Item Details

Name

St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Hall & Rectory

SHR/LEP/S170

SHR #00057

Address

313 Seven Hills Road North SEVEN HILLS NSW 2147

Local Govt Area

Blacktown

Local Aboriginal Land Council

Deerubbin

Item Type	Group/Collection	Category
Complex / Group	Religion	Church

All Addresses

Addresses

Records Retrieved: 2

Stre et No	Street Name	Suburb/Town/Postc ode	Local Govt. Area	LALC	Parish	County	Electorate	Address Type
	Seven Hills Road	SEVEN HILLS/NSW/2147	Blacktown	Unknown	Prospect	Cumberl and	SEVEN HILLS	Alternate Address
313	Seven Hills Road North	SEVEN HILLS/NSW/2147	Blacktown	Deerubbin	Prospect	Cumberl and	SEVEN HILLS	Primary Address

Owners

Records Retrieved: 0

Organisation	Stakeholder Category	Date Ownership Updated
	No Results Found	

Description

Designer	Builder/Maker
Mr.G.H.Stoker	Mr.G.H.Stoker

Site and grounds:
Set on approximately 6100sqm, the complex is in Seven Hills Road North, just south of its junction with Old Windsor Road, at Seven Hills. The land on which the church, hall and rectory is located is closely associated with early pioneer families of the area. The site is visually prominent with the chruch on the hill providing an important local landmark.

Adjacent land to the heritage buildings zoned R2 residential. DA submitted for 10 terrace style dwellings and an under basement car park for Seniors Living. Registered easement to facilitate any development.

The site is grassed, with a scatter of mature trees tracing its two central drives, which are both sides of the Church Hall (i.e. two drives to Seven Hills Road) but converge behind the hall into one drive, which is red-gravelled where it forms a carriage loop in front of the Old Rectory. The carriage loop is grassed with a box hedge (Buxus microphylla) lining its edge and standard roses. A few mature trees run along the front boundary to Seven Hills Road, framing the Hall near the road (Stuart Read, from aerial photo, 2018). Trees include Chinese elm (Ulmus parvifolia), jacarandas (several) (J.mimosifolia), crepe myrtle (Lagerstroemia indica), gums (Eucalyptus spp.), rough-barked apple oak (Angophora floribunda), Mediterranean cypress (Cupressus sempervirens), sweet gum (Liquidambar styraciflua), Chinese funeral cypress (Cupressus funebris). Timber picket gates (vehicular and one pedestrian gate, to one side) front the road. A three rail split timber rural fence fronts the road also (ibid, 2018).

The three buildings comprise an intact precinct of early church buildings. The complex is one of the most interesting and architecturally significant pre-1900 groups of buildings between Parramatta and Windsor (Letter on file from Barry Slack, 16/5/1978).

Church (1878-79)
The church building is a good example of late Victorian Neo-Gothic church architecture with single nave in brickwork and galvanised iron roof. While having some crudity of detail as in the Vestry windows and the somewhat modest/mean entry porch, it transcends this in the generous proportions of its large windows and most satisfying way the component parts of the building are massed into the final structure. The proportions of the east window in the Chancel and the curve of the Chancel arch are very pleasing. The framework of the fine timber roof - an A-frame supported on semi-circular wooden arches sprung from stone corbels in the walls is important and could be considered the equal of some of the fine church rooves by Edmund Blacket & Son, or John Horbury Hunt. It is easily the most notable roof of its type in the outer western region of the metropolitan area. The varying designs of the dripstones over the windows provide an interesting and delightful (if not unique) touch to its details (Letter on file from Barry Slack, 16/5/1978).

Church features Cedar beam arches and panelled ceiling, stained glass and leadlight full length windows, vestry and cellar.

About 1963 the original Victorian Gothic Prayer Desk and gilded Communion Rails, pulpit, lectern and pews were removed. Photographs of the church before this time would allow reinstatement. The stained glass windows are notable, the three eastern windows being exceptionally fine (costing 100 pounds each in 1880)(ibid, 1978).

