

# St Bartholomew's Church and Cemetery

Ward 3 Property 6



**Ward 3 Property 6 – St Bartholomew’s**

PROPERTY NAME	St Bartholomew’s Church and Cemetery
ADDRESS	Ponds Road, Prospect. Lots 221-224 DP 812455 & Lot 1 DP 325874
DESCRIPTION	St Bartholomew’s is a simple rectangular brick Church with a tower, including a porch, a vestry and choir room. The walls are brick with plastered walls inside. There are timber floors and originally shingled roof and cedar joinery. The tower is a simple geometric shape with the brick being used for integral detailing. The cemetery is a formal cemetery with fairly simple headstones. The burial ground, where burials first took place in 1841, contains the tomb of Lieutenant William Lawson and graves of Lawson, Weston and Bettington families as well as many other local families.
HISTORICAL CONTEXT	Completed in 1841, St Bartholomew’s is important from an historical and architectural viewpoint. It is one of few remaining buildings of pure Georgian character, has important associations with many notable pioneering families such as Lawson, Weston, Bettington and represents a community effort in the early colonial period to produce, without very skilled architectural aid, a building of Georgian character. The first burials in the cemetery took place in 1841. The grounds contain the tomb of Lieutenant W Lawson, one of the three explorers who made the first European crossing over the Blue Mountains. The site has significance to the Darug people as the burial site of Maria Locke and members of the Locke family. It also has great heritage landscape significance.
LISTINGS	Blacktown City Council LEP, State Heritage Register; Register of the National Estate, National Trust Register
STRENGTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On major gateway to Blacktown City – highly visible</li> <li>• Former church already restored</li> <li>• Masterplan for site already adopted in principle by Council</li> <li>• Church and Cemetery CMPs currently in place</li> <li>• Substantial community support</li> <li>• Very attractive site</li> <li>• Oldest church/cemetery complex in Western Sydney</li> <li>• Caretaker resides on site</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong collection of items in community relating to former church</li> <li>• Good acoustics for instrumental/choral sound inside</li> <li>• Inside quiet – very little outside noise penetrates building</li> <li>• Hall building can be adapted for multiple use (could be moved and retained)</li> <li>• Close to M4, Homebase, etc</li> <li>• Good toilets with access for people with a disability (septic system)</li> <li>• Elevated stage area/two (2) vestries</li> <li>• Popular cemetery tours already established</li> </ul>
WEAKNESSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMPs are overdue to be updated</li> <li>• No disabled access to church/hall</li> <li>• No catering/kitchen facilities</li> <li>• Limited upper on-site parking</li> <li>• Access problems with lower level parking to buildings</li> <li>• Isolated site</li> <li>• Limited sized site of usable land</li> <li>• Very little storage areas</li> <li>• Extensive work needed for landscaping/cemetery</li> <li>• Power line towers through site</li> <li>• Site is a target for vandalism and other undesirable activities</li> <li>• High maintenance site with ongoing security, landscaping and maintenance issues</li> <li>• Possible conflict between cemetery aesthetic and possible desired use aesthetic</li> <li>• The hall is sitting on the best land for redevelopment</li> <li>• Hilly/steep site/movement in ground</li> <li>• Can be dusty from mortar, traffic, etc</li> <li>• Floor can be easily damaged/scratched</li> </ul>

OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be able to acquire adjoining RTA lands</li> <li>• Potential to develop as a major/iconic site/image/point of reference for Blacktown</li> <li>• Opportunity for better lit site – light and sound opportunities</li> <li>• Programs – ‘adopt a grave’</li> <li>• Work into local history/civic school curricula</li> <li>• Garden groups, bush regeneration, community groups</li> <li>• Masterplan identifies new building site options onsite (in principle adoption by Council)</li> <li>• Shuttle bus options from Homebase/Blacktown CBD</li> <li>• Establish ‘Friends’ of St Bartholomew’s</li> <li>• Cultural industry centre</li> <li>• Music uses – instrument making, performance, marketing and education</li> <li>• Identified in Council’s Cultural Plan as a possible base for World Music, including experimental music</li> <li>• Dance activities – performance/classes</li> <li>• Re-open cemetery and/or establish columbarium/Ha Ha (sunken interment wall for ashes)</li> </ul>
THREATS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site is more prone to vandalism if no constant/on-going use</li> <li>• No designated use given to the site – lack of focus</li> <li>• Isolation of site</li> <li>• High costs of monument restoration to Council without active family and community contribution</li> <li>• Difficult to continually care for</li> <li>• Potential rivalry between users/perceived competition</li> <li>• Public liability issues by users may not have been adequately addressed</li> <li>• Dance activities limited – tap or ballet could damage the fabric of the building</li> </ul>
CONCLUSION	<p>St Bartholomew’s has the potential to be the jewel in the crown of heritage in Blacktown. The building is highly visible and its care is symbolic of a growing awareness and valuing of cultural matters in the area. Any future use of the site should ensure a broad cross-section of people have relatively free and open access to the site. Use should be regular to allow removal of cyclone fencing from around the church. Site use should have a cultural focus with associated tourism opportunities. At the time of this revision of the draft report works had commenced to design a new facility and investigate the viability of the recommendations of the Masterplan.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigate acquisition of adjoining surplus RTA lands for parking facilities</li> <li>2. Develop a report on possible cultural uses of the site that make specific recommendations</li> <li>3. Utilise guidelines outlined in Masterplan in development of the site and update CMPs</li> <li>4. Make landscaping a priority to encourage people to utilise and visit and develop landscape development and management plan</li> <li>5. Encourage family care and community adopt-a-grave strategies</li> <li>6. Investigate opportunities to illuminate site in a creative and attractive fashion</li> <li>7. Develop and install site specific outside seating for visitors</li> <li>8. Develop a tourist information board on site</li> <li>9. Maintain a caretaker living on site indefinitely</li> <li>10. Continue support and encouragement of cemetery tours</li> <li>11. Establish a 'Friends' group for St Bartholomew's</li> <li>12. Establish and develop St Bartholomew's Movable Heritage Collection</li> </ol>
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REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jonathan Falk Planning Consultants P/L et.al. <i>Blacktown Heritage Study</i>, 1988.</li> <li>• Heritage Group, State Projects. <i>Saint Bartholomew's Anglican Cemetery Prospect. A Conservation Plan</i>. July 1994.</li> <li>• Graham Edds &amp; Associates. <i>St Bartholomew's Anglican Church. Review of Conservation Plan</i>. November 1999.</li> <li>• Godden Mackay Logan. <i>Interpretation Plan. St Bartholomew's Church and Cemetery, Prospect</i>. May 2002.</li> <li>• Tanner Architects. <i>Masterplan. St Bartholomew's Church and Cemetery. (Draft)</i> December 2003.</li> </ul>
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<b>Minimum Budgetary Estimates</b>							
<b>Property</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Proposed Purpose</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Reason for priority</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Estimated Cost (\$)</b>
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Development	Develop new facilities on site with masterplan as guideline	2	Council desired	2005-2007	865 975
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Management	Restoration of Cemetery monuments	2	Halt unnecessary deterioration	2005+	24 000
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Management	Develop & implement landscape regeneration policy	2	deteriorating - make attractive for potential uses - interpretation	2005-2007	70 500
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Management	Develop a report on possible future cultural use of site	2	Ensure development relates to use	2005-2006	10 000
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/management	maintain caretaker indefinitely	2	security	2005+	2000 pa
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Museum	set up St Barts collection	2	Council responsibility	2005-2006	6 000
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Management	Upgrade CMPs	3	as required	2005-2007	16 000
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Development	Works to Green Hall	3	Facilitate use	2006-2007	129 000
St Bartholomew's	2	Church and Cemetery/Management	Develop policy to reopen cemetery	3	Generate funds for site	2007-2008	50 000
St	2	Church and	Works to Church	3	Improvements	2006-2008	89 000

Bartholomew's		Cemetery/Management			to church to improve usage		
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Museum	Develop St barts collection	3	Council responsibility	2006+	2000 pa

<b>Non Budgetary and Optional Budgetary Items</b>							
<b>Property</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Proposed Purpose</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Reason for priority</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Estimated Cost (\$)</b>
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Development	Investigate acquisition of surplus RTA & DIPNA land for parking facilities	1	development partly hinges on this	2005-2006	0
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Community activity	support and encourage the Friends of St Bartholomew's	2	management, tourism	2005+	2 000 pa
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Management	Encourage family care and community adopt-a-grave strategies	3	decrease costs to Council;	2006-2007	5000
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Tourism & Interpretation	Develop tourism/interpretive signage on site	3	heritage tourism	2006-2007	50 000
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Tourism & interpretation	support and encourage cemetery tours	3	tourism and interpretation	2005+	500 pa
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Management/OH&S	Investigate and implement	3	safety, security, aesthetics	2006-2008	50 000+

			opportunity to further illuminate site in interesting and creative fashion				
St Bartholomew's	3	Church and Cemetery/Management	Develop and install further outside seating for visitors	4	not absolutely necessary	2006-2008	10 000

<b>Recommended Use – Mixed function facility/Cemetery and ashes interment facility</b>	
<b>Minimum required budget</b>	<b>\$1 264 475</b>
<b>Recommended minimum non budgetary and optional budgetary items</b>	<b>\$82 500</b>
<b>Total ALLOCATED funds</b>	<b><u>\$840 000</u></b>
<b>Balance of funding required</b>	<b>\$506 975</b>