

# 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**

This report is in response to the WWCC RFI questions (15<sup>th</sup> December 2022) following on from the briefing with the planning panel.

In this response, the numbers/figures that relate to the future have been estimated based on past and current data. Also the figures facture in the approval of the proposed development will attract more members from surrounding areas to reside in and around Wagga Wagga.

In 2003, the congregation in Wagga was 25 people. In 2022 the congregation grew to approximately 215 people. It is anticipated that the congregation will grow to 350 people around 2040, and approximately 400 people around 2047.

## Congregation Numbers Provided and Projections

Year	Congregation	Break up
2003	25	
2020	210	135 adults, 75 under 18
2022	215	140 adults, 75 under 18
2040	350	220 adults, 130 under 18
2047	400	260 adults, 140 under 18

**Table 1**

1. Confirmation of the number of 'special occasion' events that will be held within the services building. The SEE makes reference to feasts, passion week, baptisms, weddings, funerals and Sunday school performances.

Some special occasion events will only be held within the Services Building temporarily as part of the stage 1 development. They will then be held within the Church once Stage 2 is complete. The 2022 frequencies reflect the current frequency of special occasions within the current building.

Special Occasion	Frequency
Feasts	The frequency will remain the same, regardless of congregation size.
Passion Week	The frequency will remain the same, regardless of congregation size.
Baptisms	The frequency will increase as the congregation grows, please see table 4 for projection.
Wedding ceremonies	The frequency will increase as the congregation grows, please see table 5 for projection.
Funerals	The frequency will increase as the congregation grows, please see table 6 for projection.
Sunday School Performances	The frequency will remain the same, regardless of congregation size.

**Table 2**

The “feasts” the Coptic Church will have are Christmas & Easter. These are solely a liturgical church service, but as part of stage 1 will be in the Sunday School Services Building. On the day of each feast for two hours, the congregation will have a Sunday School Celebration. This will involve the Sunday school children performing hymns and presenting plays of which they have learned throughout the year to the congregation only. It’s not open to the public.

Passion Week is all liturgical prayers. These will be in the Sunday School Service Building as part of stage 1 and will move to the church upon completion of Stage 2. Nothing will take place in the Sunday School Service Building during Passion week when the future church is operational.

The congregation will also use the Sunday School Service Building for Sunday school performances which are on the two feasts previously mentioned and one further celebration being as a “reward” presentation to give the Sunday school children their annual gifts. These three celebrations replace Sunday school in these days and go for about 2 hours.

#### ‘Special occasion’ yearly events

Month	Special Occasion	Activity	Location
January 6 <sup>th</sup> night	Christmas (Feasts)	Liturgical church service 6pm – 12am	Stage 1 - Sunday School Service Building upon
		Sunday School Celebration (Performance)	Stage 2 - New church. Sunday School Service Building
January 7 <sup>th</sup> day	Christmas	Meal – BBQ 3pm 7pm	Sunday School Service Building
April –Not fixed but mostly in April starts on Monday before Easter Day	Passion Week	Liturgical Prayers Mon –Wed 7am – 8am 10am – 1pm 6pm – 9pm Thursday 7.30am – 2pm 3.30pm – 8pm	Stage 1 - Sunday School Service Building upon Stage 2 - New church.
	Good Friday	Friday 8am – 6pm 10pm – 6am	
April –Not fixed but mostly in April Saturday and Sunday of Easter.	Easter (feasts)	Liturgical Prayers Saturday 6pm – 12am	Stage 1 - Sunday School Service Building upon Stage 2 - New church.
		Sunday School Celebration (Performance)	Sunday School Service Building
		Gathering for BBQ Sunday 3pm – 7pm	Sunday School Service Building
December 31st	New Year	Liturgy service 9pm – 12am	Stage 1 - Sunday School Service Building upon Stage 2 - New church.

**Table 3**

Please note - As part of the Coptic Church development, the context of the word 'feasts' is solely a liturgical church service.

In addition to the yearly events outlined in table 3 there will be circumstantial events throughout the year such as baptisms, wedding ceremonies and funerals.

**Baptisms** - The current congregation have around 1 to 2 baptisms per year. This is expected to increase as the congregation grows. With a future congregation of 400 the prediction would be 3 to 4 baptism per year. Refer to table 4.