Hall (c1883)
The hall represents significant religious development in Seven Hills, a small, single-storey brick building with gable-ended roof in galvanised iron and Gothic arched windows.

The roof is wooden with scissor-style trusses and timber ceiling. Until 1954 its roof was covered with slates. Problems with settlement of foundations have been reasonably successfully stabilised many years ago by iron tie-bars bolted transveresly across the building (ibid, 1978).

Rectory (1891):
The rectory behind the church is a fine late Victorian two-storied mansion with imposing double-storey verandah with iron lace balustrades and columns, which is rare within Blacktown (LEP, 2002). Circa 1955 the Rectory was restored, after having been vacant for many years. The two storey verandahs with cast iron columns and balustrades were removed, as was the cast iron balustrade to the top of its tower. Photographs exist of these features, which would allow reinstatement (ibid, 1978).

The rectory has five oversized bedrooms, the master featuring a walk-in wardrobe and an ensuite bathroom. Six marble fireplaces feature through this late Victorian two-storied mansion with polished floor boards, ornate ceilings and classic wrap around 90 ft. cast iron verandas, topped by a 'widows walk' above. Glass Conservatory family room with country style kitchen featuring island bench with stone bench tops, gas cooking, dishwasher and ample storage.

The History
The land for the church was donated by Phillip Pearce who was the son of Matthew Pearce, a pioneer settler of the area and after which Matthew Pearce School is named. Matthew Pearce, a free settler arrived on board the 'Surprise' in 1794 and was granted 160 acres in 1795, known now as Seven Hills, Baulkham Hills and Kings Langley. Four of the six windows in the church were dedicated to members of the Pearce family, descendants of Matthew Pearce.

The construction is Gothic Revival Style, although simple and unpretentious, the interior features are impressive with high beamed ceilings.

The Church (St. Andrew's) was built and designed by Mr G H Stoker from 1863-1892. The church was officially opened by the Archbishop of Sydney on 22/10/1879 and so became the Anglican Parish Centre west of St. John's in Parramatta. The Church Hall (built in 1884), and Rectory (1891) was on land donated by Phillip Augustus Pearce, who had inherited Kings Langley Farm on his father's death in 1865 and successive donations created the current block with final contribution 1938.

A substantial land holding just south of the junction of Seven Hills Road with Old Windsor Road, at Seven Hills provides easy access to the city via the M2, T-Way bus services, links you to Parramatta, CBD and Rouse Hill with Norwest Rail.

This truly is an outstanding property and must be seen to be appreciated.

5 bedrooms; 4 bathrooms, 1 ensuite, 4 toilets. 2 Garage spaces. Double staircase, 2 laundry chutes, sprinkler system, electronic gates. https://www.realestate.com.au/property-house-nsw-seven+hills-127068042 (link to Craze, Kirsten, 'Top 10: Australian Churches for sale', in The Daily Telegraph, 6/12/2017).

Physical Condition   **Updated** 05/08/2013

Church: structurally has two main faults - insufficient foundations and possible water entry from the gutters. The walls have been cracked for many years owing to foundation settlement. No further cracking has occurred over the past 26 years. Though in need of underpinning for long term preservation, the building is quite safe and structurally stable. Sufficient drainage to carry off rain water from the foundations is advisable. About 1968 an amateurish effort to underpin the walls was made by volunteers (tho' conducted over a long period during wet weather). The corbelled string course of bricks beneath the roof gutters projects beyond the line of the roofing material and where the guttering has rotted, water is inclined to run into the building across this string course (on which the wall plates rest). This was corrected many years ago over some of the walls using flat galvanised steel bent over the corbelled string course and up behind the guttering, but further attention to this problem over all the walls would be advantageous, particularly in the vestry, as it could cause rot in the wall plates on which the rafters rest (Slack, 1978).

