SUPPLEMENTARY HERITAGE REPORT

St Paul's Anglican Church
459 Chapel Road, Bankstown
February 2016

This report provides supplementary heritage advice to support the heritage listing of St Pauls Anglican Church on the Bankstown LEP.

Date:

February 2016.

Address and Property Description:

459 Chapel Road, Bankstown
Lot 26A, 27A and 28A, DP 7058
Parish of Bankstown, County of Cumberland

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Sue Rosen Associates were commissioned by Bankstown City Council to expand on an assessment conducted in 2015 as to the heritage significance of St Paul's. The aim of this report is to determine the level of significance of the various component parts of the site which includes, the original timber church now used as a church hall, the current church, the rectory, the vestry, a garage, an amenities block, gardens and a carpark.

1.2 Study Area

Figure 1 | *The study area. 459 Church Street comprises 3 lots. Two lots address French Avenue and one addresses Chapel Road. [Six Maps]*

Figure 2 | *An aerial view showing the general situation and development of the site. [Six Maps]*

1.4   Methodology

The methodology employed in this study conforms to the principles and guidelines of The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999 and is also in accord with the criteria and guidelines prepared by the NSW Heritage Branch of the NSW Department of Planning for Heritage Assessments.

2.   HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

2.1   Richard Morgan's Grant

St Paul's Anglican Church is situated on part of the 50 acre portion 48 of the Parish of Bankstown granted to Richard Morgan in March 1831. This grant ran south from Liverpool Road and was one of some 30 grants made in Bankstown that year.[1] [Some 30 years later, the grant was dissected by Chapel Road which was created to connect farms in southern Bankstown to Liverpool Road and access to city markets. Chapel Road, which was officially confirmed on 27 March 1860, cut a north-south transect through Morgan's grant. The intersection of Liverpool Road and Chapel Road, which Morgan's Grant abutted on the south, became the focus of commercial and administrative activity for Bankstown. Bankstown Post Office, St Felix's Catholic Church and School were established there and the first Bankstown Council Chambers were also established in the vicinity. [2]

2.2   The Church of England in Early Bankstown

In 1856 the Church of England called for the establishment of an Anglican school at Bankstown and in 1861 a one-room school, St Matthews, was established on Liverpool Road in the Bankstown Village Reserve on the northern side of Liverpool Road, in present day Yagoona. In its early years the school had difficulties maintaining student numbers and retaining staff despite some 400 people including 80 children resident within a 2.5 mile radius. Most families were poor, living by selling firewood or on small farms. Attendance problems continued into the late 1860s and 1867 the School Board offered the premises to the State Council of Education for use as a state school. The Council took up the offer and St Matthews closed in May 1868 to open in July as Bankstown Public School. The building continued to serve as a church until the establishment of St. Paul's when the focus of Bankstown moved south, closer to the newly established railway.[3]

2 3 The Impact of the Railway

The establishment of the railway was the single most important factor to influence the development of modern Bankstown. In December 1906, the Authorising Act for its extension from Belmore to Chapel Road was passed through the NSW Parliament. A tender was accepted for construction of the line in November 1907 and it was finally declared open on 14 April 1909. Bankstown was presented by developers, such as Arthur Rickard, as a healthy residential alternative to the inner city slums. As a consequence land that had always been of marginal agricultural worth became valuable residential real estate. Workers could labour in the city, raise their families in a rural environment on quarter acre blocks, and grow vegetables in their leisure hours. It was from this time that the Bankstown Municipality's urbanization can be dated and a population boom was first experienced. Population growth was steady and by 1910 the population of the municipality had reached 2000. North and South Terrace were created in response to railway development at this time.[4]

The focus of the Bankstown Municipality, where the town hall had been constructed, moved from the intersection of Chapel Road and Liverpool Road to the vicinity of Bankstown Station. The southern drift in the municipality's focus was recognized when the original Bankstown Public School was renamed Bankstown North in October 1913. The final capitulation came in 1918 when the old Bankstown Post Office closed and reopened near the station.[5]

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[1] LPI: CT: Vol. 2412 Fol. 67

[2] Sue Rosen, *Bankstown: A Sense of Identity,* Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1996, pp.47-59

[3] Rosen, pp.50-53.

[4] J.H. Forsyth, 'Historical Notes On Bankstown Line', Vol.1, Public Transport Commission of New South Wales, 1976, p.16; SRANSW, Archives Section, 'Station & Track Data', Vol.1, 1988, p.118; Mrs Fraser, Souvenir Of Bankstown, 1922, n.p. ML Q991.1/F

[5] Rosen, 1996, pp.80-81.

2.4   The Greenacre Park Estate

Coinciding with the establishment of the Bankstown line was the formation of the Greenacre Park Estate by Arthur Rickard. The estate was bounded by Liverpool Road, Chapel Road and Hillcrest Avenue and the railway line. Some 283 houses were constructed in the Bankstown Municipality in 1913 and these were mostly within walking distance of a station and the site of St Paul's. In that year alone the population increased by 700. Whilst the building boom of 1912-1914 was curbed by the Great War, the population of Bankstown continued to expand. Despite wartime losses, the second decade of the twentieth century was one of overall population growth.[6] Gradually, services in the area developed, including the Bankstown District Friendly Societies Association which was established in 1914 and in 1919 an affiliated dispensary to assist with the provision of medical care and pharmaceuticals. [7] The establishment of St Paul's Church on the corner of Chapel Road and French Avenue was integral to this phase of Bankstown's development.

2.5 Development of the Site of St Paul's

St Paul's is located lots 26, 27 and 28 of Section A of the Greenacre Park Estate. Lot 26, the most eastern of the three lots, was purchased by Ethel Nield, wife of Roscoe Nield of Lakemba in August 1913. In February 1914, lots 27 and 28 were purchased by John Kent, Wilfred Law Docker and Henry Wallace Mort. Mort was described as a clerk in holy orders and it is assumed that these men were church representatives. Not long after, in June 1914 the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney licensed, St Paul's Bankstown and inducted the rector, the Rev W. Rutledge Newton to the 'newly formed parish'. In October 1914 lot 26 was also acquired by Kent, Docker and Mort. In February 1923 the property was transferred to the Church of England Property Trust, Diocese of Sydney.[8] The establishment of St Paul's at this location at this time is a reflection of the change in focus of the Bankstown Community, arising from the location of Bankstown Railway Station and of the central role of the church on the community.

It is commonly asserted in reference to St Paul's that it was constructed in 1912. The wedding of George Griffiths and Amy White is recorded at the "Church of England Hall, Bankstown" in December 1912 may support this view.[9] The discrepancy in the evidence has not been resolved, it may relate to an earlier hall elsewhere, as there was certainly a Church of England congregation in Bankstown prior to 1914, or possibly the hall was constructed prior to purchase. Officially, there was no "St Paul's" until 1914. Construction may have been as late as 1920, with the induction of the rector merely marking the beginning of the establishment of St. Paul's Parish. The first contemporary reference to "St Paul's" in use is to a wedding in November 1916.[10] The precise date of construction has not been determined

2.6   Church Buildings

An extension to the timber St Paul's constructed c.1914-1920 was dedicated on 10 October 1926 by Archdeacon Charlton.[11] In 1928 a film hall in Kitchener Parade was acquired to serve as a Parish Hall.[12] In June 1938 architect, Norman Welland McPherson, who had a strong ecclesiastical architectural practice, called for tenders for the new church.[13] The contract for the construction of the new church was let to local builder W. G. Wilson in the first half of August and in October 1938 the foundation stone was laid. [14] The church was partially completed in March 1939 and consisted of the chancel and one bay of the nave. A

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[6] Peter Spearritt, *Sydney Since The Twenties*, Hale and Iremonger, Sydney, 1978, p.27

[7] Rosen, 1996, p.87.

[8] LPI: CT: Vol. 2412 Fol. 67; CT: Vol. 2361 Fol. 19; *SMH*, 20 June 1914, p.6

[9] Transcription of Wedding Certificate of George Sydney Griffiths and Amy Linda White.

[10] *Mudgee Guardian and North Western Representative*, 30 November 1916, p.11

[11] *SMH*, 9 October 1926, p.9.

