

ALBANIAN MOSQUE, SHEPPARTON



image001



image005



image007



image013

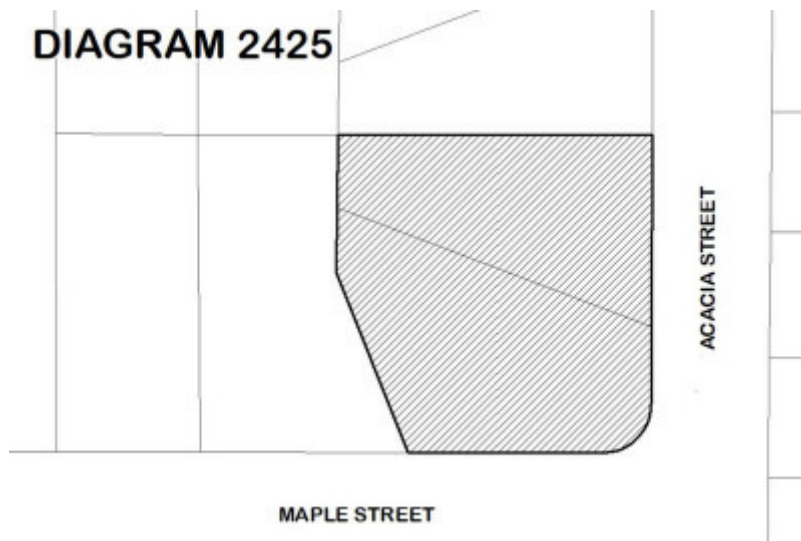


Diagram 2425



image015

Location

8 ACACIA STREET SHEPPARTON, GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY

Municipality

GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2425

VHR Registration

October 13, 2022

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - October 12, 2022

What is significant?

The Albanian Mosque, Shepparton built between 1956 and 1960, including its chandelier.

How is it significant?

The Albanian Mosque, Shepparton is of historical and social significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion G

Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Why is it significant?

The Albanian Mosque, Shepparton is historically significant as the earliest surviving purpose-built mosque in Victoria. The mosque demonstrates the history of Muslim migration to Victoria during the post-war era and in successive waves into the twenty-first century. Originally constructed for and by the Albanian Sunni community in 1956-60, the mosque is now attended by Muslims from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds including more recent migrants. [Criterion A]

The Albanian Mosque, Shepparton is of social significance to Muslim communities in Victoria as the earliest purpose-built mosque in the state. It is acknowledged as culturally significant within Islamic faith communities across Victoria and is regularly visited by Muslims seeking to explore the history of that religion and its culture in Australia. [Criterion G]

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must [notify](#) the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Specific Exemptions:

The following proposed permit exemptions are for works and activities not considered to cause harm to the cultural heritage significance of the Albanian Mosque Shepparton.

General

- Minor repairs and maintenance which replaces like with like. Repairs and maintenance must maximise protection and retention of fabric and include the conservation of existing details or elements. Any repairs and maintenance must not exacerbate the decay of fabric due to chemical incompatibility of new materials, obscure fabric or limit access to such fabric for future maintenance.
- Maintenance, repair and replacement of existing external services such as plumbing, electrical cabling, surveillance systems, pipes or fire services which does not involve changes in location or scale, or additional trenching.
- Repair to, or removal of items such as antennae; aerials; and air conditioners and associated pipe work, ducting and wiring.
- Works or activities, including emergency stabilisation, necessary to secure safety in an emergency where a structure or part of a structure has been irreparably damaged or destabilised and poses a safety risk to its users or the public. The Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, must be notified within seven days of the commencement of these works or activities.
- Painting of previously painted, oiled and varnished external and internal surfaces in the same colour, finish and product type provided that preparation or painting does not remove all evidence of earlier paint finishes or schemes.
- Cleaning including the removal of surface deposits by the use of low-pressure water (to maximum of 300 psi at the surface being cleaned) and neutral detergents and mild brushing and scrubbing with plastic (not wire) brushes.

Interiors

- Removal or replacement of existing hooks, brackets and the like for hanging wall mounted artworks.
- Installation, removal or replacement of existing electrical wiring. If wiring is currently exposed, it should remain exposed. If it is fully concealed it should remain fully concealed.
- Removal or replacement of smoke and fire detectors, alarms and the like, of the same size and in existing locations.
- Repair, removal or replacement of existing ducted, hydronic or concealed radiant type heating provided that the central plant is concealed, and that the work is done in a manner which does not alter building fabric.

