

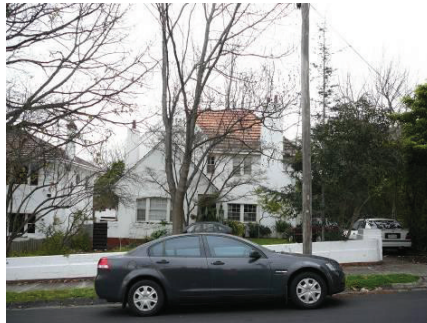
Precinct	Howard Street Precinct, Kew	Reference No	
Streets	Howard Street	Survey Date	20 August 2008



Howard Street Precinct: Heritage Overlay plan.



21 Howard Street (1935-36; significant).



Clockwise from top left: 11 Howard Street (c. 1936; contributory); 13 Howard Street (c. 1936; contributory); 17 Howard Street (1935-36; contributory); 15 Howard Street (c. 1935; contributory).



Clockwise from top left: 19 Howard Street (1935-36; significant); 21 Howard Street (1935-36; significant); 25 Howard Street (c. 1934; significant); 23 Howard Street (c. 1934; significant).

History

The land which forms this precinct was first sold during the early land sales in the mid nineteenth century. Allotment 76, measuring 126 acres and located south-west of the intersection of Studley Park Road and High Street, was sold to John Bakewell on the 18 September 1851.¹ Most of the land bought by Bakewell was subdivided and resold by him in the 1850s. The portion of land between Studley Park Road and a reserved road that became Stevenson Street was sold to John Stevenson for £1713.15s in February 1854.²

The west side of Howard Street, upon which the precinct is sited, was formerly the site of the house *Oakwood* and its grounds, which were subdivided in c. 1933.³ The home was the residence of George Lush (1846-1932), a merchant and philanthropist, who owned the property from c. 1888 until 1932. However, the houses to the south end of Howard Street appear to have been constructed earlier than this date and indicate that a portion of the estate to Stevenson Street may have been developed several years earlier.⁴ This is borne out by an examination of the MMBW detail plan for this western portion of Kew, dated 1904.⁵ The latter shows the *Oakwood* estate divided into three portions, from east to west, as fenced paddocks. The southernmost of these paddocks accounts for roughly one third of the land holding, approximating the allotments 1-7 Howard Street. In 1933 *Oakwood*, at that time numbered 45 Studley Park Road, was occupied by Mrs Matilda Lush, presumably the widow of George Lush. The subdivision of the remainder of the *Oakwood* estate took place that year with the house presumably demolished shortly after. By the following year the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria* annotated the land to Studley Park Road between Howard and Thornton streets with 'house being built' and by 1936, two allotments, numbered 43 and 45 occupied the Studley Park Road frontage of the estate.⁶ To Howard Street, the subdivision initiated the construction of a cohesive group of eight interwar houses – numbered 11 to 25 Howard Street – on generous allotments, extending back to Thornton Street behind.

The adoption of the traditional linear form of subdivision was dictated by the comparatively narrow width of the estate allotment, bounded by pre-existing streets to both its east and west – Howard and Thornton Streets respectively. The 'court' model, seen in a modest form in the 'Iona' estate (Berkeley Court) and in a substantial form in the 'Clutha' estate, both to the immediate west of this precinct, was not practicable. The subdivision of the *Oakwood* estate was therefore dictated by its surroundings, resulting in a modest number of allotments.

An examination of the listings in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria* during the mid-1930s indicates that the eight properties comprising the precinct were constructed within a five year period.⁷

Description

The Howard Street precinct consists of eight allotments located on the west side of Howard Street, which were subdivided from the grounds of the house *Oakwood* in 1933 and built upon in the period to 1937. The allotments are all large in size and regularly shaped, with rear boundaries extending west to Thornton Street.

With one exception, the residences of the precinct are constructed in the Old English building style, typically featuring half timbered gables and steeply pitched tiled roofs. All houses, bar one are two storey. The houses are all of brick and several have decorative brickwork or stone trim and dressings. In the case of 13 and 17 Howard Street, the impact of these style characteristics has to a minor degree been muted by over-painting.

