



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November, 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 8.6.2 Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies
- 8.6.4 Making places for worship

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 406 Religion
- 408 Institutions

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

St Patrick's Church is a fine example of Victorian Academic Gothic style. The Presbytery and Church Hall are good examples of a more vernacular style and form, with influences of Victorian Rustic Gothic in the Presbytery and Victorian Gothic in the Church Hall. Together, the elements of *St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall* form a picturesque setting behind a low stone boundary wall. (Criterion 1.1)

The stained glass leadlight windows of St Patrick's Church are fine examples of quality design and workmanship of imported ecclesiastical stained glass leadlights. (Criterion 1.2)

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall has a landmark quality created by the visual impact of the prominent Church tower, the design form and detail that is visible within the town and from the east and west access roads into York, and the relationship between the individual elements and the grounds. (Criterion 1.3)

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall makes a significant contribution to the historic streetscape, townscape and character of York, in complementing and enhancing the historic fabric of the town. (Criterion 1.4)

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R. and Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and terms from 1788 to the present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall are three substantial religious buildings, which form a significant religious cultural environment together with the former Convent of Mercy on the opposite side of South Street, constructed over the period of 1859 to 1894, and reflect the growth and development of the local parish of York and the evolution of the Catholic Church in Western Australia. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

The York parish was serviced by the Benedictines from New Norcia in the 1840s and the Church Hall (Old Church) and the first Catholic school in York were constructed by them in 1859. Bishop Salvado of New Norcia dedicated St Patrick's Church in 1886, while the Norbertine Fathers have been associated with the parish since 1959. (Criterion 2.3)

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall is closely associated with Father Patrick Joseph Gibney, parish priest at York from 1868 to 1901, who was primarily responsible for the construction of St Patrick's Church and the development of the parish during this period. (Criterion 2.3)

St Patrick's Church was designed by Fenian convict Joseph Nunan, who was previously responsible for completing the Sisters of Mercy convent at Victoria Square in 1871. (Criterion 2.3)

St Patrick's Church is a particularly fine example of ecclesiastical architecture of the 1870s and 1880s in Western Australia, while the stained glass windows are fine examples of quality design and workmanship. (Criterion 2.4)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall is highly valued by the local Catholic community in York as the focus of that community's religious life. It is a place where major events in the lives of parishioners take place, such as wedding, baptisms and funerals. Of particular significance are the considerable fund-raising efforts and labour provided by the parishioners that enabled the construction of St Patrick's Church during an extended period. (Criterion 4.1)

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall contributes to the local Catholic community's sense of place, and provides a focus for the community's identity. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

St Patrick's Church is the only extant example of a ecclesiastical building designed in the Victorian Academic style of architecture in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Perth. (Criterion 5.1)

The Church Hall is the only extant example of a ecclesiastical building designed in the Victorian Gothic style of architecture in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Perth. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

St Patrick's Church is a fine example of Victorian Academic Gothic style in Western Australia. (Criterion 6.1)

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall demonstrates the revival during the Victorian period of a purist approach to construction and the continued perception that a gothic style was most suitable for religious buildings. The place is closely linked to the development of York and the local parishioners' desire for a sense of permanency. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

St Patrick's Church is generally in fair to good condition. The slate roof is deteriorated, the stained glass windows are in a precarious condition and there is some minor cracking to the Church walls. The Presbytery is similarly in good condition, although there is evidence of damage from rising damp about the lower wall on the east side, above the verandah. The Hall is in fair condition with extensive evidence of rising damp, vertical cracks in the walls and weathered timber frames and detailing. The outbuilding is in fair condition with loose roof sheets and cracks in the wall evident.

12.4 INTEGRITY

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall has retained a high degree of integrity. Minimal changes have taken place over the years to facilitate the continued use of the place as the focus of the Catholic community in York.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The original fabric of the place is mostly intact. St Patrick's Church has had some alterations in replacement of the original shingle roof with slate in 1909 when the tower was constructed, replacement of the timber floors with concrete, the construction of a steel structure within the tower, and alterations to the sanctuary ceiling, while the Presbytery has had the verandah replaced with concrete, and the Hall has been rendered on the exterior, windows infilled, and the roof clad over the original shingles. The outbuilding has an addition at the front, possibly in an original opening, and except for the extensions or alterations at the south end, remain mostly intact. No structural alterations are evident to any of the buildings and although small changes have taken place, there is more than sufficient evidence to determine authentic detail and fabric of the buildings at all stages of their development. Overall, *St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall* demonstrate a high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Irene Sauman, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Laura Gray, Conservation Consultant.

Some supporting evidence has been taken from *St Patrick's Church, York Conservation Plan*, by Naomi Lawrance.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall is a group of three ecclesiastical buildings and an outbuilding comprising: Church Hall (Old Church, 1859), a single storey rendered brick and iron building, in the vernacular with influences of Victorian Gothic style; St Patrick's Church (1875+), a double volume stone and slate building with four level tower, in the Victorian Academic Gothic style; and, the Presbytery (1877; 1894), a single storey stone and corrugated iron dwelling with influences of Victorian Rustic Gothic style. The Outbuilding, in brick with an iron roof over shingles, was possibly built as stables in association with the Church Hall (Old Church) and early priest quarters (a lean-to attached to the Old Church) and could date from the 1860s or 1870s.¹

The Avon Valley district was settled early in the Colony's history following the discovery of good pastoral land in 1830, by a party led by Ensign Robert Dale of the 63rd Regiment. The area was named Yorkshire for its resemblance to that region in England. The townsite of York was gazetted in November 1830, and the first settlers moved into the area the following year. York was one of the earliest rural settlements and the first inland town of the Colony.² The district developed as a pastoral area, with the collection of sandalwood an important adjunct to the local economy, as it was in much of the south-west of the State.

