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# Loch Village



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## Location

1-37 & 2-50 VICTORIA ROAD, and 2-12, 16, 32 & 5-7 SMITH STREET, LOCH, SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE

## Municipality

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE

## Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Listing

South Gippsland Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - December 20, 2022

### What is significant?

The Loch Village precinct comprising the buildings built from c.1900 to c.1955, at Victoria Road 1-37 and 20, 26-50 Victoria Road and 3, 7 and 2-12 Smith Street, Loch is significant. Significant and Contributory buildings in the precinct include:

- Pre-World War II shops and residences. These include gable fronted shops with post-supported verandahs and attached hipped or gable roof residences.
- Pre-World War II houses, which are all single storey, weatherboard detached houses with hip or transverse gable iron roofs and separate timber post supported verandahs.

Most are symmetrical and typically have timber sash windows on either side of central doors sometimes with toplights. Some have brick chimneys. Exceptions include the Interwar house at 27 Victoria Road, which is

asymmetrical in plan with a projecting gable, the Interwar bungalow at 48 Victoria Road, which has a tiled transverse gable roof and a projecting gable, the asymmetrical Edwardian house at 50 Victoria Road, which has a hipped roof that extends to form a return verandah (with a simple ladder frieze) that is contained within the projecting bays to the front and side, and the asymmetrical hipped roof 1930s bungalow at 12 Smith Street, which has cement sheet walls with a weatherboard dado.

- St Vincent's Catholic Church, a Federation Carpenter Gothic church.
- The Loch Masonic Temple, which is an Interwar brick hall.
- The former St Paul's Anglican Church, which is an interwar Gothic Church with Arts & Crafts influence. The Postwar former church hall is on the adjoining site.
- The former Union Bank, which is a two storey Federation bank with a transverse gable roof and walls of brick and render.
- The former Royal Hotel, which is a two storey Federation Hotel constructed of brick. The symmetrical facade has a simple rendered stepped parapet with 'Royal Hotel' in raised letters above a cornice and a recessed two level verandah with a ladder balustrade. Windows are double hung sash. There is a pair of mature *Washingtonia* palms in the rear yard.
- The former Post Office, which is a simple Federation building with a transverse gable roof that extends to form the entry porch, and the residence within a hipped roof section at the rear with a contiguous verandah. The walls are of brick with a rendered frieze below the eaves and to the gable ends. The timber sash windows have a six-pane top sash.

Buildings within the precinct are Contributory except as specified below. Also contribute to the precinct are mature street trees including Planes (*Plantanus sp.*) and Ash (*Fraxinus sp.*).

Non-original alterations and additions to Contributory buildings and other buildings on the sites are not significant. Non-contributory properties are 7, 21, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 42 & 46 Victoria Road and 10 Smith Street.

#### **How is it significant?**

The Loch Village Precinct is of local heritage, representative and aesthetic significance to South Gippsland Shire.

#### **Why is it significant?**

Historically, it is associated with the development of Loch into an important local commercial and community centre during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Early shops such as Bigelow's Store (1890) and 38-40 Victoria Street, and houses such as 8 Smith Street demonstrate the establishment and formation of the town, while the expansion in the period after 1900 when the butter factory was established is demonstrated by buildings such as the Union Bank (1902), St Vincent's Catholic Church (1903), the post office and residence (1913), former Royal Hotel (1917), Masonic Temple (1922), former St Paul's Anglican Church & Hall (1927, 1958) and several houses. (Criterion A)

It is a representative example of a small rural town centre of the early twentieth century. The mix of commercial, community and residential buildings is a defining characteristic of rural town centres and the significance of the precinct is enhanced by the legibility of the original phases of development. (Criterion D)

It has aesthetic significance as an early twentieth century rural town centre comprised of gable fronted or parapeted shops and residences, most with post-supported verandahs, interspersed with late Victorian, Edwardian and interwar detached houses and cottages with hipped or gabled roofs, and church and community buildings. The aesthetic qualities are enhanced by mature street trees, which include Planes (*Plantanus sp.*) and Ash (*Fraxinus sp.*). (Criterion E)

Of note within the precinct are:

