



Photography by David Liddle

OLD DARLINGTON SCHOOL TODAY

BACKGROUND

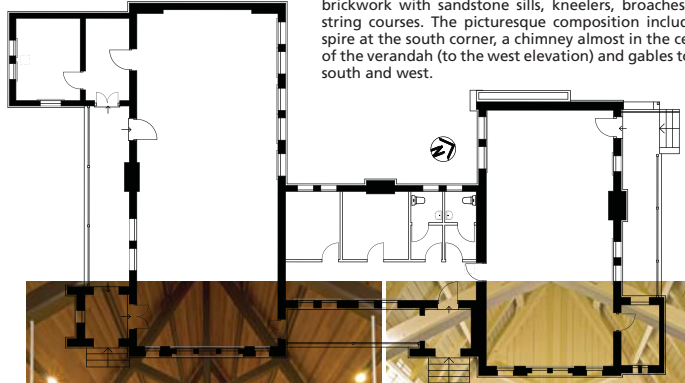
Old Darlington School was designed c1877, and was one of a number of single storey suburban schools designed by the architect to the Council of Education, George Allen Mansfield. At the end of 1975, the school, which was in a very poor state of repair was transferred to the University. Several buildings were demolished and the site cleared in 1976. It was originally intended that the area be used for construction of a new building for the School of Biological Sciences, to be relocated to Darlington from Science Road.

This plan was cancelled with the ending of the Australian University's Commission triennial funding in 1975, and in 1978 the building was renovated for the Department of Music to be used as a theatre workshop and performance space. The building is heritage listed under the City of Sydney Local Environment Plan and the University's Section 170 Register.

The Old Darlington school is a single storey Gothic Revival style building constructed of polychromatic brickwork with sandstone sills, kneelers, broaches and string courses. The picturesque composition includes a spire at the south corner, a chimney almost in the centre of the verandah (to the west elevation) and gables to the south and west.



OLD DARLINGTON SCHOOL IN 1966



RESTORATION

In September 2007, the University of Sydney began conservation work on the façade and roof of the old Darlington School in accordance with the 1999 Heritage Fabric Survey recommendations.

The drivers for initiating the project were to undertake essential maintenance of the building and conserve the heritage features. These included reconstructing the slate roofs in new slate to repair the leaking roof and remedy the extensive damage caused by white ants. Other features which were reconstructed included the timber finials, the finishing of the spire in slate with a new steel finial, copper roof vents and reconstruction of the slate veranda roofs. The restoration also installed access and toilet facilities for persons with disabilities to meet current standards.

The design of the conservation works was based on original plans and photos taken in the 19th century. Features which were retained included the face brickwork, stone chimneys, fish scale pattern to the roofs, and timber windows and fascias.

Materials used in the refurbishment are as close to the original as possible, including slate roofing from Newfoundland (Canada) as Welsh slate was not available, copper sheathed roof vents and sandstone moulds and chimney stones from the NSW Department of Commerce reserve (sourced from the recent excavations at Pyrmont).

Work was completed in February 2008, allowing the Old Darlington School to continue as a venue for events, concerts and exhibitions.

The Old Darlington School is now conserved for future generations. The life expectancy of the features, such as the roofs is over 100 years. The savings to can be measured by the original investment in the embodied energy for the building has been saved for the 21st century. The project achieved its goal and was completed within the project budget of \$1.4m, compared with the cost of an equivalent new building which would be in excess of \$2m.



NEW ROOF VENTS ROOF REPAIRED ROOF EXPOSED AFTER 30 YEARS NEW CHIMNEY STONES NEW SANDSTONE MOULDS TODAY TODAY

OLD DARLINGTON SCHOOL
API NSW EXCELLENCE IN PROPERTY HERITAGE AWARD

Project Manager: Campus Infrastructure Services, The University of Sydney.
 Architect: Clive Lucas Stapleton and Partners Pty Ltd.
 Engineers: Hughes Trueman Pty Ltd
 Builder: Kane Constructions Pty Ltd.
 Stonework: Jasper Swann Stonemasonry Pty Ltd.
 Roofer: Combined Roofing Solutions Pty Ltd.