Garden

- The processes of gardening including mowing, pruning, mulching, fertilising, planting and the removal of plants, trees and weeds.

Landscape and outdoor areas

- Removal, replacement or installation of subsurface watering and drainage systems. Existing lawns, gardens and hard landscaping, including paving, paths and roadways are to be returned to the original configuration and appearance on completion of works.
- Like for like repair and maintenance of existing hard landscaping including paving and footpaths where the materials, scale, form and design is unchanged.

- Installation of physical barriers or traps to enable vegetation protection and management of vermin such as rats, mice and possums.

Wet areas (bathrooms, kitchen, ablutions areas)

- Works to maintain or upgrade including installing new appliances, re-tiling and the like.

Security

- Installation, removal or replacement existing security systems.

Permit Exemptions for the purposes of religious services or rites (s.90 of the Act)

Under s.90 of the Act a person may carry out any alterations for the purposes of religious services or rites without a permit to a registered place which is a place of worship or in the precincts of a place of worship.

- The owner of the place or object must give notice of the proposed alteration to the Heritage Council at least 28 days before the alteration.
- The notice under subsection must be in the prescribed form; and include a declaration by an officer of the place of worship, authorised by the place of worship for that purpose, that the alteration is required for the purposes of religious services or rites.

Theme

2. Peopling Victoria's places and landscapes 8. Building community life

Construction dates 1956, 2021, 1990,

Heritage Act Categories Registered place,

Other Names MOSQUE, SHEPPARTON MOSQUE, SHEPPARTON ALBANIAN MOSQUE, XHAMIA SHQIPTARE, SHEPPARTON,

Hermes Number 208862

Property Number

History

Mosques in Victoria

The Albanian Mosque in Shepparton (1956-60) is the earliest purpose-built mosque constructed in Victoria. It is pre-dated only by a small Islamic chapel built within the Fawkner Cemetery (1930) which was built solely for burial rituals. In the early to mid-twentieth century, Albanians were one of the largest Muslim groups to settle in Victoria, most migrating to the Goulburn Valley area to undertake agricultural work. From the 1920s, successive waves of chain migration to the Goulburn Valley, and the reign of Enver Hoxha's harsh communist dictatorship in Albania from the mid-1940s to the early 1990s, saw migrants seeking a better life and the freedom to practice

their religion. These factors explain why Shepparton, rather than Melbourne, was the location of the state's first purpose-built mosque.

Immigration of Muslim people to Victoria began in the nineteenth century and continues to the present day. Muslim communities comprise people from multiple cultures, languages and ethnicities. Each community is distinct and has been shaped by immigration patterns. The 2016 census indicates that there are around 200,000 people of the Islamic faith in Victoria which is about 4% of the total state population.^[1] Mosque construction – including the adaptation of existing buildings – is reflective of this diversity, as well as the financial resources available when communities have established a mosque. In 2020 there were 67 mosques in Victoria made up of 55 mosques in the Melbourne metropolitan region and 12 in regional areas.^[2] Of these 67:

- 59 are Sunni mosques primarily catering to Lebanese, Turkish, Arab, Albanian, Bosnian, Indonesian, Somalian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Indian communities.
- 8 are Shia mosques primarily catering to Iranian, Iraqi, Afghani, and Pakistani communities.

Albanian Muslim Migration in Victoria

Around 60% of the Albanian population is Muslim (Sunni) which can be traced to its invasion by the Ottoman Empire from the mid-14th century. The first significant Albanian migration to Victoria started in the 1920s. Most migrants were single male Muslim workers from Korçë district in southern Albania who settled around Shepparton in the Goulburn Valley fruit growing district. They saw no purpose in building a mosque since they saw their time in Australia as temporary: to work, save money and return home. The next wave of migration occurred from 1945 after Enver Hoxha's repressive communist dictatorship took power which outlawed private property and banned religion. These migrants had no thoughts of immediate return when they departed for Shepparton, joining others for whom returning home had become too dangerous. In 1955, the community formed the Shepparton Albanian Moslem Society and decided to build a mosque in their new permanent home (notably at a time when mosque building in Albania and other Eastern bloc countries was outlawed). The third wave occurred in the 1990s as unrest in the Albanian-speaking region of Kosovo grew. Approximately 4000 Albanians were temporarily evacuated to Australia in 1999, and a number settled in Victoria permanently.

