
St Anne's Church



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Location

53 Windella Avenue KEW EAST, BOROONDARA CITY

Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

Level of significance

Incl in HO area indiv sig

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO836

Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - November 17, 2021

What is Significant?

St Anne's Church at 53 Windella Avenue, built in 1957 on the same site as St Anne's school established in 1930, is significant.

How is it significant?

St Anne's Church is of historic, architectural, aesthetic and social significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

Historically St Anne's Church and school is significant as one of three suburban churches in East Kew, as the newly developing suburb expanded following the electric tram connection to the city. St Anne's church is part of the Post-war development of the suburb of Kew East although it occupies a site adjacent to St Anne's School established in 1930. Having separated from the Kew Parish in 1937, St Anne's is historically significant as part of the Christian denominations providing churches to the newly developing suburbs. The site is historically significant for its development in 1930 as a church/school, with the building fronting Beresford Street serving both purposes until the church was built in 1957. (Criterion A)

St Anne's church is part of a group of Post-war suburban churches that combine modern and traditional elements of a basilica forms and tower with a stripped back modernity. Built of the common building material of brick, but monumental in scale compared with the surrounding residential urban form, St Anne's is a representative example of this group. Stylistically St Anne's does not achieve the scholarly interpretation of traditional church architecture that other churches such as St Anthony's Shrine (1961-69) or St Michael's Ashburton (1953) display. (Criterion D)

Aesthetically the cream brick church of St Anne's is significant for its monumental scale and Modernist austerity. Modelled on a basilica form with sheer brick walls, the front elevation is dominated by a central square tower with simply articulated brickwork panels decorated with a large brown brick cross and ornamental lettering. Aesthetically St Anne's combines a stripped back palette, articulation of the side walls with buttresses, simply executed brick decoration and the use of differently scaled parts that accentuate the overall height. St Anne's refers to the traditional church elements of tower, nave and longitudinal east-west site planning. (Criterion E)

St Anne's church is of social significance for its connection to the Catholic community of Kew East, the school community and that of the Holy Spirit Sisters who are involved in the life of the parish. Social significance is demonstrated by the place itself as well as commemorative events such as the 50th anniversary celebrations for the church and 75th anniversary for the school. (Criterion E)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Boroondara - Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study Volume 5: Kew East and Mont Albert, Context, 2018;
Construction dates	1957,
Architect/Designer	Harper, Robert,
Hermes Number	208311
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

St Anne's is described as a 'church school' and this is reflected in the close spatial relationship between the school and the church on the site. The St Anne's complex comprises a church and several school buildings, playing fields and a carpark. The church, located on the corner of Windella Street and facing Beresford Streets is of cream brick. A set of concrete steps lead to an elevated terrace giving access to the centrally located entry.

The cream brick church is of monumental scale in the residential environment and is a landmark in the area. It is modelled on a basilica form with the front elevation dominated by a central square tower with recessed panels and decorated with a large brown brick cross. Flanking this are two flat roofed areas with brick parapet details and pairs of fixed rectangular steel framed windows. The nave of the church has a shallow pitched roof and buttresses to the side walls that extend above the eaves line forming small projections. Small square high-level windows are regularly spaced along the nave, lighting the interior. As a Post-war church St Anne's combines a stripped back aesthetic with reference to the traditional church elements of tower and longitudinal east-west site

planning. Its rather austere appearance places it in the Modernist genre with its lack of ornament and the use of flat roofs for the smaller ante rooms.

The parish website describes a new white marble altar and refurbishment of the sanctuary being completed for the 50th anniversary of the church in 2007 (<http://pol.org.au/balwynnorth/History.aspx>). The existing church windows were replaced in the sanctuary in 2005-06 and to the nave in 2009. Elements of the church express a Modernist austerity, such as the almost sheer brick walls however the decorative lettering to the front identifies the church as St Anne's and is executed in a highly ornamental style.

The red brick school that predated the church was designed as both church and school was used for both purposes until the church was built. The main elevation extends across the Beresford Street frontage and is of red brick with rendered bands defining the lintels. The gabled roof is clad with terra cotta tiles in blended colouring. Originally with a parapet to the front this has been interrupted by the addition of a substantial entry porch with gable roof. The original extent of the building is bookended by gable end parapets with cross ornament. A second storey has been built across part of the frontage and further building to the east extended the school. A number of modifications have been made including replacement of the windows. A contemporary addition by Robert Simeoni Architects has been recently completed and is located between the church and school. The difference in design and materials, and the subsequent alterations and contemporary new building allow an understanding of the development of the site to be appreciated, however the integrity of the school is somewhat affected by the alterations and extensions.

Community connections

St Anne's is part of the parish of Balwyn North and Kew East which includes the churches of St Bede's North Balwyn and St Joachim's Kew North. Since 1994 the work of the parish is shared with the Holy Spirit Sisters who are involved in the life of the parish and reside in East Kew. Prior to their involvement and up until 1993 the community of Our Lady of Missions Sisters were involved in the life of the parish. Both St Bede's and St Anne's have primary schools attached to the churches with the combination of church and school provides a relatively large local community. From 2005-2007 50th anniversary celebrations for the church and 75th anniversary for the school were cause for major activity and refurbishment, including the development of a school masterplan. St Anne's is a focus for the Catholic community of Kew East and the local area, including surrounding suburbs. Smaller communities of interest include families whose children attend the school and employees of St Anne's. The physical prominence of the church in the residential landscape is considerable and it has a physical identity that sets it apart from the residential areas.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>