

25 SWINTON AVENUE, 'FORMERLY LASKEY VILLA'

Original Use: Residence
Date of Construction: 1859¹, 1860s and 1880s
Architect: Richard Lambeth²

DESIGNATION A
CITATION NO.5



HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

Edmund Laskey Splatt was the original owner and occupier of this early brick and render house³. Splatt held the property until about 1875 when he sold to Francis Johnson⁴ who renamed the villa 'Swinton'. The house appears to have been built in three stages⁵, however a close analysis of the fabric would be needed to verify the stages. The most outstanding element of the design of the house is however the tower, with its cantilevered walkway and heavily bracketed pyramidal tower. Very few of this type were built in Victoria, with the Matthew Flinders School in Geelong by Backhouse and Reynolds being one of the few. As such, this house is one of the earliest examples of the Italianate in Melbourne.

SIGNIFICANCE

Swinton is of significance as one of the earliest examples of the use of the Italianate in Australian domestic architecture, and for the elegance of its design, particularly in the tower.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

HBR: Recommended for inclusion on the register.

GBR: N/A

RNE: Recommended for inclusion on the register.

National Trust: Recorded No.1230

¹ Architects' Index, University of Melbourne

² *ibid.*

³ Fisher, D., 'History and Conservation Investigation Project: Kew Conservation Study', Department of Architecture, University of Melbourne, 1984

⁴ Rogers, D., *Lovely Old Homes of Kew*, p.33

⁵ Fisher, *loc.cit.*

Although it appears to have undergone alterations to the interior, the external fabric of this building is of great interest, justifying the A classification of the building.