

## **SUMMARY OF STATE HERITAGE PLACE**

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### **REGISTER ENTRY**

**Entry in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the  
*Heritage Places Act 1993***

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**NAME:**        **St Peter's College – Big Quad Precinct**

**PLACE NO.: 26457**

**ADDRESS:**   **Hackney Road, Hackney, SA, 5069**  
                    **General Memorial, No 194, Book 265 (Ref: H105100 SGM2\_71)**

### **STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The Big Quad Precinct at St Peter's College, including the 'Old School House' (State Heritage Place 10540), forms the heart of an iconic school that was one of the earliest private schools to be formally established in South Australia. The school has grown and developed since 1847, and demonstrates the role of private schools in providing high-quality education for the South Australian population from the early decades of the colony.

The College is significant for having made a notable and influential contribution to the course of South Australian history; providing English-style private schooling from 1847, demonstrating religious tolerance, and producing many prestigious alumni who would go on to shape the colony. It also has significant associations with its founders William Allen and Captain John Ellis.

The buildings themselves, including chapel, classrooms, administrative buildings, halls and cloisters demonstrate a range of functions and periods yet have a consistency in architectural design, quality and style. The complex is an exemplar of English educational design with strong neo-gothic styling and referencing to the architecture of places such as Trinity College, Cambridge. The high integrity of the buildings, as well as their setting and relationships to each other contribute to make this one of the most exceptional examples of a school in South Australia.

## **RELEVANT CRITERIA (under section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*)**

### ***(a) it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.***

The Big Quad precinct at St Peter's College is the historic heart of one of South Australia's most significant schools, and demonstrates the evolution and development of education in South Australia. St Peter's College was one of the earliest private schools to be formally established in South Australia, and has provided education for over 170 years. It has also been associated with a wide range of influential and notable people including founders, teachers and alumni.

St Peter's College also has associations with South Australia's early evolution as a 'paradise of dissent'. St Peter's College allowed non-Anglicans to choose whether or not they took part in worship or teaching that was 'distinctly Anglican'. This was due to the influence of the school's founder, William Allen, who wished to encourage students of all faiths to study at the college – an approach that sat well within a colony that had a larger number of non-Anglicans and non-conformists than any other colony in Australia.

### ***(d) it is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance.***

Buildings associated with education have an important place in the cultural development of South Australia. Schools provide education that helps to forge the people and culture of the State. As the longest continually-running private school in the State, St Peter's College has a particularly strong association with the theme of education and with the buildings that represent it. The historic collection of buildings surrounding the Big Quad represent these significant associations to a high degree, and in particular, provides a visual record of the development of schools and schooling over a 160-year period.

Few schools in South Australia have such a range of buildings – many have administration buildings, classrooms and a school hall, but some of the additional buildings such as a chapel and cloisters are less common. Added to this, each of the buildings at St Peter's, ranging from the 1849 Big School Room to the 1934 Dining Hall, has an outstanding quality and integrity and represents a fine example of its type. Yet it is when they are added together that the group of buildings provides the most compelling and distinctive representation of the class, and contributes to it being one of the most outstanding examples of a school in South Australia.

### ***(e) it demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics.***

The historic buildings clustered around the Big Quad Precinct at St Peter's College constitute an outstanding representative of the design characteristics of an

