

Former Wesleyan Church



Former Wesleyan Church and Sunday School



Photo 2: Former Church building, north & west elevations, 2016.



Photo 3: Former Sunday School, east elevation, 2016.



Photo 4: Former Sunday School (middle ground) & Church (background), south elevations, 2016.



Extent of Heritage Overlay



Figure 4: T. Holmes, Ceres Wesleyan Methodist Church and Sunday School, looking from intersection of McCann & Wheatsheaf Streets, c.1930. Source: T.T. Holmes photograph collection, c/o David Rowe.



Figure 5: Detail of Memorial Tablet to Private C.H. Smith, Ceres Church, 1919. Source: News of the Week, 25 December 1919.



Figure 6: C. Fox, Ceres Methodist Church, 7 July 1935. Source: La Trobe Picture collection, State Library of Victoria, accession no. H14967.



Figure 7: Sketch Site Plan of the Ceres Methodist Church, 18 January 1955. Source: Public Building file, VPRS 7882/P2 Unit 1172 Public Record Office, North Melbourne.



Figure 8: J.T. Collins, Ceres Methodist Church, 9 February 1969. Source: La Trobe Picture collection, State Library of Victoria, accession H94.200/630.



Figure 9: Interior of the church building prior to the sale in 2016. Source: Barry Plant Real Estate, Highton, 2016, at <http://www.barryplant.com.au/p/17-mccann-street-ceres/>



Figure 10: Interior of the Sunday School building prior to the sale in 2016. Source: Barry Plant Real Estate, Highton, 2016, at <http://www.barryplant.com.au/p/17-mccann-street-ceres/>



Figure 1: Part Barrabool Parish Plan, Dept of Lands & Survey, Melbourne, March 1946, showing land sections in the Barrabool Hills, including Ceres. Source: VPRS 16171, Public Record Office Victoria

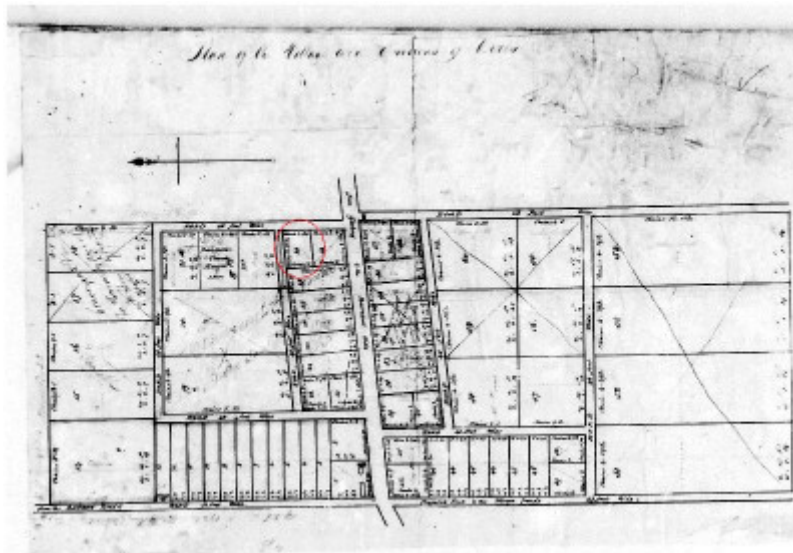


Figure 2: Fisher's subdivision plan of the Ceres Village, 1850. The circled allotment is the location of the former Wesleyan Church and Sunday School. Source: Maps & Plans collection, 17/60, Geelong Library & Heritage Centre.

