



# 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

*St John's Anglican Church, Fremantle* is significant for its aesthetic characteristics imparted by its elegant proportions enhanced by the texture of its random dressed limestone walls with contrasting ashlar buttresses and corner buttresses, lancet windows and the rose widow at the west facade. (Criterion 1.1)

The church is important for the artistic excellence of its design. (Criterion 1.2)

*St John's Anglican Church, Fremantle* is significant for its landmark qualities being set as the focal point in Kings Square, the centre piece of the city. (Criterion 1.3)

*St John's Anglican Church, Fremantle* is important for its contribution to the precinct embracing the neighbouring Fremantle Town hall and the historic buildings of High Street. (Criterion 1.4)

### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

The place is important as important as the place of worship for the Anglican congregation of Fremantle from 1843 to the present day. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

The Church is important as an example of design and artistic excellence. (Criterion 2.4)

### 11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

The place is highly valued by the members of the Anglican congregation for religious and cultural reasons and by the National Trust for its architectural merit and historical associations. (Criterion 4.1)

Being situated in a prominent position in the centre of Fremantle, and being the centre of Anglican worship, the church contributes to the communities sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

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**12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

The place is representative of major Anglican churches. (Criterion 6.2)

**12. 3 CONDITION**

The church is in good condition.

**12. 4 INTEGRITY**

The place has a high degree of integrity having long term viability and sustainability in the hands of the diocesan trustees.

**12. 5 AUTHENTICITY**

The place has a moderate degree of authenticity, in that the fabric is largely in its original state having regard to the additions referred to under Documentary Evidence. The recent replacement of the roof with asbestos shingles detracts a little from the authenticity.

### **13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

The documentary and physical evidence has been compiled by John Pidgeon, Architect, from material in the files of the National Trust of Australia (WA).

#### **13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

On the 11th March 1839 a request was made to the Governor for Kings Square as the site for an Anglican Church. This was granted to the church authorities in 1840. The following year the first Rector, the Reverend George King took up duties. His parish covered some 2,300 square kilometres and included the Locations of Canning and Murray which he serviced on horseback. The first church of St John's on the site was opened on the 11th August 1843. The title to Kings Square was granted by Governor Hutt in December 1845 and, in 1848, the church was consecrated by Bishop Short of Adelaide, into which Diocese the parish fell at the time. In 1875, the Reverend D. G Watkins became Rector.

Planning for a new church commenced in 1875 and, in the following year, architect W. Smith of Adelphi, London, was commissioned to design the new church. The church was built by J. J. Harwood and Son. The stone used in the construction was obtained from the government quarry in Cantonment Street, Fremantle. The foundation stone was laid by Bishop Hale of Perth on 28 January 1878 and the building was consecrated on 4 July 1882.

The old St John's Church was then demolished to make way for the extension of High Street and the construction of the Fremantle Town Hall. A plan of the old church is outlined in the pavement.

*St John's Anglican Church, Fremantle* was originally roofed with she-oak shingles. In 1884, a new organ was installed to replace the organ which had been transferred from the old church.

Between 1887 and 1904 separate parishes in Beaconsfield, North Fremantle and East Fremantle split from the Parish of St John's.

The bell turret was added in 1906 or early 1907 and the reredos was erected in 1908. The organ was overhauled and rebuilt in 1913. The original timber shingles were replaced with Welsh slate in 1914. The Choir Vestry was added in 1922.

In 1923, an arrangement was made with the Fremantle Municipal Council to maintain the grounds in return for their use by the public. In 1925, the carved jarrah high altar was installed. In 1946, the Baptistry was erected as a World War 11 memorial. In 1962, the organ was again rebuilt.

In 1974, St Paul's, Beaconsfield was reincorporated into the parish of St John's. In 1975, the roof cladding was replaced with asbestos shingles and in 1979 with the centenary of the laying of the foundation stone the restoration of the church fabric was commenced.

#### **13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

*St John's Anglican Church, Fremantle* stands in the spacious paved and treed surrounds of Kings Square in the centre of Fremantle.

The church is built of limestone walls, generally of random rubble with raised cement pointing but with square cut stonework at the buttresses. The roof is clad with asbestos reinforced sheet shingles.

The church is cruciform in plan and consists of a Nave, Chancel and Sanctuary aligned on an west to east axis some 40 metres long with transepts crossing between the Chancel and Nave (some 25 metres in width). To the north of the Chancel is an aisle containing the organ with a Clergy Vestry further to the north. To the north of the Sanctuary is the Vestry. To the south of the Chancel is a chapel dedicated to St Michael.

The main gable over the Nave reduces in height over the Chancel and Sanctuary and the gables over the transepts are lower still. The aisle, vestries and Chapel are under separate gable roofs either running on a north-south or an east west axis. These roofs combine to create a varied composition.

The western façade presents a high gable surmounted by a cross with three small lancets near the apex and a rose window in the centre of the triangle with a series of blind lancet openings stretching across the full width of the façade between the top portions of the corner buttresses. Centrally placed at ground level is a shallow Entry Porch with a gabled roof and a large lancet arched door. The side windows to the Nave have lancet arches and geometric pattern stone tracery.

Over the St Michael Chapel is a hexagonal bell tower with a tall conical stone spire.

The ceiling is a Gothic vault of jarrah V jointed matchboarding supported on jarrah rib beams shaped to the vault and upon stone arches at the transept intersection. The flooring is of jarrah boards excepting the centre aisle of the Nave and the Entrance Porch, where ceramic tiles have been laid. Many of the windows contain coloured glass supplied from the earlier church on the site.

### **13.3 REFERENCES**

National Trust of Australia (WA) files.