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## Guilford (Montserrat)



Review of B Graded Buildings  
in Kew, Camberwell &  
Hawthorn

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### Location

26A Wandsworth Road SURREY HILLS, Boroondara City

### Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

### Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO414

### Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

26A Wandsworth Avenue is of local historical and architectural significance. Designed in 1889 by the architect George Jobbins as his own residence, the house is a representative and relatively intact example of a large single-storey Italianate designs of the later boom period, featuring distinctive and rich detailing. Though now on a reduced allotment and addressing a different street frontage, it also retains a generous garden setting. The house is relatively intact, other than for alterations of longstanding relating to the enclosure of the courtyard and the

creation of a new entry on the north side of the house following subdivision of the original frontage to Mont Albert Road.

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;
Architect/Designer	Jobbins, George,
Other Names	Guilford, Monserrat,
Hermes Number	14739
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

26A Wandsworth Avenue is a single-storey brick residence in an Italianate style with a slate roof ridged in galvanised iron, supported on paired brackets. The roof and its bay tops are almost entirely hipped, save for one small gable-hip facing south. The chimneys have umber brick stacks with heavy stuccoed coping in sandstone and unusually prominent pitched or pyramidal tops to their main stacks. The walls are in an umber Hawthorn brick. The walls are striped with thick stuccoed course lines which spread into heavy quoin arrays, in sandstone according to Graeme Butler's 1991 survey,<sup>[i]</sup> around each window. The windows are in turn framed by pilasters, creating a quasi-aedicule around each. A return verandah is on the east and south sides,<sup>[ii]</sup> originally facing Mont Albert Road, now facing corners of the garden. A smaller verandah, also with cast iron lace, is on the west side screening the bathroom. The main verandah has a roll-topped awning in galvanised iron with a frieze and columns in cast iron, and is framed by two wings projecting to the east and south. These wings are each terminated with a smaller bay, each with three pilasters bracketed out from the base. The cast iron verandah columns are paired, each pair being linked by an unusual miniature balustrade, left open between each column pair. The entrance was originally from the east side of the main verandah.

The house originally had a large kitchen court, 15.5 m X 6m, facing Wandsworth Road. While it is possible that this was originally open, it appears to have been roofed over from an early date,<sup>[iii]</sup> with this space being described by later owners, the Nesbitts, as a ballroom or dance area.<sup>[iv]</sup> This had a screen facing north to Wandsworth Road, possibly built later, with three distinctive quasi-Gothic windows (these may have been meant to look either Baroque or even colonial Georgian) apparently dating from the early twentieth-century. The screen was removed in 1988, as part of the Bates Smart refurbishment, and two of the three windows were then installed on a weatherboard garage building at the north west corner of the site, next to Wandsworth Road. This had a mezzanine gallery inside, and the Parer family, its later owners, are said to have imported a ladder-staircase for it from Spain.<sup>[v]</sup> A room was added in 1943-44, and a garage added in 1954. A carport, presumably alongside, was ordered removed in 1957.<sup>[vi]</sup> A new laundry and toilet were added in 1964, and the owners evidently rebuilt the *verandah* later (though this reference is thought to be to a non-original verandah which was on the north side of the house and was demolished in the Bates Smart McCutcheon works in 1988: see following).

The house was pronounced 'unfit for habitation' in 1988, and that year new owners began a range of alterations to designs by Bates Smart McCutcheon.<sup>[vii]</sup> The 'ballroom' screen, still dominating Butler's photograph for his 1991 survey, has since been completely removed and replaced by an upstairs study and a glass-fronted family room. In elevation this now presents a simple gabled face, with a new upstairs window in stained and leadlit glass. The screen across the north side was removed and the house area cut back to the original rear brick wall, and two of the original three 'ballroom' windows light a new garage in weatherboard. The roof was in part replaced with grey Colorbond iron.<sup>[viii]</sup> The previous gravel court leading into the house has also been replaced by a new carport bay. Remnants of a painted fence in rubble stone were later removed, and the Wandsworth Road gate is new. A well on the site, probably there since the original construction, was built over.<sup>[ix]</sup> The

chimney copings were replaced where necessary. The interior has been refurbished, though details such as the embossed wallpaper in the hall and the ceiling roses have been retained, and the original stained glass around the front door case is all preserved. A well at the northeast corner of the main house has been filled in for many tears, though the well-head is still there.

[i] G Butler, City of Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, vol. 4, p. 299.

[ii] Description based in part on drawings on file. Drawings prepared by Bates Smart McCutcheon, 1988, sourced from City of Camberwell Building File 2043:26A.

[iii] The space is shown as roofed on the MMBW Detail Plan No. 72 of 1909.

[iv] The house was owned by the Nesbitt family in the c. 1970s and 1980s and was visited at this time by Conrad Hamann of Lovell Chen. *Guilford* was then referred to as 'Nesbitt's' after the owners of the day.

[v] Butler, City of Camberwell Conservation Study 1991, p. 299.

[vi] Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, # 15959, dated 25 November 1943 (unspecified alterations); # 13601, dated 17 February 1954 (garage), # 19836, dated 21 January 1957 (removal of carport). See also Building inspectors' reports, 28 February 1944 ('1 room addition') 8 April, 29 October 1954 (garage); 10 January 1956, 15 May 1957 (laundry and toilet), City of Camberwell Building File 2043: 26A.

[vii] Details sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index: HC Order, no date; and #87077, dated 14 December 1988, and #87368, 6 February 1989.

[viii] Bates, Smart and McCutcheon, working drawings of alterations,, TK del., dated September 1988. Drawings sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, #87077, dated 14 December 1988; #87368, dated 6 February 1989.

[ix] Bates, Smart and McCutcheon, working drawings of alterations,, TK del., dated September 1988. Drawings sourced from the City of Camberwell Building Index, #87077, dated 14 December 1988; #87368, dated 6 February 1989.

*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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