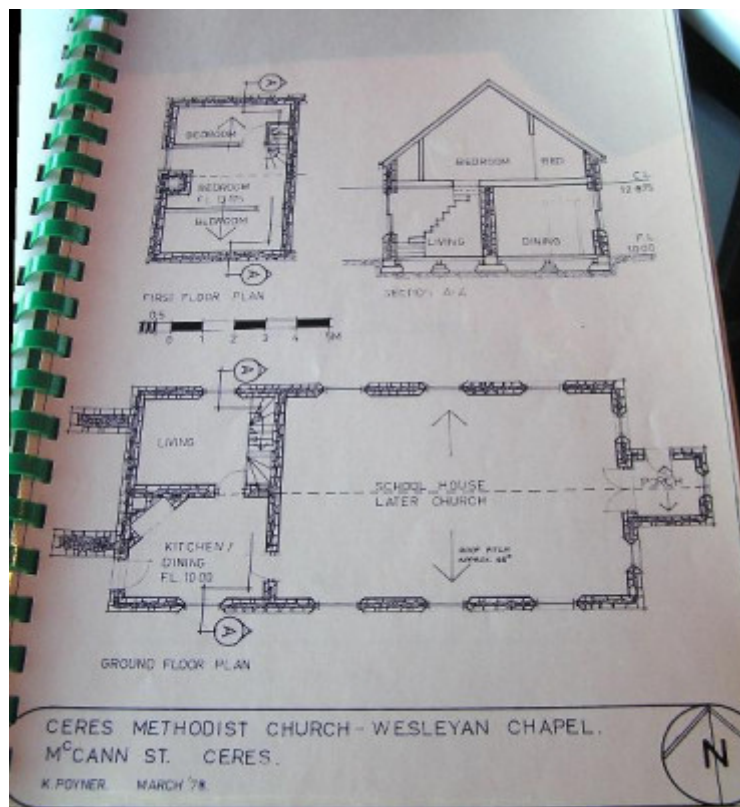


Figure 3: K. Poyner, Ground & Mezzanine Floor Plans & Section Drawing of the Ceres Church. Source: 'Sandstone Buildings in the Parish of Barrabool Part A: The Public Building in and around Ceres', Research Report, School of Architecture, Deakin Un

Location

17 McCann Street CERES, GREATER GEELONG CITY

Municipality

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO66

Heritage Listing

Greater Geelong City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The former Ceres Wesleyan Church, 17 McCann Street, has significance as a tangible legacy of the life and witness of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in the village of Ceres from 1855 until 2016, and as a denominational school from 1855 until 1875. Built in 1855, the former Wesleyan Church building is the only intact surviving 1850s church building as part of the Geelong Wesleyan Circuit, and a rare surviving rural example of its type in the Geelong region.

The significant fabric of the former Wesleyan Church includes the gabled roof forms, Barrabool stone wall construction, slate roof cladding, square-headed timber framed twelve paned double hung windows (the windows at the west end being lower, reflecting the original lower ceiling internally to allow for a mezzanine), dressed stone quoinwork, stone tablets in the gable ends, four panelled timber entrance door and the dressed stone window sills.

How is it significant?

The former Wesleyan Church, 17 McCann Street, Ceres, is historically, aesthetically, scientifically and socially significant at a LOCAL level.

Why is it significant?

The former Wesleyan Church, 17 McCann Street, has historical significance for its enduring associations as a rare surviving example with the Wesleyan movement, from the earliest days of the development of the village of Ceres in the 1850s, to the evolution and development of the Methodist Church throughout the 20th century, and as part of the life and witness of the Uniting Church from 1977 until 2016 (Criteria A & B). The former Wesleyan Church was built in 1855 as part of the Geelong Circuit to service the locally notable number of Wesleyans, most of whom were also part of the Temperance Movement. In particular, the church has associations with Nicholas McCann, inaugural Church Trustee and significant benefactor who helped finance the construction of the Church building and provide the local Barrabool stone (Criterion H). The former Wesleyan Church also has associations with other notable figures in its early evolution, including the Rev. Isaac Harding, Wesleyan Minister responsible for the building of a number of Wesleyan chapels in the Geelong Circuit, inaugural Trustee and first Minister responsible for providing pastoral care to the Wesleyans at Ceres; other original Trustees including Ezra Firth, quarryman, Peter McCann, quarryman, and Joseph Armitage, farmer; A.M. Hope, original architect (Criterion H).

The former Wesleyan Church, 17 McCann Street, has aesthetic significance as rare, intact, representative example of its type (Criterion D). The Wesleyan philosophy of 'earnest piety and dislike of frivolity' is embodied in the surviving physical building fabric. The vernacular Victorian Georgian church reflects non-conformist meeting house design ideology, typical in mid 19th century Victoria in its modest scale and unpretentious character. This building is the only intact surviving example of the 1850s of the Wesleyan Church in Geelong, as part of the Geelong Circuit.

