

Heritage (Decision about Registration of Sacred Heart Church, Calwell) Notice 2008 (No 1)

Notifiable Instrument NI 2008 – 479

made under the

Heritage Act 2004 section 34 Notice of decision about registration

1. Revocation

This instrument replaces NI2008 – 301

2. Name of instrument

This instrument is the Heritage (Decision about Registration of Sacred Hearth Church, Calwell) Notice 2008 (No 1).

3. Registration details of the place

Registration details of the place are at Attachment A: Register entry for: Sacred Hearth Church, Calwell.

4. Reason for decision

The ACT Heritage Council has decided that the Sacred Hearth Church, Calwell meets one or more of the heritage significance criteria at s 10 of the Heritage Act 2004. The register entry is at Attachment A.

5. Date of Registration

14 October 2008.

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2602

.....
Gerhard Zatschler
Secretary ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2602

14 October 2008



ACT Heritage Council

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**HERITAGE REGISTER
(Provisional Registration Details)**

Place

For the purposes of s. 33 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, an entry to the heritage register has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council for the following place:

- **SACRED HEART CHURCH at Calwell**

DATE OF REGISTRATION

Notified: 17 October 2008 Notifiable Instrument: NI2008–479

Copies of the Register Entry are available for inspection at the ACT Heritage Unit. For further information please contact:

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601

Telephone: 132281 Facsimile: (02) 6207 2229

IDENTIFICATION OF THE PLACE

- Sacred Heart Church, Casey Crescent, Section 796, Blocks 15 and 16 (part), Suburb of Calwell, ACT
-

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Sacred Heart Church is highly valued by the local community for its religious and social associations. It was the first church built in the Tuggeranong Valley and provided a place of worship and identity for the early Catholic community, as well as a place where they could socialise after services. It has maintained this function to the present, with a break in the period 1974-85.

The Church is significant in linking Canberra's settler history, before its role as national capital, to the present. It provides physical evidence of the social and religious aspirations of the early Catholic families in the Tuggeranong Valley who played an important part in Canberra's historic rural development.

The Church is one of eight church buildings remaining from the period before the creation of the Federal Capital Territory and now located in or close to the Australian Capital Territory. It is rare as one of only two built in timber, as well as being one of only two churches in the ACT south of the Molonglo.

The Sacred Heart Church is significant for representing the Federation era Carpenter Gothic style of churches, and its intact external and internal features. Internally, the design, the wooden pews and the fourteen pictures on the walls representing the Stations of the Cross, add to the building's religious and social significance. Its exterior with steep pitched roof, arched windows, decorative finials and fretwork bargeboards, serve as a visual reminder of early architectural styles in rural churches, and contrast in an aesthetically pleasing way with the newer parish structures surrounding it.

The church was moved in 1988 from its original setting, but is close to it, set in the centre of the new urban Parish, surrounded by open space, and flanked by four mature red gums (*Eucalyptus blakelyi*), that enhance the setting.

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The physical features of the Sacred Heart Church, Calwell, that particularly reflect its heritage significance are:

- The exterior of the church building, including steep pitched roof, arched windows, decorative finials, and fretwork bargeboards.
 - The interior of the church building, including the wooden pews, the fourteen pictures on the walls representing the Stations of the Cross and the timber ceiling and floors.
 - The open setting of its relocated position, including the four mature red gums (*Eucalyptus blakelyi*).
-

APPLICABLE HERITAGE GUIDELINES

The Heritage Guidelines adopted under s27 of the *Heritage Act 2004* are applicable to the conservation of the Sacred Heart Church, Calwell.

The guiding conservation objective is that the Sacred Heart Church, Calwell, shall be conserved and appropriately managed in a manner respecting its heritage significance and the features intrinsic to that heritage significance, and consistent with a sympathetic and viable use or uses. A conservation management plan (CMP) would help to guide conservation and future use. Any works that have a potential impact on significant fabric (and/or other heritage values) which are necessary prior to the development of a CMP shall be guided by a professionally documented interim assessment and conservation policy relevant to that area or component (i.e. a Statement of Heritage Effects - SHE).