**Wedding Ceremonies** - The current congregation have around 1 wedding ceremony per year. This is expected to increase as the congregation grows. With a future congregation of 400 the prediction would be 2 wedding ceremonies per year. Refer to table 5.

**Funerals** - The current congregation have around 1 funeral every 3 years. This is expected to increase as the congregation grows. With a future congregation of 400 the prediction would be 2 funerals every 3 years. Refer to table 6.

## 2. Explain the nature of the baptism and wedding events. This should include:

- Frequency
- Potential days of the weeks
- Numbers of persons
- Total length of time of each event.

The open nature of the proposed Sunday School Service Building allows the space flexibility to be used as a multipurpose area. During Stage 1 different seating zones will divide the space to cater for both meals and church service concurrently. In practice this space will seat 150 people evenly between church service and meal activity. The Sunday School Service Building will cater for growth in the congregation, however it is not the intention to seat 400 people in this space. By the time the numbers have reached this figure the future church will be in use.

During the transition phase of the development (between stage 1 & stage 2) the Coptic Church congregation will have procedures in place to manage the weekly operations of the different seating arrangements to cater for the growing congregation. At this time the space will be divided between church seating and table seating. If the active congregation exceeds the seating area provided for the church service division (stage 1) before stage 2 is completed the process will simply involve swapping out some of the tables for extra chairs during the service then bringing the removed tables back after commencement of the service to cater for the following meal.

Below are tables outlining the nature of both baptisms and wedding ceremonies for the current congregation size up to the expected future growth in congregation in 25 years. The number of persons has been based on the expected maximum size of future congregation as part of this development.

### **Baptisms**

	2022	2040	2047
<b>Estimated Congregation Size</b>	215	350	400
<b>Frequency (per year)</b>	1-2	2-3	3-4
<b>Potential Days</b>	Saturday or Sunday	Saturday or Sunday	Saturday or Sunday
<b>No. of Persons</b>	50	80	100
<b>Length of Time</b> <i>(Baptism, Stage 1 held in the Sunday School Service Building, Stage 2 held in the Church)</i>	1 hour 15mins. 7am – 8:15am followed by Liturgy 8:15am – 11:15am	1 hour 15mins. 7am – 8:15am followed by Liturgy 8:15am – 11:15am	1 hour 15mins. 7am – 8:15am followed by Liturgy 8:15am – 11:15am
<b>Length of Time</b> <i>Normal breakfast after baptism in the Sunday School Services Building.</i>	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour

**Table 4**

Baptisms will be in the Sunday School Service Building as part of stage 1 and will move to the church upon completion of Stage 2. The baptismal prayers are conducted before the Liturgy (from 7am to 8:15am). The liturgy follows from 8:15am to 11:15am. After praying the baptismal prayers and

Liturgy, the congregants will have a usual breakfast meal just like any Sunday. Our baptisms are always on either a Saturday or Sunday, and again are restricted to the congregants.

Completion of stage 2 - After praying the baptismal prayers and Liturgy inside the church, the congregants go to the Sunday School Service Building to have a usual breakfast meal just like any Sunday.

#### Wedding ceremonies

	2022	2040	2047
<b>Estimated Congregation Size</b>	215	350	400
<b>Frequency (per year)</b>	1	1-2	2
<b>Potential Days</b>	Saturday	Saturday	Saturday
<b>No. of Persons</b>	100	180	200
<b>Length of Time</b> <i>(Wedding ceremonies, Stage 1 held in the Sunday School Service Building, Stage 2 held in the Church)</i>	1 hour, 30 minutes (Receptions are external, ie. not on-site after.)	1 hour, 30 minutes (Receptions are external, ie. not on-site after.)	1 hour, 30 minutes (Receptions are external, ie. not on-site after.)

**Table 5**

As part of stage 1 Wedding Ceremonies will be in the Sunday School Service Building. The Coptic Church congregation do not use the Sunday School Service Building for any subsequent wedding celebration as the congregants hire their own wedding receptions external to the church.

Completion of stage 2 - A Wedding Ceremony will take place in the church itself.

3. Explain the nature of funeral events. This should include:

- Frequency
- Potential days of the weeks
- Number of persons
- Total length of time of each event
- In replying to this point please also consider the standard LEP definition (below) of a funeral home and confirm how the anticipated funeral use relates to this definition.  
LEP definition: funeral home: means premises that are used to arrange, conduct and cater for funerals and memorial services, whether or not the premises include facilities for the short-term storage, dressing and viewing of bodies of deceased persons.