[12] St Pauls Anglican Church Bankstown, "Sunday News", Sunday 11 March 2012 in Bankstown Historical Society Vertical File: St Paul's Church

[13] *SMH,* 21 June 1938, p.5; *The Bankstown Observer* 23 October 1963, p.11 in Bankstown Historical Society Vertical File: St Paul's Church "Projected Works", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 July 1938, p.3.

[14] "Contracts Let", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 August 1938, p.6.

perspective study of St Paul's drawn in McPherson's office shows that the church was intended as the centerpiece of a formal, symmetrically planned complex of buildings. To the north of the church, adjacent to French Street, there was planned what appears to be a rectory while a new church hall was located to its south. The two subsidiary buildings were to be separated from the church by small courtyards that were screened on the west side and enclosed on the east side by a transept that also linked the buildings to the church.

Figure 3 | *Perspective study of the complex of buildings at St Paul's as envisaged by Norman McPherson [St Paul's]*

The second part of the church was commenced in 1958. The additions to the building were dedicated on 2 April 1961 (Easter Day) by the Hon Rev H. R. Gough, Anglican Archbishop of Sydney and Primate of Australia.[15] The works included the narthex, tower and porch, executed in a more contemporary idiom than the earlier sections. It has not been established who designed these additions, but it may well have been Norman McPherson of McPherson & Harrison. The church was not consecrated until 1968 when the debt was paid off. [16] Over the years stained glass windows were installed in the church, all credited to Martin van der Toorn of Lakemba.[17]

Coinciding with the extension of the church, in 1960 the church hall, formerly the original chapel, was extended toward Chapel Road. In 1967 the church hall kitchen was redesigned and renovated, followed in 1969 by reconfiguration of the front facade in brick to match the church.[18] A kitchen upgrade, replacing a

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[15] "Primate to visit Bankstown to dedicate St Paul's Church additions", *The Torch*, 23 February 1961, p.15.

[16] St Paul's Anglican Church Bankstown, "Sunday News", Sunday 26 February 2012 and 1 April 2012 in Bankstown Historical Society Vertical File: St Paul's Church

[17] "Rector's Letter", *The Bankstown Anglican*, April 1970, no pagination (p.1.) Post war Dutch migrant Martin van der Toorn purchased "goods and chattels" of the prominent stained glass manufacturing company of Ashwin & Co during the 1960s. He had worked with the company from 1951 to 1956 and is one of a small number of artists credited with channeling the influence of a renaissance in stained glass after World War II in Europe (Beverley Sherry, *Australia's Historic Stained Glass*, p.34; http://www.stainedglass.com.au/page/restoration, http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=455801, accessed 6 February 2016).

[18] St Paul's Anglican Church Bankstown, "Sunday News", Sunday 1 April 2012 in Bankstown Historical Society Vertical File: St Paul's Church.

1967 renovation, to the Church Hall was undertaken during 2012.[19]

Figure 4 | *The Church Hall shortly before renovation. [*Bankstown Observer, *3 August 1966, p.1]*

Until at least 1943 the rector lived in accommodation rented locally, in November 1943 the Rev. Herbert Marshall was evicted after seven years of residency and took up residence in a sectioned off portion of the hall. This situation that would not have occurred had the church had a residence. This may have arisen because of accommodation shortage associated with the war and Bankstown's prominent role in the war. With materials shortages – the construction of a rectory was not likely to have been achieved in the short term.[20] In 1970 the Chapel Road frontage of the rectory was extended to accommodate meetings and Sunday school classes.[21]

These works were accomplished with the active input of the parishioners, which was maintained across decades. For example, in 1957 volunteers painted the exterior of the hall and on Saturday mornings conducted an opportunity shop selling cakes and sweets the hall porch to raise money for two stained glass windows for the apse of the church.[22] Other activities to aid with the completion of the church was an investment scheme, a Gilbert and Sullivan concert and performances by the St Paul's Dramatic Society.[23]

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[19] "Sunday News", 26 February 2012, 11 March 2012, 1 April 2012, 1 July , no pagination.

[20] *The Daily Telegraph*, 29 November 1943 p.5 in Bankstown Historical Society Vertical File: St Paul's Church.

[21] "Sunday News", 26 February 2012, 11 March 2012, 1 April 2012, 1 July , no pagination.

[22] *The Torch Bankstown*, 11 July 1957, p.15 in Bankstown Historical Society Vertical File: St Paul's Church.

[23] *The Torch Bankstown*, 15 July 1957, p.14 in Bankstown Historical Society Vertical File: St Paul's Church.

Figure 5 | *Front view of the original St Pauls [Bankstown Historical Society, Image No. 784]*

Figure 6 | *The original St Paul's [Bankstown Historical Society, Image No. 767]*

Figure 7 and 8 | *McNamara-Claire wedding, 26 September 1936 [State Library of NSW digital order no, hood_31624 and hood_31621, Sam Hood photographs]*

Figure 8 | *The new Church and the old. The old church had been extended, c.1926-1928, to the rear and to the side to accommodate the choir stalls and vestry. [Bankstown Historical Society, Image No. 785]*

Figure 9 | *Circa 1940 photograph of the interior of St Paul's. The pews have since been replaced. The photograph suggests that the high windows in the apse may not have yet received leadlight glazing. [Bankstown Historical Society, Image No. 767]*

2.6 St Pauls' Importance to the Community

St Paul's has a long tradition of contributing to the community and of community involvement in St Paul's. This includes cultural activities such as sponsoring eisteddfods, the first being held in 1928 at the parish hall in Kitchener Parade.[24] Sports were an important element of the 1930s, with teams competing in inter-church competitions, which were reported in the press. For example, in May 1930 the junior hockey team was defeated by the Botany Baptists 3-1.[25] Their soccer team played in the Protestant competition, with St Paul's juveniles defeating the Wardell Road Methodists 3-1 in June 1930.[26] Other groups included a Girls Club, and a Women's Guild.[27]

On 1 November 1932 the Returned Soldiers League in association with the state wide employment drive held a meeting at St Paul's Parish Hall in Kitchener Parade inviting professional and business men to assist in securing employment for ex-servicemen in the district.[28] Other events of the 1930s included a "mission" held by the Church Army campaigners in 1933.[29] St Paul's choir participated in St Andrew's Day celebrations in November 1934.[30] In the late 1950s the Church of England Boys Society used the hall to hold a talent quest on Saturday evenings.[31]

In 1983 St Paul's successfully applied to Bankstown Council for permission to occupy some of the church buildings for a choir school to cater for some 12 to 15 primary school aged boys gifted in singing and with musical ability. The school was to cater for the usual range of academic subjects but was to have a special emphasis on singing and music. It was to operate independently from the other church activities on the site, but would use the church, the hall and meeting room attached to the rectory.[32] The St Paul's Choir School which operated on the site until 1991 was the foundation school of what became Georges River Grammar School.[33]

It is impossible to document in such a brief assessment the extensive role of St Paul's in the Bankstown community and the contribution it has made to the lives of Bankstownians. Equally the contribution of members of the community to St Paul's is also prolific and a great deal of evidence of this can be found recorded in the fabric of the structures and grounds. For example, in the garden beds there are plaques where the ashes of parishioners have been placed including the prominent Englisch family. The windows in the church were donated by parishioners, often to memorialise loved ones, such as that donated by a Mr Olaf depicting Saint Olaf. Furniture was also donated by parishioners, including bookshelves, noticeboards and the dedication plaque for the Tower, gallery, porch and narthex from 1961. Doors, pews and windows were all donated by community members. The details of these have been documented by the Bankstown Historical Society. There are 25 windows and some 72 other items in the church that document the community's involvement. For example, one brass brass plaque, reads "The Holy Table, Communion Rail and Sanctuary Chair, Lecturn, are the work and labour of love of Herbert H. Dearia". Attached to the sanctuary doorway is a plaque which states: "This doorway is erected to the Glory of God and in memory of Frederick Charles Arnott. Nov. 4th 1956." Under the stained glass window depicting the Good Samaritan is a plaque reading: " To the Glory of God and in loving memory of Raymond Edward Fitzpatrick, 1909-1967". Fitzpatrick was a very well known local identity, with strong connections to council. The brass plaque for the sanctuary chair reads: "to the Glory of God and in cherished memory of Allan Richard Maunsell AB RAN who succumbed to injuries received in enemy action on HMAS Australia on 21st October 1944. A scholar, Sunday School Teacher and communicant of this Church. This chair is the gift of his comrades and fellow members of

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[24] *South Coast Times and Wollongong Argus*, 11 May 1928, p.13.

