

Name	<i>Roystead</i>	Reference No	
Address	51 Mont Albert Road, Canterbury	Survey Date	16 November 2005
Building Type	Residence	Grading	B
Date	1885	Previous Grading	B



Extent of Overlay

To be established on site. This should preferably be done in consultation with the owner.

The extent of the Heritage Overlay needs to establish a generous curtilage to the north and east sides with a more limited extent on the more altered west and south sides.

Intactness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input 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

Architects Twentyman & Askew let tenders for a new residence for tea merchant Oliver Vial in 1885.¹ The property first appears in the rate books in 1884-85 as a house and acres of land with a NAV of £110.² In 1885-86 the property was defined as 15 acres of land with a house and a NAV of £120.³ The *Camberwell Conservation Study* notes that the NAV increased to £250 in 1886-87 and to £400 in 1888-89,⁴ possibly suggesting major alterations and additions took place at this time. In 1889-90 the NAV decreased to £330 and in 1892-93 to £200.⁵ Based on an entry in the Twentyman & Askew Day Book describing 'additions to Oliver Vial's res', however, a date of 1890 seems more likely for additions to the property.⁶

By 1896-97 the property was rated in two parts; the brick house and 4 acres as having a NAV of £145, and 10 acres of land having a NAV of £50.⁷ Oliver Vial, while continuing to own Roystead, no longer occupied it, but rented it instead to George R. Rand, a gentleman.⁸ Vial again occupied the property in 1900.⁹

The MMBW Detail Plan no. 70 of c. 1905 shows *Roystead*, like other houses in the street - *Killegran* (*Kingussey*), *Banool* and *Highton* - all facing to the north away from Mont Albert Road. In the case of *Roystead*, a long carriage drive, entered from a recessed gateway on Mont Albert Road, curved around the front of the house and reached the stables on the west side of the property. At that date a tennis court was shown some distance to the north east of the property (now the Camberwell Grammar oval).¹⁰ Outbuildings were located to the west. The house is shown with verandahs facing north, south and west, two protruding room bays, and a cellar.

Alexander Macneil, a merchant and importer purchased *Roystead* from Oliver Vial in 1902.¹¹ Macneil owned Briscoe & Company, the wholesale ironmongers and merchants of 396 Little Collins Street, in

1900.¹² He owned and occupied *Roystead* until it was sold in the early 1930s to Camberwell Grammar School.¹³ The property is still part of the Grammar School complex today.

(G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, additional research by Lovell Chen, 2005)

Description & Integrity

Roystead (after which a nearby outer circle railway halt was named) is a two-storey stuccoed Italianate house designed by the practice of Twentyman & Askew and constructed in 1885, with early additions by the same architects of c.1890. Now on the consolidated Camberwell Grammar School site, the house does not address Mont Albert Road.

The principal north elevation is dominated by a two-storey arcaded verandah with arches carried on slender columns in the manner of Joseph Reed's *Ripponlea*, 1868, or Charles Webb's Hotel Windsor, of 1883-4. The arch arrangement is unusual, being of round arches on the ground floor and segmental arches on the first floor, rather than the reverse. These arcades, though part of a return verandah system, centre on the entrance bay. This forms a symmetrical episode in an otherwise asymmetrical design. At the western end of the north elevation is a two-storey wing, projecting forward to the north, with arched windows at ground floor level and rectangular windows to the first floor. Graeme Butler has suggested that this wing may date from a separate construction phase,¹⁴ and it is possible that this may have been the c. 1890 addition. The east end of the arcaded verandah returns in single-storey (originally open terrace) form around onto the east elevation. This element appears to be an (early twentieth century?) addition, and is not shown on the MMBW Detail Plan of c. 1905. It has since been built on at first floor level and partly enclosed at ground level. The terrace is terminated on the eastern elevation by an original canted bay facing east. This has fairly elaborate window settings, in arches with double-stepped reveals.¹⁵ The roof was originally slate and that is still in place, ridged with galvanized iron.

The main approach to the house is still via the central garden front steps with their balustrades sweeping round to support and dramatize a pair of pedestal lights. The front door is emphasized by a protruding bay from roof level down: marked first by a breakfront in the bracketed cornice, then by panels flanking the central verandah arch on the first floor, and finally by the imposing door and its fanlight, which has additional flanking panels. The ground floor windows are simple arched sashes with no flanking aedicules. The upper windows are oblong sashes. The ground floor verandah breaks out through its net of columns and transforms into two rounded terraces, with later tiled surfacing.

The east and north sides of the building are relatively intact to their original or early forms (other than for the addition, date unknown, of the eastern arcaded verandah with terrace above). During the twentieth century sections of the arcaded verandahs were enclosed to form additional rooms,¹⁶ including one still in place on the east side. A verandah is shown on the western side of the building on the c.1905 MMBW Detail Plan; this has been demolished. A series of single-storey extensions have been made on the west and south elevations. These include a single-storey lean-to on the west elevation (c. 1950s?). Next to that is a single-storey outbuilding of uncertain origins with hipped slate roof and, again, galvanized iron ridges, with windows and doors from different periods. It frames the south elevation, where it is linked to the house by a further addition incorporating a substation. This links up with the original or early rear wing. The south-east corner of the house is punctuated by a reinforced concrete bridge, railed in iron, which leads across to the adjacent first floor Chapel.

