

FORMER CURRIE STREET SCHOOL (Remand Centre)

210-228 Currie Street

The school buildings throughout the State are almost invariably of a substantial character, neat in their appearance, and suitable in their structure and appointments for their purpose ... durability and suitability are primary considerations, both in the designs and in their execution.

The Currie Street School was absolutely typical of the large state primary schools, durable, substantial and with adaptations eminently suited to the public educational system at primary, secondary and tertiary level.

The school was constructed between 1890 and 1893 by contractors Walter and Norris in brick with stone dressings. It was first the Currie Street Model School with two very long classrooms and ten smaller classrooms, most of which had the usual stepped floors. Also typical was the segregation of the sexes and age groups. Boys classrooms were on the first floor, and girls, infants and babies on the ground floor. Accommodation was for 900 students.

The school was a characteristic design of Charles Edward Owen Smyth. Owen Smyth was Irish-born and gained some experience in Melbourne before arriving in South Australia in 1876. He joined the architectural branch of the Education Office under E.J Woods and was promoted to head of the Education Branch of the Architect-in-Chief's Department. When that department was abolished he was appointed superintendent of Public Buildings in 1886 until retirement in 1920.

Owen Smyth was a man for his times as the appointment coincided with the onset of the 1890s depression which drastically affected spending on public works. Function was of prime importance, influencing his choice of designs and materials. Pragmatic but confident, he was responsible for the design of several well known public buildings where treasury funds were meagre. These buildings included the north wing of the South Australian Museum, 1894-95; the Art Gallery of South Australia, 1899; the Brookman Building of the South Australian Institute of Technology, 1903 (see PL31); the Advanced School for Girls, 1891 (see SW3); extensions to the Treasury Building, 1907 (see VS8); and extensions to the South Australian Institute Building, 1906.

After his death in 1925 it was stated in his obituary that:

... no one else was nearly so familiar with the facts relating to state-owned building and building schemes; no one was better qualified to 'get things done' expeditiously, economically and well ... In the execution of contracts, he saw that the public obtained fair value for outlays involved, and insisted upon a high standard of quality in the work. Nothing appeared to escape the scouting of his vigilant eye. Poor workmanship or defective materials evoked from him unsparing denunciation.

Heritage of the City of Adelaide

Owen Smyth oversaw renovations to the Currie Street School in 1908, when it was prepared for use as the observation school for training provisional teachers. Between 1920 and 1955 it was used at different times as a primary school and as part of Adelaide High School. It then became the Correspondence School and in 1959 an annexe of the Adelaide Teachers' College. Later the building formed part of Western Teachers' College of Advanced Education, until it was taken over by the Department of Further Education as the Migrant Education Branch, and from 1978 as the College of External Studies. The school has now become part of the Adelaide Remand Centre, its Owen Smyth design and materials having influenced the appearance of the new buildings alongside.

Advertiser, 25 January 1908; Department of Housing and Construction Plan Room, HD 885, No. 3, HD 886 No. 4.; MLSA, Bierbaum files; *Perspective*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1978, p. 9; SAPP, No. 29, 1890, p. 73, No. 44, 1893, p. 9.

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The property described in this Information Sheet is included in the Register of State Heritage places. A heritage listing does not mean or imply right of access by the public to such properties.

The heritage related Principles of Development Control as well as the Precinct specific objectives and Principles of Development Control are contained in the Adelaide (City) Development Plan. These should be referred to in whole when contemplating any development.