- St Vincent's Catholic Church, 1 Victoria Road. This is a typical Federation Carpenter Gothic Church with typical form and detailing, although the windows have square heads instead of the usual pointed lancet profiles.
- Loch Masonic Temple, 20 Victoria Road. This asymmetrical interwar building has distinctive details including the typically small high-set windows with diamond pattern glazing while projecting entry capped parapet with a flat triangular pediment and simple cornice with 'Loch' in raised letters flanked by Masonic symbols. The piers at either side of the entry are capped with Ionic volutes and support a corbelled architrave.
- St Paul's Church of England (former) 30 Victoria Road. This is a fine and well-detailed example of an interwar Gothic Revival church with Arts & Crafts detailing.
- Bigelows Store, 35 Victoria Road. This highly intact building comprises a shop with an original timber shopfront and post-supported verandah, and an attached residence set back from the street with a three-sided bay window.

- Shops, 38 & 40 Victoria Road. This pair of gable fronted shops is distinguished by the battened and bracketed ladder frames to the gable ends, original timber shopfronts and doors.
- Union Bank (former), 44 Victoria Road. This is a fine and well-detailed Federation Bank, which is notable for the rare detached siting setback from the street frontage. The prominent siting and two storey scale with steeply pitched gable roof make it a landmark within the precinct.
- Royal Hotel, 2 Smith Street. This is a simply detailed Federation Hotel, which by its two storey scale is the largest building in the town and a landmark. The landmark qualities are enhanced by two very tall Washingtonia Palms.
- Loch Post Office (former), 7 Smith Street. This simply detailed building is in the form of a gabled bungalow with distinctive details such as the multi-paned windows, and rendered architraves with a cornice and integrate sign panel 'Post Office' to the porch entry.

Heritage Study/Consultant	South Gippsland - South Gippsland Heritage Study, David Helms with Trevor Westmore, 2004;
Construction dates	1890, 1890,
Other Names	Loch Precinct,
Hermes Number	31587
Property Number	

## Physical Description 1

The Loch Village Heritage Precinct includes the following properties:

- 2 Clarence Street
- 3-7 Roy Street (inclusive)
- 3, 7 and 2-12 Smith Street (inclusive)
- 1-19 & 31-35 and 2, 20 & 32-50 Victoria Road (inclusive)

Situated within the Alsop Creek valley, Loch is enclosed on the whole of the south, east and part of the north sides by hills, while the landscape opens up to the north west where the Alsop continues on to join the Bass River. The Loch Village heritage precinct includes Victoria Road, and parts of Smith and Roy Streets, which encompass the civic, commercial and residential buildings in the town.

Victoria Road is the main street of Loch and runs through the centre of the township. It contains a mixture of residential, commercial and public buildings, predominantly from the late Victorian and Federation period, with some interwar buildings on individual sites.

St Vincent's Catholic Church on the north side and Loch Primary School on the south mark the western entrance to the township. Adjacent to the church on the north side of the street are a number of late Victorian and Federation weatherboard cottages, as well as a corrugated iron building that was once used as blacksmith and an interwar garage. Further along is the former Bigelow's Store, which comprises a late Victorian shop and residence.

On the south side, at the corner of Roy Street is the interwar Masonic Temple, while further to the east at the intersection with Clarence Street is St Paul's Church of England & Parish Hall, which also dates from the interwar period. To the west of Clarence Street is a group of single storey weatherboard shops from the late Victorian to the interwar period, most of which are substantially intact and retain original features such as shopfronts and footpath verandahs. The most significant amongst this group are the late Victorian shops at Nos. 40-42.

The row of shops is dramatically terminated by the imposing two storey brick former Union Bank of Australia,

which dominates the commercial area of Victoria Road at its eastern end. One of two banks in the Shire designed by noted bank architect, WR Butler, and constructed in 1902, it is one of the best examples of Federation bank architecture in the Shire and an important landmark in the township.

Diagonally opposite the Union Bank is another Federation brick building, the Loch Post Office, which faces Smith Street. Adjacent to the Post Office are some interwar shops, while on the other side of the street is a late Victorian cottage. At the end of Smith Street is the Royal Hotel, a two storey brick Federation Arts & Crafts building that is enhanced by a pair of Washingtonia Palms.

The historic village character is enhanced by elements in the public realm, which include:

- The retention in Victoria Road of what appear to be some early concrete kerb, channel and footpaths.
- The mature street trees, including Ash and Plane Species in part or all of the streets.
- The informal cottage style gardens in both streets that have been established on the roadside verge, which often merge with the private front gardens.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*