

**Locality:** COWWARR  
**Place address:** 31-33 MAIN STREET  
**Citation date** 2016  
**Place type (when built):** Hall, Mechanics Institute  
**Recommended heritage protection:** Local government level  
Local Planning Scheme: Yes  
Vic Heritage Register: No  
Heritage Inventory (Archaeological): No

**Place name:** Cowwarr Public Hall & Memorials



**Architectural Style:** Interwar Stripped Classical  
**Designer / Architect:** Not known  
**Builder:** G. McAlpine  
**Construction Date:** 1930

## Statement of Significance

This statement of significance is based on the history, description and comparative analysis in this citation. The Criteria A-H is the Heritage Council Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance (HERCON). Level of Significance, Local, State, National, is in accordance with the level of Government legislation.

### *What is significant?*

The Cowwarr Public Hall & Memorials at 31-33 Main Street, Cowwarr, are significant. The original form, materials and detailing as constructed in 1930 are significant. The Cowwarr World War I, World War II & Vietnam War Honour Rolls held in the hall are also significant. The Interwar fence and gates to the front boundary are significant.

Later outbuildings, and alterations and additions to the building are not significant.

### *How is it significant?*

The Cowwarr Public Hall & Memorials are locally significant for their historical, social, aesthetic and scientific values to the Shire of Wellington.

### *Why is it significant?*

The Cowwarr Public Hall is **historically and socially significant at a local level** as it represents Cowwarr's boom period in the 1920s, following the construction of a butter factory in 1918 and coinciding with the construction of the town's other landmark building, the concrete Cricket Club Hotel (1929). The first Mechanics Institute and Free Library was built in Cowwarr in 1884, which was followed by a second Hall and Library. From as early as 1926, funds for a new hall were raised by locals, by means of bazaars. The existing Public Hall on Main Street was built in 1930, at a cost of 3000 pounds, which inherited the books from the earlier Free Library. The hall was built by Mr G. McAlpine. Although John P. O'Shaughnessy Pty Ltd., built the Cricket Club Hotel (1929) opposite using the same construction technique. The hall was very popular in the greater area for holding dances in the 1930s and 40s. A Reading Room is remembered by some locals as particularly important during World War II when papers delivered news of local men who had volunteered, when other communication was limited. The Public Hall also holds the Cowwarr World War I, World War II & Vietnam War Honour Rolls. In 2015, the hall continues to serve the local community, providing meeting rooms for local groups and a space for events and local celebrations. The hall is significant as a community hall that has served the hall for over 85 years to present day. (Criteria A & G)

The Cowwarr Public Hall is **aesthetically significant at a local level** as a highly intact concrete public hall illustrating the Interwar Stripped Classical style in the Shire, and as a landmark building at the centre of the small town of Cowwarr. The Stripped Classical style is evident in the tall parapet that has a flat triangular pediment and steps back at the sides, the projecting foyer with a lower roof line and tall decorative band of smooth render with a geometric pattern in recessed and projecting vertical panels, the flat-roofed entrance porch that is supported by three large square timber posts at each corner, and the narrow bands of smooth render which delineate the corners of the facade, emphasising the form of the parapet, porch and windows. Also notable is the smooth-rendered panel to the facade that reads 'PUBLIC HALL 1930' in relief, the tall rendered chimney with a simple flat cap at the east end of the foyer, the original timber ledged and framed doors, the metal-framed 4 and 8-paned windows, the windows to the facade which have yellow pressed glass and a rendered sill, lintel and sides, forming a frame to the window, and the entrance with its pair of wide timber ledged and framed doors with a multipaned metal-framed highlight. The entrance doors have a rendered lintel and sides (overpainted); the render to the sides tapers to the tops, giving an Egyptian nuance to the entrance. Also notable is the angled entrance on the west elevation with a pair of timber ledged and framed doors, tall narrow windows either side, and solid balustrades to the entrance. The hall has a metal tube fence with cyclone wire infill and decorative Interwar metal gates which allow a clear view of the hall, and are significant. (Criterion E)

The Cowwarr Public Hall **is scientifically significant at a local level** as an intact example of the experimental concrete construction methods being used in Victoria in the 1920s and 1930s. (Criterion F)

## Statutory Recommendations

This place is recommended for inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Wellington Shire Planning Scheme to the extent of the title boundary as shown on the map.

