



# 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.

### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*St. John the Baptist Anglican Church* has aesthetic value for its Victorian Gothic style church, bell and free-standing timber portal (c. 1885, formerly the fire alarm or "curfew" bell from Gaol Hill, Fremantle), landscaping (Norfolk Island pines), interior furnishings (original pews made out of local timber), and stained glass windows; all of which contribute to the charm of the building and its setting. (Criteria 1.1 & 1.3)

*St. John the Baptist Anglican Church* is a landmark feature of the town of Dongara, and contributes to its townscape. Dongara itself is significantly comprised of historic and aesthetic buildings, streets, spaces and plantings. (Criterion 1.4)

### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*St. John the Baptist Anglican Church* is a good example of an auditory plan parish church building. It is a feature of the development of the built environment in the town of Dongara and Irwin region, and represents the foundation of the local Anglican community. (Criterion 2.1)

The church is strongly associated with the contributions of serving parish priests and with the Anglican community of the region. Noteworthy among those associated with the place were the merchant-pastoralists, Samuel and Eliza Moore (who had a significant role in establishing the church) and the colonial architect, Francis Bird. (Criterion 2.3)

The building is the sole known example of the ecclesiastical work by colonial architect Francis Bird. Bird was an architect of some note in the colony and was significant because of his partnership with Mason in pioneering the State's timber industry. *St. John the Baptist Anglican Church* is somewhat remarkable because the four-bay nave is extended by a sanctuary at the west end; the traditional placement of this is to the east. (Criterion 2.4)

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

### 11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The church is highly valued by the local Anglican community for its social, cultural and religious associations and by the wider community for its cultural, aesthetic and educational associations. (Criterion 4.1)

The historic, aesthetic and social values of *St. John the Baptist Anglican Church* contribute to the Anglican community's sense of identity and to the wider community's sense of place. The Anglican community joins with other denominations and the community for Christmas Carols, World Day of Prayer, Friendship Lunch, Children's Holiday activities and other events. (Criterion 4.2)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1. RARITY**

*St. John the Baptist Anglican Church* is the sole known example of ecclesiastical work by significant colonial architect Francis Bird. The building is somewhat remarkable for its sanctuary which is situated at the west end; traditionally this is to the east. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*St. John the Baptist Anglican Church* is one of the many small parish churches around the state and is representative of rural churches in agricultural districts. In particular, the style of the original stage is characteristic of small colonial Church of England parish churches. (Criterion 6.1)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

Although cosmetically the building looks in good condition and well cared for, there are problems caused by rising damp, resulting in the walls being drummy, and by termites. In July 1998, work is being carried out on the Vestry and Sancturay floor.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

In 1998, *St. John the Baptist Anglican Church* is still being used by the Anglican Parish of Dongara-Mingenew. It has a high degree of integrity.

### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

Much of the original fabric of the church is intact. The original character of the church has been changed through external rendering and it has also been painted in modern colours. Built additions to the church have not significantly diminished the character of the original building. (The 1985/87 porch addition to the building was designed and built to fit in with the original model.) *St. John the Baptist Anglican Church* has a high degree of authenticity.

### **13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

Attached are key sections of the supporting evidence prepared by Ian Molyneux and Associates, 'St. John the Baptist Anglican Church, Dongara, Conservation Plan 1996' (prepared for the Anglican Parish of Dongara/Mingenew, November 1996).

#### **13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

For a discussion of the documentary evidence refer to Ian Molyneux and Associates, 'St. John the Baptist Anglican Church, Dongara, Conservation Plan 1996' (prepared for the Anglican Parish of Dongara/Mingenew, November 1996).

#### **13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

For a discussion of the physical evidence refer to Ian Molyneux and Associates, 'St. John the Baptist Anglican Church, Dongara, Conservation Plan 1996' (prepared for the Anglican Parish of Dongara/Mingenew, November 1996).

#### **13.3 REFERENCES**

Ian Molyneux and Associates, 'St. John the Baptist Anglican Church, Dongara, Conservation Plan 1996' (prepared for the Anglican Parish of Dongara/Mingenew, November 1996).

#### **13.4 FURTHER RESEARCH**

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