

## HERITAGE ADVICE MEMO

To: Josh Mcalister, Director CHT Architects (jmc@chtarchitects.com.au)

Re: Marian College, 304 Barkly Street, Ararat.  
School building development - Heritage Review and advice

Date: 20 September 2023

Dear Josh,

Thank you for your briefing on the proposed development at Marian College Ararat. I confirm heritage advice.

### 1.0 Heritage Status

The school contains multiple individual Heritage Overlay sites as well as an overall heritage precinct. These include:

- HO47 Former Brigidine Convent of the Sacred Heart 302 Barkly Street
- HO100 Former St Mary's School 37-39 Princes Street
- HO50 Area D Barkly Street Churches and School Precinct
- HO48 Immaculate Conception RC Church 304 Barkly Street
- HO49 Catholic Presbytery 304a Barkly Street

The extent of these is illustrated on the following plan and review as part of a planning process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The document must not be used for any purpose which may breach any copyright

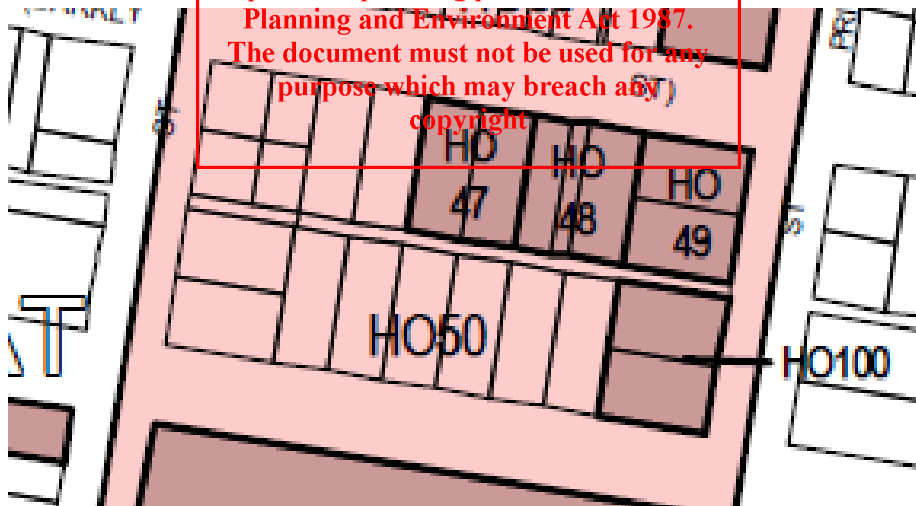


Figure 1, Ararat Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay map showing Marian College

### 2.0 Significance of the place

As the site contains a number of individual Heritage Overlays (HO's) as well as an overall Heritage Precinct there are a few statements of significances. Many of the sites share common architectural and historical significance particularly relating to their associations with the Catholic Church in Ararat.

#### Brigidine Convent of The Sacred Heart HO47

*The Brigidine Convent of the Sacred Heart, 302 Barkly St, Ararat is of local significance historically for its associations with Catholic education, the Brigidine Order, and the general Catholic community and architecturally for its use of the Collegiate Gothic style and as an example of the work of local architect, Michael Ryan.*

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*The significance of the Brigidine Convent extends to the whole of the building, including all extensions, and the whole of the land. It should be seen in the context of the whole of the Catholic complex and in association with the nearby State Primary School and the latter's much earlier antecedent, the Former Ararat Common School.<sup>1</sup>*

## **Immaculate Conception RC Church HO48**

*The Church of the Immaculate Conception, 304 Barkly St, Ararat is of local significance historically for its association with Catholic worship in Ararat from 1857, and architecturally for its use of the Romanesque Revival style typical of the architect A. A. Fritsch.*

*The significance of the Church of the Immaculate Conception extends to the whole of the building, including its extensions and modernisations, and to the whole of the land. It should be seen in the context of the whole Catholic complex and in association with the other religious buildings of Ararat.<sup>2</sup>*

## **Catholic Presbytery HO49**

*The Catholic Presbytery, 304a Barkly St, Ararat is of local significance historically for its association with the Catholic Church in Ararat and architecturally as an example of the work of local architect, Michael Ryan.*

*The significance of the Catholic Presbytery extends to the whole of the house and to the whole of the land. It should be seen in the context of the whole of the Catholic complex and in association with the nearby Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and Dominica opposite.<sup>3</sup>*

## **Former St Mary's School HO100**

*The Former St Mary's School, 37 Princes Street, Ararat is of local significance historically because of its long association with the Catholic education in Ararat and architecturally as a simple school building.<sup>4</sup>*

## **Area D: Barkly Street Churches and Schools HO50**

*The Barkly Street Churches and Schools Heritage Area is of local significance*

- i. *As the religious focus of two of Ararat's Christian denominations, the Uniting and the Roman Catholic churches,*
- ii. *For the religious education represented by St Mary's Primary School and the Brigidine Convent,*
- iii. *For the secular education represented by the Ararat Primary School, and*
- iv. *For its associations with the Grano Family.<sup>5</sup>*

## **3.0 Rural Ararat Planning Scheme**

As the site is included on the Rural Ararat Heritage Overlay works are subject to Ararat Planning 15.03-1S *Heritage Conservation*. The council has no specific heritage policy only standard strategies and policy guidelines listed below.