A track was established linking York with the river port at Guildford and the seaport at Albany. In 1835, the first York town lots were purchased and the 1837 census recorded eighteen homesteads in the Avon Valley. By the time of the 1841 census, the population of York had reached 310.³ The establishment and settlement of York created a need for social infrastructure such as schools and places of worship. In 1841, an Anglican chapel was dedicated to St John the Evangelist, a school for boys was established in 1842, and a Colonial school was opened for boys and girls in 1848.⁴

¹ No documentary evidence has been located for the Outbuilding.

² Statham, Pamela, 'Swan River Colony 1829-1850', In Stannage, C. T. (ed) *A New History of Western Australia*, UWA Press, Perth, 1981, p. 190.

³ Colonial Secretary's Office, Census [of Western Australia] 1837, facsimile, 1974; 1841 census.

⁴ Lane, Lesley & Wilkes, Florence, 'York: The new church of St Patrick and Father Patrick Joseph Gibney (including) the Sisters of Mercy in York, 1831-1915', unpublished historical research, prepared for The State Award for Personal Achievement, May 1999, pp. [1-3] (this work is not referenced).

The Catholic population of the State in the 1830s and 1840s was relatively small, and almost all were labourers or soldiers without influence or wealth. Construction of the first Catholic church was not begun until 1844, with the laying of the foundation stone of the Pro Cathedral in Perth by Bishop Brady. In 1846, two Benedictine priests, a number of missionaries and six Sisters of Mercy arrived in the State. The Benedictines established a mission at New Norcia and the Sisters opened the first Catholic schools in Perth. Another thirty-two Benedictines arrived in the State in 1848. The Catholics in York were administered from New Norcia in the 1840s, with priests Matthew Griver and Timothy Donovan occasionally visiting the area. Services were first held in private homes, and later a small building is understood to have been erected by the community near what is now the corner of Poole St and Panmure Road.⁵ The Catholic numbers increased in the 1850s with the establishment of a convict depot in York, as many of the convicts transported to Western Australia were Irish Catholics. In 1853, Father Peter Aragon was placed in charge of the York Mission. In 1856, Canon Aldo (Raphael) Martelli was appointed parish priest at Toodyay and he regularly rode to York, Northam and Bindoon to minister to the Catholics in those towns. York was known by the church hierarchy as 'never being particularly Catholic' but in the mid 1850s, the York-Toodyay district held the most number of Catholics outside the Perth-Fremantle area, no doubt because it was also the most populated of the rural areas in the State at this time.⁶

York Building Lots 24 and 25 were granted to the Trustees of Roman Catholic Church property in December 1854. Lot 24 is bounded by South, Howick, and Grey streets, while Lot 25 adjoins the northern boundary of Lot 24.⁷ This land grant was to be used as the site of chapel, school and/or minister's residence. In the c.1942 handwritten history of the York parish held at the Presbytery, it is claimed that Dr Salvado, one of the property trustees, acquired three blocks of land from the Colonial Administration in April 1856.⁸ This appears to refer to the grant of the two original Lots plus Lot 26, immediately north of Lots 24 and 25.⁹

On 17 March 1859, the foundation stone of the first Catholic Church in York (the Old Church, now the Church Hall) was laid by the Right Reverend Dr Serra, Bishop of Perth. The Old Church was built by the Benedictine monks from New Norcia. They also constructed 'several small mission huts' for use as school buildings, where a Mrs J. Whitely and later a Miss Gayley, ran

5 'St Patrick's Parish, York', hand written history, c. 1942, p. 1, held in the York Presbytery, as quoted in Lawrance, Naomi, *St Patrick's Church York: Conservation Plan*, 2000, p. 23.

6 Lane, Lesley & Wilkes, Florence, op cit, p. [4]; 'What is St Patrick's Church, York?' document held by the Catholic Church archives, Perth, p. 1, as quoted in Lawrance, Naomi, op cit, p. 22.

7 DOLA, Town enrolment 1302, 27 December 1854.

8 'St Patrick's Parish, York', op. cit., p. 2. As quoted in Lawrance, Naomi, op cit, p. 23.

