
14-16 Princess Street

Location

14-16 Princess Street KEW, BOROONDARA CITY

Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO522

Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant

Nos 14-16 Princess Street is a pair of large, wide, parapeted and terraced two storey brick and stuccoed houses constructed in c.1889-90. The terraces were originally built by Henry Rowlands, ironmonger, who owned the buildings until at least 1896 and rented the dwellings to a series of tenants. In more recent times the terraces have been adapted to commercial use and truncated to the rear where a very substantial modern three-level addition, with carparking in an undercroft at grade level, is attached to the east side of the buildings. This addition is not significant. The terraces have double-height verandahs facing Princess Street and share a wing wall and piers, the prominent parapet dominated by central mouldings with clamshells, and cast iron verandah friezes and palisade fence to the front (west) boundary. The front windows are double-hung timber-framed sashes. The location of the property, with car access to either side and the public carpark to the rear, allows for an unusually high degree of visibility of the building 'in the round', including the substantial rear addition.

How is it Significant

The two storey terrace houses at 14-16 Princess Street, Kew, are of historical and architectural significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it Significant

The two storey terrace houses at 14-16 Princess Street, Kew, constructed in c.1889 for ironmonger Henry Rowlands, are of local historical significance. While the historical context for the properties has changed dramatically, including through the adjoining supermarket and carpark development, the buildings remain as prominent surviving historic terrace houses in this area of Kew, and highly visible on busy Princess Street.

The terrace houses are also of local architectural significance, as an externally generally well-preserved (to the main front components of the building) and prominent pair of terrace houses, dating from the late Boom period, and retaining much original external detailing and fabric. As stuccoed two-storey terrace houses, they are also comparatively unusual in the Boroondara context. Distinguishing architectural details include the prominent parapet dominated by two central mouldings, with semicircular clamshells; the 'mirror' treatment of the elevations; the use of bracketed scroll consoles, moulded string courses, and vermiculated panels and rosettes; verandah friezes; piers and wing walls; and palisade fence on bluestone plinth.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - City of Kew Urban Conservation Study, Pru Sanderson Design Pty Ltd, 1988; Boroondara - Kew Junction Commercial Heritage Study, Lovell Chen, 2012;
Hermes Number	119237
Property Number	

Physical Conditions

Nos 14-16 Princess Street is a pair of large, wide, parapeted and terraced two storey brick and stuccoed houses with double-height verandahs facing Princess Street. The west setback to Princess Street is shallow; the southern boundary fronts Woodford Avenue; and the east (rear) and north elevations face a more recent car park. A very substantial modern three-level addition, with carparking in an undercroft at grade level, is attached to the east side of the buildings.

The location of the property, with car access to either side and the public carpark to the rear, allows for an unusually high degree of visibility of the building 'in the round', including the substantial addition.

The houses have a dividing wall, and the elevations inflected either side of this divider; that is, the front doors and the upstairs French windows are located to each side of the central divider and the two street elevations read as individually asymmetrical. The roof is Colorbond corrugated galvanised steel clad hips, largely concealed from Princess Street by the parapet and central moulding. The chimneys, stucco clad, have broad cornices and large stepped stacks. The front elevation is stucco-clad, with the stucco treatment turning back c.30 cm along each side elevation; otherwise the side and rear elevations are finished in exposed brick. Creeper covers much of the south elevation. The street front parapet is also linked to the side elevations with prominent half-ogival extensions of the side walls.

The parapet is dominated by two central mouldings over the individual house fronts below. These mouldings comprise semicircular bell-cast mouldings of clamshells surrounded by fielded arches, round in profile, fronted with small ribs shaped radially. Each arch is surmounted by a miniature cartouche supported on each side by two scroll consoles. Each moulding is in turn set between two bossed and corniced piers, bracketed on each side by a larger pair of scroll consoles. A moulded string course separates this level from the main parapet face below, where the moulding piers and wing walls are expressed as breakfronts. These, and the flanking piers to each of the rounded mouldings, have the remains of pyramidal tops and appear to have supported finials; but no finials remain. The parapet has five shallow vermiculated panels above each house front, with vermiculated rosettes on the front of each breakfront. A moulded cornice sits immediately below, with a plain entablature interrupted only by a single thin string course, to the upper verandah roofing.

The upper verandah level has roofs in corrugated galvanised iron coved outwards, and the three wing walls pick up this curve. The verandah friezes on both levels and the first floor balustrade are in lacework cast iron,

supported midway across each house frontage by single cast iron extruded columns with pedestals, fluting and capitals set 4/5 up each column and opening into inverted semicircles of radially patterned floral cast iron lace. Quarter cast-iron roses support the friezes at the divider and at each wing wall. The verandah fascias are in timber. Fascias and lacework are all painted dark green, set against the off-white of the facade stucco. The divider and each wing wall have their front edges treated as antae with inset panels, squared rosettes and leaf brackets, and the top of each of these projecting walls is rounded. The rounding is fronted by a small lunette with inset half-rosette. Each projecting wall also has a stilted blind arch in their internal reveals, at both the first and second levels. All three may have originally continued into corniced piers at street level, but only two of these piers remain. Between these street front piers is a fence in cast iron pickets set at two interwoven heights, on a rough-faced bluestone plinth with rounded capping. Immediately behind this fence, the front paths are flanked by two more pairs of stub piers, again with cornices. The treads and risers appear to be bluestone, and the verandahs are paved with tiles set into bluestone pavers as surrounds.

The front windows are double-hung timber-framed sashes, set in moulded astylar aedicules with lugs above each sill, and flat heads. The door cases have extruded pilaster divisions and include side lights and rectangular toplights. The door panels are raised and pitched with hips. The original rear elevation has doors and windows inset by flat arches with cambered soffits. The sills and back doorsteps and bases are in bluestone and back doors have square toplights. The upper-level vents are mostly contemporary cast-iron hood types. The back doors are in a divided wing running east behind the main rectangular massing of the terraces, with a roof set at a lower level.

To the rear of the heritage component of the building is the substantial aforementioned extension; it is of reinforced concrete columns and floors, with exposed brick walling on three sides, metal-framed windows and a north-facing bay which is 'rustic' stuccoed. Below this bay is a car park entrance with aluminium framed plate-glass doors, and the remaining ground level space is given over to open undercroft parking. The addition is held clear of the two original terraces, being linked by the original rear wing. More generally, it is possible that some external components have been renewed/replaced, but this has not been documented here. Picket fence and verandah upgrading are commonly undertaken for terraces of this age.

The rear (east) addition is not of heritage interest.

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.

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