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# Lara Uniting Church Complex



Lara Uniting Church Complex  
- 1B Flinders Avenue, Lara

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## Location

1B Flinders Avenue, LARA VIC 3212 - Property No 281874

## Municipality

GREATER GEELONG CITY

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO1997

## Heritage Listing

Greater Geelong City

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

What is Significant?

The former Wesleyan Chapel and the former Temperance Hall (former Methodist Church, now Tuckers Funeral and Bereavement Service), 1B Flinders Avenue, Lara, have significance as the earliest surviving and moderately

intact Church and public buildings in Lara. The former Wesleyan Chapel represents one of few mid 19th century Victorian Primitive Gothic styled Church buildings in the City of Greater Geelong. Built in 1865 for the newly-established local Wesleyan Church, the steeply-pitched and gabled limestone building has moderate integrity. Although the roof tiles and roughcast finish to the walls have been introduced, the original design is clearly discernible. In 1902, the Primitive Methodist and Wesleyan congregations amalgamated to form the Methodist Church of Australasia. At Lara, this was marked by the joining of the Wesleyan Church with the neighbouring Primitive Methodists who occupied the former Temperance Hall built in 1869. This building at the north end of the Uniting Church site, was purchased by John Spalding and he gave it to the Primitive Methodist congregation in 1891. The building became the principal location for local Methodist (and later Uniting Church) worship until 1980 when the existing late 20th century Church building on the site was built. The former Methodist Church building, earlier the social hub of community life in Lara until the opening of the neighbouring Public Hall in 1886, is a rare surviving example of its type. The gabled limestone building has original segmentally-arched windows with timber framed twelve-paned hopper sashes and an original door opening in the front porch. Although the gable roof of the front porch was added after 1921, it also contributes to the character and appearance of the building. To the south of the former Wesleyan Chapel is an early domed brick well/water tank. It is an important local historical legacy of 19th century water catchment, the unreliable supply of water having dogged the Lara area until the township was connected to the Geelong water supply in 1947.

How is it Significant?

The former Wesleyan Chapel, former Temperance Hall and brick well/water tank at the Uniting Church complex, 1B Flinders Avenue, Lara, are architecturally, historically, socially and scientifically significant at a LOCAL level.

Why is it Significant?

The former Wesleyan Chapel and former Temperance Hall are architecturally significant as moderately intact examples of mid Victorian church and public hall buildings (Criteria D & E). The former Wesleyan Chapel is one of few surviving Victorian Primitive Gothic styled churches in the City of Greater Geelong. The former Temperance Hall is also a rare surviving example of a rudimentary vernacular public building. Both buildings represent the earliest surviving church and public buildings in Lara. The limestone construction to both buildings contributes to the vernacular qualities of their designs. The introduced tiled roof cladding and roughcast wall finishes to both buildings has diminished their integrity, but they remain sufficiently intact that their original design qualities being clearly discernible.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Greater Geelong - Lara Heritage Review Phase 2, D. Rowe & W. Jacobs, 2013;
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Hermes Number	195338
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

### DESCRIPTION

The Lara Uniting Church complex, 1B Flinders Avenue, is comprised of a wedge-shaped site bound by Forest Road North (to the west) and Flinders Avenue (to the east). The main entrance to the site is from the east side, from Flinders Avenue, the gateway being demarcated by pencil pine trees. A large concrete car park forms a central courtyard, with the former Wesleyan Chapel located at the southern end and the later 20th century Church building centrally positioned on the west side. The former Temperance Hall (Methodist Church, now

Tuckers Funeral and Bereavement Service) is situated at the northern end and is linked to the Church buildings by a central footpath. This building has vehicular access from Forest Road North, with a concrete driveway on the south side leading to a car park at the rear. The southern portion of the Uniting Church site is identified by grassed areas and perimeter eucalypt and peppercorn trees. A row of trees on the east side also screens the Church property from the Lara Public Hall. The south-west corner of the site behind the former Wesleyan Chapel is a fenced off children's play area. Solid fencing also screens much of the property on the west boundary.

Of particular interest are the 19th century buildings outlined as follows:

#### Former Wesleyan Chapel

The earliest building on the site is the former Wesleyan Chapel. The modestly-scaled, roughcast limestone Victorian Primitive Gothic styled building is characterised by steeply-pitched gable roof form, with a smaller gabled wing at the rear (west). These roof forms are clad in introduced tiles. The roughcast wall finish has been introduced, as has the wall painting and the painting to the bluestone plinth. The three-bayed composition of the building is defined by the original pointed-arched window openings to the main gabled wing, with similar openings in the wing at the rear. These openings feature timber framed windows with hopper sashes. There is an original central pointed-arched door opening on the east elevation accentuated by brick surrounds and voussoirs (with introduced overpainting). The door opening has an introduced vertically-boarded timber door with blocked up highlight. The roughcast wall finish has been introduced. To the south of the building is an early domed brick well or water tank.

#### Former Temperance Hall (Methodist Church - now Tuckers Funeral and Bereavement Service)

This single storey, roughcast limestone, rudimentary former Temperance Hall building is characterised by a gable roof form, together with a minor gabled roughcast limestone porch (the gable roof to the porch possibly added after 1921) at the front and a respectful, gabled rendered brick rear addition (with projecting pergola on the north side) connected to the early building by a flat-roofed link. Evidence of the previous rear gabled vestry/porch is identified in the rear gable end of the early building. The early portions of the building have introduced tiled roof cladding with the new gable being clad in corrugated sheet metal roof cladding. The main building has a three-bayed composition defined by the three segmentally-arched window openings and early, timber framed, twelve-paned hopper sash windows. Other early fabric includes the masonry window sills and the evidence of quoinwork in the building corners (the visibility of the quoinwork being partly diminished by the introduced roughcast wall finish). The front porch also has evidence of quoinwork (suggesting that the walls of the porch are original). However, the pointed-arched window opening in the front of the porch is incongruent to the design and it may represent an early 20th century alteration that was possibly carried out at time of the construction of the porch roof and the decorative gable infill. The side porch doorway appears to be early although the timber door appears to have replaced an earlier door.

*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/>*