Modifications And Dates

Circa 1955 the Rectory behind the church was restored, after having been vacant for many years. The two storey verandahs with cast iron columns and balustrades were removed, as was the cast iron balustrade to the top of its tower. Photographs exist of these features, which would allow reinstatement. About 1963 the original Victorian Gothic Prayer Desk and gilded Communion Rails, pulpit, lectern and pews were removed. Photographs of the church before this time would allow reinstatement. The stained glass windows are notable, the three eastern windows being exceptionally fine (costing 100 pounds each in 1880)(Letter on file from Barry Slack, 16/5/1978).

Further Comments

Current Use

residence

Former Use

Aboriginal land, farm, church, hall, parsonage

Listings

Listings

				Records Retrieved: 5	
Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazette Number	Gazette Page
National Trust of Australia register	St.Andrews Church Group (Church, Hall, Lodge)	9776	2/11/1974 12:00:00 AM		
Local Environmental Plan	Local Environmental Plan Amendmt.143		4/12/2002 12:00:00 AM	72	
Local Environmental Plan			5/7/1993 12:00:00 AM		
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		00057	4/2/1999 12:00:00 AM	27	1546
Heritage Act - Permanent Conservation Order - former		00057	1/15/1982 12:00:00 AM	7	34

Procedures/Exemptions

				Records Retrieved: 2	
Section of Act	Description	Title	Comments	Action Date	Outcome
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions		11/9/2020 12:00:00 AM	
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Heritage Act		7/11/1986 12:00:00 AM	

History

Historical Notes or Provenance   **Updated**

Seven Hills:
Seven Hills was first settled when Matthew Pearce, a free settler who arrived on board the 'Surprise' in 1794, was granted 160 acres in 1795. He named it King's Langley after an English village about 30km south of London; it is believed he was born in the manor house at that village. His grant was bounded by the present Old WIndsor Road, Seven Hills Road, Chapel Lane (Baulkham Hills) and Toongabbie Creek. Because his family could see seven hills from their home, the area became known as Seven Hills, a title it has borne since 1800.

Pearce was interned in St.John's Cemetery, Parramatta but later his remains were removed. Today Pearce and his family lie peacefully in a private cemetery which his descendents set up near the corner of Seven Hills Road and the Old WIndsor Road (see Pearce Family Cemetery - separate SHR listing)(facing Bella Vista Farm which belonged for much of the 19th century to the Pearce family)(Pollen & Geary, 1988, 242, with addition by Stuart Read, 6/1/2010)..

In the early 1900s there was a small village in the area. A tile works was established about 1900 (later Norbrick) and continued to operate for about 60 years (ibid, 243).

Seven Hills Road still displays its early establishment as an important transport link by following the line of high ground between the Windsor Road (now Old Windsor Road) and Prospect).

A railway link built by 1863 from Parramatta to Penrith and including Seven Hills Station, stimulated development of the area into a prosperous orcharding district, which, during the land boom of the 1880s, soon became intensive farmlets (Godden Mackay Logan, 2008, 17).

Seven Hills had a Department of Agriculture Poultry Research Station (see Grantham Poultry Estate - separate SHR listing) established before the First World War. Nearby Grantham High School is on land that was also part of the Pearce Estate (Pollon & Geary, 1988, 242-3).

St.Andrew's Anglican Church, Hall & Rectory Group:
The land on which the church, hall and rectory is located is closely associated with early pioneer families of the area.

Mr W.Freame, noted local histoian and Lay Representative at the Anglican Synod, records 'During 1863 a brick building was erected to do duty as a chapel of ease and a school, and here services were held on sundays for many years, until 1880 when St.Andrews' Church was opened (W.Freame, 'A Delectable Parish', published in 1923). This appears to refer to the oldest of the three buildings on the site. A typescript history of Seven Hills (North) Public School (firectly adjacent to the Church's site)(copy in Blacktown Archives) mentions that services had been held in the Anglican Denominational School, corner of Abbotts' Road and Seven Hills Road, since the 1850s (Blacktown & District Historical Society, 1978).

The church was officially opened by the Archbishop of Sydney on 22/10/1879. It seems however to have been in use for most of 1878, the first baptism being recorded on 14/4/1878 (Blacktown Archives)(Blacktown & DIstrict Historical Society, 1978).

