

## Statement of Significance

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### What is Significant?

St. John the Evangelist Church of England Complex at 27-31 Childers Street, Cranbourne, is significant.

The church, dating from 1864 with 1909 additions is significant.

Features which contribute to the significance of the place are

- the c.1913 Sunday School as restored in 2013
- mature specimens of mature Turkey Oak *Quercus cerris* and Red Oak *Quercus coccinea* located to the south of the Sunday School.

Features which do not contribute to the significance of the place are the 1978 and later additions and alterations to the church, carparking, fencing and children's playground.

### How is it Significant?

St John the Evangelist Church of England Complex is of local historic, social and architectural significance to the City of Casey.

### Why is it Significant?

Historically, the Complex as a whole is significant as an illustration of the importance and early development the Church of England (known as the Anglican Church since 1981) faith within the Cranbourne district. The church, constructed c1864 is the earliest church to survive within the municipality and one of the earliest surviving buildings within Cranbourne. It was also one of the earliest non-residential buildings to be constructed within the Cranbourne area. The extension of the church itself in c1909 to add the chancel and vestry and construction of the Sunday School in c1913 demonstrate the growth and consolidation of the Church of England in the Cranbourne area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. (Criterion A)

Socially, the complex as whole is significant for its strong and continuing associations with the local community as the focus of Anglican worship in Cranbourne and the surrounding areas for over 150 years. The continuing use and development of the Church, including the restoration of the Sunday School building and refurbishment of the interior of the church itself as part of the broader works completed in 2013 (while retaining important original features) demonstrate this continuous importance to, use by, and attachment of, the local congregation. (Criterion G)

The St John the Evangelist Church of England building (to the extent of the c1864 portion) is of architectural significance as an early and simple example of the Gothic style within the municipality. Of further architectural significance is the church as an example of the work of architect, Nathaniel Billing, who is noted for his Gothic Revival proper designs, rather than the more eclectic Gothic examples of the 1850s and 1860s. Billing is credited with pioneering the use of patterned brickwork in Victoria, with St John the Evangelist Church being one of the early examples of this. The use of bichromatic brickwork is unique amongst the nineteenth century churches in the municipality. Although the bichromatic brickwork is now overpainted, and the church has been altered and added to, the original Gothic style is clearly evident. The mature Oak trees located to the west of the site contribute to the overall setting of the complex. (Criterion E)