

19 April 1994

HISTORIC BUILDINGS COUNCIL



Mr Greg Maddock,  
General Manager,  
City of Prahran,  
P O Box 21,  
PRAHRAN VIC 3181

|                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| CITY OF PRAHRAN         |                  |
| RECEIVED<br>21 APR 1994 |                  |
|                         | REPLY            |
| P.M.                    | INFORMATION ONLY |
| REPORT TO               |                  |

Dear Sir,

**FORMER INDEPENDENT CHURCH  
246 MALVERN ROAD, PRAHRAN**

I write to inform you that the Historic Building Council resolved on 12 April, 1994 to recommend to the Minister for Planning, in accordance with the Historic Buildings Act, that the above building be added to the Register of Historic Buildings.

I have enclosed a copy of the Extent of Designation and the Statement of Significance which were included in the Council's report to the Minister for Planning, for your information. I shall keep you informed of further progress.

Please contact Amanda Bacon (03) 628 5445 if you require further information regarding the registration of this building.

Yours sincerely,

  
**RAY TONKIN  
DIRECTOR**

cc National Trust of Australia  
" Royal Historical Society

FILE NO: 603452

HISTORIC BUILDINGS ACT (1981)

Recommendation to the Minister for Planning, the Honourable Robert Maclellan, MP in accordance with the Historic Buildings Act (1981), for the addition to the Register of:

NAME: Former Independent Church

ADDRESS: 246 Malvern Road, Prahran

EXTENT: To the extent of:

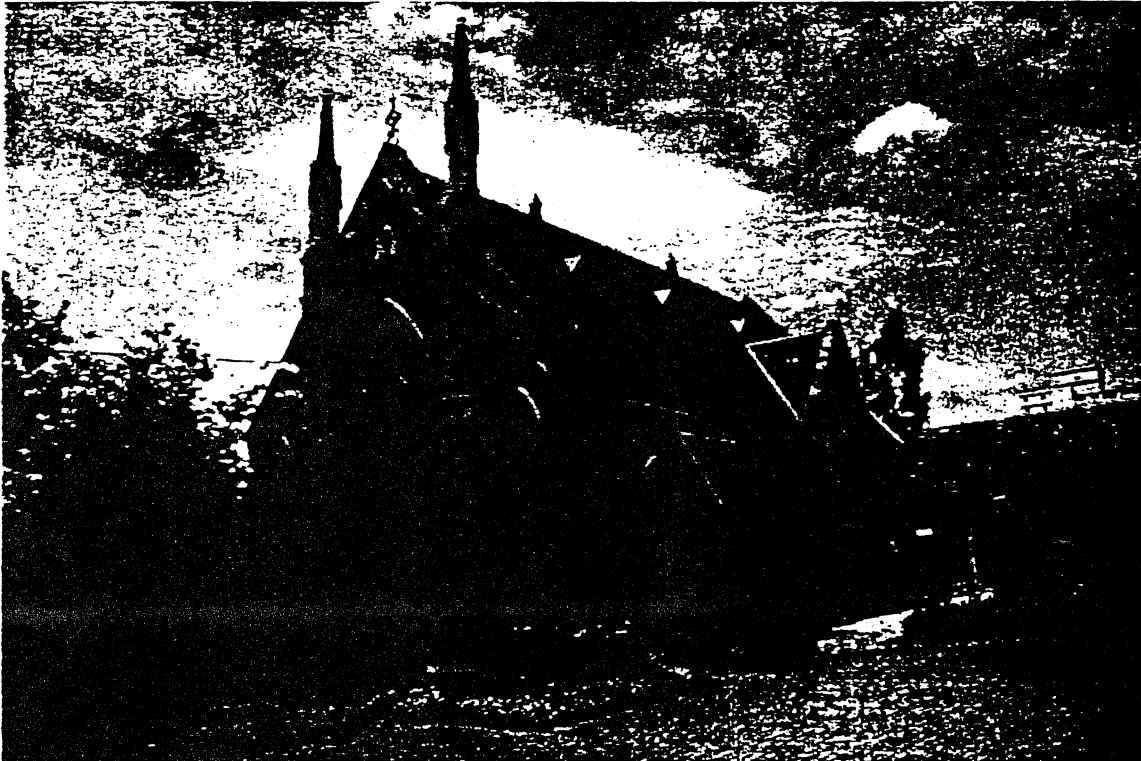
all of the building known as the former Independent Church marked B1 on Plan No.603452, signed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council, and

all of the land marked L1 on Plan No.603452 signed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council, being part of the land described in Certificate of Title, Volume 8705 Folio 106

OWNERS: The City of Prahran

PHOTOGRAPH

EXTENT OF DESIGNATION  
Refer Plan 603452



CHAIRPERSON'S SIGNATURE:

*Dr. Hume*

DATE:

12/4/94

Former Independent Church  
246 Malvern Road, Prahran

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former Independent Church is one of a significant group of early churches constructed in Melbourne in the 1850s. It occupies an important position in the history of the Independent Church in Victoria in that it was an early off shoot of the original two Independent (or Congregationalist) churches in Melbourne. This development reflected Prahran's role as an early satellite settlement to the young city.

