

Currajong, 337 Auburn Road, Hawthorn

Prepared by: Silberberg Consulting

Address: 337 Auburn Road, Hawthorn

Name: Currajong	Survey Date: N/A
Place Type: Residential	Architect: likely John Beswicke
Grading: Significant	Builder: Not Known
Extent of Overlay: To Title Boundaries	Construction Date: c.1887



Figure 1 Currajong, 337 Auburn Road, Hawthorn, www.realestate.com.

Historical Context

Hawthorn is a part of the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri-Baluk people of the Kulin nation. The area has a natural boundary, formed by the Yarra River and Gardiners Creek, a waterway previously known as Kooyongkot, in the Wooiwurrung language.¹

European settlement of Hawthorn began swiftly following the colonisation of Victoria. By April 1837 John Gardiner is known to have established a run in the area, shortly before he was joined by other squatters taking up leases.

Initially the area remained divided into large parcels leased by a number of squatters and separated from Melbourne by its watery boundary. This grazing industry was followed by

¹ Victoria M. Peel, Deborah R. Zion, and Jane Yule, *A History of Hawthorn* (Hawthorn: Melbourne University Press in Association with the City of Hawthorn, 1993). 5-6

timber cutters who cleared the land, brick makers who exploited the natural clays of the area, and market gardens and vineyards who utilised its viable soil.

George Gordon McCrae provides a description of the area in 1842 he recollects it as:

*'one great red-gum forest with a big tree felled here and there, a few pits dug in the clay, the top-sawyers at work on a sort of staging, and a great mound of red-gum sawdust on either hand.'*²

Economic activity was always reliant on the ability to cross the river and reach markets. In the 1840s, a number of punts operated across the Yarra providing access to Richmond, and slightly further upstream to Kew and Abbotsford.

In 1837 Robert Hoddle surveyed the region that was to become the suburbs of Kew, Camberwell, and Hawthorn, and declared an area of about 14,000 acres the Parish of Boroondara. Subsequently, from 1843 the land was sold in a series of land sales over a ten year period, in 150 allotments varying from ten to 2000 acres. Being closer to Melbourne, and therefore more likely to be in demand, Hawthorn was laid out with smaller sized plots than in other parts of the Parish.³ The first to be auctioned were eighteen two-to-eight-hectare blocks, which sold for £3-4 per acre.⁴

As the population increased, speculators and property owners subdivided their land, and many of the current streets reflect previous property boundaries. Increased settlement was encouraged from 1851, when the first wooden bridge was erected, connecting Richmond to Hawthorn, and allowing greater access to markets. This was further accelerated with the opening of the railway in 1861, facilitating an ease of access to the bustle of the City of Melbourne.

In 1852, the first township was laid out by Robert Hoddle. This township formed a small village east of what became St James Park, and was bounded by Burwood Road, as well as Church, Denham, and Power Streets, with Lennox Street running through the centre. The plan included sites for churches for the various Christian denominations as well as a school. In the same decade, a second hamlet, the village of Rathmines was laid out on either side of Harcourt Street.⁵

Initially the land sales led to the development of houses built on rambling estates, or farms with large gardens; the choice of which had river frontages. Throughout the 1850s and 1860s as these larger estates were subdivided, the ideals of the emerging Garden City Movement came to bare on Hawthorn's suburban development, with the creation of villas set in gardens on the newly established streets of the suburb.

² George Gordon McCrae, "Some Recollections of Melbourne in the "Forties", *The Victorian Historical Magazine* 2, no. 3 (1912). 130.

³ F.G.A Barnard, *The Jubilee History of Kew Victoria, Its Origin & Progress, 1803-1910* (Kew: E.F.G Hodges "Mercury" Office, 1910).

⁴ Peel, Zion, and Yule, *A History of Hawthorn*. 7.

⁵ McWilliam gives the date for this subdivision as 1851, although a map advertising a sale of this area in the State Library of Victoria is dated 1857. Gwen McWilliam, *Hawthorn Peppercorns* (Melbourne: Brian Atkins, 1978). 46 and Cyrus Mason, "Village of Rathmines, Boroondara," (1857).

In the 1850s, the industrial activities of Hawthorn, particularly the brick works led to the building of smaller cottages for the workers. During the 1880s these were rebuilt in their original narrow streets.