Incorporated into the broader Camberwell Grammar School campus, *Roystead* now retains very little of its original setting. Notwithstanding the fact that it always faced away from Mont Albert Road, the house was separated from the street by later buildings. All *Roystead's* original outbuildings have been demolished and the original approach drive has been obliterated. NOTE: Since this original report was written in late 2005, the Chapel and its accompanying buildings to the immediate south side have been entirely demolished, leaving the rear view of *Roystead* quite open, across a bare demolition site from Mont Albert Road. This work entails some alterations to *Roystead's* south side.

Historical Context

Several large villa estates were located in the area north of Mont Albert Road and east of the railway line at the turn of the twentieth century. Regardless of their street access, these were generally oriented northward to take advantage of the views. Villas included *Roystead*, *Kaleno* (to its west), *Highton*, *Myambert* and *Nowa Nowa* to the east and *Belmont* and *Larino* to the north facing

Whitehorse Road. These areas were generally subdivided in the 1920s (Central Park, Belmont Heights and Cotham Hill estates) and developed in the later interwar period.¹⁷

Comparative Analysis

Roystead compares with a number of houses in the Boroondara municipality, such as *Strathearne*, now Rossbourne House School, in Power Street Hawthorn, *Ashwick*, 2 Daniell Place, Kew, of 1887, and Reed, Henderson and Smart's *Urangeline* of 1884, now Carey Grammar, at 349 Barkers Road Kew. The first two were Italianate; the third, though in a free style with Queen Anne and Free Romanesque detailing, parallels *Roystead* in its various timber and brick additions. The *Strathearne-Ashwick* line went back to other imposing, arcaded Italianate or quasi-renaissance houses, among them Reed and Barnes' *Ripponlea* of 1868 ff.,¹⁸ or Charles Webb's arcaded *Mandeville Hall* west front of 1867 ff, interesting also for its use of bowed terraces. These houses are all a step up, compositionally and in terms of budget and resources, from the common form of double fronted stuccoed Italianate houses appearing around Australia in the 1860s-1880s. By contrast these were marked by short return verandahs, often in cast iron rather than in masonry as here, and usually framed with one or two canted bays.

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.

Though the association of this house with wealthy merchant, Oliver Vial and subsequent early owners and occupants is of interest, it is not considered to elevate the significance above that of other houses in Boroondara. The later historical association with Camberwell Grammar School (established in the mid-1880s but located on this site since the 1930s), one of the best known private schools in the area, is of more interest.

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.

Roystead is a relatively intact example of a substantial Italianate house and compares with other examples surviving in Hawthorn, Kew, Toorak and Ripponlea, which demonstrate the idea of Italian villas in the suburbs.

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.

Roystead is inventive in having modulated north side verandahs to centralize its composition and accentuate its front door. In this, various resources are used, from a breakfront cornice to a less common fanlight treatment over the north side door.

Statement of Significance

Roystead, 51 Mont Albert Road, Canterbury, is of local historical and architectural significance. It is a relatively intact example of a substantial two-storey Italianate house with a notable two-storey arcaded verandah. *Roystead* is inventive in having modulated north side verandahs to centralize its composition and accentuate its front door. In this, various resources are used, from a breakfront cornice to a less common fanlight treatment over the north side door. The building is also of historical significance for its association since the 1930s with Camberwell Grammar School.

Grading Review

Unchanged.

Recommendations

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

Identified By

G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991.

References

General: G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study, 1991.

Specific:

¹ 'Contract let in 1890 for additions to res of Oliver Vial', Twentyman & Askew Day Book, SLV MS138/3, p. 277, cited in Melbourne Mansions Data Base, record no. 2984, RB 1884-85, 605

² Shire of Boroondara Rate Book, 1884-85, 605.

³ Shire of Boroondara Rate Book, 1885-86, 834.

⁴ Shire of Boroondara Rate Books, 1886-87, 972; 1888-89, 1668.

⁵ Shire of Boroondara Rate Books, 1889-90, 84; 1892-93, 704.

⁶ Twentyman & Askew Day Book, SLV MS138/3, p. 1885, cited in Melbourne Mansions Data Base, record no. 2984,

⁷ Shire of Boroondara Rate Book, 1896-97, 379, 380.

⁸ Shire of Boroondara Rate Book, 1896-97, 379, 380.

⁹ Shire of Boroondara Rate Book, 1900-1, 395.

¹⁰ MMBW Drainage Plan # 2002, c1927?

¹¹ Shire of Boroondara Rate Book, 1901-2, 435.

¹² *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1900.

¹³ *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1910; 1920; 1930; 1935.

¹⁴ G Butler, City of Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, v.4, p. 188.

¹⁵ A favourite device of John Soane and Francis Greenway's, but here more related to sixteenth century Italian usage, as in Michele Sanmicheli's original use of the motif in his Verona gateways and palaces.

¹⁶ Some of these are visible in a c. 1968 photograph by John Collins, State Library of Victoria, image no. jc003175.

¹⁷ Refer G Butler, Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, citation for Precinct 18, v. 2.

¹⁸ Dates sourced from Philip Goad et al., *Melbourne Architecture: a guide*, Watermark, Sydney, 1999; and G Butler, Kew B-graded places study (draft) 2001.