

WWCC RFI RESPONSE

Project: **Proposed Place of Public Worship DA21/0806**
 Address: **12 Waterhouse Avenue, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650**
 Property Title: **Lot 606, DP 1222168**

- 1. How should the two self-contained units, proposed to be located in the Sunday School Services Building, to be used for residential accommodation for visiting clerics be classified. Is this use permissible within the R1 General Residential zone applying to the site.**

Residential accommodation means a building or place used predominantly as a place of residence. This is a use that is permissible but in order to determine whether the one bedroom and two-bedroom units are described as ancillary or independent units of accommodation further detail on their use needs to be provided. For example, how often are they to be occupied, for what period of time, by whom, who manages their occupation, who services the units etc. Certain forms of tourist and visitor accommodation are prohibited in the R1 zone and it is important to determine (based on usage patterns etc) whether the proposed accommodation would be described as serviced apartments.

The accommodation provided would be considered ancillary to the public place of worship use. This is providing the overall development the in-house amenities for the wider congregation community. The proposed accommodation will be rarely used but is something the church wishes to provide for their community and clerics when / if needed.

The one bedroom unit will be used by the visiting Bishop when he comes to town, which is only 2 times per year (maximum). The length of stay would be for 3 nights only for each visit. This unit will also be used by the congregation priest from time to time during the day. However, it must be noted this is not his permanent residence.

The proposed two bedroom unit will be used as emergency accommodation. It provides a temporary place for families new to the congregation and relocating to Wagga Wagga in general. This helps take the burden off the family, by providing a comfortable transition (and time to settle) into the community. They will only occupy the unit for 1 – 2 weeks before settling into permanent accommodation elsewhere. Due to the growth rate of the congregation, new families to the area using this proposed accommodation is only 1 family every 3 - 4 years.

Management of the occupation of the units will be by parishioners. The units will be cleaned as part of the church caretaker commitment for general maintenance.

The units are not a commercial enterprise for the church. No income will be generated from this accommodation. Based on how these are to be used and frequency of use these will not be considered as tourist / visitor accommodation nor serviced apartments. This transient guest accommodation will be class 3, which is permissible in R1 zones in the Wagga LEP (ie. not on the prohibited building use list).

2. **Would the future use of the Sunday School Services Building and the associated commercial kitchen as a multipurpose facility capable of accommodating a seated dining/function area for 150+ people be considered to be a function centre which is defined as function centre means a building or place used for the holding of events, functions, conferences and the like, and includes convention centres, exhibition centres and reception centres, but does not include an entertainment facility.**

The Sunday School Services Building will be considered a multipurpose area due to the proposed activities it will cater for. These activities will only cater for the congregation (which are the wider Coptic community in the surrounding area) and include;

- Large seated dining / function area (150+ ppl) for feasts, passion week, Wedding services (not wedding receptions), Baptisms and Funerals
- A place for the congregation to adjourn to after the main Sunday service for lunch,
- Sunday school children performances from the future staged area. A large seated area for the congregation to watch – generally once a year.
- Storage room for table chairs.
- Congregation breakfast.
- Large indoor space for Sunday School children activities (stage 2).

It must be noted this is not proposed to be used as a function centre now or in the future. It will not be used / hired out as a commercial space for events, functions, conferences or the like. It is not a space to be used by the general public.

This is not a space proposed for convention centres, exhibition centres and reception centres.

The Coptic Orthodox Church has no noisy cultural or religious practices that go along with the proposed ancillary activities taking place within the Sunday School Services building.

3. **Having regard to the scale of the building and that it would be available to cater for feasts, passion week, Wedding receptions, Baptisms and Funerals and be able to be separately occupied to the worshipping activities on site. Would this be considered an ancillary or independent land use to the Place of Public Worship activities.**

A function centre is a land use that is prohibited in the R1 residential zone. The description of the propose building as a multi-purpose facility (following completion of Stage 2) for the wider Coptic community requires clarification.

In addition to this, the scale of the Sunday School Building (7 classrooms, 6 study rooms, office, computer store, multi-media and large balcony) requires clarification with respect to its intended use noting the potential independent use of this part of the building for educational (or other) purposes.

All the activities proposed for the Sunday School Services Building space are providing necessary support to the primary operation of public place of worship, which is considered ancillary and not independent to the Coptic church. The activities listed above are all associated with the church.

Activities such as Wedding services, baptisms and funerals will not run separately while the main service / worshipping activities are on.

It was previously mentioned Wedding receptions would take place in this space. This is not correct. Only the wedding services will be held here. Similar to how other religious denominations operate. Any wedding reception associated with such on-site wedding service will take place at a venue off-site. This follows the common practice (traditional) with weddings. There will be no music or drinking (alcohol) within the Sunday School Services Building. Some Wakes will be held in the hall following a funeral at the church(1 or 2 per year).

Music / ringing of bells / beating of drums are not part of the Coptic church procession.

Classes in the Sunday School Building will only be held on Sunday's between 12:00pm – 2:00pm for the purpose of teaching children the Coptic orthodox church religious practices. This takes place whilst the adults are waiting in the Sunday School Services Building. This follows the traditionally model of how a Sunday School operates.

The number of classrooms / study rooms proposed are to cater for future anticipated growth in the congregation long term.

The Sunday school Building is setup for Sunday school purposes and will work in conjunction with the main service. It will not be used independently as an education facility. Furthermore, during the week this will not operate as an educational facility and the classrooms will not be occupied.

4. Would the proposed basketball court be considered a recreation area (Outdoor) and would its use between 7am-10pm daily (from 8am on a Sunday) be considered ancillary to or independent of the Place of Public Worship on site?

Clarification is required with respect to the intended use of both the playground and a basketball court area to understand how these facilities will be ancillary to the place of public worship or how they will be used otherwise.

The basketball court is needed to provide an activity / outdoor area for the youth of the congregation to use while the parents of the congregation are socializing, servicing the same purpose as the kid's playground does for the younger children.

The basketball court is not designed for tournaments or competitive matches, but as an area to occupy the youth of the congregation. There will be adult supervision to these areas at all times, whilst occupied.

The basketball court will not be in use the whole time between 7am – 10pm daily but only from lunch-early afternoon on a Sunday. It is anticipated the playground and basketball court will be used for 2hrs. (max.) per week while the adult congregation are having their meal after the main service and Sunday School on Sunday and youth club on Friday after school for 1 hour. This limited time usage suggests these spaces are not considered independent. They function as a level of support to the public place of worship (ancillary).

It is worth noting that the Saint Mary & Saint John the Beloved Coptic Orthodox Church community have operated out of the previously Anglican Church and Hall at 18-20 Wooden St (crn of Turner St)

for the last 20 years without complaint from neighbours about noise or activities by the congregation including parking. The new facility will be operated in the same fashion with respect and care for their neighbours. The new facility will provide greater setbacks and acoustic attenuation than their current facility and we believe the development will become a valued facility within the neighborhood.