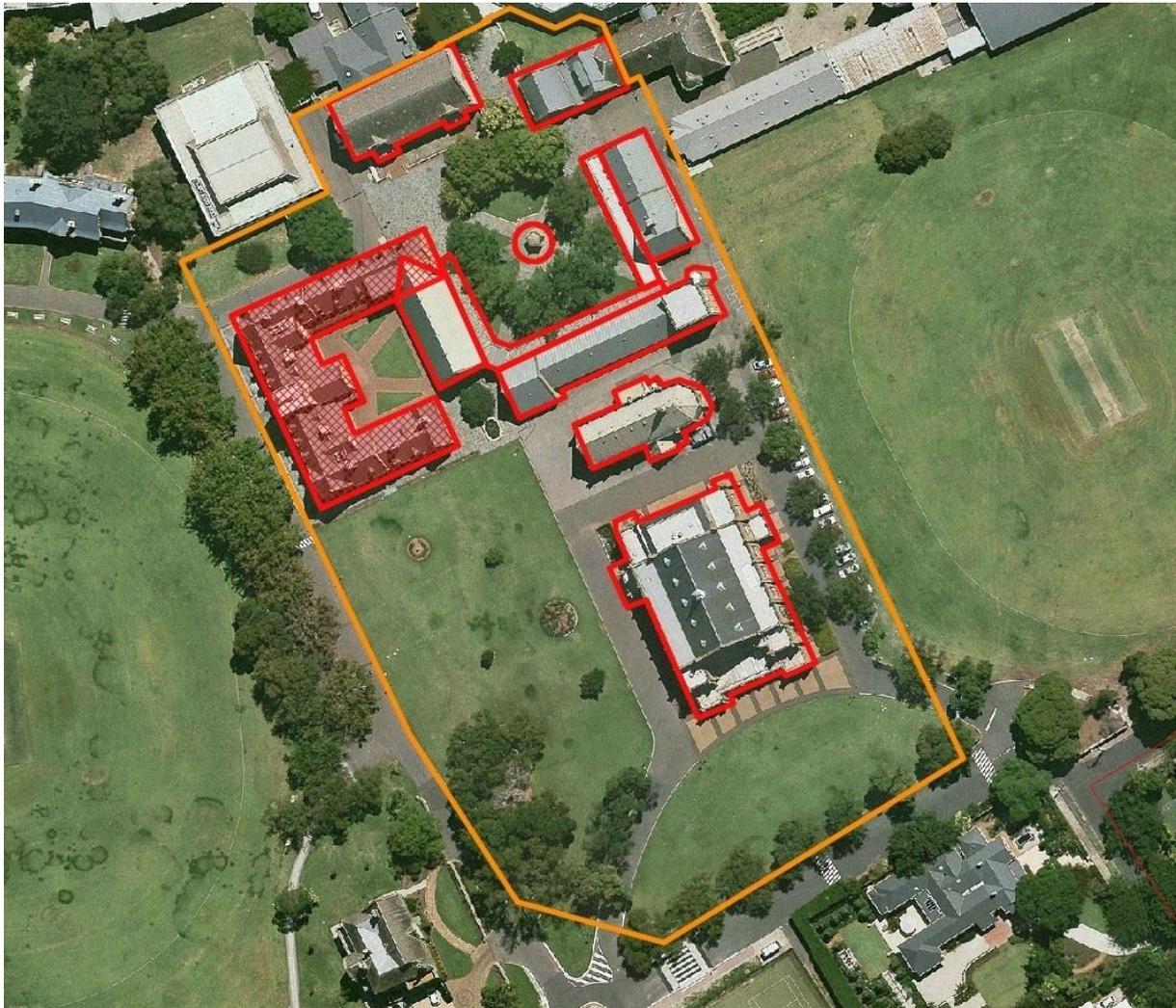
English-style educational institution and demonstrate a high degree of aesthetic accomplishment.

Throughout its development, St Peter's has adopted aspects of the architectural style and features of established English educational institutions (mostly neo-Gothic), modelling itself on some of England's most prestigious schools and colleges, including Trinity College, Cambridge. Because of this consistent stylistic intent, and the enduring vision of creating a model English-style school, the precinct retains an exceptional integrity despite the wide range of periods of construction. Because of the quality of the principal buildings and the way they have been preserved and adapted over time, the Big Quad Precinct at Big Quad Precinct St Peter's College is an outstanding representative of the English educational vernacular in South Australia.

# SITE PLAN

St Peter's College – Big Quad Precinct  
Hackney Road, Hackney, SA, 5069

PLACE NO: 26457



## ST PETER'S COLLEGE – BIG QUAD PRECINCT

*Site plan generally indicating significant features and components*

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-  **Red Hatched:** Existing State-heritage places
-  **Red outline:** High Significance
-  **Orange Outline:** Boundary of State-heritage place

## COMMENTARY ON THE LISTING

### Description and notes with respect to a place entered in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the *Heritage Places Act 1993*

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#### Physical Description

The Big Quad precinct at St Peter's College comprises the historic core of the school, and includes a number of early educational, administrative and religious structures. Many of the buildings are immediately adjacent to the Big Quad, with the chapel and Memorial Hall being located nearby.

