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# SOUTH CAMBERWELL GOSPEL HALL, FORMERLY SOUTH CAMBERWELL METHODIST CHURCH



Toorak Road, 906-912 South  
Camberwell Gospel Hall

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## Location

906-912 Toorak Road CAMBERWELL, BOROONDARA CITY

## Municipality

BOROONDARA CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO725

## Heritage Listing

Boroondara City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 30, 2019

What is Significant?

The polygonal plan form, brick church, formerly known as South Camberwell Methodist Church (1930), Camberwell, is significant. Designed by architect Samuel Charles Brittingham, it is currently in use as the South

Camberwell Uniting Church.

The 1966 church hall is *Non-Contributory*.

How is it significant?

The former South Camberwell Methodist Church is of local historical, aesthetic, architectural and socially significance to the City of Boroondara.

Why is it significant?

The former South Camberwell Methodist Church is of local historical and social significance. It is associated with the Methodist Church established on the site in 1915 and represents the growth and development of the Church across the twentieth century. The church is still in use today and demonstrates the ongoing use of the site for ecclesiastical purposes. (Criteria A and G)

South Camberwell Methodist Church is of aesthetic/architectural significance as a highly intact version of the Interwar Gothic style and polygonal church plan form, designed by noted architect Samuel Charles Brittingham. The building features a well resolved and finely detailed design that belongs stylistically to the Gothic Revival popularised in the interwar period for ecclesiastical buildings. The building is finely detailed with tracery windows, angled bays, and simply decorated vestibule parapet capping are of particular note. The church with its polygon plan form is distinctive within the municipality for the inclusion of a tower and spire, and may be the only church of this plan to do so in Boroondara (Criteria D, E and H).

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|---------------------------|---|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Boroondara - Municipal-Wide Heritage Gap Study: Vol. 2 Camberwell, Context, 2018; |
| Construction dates        | 1930, 1966,   |
| Architect/Designer        | Brittingham, Samuel C,  |
| Hermes Number             | 202227  |
| Property Number           |   |

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## Physical Description 1

The Former South Camberwell Methodist Church is located on the corner of Toorak and Park roads, Camberwell. The site comprises a 1930 church and 1966 church hall.

### Church

The Former South Camberwell Methodist Church is a clinker brick and concrete structure in the interwar Gothic Revival style as is situated on the prominent north-east corner of the site.

The church roof has a Greek cross outline with tall intersecting gables clad in terracotta tiles. A lower vestibule extends north towards Toorak Road and a vestry to the south-east. Attached and projecting from the vestibule is a decorated square tower capped with a pierced spire. The church is polygonal in plan, a form developed and frequently used in suburban church design of the 1920s. The Greek cross plan is evident in the external form, with the main gable fronting the street offset by the angled bays that connect the transverse gable, forming the shape of the roof.

The main northern facade of the church (Figure 7) features a central gable with a lower vestibule. The entry vestibule is comprised of a central stuccoed segmental arch with a pair of timber panel doors with a glazed upper

portion. A cast iron overhead lamp is set in the centre of the arch. Above the arch is a moulded stringcourse, inset stuccoed cross and stuccoed parapet formed into a jagged point. The flanking forms are divided from the entrance by clinker brick buttresses with stuccoed offsets, that rise through the parapet and are capped with stuccoed gables. A large tracery window with moulded architrave sits behind the vestibule set between the stuccoed offset buttresses. Filled with stained glass, the tracery mouldings themselves are of variant colour to the stucco used elsewhere. Above the large tracery window is a vent, with simplified window detailing.

To the east (Figure 8), the stuccoed stringcourse forms a gable intersecting the parapet above. The gable features a central lancet window with stained glass infill. The architrave is stuccoed with quoining that extends at the base to each adjoining buttress and the pointed head is finished with a simple label mould and stop. The vestry entrance is attached to the south-east of the main church. This single-story form replicates some of the main entrance detailing however on a much smaller scale.

To the north-west (Figure 9), a square tower of three levels rises and is capped with a moulded pierced spire. On the ground level of the tower sits the foundation stone laid by F.J. Cato Esq., on June 7th 1930. At the first level, half the wall is stuccoed over, from which rises a broad window form with inset quatrefoil. At the second level as the buttress level steps in again, another stuccoed stringcourse wraps the structure. From here a pair of lancet windows rises on each face. Above these windows is a final scrolled moulding and a stuccoed parapet with prominent corner piers and balustrade-like infill with arched windows and a central smaller pier. Cracking is visible on the northern side of the balustrade. The spire rises from the parapet, with imitation dormer openings cast into the concrete.

Buttresses create a central bay on the main body of the church, infilled as described above. The buttresses to the angled bays sit at a similar height to the entry with the final offset at the height of the parapet. Each bay is punctuated by a central lancet window, with label moulding and quoining matching that of the lower tower windows in height and detailing. The bays are capped with a simple stuccoed parapet which rises from each side but does not intersect with the main gable coping.

The lower side gables are similar in detail, divided into three by matching buttresses, however these stop short of intersecting the gable coping and are offset into the face of the facade. Within the central bays, the large geometric tracery window with moulded architrave and quoining is repeated, also with vent above.

## Church Hall

The 1966 church hall building is constructed of red and clinker brick with low pitched iron gable roofs over two main sections (Figure 10). Situated deep into the site, between carparking to the east and the west, the building's main facade and entry faces north to Toorak Road. A single timber framed feature window sits in the middle of the main elevation. It is made up of a painted timber white cross and infilled with various coloured panes of glass. Other windows are generally timber. An elevated porch sits between the offices and the main church hall to the east.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*