REASON FOR REGISTRATION

The Sacred Heart Church, Calwell, has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance against 4 of the heritage criteria under the ACT Heritage Act.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Pursuant to s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, a place or object has heritage significance if it satisfies one or more of the following criteria:

(b) it exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group;

Sacred Heart Church is a wooden building, constructed in the Federation Carpenter Gothic style. Exemplifying this style is the steep pitched roof, arched windows, decorative finials and fretwork bargeboards. It therefore serves as a visual reminder of early architectural styles in rural churches, and contrasts in an aesthetically pleasing way with the newer parish structures surrounding it. It is one of only 2 wooden churches remaining in Canberra. Four mature red gums (*Eucalyptus blakelyi*), two flanking each side of the Church, enhance the aesthetic quality of the building. Now the centre piece of the new urban Parish, its design and fabric contrast in an aesthetically pleasing way with the modern structures surrounding it. It serves as a visual reminder of early architectural styles in rural churches, many of which were built by communities with limited finances and resources.

(d) it is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations;

Sacred Heart Church is highly valued by the local community for its religious and social associations. It was the first Church built in the Tuggeranong Valley and provided a place of worship and identity for the Catholic community. It was a place where the Catholic community experienced the important rituals of Masses, baptisms, weddings and funerals. It has maintained this function to the present. Located as it was on the Tharwa road, the small wooden church and the tall Monterey Pines provided a well known land mark in the Valley. Although it has been moved from its original site, the Church, now located within the modern precinct of St Francis of Assisi Parish Centre, still maintains its religious and social value to the Catholic community of Tuggeranong.

The small timber Church is important for its associations with the early Catholic pioneers of the Tuggeranong Valley. These included the Pike, Brennan, Sheedy, Fitzgerald, Gallagher, Morrison, Sullivan, Ryan, Smith and Wallace families. The construction of the Church was funded by these families, who had a strong desire for a central place of worship in the Valley. Descendants of these early pioneers

still live in the ACT and attend services in the Church. The Church provides a sense of place and identity for the Catholic community.

(g) it is a notable example of a kind of place or object and demonstrates the main characteristics of that kind

Sacred Heart Church distinguishes itself from other churches remaining from the period before the creation of the Federal Capital Territory, both 1 of only 2 timber churches existing in the region and by being a larger, earlier and more articulated example of the Federation Carpenter Gothic style than its closest architectural counterpart – Saint Edmunds Church.

(h) it has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase in local or national history

The Church was built in 1902 to serve the growing Catholic community of the Tuggeranong Valley and surrounding areas. Prior to its construction, the Catholic community met at various station homesteads in the district to celebrate Mass. The Church provided a common centre of worship for Catholics and a place where they could socialise after services. It still functions in this way today, maintaining the provision of social and spiritual contact among the Catholic families of southern Canberra.

The Church provides physical evidence of the social and religious aspirations of the early Catholic families in the Tuggeranong Valley who played an important part in Canberra's historic rural development.

The incorporation of the small timber Church into the urban parish of Calwell serves as a reminder of the changing land use prior to and following the establishment of the Federal Capital. The building is in marked contrast with the more recent urban development of the Tuggeranong Valley.

The following criteria were found not to be applicable: (a), (c), (e), (f), (i), (j), (k), (l).

CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Draft provisional registration entry was released for public comment on 21 July 2008 and period for public comment closes on 18 August 2008.

SUMMARY OF THE PLACE'S HISTORY AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

History

Sacred Heart Church was the second Catholic church built in the ACT and was erected by voluntary labour in 1902, with funds for the materials contributed by the local Catholic families. Land was offered by James Cunningham, owner of the Tuggeranong Station, and a two acre site chosen on his property in the "Big Hill" paddock close to the Cooma Road. The construction was supervised by Thomas Jordan and Jack Purcell of Queanbeyan. The church was dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and formally opened on 29 June 1902 (Maher 1991:28). The sermon was preached by Father James O'Gorman from Michelago. Later the same year Archbishop Kelly visited Sacred Heart Church for a confirmation ceremony.

The small Sacred Heart Church was the centre of social and religious life for the Catholic families of Tuggeranong and the surrounding district. The families would meet there for baptisms, marriages, burials and especially Mass on Sundays, often travelling long distances from east and west of the Murrumbidgee. The first wedding celebrated in the church was on 29 July 1903, and the first baptism was that of the daughter of John Morrison of Trahlee Station in the same year. In July 1927 a large crowd attended celebrations to mark the Silver Jubilee of the Church. The "Missa Cantata" was celebrated by Rev. D. Griffin, after which a procession passed through the grounds in the shadow of the tall pines planted 25 years earlier.