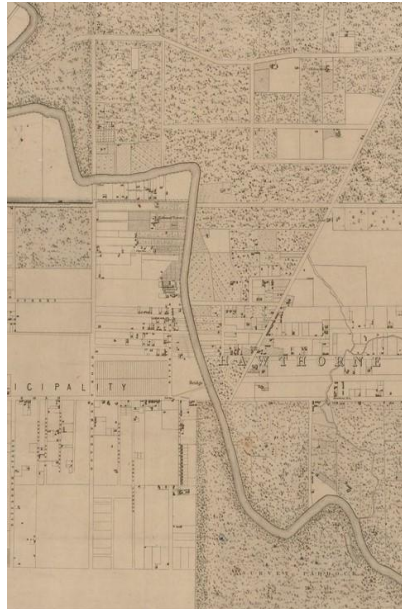


Figure 2-Detail of the Kearney Map of Melbourne and its suburbs, showing Hawthorn Village 1855

Transporting goods to market not only required a river crossing, but also a sufficiently developed and maintained road network. The first roads constructed were simple muddy tracks and basic roads which connected the area to Melbourne. Realising the inadequacies of the situation, the government sort to improve local road conditions. In 1853, Victoria passed an act to establish a Central Road Board to oversee the construction of roads and bridges, while the following year the Local Government Act of 1854 enabled the establishment of local boards to manage issues of road maintenance. In July 1854, the Boroondara Road District was established with a Board responsible for road maintenance. This was financed through rates and monies collected on toll gates, as well as a local government grant. After much agitation, the Boroondara District Road Board was disbanded in 1860 and Hawthorn was declared a municipal authority. The building of a town hall on the corner of Glenferrie and Burwood Roads resulted in the creation of a new centre for Hawthorn, east of its original village.⁶ The same year the timber bridge was replaced by an iron one, capable of carrying steam trains.⁷

A number of houses from this early period are extant in Hawthorn, these include:

- *The Hawthorns* (formally *The Falls*), 5 Creswick Street, built in 1845 for James Pinnock.
- *Invergowrie* (formally *Burwood*), 21 Coppin Grove, begun in 1846 for James Palmer (later Sir James), the first speaker of the Victorian Legislative Council.
- 15 Grattan Street, a bluestone gothic revival house, built before 1855.

⁶ Meredith Gould, "Hawthorn Heritage Study, Volume 1 a, Main Report," (City of Hawthorn, 1993). 49.

⁷ Michael Cannon, *Life in the Cities*, Australia in the Victorian Age (Ringwood: Viking O'Neil, 1975). 45.

- 4 Ardene Court, and 1 Wiseman Street both built in 1860s and considerably altered in the 1880s.

Following the opening of the Auburn Railway Station in 1882, Auburn Road became an easy commute to Melbourne and, therefore, prime real estate for residential developments (a fact highlighted in contemporaneous advertising material for subsequent subdivisions). A significant number of prominent Melbourne architects 'settled in the area and not only built houses for themselves but also designed some of the more most celebrated and best-known projects therein'.⁸ With architects John Beswicke and Henry James Prockter (of Prockter and Ruck), noted for their work in the suburb.⁹

History of *Currajong*, 337 Auburn Road, Hawthorn

Currajong, 337 Auburn Road Hawthorn forms part of an area now known as the Longford Estate. The Estate was created from a part of block 1 sold in c.1847 to Charles Robinson.¹⁰ This area was subsequently resold and subdivided during the land boom of the 1880s. The Longford Estate was not however, created in one development, rather, was subdivided into suburban plots, and sold over the course of three auctions between 1884-1886, beginning with the area around Harts Parade which was auctioned on February 23 1884.¹¹ The second sale, for an area known as *Auburn Reserve* was held on Saturday 29 November 1884, and was auctioned by John Clark on behalf of Henry Maxwell. *Auburn Reserve* was advertised as '30 villa and mansion allotments', with 337 Auburn Rd, comprising Lot 2 of this second auction and identified as Crown Portion A Section 5 of the Parish of Boroondara. Finally, the land encompassing Invermay Road, was auctioned two years later on the 11 December 1886 as the *Longford Estate*.¹²

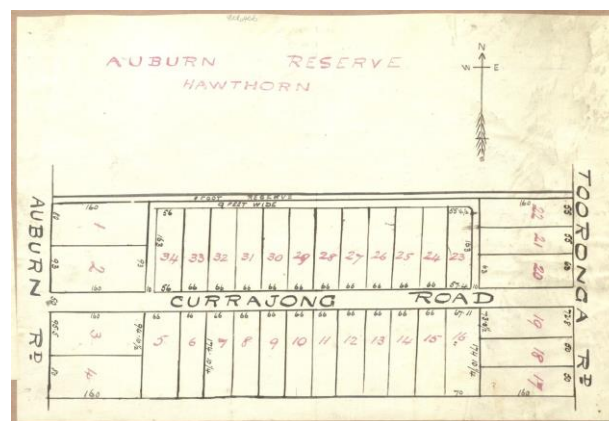


Figure 3-Hand Drawn Map of the Auburn Reserve Subdivision, showing the creation of Currajong Road, 1883, State Library of Victoria

⁸ Built Heritage, "City of Boroondara: Thematic Environmental History," (Croydon 2012). 18.