### **Strategies**

- *Identify, assess and document places of natural and cultural heritage significance as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.*
- *Provide for the protection of natural heritage sites and man-made resources.*
- *Provide for the conservation and enhancement of those places that are of aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, scientific or social significance.*

<sup>1</sup> Hermes database: Brigidine Convent of The Sacred Heart, <https://hermesorion.heritage.vic.gov.au/places/42971>

<sup>2</sup> Hermes database: Immaculate Conception RC Church, <https://hermesorion.heritage.vic.gov.au/places/42968>

<sup>3</sup> Hermes database: Catholic Presbytery, <https://hermesorion.heritage.vic.gov.au/places/42973>

<sup>4</sup> Ararat Heritage Study 1993, former St Mary's School citation

<sup>5</sup> Ararat Heritage Study Vol 1- Text and illustrations, Area D Barkly Street (Churches & Schools)

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- Encourage appropriate development that respects places with identified heritage values.
- Retain those elements that contribute to the importance of the heritage place.
- Encourage the conservation and restoration of contributory elements of a heritage place.
- Ensure an appropriate setting and context for heritage places is maintained or enhanced.
- Support adaptive reuse of heritage buildings where their use has become redundant.
- Consider whether it is appropriate to require the restoration or reconstruction of a heritage building in a Heritage
- Overlay that has been unlawfully or unintentionally demolished in order to retain or interpret the cultural heritage significance of the building, streetscape or area.

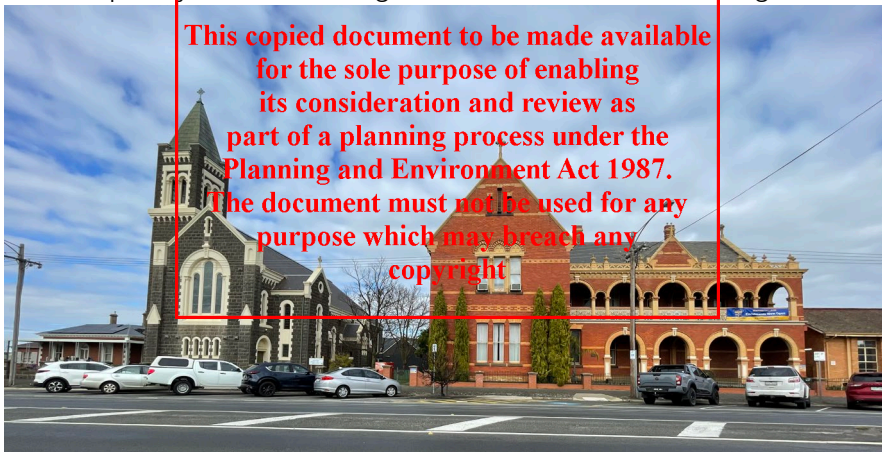
## Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- The findings and recommendations of the Victorian Heritage Council.
- The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013.<sup>6</sup>

## 4.0 Existing Conditions

Marian College is located on a large block on the corner of Barkly Street and Princes Street Ararat. The site is dominated by a number of heritage buildings along the Barkley Street boundary including the former Brigidine Convent, The Immaculate Conception RC Church and the Catholic Presbytery. Former St Mary's School is located on the corner of Moore and Princes Street to the south of the site. Excluding this heritage building the remainder of the south portion of the site includes open play spaces and a contemporary school building on the Moore Street and King Street corner.



**Figure 2**, Existing conditions of the former Convent, Church and Presbytery on Barkly Street (May 2023)



**Figure 3**, Existing condition of former St Mary's School building (May 2023)

<sup>6</sup> Rural Ararat Planning Policy 15.03-1S Heritage Conservation

Marian College is characterised by the main school building the former Brigidine Convent on Barkley Street. The two-storey red brick building is built in a Collegiate Gothic style with arch arcaded balcony and verandah and hipped and slate roof form. The building is decorated with polychromatic brick detailing and cast-iron balustrade to the first-floor balcony verandah.

To the west of this are later single storey brick hipped roof brick school buildings which sprawl south down the site in addition to contextual later additions to the former Convent building.



Figure 4, The rear of the former Convent building (May 2023)

The Immaculate Conception RC Church has a landmark position on Barkley Street and is constructed in rockface bluestone with a pitched slate roof and steeple. The adjacent presbytery is a modest single story brick building with rendered quoining and slate roof. It features a non-original verandah.



