
Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church



Church

Location

49A NICHOLSON STREET BRUNSWICK EAST - PROPERTY NUMBER 89202, MERRI-BEK CITY

Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO562

Heritage Listing

Merri-bek City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 12, 2023

What is significant?

The Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church at 49 Nicholson Street, Brunswick is significant. The style, form and materiality of the Inter-War Romanesque church is significant. The single-storey extension to the rear of the church is not significant, along with the Parish House and associated garage.

How is it significant?

The Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church is of local historical, aesthetic, social and associative significance to the City of Moreland.

Why is it significant?

The Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church has historical significance in its role in demonstrating the development of church facilities within the suburb during the inter-war period. (Criterion A)

The Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church has aesthetic significance as an Inter-War Romanesque style church which contains elaborate and well-kept original detailing including features in brick, stone, concrete and slate. Further, the church presents well to the street, establishing a strong visual presence along Nicholson Street. (Criterion E)

The Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church is significant for its ongoing association with the Brunswick East community as an important religious meeting place. (Criterion G)

The church is associated with well-known Robert Harper, architect and builder for the site. (Criterion H)

Heritage Study/Consultant	Moreland - Keeping Brunswick's heritage: A Report on the Review of the Brunswick Conservation Study, Context Pty Ltd, 1990; Moreland Heritage Nominations Study, Extent Heritage, 2022;
Construction dates	1918,
Architect/Designer	Harper, Robert,
Other Names	Church, School, Presbytery,
Hermes Number	58199
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

Complex includes church, school and presbytery.

Physical Description 2

Church

The subject site consists of an interwar Romanesque style church constructed in red brick with stone and concrete features throughout. The gable roof is clad in slate, with two projecting gables to the north and south. The gable end fronting the street is stone edged with a stone crucifix at the pinnacle. Below the eaves around the remainder of the building, the brickwork has been built to appear like dentils. The front facade is characterised by a range of arched, sandstone openings including a large arched window with stained glass, three arched entrances with timber doors and a tabernacle to the upper facade housing a statue. Along the southern edge of the building, set back slightly from the front facade, is a red brick steeple characterised by concrete column and dentil features, arched louvered openings of varying sizes, and a dome with a gold leaf statue atop. The remainder of the building contains a number of large arched and circular windows with stained glass, as well as several smaller crucifixes.

To the rear, a single-storey rear addition has been added. This is not visible from any key vantage point. To the front, the entrance has been altered to include new concrete stairs, handrails and disability access ramp built of brick. Nevertheless, the church itself retains its early form, footprint, fenestrations and ornamentation, as viewed from every adjoining public vantage point.

The landscaping immediately around the church is minimal, with some low-scale concrete lined garden beds and several mature but non-significant trees to the north and south screening some views into the site from Nicholson Street.

Parish House

The parish house is located on the corner of Nicholson Street and Barkly Street, and is a two-storey red brick building with a hipped tiled roof, aluminium framed windows and a Colourbond gable entrance framed by two tall curved brick retaining walls. The eastern elevation contains a projecting gable which has been rendered and painted grey. To the west of the parish house along Barkly Street is a cream brick double garage, one garage with a tile roof and the other with galvanised iron. The building is not original heritage fabric related to the church, being a later addition to the site.

Integrity

Alterations and Additions:

- Installation of stained-glass window of St Joseph in 1923
- Installation of windows between 1923-1953
- Single-storey rear extension/addition to the church with a flat roof
- Concrete entry stair and brick disability ramp to the front of the church
- Construction of Parish House, c.1980s

Other than a single-storey rear addition, the church has not been altered in the recent past, retaining its early form, footprint, fenestrations and ornamentation, as viewed from every street in the area.

Physical Conditions

The church has been well maintained and the overall condition is good, though there is some biological growth to the slate.

The parish house is in good condition overall. The garages are in fair condition.

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/>