The components identified as being intrinsic to the heritage significance of St Peter's College – Big Quad Precinct include:

- Big School Room;
- Chapel and Bell;
- Memorial Hall, excluding post 1985 fabric & fittings;
- Da Costa Hall (former gymnasium), external fabric only;
- The Chemistry Building, external fabric only;
- The Eastern Classrooms, external fabric only;
- Southern Classrooms, external fabric only
- 1957 Southern and Western Cloisters and Memorial Arch, including memorial plaques;
- Jury Fountain;
- 1985 Eastern cloisters.
- Open setting of the Big Quad Precinct within the boundary (delineated in orange on the site plan)

**Note:** The precinct includes the Old School House, St Peter's College (SHP 10540) registered as State Heritage Place in 1980.

The extent of listing excludes:

- Any building or landscape on the grounds of St Peter's College that lies outside the boundary of the Big Quad precinct (as defined in the Site Plan).

#### History of the Place

St Peter's College is located between Hackney Road, Hackney and North Terrace, Kent Town on land acquired in 1847.

#### *Establishment in Adelaide*

Originally known as St Peter's Collegiate School, the college began its existence in 1847 in a small schoolroom at the rear of the Holy Trinity Anglican Church, North Terrace, Adelaide. The School was known for its hybrid curriculum where students could choose between a classical or commercial education. Although the first school board was primarily Anglican, they allowed students from other denominations to attend the school, as well as to choose whether or not they wanted to participate in distinctly Anglican worship or teachings.

Later in 1847, land in Hackney was acquired cheaply from one of the school's proprietors, Frederick Dutton. Also at that time, Dr Augustus Short, South Australia's first Church of England Bishop arrived in Adelaide. Short had received a £2,000 grant from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and set about transforming St Peter's College into an 'institution that would educate boys and men from an elementary to advanced level, encompassing ordinary schooling, university studies and clerical training.' Short organised the purchase of land adjacent to the school's existing plot in Hackney in order to gain further power to pursue his vision for the school. Despite Short's attempts to increase the scope of the school beyond secondary education, a merger was organised where SPCS proprietors managed to maintain their original vision for a private secondary school.

### ***The first school buildings in Hackney, 1848-1851***

By 1848 it was realised that a purpose-built school building would be required. A grant from William Allen and John Ellis, individuals made newly wealthy from the Burra Copper Mine, provided the necessary funds. Henry Stuckey was engaged to design a building in the Oxford mediaeval college style. William Allen used the influence he gained by providing the funds for the school to counter Bishop Short's intentions for the school. In 1849 the proprietary committee was dissolved, meeting for the last time in April to elect the new Governors Board.

Progress on the first building (the Old School House) at Hackney was slow, as the stone-blocks were quarried in the hills then further cut in Hackney. Meanwhile, increasing enrolments required the construction of a second building, and in 1849 the Big School Room was constructed of local stone within three months. The larger 'Old School House' was subsequently completed in 1851.

A design for a school chapel was prepared by Edward Hamilton in 1858, and funds for the new building were raised in 1861. The Chapel was completed in 1864, and has been adapted over time to suit the requirements of the school. Prior to its completion, services were held in classrooms or the Old School House.

### ***Creation of the Big Quad & Memorial Hall (1878-1985)***

The area now known as the 'Big Quad' started to take shape in 1878, when a bluestone gymnasium was constructed to the north-east of the Big School room. In 1890 the Big Quad was further defined by the construction of the Eastern Classrooms, designed by Daniel Garlick & Son.

The next building in this group was the 'Chemistry Building', constructed in 1897 to a design by Garlick & Jackman. There had been an earlier chemistry building (now demolished) that apparently lacked adequate ventilation. The 1897 chemistry building was located to the east of the gymnasium and on the opposite corner to the Big School Room and Eastern Classrooms.

In the wake of the First World War, the headmaster was approached several times with regard to creating a war memorial. In 1919, the 'Jury Fountain' was erected near the centre of the Big Quad by George Jury as a memorial to 'his son who fell at the front'

(The Register, 9 October 1919, p5). This fountain provides a visual reference to the similar fountain in the Big Quad at Trinity College, Cambridge.

In 1918, the Bishop of Adelaide proposed that a 'Memorial Hall' should be built on the grounds of St Peter's College, however it wasn't until 1929 that St Peter's Memorial Hall was opened. The Hall was designed by architect Alfred Wells and constructed by Walter Torode as an open-span auditorium with a gallery at one end that included honour boards listing the scholars who had perished in the Great War. The Hall was gutted by fire in 1985, with restoration and reconstruction being undertaken by the Brown Falconer Group, including substantial internal modifications but retaining many of the honour boards. The Hall was reopened in 1989.