<b>External Paint Controls</b>	No
<b>Internal Alteration Controls</b>	No
<b>Tree Controls</b>	No
<b>Outbuildings or fences which are not exempt under Clause 43.01-3</b>	Yes, front fence
<b>Prohibited Uses May Be Permitted</b>	No
<b>Incorporated Plan</b>	No
<b>Aboriginal Heritage Place</b>	Not assessed

## Map of recommended boundary for Heritage Overlay



### KEY

- Recommended for Heritage Overlay
- Title boundary

### Cowwarr Public Hall 31-33 Main St, Cowwarr

Project: Wellington Shire Stage 2 Heritage Study  
Client: Wellington Shire Council  
Author: Heritage Intelligence Pty Ltd  
Date: 12/2/16

## History

### Locality history

The Cowwarr district was originally part of Hayfield Run, which was taken up in the 1840s. In the 1860s, when gold rushes occurred in the Great Dividing Range to the west, a supply route quickly formed from Sale to Toongabbie. In 1865, the Amending Land Act was passed; the 42nd section of the Act allowed selection of four 20 acre blocks provided the land was within ten miles of a recognised goldfield. From about 1866, an alternative route to Walhalla was created north of Toongabbie. By 1868, an accommodation house was operating and a town had been surveyed on the plain near the point where the track met the mountains. This town was named The Forty Second, named after the Act. The later name of Cowwarr is thought to have derived from an Aboriginal word meaning mountains or wind. At Cowwarr, supplies were transferred from bullock wagons to packhorses for the climb to the goldfields (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:62). From 1869, Cowwarr was part of the Rosedale Road District, and the Shire of Rosedale from 1871 (Context 2005:38).

The thick scrub from the Thomson River flats was gradually cleared, and oats, potatoes and other crops including orchards were grown on the fertile soil, with produce being sent to Walhalla. In 1870 a Catholic church was built and the following year, the population of Cowwarr totalled 74 people (Fletcher & Kennett 2005:62; Victorian Places). In 1883, the train station was built as part of a loop line from Traralgon. During the 1880s, a number of sawmills operated in the district, supplying red gum paving blocks to Melbourne. Dairying became a more popular industry as further land was cleared and drained, a creamery was set up and in 1897 construction begun on a butter factory. During this period, the largest training stables in Gippsland were located in Cowwarr. The Christ Church was built in 1901. Cowwarr now served the surrounding farming district (Context 2005:38; Fletcher & Kennett 2005:62).

In 1903, the *Australian Handbook* records that Cowwarr comprised a railway station, Cowwarr Hotel, Prince of Wales Hotel and Cricket Club Hotel, post office, Colonial Bank of Australasia, State School No. 1,967, Anglican and Catholic churches, a Mechanics Institute and free library and butter factory. By 1911, the population had increased to 239 people, which doubled to 486 by 1921. In 1918, a new butter factory was built near the railway station and in 1919 the Catholic Convent and school (now relocated and serves as the hall) were built. In 1929 and 1930, two of Cowwarr's landmark buildings were constructed, the Cricket Club Hotel (1929; replacing an earlier building) and the new Mechanics Institute Hall (1930) or Public Hall, both concrete constructions. From the 1930s to today, the population of Cowwarr has remained in the 300s (except for a decline to 206 in 1961) (Victorian Places).

In 1952, during widespread floods, the Thomson River broke out of its banks at Cowwarr, cutting a breakaway closer to the town known as Rainbow Creek, which became the new course of the river. In 1957, the Cowwarr Weir was built to help maintain flow in the Thomson River, continue providing local irrigation and drainage and prevent erosion (Context 2005:34-5; Fletcher & Kennett 2005:62).

The Catholic school was moved to Heyfield in 1954 and the butter factory closed in 1959; the unusually designed building now serves as an art gallery. In 1994, Wellington Shire was created by the amalgamation of the former Shires of Alberton, Avon and Maffra, the former City of Sale, most of the former Shire of Rosedale, as well as an area near Dargo which was formerly part of Bairnsdale Shire. Today, Cowwarr mainly provides rural living for people employed in business or industry in the Latrobe Valley or larger cities such as Sale (Context 2005:38-9).

