

HO1637: GEELONG COMMERCIAL HERITAGE AREA

This policy applies to all land included in the Geelong Commercial Heritage Area.

Policy Basis

Geelong's commercial centre contains a diverse and fine range of nineteenth and twentieth century buildings representing the major periods of Geelong's growth from the 1850s to the post war era. It includes notable examples of architectural styles of commercial buildings, as well as public buildings and a few former residences .

The scale of the Geelong's commercial centre and its close relationship with key infrastructure – the wharves and port, as well as the railway station – reflect its importance as a regional commercial centre. In addition, the supporting role of warehouse and the like in the backstreets provides another layer of interest.

The development of Geelong's commercial centre from its historical heart, the former Market Square in Malop Street, dictated the spread of commercial activity down Ryrie, Moorabool, Gheringhap and Yarra Streets, as did the introduction in 1912 of the electric trams. The area also contains some very early examples of Victorian residential architecture in Yarra Street.

Individually and collectively the buildings in this area demonstrate the development of the City's public and commercial life, and includes work by some of Geelong's prominent architects and builders. The relationship between nineteenth and twentieth century architecture is expressed by the corner towers at the intersection of Ryrie with Gheringhap and Moorabool Streets.

The area is characterised by a variety of street widths with little or no separation between buildings, minimal setbacks and buildings with a diverse range of construction materials and of varying scale, size and height. It is also distinguished by the use of the local Barrabool sandstone to the facades of several early buildings. Verandahs are generally associated with pre-1930s commercial architecture.

Objectives

- To retain and enhance the diverse range of existing architectural styles of commercial buildings, former residences and public buildings which form the heart of Geelong's commercial precinct and represent the major periods of Geelong's growth.
- To protect the relationship between nineteenth and twentieth century architecture expressed by the corner towers at the intersection of Ryrie Street with Gheringhap and Moorabool Streets as an architectural expression of major periods of Geelong's growth.
- To retain the character of the area with little or no separation between buildings, minimal street setbacks and indiscriminate building scale, size and height.
- To encourage the contemporary interpretation of traditional building design and use of traditional material within the area.
- To retain the special character of the area which includes a number of notable buildings by significant Geelong architects and builders.
- To protect examples of early residential development within Geelong including Yarra Street.

Policy

Where a permit is required for a proposal, it is policy to:

- Promote buildings that incorporate the following design characteristics:
 - Pressed evenly coloured bricks.
 - Smooth rendered masonry, stone, timber, steel and glass walls.
 - Slate and non-zincalume corrugated sheet metal roofing.

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

- Encourage the separation between buildings to be equivalent to neighbouring buildings.
- Encourage front setbacks that are equivalent to the setback of neighbouring buildings or if these are different, the setback may be at a distance that is between the setbacks of neighbouring buildings.
- Encourage the reinstatement of the original verandah forms to commercial buildings where they formerly existed.
- Encourage buildings to have little or no separation from adjacent buildings.
- Encourage building heights not to exceed the height of the tallest neighbouring building located within the associated block.
- Ensure that buildings and works for commercial and civic buildings comply with the ‘Geelong City Urban Conservation Study Volume One – Restoration and Infill Guidelines: Commercial and Civic Buildings’ which is an Incorporated Document.

References

Geelong Region Historic Buildings and Objects Study Volume 2, prepared by Allan Willingham for the Geelong Regional Commission, (1986).

Geelong City Urban Conservation Study Volume One – Restoration and Infill Guidelines, prepared by Graeme Butler for the City of Geelong, 1993.

Geelong City Urban Conservation Study, Volumes 2-5, prepared by Graeme Butler for the City of Geelong, (1991).

Geelong City Urban Conservation Study, Volume 4(a), prepared by Helen Lardner for the City of Greater Geelong, (1995).

City Fringe Heritage Area Review Part 1 and Part 2, prepared by RBA Architects + Conservations Consultants for the City of Greater Geelong (May 2017)(updated October 2018).