



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

The Deanery is architecturally unusual in the City of Perth and an excellent example of the work of R. R. Jewell in the Victorian Tudor style, in Perth. (Criterion 1.2)

The Deanery is a landmark on the corner of Pier Street and St. Georges Terrace, next to *Saint George's Cathedral* and is part of the significant townscape setting of St. Georges Terrace. (Criterion 1.4)

The Deanery is an important component in the stock of colonial architecture of Perth together with the *Town Hall*, *The Barracks Arch*, *Perth Boy's School*, *Government House*, *The Cloisters* and the *Central Government Offices*. (Criterion 1.4)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The Deanery is one of a small group of convict built buildings extant in central Perth. (Criterion 2.1)

The Deanery demonstrates the role played by Anglicanism in the founding of Western Australia, and also of the importance of religion in the general community. (Criterion 2.1)

The Deanery illustrates the character of the mid-nineteenth century colonial townscape of Perth, prior to the gold rushes, much of which was demolished or altered in the subsequent boom period of the 1890s. (Criterion 2.2)

The Deanery has a close association with Richard Roach Jewell, Clerk of Works and Superintendent of Perth and Fremantle of the colony until 1885. Jewell was responsible for the design of a large number of public buildings in this period. (Criterion 2.3)

The Deanery has a close association with George Purves Pownall, the first Dean of Perth. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The Deanery is held in high regard by the members of the Perth community as an architecturally unusual piece of convict architecture. A public outcry ensued at the prospect of its demolition in 1953 and financial appeals for its restoration in the 1950s and 1970s, have been supported by the wider Perth community. (Criterion 4.1)

The Deanery is highly valued by the Anglican community in Perth as an administrative and pastoral centre for the Dean of Perth and for *St. George's Cathedral*. (Criterion 4.1).

The Deanery contributes to the sense of place of the community as a reminder of the mid-nineteenth century colonial development of Perth. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The Deanery is an uncommon example of cottage orné in the Victorian Tudor style of architecture in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The Deanery is highly representative of the cottage orné style of Victorian Tudor architecture. It well demonstrates all the principal characteristics of the style. (Criterion 6.1)

The erection of a pattern-book building like *The Deanery*, within a comparatively small community, is representative of the importance of English architecture in providing models for buildings in the colony. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

The Deanery is in good condition. Restoration of the building in the 1970s was undertaken in accordance with the principles of the Burra Charter and a regular program of maintenance is undertaken under the guidance of conservation architect Ron Bodycoat of the architectural practice Duncan Stephen and Mercer.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The Deanery has a high degree of integrity. Although now used for offices, instead of as a combined office and residence, the features of the building are still primarily those of the original building. The building continues to be used as offices for the Dean.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The Deanery has had no major structural alterations. Unsympathetic additions have been removed or treated in a manner which makes them sympathetic to the original structure. The place has a high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The Deanery is a two storey brick building built, in 1859, as a residence and office for the first Dean of Perth, the Reverend George Purves Pownall.

Pownall succeeded Wittenoom as Colonial Chaplain, in 1855, and, following the Right Reverend Mathew Blagdon Hale's consecration as the first Bishop of Perth, in 1857, became the first Dean of the new Saint George's Cathedral in Perth.¹ He initially lived in rented accommodation but Bishop Hale agreed to the urgent need to build "Pownall's Parsonage".²

The site of *The Deanery* was formerly the site of the old Perth Gaol, but the land was exchanged with the Crown, in July 1858, so that *The Deanery* could be close to the Cathedral. There was some controversy regarding the exchange as the Gaol had been used to house Aboriginal prisoners, and it is claimed that Yagan's father, Midgegooroo, who was captured in May 1833, was executed on site.³ It has also been claimed that "the Town Stocks once stood in the grounds of the Deanery."⁴ Even with this history, the eastern end of St. George's Terrace and Adelaide Terrace was a fashionable residential area. A regulation promulgated in 1833 required owners of lots in this area to build homes costing at least £200. At a cost of £900, *The Deanery* was in keeping with the nearby homes of affluent colonists. Twelve white mulberry trees, planted by Wittenoom and known as the twelve apostles, grew in front of the Cathedral and *The Deanery*. A large garden with trellises of grapes and other fruit linked *The Deanery* with the Cathedral.

Pownall had a keen interest in architecture, and this interest was to substantially influence the design of *The Deanery*. He was a member of the Ecclesiological Society and he had been a member of the Camden Society at Cambridge, whose adherents strongly advocated the Gothic style for residential as well as ecclesiastical buildings. *The Deanery* exhibits a number of the attributes of this style of architecture which have been attributed to Pownall's influence, although the architect responsible for construction was Richard Roach Jewell.

Jewell had arrived in the colony in 1852, and soon afterwards was appointed Foreman in the Public Works Department. He was the only

¹ Stannage, C.T. *The People of Perth. A social history of Western Australia's Capital City* (Perth City Council, Perth, 1979), pp. 141-2.

² Wright, R. P. and Smeed, H. *Western Landmarks* (University of Western Australia, 1978), p. 25.