9 Report on the Parish of York from March 1953 to February 1957, by Father Harry F. Brennan, held at York Presbytery. As quoted in Lawrance, Naomi, op cit, p. 33. The York State School, built on Lot 26 in 1957, is reputed to have been built on the site of one of Father Gibney's orchards, resumed for the purpose.

a school under the supervision of the priests.¹⁰ The date of construction of both the Old Church and the school buildings was influenced by the fact that the Benedictines had only begun returning to New Norcia in 1859, having spent the previous 10 years in the metropolitan area due to differences within the church hierarchy.¹¹

The Church Hall (Old Church) was opened and dedicated to St Patrick on 27 March 1860, by the Very Reverend Father Martin Griver, Administrator of the Perth Diocese in Dr Serra's absence and later Bishop of Perth. Until Father Anselm Bourke was appointed as the first York parish priest in 1864, the parish was administered by priests from New Norcia and Toodyay. Father Bourke lived in simple quarters at the back of the Old Church.¹²

In 1868, Father Patrick Joseph Gibney was appointed parish priest at York. He secured a grant of another three lots on the south side of South Street where he erected the first Presbytery. In 1873, three Sisters of Mercy arrived in York to run the school. They first lived in a tent, so Father Gibney gave up his Presbytery to them for use as a residence and school and re-occupied the original priest quarters at the back of the Church Hall (Old Church). A new school was built and the Presbytery (1868) became the Convent of Mercy.¹³

In 1874, York was the fourth largest town in the State after Perth, Fremantle and Albany, and had been declared a Municipality in 1871. This may have encouraged Father Gibney in planning to build a new church in York.¹⁴

A committee was formed for the purpose:

Our readers will learn with pleasure that the Rev. P. J. Gibney purposes at an early date laying the foundation-stone of a new Church in the flourishing little Town of York. Already, we understand, a large quantity of building material has been collected on the proposed site; and other preliminaries required before undertaking a work of such importance, are fast being brought to completion. The good people of York have already the evidence of the energy of their zealous Pastor in the shape of a Handsome Convent and a pretty School House, and we make no doubt that a substantial and commodious Church will ere long will have to be added to the list of works the rev. gentleman has begun and completed.¹⁵

The process was ratified at a meeting of the Catholics of York in the school on 5 September 1874.

New Church — Proposed by R. Gallop, seconded by E. Cahill—That the Catholic community of York ... do set themselves to the task of erecting a

10 'St Patrick's Parish, York', op. cit., p. 2. As quoted in Lawrance, Naomi, op cit, p. 23.

11 Dom Eugene Perez, 'Subiaco, WA', c. 1960, 4 page typescript, PR3422; Bourke, D. F. *The History of the Catholic Church in Western Australia*, Perth, 1979, p. 108.

12 'St Patrick's Parish, York', op. cit., p. 2. As quoted in Lawrance, Naomi, op cit, p. 23.

13 'St Patrick's Parish, York', op. cit., p. 2. As quoted in Lawrance, Naomi, op cit, p. 24; Catholic Record, 6 July 1874, p. 3c; letter to the editor of the *WA Catholic Record* in 1876, quoted in Lane, Lesley & Wilkes, Florence, op cit, p. 9.

14 Lawrance, Naomi, op cit., p. 24.

15 *WA Catholic Record*, 6 July 1874, p. 3c.

Church worthy of the celebration of the Divine Mysteries, and that the foundation stone of the said Church be laid on the 28th of October next.¹⁶

Although 28 October 1874 was planned as the day for laying the foundation stone, the event was deferred until St Patrick's Day, 17 March 1875, when Bishop Matthew Griver was available to perform the task.¹⁷

The York Church.— In consequence of the absence of his Lordship the Bishop, who is on a Pastoral tour in the Northern District, the laying of the foundation stone of the new Church in York has been postponed. We hear that St Patrick's Day will be selected as the day on which to perform the interesting ceremony.¹⁸

The architect of St Patrick's Church was Joseph Nunan (Noonan). Nunan had arrived in Fremantle on 10 January 1868, on the *Hougoumont*, with 61 other Fenian convicts, members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The name 'Fenians' came from the warriors of old Irish folklore of the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Nunan had been sentenced to seven years penal servitude for 'anti-British activities'. In April 1868, requests were made to the Governor for the release of Nunan to superintend the construction of the new convent building at Victoria Square for the Sisters of Mercy. The request was refused 'due to the long unexpired period of probation to be served by the man in question', but a year later, Nunan was one of thirty-four Fenians to be pardoned, and he undertook to complete the Victoria Square convent.¹⁹ St Patrick's Church was an example of his Gothic architecture, another example being the Wesley Chapel in Guildford (1883). Nunan also designed and built Padbury's Store and Residence in Guildford (1869-71).²⁰

Henry Davies was hired as stonemason, with other work undertaken by sub-contractors.²¹ The carting of timber, lime, stone and bricks was contributed by parishioners. Father Gibney himself is recorded as carting 39 loads of timber and lime and providing 322 days' labour on the carting of stone and bricks, as well as undertaking his regular duties. The next highest contributor was E. Cahill, who carted 9 loads and provided 41 days of labour. Fundraising for the Church was an important part of the process and many fairs were held for this purpose, generally run by the Sisters of Mercy, but overseen by Father Gibney.²² He continued to occupy the priest's quarters behind the Church, a matter which resulted in correspondence to the New Church Committee and Editor of the *Catholic Record* in 1876:

[M]uch as Church accommodation is required in the thriving town of York, a house for the priest is also necessary. The present residence of the priest

16 WA *Catholic Record*, 6 October, p. 5c.

17 Lane, L. and Wilkes, F. *The New Church of St Patrick and Father Patrick Joseph Gibney (including) The Sisters of Mercy in York 1831 - 1915*, unpublished historical research, May 1999.

18 WA *Catholic Record*, 6 November 1874, p. 5.

19 'Highlights of Mercy Heritage at Victoria Square, Sisters of Mercy in WA, 1996,' brochure; Letters between Bishop Griver and the Comptrollers General's Office, 30 March & 6 April 1868.