[25] *Truth*, 25 May 1930, p.6

[26] *Truth,* 15 June 1930, p.5

[27] *The Muswellbrook Chronicle*, 15 Dec 1931, p.2

[28] *SMH*, 27 October 1932, p.13

[29] *SMH*, 4 March 1933, p.7

[30] *SMH*, 1 Dec 1934, p.21

[31] *The Torch Bankstown* 11 July 1957, p.15 in Bankstown Historical Society Vertical File: St Paul's Church

[32] BCC: P.32/199/459/26

[33] Georges River Grammar at www.grg.nsw.edu.au

the church. L. Bramble AIF, J. Cross RAN, N. Marshall RAN. [34]

In recent years the Parish has been approached by various developers with a view to redeveloping the site, but the position of the church on the lot has inevitably meant that redevelopment would require demolition of the Church. Increasingly with a diminished congregation the Church has been unable to meet its running costs and after another inquiry from a developer the Parish at their Annual Meeting in March 2015 decided to again investigate redevelopment of the site. That investigation is on going. [35]

Distressed by the prospect, a number of parishioners launched an on-line petition objecting redevelopment and approached Bankstown Council to impose an Interim Conservation Order over the site has been launched by the community to defeat the proposal and save St Paul's from redevelopment.

Figure 10 | *An appeal to the community for funds to complete the church [Bankstown Historical Society, Vertical File: St Paul's Bankstown]*

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[34] Bankstown Historical Society Vertical File: St Paul's Church.

[35] Personal Communication Rev. Garry Bennetts

Figure 11 | *Women fundraising in the Church Hall [Bankstown Historical Society]*

Figure 12 | *One of the many plaques testifying to the contribution of locals to St Paul's.*

Figure 13 | *Memorial plaques in garden on northern side of church, well known Bankstown families are represented here.*

2.7 Norman Welland McPherson, FRAIA ARIBA

Norman McPherson was an architect who graduated from Sydney University and practised architecture from 1923 until the mid 1970s. Born at Hornsby in 1900, he attended Sydney Technical College in 1916 where he initially studied Engineering Trades but swapped to architecture, obtaining a Bachelor of Architecture in May 1923. An artist and an organist as well as an architect, he registered as an architect on 28 June 1923 and was employed by the architectural firm of Budden and Greenwell in 1924. He designed many churches in Sydney and New South Wales including the Chatswood Congregational Church and St Swithun's Anglican Church at Pymble and the New Methodist Church at Mayfield which were entered in the 1938 Architectural Exhibition of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. McPherson also wrote occasionally on architecture for the *Sydney Morning Herald* on "The Small Church" in 1930 arguing that they did not need to be slavishly Gothic in style and "The Architect and Present Day Conditions " in 1932.[36] Other churches that he built include the New Methodist Church at Waitara dedicated in 1932.[37] He designed the Rawson Institute for Seaman.[38]

Although by 1930 McPherson was building small brick cottages and by 1933 blocks of flats (Balmoral Beach) and blocks of shops (Lakemba) the majority of his work was ecclesiastical and during the 1930s he designed Methodist churches at Waitara (1931), Balgowlah (1932), Bankstown, Manly (1932) Narooma (1935), Sutherland (1936), Mayfield (1937), and Wellington (1937-38), Eastwood (1941). The first design seems to have been Waitara, and this design was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in March 1931.   In addition he designed the Baptistery for St Johns Church of England at Ashfield in 1932 and a congregational church at Chatswood (1933). By June 1952, in the post war period he had obtained 10 commissions for churches and also designed the National Methodist Church in Canberra. In the 1960s with his partner David Arthur Wilson Harrison, who registered as an architect on 25 June 1951 and began working with McPherson in 1954 before becoming a partner in the practice. In 1957 McPherson began to design hospital buildings, but continued with churches into the 1960s.[39] McPherson and Harrison were joined by Kenneth Allan Hassall in the early 1960s.

Three other churches designed by McPherson are heritage listed. They are:

* The Mosman Uniting Church and Hall, 38a Belmont Road, Mosman (Mosman Council);

* The Uniting Church Group (comprising Church, Parsonage and Fence), 134 Wagonga Street, Narooma (Eurobodalla Council);

* The All Saints Cathedral Group at Bathurst (1970 works), 11 Church Street, Bathurst (Bathurst Regional Council).

2.8 Conclusion

The suite of buildings that comprise St Paul's Bankstown are related to the NSW historic themes of Towns, Suburbs and Villages, and the themes of Education, Welfare, Religion, Social Institutions, Creative Endeavour and Birth and Death.

This brief and incomplete history of St Paul's reveals that St Paul's is a product of the community, a reflection of the community and an institution that was both a supporter of the community that was in turn supported by the community. The evidence of that long history is retained in the physical fabric of the building and further documentary research will undoubtedly add to the story of the place and its people.

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[36] *SMH,* 20 September 1930, p.7 and *SMH*, 1 September 1932, p.8O .

[37] *SMH* 13 October 1931, p.5.

[38] *SMH* 24 February 1932, p.14

[39] RAIA NSW Architects Bibliographical Information

3. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The St Paul's precinct comprises the church, church hall, and rectory, together with lavatory blocks and a garage. The site is located on the south eastern corner of the intersection of Chapel Road and French Avenue. The layout of the site is described in the following diagram.

Figure 13 | *Site plan - not to scale. [Hericon Consulting]*

1   St Paul's Church
2   Church Hall - original section and 1926 addition
3   Church Hall annex
4   Toilet and storeroom
5   Rectory and 1970 meeting room
6   Vestry
7   Garage
8   Water Tank
9   Amenities block

3.1 The Church

St Paul's Church is a face brick building with a gabled and hipped roof covered with glazed terracotta tiles. The building is oriented to the west, facing Chapel Road. The church was built in two stages between 1938 and 1961. The two stages of construction are clearly evident on the exterior of the building. The earlier eastern section of the building, constructed during 1938, demonstrates the simplification of Gothic stylistic elements during the interwar period. It was intended as the centre piece of McPherson's development scheme that comprised the church flanked by the rectory and church hall sited at the rear, each with a screened garden. Projecting bricks on the northern and southern sides of the church provide evidence for proposed keying in of later brickwork for the proposed decorative screens. This original section contained the nave, side aisles, chancel and apse.

This section of the church is constructed with dichromatic face brickwork laid in stretcher bond. The upper section of wall below the roof line is terminated by a decorative soldier course. The north and south walls are divided into bays by regularly spaced piers, which hint at Gothic buttressing, while decorative short piers "supported" off shallow corbels mark gable roof ends. Eaves are boxed and lined with fibrous cement or similar. The roof has boxed eaves. Architraves are formed by slightly projecting bricks laid in stack bond and soldier coursing around window and door openings, which have shallow pointed arch heads. Windows consist of steel framed sashes containing lead light glazing.

The 1961 addition, the western section of the church, includes the bell tower, north porch, west gallery, narthex (1961) and two bays that extended the nave and side aisles. The two bays repeat the detailing of the original section, but the narthex, porch and tower are considerably more restrained in design and reflect the simplification and modernisation of traditional church architecture that took place in NSW during the 1950s and 1960s. The west facade is relieved by vertical bands of narrow, white glazed tiles, and brick pilasters continued up to the gable, with the walls terminating at raked glazed panels. There is an understated central entry from Chapel Road. The tower and belfry has the same brick pilasters and inlaid tiles.

