

# BELLARINE HERITAGE STUDY RECORD SHEET

Site No.	Street/Site Name	Town / Suburb	Postcode	Record No.
1030	Portarlinton Rd	Curlewis	3222	33
Site Name				Page No.
St Francis Xavier Catholic Church				1 of 4

Key Dates: Original  Major Changes

Existing Use/Type

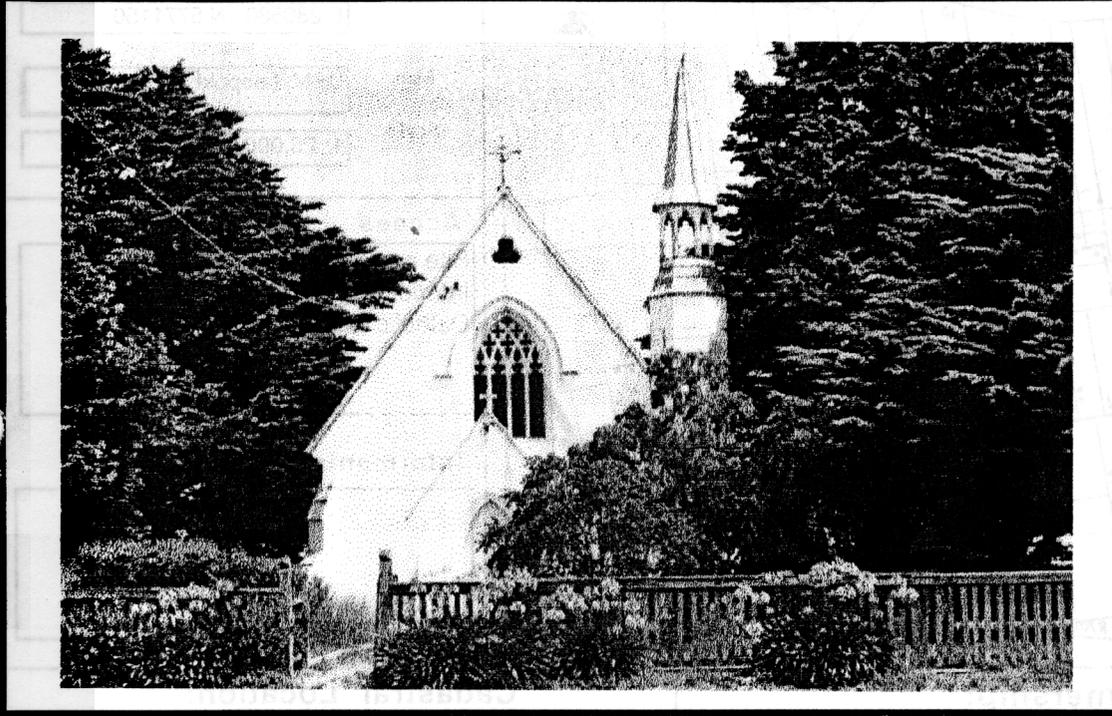
Precinct Name

Survey Date

Neg. No.

Video Track No.

