

Heritage Citation



Sherwood Presbyterian Church (former)

Key details

Also known as	Sherwood Uniting Church
Addresses	At 515 Oxley Road, Sherwood, Queensland 4075
Type of place	Church
Period	Victorian 1860-1890
Style	Rustic Gothic
Lot plan	L19_RP29596; L18_RP29596; L1_RP29592
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — October 2010
Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Masonry - Render

People/associations John Hall and Son (Architect)

Criterion for listing (A) Historical; (E) Aesthetic; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

This Gothic style rendered brick church opened in 1889 after the Presbyterian Church experienced a resurgence in attendance during the 1880s. The 1867 weatherboard church on the site was not considered sufficient for the expanding congregation and the new church, designed by architects John Hall and Son, was able to fit an additional 280 people. In 1977, with the amalgamation of the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches, the building was renamed the Sherwood Uniting Church. The land surrounding the church has since been developed into aged care units and the building has been retained on the site as a chapel. The earlier timber church is no longer on the site.

History

This brick church, designed by the Brisbane architectural firm of John Hall and Son, opened in January 1889. It was built to accommodate an expanding congregation which had outgrown the 1867 timber church on the site.

The first Presbyterian Church in Brisbane had been erected by its congregation in 1850, and more churches followed in Brisbane and country towns throughout the next two decades. The first Presbyterian services held in Sherwood took place in 1863, in a large tent erected by William Gray near Watt Street in Corinda. Services were later conducted in a slab hut near Gray's property, and were then held in his home, 'Montrose'.

In 1866 the Reverend Alexander Caldwell was given charge of 'Oxley Creek', Fortitude Valley and Bald Hills congregations. Land in what is now Sherwood was donated by John McDairmid and used as the site of a slab church building. It was replaced when, on Christmas Day 1867, a weatherboard church was opened. The weatherboard church seated 120 persons, and involved around £30 outlay in cash because of the co-operative principles adopted in its construction. Because many members of the congregation came from across the Brisbane River, the church elders in 1878 provided a punt and constructed a landing at what is now Ferry Street.

From the mid 1870s, the growth of the Presbyterian community slowed dramatically throughout Queensland, and in 1881 the Convenor of the Church Extension Committee, the Reverend Colin McCulloch, observed that the Church was not extending, but "rather the reverse". However by the mid 1880s, following a resurgence in migration and the economy, the Presbyterian Church in Queensland was also experiencing a revival. Services expanded in country and metropolitan centres, and new churches were built.

The name Oxley Creek had changed to Oxley by 1873, and in 1882 the Oxley Church had become known as the Sherwood Presbyterian Church. A new church was erected by the congregation in 1889. One hundred and thirty people watched Mrs Joseph Carson lay the foundation stone of the present church on 12 January 1889. The Queenslander recorded: "The new church is being erected alongside the old one, facing the Oxley Road, about five minutes walk from the station." The contractors, Worley and Whitehead, were paid £775 to build the church to the design of architects John Hall and Son. It was designed in Gothic style and its final cost was estimated to be £1,600. Built to accommodate 400 persons, its dimensions were 30ft by 60ft. On 23 December 1889 the old church building was sold for £8 10s 6d.

An adjacent church hall was opened during the 1930s, but it has since been moved to the site of the Uniting Church in Thallon Street. It is unknown when the manse was built, but in 1893 it was inundated by the flood waters and removal from its site was considered. In 1956 the manse building was moved from Donaldson Street near the Sherwood State School to the Primrose Street frontage. It has since been removed from the site.

In 1977, when the Uniting Church was formed by the amalgamation of Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, the church became known as the Sherwood Uniting Church. In 1989, Church Elder Colin Fenwick was reported as stating that "it was likely that the church would be demolished in the foreseeable future," however redevelopment of the site for aged-care units has seen the retention of the church as a chapel.

Description

This single storey church is a rendered brick building with a steeply pitched bellcast gable roof. Clad in corrugated iron, its ridgeline is crowned by two metal circular vents. Built in the Gothic style, it shares a large site with new units. It is set back from Oxley Road behind a brick fence and garden.

Comprising a nave and two front entry porches, this simple building can be entered via a flight of steps to each porch or by a ramp to a rear door. A timber vestry, originally linked to the nave by this rear door, has since been removed and replaced with a small porch. Divided into two spaces by a partition wall, the nave now houses a chapel and common room.

Exterior

The side walls of the nave are divided into bays by stepped buttresses. Each bay has a single timber framed lancet window. Comprising three leadlight pivoted windows and a fixed pointed arch leadlight above, each window has a smooth rendered surround. These, as well as the smooth surfaces of the plinth and buttresses, contrast with the rough rendered walls of the building.

The front facade of the church features a central projecting wall with an entry porch to either side. Within the central wall, three tall lancets (the central one taller than the outer two) sit within a slightly recessed bay. Both open timber framed entry porches sit on a rendered brick base and have a gable roof with timber battened gable end. Concrete steps under each porch lead to a pair of arched tongue and groove, vertical joint timber doors.

Interior

Divided into two spaces, the interior of the nave comprises a chapel orientated to a side wall and a carpeted common room with sink, cupboards and toilet designed for the disabled. The polished timber floor of the building has been left exposed in the chapel, whilst a strip of sheet flooring links both front entry doors. Rendered and grooved to imitate stonework, the masonry side walls of the nave are surmounted by a decorative vented strip. Vertical joint timber boards line the building's steep ceiling and partition walls. The roof structure consisting of hammer-beam trusses with tie rods which also support rows of suspended lights.

Intactness

Apart from the removal of the timber vestry, the building is very intact. According to old photographs the church originally featured exposed brickwork, which has since been attractively rendered. The side buttresses of the

building have been extended to increase their height. Boarded up with fibre cement and painted, they appear to form a homogeneous whole from a distance. The single story units built around the church are painted in the same colours and sympathetically co-exist with it.

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:

Historical

CRITERION A

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

as evidence of the development of the Sherwood area in the late nineteenth century; and, as evidence of a strong Presbyterian presence in the area in the late 1880s.

Aesthetic

CRITERION E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance

for its simple Gothic proportions and symmetrical design which features prominent central Gothic arched windows and twin entry porches.

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 a place of worship for generations of local residents since the late 1880s.

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 fine church designed by notable Brisbane architectural firm, John Hall and Son.

References

1. *Brisbane Courier*, 26 December 1876
 2. Hall, John & Sons Tender books, 24 November 1888, J.O.L. MS OM 75-112
 3. *Queenslander*, 26 January 1888
 4. Ramsay, Rev E., *Centenary History of the Sherwood Presbyterian Church 1865-1965*
 5. *Sherwood District Centenary Celebrations*, 1967
 6. *Southwest News*, 15 November 1989
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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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