The Albanian Mosque, Shepparton

In 1956 the foundation stone was laid for the earliest purpose-built mosque in Victoria by Myrteza Adem and R. Sherif Islam. The building was constructed of cream brick reflecting a suburban building style popular in the 1950s. It opened in 1960 as the Albanian Mosque, Shepparton, or in Albanian, *Xhamia Shqiptare, Shepparton*. At the time, the Acacia Street site consisted of paddocks well beyond the residential limits of the city of Shepparton. The mosque was built by the community mostly through donated labour, equipment and financial resources. The consecration ceremony for the mosque was attended by several dignitaries, including the Ambassador of Indonesia. In addition to fulfilling a religious function, the mosque has operated as a community centre for the Albanian community during the postwar period as a location for culture and language transmission. The Shepparton Albanian community (of both practising and non-practising Muslims and those of other faiths) has a rich history and observes religious days and the Albanian national day (Flag Day) on November 28.

Today, there are around 3,500 Muslims in the Shepparton area and the majority of the congregation come from non-Albanian backgrounds, including people from Malaysia, Egypt, Somalia, Turkey, Bangladesh and Pakistan. It is estimated that 70% of those who attend Friday prayers have backgrounds from more recent migrant communities. Although three other mosques exist in the city, the Albanian mosque remains the most popular, signifying its historical and contemporary importance to Shepparton. The growing population of Muslims in Shepparton since the 1990s saw the original mosque building extended to the north in 2002 to accommodate a growing congregation and a need for community rooms and a kitchen. In 2022 the external portico was enclosed to create a foyer. A small modern ablutions area (for ritual cleansing) was added on the northern side and some internal renovations were undertaken.

This mosque is known across Victoria as the first and is visited by Muslims from around the state seeking to better understand the history and traditions of Islam.

Victoria's early purpose-built mosques

This table shows the construction dates of Victoria's first purpose-built mosques. Prior to the construction of purpose-built mosques, Muslims in Victoria practised their faith in adapted buildings and private homes. The construction of purpose-built mosques following World War II represents both an increase in Muslim migration and a consolidation of the Islamic communities already present in Victoria. See list here:

1956-60, Albanian Mosque, Shepparton, Sunni, Albanian community, Earliest extant mosque in Victoria
1969, Carlton Mosque, Carlton North, Sunni, Albanian community, Earliest extant mosque in Melbourne
1975, Preston Mosque, Preston, Sunni, Arabic community,
1976, Fatih Mosque, Coburg, Sunni, Turkish community,
1985, Dandenong Mosque, Dandenong, Sunni, Albanian community,
1985, Sunshine Mosque, Sunshine, Sunni, Turkish community, Largest mosque in Victoria
1988, Mooroopna Mosque, Shepparton, Sunni, Turkish community

[1] See *Population Diversity in Victoria: 2016 Census Local Government Areas*, Department of Premier and Cabinet, State of Victoria, 2018.

[2] See Julie Rudner, Fatemeh Shahanib and Trevor Hogan, 'Islamic Architectures of Self-Inclusion and Assurance in a Multicultural Society', *Fabrications*, 2020, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 153–175.

Selected bibliography

Haveric, David *Muslims making Australia home: Immigration and Community Building*, Melbourne University Press, 2019.

Bouma, Gary *Mosques and Muslim settlement in Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1994.

Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (GMCT) Islamic Chapel, Fawkner, <https://yoursay.gmct.com.au/islamic-chapel-fmp> [Accessed: 26 May 2022]

Harris, Jessica 'Tradition, Identity and Adaptation: Mosque Architecture in South-East Queensland', in Papers presented to the 30th Annual Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand, July 2-5, 2013.

Immigration Museum, 'Immigration History from Albania to Victoria'

<https://origins.museumsvictoria.com.au/countries/albania/> [Accessed 31 May 2021]

Multicultural Commission, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Victoria, *Population Diversity in Victoria: 2016 Census Local Government Areas*, 2018.

Rudner, Julie Fatemeh Shahanib and Trevor Hogan, 'Islamic Architectures of Self-Inclusion and Assurance in a Multicultural Society', *Fabrications*, 2020, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 153–175.

Assessment Against Criteria

Criterion

The Albanian Mosque, Shepparton is of historical and social significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion G

Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Extent of Registration

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act 2017, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including a place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H2425

Category: Registered Place

Place: Albanian Mosque, Shepparton
Location: 8 Acacia Street Shepparton
Municipality: Greater Shepparton City

All of the place shown outlined on Diagram 2425 encompassing Allotment 64 on Lodged Plan 27673 and Allotment 65 on Lodged Plan 27673.

Dated 13 October 2022
STEVEN AVERY
Executive Director

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/>