⁹ Harriet Edquist, "Ruck, E.J.," in *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, ed. Philip Goad and Julie Willis (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2012). 610.

¹⁰ McWilliam, *Hawthorn Peppercorns*. 27.

¹¹ John Clark, "Auction Notice for Hart's Parade, Hawthorn," (1884).

¹² *Age*, 22 November 1884, 2

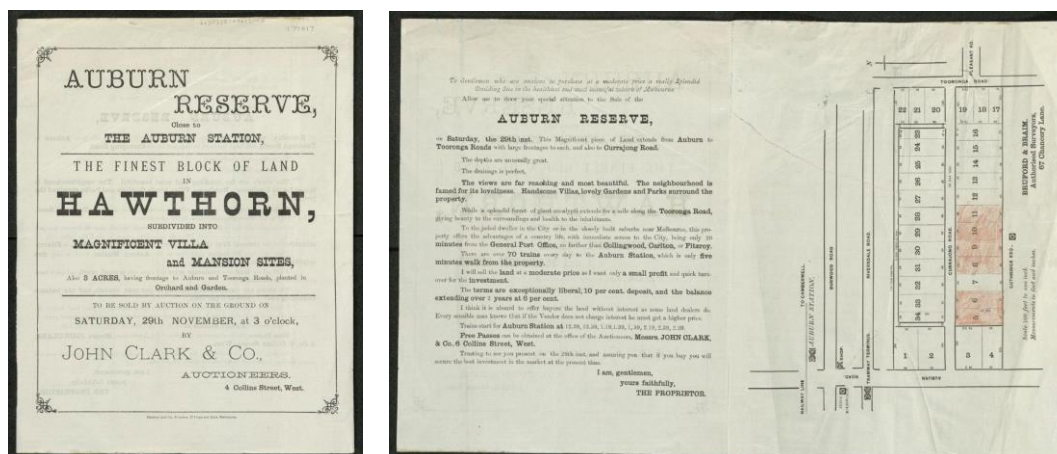


Figure 4-Advertising brochure for auction of Auburn Reserve, 29 November 1884, State Library of Victoria

Significant figures associated with *Currajong*

William Lamborn (1826-1905)

337 Auburn Road was bought by William Lamborn who commissioned the house following his retirement from the firm of Lamborn and Wagner, one of Melbourne's earliest and most significant firms of manufacturing jewellers.

William Lamborn was born in London in September 1826, and was apprenticed as a goldsmith-jeweller. Drawn by the discovery of gold, he arrived in Melbourne in 1852.¹³ Founding his first firm Lamborn and Wagner in 1855, William Lamborn was one of the first manufacturing jewellers in Melbourne.

The gold rush brought both wealth and increased economic activity to Victoria. This generated a rise in the market for consumer goods, of which gold jewellery, was both an output and became a way of signally economic success.

Lamborn, in partnership with Wagner (1855, 1867-1884) and Clark (1865-1867), created jewellery which was regarded contemporaneously and by collectors today, as highly desirable. Lamborn and Wagner's work has been described as catching 'the essence of Australian life better than any sketcher or painter before the Heidelberg School'.¹⁴ While Cavill et al considered his a style 'comparable to European botanical jewellery'.¹⁵ Jewellery manufactured by Lamborn is held by a number of private and public collections.

Although Lamborn and his partners were manufactures of high quality jewellery, this is not significant for *Currajong* under HERCON criteria H. William Lamborn retired from business in 1884, prior to building *Currajong*, and thus the house lacks association with his period of creative professional endeavour.

¹³ Rosemary Blanden, Christina Branagan, and Sandra Alexander, "Currajong, 337 Auburn Road. Community Submission for Significant Grading. 14/08/20," (City of Boroondara, 2020). 1

¹⁴ Trevor Hancock, "The "Little Aussie Battlers" in Australian Art," in *Bling: Nineteenth-Century Goldfields Jewellery*, ed. Katrina Banji, et al. (Ballarat: Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka, 2016).36

¹⁵ Kenneth Cavill, Graham Cocks, and Jack Grace, *Australian Jewellers : Gold & Silversmiths Makers & Marks* (Roseville: C.G.C. Gold, 1992). 143

William Lucius Kelly: (1875-1968)

William Kelly, who resided at *Currajong* from 1922-1969 was the longest continuous owner of the property to date. Kelly was born in Victoria in 1875, and operated professionally as a Richmond real estate agent, and cricket administrator. During his residence Kelly was noted as the manager of the 1930 Australian Cricket team, which included cricket legend Don Bradman.¹⁶

This is not considered to meet the criteria for significance.