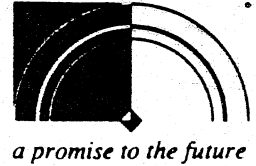
The church, the main section of which was constructed in 1858, was built to cope with the overflowing congregation from the first place of Independent Church worship in Prahran, a chapel at the nearby corner of what is now Chapel Street, the thoroughfare whose name commemorates that first place of worship.

The church was part of the Independent Church complex consisting of the basalt church and vestry, the Hawthorn brick vestry passage and associated timber structures, and the Hawthorn brick Sunday school.

- \* The former Independent Church is architecturally significant as one of the earliest designs of Crouch and Wilson whose partnership was formed in 1858. The firm of Crouch and Wilson was one of the most influential in terms of ecclesiastical and institutional architecture in the Colony of Victoria in the 1860s and 1870s. The church building at Prahran is particularly significant within the overall context of the religious buildings designed over two decades by Crouch and Wilson.
- \* The later works comprising the organ chamber (1869) and the vestry and related rooms at the rear of the church (1878) are representative of the staged development of expanding suburban congregations. These staged developments and the fact that Crouch and Wilson's design for an imposing tower at the front of the church was never realised reflect the financial constraints within which such congregations had to function.
- \* The church is an important representative example of the work of Crouch and Wilson in the context of the architecture of the Non-conformist Churches. In particular, the raked floor is an early example of a later used feature that was specifically designed for the Non-conformist service in order to provide good sight lines to the preacher.

19 April 1994

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General Manager,  
City of Prahran,  
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OWNERS: The City of Prahran

PHOTOGRAPH

EXTENT OF DESIGNATION  
Refer Plan 603452



CHAIRPERSON'S SIGNATURE:

*Dr. Hauke*

DATE:

12/4/94

Former Independent Church  
246 Malvern Road, Prahran

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- \* The later works comprising the organ chamber (1869) and the vestry and related rooms at the rear of the church (1878) are representative of the staged development of expanding suburban congregations. These staged developments and the fact that Crouch and Wilson's design for an imposing tower at the front of the church was never realised reflect the financial constraints within which such congregations had to function.
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25 May 1994

HISTORIC BUILDINGS COUNCIL



Mr Greg Maddock,  
General Manager,  
City of Prahran,  
P O Box 21,  
PRAHRAN VIC 3181

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| CITY OF PRAHRAN |                  |
| FILE No.        |                  |
| RECEIVED        |                  |
| 30 MAY 1994     |                  |
| FOR             | FOR              |
|                 | REPLY            |
| P.M.            | INFORMATION ONLY |
| REPORT TO       |                  |

Dear Mr Craddock

**FORMER INDEPENDENT CHURCH**  
**246 MALVERN ROAD, PRAHRAN**  
**HBR No. 1022**

I write to inform you that the above property was added to the Historic Buildings Register, in accordance with Section 14 of the Historic Buildings Act, on 19 May 1994.

For your information I have enclosed a copy of the notice published in the Victorian Government Gazette and the relevant material from the report to the Minister for Planning. The **Extent of Designation** explains the amount of building and land included on the Register and the **Statement of Significance** outlines the reasons why the building has been determined to be of special significance to Victoria.

Please be aware that the building owner is required to apply for a permit from the Historic Buildings Council before undertaking any works. I have enclosed a permit application form and a brochure which explains the permit process.

Should you have any further queries regarding either of these matters, please contact Alison Carey Registrations Administrator on 628 5445 or Frances Hall, Permits Administrator on 628 5437.

Yours sincerely

  
**RAY TONKIN**  
**DIRECTOR**

CC City of Prahran  
National Trust of Australia (Vic)  
Royal Historical Society of Victoria

Department of Planning and Development

**Historic Buildings Act 1981 (No. 9667)  
AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF  
HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

Under section 14 of the **Historic Buildings Act 1981** the Governor in Council amends the Register by adding Historic Building No. 1022.