### Thematic context

The following is based on information taken from the *Wellington Shire Thematic Environmental History* (Context 2005:42-3):

The mechanics institute movement originated from a series of lectures delivered by Dr Birkbeck in Glasgow to tradesmen, artisans and factory workers – or ‘mechanics’ as people who worked with machines were known – and it aimed to educate and spread industrial and technical knowledge. The movement became widespread in Victoria in the wake of the gold rushes. Land was reserved for mechanics institutes and residents in developing towns considered that building a mechanics institute was an early priority. Committees were formed in the new communities to build a mechanics institute that would serve as a meeting place, house a library and be a venue for lectures for the purposes of education. The institutes also became venues for public meetings, wedding celebrations, farewells and welcome homes to local soldiers. Deb balls were annual events, as were community Christmas celebrations and concerts. Often the mechanics institute housed war memorials to commemorate locals who served in World War I or II.

Many mechanics institutes survive in the shire. One of the earliest mechanics institute buildings in the shire is the Rosedale mechanics institute, a brick structure that opened in 1874 and extended in 1885. The Briagolong mechanics institute also opened in 1874 and since extended. At Newry, the original mechanics institute and a newer hall stand side by side. The Stratford mechanics institute is still popularly called ‘the mechanics’, and continues to function as the town’s hall. The Glenmaggie mechanics institute was moved to higher ground and survived the town’s drowning when the Glenmaggie Weir was built. It is an important reminder of the little town that once served its farming community. When their mechanics institutes were burnt at Binginwarri and Gormandale, the residents rallied and built new ones. At Maffra, the mechanics institute building has been incorporated into the town’s library. The Sale mechanics institute, a two storey building dating from 1891, has had a long association with education, first accommodating the Sale School of Mines, Art and Technology, and later becoming part of the Sale Technical School, and is now amalgamated with Sale High School to form the Sale College.

## Place history

The first Mechanics Institute and Free Library was built in Cowwarr (location not known) in 1884. Early descriptions suggest it consisted of only one room and was soon too small for the number of people who attended dances. A second Hall and Free Library was built (date not known) on the north side of the first state school (1877), with a dance floor, stage, supper room, kitchen and cloak rooms. It held many concerts, meetings, dances, balls and bazaars (Baragwanath & James 2015).

From as early as 1926, funds for a new hall were partly raised by locals, by means of bazaars. At this date the committee had already secured a site ‘opposite the post office’ (*Traralgon Record*, 15 Jun 1926:2; 3 Dec 1926:6). An article in the *Gippsland Times* in January 1929 (14 Jan 1929:4) reported that with the ‘new concrete hall and a new hotel, Cowwarr [would] soon present a more important appearance’. The *Construction and Local Government Journal* (Jan 1929:16) noted in 1929 that ‘£3000 is the cost of a new concrete public hall which is to be built at Cowwarr, near Traralgon (Vic)’ and that ‘£3500 is the value of plans approved by the Licensing Court for the new Cricket Club Hotel at Cowwarr (Vic). There was a lot of experimental activity in concrete house building and construction in Victoria in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in Melbourne (Lewis 7.08:9).

The current Public Hall on Main Street was built in 1930 and inherited the books from the earlier Free Library. An article in March 1930 reported that the opening of the new was to be celebrated by a ball (*Gippsland Times* 13 Mar 1930:3). The hall was very popular in the greater area for holding dances in the 1930s and 40s (HDHS). A Reading Room is remembered by some locals as particularly important during World War II when papers delivered news of local men who had volunteered, when other communication was limited (Baragwanath & James 2015).

The Public Hall has similar architectural details as the contemporary concrete Cricket Club Hotel (1929) built opposite. Besides being constructed during the same period with the same concrete technology, they both retain the same smooth rendered edging to the corners of the main forms of the facade (now painted in contrasting colours on both) and the same rectangular geometric details that

are indented or in relief. The designer for the hall and hotel is likely to be same as they are stylistically so similar, but it is known that they were both constructed by different builders.

The hall was built by Melbourne builder Mr G McAlpine (*Traralgon Record*, 6 Oct 1930), as was the Butter Factory 10 years earlier (1929). The two-storey Cricket Club Hotel was constructed by builder John P. O'Shaugnessy Pty Ltd (*Gippsland Times*, 12 sep 1929:7).

A photo dating to c1971 showed the facade of the unpainted hall. The photo showed many round metal vents to the roof (which have since been removed), the tall chimney on the east elevation and the entrance porch (Maddern 1971).

