

CITY OF SOUTH PERTH LOCAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

Management
Category

B

PLACE RECORD FORM

Prepared by *Heritage Today*, March 2000
Most recent update by City of South Perth, November 2015

Place No: CB 1 Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints



(Heritage Today, 1999)

LOCATION

Name of Place	<i>Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints</i>
Other / former names	
Address	164 Labouchere Road
Suburb	Como
Local Government Authority	City of South Perth
Scope of listing	This heritage listing applies to the whole of the site.

LISTINGS BY OTHER BODIES

Name of Body	Reference No.	Grade of Listing	Date
Heritage Council of Western Australia	4803	Data base only – not listed	-

LAND DESCRIPTION

Reserve No.	Lot	Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio
-	177	Swan 40	66309	V 1671 F 373

PERIOD	Post-War (World War II)
Design Style	Late Twentieth Century Organic
Construction Date	1958
Source/Details	Building Plans approved by City of South Perth

USE(S) OF PLACE

Original	Church
Present	Church
Other / former	

HISTORICAL NOTES

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (also known as the LDS Church or, more informally, the Mormon Church) is a Christian church that is considered by its followers to be the restoration of the original church founded by Jesus Christ. The headquarters of the church is in Salt Lake City, Utah, and there are established congregations (called *wards* or *branches*) and temples worldwide. The church has had a presence in the Australia since 1840, when William James Barratt, emigrated from England to Adelaide.¹ The first such church was established in Perth in 1896.²

The Perth Branch of the *Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints* met at Subiaco from 1947 until 1958 when the Como Chapel was completed. With an expanding membership, land was sought to build a chapel in the southern area of Perth. A site on the corner of Labouchere Road and Eric Street, Como, was purchased in 1956 for the cost of 5,229 pounds 17 shillings and 11 pence. The local congregation was required to pay 30% of the land costs and 20% of the chapel building costs. The members worked hard to try and achieve this. The women combined their strengths in the Home Relief Society and raised funds by holding bazaars and cake stalls, catering for weddings and other social events, and by making caravan mattresses. The cost of the Como Chapel was estimated at approximately 33,000 pounds.

The 'ground-breaking' ceremony to start the building program occurred on 26 October 1957. A building license was applied for and granted in the same year and the chapel was completed in 1958 under the supervision of Frank Goodrich, a builder from Moses Lake, Washington DC. The construction time was eight months. The Building Committee of the *Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints* designed the chapel in Salt Lake City. The Perth Branch of the Australian Mission assisted them. The architects, based in Salt Lake City, were Arnold Ehlers and Harold Burton. Unfortunately the overseas and Sydney architectural and building supervision components pushed the costs of the chapel beyond expectations. Therefore, the local cost component could not be met and the chapel was not dedicated for some years.

However, the chapel opening was celebrated by a banquet held in the Social Hall and attended by 170 people. The Home Relief Society ladies provided the catering. On 10 August 1958, a Thanksgiving Service was held where the official handing over the keys took place. This was witnessed by a congregation of 230.

¹ Wikipedia web site: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints_in_Australia.

HISTORICAL NOTES (cont'd)

The *Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints* dedication ceremony finally occurred on 31 August 1971. It was led by Elder Ezra Taft Benson, an American farmer and religious leader who also served as Secretary of Agriculture in the United States Cabinet during both terms of President Dwight D Eisenhower. Elder Taft later became the thirteenth president of the world-wide movement of the Church of the Latter Day Saints, serving in this capacity from 1985-1994.³

In 1984, new classrooms were added to the *Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints*, with further alterations or additions being made to the building in 1993, 1996, and 2004, respectively.

During the period 1988 and 1994 the Perth Branch became known as the 'Como Ward'.

DESCRIPTION

The Como Chapel of the *Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints* is set back from Labouchere Road behind shrubbery and manicured lawns. The main body of the chapel is a brick rectangular building with a steeply pitched, 'A-line' tiled roof. The façade features a sculptured curtain wall of Toodyay stone and geometrically patterned concrete blocks. A brick and concrete block tower with a needle like spire stands at the entry to the chapel. On the southern side of the chapel is a low single storey classroom wing constructed from the same building materials to blend with, but not dominate, the main part of the chapel. The building reflects the scale of surrounding residential development.

The chapel reflects the influence of United States architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, a forcible designer of Post World War II architecture. Wright was considered the master of the organic idiom and this chapel has some of the characteristics typical of Late Twentieth Century Organic style. Some of the features include the angular geometry of the sharply pitched dominating roofline, textured brickwork with horizontal emphasis and the strong use of stone in the curtain wall on the façade of the building.

ASSOCIATIONS**ASSOCIATION TYPE**

Arnold Ehlers and Harold Burton	Architects, from Salt Lake City, Utah
Frank Goodrich	Building Supervisor, from Moses Lake, Washington DC
Elder Ezra Taft Benson, President LDS Church	Officiated at dedication ceremony, 1971

HISTORIC THEME / Sub-theme**CATEGORIES OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Community Efforts/ <i>Religious Institutions</i>	Aesthetic
	Historic
	Social
	Representative
	Rarity

² Wikipedia web site: <http://www.ldschurchtemples.com/perth/>.

³ Wikipedia web site: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ezra_Taft_Benson

RATING AND ASSESSMENT**High****Low**

Aesthetic value (streetscape, setting)	1 ✓	2	3	4	5
Architectural merit (design features)	1 ✓	2	3	4	5
Rarity value	1 ✓	2	3	4	5
Value as part of a group/precinct	1	2	3 ✓	4	5
Condition	1	2 ✓	3	4	5
Integrity	1	2 ✓	3	4	5

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Como Chapel of the *Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints* has aesthetic, historic, social, representative and rarity cultural heritage significance. With many of the finer features of 1950s and 1960s architecture, the building is a good and rare representative of Late Twentieth Century Organic architectural style. Since 1958, the church has been an important centre of religious worship and education for the members of the Como Ward.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**Management Category B : Considerable significance**

Conservation essential. Reflects the highest level of local cultural heritage significance. Very important to the heritage of the locality. High degree of integrity and authenticity. Demolition or significant alteration to a place in Management Category B of the Heritage List is not permitted. Any alterations or additions are to be guided by a Conservation Plan, if any, and reinforce the heritage values of the place.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION / BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Apperly R, Irving R, Reynolds P, 'A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture'. Angus and Robertson NSW, 1989.
- City of South Perth Building License Files No.8549/57, City of South Perth.
- City of South Perth Municipal Heritage Inventory (No.1) 1994.
- Reviews of Municipal Heritage Inventory by *Heritage Today* in 2000 and 2006.
- Molyneux I, 'Looking Around Perth: A Guide to the Architecture of Perth and Surrounding Towns'. The Royal Institute of Architects, 1981.
- Cummings D W, 'Saints of the Golden West'. Self Published, WA, 1997.

HISTORY OF HERITAGE LISTING BY CITY OF SOUTH PERTH

	Date Adopted by Council
Initial listing in MHI	December 1994
Update of MHI	February 1996
Update of MHI	December 1996
Update of MHI	December 1997
Review of MHI by <i>Heritage Today</i>	June 2000
Update of MHI	June 2002
Update of MHI	March 2003
Review of MHI by <i>Heritage Today</i>	February 2006
Interim Heritage List – Policy P313 'Local Heritage Listing'	April 2013
Updated in renamed LHI	November 2015



The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints viewed from the corner of Labouchere Road and Eric Street, Como.
(Heritage Today 1999)

LOCATION MAP



(Digital Cadastral Data supplied by Landgate, WA. P295)