15 Howard Street eschews the Old English style in favour of a two storey Moderne residence of rendered brick with clinker and specialty brick elements including capping, several of which have been over-painted. The presently white painted finish limits its visual divergence from the Old English style houses which flank it, with which it otherwise shares broad characteristics of scale and siting.

The buildings all have a uniform setback from the street with large landscaped front gardens, several of which are original or of long-standing planting and landscaping. All have side driveway access which leads to a garage at the rear of the house, or in some cases to car accommodation at the side

of the house. The majority of the properties retain their original low brick and/or stone front fences with those to 23 and 25 Howard Street sharing the same fence form and design.⁸

The residences are all largely intact to their more visible elevations, with the alterations that have taken place being mostly modest and sympathetic. The precinct remains readable as a cohesive 1930s subdivision.

Comparative Analysis

The houses which comprise 11-25 Howard Street are a contiguous row of exemplar dwellings in the later interwar style. They were built in unusually quick succession over approximately five years while, in comparative terms, other Boroondara interwar subdivisions tended to develop more slowly, with sometimes lengthy gaps during the Great Depression and at the end of the period, World War II.

In terms of architectural interest and skilful design and execution, these houses broadly compare with significant examples in Camberwell such as 92 Mont Albert Road (1926) by Barlow and Hawkins, or 660 Riversdale Road (1938). Closer to this area, 12 Tara Avenue (1938-39; HO348), is a similarly well-crafted house adopting the Old English style, and has the distinction of being built as the subsequent residence for the first owners of 19 Howard Street. Howard Street's Old English style and its variants also compare with examples in Camberwell's Golf Links Estate (HO1) and Holyrood Estate and Environs (HO228) Heritage Overlay precincts, and with the Reid Estate (HO192) Heritage Overlay precinct in Balwyn.

The plunging, hyper-picturesque front gables to 19, 23 and 25 Howard Street relate to Camberwell builder-designed houses such as 125 Highfield Road (1933), and counterparts in the Holyrood Estate and Golf Links precincts. Several of the houses in this precinct also mix Old English and Georgian treatments, a hallmark of the Reid Estate in Balwyn.

Assessment Against Criteria

Criterion A - Importance to the course, or pattern, of the City of Boroondara's cultural history.

The Howard Street precinct is of historical significance as an example of the pattern of subdivision of the large Victorian-era estates fronting Studley Park Road, Kew during the twentieth century, and as a highly readable 'essay' in the interwar Old English domestic style of architecture. The latter style was much favoured in this general period in affluent pockets of Boroondara. The houses in the precinct were also constructed in unusually quick succession over a five year period, a concentrated burst of building activity expressing this popular building style.

Criterion B - Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Boroondara's cultural history.

Not applicable.

Criterion C - Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Boroondara's cultural history.

Not applicable.

Criterion D - Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or objects.

Not applicable.

Criterion E - Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Aesthetically, the Howard Street precinct is significant as an intact precinct in which seven of the eight original property owners commissioned houses adopting the Old English style, with individual dwellings providing evidence of differing but still related architectural approaches. These range from

the elaborate full-blown 'Gingerbread House' attic style of 19 Howard Street; to variations employing decorative brickwork and dramatic pitched roof forms, such as 21, 23 and 25 Howard Street; and also to those with more traditional floor plans and forms but utilising half timbering, clinker brickwork and decorative stone trim to imbue the residences with an Old English flavour, such as with 11, 13 and 17 Howard Street.

The aesthetic significance of the precinct is further enhanced by the uniform property street setbacks and large landscaped front gardens, several of which are original or of long-standing planting and landscaping. The retention of original low brick and/or stone front fences adds to this aspect of significance. While the building at 15 Howard Street adopts a Modern style in rendered brick, the siting and scale of the building are consistent with those in the Old English style.

Criterion F – Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Not applicable.

Criterion G – Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

Not applicable.

Criterion H – Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the City of Boroondara's history.

Not applicable.

Statement of Significance

What is significant?

