

Surbiton Statement of Significance August 2020

Heritage Place:	71 Stevenson Street Kew	PS ref no:	HO825
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What is significant?

Surbiton at 71 Stevenson Street, Kew, a Victorian Italianate residence built in 1875 for John Charles Walter, Treasury officer, Solicitor and Proctor of the Supreme Court is significant. Walter also served as a Director of the Victorian Pyrites and General Smelting Company and on the general committee of the Homeopathic Hospital. Walter built Surbiton and lived there until it was sold in 1884 to Fitzroy timber merchant Anthony Bray Lindley. A subsequent owner was Western District squatter Walter George Simmons whose property holdings included Moreton Plains near Stawell and Nareeb Nareeb near Glenthompson before relocating to Surbiton until 1905 when the property was again sold.

How is it significant?

Surbiton at 71 Stevenson Street Kew is of local historic, architectural and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Surbiton at 71 Stevenson Street Kew is historically significant as a demonstration of early-mid Victorian residences before the boom of the 1880s and 1890s. Often referred to as mansions, their size and degree of refinement contrasted against the general scale of housing at the time. Surbiton reflects the history of Kew as a suburb of British expatriates who built their home and gardens to replicate those that they had left behind. The ownership of the 71 Stevenson Street reflects the status of Kew as a suburb for the well-off, whose professions included Government officials, merchants and pastoralists from the Western District of Victoria. (Criterion A)

Surbiton demonstrates the early-mid Victorian architecture of the Victorian Italianate and Renaissance Revival, reflecting the predominant architecture of the time in Britain. Like other residences of this decade, Surbiton is more refined in detail and form than Victorian Italianate houses of the 1880s and 90s, and relies on a classical vocabulary of low pitched hipped roofs, restrained use of bay windows, classical mouldings in stucco. (Criterion D)

Aesthetically Surbiton, designed by architects Dall and Roberts is significant for its Victorian Italianate design including a projecting front wing with canted bay window and a classically-derived three light window. The building is enhanced by the stucco finish and mouldings including eaves brackets, window mouldings and quoining; and its slate roof. Other notable features include the concave verandah features with cast iron posts and a fine frieze and brackets (note that this may have been rebuilt). The integrity and intactness of Surbiton contributes to its aesthetic values. (Criterion E)

Primary source

City of Boroondara Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study Volume 4: Kew