20 Heritage Council database, *Wesley Church & Manse*, Place 2462.

21 WA *Catholic Record*, 25 January 1883, p. 5.

22 WA *Catholic Record*, 6 May 1875, p. 3.

is in a most dilapidated condition, having served as a temporary presbytery for the last 15 years.²³

Little wonder, perhaps, given poor living conditions and hard labour, that Father Gibney suffered ill health for several years during the construction of the Church. The result of the correspondence, however, linked the building of the new Presbytery with that of the Church, and both buildings made rapid progress in late 1876 and early 1877. By May 1877, the work of the stonemasons was so far advanced that tenders were called and accepted for the roof. In September of the same year it was decided that construction was sufficiently advanced for the wares of the Annual Bazaar and Fancy-Fair to be displayed in the new building the following month.²⁴ The Annual Bazaar and Fancy Fair continued to be a major fundraising event for the Church building fund, and was continued until 1884.

On Sunday, 14 January 1883, there was an inaugural blessing and opening of the unfinished Church. The York congregation had outgrown the Church Hall (Old Church) building and the main section of St Patrick's Church was used for services while construction and finishing of the building continued. A description of the place accompanied the report on the opening:

The style of the building is Gothic of the early English Period. The walls are built in bold hammered rubble-work; the stones constituting it being of a dark green colour; the dressings of the doors and windows and also the buttresses are in brick-work afterwards to be finished in "compo". The Nave and Chancel of the Church, taken together, measure 102 feet, the Nave being 31 feet wide and the Chancel 21 feet; the height throughout is 49 feet from floor to ridge. The plan adopted for the building has been the much favoured cruciform shape. One arm of the cross is intended to serve as a Chapel for the Nuns off the Chancel and from which it will be separated by a wood-tracery screen and communion rails, the other arm being the Sacristy. The main entrance is in the centre of the end of the Nave. On the right hand of the front elevation stands the tower which is already raised to the level from which the spire is to start. The tower and spire when finished will measure 105 feet from base to terminal.

On entering the Church at the main doorway, one is struck with the lofty appearance of the Nave with its open tracery roof of dark jarrah and the large Gothic arch which marks the division between the Nave and Chancel, and gives a bold outline as it were to the beautiful tracery window which stands at a distance of about 30 feet behind it. This window which consists of three principal lights with two quarterfoil and one trefoil light filling in the top measures 19 feet 6 inches from sill to apex and is filled with stained glass figures executed in a style of rare artistic merit. The centre light represents the Crucified Redeemer and the two side lights, the Blessed Virgin and Saint John, looking up at the Cross. The end over the main entrance is ornamented with a rose light near the top of the gable - the stained glass representing Saint Patrick to whom the Church is dedicated. The sides of the Nave are pierced with eleven double light Gothic openings filled also with stained glass, representing in succession from the main door on both sides, the various emblems of the Passion of Our Lord.

²³ Letter to the editor of the *WA Catholic Record* in 1876, quoted in Lane, Lesley & Wilkes, Florence, op cit, p. 9.

²⁴ *WA Catholic Record*, 6 September 1877, p. 4b.

The whole of the windows are in the first style of art and were manufactured by Messrs. Meyer & Co., London, who evidently spared no pains to excel in design and workmanship. Mr. J. Nunan of Perth, is the Architect and the work was carried out under the personal direction and superintendence of the Rev. P. J. Gibney. The stonework was built by the young Messrs. Davies who may be congratulated on having executed some of the best masonry in the colony, under the guidance of their clerical preceptor.²⁵

The opening ceremony was conducted by Bishop Matthew Gibney, brother of Father Patrick Gibney, and included a procession from the Church Hall (Old Church). Father Gibney conducted High Mass for the occasion.

Three years later, on 21 February 1886, St Patrick's Church was dedicated:

The members of the Catholic Church resident at York celebrated on Sunday last the completion of a ten-year labour... The dedication of the church to Ireland's patron, St. Patrick, was performed... in the presence of a large assemblage of Catholics from not only the York district, but also Fremantle, Perth, and Guildford and the intermediate stations on the Eastern railway. A special train had been arranged for to convey people from these places to York. It left Perth shortly after six o'clock and reached there at about half past ten. The railway officials received notice that about a hundred people were likely to avail themselves of the train, but nearly twice that number booked at Perth alone...

Solemn High Mass was celebrated, and the following were the priests who officiated:— The Rev. P. J. Gibney, celebrant; the Rev. Father Brereton, deacon; the Rev. A. Martelli, sub-deacon; the Very Rev. M. Gibney, Vicar-General, master of ceremonies... The ceremony of dedication was performed by the Right Revd. Dr. Salvado.²⁶

Further information on the building and its fixtures was provided in the report on the occasion:

The altar is a plain structure in wood, there being little display of ornamentation about it. The pulpit, which consists of polished wood and is of very simple design, is placed in the right hand corner of the nave... The sitting accommodation in the body of the church is sufficient for about five hundred people and the small gallery above the main entrance will be reserved for the organ and choir. There are several additions in the shape of fittings that remain to be made, so although the Church is used for the purposes of worship it is not technically finished.²⁷

The cost of the Church to date was given as £5,400, with the stained glass costing £330.²⁸ The Stations of the Cross and a confessional were installed in 1888. During the following decade, work continued on the unfinished Church spire.