The Howard Street precinct is a component of the 1933 subdivision of the former *Oakwood* estate, and one of a succession of subdivisions of former large estates fronting the south side of Studley Park Road, Kew. The subdivision in this case provided a small number of deep allotments which predominantly had brick dwellings in the popular Old English style built upon them, typically featuring half timbered gables and steeply pitched tiled roofs. All houses bar one are two storey and several have decorative brickwork or stone trim and dressings. The buildings also have uniform street setbacks; large landscaped front gardens, several of which are original or of long-standing; and the majority retain original low brick and/or stone front fences. The residences are all largely intact to their more visible elevations, and the precinct remains readable as a cohesive 1930s subdivision.

Specific buildings of individual and contributory significance which are important to the precinct are identified in the attached schedule.

How is it significant?

The Howard Street precinct is historically and architecturally significant to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Historically, the Howard Street precinct is important for its demonstration of the continuing pattern of subdivision of the formerly large estates on the south side of Studley Park Road, Kew during the interwar years, and as a highly readable 'essay' in the Old English domestic style of architecture. The latter style was much favoured in this general period in affluent pockets of Boroondara. The houses in the precinct were also constructed in unusually quick succession over a five year period, a concentrated burst of building activity expressing this popular building style.

Architecturally, the Howard Street precinct is significant as an intact precinct in which seven of the eight original property owners commissioned houses adopting the Old English style, with individual dwellings providing evidence of differing but still related architectural approaches. These range from

the elaborate full-blown 'Gingerbread House' attic style of 19 Howard Street; to variations employing decorative brickwork and dramatic pitched roof forms, such as 21, 23 and 25 Howard Street; and also to those with more traditional floor plans and forms but utilising half timbering, clinker brickwork and decorative stone trim to imbue the residences with an Old English flavour, such as with 11, 13 and 17 Howard Street. While the building at 15 Howard Street adopts a Modern style in rendered brick, the siting and scale of the building are consistent with those in the Old English style.

The aesthetic significance of the precinct is further enhanced by the uniform property street setbacks and large landscaped front gardens, several of which are original or of long-standing planting and landscaping. The retention of original low brick and/or stone front fences adds to this aspect of significance.

Recommendations

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

External Paint Controls	No
Internal Alterations Controls	No
Tree Controls	No
Outbuildings and fences exemptions	No
Victorian Heritage Register	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted	No
Incorporated plan	No
Aboriginal heritage place	No

Identified By

Lovell Chen, Assessment of Heritage Precincts in Kew, 2013.

References

General: Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, Kew Urban Conservation Study, 1988; Lovell Chen, Review of B-graded buildings in Kew, Camberwell and Hawthorn, January 2007 (revised June 2007 and November 2009).

Specific:

- ¹ Parish of Boroondara, plan B 415(5), undated.
- ² D Rogers, *A History of Kew*, 1973, p.76.
- ³ Cited in G Butler, G Butler & Associates, Kew B-graded places study (draft), 2001, AP 37618 Registrar General's Office; Central Plans.
- ⁴ This is borne out by an examination of listings for Howard Street in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, for the 1920s and 1930s. There are listings for houses at 1-5 Howard Street from 1927.
- ⁵ MMBW Detail Plan no. 40 Collingwood & Kew, Scale 1" = 40', dated 1904, State Library of Victoria.
- ⁶ Pattern of occupation derived from listings in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, 1930 - 1936.

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- ⁷ Based on an examination of listings for Howard Street in the *Sands & McDougall Directory of Victoria*, for the years 1932-1940.
- ⁸ 13 Howard Street has a high rendered brick fence and non-original iron gates; the existing dwarf brick fence to 19 Howard Street was constructed in 1960. Details of the latter were sourced from the City of Kew Building Index #995, dated 14 November 1960.

Precinct		Reference No		
Howard Street Precinct, Kew				
Number	Street Address	Current Grading	Previous Heritage control /listing	Approximate Construction Date
11	Howard Street	Contributory	C grade	c. 1936
13	Howard Street	Contributory	C grade	c. 1936
15	Howard Street	Contributory	C grade	c. 1935
17	Howard Street	Contributory	C grade	1935-36
19	Howard Street	Significant	HO316; B grade	1935-36
21	Howard Street	Significant	C grade	1934
23	Howard Street	Significant	C grade	c. 1934
25	Howard Street	Significant	C grade	c. 1934