During the development phase of the Tuggeranong Valley suburbs from 1974, the Church had to be temporarily closed. It was closed from 1974 until 1985 and, during this time, the structure suffered some vandalism in the form of bullet holes and was infested with rats and rabbits (Guest 1985). The damage to the Church was repaired and religious services were re-established in 1985, continuing to the present. In 1988 during the urban development of Calwell, administrative decisions involving road realignments and drainage required the building to be re-sited and realigned. Its new location was approximately 50m to the north of its original site.

Although the moving and re-alignment of the church building separated it from its original site and from the bordering pine trees, it still maintained its physical and visual link to Catholicism in the Tuggeranong Valley. The Church now faces onto Casey Crescent and is incorporated as a centre-piece into the new Parish Centre of St Francis of Assisi. The St Francis of Assisi parish school office and hall were built on the original site of the church.

Description

The design of Sacred Heart Church exemplifies the Federation era Carpenter Gothic style of churches. The walls are weatherboard; some of the boards are becoming cracked and require painting. The roof is steeply pitched and is of corrugated, galvanised iron. There are decorative fretwork bargeboards on the four gables formed at the ends of the main building, the porch and the sanctuary. Finials in the shape of a cross adorn the apex of each of the four gables. There are seven arched windows on each side of the original building, one smaller window on the southern side of the sanctuary and two the same size as the sanctuary window on either side of the porch. In 1912 the nave was extended by two bays and the porch was added. The aisle is at the centre of the nave. There are a number of well-worn wooden pews at the front of the nave on either side of the aisle, on which there are small metal plates engraved with the names of some of the families who established the Church.

A small area of bare ground behind the Church is all that remains of three pine trees which were planted in 1903 within the original church yard, together with other pines, to commemorate each of the Catholic families of the Tuggeranong Valley who established the Church. The trees were removed in 1998 as they had reached a stage of senescence where they were becoming dangerous. The area has been recently planted with eucalypts. The remaining pine trees that were planted by parishioners are no longer in the immediate vicinity of the Church.

The Stations of the Cross are represented in fourteen pictures on the walls, given by the Morrison family of "Trahlee" in memory of their father and mother, John and Elizabeth Morrison. The altar was replaced in 1988 when the Church was moved.

When it was relocated, the Church was turned almost at right angles so it could be sited on the centre line of the new St Francis of Assisi Parish Centre and entered from Casey Crescent. It is now the focal point of the complex and the new buildings form an arc around it. The immediate surrounds of the Church are gravel paved and grassed areas with adjacent car parks (see Figure 2).

There are four mature red gums (*Eucalyptus blakelyi*), two on each side of the Church.

References

Garnett, R, and D Hyndes D (eds) 1992 *The Heritage of the Australian Capital Territory*, National Trust of Australia (ACT), Canberra, ACT.

Gillespie, Lyall 1991 *Canberra 1820-1913*, AGPS, Canberra, ACT.

Guest, S. 'Priest builds a new parish community' *Canberra Times*, 2 March 1985

Maher, Rev. Brian 1997 *Planting the Celtic Cross*, published by the author, Canberra, ACT.

Maher, Rev. Brian, The history of the Catholic community of Canberra, in *Canberra Historical Journal*, New Series No. 27, March 1991, Canberra and District Historical Society.

Unpublished:

Cosgrove, C 1998 Hall Village citation, National Trust of Australia (ACT).

Canberra and District Historical Society (CDHS) File, Sacred Heart Church.

Muns Sly & Partners Pty Ltd (1988) *Relocation of Sacred Heart Church, Calwell Parish Centre*, unpublished report, Canberra

National Trust of Australia (ACT) File, Sacred Heart Church.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PLANS