The Public Hall holds the Cowwarr World War I, World War II & Vietnam War Honour Rolls (Vic War Heritage Inventory).

Four cypresses are located to the east and south of the hall, but are not of an outstanding size or have a known historic significance. A modern cyclone wire fence with a metal tube frame runs along the front (north) boundary, with Interwar pedestrian gates (metal pipe, wire and mild steel decoration) near the main entrance. In 2015, the hall serves as meeting rooms for local groups and remains open for public hire for local celebrations and events.



**Figure H1.** This photo showed the facade of the unpainted hall c1971, with many round vents to the roof (which have since been removed), the tall chimney on the east elevation and the entrance porch (Maddern 1971).

### Sources

*Australian Handbook* (1903), as cited on Victorian Places.

Baragwanath, Pam & Ken James (2015), *These Walls Speak Volumes : a history of mechanics' institutes in Victoria*, Ringwood North.

Context Pty Ltd (2005), *Wellington Shire Heritage Study Thematic Environmental History*, prepared for Wellington Shire Council

Cr Carolyn Crossley, personal communication, provided references for builders, costs and architects, May 2016.

*The Construction and Local Government Journal* (Sydney NSW) 1913-1930.

Fletcher, Meredith & Linda Kennett (2005), Wellington Landscapes, *History and Heritage in a Gippsland Shire*, Maffra.

*Gippsland Times*

Heyfield & Districts Historical Society (HDHS) collection: historical information and photos generously provided by Louise Hill-Coleman and Merryn Stevenson, provided Nov 2015.

Maddern, I. T. (1971), *History of Cowwarr 1866-1971*. Provided by the Heyfield & Districts Historical Society.

Miles Lewis, Australian Building, Section 7.08 Forms & Systems. And personal communication Nov 2015 and April 2016.

*Traralgon Record*

Victorian Places, 'Cowwarr', <<http://www.victorianplaces.com.au/cowwarr>>, accessed March 2016. "Cowwarr Hall" Oct 6 1930.

Victorian War Heritage Inventory, Victorian Heritage Database, entries for 'Cowwarr Honour Roll (First World War)' and 'Cowwarr Honour Roll', <<http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/>> accessed 8 Dec 2015.

## Description

This section describes the place in 2016. Refer to the Place History for additional important details describing historical changes in the physical fabric.

The Public Hall was constructed of concrete in 1930 and reflects the Interwar Stripped Classical style with its distinctive construction technique visible in the horizontal lines and textures on the outside walls. The hall is located on the southern side of Main Street and east corner of Draper Street, at the commercial centre of the small town of Cowwarr. The building is located close to the front boundary, with a low cyclone wire fence and decorative Interwar gates, with landscaping to the front and east side, with some mature cypresses to the property (not of an outstanding size). The exterior of the 1930 concrete hall is in very good condition and retains a very high level of integrity, however the render on the interior walls is going soft and falling off (Brian Wheatley & Cr Crossley, pers. comm., Apr 2016).

### Concrete construction

There was a lot of experimental activity in concrete house building and construction in Victoria in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in Melbourne. The use of concrete expanded following World War I, and became a familiar and accepted building material that was used for ordinary housing and general purposes, rather than the technology of a few specialist firms and important buildings. This was partly a result of promotion of the technology in Australia through specialist magazines (Lewis 7.08:9)

### Reinforced concrete

The Cowwarr Hall may have been constructed using reinforced concrete. According to Helen Hoppner, who owned the Cricket Club Hotel for many years, the walls of the hotel were solid concrete and whilst drilling through the wall, it was hard work all the way, indicating that there was no cavity (Hoppner, pers. comm. May 2016). Physical investigation is required to confirm the type of concrete construction method used.

The former Cowwarr Butter factory was constructed in 1918 of reinforced concrete (HV). The architect of the Cowwarr Butter Factory was C.J. Rice of Collins St, Melbourne and the builder was Mr G McAlpine of Melbourne (25 Jun 1918 - Cowwarr Company Building New Factory). Interestingly, the outer walls of the Butter Factory (1918) were 'reinforced concrete 15 inches thick with a three (?) cavity and finished in cement stucco.'

**Figure D1 & Aerial.** The hall is a concrete construction with a hipped roof (gabled to the rear) clad with (recent) corrugated iron. The wall structure forms horizontal bands to the exterior, which suggests a formwork method of construction, with a thin render applied internally and in places externally (overpainted). The corners of the building have thick narrow bands of smooth render (overpainted in contrasting green).