Lloyd John O'Neil (1928-1992)

Lloyd John O'Neil was born in Melbourne on 17 July 1928, to Victorian born parents. His career spanned a number of significant Australian publishing houses, several of which he established, including the Jacaranda and Lansdowne Presses, which focused on the publication of both educational material and Australian titles. Following O'Neil's sale of Lansdowne Press to W. Cheshire Publishing Pty Ltd, Cheshire's' was subsequently acquired by a joint Australian British partnership, and in 1969 O'Neil's employment was terminated.¹⁷ That year O'Neil purchased *Currajong* from Kelly's son, as both a family home and place of work, establishing Lloyd O'Neil Pty Ltd. The publishing house remained at *Currajong* for five years, before requiring larger premises, although as a family home O'Neil resided there until 1978.¹⁸

O'Neil's importance to Australian publishing was his focus on fostering Australian titles in fiction and nonfiction. Lloyd O'Neil Pty Ltd partnered with other publishers to produce a range of Australian titles, educational publications and reprints of earlier Australian literature.¹⁹ His most successful publication was the *Australian Women's Weekly Cookbook*.

Although the home of O'Neil for nine years, and the publishing house for Lloyd O'Neil Pty Ltd for five of those years, this does not reach the criteria for significance under HERCON criteria H.

Although the contribution of each of these individuals was important to their field, they do not individually or as a group meet the benchmark for HERCON criteria H.

Architect

The construction of *Currajong* would appear to have been between July 1886 when Lamborn received the title and 1888, when Lamborn first appears in the directories living at this address. Strong circumstantial evidence suggests that the house was designed by John Beswicke (1847-1925). Beswicke was responsible for designing over 45 residential, commercial, and civic buildings in Hawthorn, with a concentration of his designs in Harcourt Street, Hawthorn.

¹⁶ Blanden, Branagan, and Alexander, "Currajong, 337 Auburn Road. Community Submission for Significant Grading. 14/08/20."

¹⁷ Jenny Lee, "O'Neil, Lloyd John (1928–1992)," ed. Australian Dictionary of Biography, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Australian National University: National Centre of Biography).

¹⁸ Helen O'Neil, "Heritage Listing of Currajong- 337 Auburn Road Hawthorn: The House and Lloyd O'Neil Am," (2020). 2.

¹⁹ Lee, "O'Neil, Lloyd John (1928–1992)."

Lamborn was already a resident of Hawthorn at the time of the *Auburn Reserve* auction. In 1882 he is listed as the owner occupier of a house at 7 Kinkora Road, while two years later when *Auburn Reserve* was auctioned, he was renting south of *Currajong* and on the west side of Auburn Road towards Gardiners Creek. The rate book lists William Lamborn having paid for two contiguous properties (a block of land and a house) on 7 June 1886.²⁰ Auburn Road continued to be his home until he died in 1905.

Built contemporaneously with *Currajong*, was the Beswicke designed *Balmerino*, the home of James Robison and his family. Two of Lamborn's sons married two of Robison's daughters, with the second marriage of Annie Robison to Arthur Lamborn in 1886, coinciding with the Robison family moving to the newly built, Beswicke designed *Balmerino*. Thus, one can assume that the two families knew of each other's projects.

The title for the 337 Auburn Road, Hawthorn was issued to Lamborn on 5 July 1886 (18 months after the auction date), and the following day a tender notice appeared in the *Age* for a house designed by Beswicke in Auburn Road, although the exact location is not specified.²¹ It is conceivable to argue that prior to the property's registration, and while the terms of the property's sale were being resolved, Beswicke had been working on the project, advertising his tender at the first possible date. Importantly, the quality of detail at *Currajong* indicates an architect of some skill and experience and is consistent with quality of the architectural output of Beswicke.

Although more modest in scale than many of Beswicke's houses in Hawthorn, Miles Lewis's description of a typical Beswicke designed single storied Hawthorn villa, clearly fits *Currajong*, 'many of the single-story type are recognisable by the use of a polygonal corner bay with a pointed roof and a ring of steep gablets one on each face', giving further credence to the house's association with Beswicke.²²

Description & Integrity

Currajong sits on the north east corner of Currajong and Auburn Roads, listed as Lot 2 of the *Auburn Reserve* sale. The blocks facing Auburn Road were designed for the more prominent houses in the Longford Estate. As such, the house which is an Italianate villa, is set back on a generous allotment of land, facing west, with a tennis court at the rear. The house retains a high level of integrity.

²⁰ *Hawthorn Rates Books* 1882 & 1884.

²¹ *Age*, 6 July 1886, 3.

²² Miles Lewis, "Beswicke, John," in *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, ed. Philip Goad and Julie Willis (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2012). 81.



