

53 BARNARD GROVE, 'TURINVILLE'

Original Use: Residence

Date of Construction: circa 1847¹

Architect: Probably John Gill²

DESIGNATION A

CITATION NO.1



HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

The first owner of 'Turinville' was John William Cowell, a wealthy hotelier³ who ran, amongst other ventures, the Royal Hotel in Collins Street.⁴ Cowell bought Lots 58 and 59, both of 62 acres, at a land sale in January 1845 and on 17 November 1847, the architect John Gill called tenders for a '... dwelling for J.W. Cowell on the banks of the Yarra, near Richmond Punt'.⁵ It is probable that this related to 'Turinville'. The Richmond punt, while four kilometers away, was one of the few landmarks in the area and Gill had carried out alterations and additions to the Royal Hotel for Cowell the previous year. Of the other people to have owned and occupied the house (subsequent to Cowell) most did so for quite a short period, and included Waldron Johnson, also a hotel licensee, c.1863, Benjamin Armitage and in 1870 Archibald Smart who became Mayor of Kew in 1875.⁶

In 1853, an advertisement that appears to describe the house, was placed in a Melbourne newspaper: 'To Let, those extensive and delightful Premises known as the Residence of the late J.W. Cowell, Esq., situated on the Yarra River, about 4 miles from Melbourne, consisting of a dwelling house, stables, coach house, orchard, garden paddocks, and other erections too numerous to mention. The whole have been erected without any regard to expense by the late Proprietor, and for healthy situation and delightful scenery cannot be surpassed by any around Melbourne ...'⁷

As it stands, Turinville does not clearly display such an early date of construction and requires a close inspection internally and externally to verify what parts of the house date from the 1840s. It is a single storeyed house, the front facade dominated by a cast iron decorated verandah that appears to have been added in about the 1870s. The verandah spans the front facade and wraps around a polygonal bay unit that would also appear to be a later addition. The extant area of garden includes some old trees including *Ficus* sp.

SIGNIFICANCE

'Turinville' appears to retain fabric that dates from the 1840s and it was almost certainly designed by John Gill. The significance of the house stems from these factors and requires establishing after a detailed on-site analysis and dating of its fabric.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

HBR: Recommended for inclusion on the register.

GBR: N/A

RNE: Recommended for inclusion on the register.

National Trust: Recorded No.1233

¹ Sawyer, T., Memo to National Trust of Aust.(Vic), File No.1233, dated 28 May 1985

² *ibid.*

³ Rogers, D., *A History of Kew*, p.8

⁴ Sawyer, *loc.cit.*

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ Rogers, *op.cit.*, p.9

⁷ Architects' Index, University of Melbourne, *Argus* 22 January 1853, p.3

This building is the oldest in Kew, and one of the oldest in Victoria, and is largely intact. It was also designed by a prominent early architect, John Gill. It is clearly of A significance and has been nominated to the Historic Buildings Council by its owner.