the house in Rowland Street.⁷ A photograph of the Rowland Street parsonage taken in c. 1950 showing an enclosed entry porch, shutters to the front windows and over-painting of the brickwork is reproduced in C Behan McCullagh & N Gwen Rodda *St Hilary's Anglican Church, Kew 1888-1988*.⁸

The property was subsequently acquired by Dr & Mrs L H Whitaker, who made a single-storey addition to the rear, comprising a new kitchen and family room in 1962.⁹ The addition may have replaced the timber service wing which is shown on an MMBW survey plan.¹⁰ The front verandah was later reconstructed for a subsequent owner in 1992. The architect for these works was conservation architect, Nigel Lewis; there are notes on the construction drawings to the effect that 'verandah reconstruction is to be exactly in accordance with early photograph'.¹¹ Other positive conservation works have been undertaken in recent years including the removal of paint, and other unsympathetic additions and alterations.¹²

(G Butler & Associates, Kew B-graded buildings study (draft), 2001, additional research by Lovell Chen, 2005 and 2009)

Description & Integrity

34 Rowland Street is a two storey house in red brick – recently tuck pointed - with a reconstructed skillion verandah with a galvanized iron roof, timber fretwork columns with cast iron lace quadrants at each column, miniature pediments and a Japanned frieze in timber box frames. The pediments line up with the windows directly above and behind them.

With the exception of the reconstructed verandah (refer discussion below) and alterations to the central first floor window (also discussed below), the principal elevation appears to be intact to its original form. It comprises two gabled breakfront pavilions, each framing a single tall first floor sash window and fanlight, and separated by a recessed front wall with a central window, somewhat smaller than the other two. Window heads at both ground and first floor levels are in cream brick and the sills are in bluestone. Rendered cement panels are located below both ground floor windows.

The central recessed section of the facade is surmounted by the main transverse roof slope, which incorporates a lantern or dormer-like vent immediately above and behind the central window. The two flanking gables are topped by infill panels near their bargeboard apexes, and the panels have sunburst reliefs in each. The red brick of the façade is relieved by a cream brick moulded string course at first floor sill level and a cream brick band at the level of the fanlight frames. Both extend across the façade and continue along the length of the side walls. The recent tuck pointing has been undertaken in a relatively crude manner.

The main pitched roof forms are predominantly clad in slate with galvanized Colorbond ridge capping. A central rectangular section of roof is located between the principal gables and extends back from the front transverse slope; this is not visible from the street but from the aerial view appears to be clad in Colorbond or similar (replacing an earlier lead sheet cladding over wood core rolls). The chimneys are red brick with the unusual combination of stuccoed cornices and half-length vertical brick strapwork. The single-storey rear addition is not visible from the street.

A somewhat indistinct historic photograph held by the owner appears to show that the central first floor window opening has been enlarged. In its original form, the window was smaller; in the wall immediately below it was a panel or plaque-like element, possibly of a similar form to the existing rendered panels below the ground floor windows. This is reported to have been inscribed with a reference to St Hilary's.¹³ The plaque or panel has been removed and the window opening has been dropped down to the level of the bluestone sill below (which was always in this location). The window itself adopts a conventional double-hung sash form.¹⁴

In relation to the verandah to the facade, it is noted that certain elements of the reconstructed verandah vary from the drawing prepared by conservation architect Nigel Lewis in 1992. These include the direction of the diagonal elements of the timber frieze, and the use of iron brackets in place of the documented timber brackets.

Most of the garden is of recent origins. The picket fence and gate are also new. The 1904 Board of Works plan shows a back verandah, a laundry and possibly kitchen wing next to that, and a smaller outhouse by the east side fence. These are not visible from the street and may have been altered or demolished.

Historical Context

Apart from St Hilary's Church, which was later rebuilt at right angles to its original building, Rowland Street had one other house fronting it in 1904- the present No. 2 John Street (q.v., B-graded). There were five stables and outbuildings with frontages. The remaining stock was built in the Federation (including 9 Edward Street, q.v., B-graded but recommended to be downgraded to C) and interwar periods, primarily the 1920s.

Comparative Analysis

No. 34 was originally a parsonage for the first St Hilary's Church around the corner in John Street. It typifies clerical houses in the region, as with Alfred Dunn's parsonage for his Oxley Road Wesleyan Church in Hawthorn, also of 1890¹⁵: two-storied, with a broad frontage and verandah, brick striping

and Queen Anne detailing. The brick striping extends to the side walls; this, and the absolute consistency of brick usage, render the building 'facadeless' in a way appropriate to Gothic Revival ethics of honesty and direct expression, and to the related Free Style thinking that was informing applications of Queen Anne detailing¹⁶. These movements required that a building be generated and seen in the round. Queen Anne detailing is seen on the 1883 Hall next to G Allan's Presbyterian Church, Hawthorn, of 1890-1, and marked Reed, Henderson and Smart houses in Boroondara and elsewhere after *Urangeline*, 326 Barkers Road Kew, of 1883-4, or *Holyrood* of 1890 at 816 Riversdale Road Camberwell (graded A). Despite its detailing and verandah treatment, 34 Rowland Street is restrained by visual standards of the day, reflecting its use as a parsonage.

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.*

34 Rowland Street, Kew is of historical significance for its association with the history of the Church of England in Kew, and specifically with St Hilary's Church of England, established in 1889 on the corner of John and Rowland Streets in Kew.

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.*

34 Rowland Street is a fine and (notwithstanding the reconstructed verandah and changes to the first floor window) externally relatively intact example of a late nineteenth-century suburban parsonage.

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.*

It suggests a sense of restraint and physical rectitude in its stiff, plain demeanour, yet has a measure of warmth in its use of contemporary Queen Anne detailing, a balance which appropriately reflects the nature and purpose of the building.

Statement of Significance

34 Rowland Street, Kew is of local historical and architectural significance. It is of historical significance for its association with the history of the Church of England in Kew, and specifically with St Hilary's Church of England, established in 1889 on the corner of John and Rowland Streets. The house is also a fine and (notwithstanding the reconstructed verandah and changes to the first floor window) an externally relatively intact example of a late nineteenth-century suburban parsonage. It suggests a sense of restraint and physical rectitude in its stiff, plain demeanour, yet has a measure of warmth in its use of contemporary Queen Anne detailing, a balance which appropriately reflects the nature and purpose of the building.

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, G Butler & Associates, Kew B-graded places study (draft), 2001.

Specific:

¹ Rogers, Dorothy. *A history of Kew*, 1973, pp. 12-13.

² Rogers, Dorothy. *A history of Kew*, 1973, p. 201.

³ Rogers, Dorothy. *A history of Kew*, 1973, pp. 200-01.

⁴ Additional detail relating to the architect of the parsonage is drawn from the peer review by RBA Architects and Conservation Consultants, October 2008. The source of this information is given as the Miles Lewis Architectural Index.

⁵ Rogers, Dorothy. *A history of Kew*, 1973, p. 201.; *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years.

⁶ Details sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, #131, dated 16 June 1950.

⁷ Rogers, Dorothy. *A history of Kew*, 1973, p. 201.

⁸ Additional detail drawn from the peer review by RBA Architects and Conservation Consultants, October 2008.

⁹ Drawings sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, #23, dated 21 August 1962.

¹⁰ MMBW Plan no. 66, Kew, scale 160':1", dated 1904.

¹¹ Drawings sourced from the City of Kew Building Index, # 92/6169, dated 28 July 1992.

¹² Information provided to Council by current owner, April 2007.

¹³ Information provided to Lovell Chen by the current owner, September 2009.

¹⁴ This analysis of the sequence of change differs from that in the Lovell Chen, *Supplementary Report to Statement of Evidence*, December 2008, pp. 16-17. The change in view has occurred based on a closer physical inspection of the building (access kindly provided by the current owners) and brief inspection of the photograph held by the owners.

¹⁵ See Miles Lewis, *Victorian Churches*, National Trust, Melbourne, 1987, p. 74.

¹⁶ The Gothic Revival is discussed at length in Roger Dixon and Stefan Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1974, and the related movement for an architectural Free Style is discussed by Alastair Service, in *Edwardian Architecture*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1977.