Figure-5 Location of Currajong, corner Currajong and Auburn Roads, Hawthorn

The house is a single-story symmetrical building, with a double cantered bay and a cranked veranda returning slightly at the sides. The veranda has a corrugated iron roof in a convex form. The façade has a highly sophisticated and elaborate treatment, particularly in comparison to other buildings in the Longford Estate, as well as to the comparison buildings, previously identified as significant in Boroondara (see below). The house has vermiculated quoining to the corners of the front façade. The side walls are painted faced brickwork, while the front façade is rendered. The house has a hipped slate roof running parallel to Auburn road, with a symmetrically placed pair of chimneys. These are cement rendered with cast decorative detailing. The verandah has an elaborate cast iron decoration, with a sophisticated frieze of styled acanthus leaves which is set between a timber frame, below which are a row of attached pendants. The posts have pendant brackets at the corners and are decorated with a running patterns of overlapping ovals reaching almost to the end of the brackets. Above the frieze the bressummer is decorated with a timber row of dentillation.

The front door is unusually six panelled, surrounded by elaborate decoration. The top of the door is framed by a frieze, while candy twist columns border the sides. These are finished with stylised Doric capitals which incorporate the frieze. The door has half sidelights, resting on timber plinths.



Figure 6-Detail of door and roof, Currajong

The property currently has a single pedestrian gate on the axis of the front door. The 1902 MMBW plan shows the gate in an asymmetrical position to the north of the Auburn Road frontage. The house is surrounded by an early picket fence, behind which is a high mature hedge which screens the house. The date of the hedge is unknown, although the movement of the gate may indicate it was planted later. The hedge acts as a privacy and noise barrier to the property. It does not diminish its integrity.



Figure 7-Back of Currajong, www.realestate.com.au

While the 1880s building retains its original footprint, the windows on the south side have been altered and the house has been extended on two occasions. These have made only minor changes to the original building, as they have been constructed as separate structures and linked to the building, so that its form and roofline remain unaltered. On the south side of the house is a double garage with attic rooms above. These later additions are connected to the original external wall by a hallway/laundry acting as link. On the north side of the property a sunroom has been added, and although a doorway now connects this to the original house, it in no way disrupts the original house's integrity. Between the sunroom and the boundary a lap pool has been constructed. None of this is visible from Auburn Road and it does not diminish the integrity of the house.



Figure 8-Aerial and rear views showing extension and tennis court.

Comparative Analysis

A number of buildings within the Hawthorn suburb of Boroondara have been identified as Significant. In the Context Boroondara Planning Scheme Amendment C308, Natica Schmeder outlines a response to Submission 59, comparing five of these to *Currajong*-1 Wiseman Street (HO140), 4 Ardene Court (HO431), 1 Bayview Road (HO151), and Rosedale, 25 Oak Street (HO468) all in Hawthorn and 59 Sackville Street, Kew (HO162). All five have similar double canted bays, surrounded by a cranked verandah. All are symmetrically arranged, with rendered facades. At first glance these all appear to date from the 1880s, when Hawthorn developed into a genteel suburb of predominantly middle-class businessmen and professionals.

Comparative Buildings



Figure 9-1 Wiseman Street, Hawthorn



Figure 10-4 Ardene Court, Hawthorn

Both 4 Ardene Court, and 1 Wiseman Street are not strictly comparable to *Currajong*, 337 Auburn Road, as their significance has been granted due to their original configuration. Although they have 1880s facades, they are in fact earlier buildings which were altered.

4 Ardene Court (originally, 66 Wattle Road (formerly Weinberg Road)), was granted significance due to the retention of an 1860s house, and the properties association with the German farming community of Hawthorn.²³ The house built for Andreas Bruse, appears to have been constructed in three periods, beginning with three rooms arranged in a row, with no interconnecting doors, which Lovell Chen describe as 'apparently typical of early German buildings in Victoria'. Later an additional three rooms were added, although they may have functioned as a separate structure.²⁴ In 1881 alterations to the original structures included an addition of four rooms to the front and a façade, added by owner-builder Robert Elkins. Similarly, 1 Wiseman Street derives its significance from the 1860s sections, for which the 1880s façade has been attached, as well as for its level of external intactness.

²³ Context, "Boroondara Planning Scheme Amendment C308, Statement of Evidence by Natica Schmeder," (for the City of Boroondara, 2020). 41-42.

²⁴ Lovell Chen, "Review of C* Grade Buildings in the Former City of Hawthorn: Volume 2 Individual Building Data Sheets and Data Sheet for C Property Recommended for Inclusion in Existing Heritage Precinct," (City of Boroondara, 2009). 7

59 Sackville Street, Kew | HO162



Figure 11-59 Sackville St, Kew

59 Sackville Street is more substantial building in scale and setting than *Currajong*. Stylistically the frieze and veranda treatment is more extravagant, its elaborate façade has a deep and curved iron lace frieze forming high arches and supported by triple candy twist columns, with Corinthian capitals. The house is set in a generous mansion allotment, with a large fence of iron supported by rendered masonry columns and a bluestone foundation. 59 Sackville Street is currently graded as Significant under HO162.