The former Wesleyan Church building, 17 McCann Street, has scientific significance for its distinctive Barrabool stonework that was quarried nearby the church site, and while ubiquitous for building construction throughout Victoria (and especially the Barrabool Hills) in the 19th century, is now a material no longer employed (Criterion F).

The former Wesleyan Church, 17 McCann Street, while no longer functioning for its original church purpose, has social significance as a physical legacy of its enduring role in the Wesleyan Methodist (and later Uniting Church) faith and faith education at Ceres from 1855 until 2016 (Criterion G).

Heritage Study/Consultant City of Greater Geelong - Ceres Heritage Citations Project, Dr David Rowe, 2018;

Hermes Number 200343

Property Number

Physical Conditions

The former Wesleyan Church, 17 McCann Street, is set on an almost square site on the original subdivision of the Ceres village. It is situated on the south-west corner of Wheatsheaf and McCann Streets. The site is bound on the north, south and east sides by introduced hollow steel and rail, and cyclone mesh fences and timber corner posts (to a height of approximately 1200 mm, the north-west corner also having a timber post). On the west boundary is a row of semi-mature Cypress trees while on the front (east) boundary is a mature and manicured Cypress hedge, planted after the 1930s. The landscaping for the remainder of the site is largely open grassed spaces with some perimeter agapanthus on the north side, shrubbery to the south of the church and concrete pedestrian paths. Near the western boundary is an introduced, corrugated sheet metal outbuilding.

The former Victorian vernacular Georgian styled Wesleyan Church building is located in the northern portion of the site. It is characterised by a principal gabled roof form and a minor gabled entrance porch on the east side. These roofs are clad in slate with introduced timber bargeboards and flashings in the gable ends. The front porch has been rebuilt. The four-bayed church is also defined by square-headed timber framed twelve paned double hung windows (the windows at the west end being lower, reflecting the original lower ceiling internally to allow for a mezzanine). The building expresses the original Wesleyan ideal of a simple church building, the only elaboration being identified in the dressed quoinwork at the building corners and front window openings, stone label moulds above the front (east) windows and the tablets in the gable end, the tablet in the porch gable reading "Wesleyan Church 1855". Other early features include the four panelled timber entrance door and the dressed stone window sills. At the rear are introduced, projecting stone buttresses. The original window opening in the west gable end has been bricked up. There is metal bracing surrounding the rear (west) window on the north elevation and other metal brackets are visible on the north and south elevations.

Internally, the church has an early coved timber lined ceiling. There are hard plaster walls and introduced timber clad dados. The polished timber floor boards appear to be original, as do the timber door architraves and four panelled door between the main church space and vestry. The ceiling is punctuated by early iron tie rods.

Until recently, to the south of the church building was the former Sunday School. The timber weatherboard, Victorian Picturesque styled building had a double gabled roof form clad in corrugated sheet metal. The three bayed building was defined by square-headed timber framed, twelve paned double hung windows with moulded timber architraves and timber window sills. There were vertically boarded timber doors at the front (east) and another timber door at the rear (west, south side). The front gable ends were adorned with decorative timber bargeboards and timber finials.

Internally, the Sunday School building had strapped, timber-lined, coved ceilings supported by central posts. The northern portion of the interior had horizontal aligned timber wall cladding the south portion being clad in larger-sized horizontal timber boards. The timber floor boards also appear to be early. There was a timber partition wall

at the west end, with a vertically boarded door providing access to a narrow kitchen area.

Photo 2: Former Church building, north & west elevations, 2016. Source: David Rowe.

Photo 3: Former Sunday School, east elevation, 2016, prior to demolition. Source: David Rowe.

Photo 4: Former Sunday School (middle ground) & Church (background), south elevations, 2016.

Source: David Rowe.

Condition and Integrity

Overall from the street, the church appears to be in fair condition. There is evidence of movement at the west end (particularly the north-west corner) in the wall cracks, rising damp in the wall bases, weathered timber window frames and sashes, and timber bargeboards, and rusted ridge capping and flashings. There is numerous evidence of previous mortar patching, some appearing to be cement rich. The church is of moderate integrity as a vernacular Victorian Georgian stone building. The most noticeable changes being the altered (rebuilt) front porch (reflecting its early design), introduced buttresses at the west end and the timber bargeboards and flashing which appear to have replaced the original parapets and copings in the east and west gable ends.

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/>