Inside, the church has walls constructed out of face brick and a polished timber board floor. The roof is supported off muscular king post trusses, which have been left exposed. The underside of the roof is lined with timber boards. The ecclesiastical furniture includes the marble font with timber cover, pulpit, altar rail, altar table and platform, and seating. There is an organ and organ loft on the south side, and choir gallery on the north side of the nave. The organ is not listed in G.D. Rushworth's 'Historic Organs of New South Wales (1988) and would require further investigation into its maker.

St Paul's Church is described in the following photographs.

Figures 14 and 15 | *St Paul's Church viewed from the west (left) and north (right).*

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Figures 16 and 17 | *St Paul's Church viewed from the southwest. The hall is in the foreground (left); principal western facade and entrance (right). The doors are sheltered by a shallow canopy, while the face brickwork is relieved by slender vertical ceramic tile bands.*

Figures 18 and 19 | *Left: Simplified elements along the sides of St Paul's reflect the lingering influence of Gothic architecture, here suggested by the shallow pointed arches of window and door openings and the regularly spaced brick piers, which recall buttresses. The early 1960s tower takes the simplification of Gothic architecture even further. Corbelling at gable ends is also visible. The projecting bricks await the construction of screens that formed part of McPherson's original scheme. Right: the polygonal apse of St Paul's framed by the Vestry and the Rectory. The high band of windows is emphasised by the soldier course below the fascia board and projecting string courses above and below it.*

Figures 20 and 21| *Detailing of brickwork, which is darker in tone than bricks in the surrounding walls, around paired windows lighting the aisles (left); boarded door with decorative wrought metal hinges and handle at the rear of the church (right).*
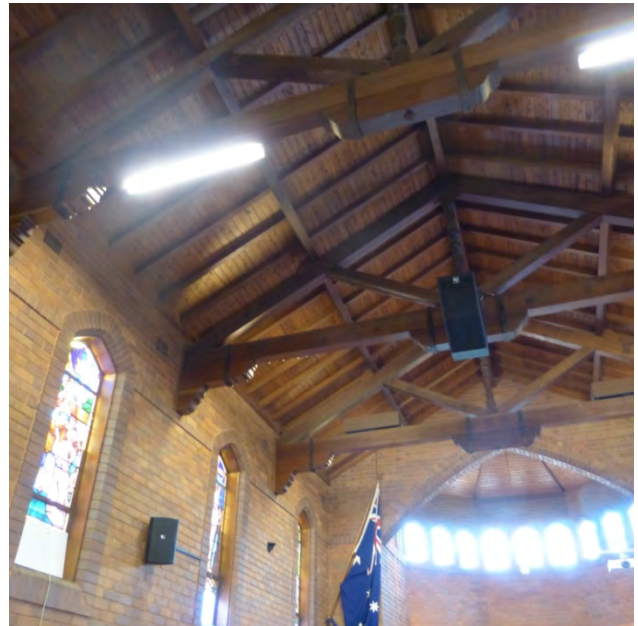
Figures 22 and 23| *Looking east along the nave towards the apse (left); exposed timber roof trusses supported off corbelled wall brackets- timber boards have been installed between the trusses to line the underside of the roof (right). The heads of windows are linked by a string course.*

Figures 24 and 25| *Chancel at the eastern end of the church (left); altar within the sanctuary, located within the polygonal apse (right).*

Figure 26 | *Timber ceiling lining above the sanctuary. The shallow arch separating the apse from the nave is emphasised by contrasting molded bricks.*

Figures 27 and 28| *Looking west along the nave from the chancel. The organ can be seen at left, with the cantilevered timber choir opposite (left); southern side aisle. The external piers are reflected by rhetorical buttressing pieced by arched openings. Timber bolsters carry the beam supporting the wall section, which is lined with acoustic panels, between aisle and nave. The vertical timber boards at right above the pews form part of the low balustrade wall across the gallery at the western end of the church (right)*

Figures 29 and 30| *Organ loft (left); looking east along the nave from the gallery at the western end of the church, which formed part of the early 1960s works (right).*

Figures 31 and 32| *Rear section of the early 1960s gallery (left); detail of stair providing access to the gallery (right).*

3.2   The Rectory

Internal inspection of the Rectory was restricted out of respect for the privacy of persons occupying the building.

The rectory is a single storey brick dwelling sited at the rear of the property with frontage to French Avenue. Unusually, the rectory abuts the church chancel, and this was a feature of McPherson's proposed layout for the church. Windows are timber framed pairs of casement sashes. The building has no particular stylistic affinities but is characteristic of many dwellings that were constructed around the first half of the 1960s. The original section had a simple tiled gabled roof with timber shingles lining the north and south gables. The 1970 extension, which was constructed on the western side of the Rectory for the purposes of a Sunday school and meeting space, also has a gabled roof, the ridge of which is perpendicular to the ridge of the main roof, and its gable end is lined with fibre cement or similar. The extension has brick walls and glazed timber framed French doors with matching sidelights on its northern side.

The interior of the building contains bedrooms and an office which are served by internal corridors. Finishes and detailing are very representative of domestic architecture from the period during which the building was constructed. Walls are lined with cement render, ceilings are of fibrous plaster with simple cornices, timber joinery door frames and skirting boards are simple in profile and floors are covered with carpet, apart from the kitchen, bathroom and 1970 extension, which has polished timber boards. The laundry is located adjacent to the kitchen but is only accessible externally.

Figures 33 and 34| *Southern end of the Rectory. The small covered porch provides access to St Paul's Church (left); the Rectory viewed from the northern side of French Avenue. This part of the site is screened by a proprietary steel fence.*

Figures 35 and 36| *Northern end of the Rectory (left); the 1970 extension on the western side of the building (right).*

Figures 37 and 38| *The main entrance to the Rectory is on its western side, adjacent to St Paul's Church and distinguished by a relatively generous porch with a simple flat roof supported off a timber post (left); French doors on the north side of the Rectory (right).*
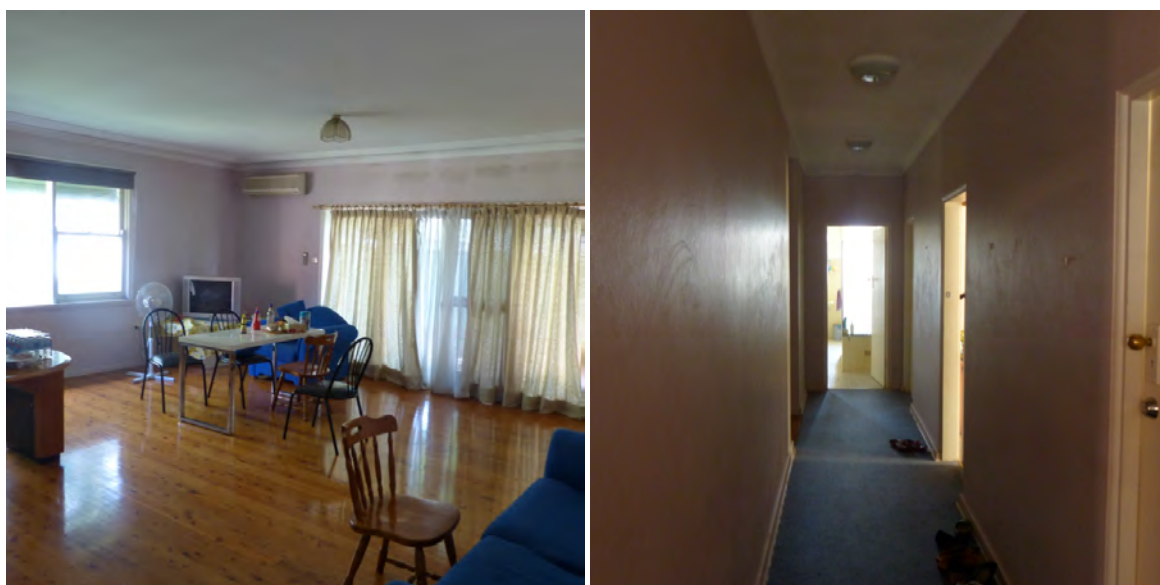
Figures 39 and 40| *Interior of the 1970 extension, which is distinguished by polished timber floor boards and cornices that are more elaborate than in other parts of the Rectory (left); the finishes and joinery in the corridor between bedrooms and other spaces are characteristic of the building as a whole (right).*

Figures 41 and 42| *The cupboards and fitments in the kitchen are not original but are relatively recent. The kitchen also has polished timber floor boards (left); the bathroom has also been modified by the installation of more recent sanitary items and floor tiling but has retained original fabric such as wall tiles and towel rails. The original finishes are characteristic of the period during which the building was constructed (right).*

3.3 Church Hall

The western end of the church hall includes the original weatherboard church erected circa 1912-1914, which included three bays of windows. It was extended by a couple of bays in the middle of the 1920s, subsequently enlarged by a major extension to the east and the brick facade facing Chapel Road was added in 1961. The gable roof is of a shallower pitch than depicted in photographs of the inter-war era, and therefore was altered probably about 1961. The timber frames, external architraves and sills of the windows seem early, but the sashes have been replaced. While McPherson proposed a church hall on the south side of St Paul's Church, his intention was for a new brick structure at the rear of the site.