Rosedale, 25 Oak Street, Hawthorn | HO 468



Figure 12-25 Rosedale, Oak Street, Hawthorn

Constructed in 1884, Rosedale (formally *Fairmount Park*) is similarly an Italianate double cantered house, with a cranked verandah, cast iron lace frieze, vermiculated quoining and a rendered façade. The hipped roof has bracketed eaves and a moulded freeze. The house is symmetrical with an entrance path leading from a central gate. The reproduction fence sits on a bluestone foundation. The overall form and massing of *Rosedale* is similar to *Currajong*.

The house has stables at the back, which may be Victorian.²⁵ *Rosedale* is currently graded as Significant within HO468.

1 Bayview Avenue, Hawthorn East | HO151



Figure 13-1 Bayview Road, Hawthorn

1 Bayview Road, East Hawthorn was built almost concurrently with *Currajong* (1886-1887). Stylistically, as a double cantered Italianate villa, surrounded by a cranked veranda, with a hipped roof, its form is similar to both *Currajong* and *Rosedale*. The house was designed and occupied by the builder Tomas Barrett, and has been described by Context as 'differentiated by more extensive and richly modelled cast-cement ornament and the retention of unpainted render walls, as well as somewhat more elaborate verandah decoration (paired posts), and an original front fence.'²⁶ *Bayview* is currently graded as Significant within HO468.

The Longford Estate

The Longford Estate was built from the 1880s onwards, and thus is not architecturally homogeneous. Immediately south of *Currajong*, are three Italianate houses (339-343 Auburn Road), which in comparison to *Currajong*, do not display the high quality of the architectural detail and position of *Currajong*. Currently largely hidden behind high brick fences, the MMBW plan indicates that the three have identical form.

²⁵ Context, "City of Boroondara Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study, Vol 6: Hawthorn East," (City of Boroondara, 2019). 229

²⁶ Context, "Boroondara Planning Scheme Amendment C308, Statement of Evidence by Natica Schmeder," (for the City of Boroondara, 2020). 48.

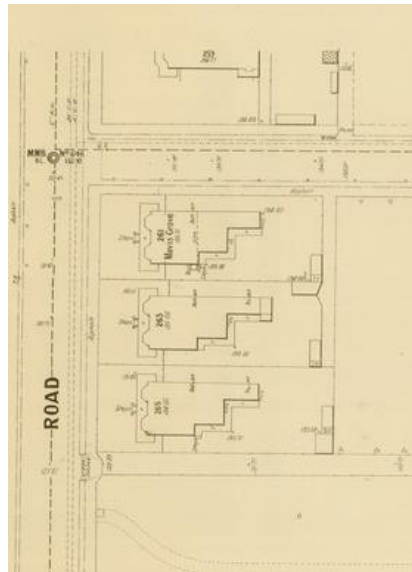


Figure 14-Detail of MMBW 1524, showing position of 339-343 Auburn Road, Hawthorn

339 Auburn Road, Hawthorn | H0844



Figure 15-339 Auburn Road, Hawthorn, www.realestate.com.au

Neighbouring *Currajong*, 339 Auburn Road is a simpler example of the double fronted Italianate house of the 1880s. While 339 Auburn Road exhibits the double cantered façade it has a simple straight verandah, decorated with a simple iron freeze, and no significant detailing on the face or door. Unlike *Currajong*, *Rosedale*, and 1 Bayview Avenue, 339 Auburn Road is not rendered but rather the façade is simply painted brickwork. The house is surrounded by a high modern fence. 339 Auburn Road is graded as Contributory under H0844.

341 Auburn Road, Hawthorn | HO844



Figure 16-Detail of 341 Auburn Road, Hawthorn

341 Auburn Road is again an 1880s Italianate villa with a double cantered façade. Like its neighbour, it has a straight verandah and painted brick finish. The iron freeze on this house is more elaborate, with a frieze set in a timber frame, a dentilated bressummer although nowhere as elaborate or sophisticated as Currajong. While the door is a more simple lantern form with side lights and applied moulded detail to the upper sections.

Comparative Analysis

The architectural form and treatment *Currajong* is consistent with these of *Rosedale*, and 1 Bayview Avenue, two comparison buildings which have been graded as Significant within the municipality of Boroondara.

Facade

The 1880s saw a boom in housing with many architects, builders and carpenters responsible for the mass of dwellings constructed.²⁷ These three house show the aspirational nature of building during the period, with their elaborately designed facades with vermiculated quoining and cantered bays.

