

Building:	Former Woodhouse Grove Wesleyan Chapel	Significance:	A
Address:	147 Woodhouse Grove, Box Hill North	Melway May Ref:	47 E5
Building Type:	Church	Construction Date:	1856
Architect:	Unknown	Builder:	Unknown



Intactness:

G[x] F[] P[]

Condition:

G[x] F[] P[]

Existing Heritage Listings:

Victorian Heritage Register []
 Register of the National Estate []
 National Trust [x]

Recommended Heritage Listings:

Victorian Heritage Register [x]
 Register of the National Estate [x]
 Heritage Overlay Controls [x]

History

Joseph Aspinall (1819-1898) acquired 49 acres from John Dane, grantee for Crown Allotment 12, in the Woodhouse Grove area in 1851. Aspinall was an orchardist, member of the first Nunawading District Road Board and foundation member of the Box Hill Cemetery Trust. He was a Methodist who made his home at the north end of Aspinall Road available for the first services in the district, eventually selling a portion of his land as the site of the present chapel.

Construction of the chapel commenced in 1855 using locally quarried sandstone (Aspinall had previously worked a quarry on the Collingwood Flat). Services commenced in 1856 and the church became part of the Richmond circuit in 1863. Andrew Lemon contends that constructions began in 1856 and that the first service was held the following year ¹.

The building is now known as The Grove Uniting Church.

Description

The Woodhouse Grove Chapel is a small building of coursed freestone with quoining, and round-arched Georgian window with cream brick surrounds and keystones. The hipped slate roof is partially concealed behind a rendered parapet bearing the words WESLEYAN CHAPEL 1856 in low relief. The rendered front porch, a later addition, encroaches over the present footpath.

The porch floor is of stone flags, and the nave has scissor trusses and a pyramidal ceiling. Hinged cast lamp brackets also remain.

Significance

The former Woodhouse Grove Wesleyan Chapel is of outstanding historical and aesthetic significance. It was one of the first church buildings to be built in the area, and the oldest surviving church building in the municipality. It is an early building within the broader context of Victoria. The church is also one of a very small number of stone buildings within the municipality, and its Georgian details are highly unusual for a Wesleyan Church. The building also derives significance from its associations with the pioneering Methodist Aspinall family, in particular Joseph Aspinall.

Source

Andrew C Ward & Associates. *City of Box Hill Heritage and Conservation Study*. 1990.

Additional Historical Information

Miles Lewis (ed). *Victorian Churches: Their Origins, Their Story and Their Architecture*. Melbourne, 1991. p 59.

1 *Argus*. 2 January 1857. p 5.