

Kew Primary School No. 1075 Statement of Significance August 2020

Heritage Place: 20 Peel Street Kew

PS ref no: HO818



What is significant?

This document is an incorporated document in the Boroondara Planning Scheme pursuant to section 6(2)(j) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

Kew Primary School (former State School No. 1075) at 20 Peel Street, Kew, established at this site in 1871, is significant.

Significant elements of the site include:

- The single-storey red-brick 1910 Infant School, which faces Pakington Street. This Edwardian building has picturesque medieval features with a complex roofscape of hips and jerkin-head gables. It was designed under Public Works Department Supervising Architect George W Watson.
- The two-storey red-brick 1923 Main building, which faces Peel Street, including the WWI memorial. It is an interwar Georgian Revival building with a U-shaped plan and classicising details. The ground-floor extension to the west elevation is not significant. It was designed under Public Works Department Chief Architect E Evans Smith. The memorial comprises a marble plaque and a memorial book, both dedicated in 1919, and installed on a wall when the building was completed.
- The 1929 timber shelter shed at the south of the site. It is a small structure with a hipped gable roof that extends over the wide verandah. The verandah is ornamented by Arts & Crafts inspired timber corner brackets.

Mature exotic trees, such as Peppercorns and a Monterey Cypress, contribute to the setting.

How is it significant?

Kew Primary School is of local historical, aesthetic and social significance to the City of Boroondara. In addition, the Infant School is of creative significance, and the shelter shed is of rarity value.

Why is it significant?

Historically, the school as a whole illustrates an early phase of Kew's development and the continual growth the local (and thus school) population. It starts with the remnant part of the wall of the 1882 school building, with its diaper brickwork that has been incorporated into the Main building, then the 1910 Infant School and 1923 Main building illustrate jumps in the number of pupils in the early twentieth century. In addition, the 1919 Honour Board is significant as an unusual example of a war memorial specifically associated with a school and demonstrates the impact the Great War had upon all aspects of community life. (Criterion A)

Kew Primary School as a whole is of social significance due to its long tenure at this site since 1871 as a centre of the local community. Its many alumni hold particularly strong associations with the school. (Criterion G)

The entire school complex is of aesthetic significance due to the collection of varied and largely intact early-twentieth century buildings – the Infant School, the Main building, and the shelter shed – in a setting that retains mature exotic trees such as Peppercorns and a Monterey Cypress. (Criterion E)

The Infant School is historically significant as a demonstration of the major change in educational methods in Victoria in the early twentieth century, when efforts were made to provide school buildings to serve the particular needs of very young children. Its design is particularly important as the very first example of a model that would become standard for infant schools across Victoria, and was repeated a dozen times. The exterior is important for the high degree of

intactness, demonstrating the features of this model design, retaining all the original elements of the building's pavilion design, notably the octagonal-plan domed ventilators which prominently feature in the decorative massing of the roofscape. (Criteria A & F)

The shelter shed is a fine example of a building type that was once common at schools in Victoria, but is becoming increasingly rare. It is also a more elaborately decorated example than the average shelter shed of the interwar period. (Criterion B)

Primary source

City of Boroondara Municipal Wide Heritage Gap Study Volume 4. Kew, Revised Report, 11 June 2020.