

Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

RSTCA No: R030

Name of Place: Canberra Grammar School

Other/Former Names:

Address/Location: Monaro Crescent RED HILL 2603

Block 1 Section 6 of Red Hill

Listing Status:		Other Heritage Listings:	
Date of Listing:		Level of Significance:	Local
Citation Revision No:		Category:	Education and Religion
Citation Revision Date:		Style:	Old English

Date of Design:	c1928	Designer:	Burcham Clamp and Finch, Stephenson & Turner
Construction Period:	1928-29	Client/Owner/Lessee:	Canberra Grammar School
Date of Additions:	1934 Headmasters House, 1939 Dining Room & Kitchen, 1939 Garran House, 1958 Gymnasium, 1962 Science and Administration Wing, 1965 Chapel	Builder:	A Stephens & Co

Statement of Significance

This Church school complex is architecturally significant as a good and rare (unique?) Canberra example of the Inter-war Gothic style which, as in this case, is generally restricted to colleges and churches. It comprises four buildings from the period 1929-39 which exemplify this style by the use of load-bearing face brickwork including some brick patterning, medium pitched roofs with parapeted gables, use of pointed arch forms including window tracery, and exposed timber roof trusses in the former Dining Room. The form and planning of the complex is partly reinforced by the later additions in 1958, 1962 and 1979.

The Chapel is architecturally significant as a fine example of the Late Twentieth Century Ecclesiastical style. Key elements of the Chapel which demonstrate this style include the use of a non-traditional circular plan shape, the spire reminiscent of a Gothic feature, strong vertically proportioned glazing around the entrance, the use of a celestary window and plain wall surfaces. While there are other examples of this style in Canberra, for example the Holy Trinity Church in Turner, the Chapel is a much stronger and austere example.

Description

The complex comprises: East Wing of classrooms and (originally) dormitories (1929); Headmaster's House (1934); former Dining Room and Kitchen (1939); Garran House (1939); Gymnasium (1958); Science and Administration Wing (1962); Chapel (1965); McKeown Building (1979); and the area surrounding these buildings including the quadrangle, the landscaped area to the north and the main oval.

The buildings are generally of two storeys, constructed of red face brickwork with sandstone or rendered trim, and terracotta tile gabled roofs. With the exception of the Headmaster's House and Chapel these buildings are set about a quadrangle and create a cloister. The axis of the quadrangle extends to the north through the main oval. The Headmaster's House and Chapel are set roughly symmetrically on either side of the north elevation of the complex.

The Chapel is also two-storeyed and constructed of red face brickwork. However, it is circular in plan, has a low-pitched roof and spire with a celestory window between the walls and roof. The entrance is marked by glazing with strong vertical proportions surrounding the doors.

An interesting feature is the collection of stones from a number of famous schools set into a wall of the East Wing in 1937.

Condition and Integrity

The buildings are in generally good condition and reasonably intact. The function of a number of buildings has changed including the dormitories of the East Wing and the Dining Room and Kitchen.

Background/History

Analysis against the Criteria specified in Schedule 2 of the Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991

(i) a place which demonstrates a high degree of technical and/or creative achievement, by showing qualities of innovation or departure or representing a new achievement of its time

(ii) a place which exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group

(iii) a place which demonstrates a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function which is no longer practised, is in danger or being lost, or is of exceptional interest

(iv) a place which is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations

(v) a place which is the only known or only comparatively intact example of its type

(vi) a place which is a notable example of a class of natural or cultural places or landscapes and which demonstrates the principal characteristics of that class

(vii) a place which has strong or special associations with person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history

(xi) a place which demonstrates a likelihood of providing information which will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site

References

Other Information Sources