Early photographs of the hall indicate that the skillion-roofed section on its northern side was initially part of the 1920s works and extended when the eastern section was constructed. On the east end there is an addition to the hall with battened fibrous-cement sheeting. The building looks like a former hut of the Second World War era.

There are conflicting claims that the timber Church, now used as a hall was first constructed as late as 1920, other claims date as early as 1912, for which there is some documentary evidence. However the land was not acquired until 1914, for which there is also documentary evidence.

Apart from the western facade, the main portion of the building is clad with rusticated timber weatherboards. The skillion roofed section on the northern side of the building is lined with fibre cement or similar. The roof of the later eastern addition is lower than the eastern section of the hall. Double hung window sashes associated with the main hall are not original; windows in the northern skillion roofed section are aluminium framed sliding sashes. The roof of the building is covered with corrugated steel; the roof over the eastern addition is deteriorating while the skillion is covered with Colorbond finished corrugated steel.

The interior of the building has a higher level of integrity. retaining original timber floor boards, and wall and ceiling linings with battens over joints. Early timber joinery cupboards have also survived. The kitchen in the skillion roofed section is recently installed fabric.

At the eastern end of the building is a detached brick toilet block and a timber framed storeroom. Their date of construction has not been ascertained, but the detailing and fabric of the toilet suggest it was constructed during the 1960s.

Figure 43| *The Hall viewed from the west. The 1960s brick facade has been designed to harmonise with the western end of the Church.*

Figures 44 and 45| *Rusticated timber weatherboards and recent windows on the northern side of the Hall (left); skillion roofed northern section of the Hall. The difference in roof level between the original section of the Hall (circa 112 to 1926) and the later eastern addition is clearly apparent, as is the differing condition of roof linings.*

Figure 46| *Circa 1960s toilet and storeroom at the eastern end of the Hall. The toilet block is connected to the Hall by an extension of its metal clad gabled roof.*

Figures 47 and 48| *The principal space within the Church Hall extends through the original section and the 1926 addition. These photographs show the interior of the addition looking towards the stage at its eastern end (left) and looking west from the stage (right). The two sections are linked by a wide opening that can be closed off by a roller shutter. The ceiling height of the addition is lower than the original section of the building.*

Figures 49 and 50| *Early fabric within the addition to the Hall includes this pair of timber doors on its northern side (left) and this Cupboard in its south western corner (right).*


Figures 51 and 52| *The skillion roofed section on the northern side of the Hall has been recently refurbished, as indicated by the kitchen (left) and other finishes throughout the structure. This mural is located in one of the section's ancillary spaces (right). Its authorship has not been ascertained.*

3.4   The Vestry

The Vestry is a small single storey timber framed building located to the immediate east of St Paul's Church and to the south of the Rectory. It was constructed circa 1960. Its walls are lined externally with timber weatherboards and its hipped roof is covered with terracotta tiles. Pairs of double hung timber framed windows, which extend to the eaves, provide natural light and ventilation. The Vestry contains two connected rooms, both of which have external access from the western side of the building. The door openings are sheltered by a porch formed by an extension of the roof plane that is supported off timber posts. A covered path links them to the Church.

Figures 53 and 54| *Vestry viewed from the north east (left) and south west (right). The building is close to the apse of St Paul's Church and is connected to the Church by a short covered way, which can be seen in the photograph on the right.*
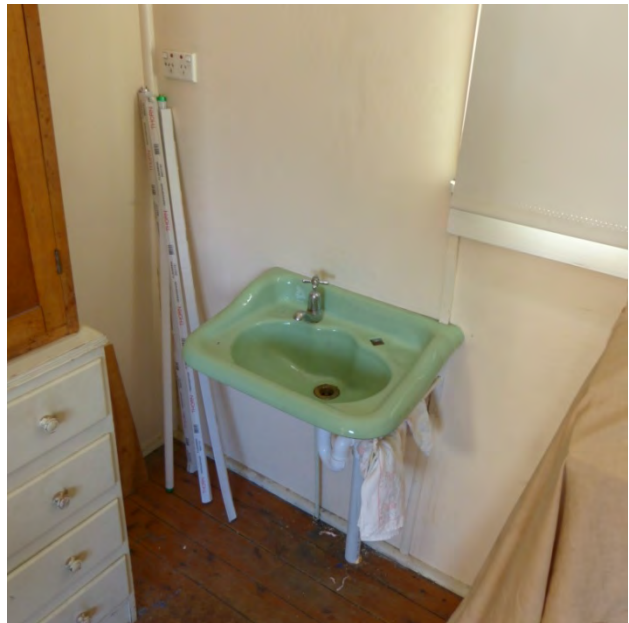
Figures 55 and 56| *Details of the Vestry interior - fibrous plaster wall and ceiling linings with joints covered by slender timber mouldings, polished pine floor boards and an enameled hand basin in one corner.*

3.5   The Amenities Block

The Amenities Block is a recently installed flat roofed single storey prefabricated structure located at the south eastern corner of the site, which contains male and female lavatories. Its amenity has been improved by the provision of a shallow timber framed verandah on its northern and western sides, which provides sheltered access to the facilities within.

Figure 57 | *The Amenities Block viewed from the west.*

3.6   The Garage

The Garage is a small functional brick building located near the eastern site boundary, which is beleived to have been constructed at the same time as the original section of the Rectory. The front of the Garage is aligned with the southern side of the Rectory. It has a hipped roof covered with glazed terracotta tiles. There is a relatively recent steel roller door in the northern side of the building and a timber framed window on its western side. A door opening on the southern side of the Garage has been bricked up. A water tank has been installed relatively recently behind the building, as has a proprietary Colorbond finish steel fence, which extends between the Garage and the Vestry.

Figures 58 and 59| *The Garage viewed from the north. The physical relationship between it and the Rectory and Vestry is apparent (left); the Garage and recently installed water tank viewed from the south west. Part of the Amenities Block can be seen at right (right).*

3.7   Other Site Features

There is lawn and some plantings on the French Avenue frontage, which includes a row of Jacarandas along the northern section of the site along French Avenue, a short row of cypress pines parallel to the western side of the church and to the west of the rectory, a small frangipani against the north side of the church near Chapel Road Planting bed n the northern side of the church contains a number of commemorative markers with names of deceased parishioners engraved on metal plaques.

A large part of the site is paved. There is a wide expanse of concrete paving between the church and church hall and tar sealed paving across the eastern section of the site.

Figures 60 and 61| *Jacarandas and cypress pines in the northwestern section of the site. A concrete path provides convenient access to the church from French Avenue.*

Figures 62 and 63| Concrete paving between the Church and Hall (left); asphaltic paving in poor condition across the eastern part of the site (right).

4. COMPARATIVE

4.1   Churches by Norman McPherson

Norman McPherson was one of a number of architects who specialised in church design during the middle third. Others included Arthur Lanyon Clark, who designed numerous churches and halls for the Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist denominations, John Burcham Clamp, who was building surveyor to the Anglican diocese of Sydney, and the firm of Fowell & McConnel (Fowell McConnel & Mansfield from 1935) designed a number of churches for the Roman Catholic denomination, as did Clement Glancey. These buildings were all marked by adherence to architectural idioms traditionally associated with western religion, most particularly the Romanesque and Gothic styles, but in a simplified and more retrained form. However, the interpretation of individual architects varied, with some churches stripping away detailed references and suggesting rather than depicting the characteristic elements of these styles. The use of brick predominated, which allowed small budgets to achieve attractive and well detailed buildings.

