

PLACE IDENTIFICATION FORM

ADDRESS

51 Chrystobel Crescent

TYPE

- ☒ Single Residence ☐ Multiple Unit Res.
☐ Shop ☒ Outbuildings
☐ Office ☐ Industrial Building
☐ Landscape feature ☐ Public building
☐ View ☐ Other

TITLE

"Ensignton"

EXISTING DESIGNATION

HBR ☐ GBR ☐ AHC ☐ NT ☐ VAS ☐

STREETSCAPE LEVEL

1 ☒ 2 ☐ 3 ☐
 SIGNIFICANT ☒ STREET TREES SIGNIFICANT ☒ KERB & GUTTERS

GRADING

A ☒ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐
 KEYNOTE BUILDING ☐

RECOMMENDED FOR

HBR/GBR ☒ AHC ☒ URBAN CONSERVATION AREA ☒
 VAS ☐ PLANNING SCHEME PROTECTION ☒
 CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ☐ OTHER ☐

SURVEY DATE Oct. 91.

NEG FILE 13.01.

Title
Vol.
Fol.

THEME

- ☐ Early Settlement
☐ Mansions
☐ Victorian Garden Suburb
☐ Municipal dev.
☐ 1870s growth
☒ Garden villas
☐ Working enclaves
☐ Commercial Centres
☐ Edwardian Prosperity
☐ Interwar Housing
☐ Flats and Offices

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Date 1890

Architect

Builder

Elements -

House and garden,
outbuildings

- ☐ Contributing garden ☐ Original or early hard landscape layout
☒ Landmark tree (palm) ☒ Original or early fence (lych gate only - repaired)

NOTABLE FEATURES/SIGNIFICANCE

See attached

INTEGRITY Good ☒ (roof slate replaced) CONDITION Good ☒
 Fair ☐ Fair ☐
 Poor ☐ Poor ☐

CROSS REFERENCED INFORMATION

Associated significant garden ☐

51 CHRYSTOBEL CRES.

"ENSIGNTON"

History

Robert C. Edwards, tea merchant, was the first owner of this Chrystobel Cres. brick villa described in the 1890-91 Hawthorn rate book as a brick house of nine rooms, NAV 120 pounds.²¹ It was described as a brick house of ten rooms the following year.²² Previously listed as 43 Chrystobel Cres., the house was still occupied by the Edwards family in 1919.²³

Description

The Grace Park estate was formed from several lots purchased by Michael or Julia Lynch between 1846 and 1847, forming grounds to "Grace Park House", constructed by the Lynch's before 1858.

After Lynch's death in October 1871, Julia Lynch became the owner/occupier of the house and 3 acres. In 1884 the Grace Park Estate was leased to the Grace Park Leasehold Syndicate headed by Henry Byron Moore and was subdivided soon after into the broad Serpentine Street form of the Grace Park area. Moore became insolvent in 1891 and there followed a series of convoluted lease arrangement until in 1904 the Settled Lands Act made sales possible. These commenced in 1904. Architect Christopher Cowper bought and developed 33 allotments between 1908 and 1912. An architectural competition for new buildings for this elegantly designed suburb, set a standard of high quality homes in up to date designs, on large allotments. The designs in the competition, some of which were built, and those which came later, emphasised the open garden nature of the Estate by constructing houses which addressed at least two sides. Extensive lanes to the rear kept horse/carriage and later car access away from the frontages, and allowed the high amenity of the footpath promenade under tree avenues to dominate. The centrepiece of the Estate was the creation of a Park - "Grace Park" on the lower lying land. Associated facilities for lawn tennis and cricket added status to an already desirable location, well served by train routes.

The curving railway easement to Kew was formed in 1887 but was in use for only a few years. This fortuitously reinforced the garden suburb planning by providing a park spine through the centre of the estate.

Despite the economic conditions of the 1890s several properties were developed. In the twentieth century, the character set by the earlier development was reinforced with Queen Anne and Garden Bungalow designs often by architect/developer Christopher Cowper. By the end of the First World War most land was fully developed and the distinctive character of the Precinct was set.

²¹. Hawthorn R.B. 1890-91 Western Division No. 740.

²². Ibid. 1892 Power Ward No. 3334 (NAV 120 pounds).

²³. Information supplied by Gwen McWilliam.

51 Chrystobel Cres. continued

A picturesque Italianate Villa executed in the local Hawthorn brick with render (and/or possibly cream brick) dressings. The principal facade is dominated by a gable roofed projecting wing with bayed front. The gable barge incorporates fretwork and turned droppers complimentary to the verandah. Below, the bay is detailed with a flat roof to a heavy battered cornice in imitation of stone.

The windows are slender and extend to the floor utilizing a panelled lower panel similar to Kwarau (405 Tooronga Road, 1891-92) by Beswicke and Coote. The front door is elaborately panelled utilizing small segments reflecting the unusual timber verandah decoration. A roof balcony exists now however it is not clear whether this has been increased in size. A flagpole terminates the design. At the property boundary, a lych gate of unknown date completes the picturesque composition.

Assessment

Although the design has not been attributed to a particular architect, Beswicke is a likely candidate. The windows match the contemporary Kwarau and the prominence of the overly large projecting wing is consistent with Beswicke's small house designs e.g. **

The picturesque nature of the design gives it a quality similar to the Old Colonists homes in Fitzroy of similar date. It reflects the usual qualities of architects solutions for houses in Grace Park in the competition sponsored by the Estates developers. Despite the new slate roof the whole is remarkably intact and is amongst the best examples of the design intent for the Estate. This house is an important component of the pre 1890s depression phase of development in the new garden suburb.

The lych gate may be a later addition, few others survive in Hawthorn, and indeed they were uncommon throughout Melbourne until the 1920s. Nearby, the property on the corner of Glenferrie Road incorporates a less elaborate example, probably of later date.

There are many villas of this basic pattern throughout Hawthorn, built primarily in the 1880s boom. Hawthorn Grove provides many comparable examples notably 28, 25. This example, utilizing the local building material is amongst the best.

Significance

State

1. Amongst the early buildings at the Grace Park Estate, which set the garden suburb character of the built form, it vividly describes the well-to-do housing push which consolidated Hawthorn as a garden suburb in the 1880s boom.
2. Possibly the work of Architect John Beswicke.
3. Amongst the best examples of single storey picturesque Italianate villas in Hawthorn.



(Rear 51 Chrystobel Crescent)
Many Street.