

Heritage Data Form

ITEM DETAILS							
Name of Item	Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church						
Other Name/s Former Name/s	Kiama Catholic Church Mid-Century Church Building						
Item type (if known)	Built						
Item group (if known)	Religion						
Item category (if known)	Church						
Area, Group, or Collection Name							
Street number	94–112						
Street name	Manning Street						
Suburb/town	Kiama				Postcode	2533	
Local Government Area/s	Municipality of Kiama						
Property description	Lot 1002, DP 859186						
Location - Lat/long	Latitude	-34.676424			Longitude	150.853331	
Location - AMG (if no street address)	Zone		Easting		Northing		
Owner							
Current use	Church						
Former Use	Church						
Statement of significance	<p>Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church has cultural significance for historic, aesthetic, associative, rarity and representative values at a local level an excellent example of a postwar ecclesiastical parish church. The church building is largely intact externally and displays a good degree of integrity, retaining much of its original form and fabric. The church has a high-quality design which exemplifies the postwar ecclesiastical typology, incorporating typical characteristics such as a high-pitched roof, masonry construction, geometric stained glass and vertical panels of sandstone cladding.</p> <p>Designed by ecclesiastic architects, Hirst and Kennedy, the church is an excellent example of their regional work and is likely to be the best extant representation of their parish churches in NSW. Outside of their design for St Brigid's in Wollongong, the firm did not frequently utilise the A-frame design, making Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church a rare example of their experimentation with a popular mid-century ecclesiastic design. The A-frame style church is also comparatively rare in the regional context, having first emerged in NSW in the suburbs of larger cities. Due to its situation, the site holds a high degree of landmark quality, with its distinctive architectural character immediately recognisable in the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>The church was constructed in 1963, replacing an earlier church building from the 1860s. The building was commissioned by Monsignor Michael Irish, parish priest from 1930–1970. It demonstrates the enduring popularity of Catholicism in the Kiama area and, in particular, the regional response to the postwar boom in religious building in Australia, echoing the development of mid-century churches seen in the larger cities. The church was also one of the first constructed in the newly formed Diocese of Wollongong, with the first Bishop of Wollongong, Thomas McCabe, laying the foundation stone, and later performing the first mass in December 1963.</p> <p>Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church is a rare example of the postwar ecclesiastical typology in the Kiama region, and demonstrates a superior quality of design and finishes when compared to</p>						

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	twentieth-century churches in the region, having been designed to echo modern churches in larger cities and complement the coastal setting. The church gives the site spiritual importance and demonstrates the postwar growth of the Catholic community in the area. .			
Level of Significance	State <input type="checkbox"/>		Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