Further information on the Heritage Incentives Scheme, an initiative of Council to sponsor timely and appropriate conservation action is available upon request of the Customer Service Centre.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	Former CURRIE STREET SCHOOL	Building No 1/2401-2
Address	210-228 Currie Street; 64-80 Gray Street; 69-87 Philip Street	CT 4286/473

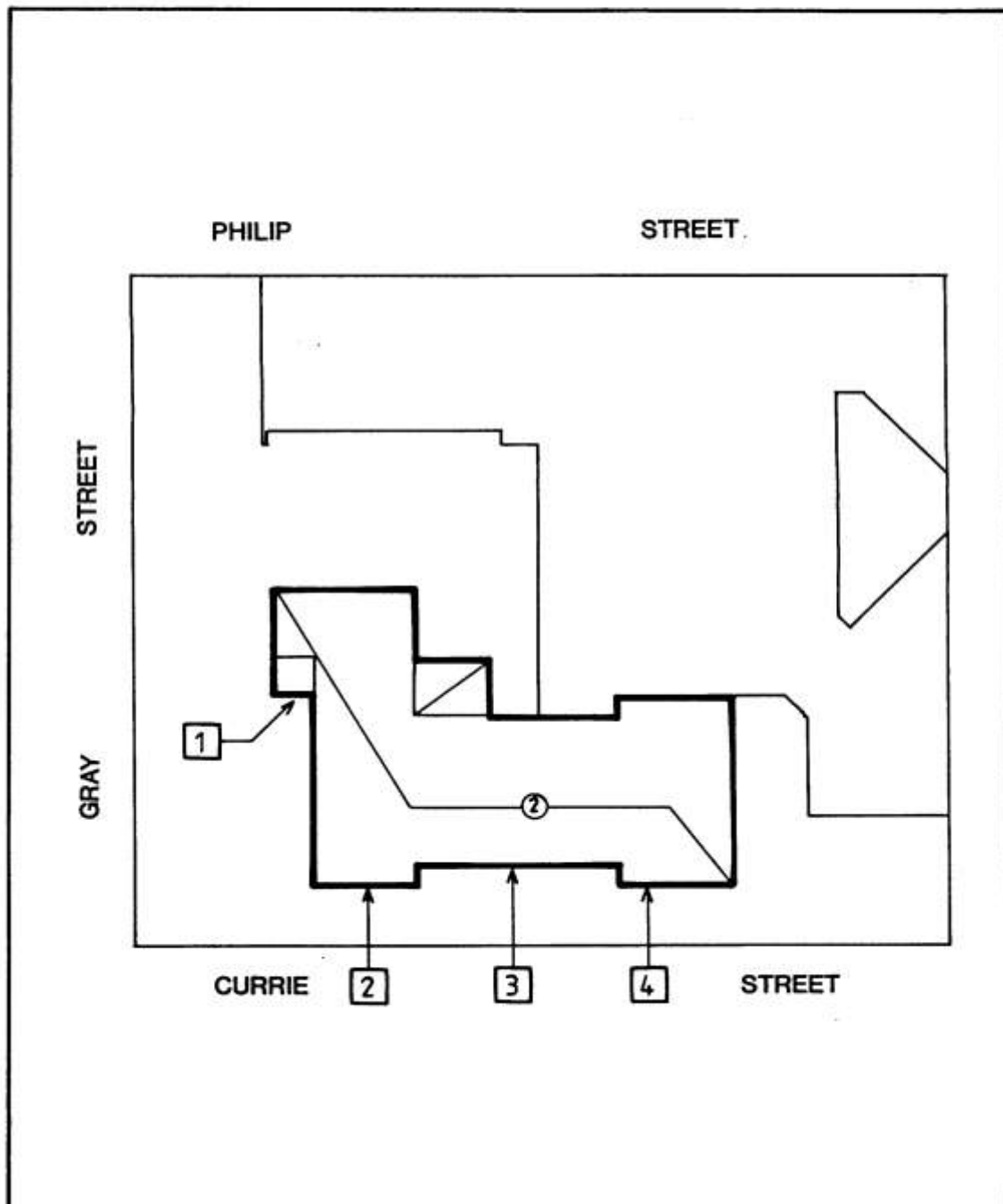


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NOTES:

1. Verandah - Timber joinery.
2. Brick construction, flemish bond with bluestone plinth and sandstone detailing.
3. Main entrance.
4. Sandstone finials.