

## Heritage Citation

### Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Chapel

#### Key details

<b>Addresses</b>	At 109 Darra Station Road, Darra, Queensland 4076
<b>Type of place</b>	Church, Hall
<b>Period</b>	Interwar 1919-1939
<b>Style</b>	Free Gothic
<b>Lot plan</b>	L36_RP29728; L35_RP29728
<b>Key dates</b>	Local Heritage Place Since — 30 November 2012 Date of Citation — January 2011
<b>Construction</b>	Walls: Face brick
<b>People/associations</b>	John Patrick (Jack) Donoghue (Architect)
<b>Criterion for listing</b>	(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (G) Social

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Chapel at Darra was built in 1937 and was the first Catholic church and school in the district. Designed by successful Brisbane architect J. P. Donoghue, the brick chapel was designed to be used as a congregational chapel, a hall and a school. The interwar chapel is historically important to the Darra Catholic community as evidence of Archbishop Duhig's strong commitment to the construction of Catholic centres throughout Brisbane's suburbs. The building of this church during the Great Depression demonstrates the determination of the Catholic community of Darra to raise funds to build a local church and school.

#### History

Darra's development was influenced by the railway. By 1914 a post office had been established at Darra and a primary school had been opened in 1915 as a result of the increased population. Several large industries moved into Darra in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and it was with this that the suburb moved away

from a rural outpost and began to emerge as an industrious sector of Brisbane. The two main industries were Brittain's Brickworks and the Queensland Cement and Lime Company. These large enterprises encouraged employment opportunities for many Brisbane residents and many of the workers built homes in Darra close to their place of employment. By 1921 the population of the Darra area had reached 423.

By the 1930s Darra had several churches, a Methodist Church and an Anglican. Prior to the establishment of a Catholic Church in Darra those of Catholic faith attended Mass at the church in Corinda. This, according to Archbishop Duhig, was not ideal. At the Darra Church's dedication ceremony held on 4 April 1937, he stated that "for many years Catholic residents had suffered inconvenience because of the lack of a church, and had had to travel by train to Corinda to attend Mass. Father Murphy had worked strenuously to remove these difficulties by providing a church combined with a school at Darra and the building erected would provide accommodation for 120 worshippers"<sup>1</sup> Prior to this, on Tuesday 24 November 1936, *The Courier Mail* published an article announcing that a new Catholic Church would be constructed at Darra and that tenders would soon be called.

In December 1936 a Tender Notice was published in the *Architect and Builder's Journal of Queensland* by J. P. Donoghue accepting a Tender from builder E. Reid for the construction of a brick church in Darra. Donoghue, a successful Queensland architect, was chosen to design the church on the basis of his previous designs for Catholic churches in Queensland. These included Mary Immaculate Church at Annerley, the Holy Spirit Church at New Farm, Saint Augustine's Catholic Church at Coolangatta, as well as several convents, presbyteries and Catholic schools.

The Darra church was to be an expansion of the parish of St. Joseph at Corinda, the parish priest was Father P. J. Murphy who played an integral role in the building of the Darra church. The Darra Catholic community had been instrumental in raising funds for the construction of the building. At a time of economic hardship for many due to the effects of the Great Depression it was a reflection of the generosity of the district's Catholic community and their recognition of the need for a Catholic centre for worship and education. One of the major contributors of funds for the church came from a Corinda resident, Mrs. H. Tatham, who donated £800, a substantial amount in this period. The collection of funds was officially given to Archbishop Duhig at the opening ceremony and totalled £1050.

On 1 April *The Courier Mail* reported that the new church at Darra had been successfully completed, "The building, which cost nearly £1500, stands on a hill between Ipswich Road and the Darra railway station, facing Station Road. The main building measures 48ft by 24ft. Excellent ventilation and lighting have been provided for the 34ft class rooms. There is a sanctuary attached to the building, and outside, protected from the weather, is a detached play shed. The school will open next Monday under the Sisters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart."<sup>2</sup> The Catholic Leader also reported the event and the importance of the new church and school to the Darra Catholic community. The church was dedicated by Archbishop Duhig and reported to be able to seat 120 parishioners and "is completely furnished, the altar fittings and cloths, statues, sanctuary lamp, organ and other articles of necessary church appurtenances being mostly donated by parishioners."<sup>3</sup> Archbishop Duhig acknowledged the increase in industrial activity in Darra had led to many workers establishing their homes there and were in need of a Catholic church of their own.

As with the majority of Catholic educational institutes in this period the teaching was carried out by Sisters or Brothers. The Sisters of the order of The Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart were to run the new school. Based at Corinda (and Goodna) the Sisters made the journey to Darra each day until a convent was established for them on the other side of Darra Station Road from the church in 1956. The convent was dedicated by Archbishop Duhig in July 1956. A year later a Presbytery was built beside the church. This too, was dedicated by Archbishop Duhig in August 1957.

In December, 1970, the parish priest at the time, Father Dan Carroll, purchased several artefacts for the church at Darra. The “altar, crucifix, alter cloth, missal stand, credence table, two lecterns and one of the celebrant’s chairs” had been objects that had been used by Pope Paul VI at a Mass in Randwick in 1970. The timber items were made from Queensland silver ash, the crucifix being made from Queensland maple. Father Carroll stated “They are of simple design but a lot of work went into them. And they have a tremendous historical value.”<sup>4</sup>

Our Lady of the Scared Heart is a rare interwar brick church in Darra. It is important to the history of the district as the first Catholic Church established by Archbishop Duhig and funded by the community.

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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 the first Catholic church and school in the Darra area, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Chapel is representative of the development of religious institutes in the area in response to the spiritual needs of the community; a masonry church built in 1937 that represents the growing needs of the Catholic congregation in the Darra area in the early twentieth century.

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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 an architect designed masonry building constructed for use as both a church and a school.

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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 first Catholic Church in Darra built by the Catholic community in the interwar period.

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## References

1. *The Courier Mail*, Monday 5 April 1937, p15
2. *The Courier Mail*, Thursday 1 April 1937, p25
3. *The Catholic Leader*, Thursday 8 April 1937, p16
4. *The Catholic Leader*, 20 December 1970
5. Jenkins, Lesley, *A Celebration of Culture: A Social History of Darra*, Living in Brisbane, 2003
6. Fones, Ralph, *Oxley! A Mind of its Own*, Oxley-Chelmer History Group, 2006
7. Grantham, Lona, *Heritage Tour: An Historical Tour of Oxley*, Oxley-Chelmer Historical Group, 2003
8. Historic Titles, Department of Environment and Resource Management
9. Queensland Post Office Directories
10. *Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Survey Maps*
11. Brisbane City Council, *Register of New Buildings*, 1930
12. *Architect and Builder's Journal of Queensland*, Tender Notice, December 1936
13. Brisbane City Council, *Register of New Buildings 1937*
14. *The Courier Mail*, Tuesday 24 November 1936, p22
15. *The Catholic Leader*, 12 July 1956
16. *The Catholic Leader*, 15 August 1957

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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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