While *Rosedale*, 25 Oak Street, Hawthorn was described as a ‘fine and externally relatively intact example of a substantial Victorian Italianate villa which displays all of the hallmarks of the popular Hawthorn type including paired canted bays, hipped slate roof, encircling cast iron verandah and rendered façade’ this description apply fits *Currajong* as well.²⁸

Unlike *Rosedale* and 1 Bayview Avenue, *Currajong*’s position elevated on a large block surrounded by gardens, is certainly a asset in comparison to these two examples, who sit close to the street on smaller blocks. *Currajong*’s more elevated position raised from the ground and accessed by two steps, also provides a more imposing position.

²⁷ Graeme Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1978). 76.

²⁸ Ibid 42.

Frieze



Figure 17-Comparison details of *Rosedale*, 25 Oak St, Hawthorn and 1 Bayview Ave, East Hawthorn



Figure 18-Detail of *Currajong*, 337 Auburn Road, Hawthorn

Currajong's cast iron frieze is different in form to the two comparison buildings. While its iron work is not as deep as *Rosedale*, nor does it have the double columns of 1 Bayview Road, its refined detail indicates that its designer was aware of the highest quality of housing being carried out in Melbourne, and able to deliver an Italianate design of sophistication. *Currajong's* ornate cranked verandah has an intricate cast iron decoration, which is more elaborate in nature than either 1 Bayview Avenue East Hawthorn or *Rosedale*, 25 Oak Street Hawthorn. The sophisticated frieze does not rely on the iron alone for its impact, but is set within a timber frame. The frame carries not only a frieze of stylised acanthus leaves, but also provides support for a row of pendant drops and brackets. While the posts have an unusual, applied decoration of overlapping ovals and the bressummer is also decorated with a row of dentation.

Door

Of the three, *Currajong* has a far more elaborate door treatment, while the other two are more simple, in *Rosedale's* case the door and etched ruby sidelights are topped with a

simple Doric pattern. At 1 Bayview Avenue, the door has applied details to the upper level of the timber between the door and sidelights. This house has an unusual six panel door which is also elaborately detailed, surrounded by a frieze and framed with twisted columns, which form Doric capitals before merging back into the frieze.

Land Size

Currajong is built on one of the blocks described as suitable for 'mansions' in the sale advertisement for the *Auburn Reserve*. Although the house can in no way be described as a mansion, its size and level of architectural detail makes it a significant building within the Longford Estate. *Currajong*, 337 Auburn Road was situated on a more substantial allotment than either of the two comparison buildings, allowing the house to sit in a park like setting, away from its neighbours, while those in Oak Street and Bayview Avenue are sited close to the road. Further, the garden also allows the house not to be abutted so closely by its neighbours.

1 Bayview Road is noted for its original fence, while that of *Rosedale* is a reproduction. The date of the surrounding fence at *Currajong* is unknown, but identified by Nigel Lewis as early, and therefore possibly original also.²⁹

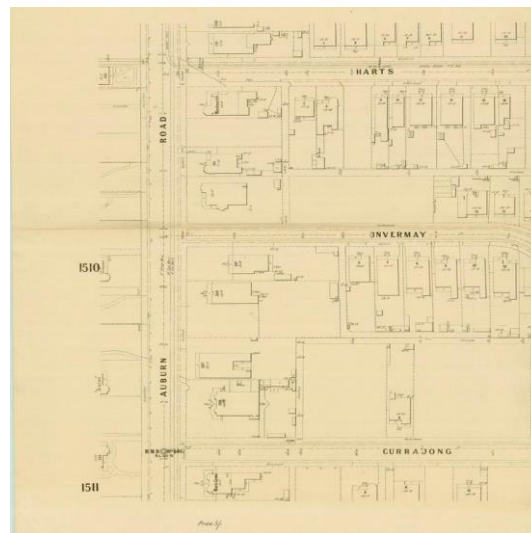


Figure 19-1902 MMBW Plan showing the position of *Currajong*, 337 Auburn Road, in comparison to other buildings in the Longford Estate area

Intactness

In describing the significance of the comparison properties, the intactness of the buildings was noted. Although *Currajong* has had mid to late twentieth-century additions, these have not disturbed the original fabric in any significant way, and have been connected carefully to the original building. The only alternations that impact on the building are the changes to the south facing windows. From the street, *Currajong* appears in its original form as an intact Italianate villa.

Conclusion

While there is a strong likelihood that John Beswicke designed *Currajong*, its quality and sophistication warrant the raising of its grading from Contributory to Significant in these

²⁹ Nigel Lewis, 13

merits. This analysis highlights the comparable architectural significance of *Currajong*, 337 Auburn Road, Hawthorn to other properties considered Significant. Likewise, it is clear that the architectural composition of *Currajong* is representative of a proficient architect with a grasp of fashionable Italianate detailing. This level of architectural treatment places *Currajong* above its neighbouring properties which have been classified as Contributory to planning scheme HO844. Therefore it is clear the *Currajong* meets the threshold of being graded Significant.

