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# St Mary's Catholic Church



26629 St Mary's Catholic Church

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## Location

136 Lonsdale St HAMILTON, Southern Grampians Shire

## Municipality

SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Stage 2 study complete

## Heritage Listing

Southern Grampians Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

**SIGNIFICANCE:** »focus for the Catholics of Hamilton, as a design by Wardell with J H Fox and for its later extensions. With the twin spires of Church Hill this is a landmark building for Hamilton.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St Mary's Catholic Church

136 Lonsdale Street

This building has regional significance for its architectural interest as a notable Western District church, the first section of which was designed in 1865 by the distinguished architect, William Wilkinson Wardell, who was

responsible for the design of St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne as well as many other important ecclesiastical buildings throughout Victoria. ([i]) The architect James Henry Fox, who designed sections of the Hamilton Hospital in the 1860s, most probably supervised early work at St Mary's, which opened in August 1866. ([ii])

St Mary's, a bluestone church with Mt Sturgeon sandstone dressings, is of interest for its dramatically steep apse with etiolated windows and the typically Wardellian sexfoil windows of the clerestory. The building also has associations with the local architect, Frank Hammond, Town Clerk and Engineer, who designed a number of important Hamilton buildings. The west end of St Mary's was completed from Hammond's designs in 1902 and he was responsible also, for the completion of the spire in 1916. ([iii]) Another local architect, Francis Punch, was responsible for extensions and renovations in 1987. ([iv]) St Mary's has historical significance for its associations with Catholic congregations in the Hamilton district and beyond over a period of more than 120 years.

The church is significantly intact and in excellent condition. It is a critical part of the streetscape and its spire, as with those on Church Hill, forms a landmark for Hamilton.

[i] Garden, D, *Hamilton*, p 82; *Australian Architectural Index*; Ebsworth, *Pioneer Catholic Victoria*, p 112; Hazell, T, 'W Wardell' in *Historic Environment III*, No. 4, 1984.

[ii] Ibid.; Ebsworth, p 486; *Geelong Advertiser*, 7 October 1865 (J H Fox calls tenders for erection of part of RC church, Hamilton).

[iii] National Trust File No. 3265.

[iv] Ibid., Includes plan showing proposed extension and renovations. Dated March 1987.

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|---------------------------|---|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Southern Grampians - City of Hamilton Conservation Study, Timothy Hubbard with Carlotta Kellaway & Michael Looker (plus Francis Punch), 1991; |
| Construction dates        | 1866, 1900, 1901, 1989,   |
| Architect/Designer        | Fox, James Henry, Hammond, F, Wardell, William W.,  |
| Hermes Number             | 26629   |
| Property Number           |   |

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## Physical Description 1

### **MATERIALS:**

**Roof:** »slate

**Walls:** »rockfaced bluestone

**Dressings:** »sandstone

**Plinth:** »dressed bluestone

**Windows:** »stained glass

**Paving:** »concrete

**Other:** »leadlight in some windows

## Physical Description 2

**NOTABLE FEATURES:**»With its spire it dominates as a landmark for this part of Hamilton

## Integrity

INTEGRITY: E

CONDITION: E

## **Historical Australian Themes**

### **ASSOCIATED HISTORIC THEMES**

Religion: Catholicism & Churches

Evolution of the Town: 1860s, 1900s, 1980s

Government institutions: Local

*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/>*