

ST PATRICK'S CHURCH

254-280 Grote Street

Until the late 1970s St Patrick's was the Catholic parish church for west Adelaide. Apart from its long association with Catholicism, the church also exemplifies the once residential nature of the west end of Adelaide.

For the first four-and-a-half years of European settlement in South Australia there was no Catholic priest permanently stationed in the colony. The first resident priest, Father William Benson, arrived in 1841 and used temporary places of worship such as John Bentham Neales' large store and a brewery in Pirie Street.

The first bishop of Adelaide, Dr Francis Murphy, was consecrated in 1844. Bishop Murphy has been claimed as the founder and apostle of the Catholic Church in South Australia.

Bishop Murphy arrived in Adelaide in November 1844 and five weeks later laid the foundation of St Patrick's School Church on the corner of Grote Street and West Terrace. This small church, which was opened on 5 October 1845, became the principal centre for Catholic worship in South Australia until the Cathedral Church of St Francis Xavier was opened in July 1858. The cathedral then provided for the Milne's Catholics of east Adelaide, while those living in the western half of the city continued to worship at St Patrick's.

By the turn of the century St Patrick's had become too small for its congregation. The architects Woods and Bagot prepared plans, a tender of £13,425 was accepted, and the foundation stone was laid on 10 November 1912. An estimated 10,000 people attended the ceremony.

The Catholic newspaper *Southern Cross*, 13 March 1914, described the building as basilican in form and indicated that the section erected was only part of a much larger work. St Patrick's was dedicated on 15 March 1914. The *Southern Cross* extolled the new church as ' . . . probably the most artistic ecclesiastical structure in the State and is in accordance with the best traditions of ecclesiastical architecture. Based on the Church of the Holy Spirit in Florence by Brunelleschi (1428) . . . the design of the front is Italian from a British point of view'. As the original church was incomplete, the architects had to improvise, but they could not ' . . . ignore the traditions of Sir Christopher Wren and the British School of Renaissance architects'.

The design of the church was meant to include a sacristy and a large impressive dome above a section that would have made the church half as long again. However, this was not carried through as church funds were limited and construction coincided with unsettled times before the outbreak of the First World War late in 1914.

The building is a singularly creative and vigorously massed structure with a facade evocative of the later Renaissance period. It is an early design by W.H. Bagot, an important Adelaide architect noted for his attention to architectural history and accuracy of detail. The integrity of

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the church is high as only superficial alterations have been undertaken because of liturgical changes.

The church is also a major streetscape element, indeed a landmark in north west Adelaide.

ACA, *Annual report 1912*, p. 13, Smith Survey 1880, fieldbook No. 8, p. 18; Byrne, E, *History of the Catholic Church in South Australia*, 1914, p. 28; Catholic Archives, Sister Mary Attracta, *St Patrick's - Grote Street*, 1975, St Patrick's Church committee book (minutes and financial), 1906-20; *Chronicle*, 28 February 1925; *Mail*, 14 March 1914; MLSA, Historical photographs (Town Acres 318, 319), *Southern Cross*, 1 November 1912, 1 January 1913, p. 61; Press, M., *From our broken toil*, 1986; *South Australian Gazette*, 29 September 1938.

The text in this Information Sheet was copied from the **Heritage of the City of Adelaide: An Illustrated Guide**, (1996). The photographs contained in this Information Sheet are a selection of those held by Heritage Services, in digital format.