³ Shenton E. "Reminiscences of Perth" in *Royal Western Australian Historical Society* Vol. 1., Part 1., p.2 (1926).

⁴ Oldham J. & R. *Western Heritage* (Perth, Paterson Brokensha 1961), p. 51.

qualified and experienced architect in the colony and subsequently became Superintendent of Public Works.⁵ His buildings included the *Town Hall*, the *Pensioners' Barracks*, *Treasury Buildings*, *Trinity Congregational Church*, *Wesley Church* and the old *Courthouse and Gaol*. Nearly all his buildings in the central Perth city area are in the style of simplified Colonial Gothic with a strong Tudor influence. *The Deanery* has a relationship with these buildings, but it is uncommon in Perth in its close adherence to a standard design from an English pattern book of the period.

In a letter to the Colonial Secretary, Pownall wrote: "The whole expense of carrying out the excellent plan prepared by Mr. Jewell would be about £900."⁶ The cost of the building was met by the Government paying £300, public subscriptions raising £300, and the Anglican Church contributing £300.⁷ Bazaars and other fundraising activities were held to raise money for the Deanery.⁸

The men employed to build *The Deanery* were convicts who had been granted a ticket-of-leave to obtain employment with free settlers in the colony. Hale and Pownall abhorred convictism, but they believed that the system would eventually foster moral reformation by showing the convicts the error of their ways. The employment of ticket-of-leavers on the construction of *The Deanery* and *Bishop's House* reflected their views on convictism and self-help.⁹ Progress on the buildings was reported in the *Inquirer* and on 4 November 1859, it was reported that "the Dean has moved into the Deanery".¹⁰

The Deanery was used as a residence for over ninety years. In 1918, 1932 and 1936 the building was renovated and some minor alterations were made in keeping with changes in living standards in the community.

In 1953, the church trustees wrote to the Secretary for Lands stating: "Owing to the development of the city of Perth the site is becoming increasingly unsuitable for residential purposes and the trustees, subject to the Crown's consent wish to provide a house for the Dean of Perth in a residential area."¹¹ In that year, the Reverend John Bell was installed as Dean of *St. George's Cathedral* but he did not take up residence in *The Deanery*. It was proposed that the building be demolished, and that the church build a ten storey office block on the site. Following a storm of protests from the public *The Deanery* was reprieved. An appeal was opened, and the new Dean said "He hoped that those who complained about the proposal to demolish the Deanery would now show him some

⁵ Oldham, R. & J. "Richard Roach Jewell" in *Architecture in Australia* November 1966 pp. 87-94.

⁶ First quote from Pitt-Morrison, M. & White J. (eds) *Western Towns and Buildings* (University of Western Australia Press, 1979) p.195; the design is very similar to Fig. 1.12 "A dwelling in the Old English Style", in J. C. Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage Architecture*; Pitt-Morrison, M. & White, J. Ed. *Western Towns and Buildings* (University of Western Australia Press, 1979) p. 195; Second quoted from Letter to the Colonial Secretary, 1 September 1858 *Colonial Secretary's Office* vol. 406, accession number. 36. p. 59.

⁷ *Colonial Secretary's Office* vol. 406, accession number. 36, p. 59.

⁸ *Colonial Secretary's Office* vol. 430, accession number. 36, p. 127.

⁹ Stannage, p. 142.

¹⁰ *Perth Gazette* 4 November 1859 p. 2.

¹¹ Letters from church trustees and to church trustees, on 26 August 1953 quoted in Cornish, D. *The Deanery* (Student essay Department of Home and Consumer Studies, 1979) p. 18.

financial backing for his plans to preserve the structure for years to come."¹² The appeal was successful and *The Deanery* was modernised and then used as part office and part residence by the Dean's secretary and by the assistant priests and their families and verger-caretakers.¹³

In 1979, *The Deanery* was again in need of restoration as its condition had deteriorated, and an appeal was opened with the aim of raising \$90,000. \$95,736 was raised, of which \$69,488 came through the National Trust.¹⁴ An extensive program of restoration and conservation, including an attempt to restore the garden to a resemblance of the original garden was undertaken under the aegis of conservation architect Ron Bodycoat of Duncan Stephen and Mercer. Following the restoration *The Deanery* was opened for the public on 8 May 1982.¹⁵ Since then *The Deanery* has been used as the Cathedral offices.

The Deanery was entered into the Register of the National Estate by the Australian Heritage Commission in March 1978 and classified by the National Trust of Australia (WA) in October 1980. The place is entered into the City of Perth Town Planning Scheme and is afforded protection under Clause 46, Schedule 5 of the scheme.

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The Deanery is sited on the corner of Saint Georges Terrace and Pier Street in the Central Government precinct, overlooking *Stirling Gardens* (1845), and in close proximity to the legal and administrative centre of the Colony: *Saint George's Cathedral* (1879+), *Government House* (1863), the *Supreme Court* (1836), the *Central Government Offices* (1874-1882) and the *Town Hall* (1871).