Assessment Against Criteria

Criteria referred to in *Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay*, Department of Planning and Community Development, September 2012, modified for the local context.

CRITERION A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (historical significance).

N/A

CRITERION B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (rarity).

N/A

CRITERION C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the City of Boroondara's cultural or natural history (research potential).

N/A

CRITERION D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).

Currajong demonstrates the pattern of rapid development of suburban villas in the 1880s boom era in Hawthorn. It is a notable example of an Italianate villa, distinguished from the other houses in the Longford Estate by the quality and scale of its detailing, and the intactness of the house on one of the Estate's larger blocks. The house is a strong comparison stylistically and for its level of intactness to similar Italianate villas which have been identified as Significant. Its detailed and refined decorative treatments are indicative of the aspirational nature of homeowners in that period.

The house's original footprint is intact, with additions clearly defined to the north and south, separate from the original roofline. *Currajong* is an important intact example of an Italianate Victorian villa with a well-designed principal double canted bay facade and prominent cranked return verandah.

CRITERION E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).

The strong aesthetic qualities of *Currajong* derive from its double canted bay design and its articulated composition, enhanced by the prominent cranked verandah. Its refined detailing eschews the more formulaic use of cast iron decoration of this period, and extends not only on the verandah itself, but to the elaborate door treatments and the vermiculated quoining on the corners of the front façade. Built for the retired manufacturing jeweller William Lamborn and his wife Eliza, the house reflects the design sensibilities of an owner whose career centred around an understanding of aesthetics and aesthetic details. The prominent corner setting is a characteristic siting for more substantial houses of the period.

The early timber picket fence design and hedge add to these values.³⁰ .

CRITERION F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).

N/A

CRITERION G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).

N/A

CRITERION H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the City of Boroondara's history (associative significance).

Although William Lamborn, William Kelly and Lloyd O'Neil were all recognised as making significant contributions to their respective fields, this was made independently of any association with *Currajong*. Therefore this does not meet the standard under this criterion.

Statement of Significance

What is Significant?

This Italianate house at 337 Auburn Road, Hawthorn built c.1887 at the height of the boom, shows a high level of artistic achievement, consistent with it having been built by an architect of the reputation of John Beswicke. The façade of the house is intact, with highly sophisticated detailing on its frieze, door and overall arrangement of the façade. This includes the elaborate use of a frieze of stylised acanthus leaves and bressummer to carry additional layers of decorative elements in the form of dentilation. The verandah is supported by columns which have an applied oval decoration between the roofline and base of the brackets. The vermiculated quoining provides a sense of grandeur, which is balanced in the highly decorative treatment of the door and its surrounds.

How is it significant?

Currajong, 337 Auburn Road, Hawthorn is significant for its representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Currajong, 337 Auburn Road demonstrates the rapid development of middle-class housing in Melbourne in the 1880s boom. It is an unusual example of an Italianate villa, in the complex and sophisticated and refined detailing. This is unusual and indicative of the artistic and aspirational values of its builder, the manufacturing Jeweller William Lamborn and his wife Eliza. (Criterion D)

Currajong is distinguished from the surrounding Longford Estate in the sophistication of its detailing. The house is built as a double canted bay design, with an articulated composition, enhanced by the prominent cranked verandah. The sophisticated and layered applied detail shuns the more formulaic designs of many of its contemporaries. Likewise, the building is largely intact, maintaining its original fenestrations and materials. (Criterion E)

³⁰ Nigel Lewis, "Amendment C308 to the Boroondara Planning Scheme," (2020). 22.

It is reasonable to assume that the house was designed by John Beswicke an architect prolific in Hawthorn and more especially in the area around Auburn Station.

Grading and Recommendations

Recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Boroondara Planning Scheme as an individually Significant place.

Recommendations for the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) in the Boroondara Planning Scheme:

External Paint Colours Is a permit required to paint an already painted surface?	No
Internal Alteration Controls Is a permit required for internal alterations?	No
Tree Controls Is a permit required to remove a tree?	No
Victorian Heritage Register Is the place included on the Victorian Heritage Register?	No
Incorporated Plan Does an Incorporated Plan apply to the site?	No
Outbuildings and fences exemptions Are there outbuildings and fences which are not exempt from notice and review?	No
Prohibited uses may be permitted Can a permit be granted to use the place for a use which would otherwise be prohibited?	No
Aboriginal Heritage Place Is the place an Aboriginal heritage place which is subject to the requirements of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?	No

Identified By
Silberberg Consulting

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