25 *WA Catholic Record*, 25 January 1883, p. 5.

26 *Western Mail*, 27 February 1886, p. 8.

27 *Western Mail*, 27 February 1886, p. 8.

28 *Western Mail*, 27 February 1886, p. 8. Note: The *Conservation Plan* states that, according to 'St Patrick's Parish, York', another official opening and dedication took place the following year, on St Patrick's Day, 17 March 1887, but the *Catholic Record*, 24 March 1887, p. 3, reports 'a simple, quiet and pious' celebration in York on that day, with no special ceremonies of any kind. The history this information is taken from is a reconstruction from memory following destruction of early documents in 1894 and may be in error.

On 3 May 1894 John McCabe detonated three charges of dynamite against the Presbytery. McCabe was angry towards the Catholic Church because of the sanctuary given by the Sisters of Mercy to a woman (named as Cronan), with whom he had had a relationship. The explosion caused considerable damage to the building but Father Gibney, who had been asleep in one of the rooms, escaped with only a few bruises. Various reports described the Presbytery and the damage. The brick residence was situated on an east-west alignment with a brick lean-to running the entire length.²⁹ The back of the building was razed and the roof blown off, while the walls still standing were 'more or less shattered'.³⁰ Father Gibney's testimony at McCabe's trial indicates that the original building was of two or three main rooms and a series of lean-tos. He lists two bedrooms, a storeroom, bathroom and kitchen as having been destroyed. A cellar under one of the lean-to rooms had the door blown open. The incident could have had more tragic results, as a servant of Father Gibney's, who normally occupied one of the damaged bedrooms, had left his service only days before the blast. Papers documenting the early history of the parish were also destroyed in the blast.³¹

As a result of the damage, the York Presbytery Building Fund was established on 27 May 1894, to enable Father Gibney to rebuild his home.³² A fund was also set up at Toodyay for the same purpose and the foundation stone for the new Presbytery was laid by Bishop Gibney on 29 September 1894.³³ The floor plan of the existing Presbytery does not show any clear indication of the early rooms on an east-west alignment. The differing roof styles and heights indicate the possibility of different periods of construction, but what is original and what reconstructed, or added at a later date, is largely conjecture on the available evidence.³⁴

The Old Church was used as a Church Hall following the official opening of St Patrick's Church. Around 1900, a brick kitchen was added, most likely to facilitate the use of the building as a hall and meeting place. Another room was added, possibly in the 1950s, and the kitchen was upgraded with the addition of an Aga cooker. The exterior brickwork has been rendered at some time.³⁵ The Outbuilding, referred to as Store/Garage and Toilet Block in the *Conservation Plan*, is situated north of the Hall. This was possibly a stable associated with the Old Church and priest quarters and shows evidence of the original shingled roof. An extension at the front (east) has extended the width of the building at one end to accommodate a motor vehicle. A later toilet block (south end) and small iron shed (north end) have been added. The toilet block serves the Church Hall.³⁶

29 *The West Australian*, 4 May 1894.

30 *WA Catholic Record*, 10 May 1894.

31 *The West Australian*, 9 July 1894.

32 *WA Catholic Record*, 7 June 1894, p. 8.

33 *WA Catholic Record*, 28 June 1894, p. 8.

34 Physical evidence. See note on further research.

35 Lawrance, Naomi, op cit, p. 56; physical evidence.

36 Lawrance, Naomi, op cit, p. 58; physical evidence.

In 1901, Father Patrick Lynch was sent to York as assistant priest to Father Gibney. Father Gibney then took up residence in Busselton while remaining in charge of York, the seaside climate proving beneficial to his health. In 1911, he retired to Perth to live with his brother, Matthew, who had retired as Bishop of Perth the previous year. They resided at 'Lourdes', Matthew Gibney's house in Vincent Street, Highgate near the Sacred Heart convent and college complex in Mary Street. Father Gibney died on 10 July 1915, aged 73.³⁷

St Patrick's Church tower was eventually completed in 1909 at which time the roof was converted from shingle to slate. The spire planned by Joseph Nunan atop the tower was not constructed.³⁸ In 1934, nearing the end of the Depression, renovations were carried out to the Church and Presbytery. According to Church records, 'there was a period of revival of both spiritual and temporal affairs'.³⁹

During the 1950s agricultural boom years, changes were made to the exterior of the Church and its surrounds. The local Italian community added a stone porch to the east side of the Church, which also functioned as a crying room for mothers with young babies, and they constructed a low stone wall along the South Street side of the site. Although the wall was said to replace a former wire fence, a photograph of the Church dated c.1946 indicates a substantial picket fence had once enclosed much of the grounds. A stone altar was built by a group of Italian parishioners headed by Mr Joe di Rossi, who was accidentally electrocuted while polishing the stone steps for the altar with an electric sander. Father Brennan planted about 30 fruit trees throughout the grounds and established a rose garden in front of the Presbytery. A report on the Church was undertaken by architect Edgar Le B. Henderson, which found that a section of the Sanctuary floor, which was rotting, had been built over a well. The well was filled in and the floor repaired.⁴⁰

In 1959, Archbishop Prendiville invited the Norbertine Fathers to take charge of the York Catholic parish. Work on the Church in the 1960s included replacement with concrete of the wooden floors in the Church and Vestry, a glass door entry porch added to block the winds which blew in through the main entrance, the addition of an electric Hammond Organ, and installation of a stained glass window above the entrance, commissioned from Gowers and Brown. The Church was damaged by the Meckering Earthquake on 14

³⁷ Lane, Lesley & Wilkes, Florence, op cit, p. 24; Lawrance, Naomi, *Roman Catholic Diocese of Perth Heritage Inventory*; Sister Mary Josephine, *The History of the Parish of Highgate Hill*, Highgate Hill Catholic Parish, 1964.