DESCRIPTION					
Designer	Sydney G Hirst and Kennedy				
Builder/ maker	Hughes Brothers of Wollongong				
Physical Description	<p>The church building at 94–112 Manning Street (distinct from the earlier presbytery building) is a postwar ecclesiastical construction designed in the mid-century A-frame style. It has a typical cruciform configuration, with the central body of the building oriented west-to-east. It is situated on a slight northwards slope and has been built on elevated foundations to mediate the topography of the site. The retaining wall continues along the northern elevation, enclosing a small grassed area to the north of the nave. The church is constructed of polychromatic face brick and incorporates a steep, high-pitched hipped roof, typical of the period. The roof is clad in tiles and includes smaller skillion roofs which extend over the secondary entrances. The high-pitched roof features overhanging eaves with painted soffits.</p> <p>The church fronts Manning Street to the west and is set back from the street by an concrete courtyard enclosed with contemporary masonry fences, and a masonry retaining wall with planter beds. The primary west elevation is the main focal point of the building. This façade is divided into three bays, with two panels of tessellated sandstone tiles to either side of a central bay. The central bay incorporates two panels of coloured glass divided by decorative mullions in geometric panels, which frame a central column of fine marble tiles over which a simple metal crucifix is suspended. The panels of sandstone and glass are typical of postwar ecclesiastic architecture and serve to emphasise the vertical motif across the façade. Three sets of timber doors are located at the base of the central bay, serving as the primary access point for the building. The central set of doors incorporate two decorative brass plaques, etched with the sword of Paul and the keys of St Peter. Two small statuettes have been affixed to the sandstone bays depicting St Peter and St Paul.</p> <p>The primary entrance is reached via a colonnaded entryway with a flat roof and an arch motif. Windows extend to the roof either side of a central crucifix above the doorway. Access from the courtyard is provided via stairs with contemporary tubular steel handrails.</p> <p>The windows to the rear of the building seem to include original timber sash windows and contemporary replacements. A series of contemporary stained-glass windows are located along the southern elevation of the nave incorporating biblical scenes. These windows appear to serve as the clerestory windows. The transepts extend to the north and south, with a small masonry wall connecting the southern transept to the earlier presbytery in the south. The northern entry hall has been enclosed with decorative glass panels, echoing the geometric designs on the primary façade. Located on the Manning Street thoroughfare, the church site occupies a prominent position in the town. It is situated in front of Kiama Beach and directly abuts Coronation Park, juxtaposing modernist design with the natural landscape. Due to its situation, the site holds a high degree of landmark quality, with its distinctive architectural character immediately recognisable in the landscape.</p>				
Physical condition and Archaeological potential	<p>The church displays a good degree of integrity with the external form largely intact. The building retains a high degree of exterior fabric, but the interior has been refurbished, altering the original design and materiality of the space.</p> <p>The archaeological potential of the site is unknown.</p>				
Construction years	Start year	1962	Finish year	1963	Circa <input type="checkbox"/>
Modifications and dates	<p>1999–2000— church exterior and interior refurbished, new meeting room and catechist centre.</p> <p>2011—old meeting room in the church converted to the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament.</p> <p>2013—two mosaics of St Peter and St Paul installed and blessed.</p> <p>2015–2016—installation of series of stained-glass windows.</p>				
Further comments					

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HISTORY

Historical notes

Kiama is part of the traditional land of the Wodi Wodi, a clan of the Dharawal people. The Wodi Wodi are a coastal people whose traditional Country includes Lake Illawarra, Shellharbour and Minnamurra.

On 25 April 1770 Captain James Cook observed Aboriginal people along the coastline of the Illawarra and recorded the event in his logbook. Bass and Flinders later encountered Aboriginal people at Port Kembla in March 1796. The following year, Bass anchored his whaleboat in the sheltered bay (now known as Kiama Harbour) and 'found' the Kiama Blowhole, calling it 'a deep ragged hole and on one side of it the sea washed in through a subterraneous passage with a most tremendous noise'.

The name Kiama is of Aboriginal origin, with several possible meanings. One explanation is that the word derives from the name of the father spirit of Eastern NSW, 'Kiahma' or 'Baiaime'. Alternative meanings are 'fish caught from rocks' or 'where the seas roar' (referring to the Kiama Blowhole).

Red cedar logging and rainforest clearing began in 1812 and a port was established at Kiama for the shipment of cedar from the district. The cedar cutters were soon followed by European settlers and their animals. David Smith is said to have been the first permanent European settler, arriving in 1821. Aboriginal people were gradually displaced from their traditional land as it was cleared for farms and towns were established. In the mid-1830s, Aboriginal people resorted to raiding the farms of the settlers, stealing crops and pigs. In 1835, nine local farmers accused 'Black Harry' and 'Captain Brooks' of leading these raids. Within a century of European settlement of the district, there were few Aboriginal people living in Kiama. Those who remained lived in camps at Brown Street and elsewhere in the district. Some of the Aboriginal men worked in the quarries and sawmills of the area.

The townsite of Kiama, reserved in 1826, was surveyed in 1839—town allotments were sold the following year. By 1848, there were 18 permanent houses, two inns (Gum Tree Inn and Fitzroy Inn), two stores, a wooden church (the first Church of England) and a jetty in the harbour.

The cedar forests of the district were logged out by the 1850s, paving the way for the development of a thriving dairy farming industry. A new breed of dairy cow, the Illawarra Shorthorn, was developed in the area. Local farmers and pastoralists joined the Kiama Agricultural Society in 1848, signalling the importance of agriculture to the district.