Ministers of the original parish of Prospect and Seven Hills had resided at Parramatta until 1860, and their successors until 1860 lived in rented houses within the parish. The Rev. T. Donkin (1855-76) lived in a cottage owned by Mr.J.Pye on the Old Windsor Road. Here he conducted a small private school for gentlemen's sons (Moore, 1978, 29).

Four of the six side windows were dedicated to members of the Pearce family, descendents of Matthew Pearce, pioneer free settler in the 1790s (and later of 'Bella Vista' or 'Seven Hills' farm). Other memorials to pioneer families were in the church until its closure.

Mr Freame records the memorials that were in St.Andrew's Church in 1923, these included:
- at the east end a fine three light window in memory of Eliza Pearce, died 20/2/1878; William Thomas Pearce, died 9/2/1865; and James Robert Knaggs, deid 15/1/1878.

There were also memorial windows to Amelia Neale and William Pearce. Three mural tablets were memorials to A.G.J.Neale (1825-1906), WIlliam John Pearce (1835-98); and Amelia Ann Neale (1836-65). The Neales and the Pearces were related by marriage. The brass book rest and vases on the communion table were in memory of the late Phillip Pearce, JP, Church Warden.

Mr.Freame lists the leading 'founding parishioners' of St. Andrew's as: 'The Pearces, Howards, Briens, Meurants, Davis and Horwood'. Apart from Street names and one or two homesteads (e.g.: Exeter Farm Cottage was formerly known as Meurant's Cottage, on (then) Meurant's Lane), more or less under threat from developers, St. Andrew's is the last remaining visible memorial to these noted pioneer families of the district (Blacktown & District Historical Society, 1978).

The three buildings comprise an intact precinct of early church buildings with high architectural and social value within the local area. The church building is a good example of Victorian church architecture. The hall represents significant religious development in Seven Hills and the rectory is a fine late Victorian mansion which is rare within Blacktown (LEP, 2002).

The rectory's foundation stone was laid by the Primate of Australia and Bishop of Sydney, Rt. Rev. William Saumarez Smith, on 13/6/1891, alongside St.Andrew's church, which by that time had been in service for a decade or more. A large crowd was present for the ceremony, which was reported in the local press, and all the old families were well represented. The Cumberland Argus gave a full description of the building. It was being built by Mr.G.H.Stoker, who was both architect and contractor. In 1860 a parsonage was built between Seven Hills and Prospect, and paid for by public subscription. There were a couple of Catholic names among the subscribers. This parsonage was still standing in the 1920s. By 1890 however, St.Andrew's parishioners were determined to have a new parsonage of their own. Hence the visit of the Primate. The two storey building would have nine rooms, bathroom, lavatory, study, kitchen etc. The front was to be of attractive design, with cast iron columns to the full elevation. The bay window also was carried through to the roof and the balcony was to be 90' long. After laying the foundation stone there was a laying of donations on the stone. The trowel used was at least until recent years (1978) preserved in a glass case in the church (Moore, 1978, 29).

The term 'villa' was first used in England in the 17th century, partly from the Latin and Italian 'country house, farm', perhaps derived from the stem of vicus (village). The villa was a country mansion or residence, together with a farm, farm-buildings, or other house attached, built or occupied by a person of some position and wealth. It was taken to include a country seat or estate and later a residence in the country or in the neighbourhood of a town, usually standing in its own grounds. From this is was appropriated by the middleof the 18th century to mean a residence of a superior type, in the suburbs of a town or in a residential district, such as that occupied by a person of the middle class, and also a small, better-class dwelling house, usually detached or semi-detached. The term 'villa garden' was used in the context of Hobart and Sydney residences in the 1830s, and if near the coast or harbour, the appellation 'marine villa' was often applied. Australian origins probably date from the grant conditions applied to Sydney's Woolloomooloo Hill (1827, under Governor Darling), which obligated the construction of villas fulfilling certain conditions... 'with garden like domain, and external offices for stables and domestic economy' (John Buonarotti Papworth, 1825, quoted in James Broadbent's 1997 book, 'The Australian Colonial House'). Many gardens of 19th century villas followed Gardenesque conventions, with garden ornaments often complementing the architecture of the house. The term had acquired such widespread usage by the 1850s that when Jane Loudon issued a new editiion of her husband (John Claudius Loudon)'s 'Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion' (1838) she merely entitled the revised work 'The Villa Gardener' (1850). This coincided with a growing period of suburbanisation in Australia with consequent fostering of the nursery trade... By the 1880s, descriptions of Australian villas implied sufficient room for a lawn on two or three fronts of the residence...(Aitken, 2002, 619-20).

