



**HERITAGE
COUNCIL**
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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)

- 3.14.1 Building to suit Australia conditions
- 4.1.2 Making suburbs
- 8.6 Worshipping
- 8.10.4 Designing and building fine buildings
- 8.13 Living in cities and suburbs

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 307 Intellectual activities, arts and crafts
- 406 Religion

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach is a fine example of Late Twentieth Century Organic style architecture, featuring sweeping curved brick walls and an overall irregular curved floor plan. (Criterion 1.1)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach is a unique sculptural design, with its dramatic external form, high quality interior spaces, and finely designed sanctuary fittings and furnishings, including the timber pews, off-form altar, seats, side altars, and baptismal font, and appears to have drawn inspiration from the internationally acclaimed 1956 Chapel of Notre Dame du Haut at Ronchamp, designed by Le Corbusier. (Criterion 1.2)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach includes a number of finely designed artworks, including a wheat and grapes design on the silver tabernacle door, Madonna and Child mosaic, 'Last Supper' tapestry, stained glass windows, sculpture of Jesus on the Cross, and Stations of the Cross, all of which were placed in the building in consultation with the original architect. (Criterion 1.2)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach is a landmark, being a striking physical form located on a prominent raised site with ocean views. (Criterion 1.3)

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

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach was designed in 1972 to reflect the shift in Catholic theology and liturgical practice following the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s, in which church layout was to be amended to allow for greater interaction between the congregation and the sacred elements of the mass administered by priests. (Criterion 2.2)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach was constructed in a period of rapid population growth for the State, especially as a result of mineral booms, to accommodate the growing Catholic population of the area. (Criterion 2.2)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach was designed by Mike Fitzhardinge, of the prominent 1950s-1980s Western Australian architectural firm Forbes & Fitzhardinge, who were leading exponents of contemporary late twentieth century architecture. Mr Fitzhardinge was married to a member of the church and continued to be involved in the development of the place after its construction. (Criterion 2.3)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach was planned and built with the support of parish priest Fr Thomas Phelan, who was the founding priest for the parish, served in that role for 47 years from 1960 to his death in 2007, and is fondly remembered for his involvement in parish and school life. (Criterion 2.3)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach includes artworks by Penni Ward, Arthur Kalamaris and Leon Kalamaris, all of whom are local artists. (Criterion 2.3)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach was designed to minimise the impact of strong westerly winds off the ocean, and demonstrates technical competence in its use of steel-reinforced curved brickwork, which resulted in two bricklaying firms abandoning the construction work due to its difficulty and the finished building receiving the 1975 Clay Brick Award. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The overall design and the technical competence of the structural work required to complete it demonstrate innovation and achievement. (Criterion 3.3)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach is valued by the Catholic community of City Beach, and beyond, as the centre of Catholic religious life since its construction and as a fine architectural work, as demonstrated by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Perth Heritage Inventory's recommendation that the place be considered for entry into the State Register of Heritage Places. (Criterion 4.1)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach is a striking landmark that contributes to the local community's sense of place. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach is a unique design that is rare as a very fine example of Late Twentieth Century Organic style architecture. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach is a very fine representative example of Late Twentieth Century Organic style architecture, as demonstrated by its inclusion as an indicative example of the style in the relevant chapter of Apperly, Irving and Reynold's architectural style guide¹. (Criterion 6.1)

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach is a good example of a church designed to facilitate liturgical and theological changes in the Catholic church following the Second Vatican Council, with its open interior layout, clear site lines, placement of altar and baptistery, and lack of barriers to the sanctuary area. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach is in fair to good condition. There is extensive erosion to the mortar on exposed faces of the building.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach has high integrity, as it continues in its original function as a church.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, City Beach has high authenticity, as it remains as constructed with very minor changes to the original elements, including interior furnishings.

¹ Apperly, Irving, & Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*, p.237.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

This document has been based on 'Holy Spirit Catholic Church Conservation Plan', prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals, with Kris Bizzaca for Holy Spirit Parish Council in March 2009, with amendments and/or additions by the Office of Heritage and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the documentary evidence, refer to 'Holy Spirit Catholic Church Conservation Plan', prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals, with Kris Bizzaca for Holy Spirit Parish Council in March 2009.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

For a discussion of the physical evidence, refer to 'Holy Spirit Catholic Church Conservation Plan', prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals, with Kris Bizzaca for Holy Spirit Parish Council in March 2009.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

For a discussion of the comparative information, refer to 'Holy Spirit Catholic Church Conservation Plan', prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals, with Kris Bizzaca for Holy Spirit Parish Council in March 2009.

The Conservation Plan states that no buildings designed by Forbes and Fitzhardinge are on the Register. However, in addition to a number of places where the firm were responsible for additions and changes to an earlier building, the following places designed by Forbes and Fitzhardinge are on the Register:

- P2379 *Wesley College, Chapel & Memorial Rose Garden*, a complex of school buildings dating from 1923 in which many of the post-World War Two buildings are designed by Forbes & Fitzhardinge (although not the chapel).
- P8774 *St Matthew's Anglican Church Group, Armadale*, in which Forbes & Fitzhardinge designed the substantial 1964 extension, more than doubling the size of the 1904 church.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

'Holy Spirit Catholic Church Conservation Plan', prepared by Heritage and Conservation Professionals for Holy Spirit Parish Council in March 2009.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH
