

## Heritage Citation



**Our Lady of Dolours Church**

### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 600 Samford Road, Mitchelton, Queensland 4053
<b>Type of place</b>	Church
<b>Period</b>	Late 20th Century 1960-1999
<b>Style</b>	Ecclesiastical
<b>Lot plan</b>	L1_RP43226; L2_RP43226
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 July 2005 Date of Citation — November 2010
<b>Construction</b>	Roof: Tile; Walls: Face brick
<b>People/associations</b>	Cullen, Fagg, Hargraves and Mooney (Architect)

**Criterion for listing**

(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (E) Aesthetic; (F) Technical; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

Our Lady of Dolours Church was built in 1964 to the design of architects Cullen, Fagg, Hargraves and Mooney. It joined the local presbytery, convent and Catholic school to form a strong Catholic community that established itself as Mitchelton progressed from a predominantly rural area to a more intensively developed suburb in the postwar period. In 1966, its unique design received a commendation in the 'Building of the Year' category of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects awards for meritorious architecture.

## History

Land upon which the Catholic Church has established the buildings that represent the hub for the local Catholic community was originally part of 13½ acres purchased by William Robinson in 1864. After the land passed to his widow in 1884, James Robinson acquired title to the property in 1892. This farmer of Dingo Head, Teleman Crossing Upper Logan, retained the property until it was transferred to the War Service Homes Commission in the late 1920s.

At this time Gaythorne / Mitchelton was beginning to become more densely settled. The train line to Enoggera had been operating since 1899 and extended to Gaythorne (initially Rifle Range) in 1916 and Mitchelton in 1918. The Rifle Range, from which originated Gallipoli Barracks, was officially established in 1908. With the advent of World War One (1914-18) the Range became a recruit training area as well as a staging camp. Military personnel and their families contributed to the population growth in the adjoining suburbs. Residential estates such as Lade's Paddock, the Brookside estate and Oxford Park estate were offered for sale in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Population growth in the area warranted the establishment of the Enoggera (originally called Grovely) State School in 1916.

At this time Catholics in the developing local community travelled mostly to Alderley to the first St John the Baptist church (built 1908) to receive the sacraments, and during the 1920s also worshipped at the chapel of the Redemptorist Order of monks in Church Road. James Duhig, Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane bought the 3 subdivisions on the corner of Samford Road and Suez Street from the War Service Homes Commission in May 1928. The first Church of Our Lady of Dolours was produced by transforming the house on the corner of the site when it was purchased. At the opening ceremony on Easter Sunday, 19 April 1930, Archbishop Duhig commented that the drive to Mitchelton had become familiar "during the sad days of the Great War ... when our soldiers were being trained for overseas in that big area that surrounded the White City". From being "scarcely more than a name" Mitchelton then was becoming "one of our most rapidly growing suburbs" with "its picturesque slopes and hill-tops now being covered with beautiful villas". By June 1941, when the Mitchelton Presbytery was completed and blessed, there were about 140 Catholics in the parish. During World War II the Mitchelton parish priest ministered to the needs of the parish as well as carrying out duties as an Army chaplain and chaplain to the nearby Good Shepherd Convent.

The parish priest of the time (1960s), Father Nugent, had travelled overseas and did extensive research to try to ascertain what the changes might be. He told the architect that he wanted a "church that could be seen from all over the parish" and had "the congregation ... as close as possible to the altar". The accepted design produced

by Hargraves had the altar sited so the priest could stand either in front or behind it. The new church, designed by architectural firm Cullen, Fagg, Hargraves and Mooney, opened in 1964.

The church received a commendation in the 'Building of the Year' category of the 1966 Royal Australian Institute of Architects awards for Meritorious Architecture. It was built at a time of significant changes to liturgical practices introduced by the Vatican Council in Rome and may have been one of the first churches in Australia to have a free-standing altar. Our Lady of Dolours was certainly the first church built in Brisbane and probably Queensland to provide for changes in the liturgy and is one of the earliest churches in Brisbane to have the congregation's pews arrayed around the altar. The church is also a War Memorial "commemorating all Australian Servicemen ... fallen in the war".

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## Statement of significance

### Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

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#### Historical

##### CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history

as a church built in 1964 when postwar development in the suburb was well established and religious worship was an important part of community life.

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#### Representative

##### CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as a Catholic Church built at the time of the radical Vatican II changes in the liturgy.

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#### Aesthetic

##### CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for its architectural quality, visual prominence in comparison with surrounding suburban development, 'soaring' internal space and harmonious form.

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## Technical

### CRITERION F

The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technological achievement at a particular period

for its innovative, original design and careful details.

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## Social

### CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

as the hub of the local Catholic community since 1964.

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## Historical association

### CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

as a modern church designed by prominent architects Cullen, Fagg, Mooney and Hargraves.

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## References

1. *Our Lady of Dolours. Parish Jubilee 1932-1982*. Publication held in Catholic Archives
2. 'New Mitchelton Church opened', *The Catholic Leader*, 22 July 1965, p.3
3. 'Church with a "new look"', *Courier-Mail*, 19 July 1965, p.7
4. 'New presbytery at Mitchelton', *The Catholic Leader*, 26 June 1941, p.10
5. 'Thirty-Fourth place of Worship', *The Catholic Leader*, 24 April 1930, p.21
6. 'A Pocket Guide to RAI Awards in Brisbane 1933?-1997', working draft

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**Note:** This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

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