The table below outlines the nature of funeral events for the current congregation size up to the expected future growth in congregation in 25 years. The number of persons has been based on the expected maximum size of future congregation as part of this development. The process will involve using the Sunday School Service building for the 'wake' (vigil) being for the departed souls on the night before the funeral day. The 'wake' is for the congregation to come into the Sunday School Service Building where they listen to recorded sermons and then the parish priest gives a comforting word. The body of the deceased person is not in attendance as all these arrangements take place at the funeral home, external to the church altogether.

**Funerals**

	2022	2040	2047
<b>Estimated Congregation Size</b>	215	350	400
<b>Frequency</b>	1 per 3 years	1-2 per 3 years	2 per 3 years
<b>Potential Days</b>	Monday to Friday	Monday to Friday	Monday to Friday
<b>No. of Persons</b>	60	98	120
<b>Length of Time</b> <i>(Wake held in the Sunday School Service Building, the evening before funeral)</i>	1.5 to 2 hours	1.5 to 2 hours	1.5 to 2 hours
<b>Length of Time</b> <i>(Funeral service, Stage 1 held in the Service Building, Stage 2 held in the Church)</i>	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour

**Table 6**

As part of stage 1 The Wake (night before) and Funeral will be in the Sunday School Service Building.

Completion of stage 2 - The Wake (night before) will be in the Sunday School Service Building. Funerals will take place in the church itself.

**LEP definition – Funeral home:**

*‘means premises that are used to arrange, conduct and cater for funerals and memorial services, whether or not the premises include facilities for the short-term storage, dressing and viewing of bodies of deceased persons.’*

The anticipated funeral use in relation to the LEP definition is the proposed development will serve as a premise to arrange, conduct and cater for funerals. The body of the deceased one comes from the designated funeral home on the day of the funeral and goes inside the church (at stage 1 this will be in the Sunday School Services building) for prayers. This takes place for about an hour then the deceased body is moved to the Hurst waiting outside and transported away.

Applying the Funeral Home definition, the premise does undertake aspects of a funeral home. Funeral homes are not included within the prohibited uses in R1 zone and therefore are permitted with consent.

The Coptic Church development is not a premises seeking the business that provides the dressing, storage or burial of the deceased body.

**4. Clarify how the use of the services building for 'special occasion' events will differ when comparing stage 1 (services building only) and stage 2 (services building and church).**

	Stage 1	Stage 2
<b>Special Occasion Events</b>		
Christmas Feast	Sunday School Service Building	New Church
Sunday School Celebration	Sunday School Service Building	Sunday School Service Building
Christmas BBQ Meal	Sunday School Service Building	Sunday School Service Building
Passion Week	Sunday School Service Building	New Church
Easter Feast	Sunday School Service Building	New Church
Easter Sunday School Celebration	Sunday School Service Building	Sunday School Service Building
Easter BBQ Meal	Sunday School Service Building	Sunday School Service Building
New Year	Sunday School Service Building	New Church
Sunday School Celebration	Sunday School Service Building	Sunday School Service Building
Baptisms	Sunday School Service Building	New Church
Wedding ceremonies	Sunday School Service Building	New Church
Wake (night before funeral)	Sunday School Service Building	Sunday School Service Building
Funerals	Sunday School Service Building	New Church

**Table 7**

In reference to table 7 above, after completion of the new church in stage 2 all Liturgical events will be shifted across from the Sunday School Services Building to the church. This includes the main Sunday service, the special occasion liturgical church services, liturgical prayers and Baptisms, wedding ceremonies and funeral services.

The font will be relocated to this new church building and the Sunday School Service Building will be modified to include a stage and changerooms at the eastern end for Sunday School performances.

The previously divided seating area within this space (as part of stage 1) will be freed up to seat the larger congregation for meals, without the need for swapping out chairs and tables. The Sunday School Service Building will still continue as a multipurpose facility catering for the weekly congregation breakfast, Sunday School Performances, Wakes, special occasion meals and storage

Without the need for Liturgical events the Sunday School Service Building is freed up to provide a large indoor space for Sunday School children's activities.