Former Independent Church, 246 Malvern Road, Prahran.

(To the extent of:

All of the building known as the former Independent Church marked B1 on Plan No. 603452, signed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council; and

All of the land marked L1 on Plan No. 603452 signed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council, being part of the land described in Certificate of Title, Volume 8705, Folio 106.)

Dated 17 May 1994

Responsible Minister:  
**ROBERT MACLELLAN**  
Minister for Planning

**KATHY WILSON**  
Acting Clerk of the Executive Council



Former Independent Church  
246 Malvern Road, Prahran

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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FILE NO: 603452

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EXTENT: To the extent of:

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all of the land marked L1 on Plan No.603452 signed by the Chairperson, Historic Buildings Council and held by the Director, Historic Buildings Council, being part of the land described in Certificate of Title, Volume 8705 Folio 106

OWNERS: The City of Prahran

PHOTOGRAPH

EXTENT OF DESIGNATION  
Refer Plan 603452



CHAIRPERSON'S SIGNATURE:

*Rn Hauke*

DATE:

12/4/94

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
**HISTORIC BUILDINGS ACT (1981)**

**APPLICATION TO REMOVE, DEMOLISH, DEVELOP, ALTER OR SUBDIVIDE A BUILDING ON THE REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

I, the undersigned \_\_\_\_\_  
(name in full)

of \_\_\_\_\_  
(address in full) (post code)

Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_

being the owner of a historic building situated at \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (full address of Historic Building) (post code)

in the municipal district of \*City/Town/Borough/or Shire of \_\_\_\_\_

and known as \_\_\_\_\_  
(state name, if any of this historic building)

Buildings established under Section 14 of the Historic Buildings Act (1981) **HEREBY APPLY** to the Historic Buildings Council

for a Permit to:\*      remove  
                                  demolish  
                                  develop      the said historic building or land.  
                                  alter  
                                  subdivide

I attach hereto full description of the works proposed to be carried out by me together with the name of my architect/surveyor (if any) and my builder and/or demolisher and (in the case of alterations) I furnish herewith full plans and specifications of the works proposed to be carried out (3 copies are required).

In the case of a historic building proposed to be removed and re-erected in whole or in part on another site, full particulars of the removal and re-erection are required to be annexed.

Purpose for which the Historic Building is used: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose for which Historic Buildings on alteration will be used: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated cost of works \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I undertake that the \*removal/demolition/development/subdivision/alteration will be carried out in conformity with the Permit granted by the Council and with any conditions which the Council thinks fit to impose.

DATED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_

OWNER'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

\* Strike out words which are inapplicable.

**NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (VICTORIA)  
CLASSIFICATION REPORT**

**Former Independent Church, 246 Malvern Road, Prahran**

**1 NAME OF PLACE/ARTEFACT**

[Former] Independent Church

**2 OTHER CURRENT NAME**

[Former] Congregational Church

**3 LOCATION**

246 Malvern Road, Prahran

**4 DATE**

1858-9 (and 1869-70, 1878, 1886, 1901, 1914, &c)

**5 TYPE OF PLACE/ARTEFACT**

Church

**6 LISTING DETAILS**

State

**7 EXTENT OF DESIGNATION**

Building and immediate curtilage.

**8 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The former Prahran Congregational Church is of state significance as an early local example of the Nonconformist tradition, as a prominent early church work by an important firm of architects, and as the oldest surviving example of a ramped auditorium-type church interior in Victoria. This significance has survived the loss of the 1863 F W Nicholson organ and the pews, and damage to the floor.

The church was built in 1858-9 in bluestone with cement dressings, in a free version of the Decorated Gothic style, and was one of the first to be designed by the subsequently prolific practice of Thomas J Crouch and Ralph Wilson. It was intended to be completed in stages but never reached its designed final form, which was to include a masonry chancel and a tower. A wooden porch designed by C E Connop in 1886 provides entry in what was to be the tower base, and there is a timber extension at the east end, between the church and vestry, which probably dates from 1914. The absence of the tower leaves the north (liturgical west) front substantially symmetrical and destroys the picturesque effect as designed, though the porch marginally alleviates this. The most conspicuous exterior feature is the three light window in this facade, with its geometric tracery.

The nave is given further significance by the use of heavy wooden cruciform columns with distinctive foliated capitals to create an aisled effect. The ceiling, although modified by wood panelling and levelling of the centre part in 1901, remains an important visual element, with hammer beam trusses supported on the columns and on corbelled colonettes at the walls. The remains of the frieze of about 1910, and of the earlier dado, are also important.