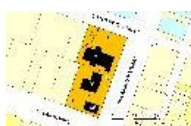


Victorian Heritage Database Report

FORMER ST GILES CHURCH AND FREE CHURCH SCHOOL



Location:

72-80 GHERINGHAP STREET GEELONG, GREATER GEELONG CITY

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H0633

Listing Authority: VHR

Heritage Overlay Number: HO224**Statement of Significance:**

What is significant?

The former St Giles Church (also known as the High Church) and Free Church School occupy a site which was granted to the Free Presbyterian Church congregation in 1853. The church building dates from 1861 and the school and master's residence from 1854. The foundation stone of St Giles Church was laid in 1861. Nathaniel Billing, noted ecclesiastical architect and student of Sir Gilbert Scott designed the church in the Decorated Gothic style as a competition entry. It is constructed in basalt with Barrabool sandstone dressings but the spire originally proposed was never built. Joseph Watts, architect, called tenders for alterations and additions to the High Church 1878. This may have been for the small basalt hall at the rear of the church. The schoolmaster's residence and school house were designed by Geelong architects, Snell and Kawerau in the Tudor Gothic style at a total cost of £4300 of which the government contributed £2800. The picturesque double-gable front to Gheringhap Street is the most dominant feature of the master's residence which is enhanced by exposed brick quoins and window hood moulds. The school building, also constructed in brick and with similar details, is a considerably larger building. 1860 an additional classroom was added to the design of little known architect Thomas Fargie. The Free Church School closed in 1874 and it was probably after this date that the school house was converted to a manse. St Giles Church was last used for services in 1977 when the formation of the Uniting Church in Australia made the building redundant. The church property was sold in 1988 and was subsequently redeveloped as an entertainment venue.

How is it significant?

The former St Giles Church and Free Church School are of historical, social and architectural importance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The former St Giles Church and Free Church School are historically and socially significant as an early and rare complex which illustrates the development of the activities of the free church on the site and the important role played by the early denominational schools.

The former St Giles Church is architecturally significant as fine example of the ecclesiastical work of noted architect Nathaniel Billing. Although the designed spire was never built the church remains as neat example of the Decorated Gothic style.

The former Free Church School and master's residence are architecturally important as a typical design in the Tudor Gothic style by the Geelong firm of Snell and Kawerau.

Heritage Study / Consultant	
Construction Date Range	1854 -
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	GREATER GEELONG CITY

Other names	
Hermes number	12313
Property number	

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