
Name	House	Reference No	
Address	34 Stevenson Street, Kew	Survey Date	16 August 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	1910-11	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

Intactness Good Fair Poor

Heritage Status HV AHC NT Rec. BPS Heritage Overlay

History

Erected on land that once formed part of the Stevenson family's extensive *Clifton* estate,¹ the house at 34, originally 62, Stevenson Street was built in 1910 for Rudolph Werner, an engineer.² Werner was the founder of a leading refrigeration engineering company, R Werner & Co., which operated from Richmond and subsequently Wantirna until the early 1960s.³

Rudolph Werner occupied the house until 1922, when it was purchased by Thomas C Schlessar or Slessor.⁴ In 1974, a T C Thomas Slessor was still listed as the occupant.⁵ Rudolph Werner some years later lived at 10 Findon Crescent, Kew, which was constructed for him in 1930 (q.v., B-graded).

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

Description & Integrity

The house at 34 Stevenson Street, Kew, is a late Federation villa of brick construction which combines Queen Anne stylistic elements with the emerging bungalow style to address its prominent corner siting. The attic-storey house has a broad steeply pitched roof of slate with terracotta ridge cresting and finials, timber-lined eaves and red face brick chimneys with rendered bands. The prominent gable ends are half timbered with roughcast infill and the main gable provides a balconied terrace accessed via a timber-framed doorway flanked by a bay of timber-framed windows. A deep return verandah encircles the street frontages of the house; the bellcast roof is supported by Tuscan colonnettes which bear on face brick piers and dwarf wall, the soffit is lined with timber and the floor and steps are concrete. A convex conical turret is located at the verandah axis and the entrance is marked by a gable pediment in the verandah. The façade displays tuckpointed red face brickwork and each street frontage terminates with a projecting bay, with the bay on the south elevation containing a bay window. The main entrance faces the side street (Howard Street) and contains a polished panelled

timber door and surround with leadlight glazing. Original windows generally contain timber-framed double-hung sashes with leadlight highlights.

The front fence is largely original and comprises a red face brick pier-and-panel wall with rendered capping and non-original timber gate and pergola. The fence continues into Howard Street, where it steps up the hill, and has been altered where it meets a later carport. Alterations appear to be limited to a single-storey rear addition, swimming pool and carport which date from the mid-1980s.⁶

Historical Context

The north side of Stevenson Street in the vicinity of the subject property was characterised by Federation residences constructed following the subdivision of the mansion estates abutting Studley Park Road.

Comparative Analysis

The house at 34 Stevenson Street can be compared with a number of nearby examples including:

- 32 Stevenson Street, Kew (ungraded); the subject property is a larger, more elaborately detailed composition which reflects its prominent corner siting
- 46 Stevenson Street, Kew (C-graded); similar age, scale, integrity and composition which also reflects its corner location and also retains an original brick fence
- 6 High Street, Kew (1914, B-graded), a slightly later Federation house with similarly accentuated corner bay and simplified detail.

The attic storey composition of this house is an early announcement of a form that would recur widely through Melbourne's wealthier middle-radius suburbs - Kew, Camberwell, Malvern, Caulfield - in the interwar period. A closely related Kew design is Arthur Purnell's *Rothbry* at 35 High Street and 2 Miller Grove, Kew, of 1914 (both q.v., B-graded). Camberwell counterparts include 26 Balwyn Road, Canterbury and 22 and 24 Albion Street, Surrey Hills of 1911 (q.v., B-graded).

The pier and panel brick fence was common in Kew with transitional houses moving from Federation to more broadly bungalow form. The use of Tuscan colonnettes on dwarf face-brick walls, and juxtaposed frontal gables with sparsely detailed half-timbered spandrels was also often a characteristic of these transitional examples.

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.

34 Stevenson Street, Kew, is a good and externally highly intact example of a brick attic-storey house of the late Federation period, its simplified form suggestive of the shift toward the interwar bungalow forms.

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.

34 Stevenson Street, Kew, addresses its corner inventively through the use of a tower element, and otherwise features broad, simple and bold massing for its day. Its attic storey treatment predates interwar attic bungalow designs common in the Kew and Camberwell areas.

Statement of Significance

34 Stevenson Street, Kew is of local historical and architectural significance as a good and externally highly intact example of a brick attic-storey house of the late Federation period, its simplified form suggestive of the shift toward the interwar bungalow forms. The house addresses its corner inventively through the use of a tower element, and otherwise features broad, simple and bold massing for its day. Its attic storey treatment predates interwar attic bungalow designs common in the Kew and Camberwell areas. The house retains its original fence, albeit modified at one end.

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 Barnard, F G A. *The jubilee history of Kew, Victoria: its origin and progress*, 1910, pp. 37-8.

² Borough of Kew Rate Books 1910-11, #2756, brick, 8 rooms, nave £95.

³ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1950-59; Images of Werner refrigeration equipment are held in the Harold Paynting Collection, State Library of Victoria.

⁴ Borough of Kew Rate Books 1921-22, #4922, nav £120; *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years.

⁵ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1974.

⁶ Details and drawings sourced from the City of Kew Building Index for brick additions #1451 (dated 11 January 1985), swimming pool #1858 (dated 29 August 1985) and carport and brick fence #2200 (dated 14 March 1986)