The facade comprises a tall parapet that has a flat triangular pediment, and steps back at the sides. At the centre of the facade is a smooth-rendered panel with a rendered frame that reads 'PUBLIC HALL 1930' in relief. In front of the tall parapet is a wider section with a lower roofline, creating a foyer. The top of this section has a tall band of smooth render with a geometric pattern in recessed and projecting vertical panels. Attached to the right is a flat-roofed entrance porch, supported by three large square timber posts at each corner. The porch has a concrete floor.

**Figure D2.** Underneath the porch is an entrance with a pair of wide timber ledged and framed doors with a multipaned metal-framed highlight. The door has a rendered lintel and sides (overpainted); the render to the sides tapers to the tops, giving an Egyptian nuance to the entrance. To the right is a metal-framed 8-paned window of yellow pressed glass, with a rendered sill, lintel and sides, forming a frame to the window. Three windows of the same style are located to the left of the entrance.

The Public Hall holds the Cowwarr Honour World War I Roll and Honour Roll for World War II and the Vietnam War.

**Figure D3.** The height of the tall building is evident on the side elevations, which allows for a second floor behind the facade; with openings at this height. A tall rendered chimney with a simple flat cap is located on the exterior of the east end of the foyer. The east elevation of the hall has 4 and 8-paned metal-framed windows.

**Figure D4 & Aerial.** The west elevation has a timber ledged and framed door at the north end and 4 and 8-paned metal-framed windows with rendered sills. A large single-storey section is constructed off the rear (south) and west elevation of the hall, which serves as the toilets. This section is constructed in the same concrete technique as the hall and has an angled entrance, with a pair of timber ledged and framed doors, tall narrow windows either side, and solid balustrades to the path.

A modern facility block has been added to the east elevation of the toilets, which is sympathetic in design.



**Figure D1.** The hall sits behind a metal fence and gates which are likely to be original. The facade comprises a tall parapet that has a flat triangular pediment, and steps back at the sides. At the centre of the facade is a smooth-rendered panel with a rendered frame that reads 'PUBLIC HALL 1930' in relief. In front of the tall parapet is a wider section with a lower roofline, creating a foyer. Attached to the right is a flat-roofed entrance porch.



**Figure D2.** Underneath the porch is an entrance with a pair of wide timber ledged and framed doors with a multipaned metal-framed highlight. The door has a rendered lintel and sides (overpainted); the render to the sides tapers to the tops, giving an Egyptian nuance to the entrance. To the right is a metal-framed 8-paned window of yellow pressed glass, with a rendered sill, lintel and sides, forming a frame to the window.



**Figure D3.** The height of the tall building is evident on the side elevations, which allows for a second floor behind the facade; with openings at this height and a balcony inside the hall. A tall rendered chimney with a simple flat cap is located on the exterior of the east end of the foyer.



**Figure D4.** The west elevation has a timber ledged and framed door at the north end and 4 and 8-paned metal-framed windows with rendered sills. A large single-storey addition is constructed off the rear (south) and west elevation of the hall, which serves as the toilets.

### *Sources*

All photos taken in 2015 by Heritage Intelligence Pty Ltd as part of Wellington Shire Stage 2 Heritage Study.

Brian Wheatley and Cr Crossley, personal communication April & May 2016.

Heritage Victoria Place Citation for the former 1918 Cowwarr Butter factory.

Helen Hoppner, Cowwarr Hall committee of Management and former owner of the Cricket Club Hotel, personal communication, May 2016.

Miles Lewis, Australian Building, Section 7.08 Forms & Systems. And personal communication Nov 2015 and April 2016.

## Comparative analysis

### Concrete construction

There was a lot of experimental activity in concrete house building and construction in Victoria in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in Melbourne. The use of concrete expanded following World War I, and became a familiar and accepted building material that was used for ordinary housing and general purposes, rather than the technology of a few specialist firms and important buildings. This was partly a result of promotion of the technology in Australia through specialist magazines (Lewis 7.08:9)

In Wellington Shire there was a concentration of places in and around Cowwarr, built in concrete before and after WW1, such as the Foster commercial building in Maffra 1908, the Glenmaggie Weir 1914, water tower at Mewburn Park (c1920), Cowwarr Butter Factory 1918, Cowwarr Cricket Club Hotel 1929, Cowwarr Public Hall 1930. Rosedale also had an early concrete building, McCarthy House (also known as King House) built in 1914 by owner builder Francis McCarthy and possibly designed by Melbourne architect A A Fritsch.