Basalt (blue metal) quarrying flourished in and around Kiama from the 1870s, and the quarries were a major employer in the district. The quarries supplied large amounts of 'blue metal' demanded by Sydney's expanding network of roads, tramways and railways.

Kiama developed as a service and shipping centre for local industry centred on the harbour, where local produce and blue metal was shipped to Sydney and beyond. The wealth generated from the pastoral and quarrying industries led to an economic and social boom in Kiama in the 1880s. The town also became a popular seaside holiday resort—the opening of the railway in 1888 and Kiama station in 1894 made it more readily accessible from Sydney.

The municipality of Kiama was gazetted in 1858. The present Kiama local government area (LGA) comprises the former Gerringong, Jamberoo and Kiama councils. The population of Kiama rose from 741 in 1861 to 19,973 in 2006. There are 21,464 people living in the LGA at the present time.

On 15 January 1855, the Catholic Church was granted lots 3, 4 and 5 of Section 2A of the Town of Kiama Plan for a presbytery, school and church, respectively. It later acquired lots 1, 2, 200 and 201. St Peter's Church was opened in 1858 at a cost of £1600. Father Michael Flanagan succeeded Fr Pierre de Jonge (Peter Young) as parish priest in 1860. A new presbytery was built in 1865–1866. The Catholic mission in Kiama expanded in 1888–1889 when a convent was built adjoining the church.

Coinciding with the Golden Jubilee of St Peter's Church, Kiama, St Joseph's School was established in 1908—lessons were taught in the Old Railway School Building. The present parish hall was built adjacent to the convent and officially opened and used for classrooms from January 1952. The school's name changed to 'Saints Peter and Paul' in 1974, uniting all parish buildings under the patronage of the same saints.

Kiama became one of the parishes making up the newly formed diocese of Wollongong in 1952 and Thomas McCabe became the diocese's first bishop.

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Monsignor Michael Irish was administrator of the parish from 1935 and 1960. He was then appointed parish priest from 1960 to 1970. Irish believed there was a need for a large, modern church to cater to the needs of the growing Kiama population—by the 1960s, the old church was over 100 years old.

There was some opposition among the parishioners to replacing the old church. Some felt emotionally attached to the building, while others felt the proposed new church was 'too large to seat 540, with the proposed high ceilings and the slope and shape of the roof increasing the cost unnecessarily'. Planned Giving (which comprises envelopes and direct debit donations) was introduced in 1960 to raise the base capital for the church project to proceed.

Monsignor Irish commissioned official Catholic Church architects Sydney G Hirst and Kennedy to design the new building. Hirst and Kennedy specialised in church architecture and had previously completed the designs for St Brigids in Wollongong (1954) as well completing designs for new churches throughout New South Wales. The firm had also designed additions to prominent churches in Sydney, such as St Patrick's in Manly and St Francis Xavier in North Sydney. They awarded the contract to Hughes Brothers of Wollongong. Construction commenced on the site in December 1962. A sketch of the original design appeared in the *Kiama Independent* in November 1962 and shows the design underwent minor alterations. The cost of the works was estimated at \$88,000.

Bishop McCabe laid the foundation stone of the new church on 5 May 1963 and the building was completed in November 1963. The new parish church—Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church—was opened and blessed by Bishop McCabe on 29 December 1963, though Monsignor Irish said the first mass in the church on 1 December.

The *Kiama Independent* gave an account of the opening ceremony which 'began in hot summer sunshine at 9.30am, when the Bishop, led by red-clad altar boys and accompanied by Parish Priest Right Rev Monsignor Michael Irish and the Bishop's secretary, Mgr Deignan, walked in a solemn procession around the church sprinkling doors, windows and walls with holy water'. The article continues, 'the large congregation, among them many children, filed into the church behind the Bishop to witness a similar blessing of the altar and other parts'.

The Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican brought about liturgical changes to Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church, including the Mass being changed from Latin to English and the introduction of the new Mass text. However, the building itself remained relatively unchanged from the 1963 design. Some minor alterations that have occurred in recent decades include the repositioning of the altar and tabernacle, and changes to the dimensions of the sanctuary.

