

SORELL HERITAGE SURVEY

Address: 45 Arthur Street Sorell 7172		UPI: 2902953	PID: 1715964
Name: SCOTS CHURCH			
Feature Type:	Structure Type: Church	Site Feature Type:	
		Dating:	1830 - 1890 1842
		Access Restrictions:	Not available
		Inspection Date:	October 96 P Davies
		Style:	Norman Romanesque
		Grid ref:	5426 545600 5262700
Indication of Significance: High probable significance		Theme: Worship	
Material:	Stone	Corrugated iron	Listings: National Trust SMC Schedule 3 AHC
Condition:	Fair	Deteriorated	
Integrity:	Intact		
National Estate Criteria:	A4 B4 C2 D2 E1 F1 G1 H1		Photograph Index: 1:11-13
Risk:	Excavation: ☐	Development: ☐	Maintenance: ☐ Vandalism: ☐

SITE DESCRIPTION:

A very fine country church by Colonial Architect James Blackburn built in the Romanesque style with Norman detailing. The church features a tall tower with an attached and richly formed curved entry porch and door. The sides of the tower and the east wall are decorated with elegant blind arcades and the sides of the building feature a series of large round headed windows. The roof is relatively low pitched and clad in corrugated iron. The form of the building is a simple rectangle with the entry porch and the building is of modest size. Stonework is a combination of picked finish, dressed in the arcades, margined for the plinth and corner stones and other trim.

The church is surrounded by poor quality 1960's development which impinges on the significant curtilage.

The building has had considerable stonework carried out but is still in overall poor condition externally. The work carried out includes rebuilding the base of the tower and the surrounds to the entry door, replacement of various stones around the lower section of the building and the mortar repair of other stones. Much of the work is well done, but some is poorly executed and impacts on the high significance of the building.

Work required is repointing to parapets, structural checking (if not carried out) as the end wall of the church has moved substantially and one bay of the south side has sunk. Attention is also required particularly to the arcade stones which appear to be of poorer quality than the surrounding stone.

HISTORY:

Built by the Presbyterian church to a design by the well known convict architect, James Blackburn after representations to Governor Franklin in the 1830's. The church was planned after the appointment of Rev Thomas Dugall to Sorell in 1839 when services were held in the Sorell courthouse. The foundation stone was laid in 1840 and the building completed in 1842 at a cost of £1415 with the bell being donated by local land holder, George Marshall. It is regarded as one of the earliest Romanesque churches in Australia.

The first Ningana Home Units for the Aged were erected adjacent to the church in 1968 for aged victims of the 1967 bushfires. As demand grew more units were built in following years.

BOUNDARY:

The listing boundary is formed by the street frontage, the face of the surrounding buildings on the site and the title boundary to either side. It is noted that the retirement housing impinges on the site adversely and should ideally be screened from the church.

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COMMENTS:

The finest church building in the municipality, it is of unusual form and was designed by the pre-eminent colonial architect James Blackburn. It is significant for its designer, its very fine form and detailing and as one of the earliest Romanesque churches built in Australia.

It meets Criteria A4, B2, C2, D2, E1, F1, G1, and H1 for inclusion in the Register of the National Estate. It should continue to be included in Schedule 3 of the Sorell Planning Scheme and the Register of the National Estate and should be nominated for inclusion in the Tasmanian Heritage Register.

BIBLIOGRAPHY + PREVIOUS STUDIES:

REID, Owen. 1979. The South East. Curriculum Centre, Education Department, Hobart

MORRIS, W.C. 1992 (5th ed). Scots Uniting Church Sorell 150th Anniversary Edition.

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