³⁸ 'St Patrick's Parish, York', op. cit., p. 6. As quoted in Lawrance, Naomi, op cit, p. 31. Note: Lane, Lesley & Wilkes, Florence, op cit, give the date of the tower completion and roof cladding renovation as 1900.

³⁹ Lawrance, Naomi, op. cit., p. 31.

⁴⁰ Lawrance, Naomi, op. cit., p. 32; Photograph 7972d, LISWA online image.

October 1968. Extensive repairs were carried out and included changes to the sanctuary and altar in accordance with the new liturgy.⁴¹

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall were situated on York Town Lot 24 and, in 1967, this was divided into three sub-lots. St Patrick's Church and the Church Hall (Old Church) are situated on Lots 1 and 3 and are owned by the Catholic Church of Perth.⁴² The Presbytery, on Lot 2, belongs to the Norbertine Fathers Incorporated.⁴³ In 1977, the group was classified by the National Trust, and the following year was given interim entry on the Register of the National Estate.⁴⁴ On 12 July 1982, a Deed of Covenant was entered into between the Catholic Church and the National Trust of Australia (WA) in respect of Lot 1, the site of St Patrick's Church, and in 1985, the places were given separate classifications by the National Trust.⁴⁵ The Covenant related to work required on the Church tower, as the top two sections were of more substantial construction than the earlier lower sections, which were crumbling. Restoration of the tower and other sections of the Church were undertaken by Palassis Architects in the 1980s. These works were completed in 1987, and the centenary of the Church was celebrated on 17 March 1987.⁴⁶

In 1995, *St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall* were entered on the Shire of York Municipal Heritage Inventory with a Category 1 rating.⁴⁷

In 2003, the Church continues to function as the venue for Catholic services in York, the Presbytery is occupied by the parish priest as his residence and the old Church continues to function as the Church Hall. The Outbuilding continues to function as garage, toilet block and store.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall is a group of three buildings and a brick outbuilding on a single site, comprising: Church Hall (Old Church, 1859), a single storey rendered brick and iron building, in the vernacular with influences of Victorian Gothic style; St Patrick's Church (1875+), a double volume stone and slate building with four level tower, in the Victorian Academic Gothic style; and, the Presbytery (1877; 1894), a single storey stone and corrugated iron dwelling with influences of Victorian Rustic Gothic style.

41 Lawrance, Naomi, op. cit., p. 52; Gould, C. C., *An introduction to the main Stained Glass Windows: St Patrick's Church, York, Western Australia*, Westralian Publishers, Carine, 1998, p. 9.

42 Certificate of Title, Vol. 35 Fol. 137A, 21 July 1967.

43 Certificate of Title, Vol. 35 Fol. 136A, 21 July 1967.

44 Heritage Council of WA, online database.

45 Deed of Covenant, C387731, 7 July 1982.

46 Lawrance, Naomi, op. cit., p. 43. Note: 1887 has been taken by the parish as the official opening of the Church, although, as noted earlier, this could be an error with 1886 the correct date.

47 Hocking Planning & Architecture, *Shire of York Municipal Heritage Inventory*, March 1995,

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall is located on a truncated triangular parcel of land facing South Street, which is diagonal across the south side of the property (from southwest to northeast), with Howick Street to the east, the railway line to the west and the former York Primary School to the north.

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall has an expansive double street frontage, delineated by a low stone wall with openings to the formal Church entry and the Presbytery. The Church is located on the east side of the site, facing south, with the tower on the south east corner. The Presbytery is located west of the Church on the same north-south alignment facing south, but stepped forward of the Church setback, in response to the angled South Street alignment. The Church Hall aligns parallel with South Street in the southwest corner of the site, with a minimal setback to South Street. The Hall faces northeast. The area to the front of the Church, along the west side and across to the east side of the Presbytery, is a brick paved forecourt. The remainder of the area to the front of the Presbytery is lawns and rose gardens with some mature palm plantings. Brick paved pathways link the Presbytery and the Hall through the garden. There is a row of trees within the fence line at the front of the Hall while the remainder of the site has some random plantings of immature and some mature shrubs and native plantings including Eucalypt and Peppermint trees. There is a curved gravel driveway defined by a series of white timber posts, leading from the west boundary behind the Hall around the north side of the Presbytery to the west (rear) of the Church. Located along the west boundary is a brick outbuilding with accretions. The west and north boundaries are delineated by steel pipe framed mesh fences.

St Patrick's Church displays characteristics Victorian Academic Gothic style. Typical of the style is the asymmetrical masonry form and solid massing, simple ornamentation, steeply pitched roof and landmark tower, parapeted gables, stained leadlight windows framed between buttresses, and a timber roof construction that is expressed internally.

