
Gooroc Roman Catholic Church (St Bernard's), 22 Church Road, GOOROC



GO 01 - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, 2004

Location

22 Church Road GOOROC, NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

Heritage Listing

Northern Grampians Shire

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 16, 2004

The Gooroc Roman Catholic Church, 22 Church Road, Gooroc, has significance as a largely intact example of an interwar Gothic Revival styled church building. Constructed in 1922, the church served the Gooroc township and the almost 100% Irish immigrant community at that time. Today, the church is the only remaining building in the originally surveyed township area.

The Gooroc Roman Catholic Church is **architecturally** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It demonstrates original design qualities of an interwar Gothic Revival style. These qualities include the gable roof forms clad in lapped galvanised corrugated iron, four bayed main nave with stepped brick and render buttresses, and the Gothic

arched timber windows. Other intact qualities include the face red brick wall construction, render dressings to the window arched heads, central arched doorway forming the church entry, arched niche in render with a corbelled ledge supporting a plaster statue of the Virgin Mary, rendered upper gable section with three vertical recessed panels supported on a narrow rendered sill with render moulds above, and the timber bargeboards. The line of eucalypts, remnant peppercorn trees and timber post and rail fence also contribute to the significance of the place. Due its isolation on a flat site amongst farming pastures the building has also become a district landmark.

The Gooroc Roman Catholic Church and site are **historically** significant at a **LOCAL** level. The site is associated with the establishment of the Catholic Church in the Gooroc area in 1885, while the church building is associated with the further development of the church from 1922. The site also has wider associations with the community, with the original church building (subsequently destroyed by fire) being used as the district hall from 1923 until 1950, and as the local State school between 1923 and 1931. The Church has associations with several local and former local families in the district, including the Feeny and McKew families.

The Gooroc Roman Catholic Church is **socially** significant at a **LOCAL** level. It is recognised and highly valued by the local community, and particularly by several family members of the Feeny and McKew families, for religious reasons.

Overall, the Gooroc Roman Catholic Church is of **LOCAL** significance.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Northern Grampians - Shire of Northern Grampians - Stage 2 Heritage Study, Wendy Jacobs, Vicki Johnson, David Rowe, Phil Taylor, 2004;
Hermes Number	104907
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The Roman Catholic Church, 22 Church Road, Gooroc, is set on a flat site in isolation amongst farming pastures. It is at some distance from the main highway. A line of eucalypts and remnant peppercorn trees marks the site. The church land is marked by a timber post and rail fence with chain wire mesh and a chain mesh entry gate.

The interwar Gothic Revival styled church is gable roofed brick building with a smaller gable section at the rear forming the sanctuary and a small side gable forming the vestry. These gable roof forms are clad in lapped galvanised corrugated iron with the ridgelines adorned with galvanised ventilation stacks. The main nave section of the church is divided into four bays by stepped brick and render buttresses. Each bay has a central Gothic arched timber window. One window has been altered to a rectangular form by bricking in the arch head.

The building is constructed of face red brick with rendered dressings to the window arched heads and in the upper section of the front gable. The church entry faces the road and has a central arched doorway flanked by a pair of Gothic arched windows. Stepped render capped red brick buttresses form the facade, and the buttresses supporting the vestry gable have been extended in an attempt to reduce brick cracking. Above the entry door is an arched niche in render with a corbelled ledge supporting a plaster statue of the Virgin Mary. The upper gable section is rendered with three vertical recessed panels supported on a narrow rendered sill with render moulds above. The facade is finished with a timber bargeboards which is now missing a central finial or cross. The vestry appears to be a later addition to the building.

The interior has hard plastered walls, timber floors and a coved timber lined ceiling with simple timber trusses. The sanctuary is divided from the nave by a large Gothic arched opening flanked by smaller Gothic arched recesses. The sanctuary is raised by one step from the level of the main nave. The marble alter remains in place but all other fittings except the stations of the cross wall plaques have been removed.

The building has suffered cracking from movement in the footings due to the reactive subsoil in the district. This has been exacerbated by the lack of maintenance to the stormwater runoff from the roof which has resulted in more substantial cracking occurring in areas where water has been directed from the roof to the ground.

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/>