Figures 64 and 65| *St Matthew's Church of England, Manly (left) was completed in 1930 to the design of Wright & Apperly working in association with John Burcham Clamp. Bricks were used externally and internally, as were exposed timber roof trusses. External decorative elements, which are specifically Gothic in detail, were executed in stone. By way of contrast, Fowell McConnel & Mansfield's St Mary's Roman Catholic Church at North Sydney (right) completed in 1938, suggests Romanesque architecture by the scale, form and massing of the building. The great simplicity of the building's stone exterior and brick interior is offset by a high standard of workmanship.*

Perhaps the earliest ecclesiastical building designed by Norman McPherson, who was a prolific designer of churches, was a school hall for the Hornsby Methodist Church, undertaken in association with H. M. Cook, Both were members of the congregation. The hall was completed in 1924.[40] In subsequent years McPherson designed churches for the Methodist, Congregational and Anglican denominations.

In 1930 McPherson acknowledged that the Gothic style was popularly associated with ecclesiastic architecture, but argued that true Gothic was the expression of a sophisticated structural system that was unnecessary for smaller churches and that a carefully simplified form could be appropriate. A "reverential

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[40] "Circuit Notes", *The Methodist*, 5 April 1924, p.13.

atmosphere" was "essential in a church", which could be achieved without slavish copying of Gothic elements through a character of restraint and dignity resulting at least in part from the expression of the building's structure.[41] Several years later McPherson reiterated these thoughts, suggesting the possibilities of recently developed construction and acoustic technologies. He envisaged the church of the future:

> There is now no excuse for bad acoustics and bad visibility ... I picture a structure of grand dignity, of stately massing, with long simple vertical lines, curving over at the top in the most dignified of all shapes, the semi-circle. A structure which will not speak in part but as a whole with a grand, stirring note, a structure built around a single theme as the grand musical structures of Bach and Handel were built.
>
> There will be no appeal there to the passing whim for prettiness, but a deeper call to the finer taste. Internally there will be a sense of spaciousness enclosed by the massing of surfaces arranged in planes to make the play of light take its part in the general effect ...[42]

One of the earliest churches known to have been designed by McPherson was the Methodist Church at Waitara, which was dedicated in October 1931. It was similar in plan to St Paul's, with a central aisle leading to a chancel that was raised slightly above the main floor, and terminating in a sanctuary. The reredos was panelled in maple above which was a circular window opening intended to take an imposing stained glass memorial in the future. The choir was on one side of the chancel, the pulpit and organ on the other. Wall surfaces both externally and internally were of face brick, "of varying colours and texture, to give an interesting but soft effect" while the roof was covered with terracotta tiles. The ceiling was described as a "multi-sided open timber type" with a proprietary lining placed between exposed rafters. Windows were steel framed and intended to take leadlight glazing.[43]

Figure 66 | *Waitara Methodist Church. The earlier church is to its left [Sydney Morning Herald, 13 October 1931]*

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[41] Norman McPherson, "The Small Church", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 September 1930, p.7.

[42] Norman McPherson, "Church Architecture. What of Today?" *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 November 1935, p.9.

[43] "New Church For Waitara Methodists", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 March 1931, p.8; "Waitara Church", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 October 1931, p.5.

Over the next ten years McPherson was responsible for a number of churches that furnished their parishioners with buildings of high quality and character. Amongst them were:

The freely Gothic **Chatswood Congregational Church**, completed in 1933. It was constructed of "pressed brick with variegated coloured tiles" and was cruciform in plan. It boasted a prominent tower and spire and formed part of an overall scheme linking it to the existing church, which was to become a hall. The space between was paved and screened by an arcaded wall, prefiguring McPherson's scheme for St Paul's. The church consisted of a nave with two transepts, one of which was occupied by the choir and organ. The roof was supported off open timber trusses between which were acoustic linings; the reredos was panelled and surmounted by a rose window. Windows generally were steel framed and filled with leadlight glazing.[44]

Figure 67 | *Chatswood Congregational Church [Willoughby Library File 6515/6515948]*

The mildly Gothic **Roseville Methodist Church**, completed in 1935, which was built of "rich-toned brick" with a tiled roof, tower and spire. It accommodated 250 worshippers, who were surrounded by face brick walls inside, open timber roof framing, a chancel panelled in silky oak and a stained glass memorial window.[45]

Figure 68 | *Roseville Methodist Church [The Methodist, 13 July 1935]*

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[44] "Congregational Church To Be Built At Chatswood", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 February 1933, p.5; "New Congregational Church", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 August 1933, p.4.
[45] "Church Development", *The Methodist*, 13 July 1935, p.1; "Roseville Methodist Church", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 November 1935, p.5.

Mosman Congregational Church, completed in 1937, which accommodated 300 parishioners. It was cruciform in plan, with a central aisle flanked by arcaded side aisles. According to the Sydney Morning Herald, "though the form of the building is traditional, the architectural treatment will echo the modern trend in design as applied to ecclesiastical work" - that is, simplified Gothic but with suggestions of Art Deco influence. As with McPherson's other churches, face bricks were used internally and externally and acoustic linings were introduced internally[46]. The Church was picturesquely massed with a prominent tower. Its colourful roof was covered with colour blended tiles.

Figure 69 | *State Heritage Inventory database entry for Mosman Uniting Church & Hall*

Mayfield Methodist Church was also completed in 1937 to accommodate 400 people. The church was planned as a Latin cross with a central nave flanked by colonnaded side aisles that continued into transepts. The exterior of the building was restrained, alluding to the Gothic without literal references. The building made much of face brickwork externally and internally, and external openings were emphasized by brick architraves. The floor of the church was timber. The asymmetrical façade of the church featured a tall tower, alongside which was a slender spire.[47]
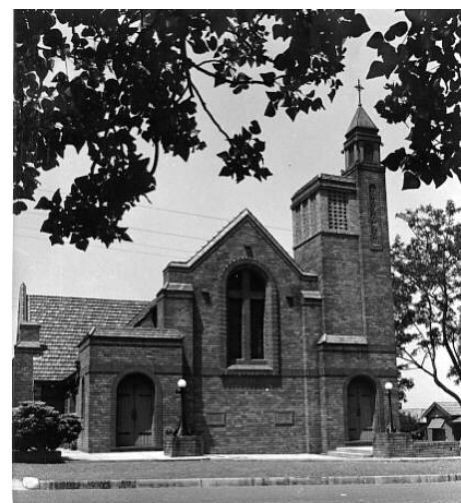

Figure 70 | *Mayfield Methodist Church [collections.ncc.nsw.gov.au]*

Wellington Methodist Church was constructed during the second half of 1938. It was built of sandstock brick with a tiled roof and as originally built allowed for additions to increase its capacity. Local timber was used in the roof structure, which was exposed. The plan of the church included a nave, choir, sanctuary, two vestries and a chapel on one side of the building. The tower was kept low because of foundation conditions on the site, which also meant that the whole structure was reinforced with steel rods. Window openings had arched heads.[48]

Figure 71 | *Wellington Methodist Church [Sydney Morning Herald, 1 March 1938]*

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[46] "A Mosman Church", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 June 1936, P.4.
[47] "Mayfield Methodist Church", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 August 1937, p.6.
[48] "Wellington Methodist Church", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 March 1938, p.8.

St Swithun's Anglican Church, Pymble was planned "along correct traditional lines for an Anglican Church of this size" and contained a nave, chancel, sanctuary, baptistery, side aisles, an organ loft and vestries.[49] It was one of McPherson's most distinctive churches in terms of its presentation to the street, in which pointed Gothic openings were punched into simple and rather squat wall planes. The use of stone externally was also unusual.