The group of buildings adjacent to the Old School House started to take on more of the appearance of a closed quadrangle in 1919, when the southern row of classrooms was also constructed to a design by Alfred Wells. The gymnasium was then converted to become the Da Costa Dining Hall in 1934.

In 1957, the Big Quad was further defined by the construction of cloisters along the southern and western sides, with an arched porch providing an entry at the south-west corner. The entry porch was designed as a memorial to the fallen 'boys' of the Boer War and the First and Second World Wars. To this day, students continue a tradition of being silent as they pass under the Memorial Arch

In 1985, the construction of an eastern cloister to match the southern and western cloisters enclosed three sides of the Big Quad. In 1998, the interior quadrangle formed by the Old School House and Big School Room was cleared, landscaped and renamed the 'Allen Quad' in honour of the school's founder, William Allen.

Another early stone building within the Senior School that dates back to the first decades of development at the school and has associations with those who worked at or attended the school, is the stables building. Constructed of stone and brick in 1873, the stables building lies outside the Big Quad precinct and is now used as an amenities block.

In 2015, St Peter's College continues to proudly provide education in South Australia, with many of South Australia's prominent individuals having been educated there. This history has been documented in countless publications and articles, including the recently completed history by Katharine Thornton.

## **References**

Information for this Summary of State Heritage Place primarily sourced from:

- Collins, J 2011, *St Peter's College Complex*, consultant report for the State Heritage Branch (DENR) by the Architecture Museum (UniSA)
- Thornton, K 2010, *The Message of its Walls & Fields: a History of St Peter's College 1847 to 2009*, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, SA
- Bruce Harry & Associates 2002, *St Peter's Heritage Review*, consultant report for the City of Norwood Payneham St Peters
- Danvers Architects 1985, *St Peters Heritage Survey*

## SITE DETAILS

**St Peter's College – Big Quad Precinct**  
**Hackney Road, Hackney, SA, 5069**

**PLACE NO: 26457**

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<b>FORMER NAME:</b>	None	
<b>DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:</b>	<p>St Peter's College – Big Quad Precinct includes the buildings relating to the early school in Hackney forming a precinct around the 'Big Quad'. These are the buildings known as the Big School Room, Eastern Classrooms, Southern Classrooms, Da Costa Dining Hall, the Big Quad including 1957 &amp; 1985 Cloisters and Jury Fountain, Chapel and Bell, Memorial Hall and Chemistry Building.</p> <p>Note: The precinct includes the Old School House, St Peter's College (SHP 10540) registered as State Heritage Place in 1980</p>	
<b>DATE OF COMPLETION:</b>	1849-1985	
<b>SA HERITAGE REGISTER STATUS:</b>	Confirmed 7 December 2016	
<b>LOCAL HERITAGE STATUS</b>	Inserted in the Norwood Payneham and St Peters (City) Development Plan, including: Old School House; Big School Room; Chapel; Shinkfield Building; Memorial Hall; Da Costa Hall; Residence 'Headmasters House'; 'Pentreath'; The Chemistry Building; The Physics Building; The Big Quad Classrooms and Big Quad, including Memorial Fountain.	
<b>CURRENT USE:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	School
	<b>Dates:</b>	1847
<b>PREVIOUS USE(S):</b>	<b>Description:</b>	n/a
	<b>Dates:</b>	n/a
<b>ARCHITECT:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	Various
	<b>Dates:</b>	From 1849
<b>BUILDER:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	Various
	<b>Dates:</b>	From 1849
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	Norwood Payneham and St Peters (City)
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>Address:</b>	Hackney Road, Hackney, 5069
<b>LAND DESCRIPTION:</b>	<b>Title Type:</b>	General Memorial
	<b>No:</b>	194
	<b>Book:</b>	265
	<b>Ref:</b>	H105100 SGM2_71

## PHOTOS

St Peter's College – Big Quad Precinct  
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Big Quad, Jury Fountain, Eastern Classrooms, Southern Classrooms with Cloisters



Chapel (exterior)

## PHOTOS

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Old School House



Big School Room (exterior)

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Memorial Hall



Da Costa Dining Hall

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Chemistry Building



Southern Classrooms crenelated tower