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# Kew East Primary School No 3161



Kew East Primary School  
No.3161



Kew East Primary mature  
Monterey Cypress trees on  
Windella Avenue and  
Beresford Street

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## Location

35 Kitchener Street KEW EAST, BOROONDARA CITY

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Incl in HO area indiv sig

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO833

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - November 17, 2021

What is Significant?

Kew East Primary School No. 3161 at 35 Kitchener Street, Kew East, is significant. The school was officially opened in 1923. The following elements are significant: the 1923 Main Building (Senior School), the 1929 Infants School (Junior School); and the nine mature Monterey Cypress trees planted along the Windella Avenue and

Beresford Street boundaries.

How is it significant?

Kew East Primary School No. 3161 is of local historical, architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Kew East Primary School No. 3136 is historically significant for the evidence it provides of an early phase in the development of Kew East which gathered momentum from the 1920s, as housing developed rapidly and the population increased in response to the extension of the High Street tram to Harp Road then Burke Road then improved tram connections between the area and the city. The first building on the site was the 1923 Main Building (Senior School), with the Infants School added in 1929 illustrating the enlarged school population. (Criterion A)

Architecturally, the Kew East Primary School No. 3161 is a fine example of the interwar school buildings exemplified in the work of the Victorian Public Works department under Chief Architect E. Evan Smith at either end of Smith's role as Chief Architect (1922-29); the Main Building was designed in 1922 (opened 1923) and the Infant School building in 1928 (opened 1929). Smith's leadership of the Department from 1922-29 corresponded with the construction of a number of fine schools that expressed contemporary ideas of civic beauty through the use of classical styles, an emphasis on axiality and, at times, Palladian plans. These include several examples of State significance including University High School Parkville, Bendigo Senior Secondary College, and Kyneton Secondary College. Kew East Primary School is one of several interwar schools within Boroondara including Camberwell South, Ashburton, Chatham and Hartwell Primary Schools, that were designed and built under Smith's leadership. (Criterion D)

Kew East Primary School is aesthetically significant for its use of restrained classical elements on the dignified 1923 Main Building (Senior School), and for the prominent Spanish Mission style portico to the U-shaped Infants School building. The 1923 building is distinguished through its use of face red brick with concrete sills and lintels around the regularly spaced multi-paned sash windows and terracotta tile hip roof. It is distinguished from other school buildings designed by Smith in the early 1920s, for the asymmetry of the design, utilised to compensate for the gently sloping site. The 1929 Infant School is distinguished by its use of red face brick and terracotta tile and the distinctive and elegant front porch, which comprises a simple white block with elegant pillars that flow smoothly into its three arches. The relatively low-pitched gable roof above the assembly hall of the Infants School provided for the inclusion of clerestory windows into a standard school design, allowing additional light into the building and its assembly hall, and are representative of innovations of infant school design from the mid-1920s. Whilst some external changes have taken place to the school as a whole, the 1923 and 1929 buildings contribute strongly to the school's interwar character. The integrity of the Kew East Primary School is enhanced by the early boundary plantings of Monterey Cypress trees, now large, landmark trees in the streetscape and which contribute to the aesthetic qualities of the school grounds. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - City of Kew Urban Conservation Study, Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, 1988; Boroondara - Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study Volume 5: Kew East and Mont Albert, Context, 2018;
Architect/Designer	Public Works Department,
Hermes Number	118778
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

Kew East Primary School occupies a rectangular site, with three boundaries coincident with surrounding streets: Kitchener Street (south); Windella Road (east); and Beresford Street (north). The western boundary is coincident with the rear boundaries of properties fronting Belford Road.

The school buildings are mainly distributed across the southern and eastern portions of the site, with a playing field to the west and a playground north of the 1929 Infant School building.

The 1923 Main Building, currently known as the Senior School, is a double-storey red face brick building, with terracotta tile hipped roof. The building is asymmetrical in plan and elevation with a three-storey wing at the western end. Windows are multi-paned, vertically proportioned, with six-paned transom lights above, generally grouped in fours on the principal elevation, except at ground level of the three-storey section where they appear singly above smooth rendered panels. Detailing is restrained, limited to contrasting concrete bands of the lintels and sills, rendered band that enwraps the building at first floor sill height, corbelled brick work on the chimneys, and the smooth rendered panel with decorative mouldings for the school name: 'Kew East School 3161'. An air conditioner is unsympathetically located on the external wall of the ground floor principal facade.

The 1929 Infants School building, currently known as the Junior School, is also red brick with a terra cotta tiled hip roof, but single storey, with a striking projecting Spanish Mission style portico with three arched openings. Like the 1923 building, the windows are tall, vertically-proportioned six-paned double-hung timber sash with six-paned transom lights above. They occur in singles. U-shaped in plan, the symmetrical building enwraps a central gabled roof with clerestory windows that was designed as a light-filled, high-ceilinged assembly hall.

In addition to the two original school buildings (the 1923 Main Building and the 1929 Infant School), the site comprises a range of more recent buildings, including lightweight portable classrooms (weatherboard, fibreboard, and metal clad), a modern brick office building behind a high red face brick wall between the 1923 and 1929 buildings, and two further brick buildings of different eras behind the office building. Covered walkways link these central brick buildings with the 1923 and 1929 buildings. A more recent building sits adjacent to the northern boundary of the site.

The school grounds are planted with mature and more recently introduced trees, a mix of Australian native trees, deciduous exotics and mature Monterey cypress. The mature Monterey Cypress trees evenly spaced along the Beresford Street and Windella Avenue boundaries make a prominent contribution to the landscape character of the school and the surrounding streetscape.

Externally, both interwar school buildings have high integrity and new school buildings have been added to the side and rear rather than as additions.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*