Figure 72 | *St Swithuns Anglican Church, Pymble [*Building*, 24 October 1940, p.41.]*

The asymmetrically planned **Eastwood Methodist Church** was completed in 1941 to accommodate a congregation of 300-400 people. While the exterior was constructed of brown face bricks, the interior was constructed with cream bricks. Openings were treated with brick architraves, as at St Paul's, while the tower was similar to the original concept at St Pauls. Exposed timber short-span roof trusses gave "an interesting and massive architectural effect" internally. Windows contained leadlighted sashes.[50]

Figure 73 | *St Swithuns Anglican Church, Pymble [*Building*, 24 June 1941, p.33.]*

Figure 74 | *Interior of Eastwood Methodist Church [*Building*, 24 June 1941]*

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[49] "St Swithun's Pymble", *Building*, 24 October 1940, p.41.

[50] "Eastwood Methodist Church", *Building*, 24 June 1941, p.33.

The Romanesque and Gothic styles, long associated with ecclesiastical architecture, continued to endure into the post-war period, which witnessed the construction of a large number of churches as towns and cities grew and new parishes were formed. However, with the impetus of Modernism after the war the forms became even more simplified. Some architects experimented with imaginative structures to express the unique religious roles that churches played in the community. During the 1960s architects also responded to reflect changes in liturgies, which affected planning and was expressed architecturally through the manipulation of space within churches.

Figures 75 and 76| *St Bernard's Roman Catholic Church at Botany, designed by Kevin Curtin and completed in the first half of the 1950s, demonstrates how architects experimented with advanced structural techniques, in this case tensioned parabolic arches, to determine the form and spatial character of the buildings [Roy Lumby Photographs]*

Figures 77 and 78| *Architect Stan Smith of McConnel Smith & Johnson designed a series of Presbyterian churches during the 1960s that were directly informed by changed liturgical requirements, expressed in planning and the form of the buildings. They included the square Latin cross planned church at New Lambton (1966 and the square, diagonally configured church at Ryde (1961). [Roy Lumby Photographs; Architecture in Australia, March 1962].*

Whilst the additions to St Paul's could not reflect changing liturgy because of the original section, McPherson's office (assuming it was responsible for their design) dealt with them in a way that reflects the period. McPherson continued to work on numerous churches during the 1950s and 1960s. A newspaper article from 1953 noted that he had eight buildings "on the drawing boards" and that he was enthusiastic about exploiting new materials and building technologies in church architecture - "if there is not the money or the conditions to do [traditional Gothic forms] well it is far better to do something simple, which may be honoured by the name of 'living architecture' "[51]

The following illustrations demonstrate the range of buildings produced in McPherson's office during the post war era.


Figures 79| *The Methodist Wesley Church and Memorial Youth Centre in Wagga Wagga was designed during 1948. It was a major project that visually recalls McPherson's pre-war churches [*The Methodist*, 2 October 1948]*

NATIONAL MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH. ONE OF CANBERRA'S NUMEROUS FINE CHURCH BUILDINGS.

Figures 80| *One of McPherson's most significant post war projects was the National Memorial Methodist Church in Canberra, which was opened in November 1955. He was responsible for a nearby parsonage that was constructed during the 1930s. The church is a very simplified interpretation of Gothic architecture but similar in composition to his pre war churches [www.flickr.com]*

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[51] "Sydney Church Building Revival", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 June 1953, p.13.
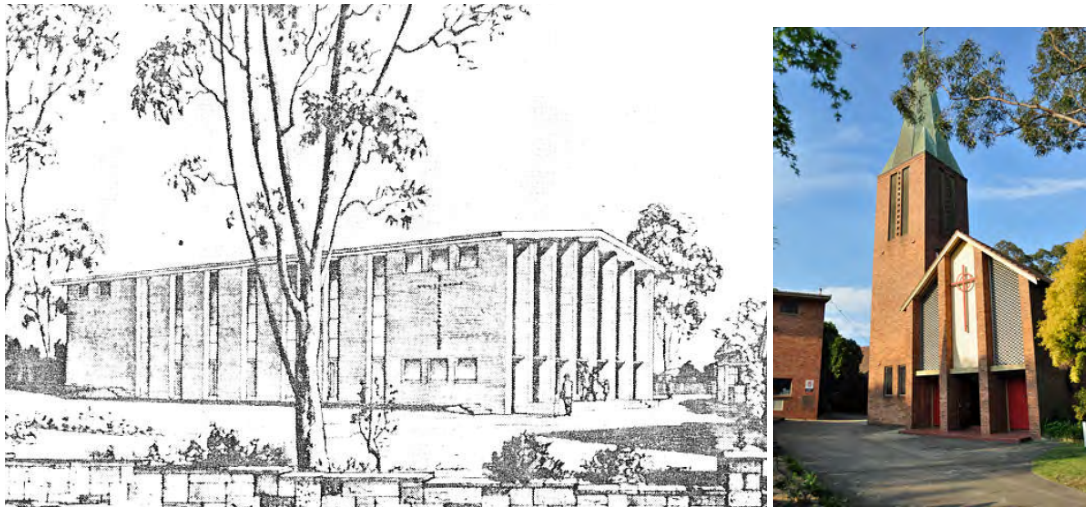
Figures 81 and 82| *St Alban's Anglican Church Hall, designed around 1957 The adjacent 1920s Church was altered in the 1960s, possibly to McPherson's deign - its principal front is similar to the western front of St Paul's* [Building, *Lighting & Engineering, 24 April 1957; www.sydneyorgan.com]*
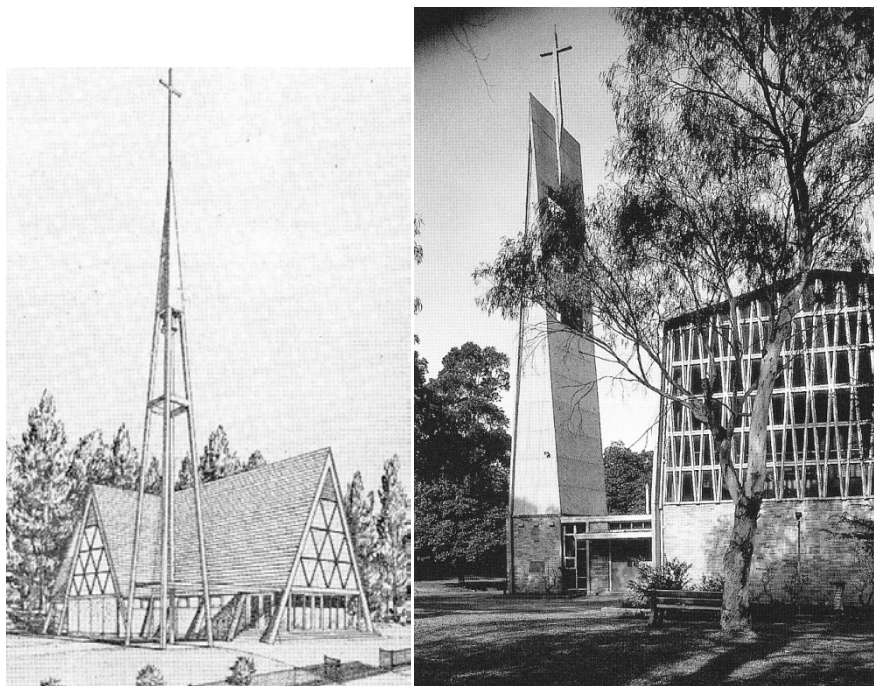
Figures 83 and 84| *The early 1960s St Matthew's Anglican Church at Eugowra is representative of many A-frame churches that were built during the 1960s (left), while the 1963 St Mark's Anglican Church in West Wollongong dramatically exploited structure and distinctively broke with tradition [*Building, *Lighting & Engineering, September 1961; Robert Irving,* Twentieth Century Architecture in Wollongong, *Patrick Grant photograph]*

Figures 85| *Amongst McPherson's last church projects was the completion of All Saints Cathedral in Bathurst (1970). Its centralised planning and overall form reflects the changed liturgical circumstances of the Anglican Church [Roy Lumby Photographs]*

4.2   Bankstown Context

When Bankstown was proclaimed a municipality in 1895 it could boats three churches - an Anglican church, a Wesleyan (Presbyterian) church and a Roman Catholic church, associated with the Convent of St Joseph.[52] By 1919 there were five denominations represented, the three established churches being joined by the Baptist and Congregational Unions, and at least one other religion was represented after the local Jewish community opened a synagogue in 1913.