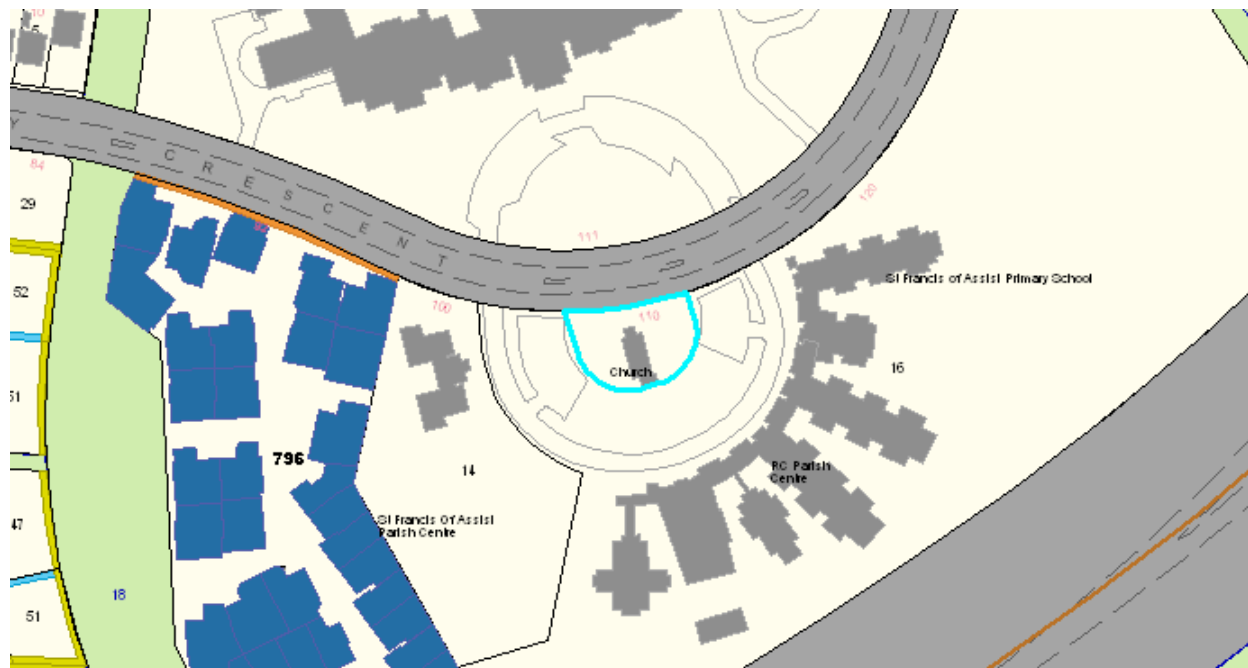


Figure 1. Location of Sacred Heart Church, Calwell

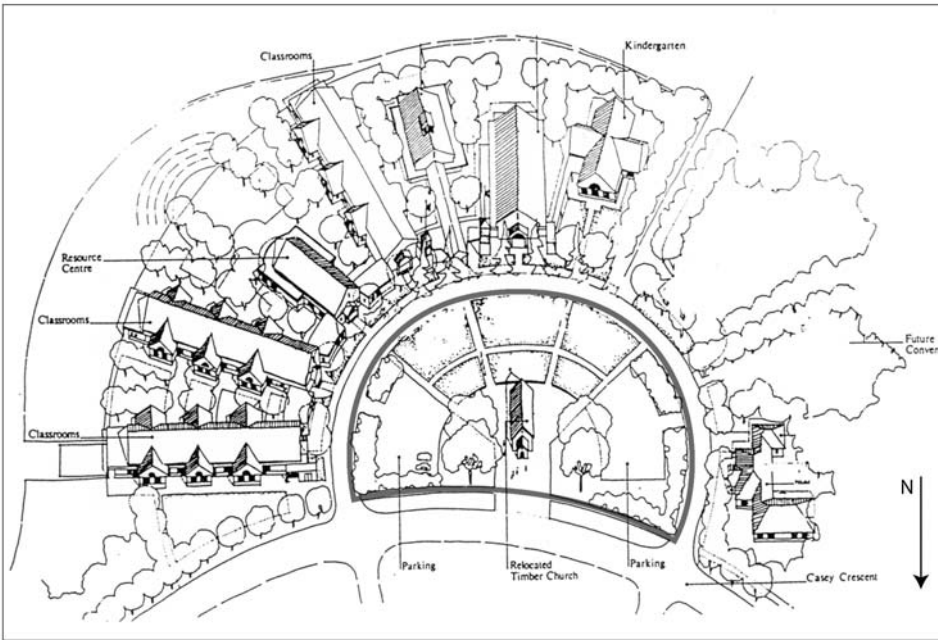


Figure 2. Site plan, Sacred Heart Church, Muns Sly & Partners Pty Ltd (1988)



Figure 3. Sacred Heart Church, from NW (Truscott 11/4/08)



Figure 4. Sacred Heart Church from NW (Truscott 11/4/08)



Figure 5. Sacred Heart Church and St Francis of Assisi Parish Centre (Truscott 11/4/08)



Figure 6. Sacred Heart Church and St Francis of Assisi Parish Centre (Truscott 11/4/08)