
Highton



Review of B Graded Buildings
in Kew, Camberwell &
Hawthorn

Location

65 Mont Albert Road CANTERBURY, Boroondara City

Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO395

Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

Highton is of local historical and architectural significance. The building is of historical significance for its ability to demonstrate the pattern of siting of large villa houses on the rise to the north of Mont Albert Road, facing away from Mont Albert Road and north toward the view. It is also of historical interest for its association since the 1970s with Camberwell Grammar School. Architecturally, *Highton* is among the more interesting examples of Federation era houses in Boroondara. It is of particular significance for its unusual planning, employing a radial 'butterfly'

plan on the Mont Albert Road elevation and a five-winged plan in total. The design employs a range of simplified late Federation detail and is generally intact externally.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - Review of B Graded Buildings in Kew, Camberwell and Hawthorn, Lovell Chen Architects & Heritage Consultants, 2006; Boroondara - Camberwell Conservation Study, Graeme Butler, 1991;
Other Names	Highton,
Hermes Number	14715
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Highton, 65 Mont Albert Road, of 1906, is now a part of Camberwell Grammar School, housing its music rooms. As with *Roystead* nearby (51 Mont Albert Road, B-graded, q.v., also part of Camberwell Grammar School), *Highton* was designed and sited to take advantage of views to the north, looking away from Mont Albert Road.

Highton's brickwork was painted white or pale grey for some years but more recently stripped back to reveal the original red brick texture and coloration.[i] The bricks are dense and appear to have survived this stripping well. This house has a complex massing even by Federation standards. This is focused on a hipped, broadly pyramidal north side roof, breaking into two closely placed gables on the south. Five radial wings of uneven length and detailing spread out from this core: two on the south side, three on the north, forming an X-plan plus an extra wing. Adding to the complexity of its planning, *Highton* also progresses from single storey (flanking wings to the south); two-storey (paired gables over the south entry); to three storeys (north-east wings, verandah and basement). The roof is terracotta tile in a Marseilles pattern, and the chimneys have red brick stacks with strapwork trim and roughcast stuccoed tops.

The north side of the building is dominated by the three upper floor wings, together radiating in an arrowhead pattern. The fronts of each wing are quite plain: flat, plain-coursed brick, with the gable tympanum pushed out over the window bays on the east and north-east wings but replaced with a skeleton frame barge board on the north wing. The north and north-east wings are linked by a triangular terrace/verandah. This is simply treated, with a slat balustrade and some floral detailing, and a plain frieze in shallow segmental arches. Behind this verandah/terrace, the ground floor level of the building appears to have been extensively altered though the details of these changes have not been confirmed. Below the verandah/terrace, access is provided to an assumed basement level via service doors. This lower area also appears to have been altered possibly through infilling and certainly through the alteration of door and window openings. The half-timbered looking cement sheet and strap plank wall along the rest of the north side looks like a later infill. It terminates part way across the original west wing, which is again in plain brick with a flat front and a skeleton bargeboard pulled clear, and a non-original off-centre window. A projecting rectangular bay with a shallow tiled roof frames the composition at the east end. On the upper levels, the windows are relatively plain, being trios of sashes with smaller-paned upper halves and some leadlighting, over long single-piece sills. The north wing's gable end window has a segmental top, but the other windows are all rectangular, suggesting some alteration has occurred. By comparison with the south side, a reasonable amount of alteration has occurred on the north side of the building.

The south side presents two broad-angled wings that converge on a large entry porch. Again the roof geometry is simple and direct, with two transverse pitches converging on to gables, near to a pairing and linked with a stucco parapet inscribed *Highton*. Below this parapet is another balcony, curved this time, again with plain slat balustrading, and below that an imposing porch valance in three bays in a slatted valance. The three doors opening onto the balcony appear to be of recent origins, and the balustrading to the balcony reinstated since the Camberwell Conservation Study was completed in 1991. The porch is supported on five horseshoe arches over turned timber posts. Behind that the front door and two large flanking bays form a broad wall of glass and timber

framing. The south elevation's general symmetry is broken primarily by a gabled front on the west wing only, with a tall central window in a stilted arch flanked by two rectangular windows, like components of a Serlian arch spread across the gable bay. The east wing terminates in a half-timbered gable placed directly over a canted bay. A counter-balancing unity is reasserted on the south side with a brick dado below a stuccoed upper walling; this is consistent across the south side.

Other than for the alterations noted above (which are more numerous on the north side), the house appears to be broadly intact externally. Notwithstanding this, it is commented that the unusual and complex form of the building, together with the limited documentation for works, make it difficult to identify all changes that have occurred.

The setting of the building has been extensively altered following its incorporation into the Camberwell Grammar School campus. The original front garden has been replaced by a terraced space between *Highton* and the classroom block to its immediate south. The original drive has been obliterated for the development of this garden and an asphalted car park to the east side, next to Belmont Park. This car park now extends to the north of *Highton* itself, replacing its former garden.

[i] See the illustration in Graeme Butler, *Camberwell Conservation Study* 1991, v.4, p. 191.

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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