Comparable places:

There are three substantial buildings in Cowwarr constructed of concrete between 1918 and 1930. Cowwarr Butter Factory in 1908, the Cricket Club Hotel in 1929 and Cowwarr Hall in 1930. The earlier 1918 Cowwarr Butter Factory is stated by Heritage Victoria, to have been constructed of reinforced concrete.

Cowwarr Public Hall – 1930 two-storey hall constructed of concrete, using a formwork system, built by G Mc Alpine from Melbourne and designed in the Interwar Stripped Classical style. The substantial hall is highly intact with simple Classical details and large dominant parapet to the facade. It is a landmark building in the small town of Cowwarr. There are no other halls in the Shire that are constructed of concrete before the Cowwarr Hall. Recommended for the Heritage Overlay as part of this Study.

Cricket Club Hotel, Cowwarr – 1929 two-storey hotel constructed of concrete, built by John P O'Shaughnessy Pty Ltd, using a formwork system and designed in the Interwar Stripped Classical style. The hotel is highly intact with simple Classical details and is a landmark building in the small town of Cowwarr. There are no other hotels in the Shire that are constructed of concrete before the Cowwarr Hotel. Recommended for the Heritage Overlay as part of this Study.

Cowwarr Butter Factory (former), 2730 Traralgon-Maffra Rd, Cowwarr – 1918 building designed by Melbourne architect C J Rice, and constructed of reinforced concrete by Melbourne builder G Mc Alpine. The one and two-storey building is in the Arts and Crafts style. It is significant for its architectural style and concrete construction for this type of factory, and its historical associations. (VHR H1282)

Foster Building, 67-71 Johnson St, Maffra – a 1908 two-storey commercial building designed by local architect Stephen Ashton and constructed of hollow concrete blocks, which is a different technique to the Cowwarr buildings which were constructed using form work. It is significant as an intact early example of concrete block construction in Victoria, with unusual moulded Classical details. The shopfronts on the ground floor have been altered. (VHR H2308).

## Management Guidelines

Whilst landowners are not obliged to undertake restoration works, these guidelines provide recommendations to facilitate the retention and enhancement of the culturally significant place, its fabric and its setting, when restoration works or alterations to the building are proposed. They also identify issues particular to the place and provide further detailed advice where relevant. The guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive and a pragmatic approach will be taken when considering development proposals. Alternative approaches to those specified in the guidelines will be considered where it can be demonstrated that a desirable development outcome can be achieved that does not impact on a place's heritage integrity.

This exterior of the building is in very good condition, however, there are concerns about render on the interior walls softening and falling off (Cr Crossley & Brian Wheatley, pers. comm. April 2016). There are some recommendations and guidelines below for future development and heritage enhancement.

### 1. Setting

- 1.1. Retain clear views of the front and side elevations from along Main and Cricket streets.
- 1.2. Ensure signs and services such as power poles, bus shelters, signs, etc are located so that they do not impact on the important views.
- 1.3. New interpretation storyboards should be placed to the side of the building not directly in front of it.
- 1.4. Paving
  - 1.4.1. Could be pressed granitic sand, asphalt or concrete.

### 2. Additions and New Structures

- 2.1. New structures should be restricted to the area shown in the blue polygon on the aerial map below.
- 2.2. Sympathetic extensions are preferred. E.g. New parts that are in the same view lines as the historic building as seen from Main Street, should be parallel and perpendicular to the existing building, no higher than the existing building, similar proportions, height, wall colours, steep gable or hip roofs, with rectangular timber framed windows with a vertical axis. But the parts that are not visible in those views could be of any design, colours and materials.
- 2.3. Where possible, make changes that are easily reversible. E.g. The current needs might mean that a doorway in the concrete wall is not used, or located where an extension is desired. Rather than bricking up the doorway, frame it up with timber and sheet it over with plaster, weatherboards, etc.
- 2.4. If an extension is to have a concrete slab floor, ensure it will not reduce the air flow under the historic building, if there is a sub floor cavity and timber floor.
- 2.5. New garden beds
  - 2.5.1. These should be a minimum of 500mm from the walls, preferably further, and the ground lowered so that the finished ground level of the garden bed is a minimum of 250mm lower than the ground level which is under the floor, inside the building. Slope the soil and garden bed away from the building, and fill the area between the garden bed and walls, with very coarse gravel up to the finished level of the garden bed. The coarse gravel will have air gaps between the stones which serves the function of allowing moisture at the base of the wall to evaporate and it visually alerts gardeners and maintenance staff that the graveled space has a purpose. The reason that garden beds are detrimental to the building, is by a combination of: watering around the base of the wall and the ground level naturally builds up. The ground level rises, due to