Presbytery and Hall show some elements of Victorian Gothic influences, such as the gothic arched windows in the Hall, and the decorative gable bargeboard and stone construction of the Presbytery, which is typical of Victorian Rustic Gothic. For the most part, however, both buildings are a vernacular response to the function, economics and materials available at the time.

St Patrick's Church

St Patrick's Church is a cruciform in plan, aligned north-south, with a northern polygonal bay, and the square form tower on the southeast corner. The main entry is on the south with the entry space defined by a choir gallery at mezzanine level above, supported by two fluted timber posts and accessed by the spiral staircase within the tower. A three-booth confessional is on the left (west) of the entry. Also within the entry area are the baptismal font, the organ, statues, and images of Stations of the Cross along the east and west walls. The central aisle through the Nave leads to the sanctuary, situated on a slightly raised platform, which is faceted around

the north end. The Lady Chapel and Vestry are located respectively on the west and east sides of the Nave at the crossing. The tower was inaccessible at the time of inspection.

St Patrick's Church is a stone construction in random coursed granite blocks with raked joints, although the front façade is pointed. The gable roof is clad with slate and the majority of the roof plumbing is a recent installation, although original water heads are still evident. The gabled parapet on the north and south feature a stained glass window arranged in tripartite perpendicular style. The stone walls of the Church are supported and divided into structural bays by stepped buttresses. The buttresses are brick construction rendered with an ashlar finish and an ogee shaped pressed cement corbel that supports the gutter. The walls are detailed with pressed cement and rendered mouldings and elements, including parapets. Central within each buttressed bay is a pair of intricate stained glass leadlight windows in a Gothic arched lancet frame with a quoined rendered reveal with moulded window hood. The door reveals are similarly detailed, with all openings deeply recessed within a simple gothic arched opening. The original timber framed, ledge and brace, tongue and groove timber doors are mostly in place, although more recent hardware has been installed and there are c.1950s etched glazed doors in the secondary western entrance.

The tower is stone construction and, as for the main body of the Church, has projecting rectangular parapeted bays and rendered buttresses. Different style louvred windows define each of the four levels of the tower. The crowning pediment of the tower includes shamrock openings with central cartouche that is framed by an ornate pinnacle on each corner.

The interior of the Church walls is finished in painted cement render with some evidence of original ashlar finish. Internal engaged piers align with the external buttresses, forming bays along each side of the Church. The mezzanine balustrade is panelled jarrah veneer between turned timber posts. The ground level floors are concrete, although the mezzanine choir gallery and the platforms in the tower are timber-boarded floors. The roof is unceiled revealing the intricate timber construction details in the expansive roof space with exposed rafters, and decorative gothic brace and hammer beams supported on stepped corbels atop each of the piers. The 21 stained glass windows throughout the Church are located central within each side wall bay and central within the faceted walls of the sanctuary. The stained glass windows have wire mesh screens fitted on the exterior. The ecclesiastical furnishings are integral to the place.

The Presbytery

The Presbytery is a single-storey stone and corrugated iron dwelling showing some elements of the Victorian Rustic Gothic style. It is 'T' shape in plan with a two-room frontage with the east side recessed. There is a return verandah around the entire east wing, across the front and along the west side. The front entry, central on the façade, is on the west side of the recessed front. The entry leads into a wide corridor with two rooms each side and a short arched entry corridor at the north end on the west side. The

short corridor opens into the bathroom on the west side and the kitchen at the north end. There is another room accessed direct off the kitchen on the north side. A door on the east side of the kitchen opens onto the north verandah of the east wing, and a door on the west side of the kitchen accesses the west verandah. The immediate west verandah area is enclosed with lattice above an asbestos dado wall and it is the only remaining section of timber-floored verandah. On the north side is a fibro sheet clad toilet facility behind which, down a set of timber steps, is the laundry, which has a timber framed asbestos wall on the north.

The roof of the Presbytery has a dominant gable on the protruding frontage on a north south alignment. The remainder of the roof is hipped with a separate roof over the north kitchen wing at a lower pitch, and a double-hipped roof over the east wing. The gutters and downpipes are square profile c.1950s elements. The front gable has a decorative fretwork bargeboard and features a central vertical rectangular vent in the apex. The roofline is enhanced by tall painted-brick moulded corbelled chimneys. The verandah has a separate skillion roof that is hipped at the corners. The roof is clad with painted corrugated iron. The building is raised approximately 0.600 metres from ground level with verandahs around all sides except the northernmost wall. The verandahs are concrete on a brick buildup in stretcher bond, with some elements of c.1950s wrought iron balustrading, and the posts are similarly c.1950 slender round steel posts. The walls are stone construction in random coursed granite blocks. The face of the stone wall has been black-line pointed and all openings and corners are quoined in render. The front elevation features two sets of three windows with a continuous rendered protruding sill and rendered mullions between. The windows throughout are timber framed double hung sashes. There is evidence of fretted stone and mortar along the east wall immediately above the concrete verandah floor.

