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# ST JOHNS CHURCH OF ENGLAND



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1 st johns church of england toorak view of spire

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## Location

510 TOORAK ROAD TOORAK, STONNINGTON CITY

## Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0204

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO109

## VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 31, 1999

What is significant?

St Johns Church of England, located at the intersection of Toorak and Clendon Roads, Toorak, was erected in 1860, and subsequently enlarged in 1865, with the tower and broached spire added in 1873 to complete the original design by William Wardell. Supervision of construction was undertaken by architect FM White. The chancel was enlarged in 1912, and the baptistery, vestries and chapel were added in 1920, 1935 and 1937, to the design of Walter Butler and Louis R. Williams. The Church is constructed of regular coursed basalt relieved with freestone dressings. It comprises a lengthy nave, with aisles and a diminutive clerestory and chancel flanked by organ chamber, chapel and vestries. The interior is notable for the wood and stone carvings, a rare and historically important organ by Hill & Son, London, of 1912, and beautiful stained glass from 1868 and 1874.

How is it significant?

St Johns Church of England is of architectural and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

St Johns Church of England is of architectural significance as a notable early English Gothic style church designed by the celebrated ecclesiastical and public buildings architect W.W. Wardell (1823-1899). This was Wardell's first Anglican Church, displaying the style that had made him a prolific designer of Catholic Churches in England before moving to Australia in 1858. It features the distinctive and characteristic Wardell proportions, accentuated by a dominant west tower and unusual, austere broached spire. In the year before obtaining the commission for St Johns, he had begun the design of St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. In 1859 Wardell had also been appointed the Inspector-Clerk of Public Works, and in the following year became Inspector General of Public Works. Despite this position, he maintained his own practice, continuing to produce numerous church buildings throughout Victoria.

St Johns Church of England is of aesthetic significance for its stained glass windows, especially the WC Cornish memorial window, which was probably the first major work of JL Lyon. Lyon emigrated from England to Melbourne in 1861, immediately joining the very early Melbourne stained glass firm of Ferguson and Urie. Lyon went on to form his own important firm in Sydney, Lyon, Wells and Cottier. Lyon was significant in the development of stained glass in Victoria as one of the first stained glass artists of real note. Prior to this time, stained glass had been largely produced by plumbers and tradesmen.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions

prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Construction dates	1860,
Architect/Designer	Wardell, William W.,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	1170
Property Number	

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## History

Contextual History:History of Place:

William Wardell (1823-1899), architect of St John's, is credited with designing 14 surviving churches in Victoria. Wardell had already designed about 30 Catholic churches in England before he came to Melbourne in 1858. St John's reflects Wardell's interest in the early English Gothic style, which he later gradually discarded in favour of French Gothic.

Wardell became Inspector general of the PWD in 1861 but carried on a discrete private practice, notably with church design in the Gothic style. It is therefore interesting to note that Wardell's PWD completely eschewed the Gothic in its government building designs.

(Miles Lewis, [Ed]. Victorian Churches, pp.22-23.)

Associated People: F M White (supervising architect)

Walter Butler (later additions)

## Extent of Registration

*City of Prahran*. No. 204. St. John's Church of England, 510 Toorak Road, Toorak.

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No 100 Wednesday, October 9 1974 p.3648]

*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/>*