mulching and leaf litter and root swelling, above a safe level such that it blocks sub floor ventilation, and the wall is difficult to visually monitor on a day to day basis, due to foliage in the way.

### 3. Accessibility

#### 3.1. Ramps

##### 3.1.1. Removable ramp construction

3.1.1.1. A metal framed ramp which allows air to flow under it, to ensure the subfloor vents of the building are not obstructing good airflow under the floor, which will allow the wall structure to evaporate moisture, reduce termite and rot attack to the subfloor structure and reduce rising damp in brick/stone walls.

3.1.1.2. If it is constructed of concrete next to brick walls this may cause damp problems in the future.

3.1.1.3. Ensure water drains away from the subfloor vents, and walls and any gap between the wall and the ramp remains clear of debris. Insert additional sub floor vents if the ramp has blocked any of them.

3.1.1.4. The hand rails on the ramp should not be a feature, which would detract from the architecture. Plain thin railings painted in the same colour as the walls, so that they blend in, would be appropriate.

3.2. Metal banisters may be installed at the front steps. They are functional and minimalist and they have a minor visual impact on the architecture and therefore they are a suitable design for an accessible addition.

### 4. Care and Maintenance

4.1. Retaining and restoring the heritage fabric is always a preferable heritage outcome than replacing original fabric with new.

4.2. Subfloor ventilation is critical. Check that sub floor vents are not blocked by paint or other matter, and introduce additional ones if necessary. Ensure the exterior ground level is 250mm or more, lower than the ground level inside the building. Good subfloor ventilation works for free, and is therefore very cost effective. Do not rely on fans being inserted under the floor as these are difficult to monitor, they can breakdown as they get clogged with dust, etc, and there are ongoing costs for servicing and electricity.

4.3. Engineering: If a structural engineer is required, it is recommended that one experienced with historic buildings and the Burra Charter principle of doing 'as little as possible but as much as necessary', be engaged. Some of them are listed on Heritage Victoria's Directory of Consultants and Contractors.

### 5. Services

5.1. Ensure new services and conduits, down pipes etc, are not conspicuous. Locate them at the rear of the building whenever possible, and when that is not practical, paint them the same colour as the building or fabric behind them, or enclose them behind a screen the same colour as the building fabric that also provides adequate ventilation around the device. Therefore, if a conduit goes up a red brick wall, it should be painted red, and when it passes over say, a cream coloured detail, it should be painted cream.

### 6. Signage (including new signage and locations and scale of adjacent advertising signage)

6.1. Ensure all signage is designed to fit around the significant architectural design features, not over them.

NOTE: The blue shaded area is the preferred location for additions and new development



**KEY**

- Recommended for Heritage Overlay
- Title boundary

**Cowwarr Public Hall**  
**31-33 Main St, Cowwarr**

Project: Wellington Shire Stage 2 Heritage Study  
 Client: Wellington Shire Council  
 Author: Heritage Intelligence Pty Ltd  
 Date: 12/2/16

## Resources

Wellington Shire Heritage Advisor

Young, David (2008), "Salt Attack and Rising Damp, a guide to salt damp in historic and older buildings" Technical Guide, prepared for Heritage Victoria. Download from their web site or ask Wellington Shire's heritage advisor to email a copy to you.

The following fact sheets contain practical and easy-to-understand information about the care and preservation of war heritage and memorabilia commonly found in local communities across Victoria. They can be downloaded at <http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/index.php/veterans/victorian-veterans-virtual-museum/preserving-veterans-heritage/preserving-war-heritage-and-memorabilia>:

- Finding-the-right-conservator-tradespeople-and-materials
- General-Principles
- Honour-rolls ( wooden)
- Useful-resources-and-contacts.