
Coburg City Hall complex & World War One memorial

Location

88-92 Bell Street, Coburg VIC 3058 - Property No 231980

Municipality

MERRI-BEK CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO204

Heritage Listing

Merri-bek City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 23, 2004

The Coburg City Hall complex including the City Hall constructed in 1922 and 1929, the World War 1 memorial erected in 1924, and the two Common Oak trees is of local historical, social and aesthetic significance of the City of Moreland.

Historically, the complex is the municipal focus for Coburg, and the city hall is a key building in the complex of buildings which has evolved on the original Pentridge village reserve (Refer to citation for Church and Municipal Reserve precinct). It demonstrates the significant development of Coburg during the interwar period, which led to Coburg being declared a city on 1 April 1922.

Socially, the World War 1 Soldiers memorial has strong associations with the local community as the focus of Anzac Day. Its location within a suburb that has a large number of War Service Homes provides an added poignancy.

Aesthetically, the city hall is architecturally significant for its unusual design, which it is claimed to derive in part from Lutyens' Viceroy's Residence, and its remarkably early and intact Art Deco interiors, are also significant. The setting is complemented by the World War 1 memorial and the mature Oak Trees.

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| Heritage Study/Consultant | Moreland - City of Coburg Heritage Conservation & Streetscape Study, Timothy Hubbard Pty Ltd, 1991; Moreland - City of Moreland Heritage Review, Allen Lovell and Associates, 1999; Moreland - Moreland City Council: Local Heritage Places Review, Context Pty Ltd, 2004; Moreland - Keeping Brunswick's heritage: A Report on the Review of the Brunswick Conservation Study, Context Pty Ltd, 1990; |
| Architect/Designer | Heath, Charles Robert, |
| Hermes Number | 58993 |
| Property Number | |

Physical Description 1

Coburg City Hall is a stylised classical building with an asymmetrical U-shaped plan. The Bell Street elevation comprises a single-storey central section with white-painted rendered walls and timber windows flanked by simple pilasters on each side of the entrance. The entrance has a small covered porch leading to a taller central mass of rendered brick with chamfered corners and is capped with a concrete false dome. Flanking this section are two double-storey red brick pavilions, with small openings dressed with white-painted rendered concrete and the pilaster motif repeated along the low, horizontal window openings to the first floor. An additional entrance to the south-west is sheltered by a cantilevered concrete roof. To the rear, and parallel to the front section, is a double-storey red brick section with a gabled roof and a rendered parapet along the front, partially concealed by the dome. The roofs otherwise are of terracotta tiles and the windows timber.

A World War memorial constructed of Harcourt Granite in the form of a cairn is situated within the forecourt area. The original inscriptions, which included "Have regard to thy name" and a list of the names of WW1 battlefields have been joined by others commemorating later conflicts. There is also a rising sun in beaten brass decorating each face. The two Nordenfelt six-pounder guns that originally flanked it have been removed.

Other significant elements include two mature Common Oak (*Quercus robur*) trees. The eastern most of these trees is of a mature size and may be contemporary with the adjacent city hall complex. The other Oak is smaller, suggesting a later planting date and requires clarification. The trees are in good condition, and have had their canopies raised. The surrounding annual beds represent an anachronistic landscape element, which has generally been phased out in municipal open spaces, but one that suits the period of the adjacent buildings.

Potential Threats:

Removal of the annual beds. Reduction in the level of maintenance of the garden area, which is currently maintained to a high standard.

Key Architectural Elements:

Rendered central entry section with white-painted walls and dome
 Two storey pavilions with face red brick walls
 Terracotta tiled roofs
 Siting set back from street behind formal gardens

Physical Conditions

Excellent

Integrity

Altered/Minor Modifications

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/>