By the early 1930s, six Christian denominations were established in Bankstown, the more established churches being joined by the Church of Christ. At this time the local government area had some 28,000 inhabitants. There appears to have been relatively little church building during this decade, although further research may modify this conclusion. One notable exception was St Felix's Roman Catholic Church, which in 1932 published renderings of an ambitious proposal for the completion of its 1925 church, which leant towards classical forms of architecture.[53]

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[52] "Bankstown. A New Municipality", *The Cumberland Free Press*, 21 September 1895, p.7.
[53] "St Felix's Church, Bankstown Blessed", *The Freeman's Journal*, 1 September 1932, p.18.

Figures 86 and 87| *Circa 1900 photograph showing St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church and Bankstown's Presbyterian Church (left); the proposed completion of St Felix, 1932 (right) [State Library of NSW PXA 635/38-40, digital order no. a105040, Broadhurst Postcard Publishers;* **The Freeman's Journal***, 1 September 1932]*

In the post war era churches in Bankstown, like many other localities, continued to be active. New parishes were formed to meet a growing population that was also diversifying as migrants from many parts of the world settled across Sydney. One example of this is Bankstown's Concordia Lutheran Congregation, which was established in 1947.[54] As is characteristic of Australian cities as a whole, Bankstown experienced increasing cultural, ethnic and religious diversification in the second half of the century, which accompanied its population growth. For instance there are Anglican, Catholic, Uniting and Baptist churches in Greenacre, along with a Church of Christ, a Korean Church and a Melkite Church. In Chester Hill there are Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist and German Lutheran churches. This is reflected in the architecture of Bankstown's churches and the Christian denominations that have made use of them. They generally reflect the impacts of Modernism on traditonal church architecture as well as changing liturgical circumstances. The following illustrations providee representative examples of the buildings, most of which were constructed during the 1960s.

Figures 88 and 89| *Greenacre Baptist Church (left); St Therese's Catholic Church at Padstow (right) [greenacrebaptist.org.au; www.sttherese.net]*

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[54] Sue Rosen, *Bankstown: A Sense of Identity*, p.139

Figures 90 and 91| *Padstow Congregational Church (left); Bankstown Uniting Church (right) [padstowcong.com; commons.wikimedia.org]*

Figure 92| *St Jerome, Punchbowl [familypedia.wikea.com]*

4.3   Conclusions

The 1938 section of St Paul's Church is characteristic of Norman McPherson's 1930s churches - simplified Gothic, brick inside and out, tile roof, steel framed windows filled with leadlight glazing. It is also quite representative of 1930s church architecture generally. However, it is understood to be relatively uncommon in the context of the Bankstown local government area, where relatively few churches were built during the 1930s. The 1961 addition is representative of McPherson's post war work and of church architecture generally. The church has an added level of distinction because of the two different architectural expressions, which however are linked by use of materials, scale and simple detailing to form a unified and successful whole.

5. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Criteria a) an item is important in the course, or pattern, of the Bankstown LGA's cultural or natural history.

St Paul's Bankstown is capable of demonstrating the historic theme of towns, suburbs and villages reflecting the focal shift in the early twentieth century of Bankstown from the Liverpool and Chapel Roads intersection to the vicinity of Bankstown railway station. The site retains the original timber chapel and the more substantial brick church constructed in 1938 and 'finished off' in 1961. It is also able to demonstrate the theme of creative endeavour in its architecture and its fittings, many of which have local associations. The fabric and location of the buildings which make up St Paul's are evidence of the historic development of the area and its social history. The construction of the church in phases is also reflective of the socio-economic history of Bankstown. It is an important ecclesiastical survivor of Bankstown's development from the early decades of the Twentieth Century with a high degree of integrity and intactness prominently situated in central Bankstown on the major thoroughfare for much of the century, ie. Chapel Road. Its siting is also reflective of its role and estimation in the community.

Criteria b) an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Bankstown's cultural or natural history.

St Paul's has historical associative significance due to its association with local identities, such as the Engisch and Fitzpatrick families who are significant figures in the history of Bankstown. These families and many others supported St Paul's and chose it as the site for memorialisation of their families in the form of plaques, windows and fittings of the church. These memorials are intact and have been maintained over many years by the community and have been recorded by the Bankstown Historical Society. St Paul's is also associated with noted ecclesiastical architect, Norman Welland McPherson, four other churches designed by McPherson are listed heritage items.

Criteria c) an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the Bankstown LGA.

St Paul's has local aesthetic significance as it demonstrates the work of architect Norman Welland McPherson, who was responsive to trends in ecclesiastical architecture in the inter-war and post war eras and designed a number of significant buildings for the Anglican, Methodist and Congregational Churches. The site comprises the church and rectory of McPherson's planned development (ultimately incomplete) with its unusual, pre-Reformation, almost monastic enclosed grounds. The church fabric is locally noteworthy for its quality brickwork and timber joinery and fittings, and the tower provides landmark value to the Bankstown town precinct. The church is representative of McPherson's 1930s ecclesiastic architecture, providing Bankstown with the only known example of his work.

Criteria d) an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the Bankstown LGA for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

St Paul's is socially significant due to the strong attachment of current parishioners, as demonstrated by their approach to Council, and their posting of an on-line petition in response to a perceived threat to the Church. This is an identifiable group within the current community. St Paul's is also likely to be significant to those people whose family members are memorialised there or have had their contribution to St Paul's acknowledged in the many plaques on its walls.

Criteria e) an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding Bankstown's cultural or natural history.

The connection of the rectory with the church may have technical significance as it relates to the changing

aspirations of the parish in the implementation of McPherson's original design for the complex.

Criteria f) an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Bankstown's cultural or natural history.

St Paul's is an uncommon example of an inter-war church in Bankstown. The linking of the rectory to the Church is also an unusual feature. The survival of the sequence of buildings which physically represent the history of St Paul's is a local rarity.

Criteria g) an item an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of Bankstown's cultural or natural places.

St Paul's Church is representative of the simplified medieval forms of architecture such as the Gothic and Romanesque styles that were considered appropriate for the architecture of churches during the inter-war era. The early 1960s additions are representative of the very simplified forms of post war ecclesiastical architecture, which alluded to medieval architecture

The group of buildings is representative of suburban parishes associated with Christian denominations, both in terms of historical development and in the composition of the group - church, hall, vestry and rectory.

Statement of Significance
The precinct of St Paul's is locally historically significant due to its capacity to demonstrate the historic themes of "Towns, suburbs and villages", "Creative endeavour", "Religion" and "Birth and Death". It has local historic associative significance due to its association with both prominent and less prominent Banktownians with that association documented on the walls, in the windows and the furniture and fittings of the church. Its very existence is the product of local endeavour, fundraising and support for the church and parish – a testament to its local social significance for the community across the century, as currently evidenced by those who have reacted to the threat of its loss. It has local aesthetic significance due not only to its landmark status near the civic centre but as an example of the work of N.W. McPherson. It is of technical and research significance as an example of Church architecture with an unusual connection of the rectory with the church, and as a reflection of the changing aspirations of the community. This feature also lends the building local significance under the rarity criteria, rarity is also augmented by the survival of the entire complex from its inception as a parish in the second decade of the twentieth century. The Church with its activities and functions embodied in the complex also has local representative significance.

6. GRADING OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Item	Significance	
1	St Paul's Church	High - aesthetic, historic, associational, social	
2	Church Hall - original section and 1926 addition	Moderate - social and historical; low aesthetic significance due to modified fabric	
3	Church Hall annex	Low	
4	Toilet and store	Low	
5	Rectory and 1970 meeting room	Moderate - social and historical; low aesthetic significance	
6	Vestry	Low - intrusive in context of Church	
7	Garage	Low	
8	Water Tank	Neutral	
9	Toilet block	Intrusive	