In November 1993, a 'new' bell, formerly the bell at Sacred Heart Church, Blackheath, was relocated to the church grounds at Kiama and blessed and named Sophia (Wisdom).

The church exterior and interior were refurbished extensively in 1999, including a new meeting room and catechist centre which was opened and blessed by Bishop Wilson on 27 February 2000.

In the early 2000s, the Knights of the Southern Cross refurbished the pews.

On 21 April 2011, the old church meeting room was converted to the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament.

In 2013, on the 50th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone, two mosaics of St Peter and St Paul, made by parishioners Clare Anderson and Joan O'Neill, were blessed. Bishop Ingham simultaneously celebrated the anniversary marking the opening of the church. The old bell from the St Peters Church (1858) was reinstalled outside the parish office and electrified to ring out the Angelus at 12 noon daily. The following year, a stained-glass window of The Annunciation, made by parishioner Joan O'Neill, was installed and blessed by Fr Chris on 29 September.

During 2015–2016, a series of stained-glass windows, commissioned by parishioner David Burke, designed by Peter Edward and constructed by Kaye Vincent, were installed. Each window depicts major events that occurred in Jesus' ministry—The Baptism of Christ, The Transfiguration, The Wedding at Cana, The Calming of the Storm and The Institution of the Eucharist.

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THEMES	
National historical theme	Culture—developing cultural institutions and ways of life
State historical theme	Religion—activities associated with particular systems of faith and worship
National historical theme	Culture—developing cultural institutions and ways of life
State historical theme	Creative endeavour—activities associated with the production and performance of literary, artistic, architectural and other imaginative, interpretive or inventive works; and/or associated with the production and expression of cultural phenomena; and/or environments that have inspired such creative activities.

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APPLICATION OF CRITERIA	
Historical significance SHR criteria (a)	<p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church originated from a grant of lots 3, 4 and 5 of Section 2A of the Town of Kiama Plan for a presbytery, school and church, respectively. The original building was constructed contemporaneously to the presbytery in the 1860s but was demolished a century later to accommodate the construction of the current building. The current building maintains the same lot (Lot 3) as the previous church, showing the continuous presence of the Catholicism in the Kiama area.</p> <p>The new church was built in 1963 in response to the growing Catholic population in the area—it accommodated a larger congregation than the previous building. The building demonstrates the enduring popularity of the Catholic faith in the region, and is representative of the postwar boom in religious building in Australia in the regional context.</p> <p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.</p>
Historical association significance SHR criteria (b)	<p>The church building was commissioned by Monsignor Michael Irish, parish priest from 1930 to 1970. However, as one of the first parishes incorporated into the newly formed Diocese of Wollongong, the foundation stone was laid by Bishop Thomas McCabe. Bishop McCabe, the first bishop of the area, also performed the first mass held in the church.</p> <p>The church was designed by architectural firm Sydney G Hirst and Kennedy. Hirst and Kennedy specialised in parish churches and designed a number of postwar ecclesiastical buildings, including St Brigid's in Wollongong. Although they never achieved national acclaim, they were esteemed as ecclesiastical architects. Although the Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church, a modest example of the ecclesiastical style, it is nevertheless a good example of Hirst and Kennedy's postwar oeuvre.</p> <p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.</p>
Aesthetic significance SHR criteria (c)	<p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church is an excellent example of a modest postwar ecclesiastical building. It conforms to the typical A-frame style popular in the postwar period and incorporates a number of decorative elements typical of the style, such as a high-pitched roof, geometric stained glass, and decorative panels which emphasize the vertical motif. The church is a rare example of the style in the Kiama region, and is likely to be rare in the LGA.</p> <p>The church is an excellent example of Hirst and Kennedy's ecclesiastical architecture, representing the peak of their design work in the mid-century period. The church is informed by their earlier work at St Brigid's in Wollongong but surpasses this design in the scale of the building and the quality of the execution. The church is likely to be one of the best surviving examples of their work in New South Wales.</p> <p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.</p>
Social significance SHR criteria (d)	<p>A detailed social values assessment has not been undertaken, but the Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church has been in continuous use as a parish church since its inception and is likely to hold a high degree of social significance to the congregation of the church and the wider Catholic community in the area.</p> <p>It is not known if the Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church meets the threshold of significance under this criterion.</p>

