

22.02 COBRAM CHURCH PRECINCT

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This policy applies to all applications within the Cobram Church Precinct Heritage Overlay (HO250).

22.02-1 Policy Basis

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This policy applies the SPPF provisions at Clause 15.03 to local circumstances and builds on the local objectives and strategies identified at Clause 21.04-4. The MSS identifies the protection of places of cultural heritage and supporting preservation of those site threatened by development or neglect as a key objective. The MSS also identifies the need for its cultural heritage assets to be conserved and enhanced.

The *Moira Shire Stage Two Heritage Study* (2007) has assessed individual sites, precincts and groups across the municipality. A Statement of Significance has been prepared which describes the history and condition of some of these heritage places. Other heritage places within precincts are documented in the Study database or are listed in Appendix 1 of the report.

All buildings which are 'contributory' within the Precinct are listed at Clause 22.02-7 in this Policy.

All applications will be assessed in accordance with the following Statements of Significance for the Heritage Places as listed in the *Moira Shire Stage Two Heritage Study* (2007).

22.02-2 Statement of Significance

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The Cobram Church precinct is **aesthetically** significant at the **local** level. The precinct retains significant views, within the precinct, to the imposing red brick Federation Gothic Catholic Church and Convent and former Federation Gothic Presbyterian Church, the diminutive timber former Methodist church, the 2002 carillon. These views cumulatively reinforce the historic late nineteenth century and early to mid twentieth century religious values of the town and setting of the precinct and its associated religious structures. These views occur along Broadway, William and Hay Streets and are particularly prominent when viewed across the parklands and school playground. The built form of all of its significant buildings includes hipped and gabled roofs with generous setbacks. The church buildings are good examples of their architectural type and provide important architectural integrity and focal points to the precinct. The interior of the churches are also aesthetically significant particularly for the interior spaces and intact detailing.

The aesthetic character of the precinct is formed by the majority of the culturally significant buildings being Federation or Inter-War in design, and are rectangular, single storey with steep hipped or gabled roofs, and positioned parallel to the rectangular shaped allotments. They are either constructed of timber or unpainted red brick walls, with roofs clad in galvanised corrugated iron or slate. They are mostly bounded by low fences of red brick, some with concrete capping. The timber church has a low cyclone wire fence with wrought iron gate. The post war buildings are typical architectural examples of the era of their construction.

The Cobram Church Precinct is **historically** significant on a **local** level for its strong and continuing association with the religious and cultural life of the community. The Precinct is particularly associated with, but not limited to, the historical development of the Roman Catholic community in the early twentieth century and interwar period. It is historically significant for Cobram's earliest extant purpose built religious structures for the Wesleyan Church (1889), Catholic Church (1911) and Presbyterian Church (1912) and also contains sites associated with important individuals in the historical development of religious life in the town.

The coexistence of Catholic, Wesleyan and Presbyterian churches on this historically contiguous site is testament to the religious harmony that existed between denominations which was a distinctive feature of Cobram's religious and cultural development in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Cobram Church Precinct thus forms a

particular and significant component of the heritage of Cobram. The Precinct is **historically** significant on a **local** level for its strong and continuing association with the educational life of the community throughout the twentieth century, illustrating also the early association of religion and education in the state.

The Cobram Church Precinct is **socially** significant on a **local** level as it valued by the local community for its religious, spiritual, cultural, educational and social associations. The Cobram Church precinct is **scientifically** significant at the **local** level. The materials and workmanship in the significant buildings are technically important and increasingly rare examples in Cobram.

Overall, Cobram Church Precinct is culturally significant at the LOCAL level.

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Policy Objectives

- To maintain the special historic character of church precincts largely comprised of churches, associated community buildings, manses and sometimes including other Victorian and Federation residences.
- To ensure that new infill buildings do not detract from the dominance of the church buildings through excessive height, bulk or overly bright colours and materials.
- To ensure the setbacks are consistent with those of the precinct
- Maintain views in and out of the precinct.

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Policy

In considering applications under the Heritage Overlay it is policy to:

- discourage development that will detract from the prominence of the church buildings
- maintain prevailing side and front setbacks.
- encourage the use of construction materials for infill development which are compatible with the churches' unpainted red brick walls or timber wall construction and iron or slate roofs.
- discourage development that would detract from or obscure views in and out of the precincts, in particular: in Cobram views to the churches along Broadway, William and Hay Streets and across parkland and the school playground.

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Application requirements

An application should be accompanied by a report prepared by a suitably qualified heritage consultant, which assesses the impact of the application upon the significance of the heritage place. This information may not be required for minor applications as determined by the responsible authority.

All applications for the total demolition of a significant or contributory heritage place are to be accompanied by a report from a suitably qualified and experienced structural engineer that outlines the structural condition of the building.

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Decision Guidelines

Before deciding on an application the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- The Statement of Significance for those heritage places as contained above.
- Whether the application has responded to the relevant design suggestions in *The Heritage Overlay: Guidelines for Assessing Planning Permit Applications*.
- The History, Description and Statement of Significance of the Heritage Place in the *Moira Shire Stage Two Heritage Study (2007)*;

- Whether the building, place or group is identified as individually significant in the Heritage Overlay or a contributory place under this policy.
- How the buildings or works relate to the contributory building, place or group identified in this policy and Clause 22.17.

In deciding any application, the Responsible Authority will disregard existing non-contributory buildings and works when determining the appropriate siting, massing and scale of new buildings or extensions to existing buildings in a Heritage Overlay.

22.02-7 Contributory Places

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In addition to the individual places listed in the schedule to the Heritage Overlay, the following places have been identified as being 'contributory' within the Precinct in the *Moira Shire Stage Two Heritage Study* (2007):

- 2 William Street and 21-29 Broadway Street
- 3A William Street
- 4 William Street
- 4-8 Hay Avenue (Uniting Church)
- 10 Hay Avenue
- 12 Hay Avenue