

PLACE IDENTIFICATION FORM

ADDRESS

1 Shakespeare Grove

TYPE

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

TITLE

"Richmond House", "Hawthorn House"

EXISTING DESIGNATION

HBR [] GBR [] AHC [] NT [] VAS []

STREETSCAPE LEVEL

1 [] 2 [X] 3 []

SIGNIFICANT [] SIGNIFICANT [X]

STREET TREES KERB & GUTTERS

GRADING

A [X] B [] C [] D [] E []

KEYNOTE BUILDING []

RECOMMENDED FOR

HBR/GBR [X] AHC [X] URBAN CONSERVATION AREA [X]
 VAS [] PLANNING SCHEME PROTECTION [X]
 CULTURAL LANDSCAPE [] OTHER []

SURVEY DATE

Nov. 91.

NEG FILE

41.16.

Title

42.26,27

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 1874-1888

Architect J.T. Conlan

(see below)

Builder Plowman and Hill

Elements (1888)

☐ Contributing garden☐ Original or early hard landscape layout☐ Landmark tree☐ Original or early fence

NOTABLE FEATURES/SIGNIFICANCE

See attached

INTEGRITY

Good [X] to 1888

Fair []

Poor []

CONDITION

Good [X]

Fair []

Poor []

CROSS REFERENCED INFORMATION

Associated significant garden []

The site information given above has been determined from external street level inspection.

1877-1878 additions (Conlan and Salway)

1888 extended with tower (J.A.B. Koch)

1972-1973. 2 large bluestone wings added at rear.

1 SHAKESPEARE GROVE

"RICHMOND HOUSE"

History

Originally known as "Richmond House", this handsome brick towered residence was built in stages. In the 1874-75 Hawthorn rate book, Charles Levy was listed as the owner/occupier of a house in Shakespeare Grove, NAV 120 pounds.¹ Levy, of the Australian Boot Factory next to Young and Jackson's Hotel, bought two blocks of land in Shakespeare Grove in 1872.² Levy's home, "Richmond House", was reputedly built in 1873-74 from the designs of the architect, James T. Conlon, a relative of Levy, the Prussian-born merchant.³ A tender notice appeared in the *Argus* of 10 October, 1874 in which Conlon invited tenders for the erection of a two storey villa residence at St. James Park, Hawthorn. Later, in September 1877 and October 1878, the architectural firm of Conlon and Salway invited tenders for alterations and additions to "Richmond House" in St. James Park.⁴ Ten years later, in 1888, the distinguished architect J.A.B. Koch, extended the house further and added a tower. The building contractors were Plowman and Hill.⁵

Charles Levy, financier and merchant, owned a number of small pieces of real estate in Hawthorn in Auburn Road, Melville and Church Streets. He was also interested in music and occasionally supplied orchestral scores to the Victorian orchestra. The Levy family remained at 1 Shakespeare Grove (known earlier as No. 80) until World War I. At that time, it became the property of the Carson family of Kew. In the early 1920s, it was converted into four flats and known as "Tower House". More recent owners, the Hossack family, renamed the property "Hawthorn House".⁶

Description

A two storey mansion with three stage tower set on the side. The Shakespeare Grove elevation comprises a projecting hipped wing with bay at the ground level and a ground level colonnade adjoining. Above is a first floor balcony, unroofed, as is the first floor bay balcony. The render mouldings are particularly fine. Corners and openings have a chamfered edge to the reveal and extensive use is made of acanthus motifs in string courses and as pilasters. The eaves comprise heavy brackets and the arched openings are defined by render mouldings. Weird short render piers with orb heads are used on the balconies. On-site inspection is required to determine their date. Between the piers is a fine (probably wrought iron) balustrade.

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1. Hawthorn RB 1874-75 No. 22.
 2. Gwen McWilliam, "Burwood Park", 1988, p.133.
 3. Miles Lewis, "*Australian Architectural Index*".
 4. *Argus* 3 Sept. 1877 (p.3); Ibid 7 Oct. 1878 (p.2).
 5. *ABCN* 21 April, 1888.
 6. McWilliam, op. cit.

1 Shakespeare Grove continued

Access to the house is via the colonnade at the front of the house. As the tower is a later addition it does not have a key functional role in the scheme. The tower is set on a bluestone base. The lowest level is heavily ruled. Substantial string courses divide the three stages, with the top stage, which rises free of the roof, the most elaborate, particularly wide eaves set on paired brackets completes the design.

Assessment

The building was constructed in several stages. It appears to be intact to its 1888 form on the two principal elevations. On-site inspection is required to confirm this. The basic projecting wing and colonnade form is a standard mansion house design used by a wide variety of designers, notably John Beswicke. The adaptation to a first floor balcony, rather than a repeated colonnade is unusual. Given its use on the ground floor bay roof it would appear at least to be an 1888 feature.

The first architect, Conlon, was in private practice in the 1870s on his own. He apparently also undertook work with the prolific architect Salway, although these two are not listed together in the *Architects Index*.

How much of the existing elevation belongs to the design of Koch in 1888 is not clear. The tower is certainly his design. The geometric pattern to the iron balustrade has similar qualities to his favoured Greek maze pattern, seen in a number of locations in Hawthorn, including 25 Shakespeare Grove nearby. Koch was a prominent architect in the late nineteenth century. His designs are distinctive, often rather flat but with close attention to render details. This can be seen particularly well at Oxford, 21 Isabella Grove of 1887 probably his best Hawthorn work and amongst his best in Melbourne. Koch designed at least two other buildings in the St. James Park estate at 25 Shakespeare Grove and 21 Isabella Grove. This design, as it eventually was formulated excludes the showy, opulent designs of the boom period. Its prominent location emphasises the symbol of the mansion in a tower. There are many towered designs in St. James Park but none more prominent than this one.

This property describes all the basic principals of the St. James Park mansion, garden suburb. It is a local landmark and amongst the finest boom style mansions of Melbourne.

Significance

State

1. Architecturally significant as one of the best examples of boom style mansions in Melbourne.
2. A landmark in St. James Park and a vital part of the Urban Conservation Area.

1 Shakespeare Grove continued

3. Architecturally significant for its association with the major architect J.A.B. Koch.
4. This important brick towered residence constructed in stages between 1874 and 1888 has historical significance for its associations with Charles Levy, Prussian-born financier and merchant, of the Australian Boot Factory next to Young and Jackson's Hotel. The Levy family owned and occupied the property until the World War 1 period. It is a splendid example of the fine homes built in the prestigious St. James Park area last century for affluent business and professional men and their families.