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	ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH	Building No	9/0103-4
Address	254-280 Grote Street; 181-199 Gray Street	CT	1811/147

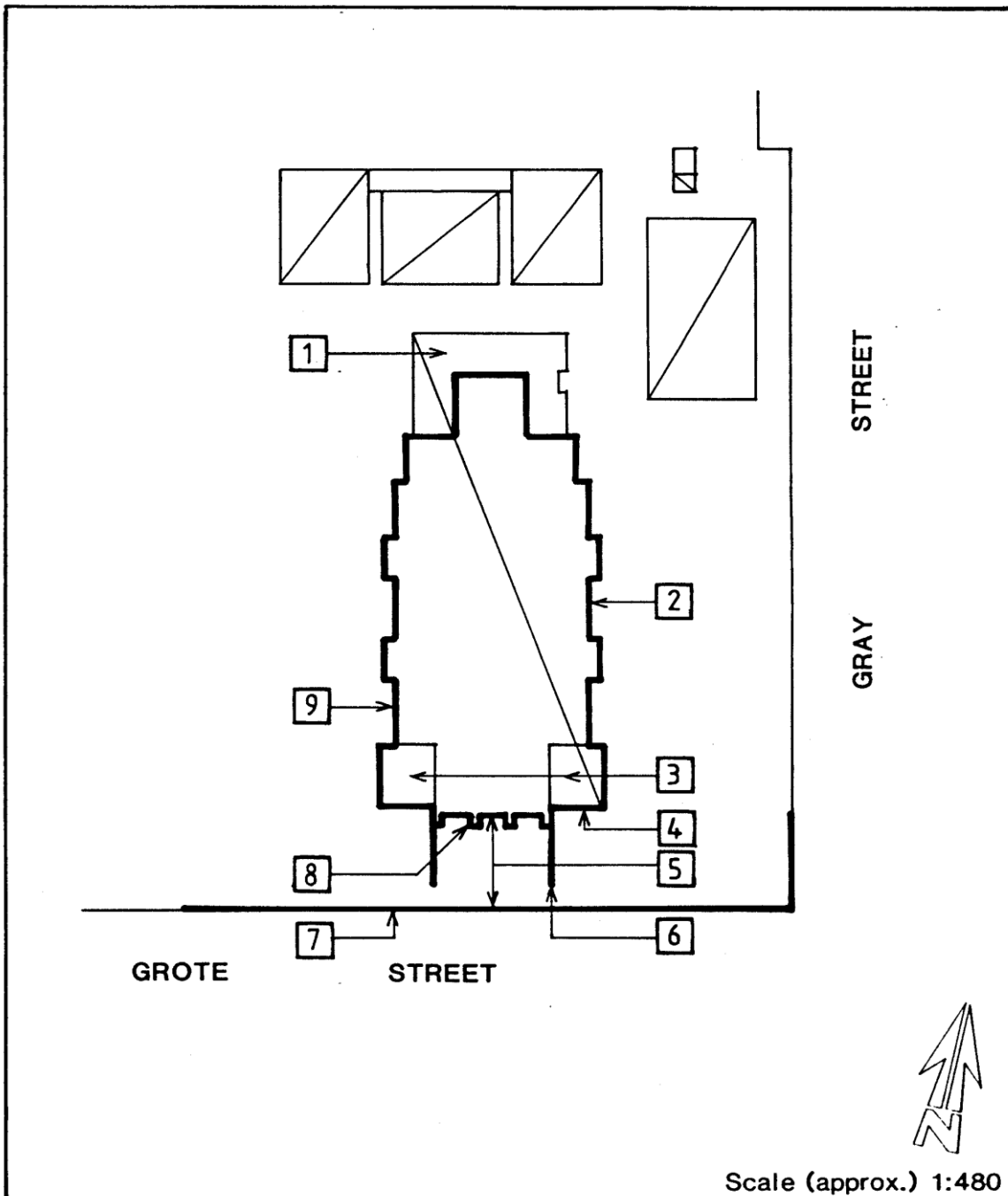


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NOTES:

1. Iron addition.
2. Brick (English bond) with stucco enrichment and rendered plinth.
3. Note towers with elaborate enrichment including columns, pediments and metal roofing.
4. Rendered facade, strong horizontal rustication and stucco enrichment.
5. Cast iron gates.
6. Note cast iron ornamentation.
7. Cast iron and rendered masonry fence.
8. Note pilasters, pediment and balustraded parapet.
9. Leadlight windows.