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Technical/Research significance SHR criteria (e)	<p>The historical archaeological potential of the site has not been assessed. It should be gauged in order to determine if the site has research potential to contribute to a better understanding of the history of the area.</p> <p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church has not been assessed under this criterion.</p>
Rarity SHR criteria (f)	<p>The postwar ecclesiastical style is locally rare in the Kiama LGA, with only a few extant examples in the region. The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church is likely to be one of the best examples of the style within the region.</p> <p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.</p>
Representativeness SHR criteria (g)	<p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church is an excellent example of a modest postwar ecclesiastical parish church in the Kiama LGA. It is largely intact externally, and retains a good degree of integrity, despite later internal refurbishments. Later additions to the church, such as the stained-glass windows installed in 2015–2016 are sympathetic to the existing character of the church and enhance its aesthetic qualities. The church demonstrates a number of design elements common to the typology, such as a high-pitched roof, masonry construction, vertical panels of stained glass and decorative sandstone cladding. The church is an excellent demonstration of a rare building type in the Kiama region and has representative significance as a result.</p> <p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.</p>
Integrity	<p>The Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church displays a high degree of integrity. The church building largely retains its original form and a high degree of external fabric, including stained glass, timber sash windows and sandstone cladding. It has undergone internal refurbishment with some alteration of the floorplan, but the original layout is still legible. The building has been well maintained and is currently in good condition.</p>

HERITAGE LISTINGS

Heritage listing/s	N/A

INFORMATION SOURCES

Include conservation and/or management plans and other heritage studies.

Type	Author/Client	Title	Year	Repository
Leaflet	Ss Peter & Paul Church	Ss Peter & Paul Church Kiama: celebration 50 years—1963–2013	2013	www.kiamacatholicchurch.org.au
Website	Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Parish Kiama	Parish History	2020	Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Parish Kiama

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	<p>Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church should be included as an item of local significance in Schedule 5 of the <i>Kiama Local Environmental Plan 2011</i>.</p>
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SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION			
Name of study or report	Kiama Town Centre Heritage Review	Year of study or report	2021
Item number in study or report	44		
Author of study or report			
Inspected by	GML Heritage Pty Ltd		
NSW Heritage Manual guidelines used?		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
This form completed by	GML Heritage Pty Ltd	Date	12 May 2021

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IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

Image caption	Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church as viewed from the west, showing its characteristic postwar ecclesiastical façade.				
Image year	2020	Image by	GML Heritage	Image copyright holder	GML Heritage



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IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

Image caption	Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church looking northeast toward the southern elevation, showing its characteristic A-frame construction.				
Image year	2020	Image by	GML Heritage	Image copyright holder	GML Heritage



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IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

Image caption	Detail of stained-glass windows installed in 2015–2016.				
Image year	2020	Image by	GML Heritage	Image copyright holder	GML Heritage



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IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

Image caption	Detail of the etched plaques on the entrance doors.				
Image year	2020	Image by	GML Heritage	Image copyright holder	GML Heritage



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IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

Image caption	Approximate location of Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church on the Town of Kiama Plan (1972 copy of the original 1840s drawing).				
Image year	1972	Image by	Department of Lands NSW	Image copyright holder	Department of Lands NSW



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IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

Image caption	Sketch of the original design for the church from the <i>Kiama Independent</i> , 28 November 1962. The current church is largely faithful to this design, but it appears the northern transept was not included in the original plan and that vertical glass panels were originally planned for the north elevation of the narthex.				
Image year	1962	Image by	<i>Kiama Independent</i>	Image copyright holder	Wollongong City Library



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IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

Image caption	Historical photograph of Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church c1964, looking northeast.				
Image year	1964	Image by	Unknown	Image copyright holder	Kiama City Library



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IMAGES - 1 per page

Please supply images of each elevation, the interior and the setting.

Image caption	Historical postcard showing a view of Kiama from Hillington Crescent, which was above the town. Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church can be seen in the distance, a striking feature in the landscape.				
Image year	c1960s–1970s	Image by	Unknown	Image copyright holder	Kiama City Library