The Deanery was built by convict labour with hand made bricks which came from the Queen's Garden brickworks, laid in flemish bond. While most of the building was rendered, in the 1950s, the distinctive chequered pattern of the original brickwork is visible on the north wall. Local hand sawn timbers were used in its construction¹⁶ and the roof was of split she-oak shingles.¹⁷

The Deanery is a two storey brick house of simple rectangular shape. It has several dormer type gable windows and a bow window on the ground floor. The main house is rectangular in shape, reflected in the straight line of the main gable roof. A series of subsidiary gables emphasise the fenestration. These and the end gables are decorated with a carved timber valance. The entry is formal and authoritative. The style has been described as "a good example of the Regency 'cottage orné' and almost certainly based on a design in one of the many pattern books of the period."¹⁸ This style has been

¹² *The West Australian* 31 December 1953 p. 1.

¹³ Cornish, p. 19.

¹⁴ *The West Australian* 1 May 1982 Classified Liftout p. 3.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ Hammond, J. "Builders of Perth" in *Royal Western Australian Historical Society* (1931) Vol. 1 Pt. IX p.63.

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ Oldham, R.& J. "Richard Roach Jewell" in *Architecture in Australia* November 1966 pp. 87-94.

identified as being part of the style known as Victorian Tudor by Apperly, Irving, and Reynolds, in *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, although it does have elements of the earlier Colonial Picturesque Gothick style.¹⁹

As a residence for the Dean of Perth, *The Deanery* would have included a public office, bedrooms, a parlour, and servants' rooms, a kitchen, cellar and store.

The Deanery was renovated in 1918, 1932 and 1936. In 1918, a new balcony was added to the western facade at a cost of £60, and the laundry was renovated and properly connected to the sewerage.²⁰ In 1932, work included bitumen paving between the back door of *The Deanery* and the garden gate to the Cathedral; putting a wood floor in place of paving the veranda floor underneath the balcony; enclosing the side and end of the veranda; and building a new garage.²¹ In 1936, *The Deanery* was painted; a new fireplace was installed in the drawing room; alterations were made to the lavatory on the first floor; and the balcony on the eastern facade was widened at a cost of £473/5.²²

In 1953, the shingled roof was replaced with corrugated iron; the exterior rendered; the inside walls were renovated and extensions built to the laundry.²³

A 1978 plan shows the ground floor layout of the building with the Dean's office and a general office to the right and left of the front entry from the porch, with the stairs to the upper level situated in an area which opened from the entry. Adjacent to the general office was the precentor's office, with the Dean's secretary's office adjacent to his office. To the rear of the building were the kitchen, two stores, a bathroom and lavatory. There was a veranda on the east, opening from the secretary's office. The first floor had accommodation for the caretaker and an office for the organist at the front of the building. Adjacent was the print room which opened into a store situated above the porch. The caretaker's lounge was on the south east with windows to St. Georges Terrace and doors opening onto the balcony on the east. A door opened to this kitchen, which also had doors opening to the balcony to the east and to a passage. There was a bathroom and a lavatory next to the kitchen. To the west of the stairs was a store and the caretaker's bedroom.

Following a successful restoration appeal in 1979, restoration of *The Deanery* began early in 1980. Some of the additions to the original building were removed including the modern carports and the balcony on

¹⁹ Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*. (Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989) pp. 86-89 and pp. 36-39.

²⁰ Letters from H. K. Parry to the Secretary of the Diocesan Trustees and from the Diocesan Secretary September to December 1918, Lau Shuh Ling *Conservation Assessment of the Deanery* (Curtin University, student report, School of Architecture and Planning, 1991) Appendix 2.13.

²¹ Letters from H. K. Parry November 1932- February 1933, Lau, Appendix 2.13.

²² Letters from church trustees and to church trustees, March to July 1936, Lau, Appendix 2.13.

²³ Cornish, p.19.

the west wall, which was in very poor condition. The doors on to it were converted back to windows. The balcony on the east was repaired. Removal of rendering on the walls where the carports had been revealed extensive brick deterioration. As it was impossible to reproduce the original bricks from the Queen's Garden brickworks, bricks for the outside were replaced from the inside walls of *The Deanery*. A bathroom and laundry at the back of the building were reconstructed to fit more closely with the character of the original building, with the louvre windows replaced with small-paned ones. The roof was re-shingled with Canadian red cedar shingles split to a smaller size to make them more compatible with the original Western Australian she-oak shingles.²⁴ The area at the rear of the building was paved and bitumen on the car park off Pier Street was removed in favour of cobblestones.²⁵

Inside *The Deanery* decayed plaster was replaced, broken sashes were repaired, new ceilings were installed, electrical wiring was renewed and the interior was repainted.²⁶ Major restoration was completed in May 1982.

The restoration of *The Deanery* was awarded the RAIA award for "restoration and/or recycling of a building" in 1984 for the quality and sensitivity of its conservation.

13.3 REFERENCES

National Trust Assessment Exposition

Australian Heritage Commission Data Sheet

Lau Shuh Ling *Conservation Assessment of the Deanery* (Curtin University, student report, School of Architecture and Planning, 1991)

²⁴ *Trust News* April 1982 p.5.

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ *ibid.*