Circa 1955 the rectory behind the church was restored, after having been vacant for many years. About 1963 the original Victorian Gothic prayer desk and gilded communion rails, pulpit, lectern and pews were removed from the church. Photographs of the church before this time would allow their reinstatement. The church's stained glass windows are notable, the three eastern windows being exceptionally fine (costing 100 pounds each in 1880. An almost complete set of church financial statements covering the period from 1880s-1930s is retained by the author and forms a useful reference (Letter on file from Barry Slack, 16/5/1978).

In 1978 the Anglican Church proposed retention of the manse but demolition of the church and hall, subdivision and disposal of the site for eight house lots, claiming the area was no longer desirable, that church activities had ceased in 1977, that it had no further use for the site and citing high maintenance costs. The National Trust of Australia (NSW) had recorded the church and hall. Heritage Council advice was sought by Blacktown City Council (Heritage Branch, file note, 6/3/1978).

The Heritage Council negotiated retention of the church and hall until the subdivision application was finalised. The church removed the stained glass windows from the church for safe-keeping, made it vandal-proof (Heritage Branch file note, 6/4/1978).

Historic Themes

Records Retrieved: 16

National Theme	State Theme	Local Theme
8. Culture	Religion	parsonage, manse, vicarage, rectory, verger's cottage
8. Culture	Religion	Practising Anglicanism
8. Culture	Religion	church hall
8. Culture	Religion	Associated with the Sisters of the Sacred Heart
8. Culture	Religion	Adaptive new use
4. Settlement	Land tenure	Alienating Crown Lands for religious purposes
4. Settlement	Land tenure	1820s-1850s land grants
4. Settlement	Accommodation	Building settlements, towns and cities
3. Economy	Events	Developing local landmarks
3. Economy	Environment - cultural landscape	Landscapes of remembrance
3. Economy	Environment - cultural landscape	Landscapes of passive recreation
3. Economy	Environment - cultural landscape	Landscapes and parklands of distinctive styles
3. Economy	Environment - cultural landscape	Developing local, regional and national economies
1. Environment	Environment - naturally evolved	Other open space
1. Environment	Environment - naturally evolved	Gardens
1. Environment	Environment - naturally evolved	Changing the environment

Recommended Management

Management Summary

Management

Records Retrieved: 3

Management Category	Management Name	Date Updated
		2/7/2024 6:05:08 PM
		2/7/2024 6:05:08 PM
		2/7/2024 6:05:08 PM

Report/Study

Heritage Studies

Records Retrieved: 0

Report/Study Name	Report/Study Code	Report/Study Type	Report/Study Year	Organisation	Author
			No Results Found		

Reference & Internet Links

References

Records Retrieved: 6

Type	Author	Year	Title	Link
Written	Godden Mackay Logan	2008	Former Grantham Poultry Research Station - Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Strategies - Final Draft Report	
Written	Aitken, Richard	2002	Villa Garden (entry)	www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au
Written	Pollen, F. & Healy, G. (ed.s)	1988	'Seven Hills' entry, in The Book of Sydney Suburbs	
Written	Slack, Barry W.	1978	letter to the Heritage Council, dated 30/4/1978	
Written	Moore, Kevin	1978	'Rectory was built in 1891', in The Blacktown Advocate, 7/6/1978	
Written	Blacktown & District Historical Society	1978	letter to the Registrar, Historic Sites and Buildings, Heritage Council of NSW	

Data Source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Data Source	Record Owner	Heritage Item ID
Heritage NSW	Heritage NSW	5045295

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