The entry doors are double-panelled doors flanked by sidelights and panels with red glazing in the sidelights and the fanlight above. The interior of the Presbytery has original 0.135 metre timber board floors, plaster walls and lathe and plaster ceilings. The main corridor ceiling has been battened across the width of the corridor at regular intervals. The kitchen ceiling is plaster with a matchboard manhole. The timber detailing throughout including architraves, high skirtings and four-panel and six-panel doors are varnished, except in the kitchen where the doors have been painted. The four main front rooms each have timber mantelpieces and the one in the front west room is exceptionally decorative. The bathroom and kitchen are both c.1950s fitouts with boxed bath and vanity in the bathroom, and simple cupboards and a Metters stove in the kitchen. The bathroom also has a c.1970s shower installation. The remains of a 'copper' are evident in the laundry.

There is no evidence of the cellar referred to in the conservation plan.

The Hall

The Hall is a brick rendered building showing Victorian Gothic influences, rectangular in form with a small extension on the northwest corner. The

main roof is gabled as is the extension roof at a lower level, while the kitchen across the rear (west) has a skillion roof. The short sheeted, painted corrugated iron roof features small gabled ventilators, and interior evidence reveals that the original shingles are still insitu on the roof. The frontage is symmetrical with double ledge and brace central doors in a gothic arched opening flanked by single vertical gothic arched multi paned windows. The front parapeted gable wall features a wheel window. The interior walls are rendered, while the original 0.150 metre floorboards remains in place with a number of interventions and are carpeted over. The roof space is unceiled, revealing the simple timber structure and the original shingles. There are evenly spaced windows along both sides of the hall. All but the central window on each wall has been bricked up. The remaining windows are vertical and gothic in form as for the front elevation, but only have four panes of glass. The rear kitchen extension has rendered walls, battened Masonite ceiling lined on the rake, and a modified chimneybreast to accommodate the Aga cooker. The window is a timber framed double hung sash and the rear door is four-panelled. Both are in a very weathered condition. The attached vestry on the northwest corner, at a step down, has 0.150 metre floor boards, rough rendered walls and is unceiled. The window is louvred in a flat arched opening.

The Hall shows considerable evidence of disintegrated render on the exterior and interior due to rising damp, although there is also evidence of recent drainage works around the perimeter of the building. The external timber detailing is seriously weathered and the kitchen ceiling is buckled and damaged from moisture ingress.

Outbuilding

The brick outbuilding is of some significance, as it was possibly the stables associated with the Church Hall (Old Church) and early priest quarters. It is a rectangular building of brick construction in reverse tone Flemish bond on the west wall and Flemish bond on the remaining walls. The toilets adjoining the south end are also constructed in Flemish bond, although the skillion roof and fitout suggest a much later construction, or perhaps an adaptation. There is a corrugated iron extension on the north end of the east wall, seemingly providing an extension to facilitate a garage function for a vehicle, and there is a separate metal clad shed adjacent to the north side. The roof is gabled and clad with painted corrugated iron. Only the south end of the building was accessible, revealing evidence of a shingle roof, rough render walls with a vertical timber boarded gable infill on the central dividing wall, and herringbone patterned brick pavers forming a floor. The original ledge and brace door and hardware remain and both the threshold step and the herringbone pavers attest to considerable use.

St Patrick's Church, York Conservation Plan has been referenced primarily for the physical description of the Church building. More detail of the elements is described in the Conservation Plan.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

The comparative analysis (Section 5.3) from *St Patrick's Church, York Conservation Plan* has been included below.

A place which compares with *St Patrick's Catholic Church, Presbytery and Hall* is the Anglican group of buildings in York, namely Holy Trinity Church (1856), Hall (1861) & Rectory (1875 with 1853 kitchen), which developed at the same time, but without the addition of a later church on the same site. The Holy Trinity group is entered on the State Register.⁴⁸

Other places comparable to the Church Hall (Old Church) is the non-sectarian Gwalla Church, Northampton (1861), a stabilised ruin where a church service is held once a year, and St Mark's Anglican Church, Picton, a timber building with shingle roof (1842). Both places are entered on the State Register.⁴⁹

An example of Joseph Noonan's Victorian Academic Gothic architecture is the Wesley Chapel, Guildford (1883), constructed in brick and iron. The place continues to be used for church services by the Guildford Uniting Church congregation and is entered on the State Register.⁵⁰

The Heritage Council database lists 24 presbyteries with associated churches dating from the 1890s to the 1930s.

St Patrick's Church is the only extant example of a ecclesiastical building designed in the Victorian Academic Gothic style of architecture in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Perth.⁵¹

The Church Hall is the only extant example of a ecclesiastical building designed in the Victorian Gothic style of architecture in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Perth.⁵²

13.4 REFERENCES

Lawrance, Naomi, *St Patrick's Church, York Conservation Plan*, June 2000.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Possible archaeological interest as suggested in *St Patrick's Church, York Conservation Plan*.

A plan and photographs of the damage to the Presbytery were submitted at the 1894 trial and may still exist in court records.

Assessment of the former Convent of Mercy (c. 1868 Presbytery) and any associated buildings on the south side of South Street.

⁴⁸ HCWA assessment documentation, *Holy Trinity Church, Hall & Rectory*, Place 3213.

⁴⁹ HCWA assessment documentation, *Church & Cemetery, Gwalla*, Place 1902 & *St Mark's Anglican Church & fmr Graveyard*, Place 0383.

⁵⁰ HCWA assessment documentation, *Wesley Chapel & Manse*, Place 2462.

⁵¹ Lawrance, N., 'Roman Archdiocese of Perth: Heritage Inventory', Perth, 1998

⁵² op. cit.