

# HERITAGE PLACE

**NAME OF PLACE:** WONTHAGGI RSL CLUB

**ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE:** 60 Graham Street WONTHAGGI

**STUDY NUMBER:**

**HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:** HO154

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**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** Bass Coast Shire

**PARISH:** PARISH OF WONTHAGGI

**SIGNIFICANCE RATING:** Local



Wonthaggi RSL Club, 60 Graham Street, Wonthaggi

**Image Date:** July 2004

**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

Whole allotment.

# WONTHAGGI RSL CLUB

Heritage Overlay No **HO154**  
PropertyNo  
File Number  
Heritage Study No  
Heritage Grading

HPD Number 211 HI Number VHR Number  
Other Names/s  
Precinct Group Number  
Extra Files

Location 60 Graham Street WONTHAGGI  
PARISH OF WONTHAGGI COUNTY OF MORNINGTON  
WONTHAGGI (T)

Planning Authority Ward Hovell

## Access Description

Map Number 0 Map Scale 1:100000 Latitude Longitude  
UMG Zone Easting Northing

Location Validity Spatial Accuracy

## Extent of Listing

Whole allotment.

## Published Extent of Listing

Significance Local

## Statement of Significance

The Wonthaggi RSL Club is of local historic, social and aesthetic significance. The Club is of historic and social significance as a local club established to commemorate the First World War by returned service men and women. The Club is of aesthetic significance as a building constructed during the 1950s, a significant phase of development of the Club's life.

## Gazettal Details

## Permit Exemptions

## Exemptions Policy

## Assessment Against Criteria

AHC A.4 Importance for association with events, developments or cultural phases which have had a significant role in the human occupation and evolution of the nation, State, region or community.

AHC E.1 Importance for a community for aesthetic characteristics held in high esteem or otherwise valued by the community.

Date Assessed 13/08/2004 Assessed By F Woodhouse

## Comparisons

## Rare Assessment

## Intact Assessment

Include in VHR  Include in RNE  Include in Local Planning Scheme  No Recommendations for Inclusions

## Recommended Management

Maintain the original brickwork in its unpainted condition.

The area in front of the club could be enhanced by the insertion of street furniture and paving.

Heritage Act Categories Heritage Item Groups Heritage Item Categories

## Title Details

## Physical Description

The Wonthaggi RSL Club is a single storey, red brick, Moderne style building. The principal elevation onto Graham Street comprises six bays. The main entrance is located in the 4th bay, and has a projecting, surround clad with streamlined tiling. New double entry doors have been installed. A coloured RSL emblem mounted above the doorway was donated in memory of Private H J Hitchings in 1967. The remaining bays each contain a six panel steel-framed window, with a black clinker brick motif in a recessed panel beneath. The shallowly pitched roof has been recently reclad with corrugated, galvanised steel sheeting. Otherwise, the building is highly intact to its original

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construction.

Physical Condition and/or Archaeological Potential

Usage Club.

Associated People

Historical Notes

Wonthaggi was established as a mining town in 1909 to supply the Victorian Railways with black coal, and thus make Victoria independent of the privately owned New South Wales coalfields, the previous source of coal for the railways. The decision to proceed with mining coal from the Powlett Coalfield was prompted by the coal miners in New South Wales strike in 1909. When established, the coal was worked by the State Coal Mine from the Dudley and Kirrak Basins. The township of Wonthaggi is located on a ridge between the two basins. Initially the miners lived in a tent city; by 1910 the Government had laid out a model township. By 1921 Wonthaggi had a population of 7,000, making it one of the largest towns in Gippsland at the time. Wonthaggi's population peaked at around 12,000 in the mid-1920s when the mine was at its operational peak. The township was divided into commercial and residential areas. Its infrastructure provided for housing, water, churches, schools, and other social facilities.

The Wonthaggi District Returned Soldiers, Sailors and Nurses Co-operative formed in 1920 for the purpose of acquiring and operating the Wonthaggi Picture Theatre, (later known as the Plaza Theatre). The local sub-branch of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) was a significant subscriber of funds, and it used the theatre building as a meeting venue. By the early post-War years, a decision had been made to sell the Theatre. After the sale, the League is believed to have rented premises nearby.

By 1954, resources became available to construct a new club, and a site was secured on Graham Street. The new building was designed by architects R M & M H King, the builders Johnson Bros. Construction is believed to have involved war veteran labour. The new building opened in 1956. In October 1965 the League became known as the Returned Services League of Australia (RSL)

The building continues to be used as a welfare centre for ex-service members and as a community entertainment centre.

Historic Themes

16.3 Clubs & Associations: In the early days of the Colony, schools and churches were essential to the infrastructure and establishment of a new township. Once these had been established, or often at the same time, Mechanics Institutes, Masonic Lodges, local halls and social clubs were built. Frequently, one hall was the home of several clubs, such as the Country Women's Associations, car clubs, Returned Services Leagues and agricultural societies. In the Bass Coast Shire, a wide variety of clubs and associations have been formed, and include the Wonthaggi Leek Club, the Rifle Club, Girl Guides and Scouts Clubs.

References

References

Author	Title	Year	Shelf Location
Department of Land and Survey	RSL National Headquarters Homepage <a href="http://www.rsl.org.au/">http://www.rsl.org.au/</a> Parish Plan of Township of Wonthaggi, Parish of Wonthaggi, County of Mornington		
Doug Veal, Wonthaggi RSL, pers comm.			
John M Coghlan	The State Coal Mine and Wonthaggi 1909-1968	1979	
Michael Shiels, Wonthaggi RSL, pers comm.			
R M & M H King	Contract drawing for 60 Graham Street (viewed by Michael Shiels)	1954	
T.J. Gannon (ed.)	Wonthaggi and District, Past and Present	1934	

Conservation Plans

Owner Type

Section 32 Recommendation

Owners/Occupants/Managers

Other Notes

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**Application Detail**

**Adviser Comments**

**Planning Scheme Amendments**

**Overlay Controls**

**Planning Scheme Schedule**

**External Paint Controls?**            No

**Included in Vic Heritage Register?** No

**Internal Alteration Controls?**    No

**Prohibited uses may be permitted?** Yes

**Tree Controls?**                      No

**Name of incorporated plan** No

**buildings/fences not exempt?**    No

**Aboriginal Heritage Place?** No