

<b>Name</b>	<i>Essington House</i>	<b>Reference No</b>	
<b>Address</b>	67 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East	<b>Survey Date</b>	27 April 2006
<b>Building Type</b>	Residence	<b>Grading</b>	C*
<b>Date</b>	1874	<b>Previous Grading</b>	C*2



#### Extent of Overlay

To title boundaries.

**Intactness** ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

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

#### History

*Essington House*, possibly named after the village in Staffordshire, was built in 1874 for banker Richard Mayston Willdredge or Willdridge, who also owned much of the land in the vicinity of this property.<sup>1</sup> Richard Willdridge died in Europe in 1889, and his widow Jane died in 1895. This prompted the sale of the Essington Estate (Willdridge's Paddock), described in 1898 as the land bounded by Mayston and Harold Streets and Burke and Camberwell Roads, according to Flint & Baillieu for the National Trustees & Executors Co.<sup>2</sup> *Essington House* was also sold and subsequently purchased by William Callaway in 1901, who renamed the house *Rheola*.<sup>3</sup> The house was again sold within a few years, returning to the name of *Essington*. The property appears to have had a chequered history, and changed hands every few years until by the mid-1940s, it was owned by Emily Thomson of Lake Boga, and was operated as an apartment house occupied by a Miss K Hayes and several others.<sup>4</sup> From 1960 the property's listing in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria* changed to read 'apartments', a function it fulfilled until at least 1974.<sup>5</sup> It has since been converted back to a single family dwelling.

(G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote Places (draft)*, 2000; Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, *Hawthorn Heritage Study*, 1992; additional research by Lovell Chen, 2006)

#### Description & Integrity

*Essington House*, 67 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, is a substantial two-storey, 1870s, stucco-clad Italianate house with a return verandah. The house presents three wings to Mayston Street, with the front wing terminated by a canted bay, and a return or wrap-around verandah. The roof has slate-cladding with iron ridge capping, and chimneys are stucco-clad and heavily sculpted around their cornices; the eaves are boxed with paired brackets used sparingly over corner piers marked with diamond bosses halfway down. These piers are plain-surfaced in render on the first floor, with a uniform quoined surfacing to the ground floor. The upper floor elevations have five moulded string courses, with the deepest of these marking the floor line and the sill point for the windows. The windows are timber-framed, double-hung sashes, with those on the Mayston Street frontage having

segmental arches and rectangular indentations below each window. The verandah has timber posts with iron brackets, a bull-nosed corrugated iron roof, and a restrained frieze contained in long rectangular frames. The posts may be from a later date and earlier assessments regarded the verandah as being non-original, which appears to be the case.<sup>6</sup> The front door and its case appear original. The fence is not original, although it may be from the interwar period; it has an accompanying cypress hedge; both are shared with the 1930s block of flats next door. Elements of the garden are long standing, as with the front conifer and the palm trees particularly. A swimming pool was added to the rear in 1985.<sup>7</sup>

### Historical Context

This property was built on the large *Essington* estate in the Camberwell Road area in 1874, for banker Richard Mayston Willdredge or Willdridge. The estate was in an area which was later subdivided, with the lots taken up by owners wanting to live in proximity to the Camberwell station. The locality then became characterized as one of several 'commuter developments' in Boroondara.

### Comparative Analysis

*Essington House*, 67 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, is a stuccoed Italianate residence of the 1870s, other examples of which can be seen in the St James Park and central Kew areas of Boroondara. Its demeanour and detail are both restrained and magisterial, not unlike the Government buildings appearing in the period. For example, the window interplay, heightened by the rectangular indentations below each window, suggest an intersection of course line and balustrade similar to those appearing on J J Clark's Government buildings of the period 1857-78. The demeanour and detail also reflect marginally earlier house designs such as Kew's *Villa Alba* in Studley Park Road (1857-75, graded A), and other single-storey Kew counterparts such as *Wimba* at 235 Cotham Road (1862-70).<sup>8</sup> Hawthorn counterparts tend to be smaller, and concentrated in the St James Park/Coppin Grove locality.

### 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.*

*Essington House*, 67 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, is a large and substantially externally intact two-storey, 1870s, stucco-clad Italianate house. It is typical of a body of larger Melbourne houses constructed between the 1850s and 1870s which often took cues from major institutional buildings such as the various government houses. The house dates from the era of grander estates in Hawthorn, and would have commanded extensive views of the inner city area.

*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.*

*Essington House*, 67 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, has a demeanour and detail that are both restrained and magisterial, not unlike the Government buildings of the mid-nineteenth century, and marginally earlier houses such as *Villa Alba* in Kew. The upper and ground floor elevations are restrained yet imposing, and effectively use a simple set of Renaissance details.

### Statement of Significance

*Essington House*, 67 Mayston Street, Hawthorn East, is of local historical and architectural significance. It is a large and substantially externally intact two-storey, 1870s, stucco-clad Italianate house, and one of a body of larger Melbourne houses built between the 1850s and 1870s which were influenced in their design by institutional buildings such as the various government houses. Architecturally, it has a demeanour and detail which are both restrained and magisterial, with the upper and ground floor elevations being restrained yet imposing, and effectively using a simple set of Renaissance details.

### Grading Review

Unchanged.

## Recommendations

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

## Identified By

Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, *Hawthorn Heritage Study*, 1992.

## References

*General:* (G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote Places (draft)*, 2000; Meredith Gould Conservation Architects, *Hawthorn Heritage Study*, 1992.)

*Specific:*

<sup>1</sup> Borough of Hawthorn Rate Books, 1874-75, #250, cited in Meredith Gould, *Hawthorn Conservation Study*, 1992; Gwen McWilliam, *Hawthorn Peppercorns*, 1978, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Essington Estate* plan, 1898, State Library of Victoria.

<sup>3</sup> City of Hawthorn Rate Books, 1901-02, #7031, cited in G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote places (draft)*, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> City of Hawthorn Rate Books, 1945-46, #12248, cited in G Butler & Associates, *Hawthorn Keynote places (draft)*, 2000; an entry in the City of Hawthorn Building Index indicated that a permit was applied for to divide the building into two apartments. This entry is not dated but is prior to 1950.

<sup>5</sup> Pattern of occupation derived from listings in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, various years between 1944/5 to 1974.

<sup>6</sup> See Meredith Gould, *Hawthorn Conservation Study*, 1992. 'Essington House'.

<sup>7</sup> City of Hawthorn Building Card Index: Permit #2053, n.d. ('2 apart's'); and #1164, dated 21 February 1950 ('adds'). The swimming pool was Permit #3439 (1863), dated 15 October 1985, and it was completed around 3 June 1986.

<sup>8</sup> See Pru Sanderson, *Kew Urban Conservation Study 1989*, v. 2, citations 3 and 6.