Figure 5, view of the school from the corner of Barkley and King Street (May 2023)

The wider HO50 Area D Barkly Street Churches and School Precinct includes numerous churches and schools including Ararat Primary School across the road to the south of Moore Street and the Uniting church to the north of the site.

The area proposed for development currently includes a contemporary basketball court with additional courts and an open grasses playfield on either side.

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Figure 6, Proposed location of new building existing conditions (May 2023)

## 5.0 Heritage review

### Background

MTA&H were engaged by Marian College and CHT architects to provide a heritage architectural review of the existing building design in May 2023. The following recommendations were provided in a heritage advice memo dated 2 June 2023 as well as a virtual design workshop with the project team:

*The proposed architectural response could benefit from referencing the surrounding heritage buildings more through:*

- Materiality/colour palette such as red brick, Bluestone, slate and corrugated iron sheeting.
- The use of gable or pitched roof typology within the new building form.
- De-scaling the front Moore Street pavilion through window placement or signage.

Following this CHT has further amended the architectural design to include:

- a masonry base incorporated into the west and north facades
- additional windows
- introduction of charcoal coloured material
- reduction in height of 1m

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I confirm preliminary heritage advice regarding CHT Architects drawings dated July 2023.

### Context

- The chosen location of the proposed new school building is suitably setback and separated from the sites heritage buildings and will have no visibility from the school's principal frontage on Barkly Street, having no impact on the assigned aesthetic and architectural significance of the significant heritage buildings.
- The existing playing courts also provide an appropriate separation from HO100 former St Mary's Schools on Princes Street. This building is also not intact following contemporary additions further reducing any impacts of an adjacent heritage building on its noted cultural heritage significance.
- The school sites appearance from Moore Street contributes less to the overall significance of the heritage places and precinct as only less intact or significant parts of the site's heritage buildings are visible.
- The existing typography of the site, which has the heritage buildings located on a higher level to the north further reduce any potential visual impacts of the construction of a new building in the proposed location.

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- The new building's location will have no impact on the wider HO50 Area D Barkly Street Churches and School Precinct including Ararat Primary School across the road to the south, which too has contemporary additions as is a typical feature in the context of the precinct.



Figure 7, View of the school from the corner of King and Moore Street Looking north east (May 2023)

### Architecture

- The contemporary architectural approach, proposed by the new school building is appropriate and in accordance with the ICOMOS Burra Charter which advocates against employing a faux heritage architectural design.
- The existing design has a relatively modest modular form which affirms the hierarchy of the former convent and church with their more dominant height and finer architectural detailing.
- The inclusion of the undercroft/veranda complements the existing architecture of the site serving as a contemporary interpretation of the arched arcades of the adjacent former convent on Barkly Street and the veranda of the Presbytery.
- The materiality of the building has been improved with the inclusion of a masonry base/plinth, the red brick referencing the existing materiality of the site's significant heritage building and serving as a contemporary rendition of a typological defined plinth evident on the sites significant former covenant building and adjacent church.

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Figure 8, Proposed building Marian College (CHT Architects September 2023)

- Additional fenestration has been added to the south facade and an alternative charcoal materiality has been introduced to break up the contemporary light metal clad facades and reduce the overall scale and bulk of the building, particularly the south facades.

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- The proposed contemporary colour scheme of predominantly light coloured metal cladding is appropriate and visually reductive as to not draw undue attention away from the sites more dominant darker coloured heritage buildings.

#### Rural Ararat planning policy

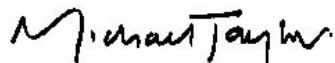
- Ararat Planning Scheme lacks any specific heritage policy, only guiding strategies and policy guidelines such as the ICOMOS Burra Charter. Those of most relevance to the proposed new building development are listed below.
- The proposed design is broadly in accordance with the policy guidelines
  - *Encourage appropriate development that respects places with identified heritage values.*
  - *Retain those elements that contribute to the importance of the heritage place.*
  - *Encourage the conservation and restoration of contributory elements of a heritage place.*
  - *Ensure an appropriate setting and context for heritage places is maintained or enhanced.*
  - *Consider as relevant: The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013.*

#### 6.0 Conclusion

- Overall, the proposed contemporary architectural design by CHT Architects appears appropriate within the diverse heritage context and presents no apparent adverse impact to the cultural heritage significance of the HO precinct or numerous adjacent individual HO sites.
- The architectural response has been revised to reference the vernacular architectural facade composition and material palates of the site's individually significant buildings while still being of a suitably contemporary architectural design.

Please contact me if you have any queries or require additional information.

Yours sincerely



Michael Taylor

Director MTA&H  
Heritage Adviser, Architect ARBV Reg No. 14847

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