Recorded By



**Heritage Status:**

CATEGORY REGISTRATION NUMBER

**National Estate:**

Nominated

Registered

**Historic Buildings Register**

Nominated

Registered

**National Trust Register:**

**Planning Scheme:**

**Historical Archaeological Register :**

**Other:**

**BHS Degree of Significance**

A  B  C  D

**Condition of the fabric:**

Excellent  Good

Fair  Poor

Ruinous  Unexposed

**Integrity of the site:**

Excellent  Good

Fair  Poor

Partially excavated

Fully excavated

**Present Threats:**

Human; mining

Human; visitor erosion

Human; vandalism

Human; development

Human; conservation/maintenance

Human; stock

Natural Forces; erosion

Natural Forces; vegetation

Not threatened

**Significant Architectural Features:**

Original Materials

Original Chimneys

Wall Decoration

Verandah Structure

Verandah Decoration

Original Parapet

other prominent elevations

Original Roof

Original Openings

Original Decoration

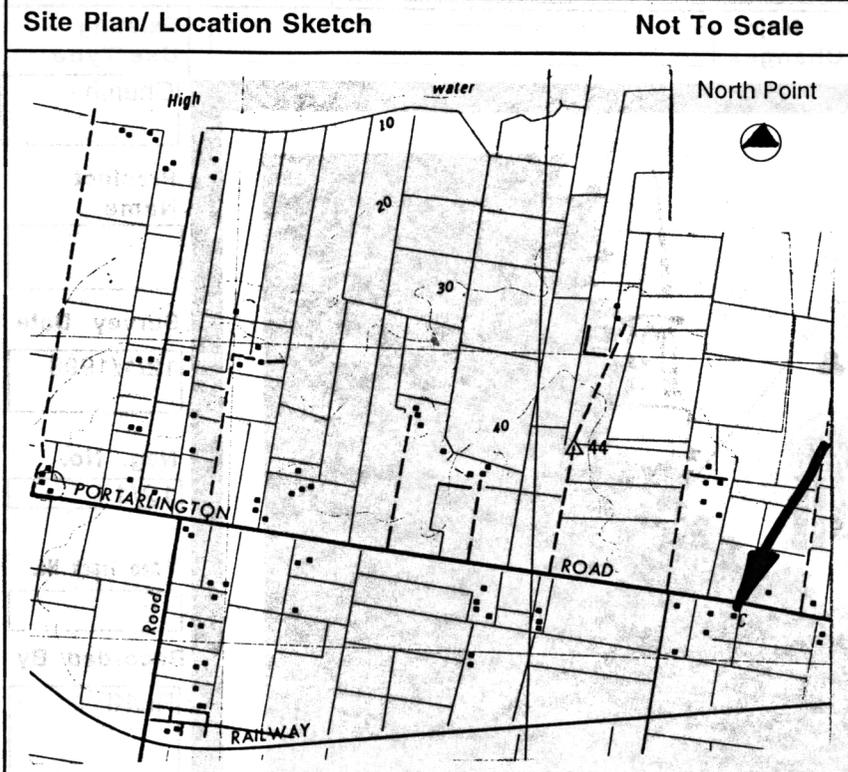
Original Finish

Early Garden

Early Fence

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<b>Site Address</b>	No. <input type="text" value="1030"/>	Street/Site name <input type="text" value="Portarlington Rd"/>	Town / Suburb <input type="text" value="Curlewis 3222"/>	Record No. <input type="text" value="33"/>
				Page No. <input type="text" value="2 of 4"/>



**Australian Map Grid Co-ordinates**

Map

Scale

**Access**

Site and Exterior access from road.  
Interior access: contact Drysdale Catholic Church.

**Informants**

**Ownership:**

Crown  Private

Resident owner  Occupier only

Local Govt Area  City of Greater Geelong

**Cadastral Location:**

County

Parish

Allotment

Block

**Physical Description of Site:**

A relatively intact steeply gabled slate roof, Decorated Gothic church c.1870 built in brick and later cement rendered. It has diamond paned leadlight east and west windows of three and four lights respectively, and an octagonal belfry to the south-west. The front porch has a slate roof and interior timber panelling to a metre and a half. Both the porch and the church have timber ceilings. There is a small rear room and the building is surrounded by large cypress trees.

The knotted pine floorboards are believed to be original. (1)

(1) Myrtle Filbay

**Relevant Special Interest Groups:**

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<b>Site Address</b>	<b>No.</b> 1030	<b>Street/Site name</b> Portarlington Rd	<b>Town / Suburb</b> Curlewis 3222	<b>Record No.</b> 33
				<b>Page No.</b> 3 of 4

## Types of Sites:

<input type="checkbox"/> monument	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> maritime	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> tree(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> machinery
<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> relic/ruin	<input type="checkbox"/> garden	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building
<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> residential	<input type="checkbox"/> fence	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> miscellaneous
<input type="checkbox"/> recreational	<input type="checkbox"/> infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> gate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious	

## Historical Themes:

<b>Early Settlement</b> <input type="text" value="esReligious"/> <b>Maritime</b> <input type="text"/> <b>Tourism</b> <input type="text"/> <b>Workforce</b> <input type="text"/> <b>Townships</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>Communities</b> <input type="text" value="cmChurches"/> <b>Landscapes</b> <input type="text"/> <b>The Wider World</b> <input type="text"/> <b>Cultural Activity</b> <input type="text"/> <b>Miscellaneous</b> <input type="text"/>
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## History of Site/Object/Place:

The strength of Catholicism in the Curlewis area is illustrated by the early opening of a school for the predominantly Catholic community in the 1850s. As in many areas church services and school classes were frequently held in the one building until the community was well enough established to build a separate place of worship.(1)

St Francis Xavier church was built next to the Catholic school and opened in October 1873. A Pontifical High Mass sung by Bishop Gould was performed at the opening and this was followed by a sermon from Father Joseph Campett. The bell and belfry were added in 1878(2) and severe damage to the steeple occurred in 1912 after "a period of rough weather".(3)

This church represents the last remnant of an active agricultural community that did not develop into a formal township. The church and school were the centre of the rural community where many social as well as religious functions were held.(4)

Since a new church Lumen Christi has been built in 1980 at Leopold, St Francis Xavier has been virtually unused.(5)

Further research is necessary.

## References:

1. Hill, R. *Catholic Life on the Bellarine Peninsula*. p. 5.
2. Wynd, I (1988) *Balla-wein. A History of the Shire of Bellarine* p. 101
3. Hill, R., op.cit., p.6
4. Wynd, I op.cit., pp.101-2
5. *ibid.*, p.166

# BELLARINE HERITAGE STUDY RECORD SHEET

Site Address	No.	Street/Site name	Town / Suburb	Record No.	33
	1030	Portarlinton Rd	Curlewis 3222	Page No.	4 of 4

## Statement of Cultural Significance:

St Francis Xavier Catholic Church, built beside the (now demolished) Catholic school, was opened in 1873 and the octagonal belfry was added in 1878. It is a steeply gabled slate roof Decorated Gothic structure of rendered brick with diamond paned leadlight windows and interior timber panelling.

St Francis Xavier Catholic Church has aesthetic, historic and social value to the Curlewis district community.

This well proportioned Decorated Gothic church with good integrity is surrounded by cypress trees. The church and its setting demonstrate important picturesque visual qualities. The establishment of the Catholic school and St Francis Xavier Catholic Church together illustrates the strength of Catholicism in the area. The Church, which was in continuous use for over 100 years, has had a major religious and social association with the rural Curlewis community since 1873. It is the sole remnant of the once active agricultural community which existed at Curlewis.

It is of LOCAL cultural significance.

## Additional Information