

Victorian Heritage Database Report

# St Brigid's Catholic Church, Presbytery, Convent and School

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**Location:**

1-3 High Street, HEALESVILLE VIC 3777 - Property No 40472

**Heritage Status / Level of Significance:**

Included in Heritage Overlay

**Heritage Inventory (HI) Number:**

**Listing Authority:** HI

**Statement of Significance:**

St. Brigid's Church, which comprises a brick church, (1910-1956), a brick presbytery (1901), school (1904) and convent, has high local significance as an important district church complex, which has been a meeting place for district Catholics from early this century.

**Description**

St Brigid's, Healesville, is a large complex consisting of a church, presbytery, convent and school. These buildings occur along High Street, with the church at the corner of High Street and Ryrie Street.

The church, a large red brick building on a prominent rise, faces Ryrie Street. It appears to have been built in 1910, with an extension to the rear of the church, carried out in the 1950s. A plaque at the church's side entrance commemorates the completion of St Brigid's, which in 1956 had been blessed and "dedicated as a memorial to all who served in the wars 1914-1918 and 1939-45". The church has ornate features on its front and side elevations. These features include a cream painted band running around the church (except for the extension) and around the rectangular arched windows on the sides of the building. The prominent Ryrie Street façade has a symmetrical design of white bands on red brickwork, an arched entranceway, ornamental curved turrets on either side and a tall arch at the top of the façade, outlined in white paintwork. Concrete paves the ground in front of the church and small golden cypress shrubs grow either side of the Ryrie Street entrance.

Between the church and the presbytery grows a mature oak, the centrepiece of a garden.

A low red brick fence runs along High Street from the front corner of the church, past the presbytery, to the fence separating the presbytery from its neighbour. The presbytery is a Victorian brick residence on a steep slope facing High Street, with an understorey at the rear. It has a tiled hipped roof, including two chimneys with chimney pots. A new verandah and its associated timber work has recently replaced an earlier verandah. The house has two-pane sash windows, a small timber garage, and a single storey extension to the rear of the building. A foundation stone at the presbytery states "This stone was laid by the Most Rev'd T.J. Carr D.D. Archbishop of Melbourne January 27, 1901." Behind the presbytery and the church on the same block is a recently constructed large brick building with a colourbond roof.

Further up the hill on High Street is the parish school of St Brigid's, and the convent, called "St Josephs". Both of these buildings are opposite the Healesville Primary School. The main building of the parish school is a double-storey red brick building containing a section of the original parish school. This building also used to be a boarding school and a convent and is thought to date from around 1904. Two additions have been made to its High Street end, the first one following the dimensions of the original building, and the second of one storey only. The older part of the building has round arched windows on its upper storey and large white-painted twelve-pane windows on its lower floor. The original entrance to the building has a prominent arched doorway. It has crosses and a large M formed in pale brick work on this façade, above the doorway.

St Josephs convent is a timber Federation style residence, painted pale green, with a tile roof with decorative terracotta ridgeline and flashing. The verandah, running along the front of the house and around part of its southern elevation, has decorative timber fretwork, a timber floor and turned verandah posts. A number of mature exotic and native trees surround the convent.

Excellent

Intact

Heritage Study / Consultant	Yarra Ranges - Shire of Yarra Ranges Heritage Study, Context Pty Ltd, 2000
Construction Date Range	
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	YARRA RANGES SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	115804
Property number	40472

*This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online*