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# BAPTIST CHURCH



Baptist Church, 540-2 High Street, Northcote

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## Location

540-42 HIGH STREET, NORTHCOTE, DAREBIN CITY

## Municipality

DAREBIN CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO192

## Heritage Listing

Darebin City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

### *What is significant?*

The Northcote Baptist Church at 542 High Street, Northcote built in 1909 and designed in what may be described as an Edwardian interpretation of the nineteenth century Neo-Classical non-Conformist Chapel style is significant.

It is built of brick in a rectilinear plan and the street facing (west) elevation conceals the gabled roof of the building. Towards the top of the street facing elevation is a circular vent with timber slats and below this is a segmental

arched window with a tripartite arrangement. A cement render band, which is painted, extends horizontally across this elevation where this window is. Other cement mouldings are found on the church around windows and other elements. A brick entrance porch extends across the street facing elevation. This porch has a pair of semi-circular brick arches supported at the centre by a slender cast iron column. Dual entrance doors to the church lead from each end of this porch. The porch's skillion roof is clad in terracotta tile, which was probably the original roofing of the entire church. On the rear wall of the porch is a stone that reads:

*This memorial stone was laid by Parker Esq. J.P. 28th August 1909*

The concrete forecourt along the High Street frontage, thenon-original alterations and additions to the church including the corrugated galvanised steel roofing on the church, and the former church hall at No.540 High Street are not significant.

#### *How is it significant?*

The Northcote Baptist Church at 542 High Street, Northcote is of local historic, architectural and social significance to Darebin City.

#### *Why is it significant?*

Historically, the Northcote Baptist Church at 542 High Street, Northcote is significant as evidence of the Baptist Church's establishment early in Northcote's development as a suburb, and its continued involvement in the community throughout the twentieth century until the present day. (AHC criteria A.4, D.2)

The Northcote Baptist Church at 542 High Street, Northcote is architecturally significant as a representative example of an early twentieth century church designed in a Classical Revival style, which is a style not common on churches in metropolitan Melbourne from this period and reflects the independence of each Baptist congregation. It is notable for the double semi-circular arches supported at the centre by a cast iron column, which is an unusual architectural device for a Baptist Place of Worship. It emphasises the dual entrances that are typical of Baptist churches (which internally have two side aisles rather than a single central aisle) and gives an elegant structural element to the centre of the front facade. (AHC criterion D.2)

Socially, the Northcote Baptist Church is significant as a church that is known, used and valued by the community in Darebin (AHC criterion G.1).

Heritage Study/Consultant Darebin - Darebin Heritage Study, Context P/L, 2011;

Construction dates 1909,

Heritage Act Categories Registered place,

Hermes Number 26686

Property Number

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## **Physical Description 1**

The Northcote Baptist Church is situated on the east side of High Street, south of Darebin Road. The church is set back from its High Street boundary behind a curved concrete drive. To the north of the church are a group of c.1915 single-storey shops and to its south at No.540 is a brick gabled roof building, which was the Sunday School associated with this church and in 2010 was used as part of a nursery.

The church has a simple rectilinear plan with a gabled roof. According to Edmonds (2011) it could be described as a:

*...simple Non-Conformist Place of Worship in the English 'Chapel' tradition. This tradition avoided architectural forms associated with the Liturgical Churches as a result of the former discrimination of Baptists, and other dissenters, prior to emigration. The use of round arched windows and structural arches in preference to pointed arches is a clear example of the Chapel style.*

It is built of brick and its street facing (west) elevation conceals the gabled roof of the building, which has corrugated galvanised steel roofing. Towards the top of the street facing elevation is a circular vent with timber slats and below this is a segmental arched window with a tripartite arrangement. A cement render band, which is painted, extends horizontally across this elevation where this window is. Other cement mouldings are found on the church around windows and other elements.

A brick entrance porch extends across the street facing elevation. This porch has a pair of semi-circular brick arches supported at the centre by a slender cast iron column. Dual entrance doors to the church lead from each end of this porch, which reflects the internal arrangements of Baptist Churches that typically have two side aisles rather than a single central aisle (Refer to *Comparative analysis*). The porch's skillion roof is clad in terracotta tile, which was probably the original roofing of the entire church. On the rear wall of the porch is a stone that reads:

*This memorial stone was laid by Parker Esq. J.P. 28th August 1909*

The building is in good condition and has a high degree of external integrity. The interior was not inspected.

### **Sources**

Kenneth Edmonds and Associates Architects, submission to Darebin Planning Scheme Amendment C108, 1 April 2011

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*