

# Places of Assembly/Worship Policy

## **Document Control**

*Council policy documents change from time to time and it is recommended that you consult the electronic reference copy at [www.casey.vic.gov.au/policiesstrategies](http://www.casey.vic.gov.au/policiesstrategies) to ensure that you have the current version. Alternatively you may contact Customer Service on 9705 5200.*

*Responsible Department – Planning*

*Adopted 7 September 2004, administrative update completed 13 January 2012.*

*Electronic reference library version 1.3*

## **Preamble**

*In accordance with a resolution of Council on 21 June 2005 to include definitions of Council, Councillors and Council officers in all Council policy documents, the following definitions are provided:*

*Council – means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 1989*

*Councillors – means the individuals holding the office of a member of Casey City Council*

*Council officers – means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.*

## 1. Purpose

This Policy provides advice and guidance to persons seeking to establish places of assembly or worship within the City of Casey.

## 2. Definitions

A place of assembly is defined as: *Land where people congregate for religious or cultural activities, entertainment or meetings.*

A place of worship is defined as: *Land used for religious activities, such as a church, chapel, mosque, synagogue, and temple.*

## 3. Scope

This Policy applies to the establishment of new purpose built facilities, as well the conversion/use of existing premises for the purpose of assembly or worship.

## 4. Context

Council acknowledges that places of assembly or worship are an integral part of a rapidly growing and diverse community, which ideally should be located in proximity to where people live. This policy aims to ensure their successful integration in a range of different locations including residential areas, by ensuring that good design and siting principles are incorporated throughout the development.

### 4.1 Objectives – What does this policy hope to achieve?

#### General

To facilitate the establishment of places of assembly/worship that predominantly serves the needs of the local community.

- To ensure that places of assembly/worship provide a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area in which they establish.
- To ensure that new buildings and alterations to existing buildings complement the appearance of nearby development.
- To ensure that places of assembly/worship in residential areas do not adversely affect residential amenity.
- To ensure the sensitive integration of places of assembly/worship into their surrounding area.

#### Locational

- To ensure that in new residential areas, places of assembly/worship be clustered around planned neighbourhood nodes.
- To ensure that in established residential areas, places of assembly/worship, wherever possible, be located adjacent or close to similar non-residential uses where located on the periphery of an activity centre or commercial/industrial area.
- To ensure that places of assembly/worship are located along roads that are capable of carrying anticipated traffic volumes.
- To prevent places of assembly/worship from segregating a single dwelling or collection of dwellings from the surrounding residential area.

- To encourage places of assembly/worship to be planned and designed to cause minimal loss of amenity, privacy and convenience to people living in nearby dwellings.
- To ensure that the use and development will have minimal impact on the area, with respect to the design of the building, traffic, car parking, access and overall site layout.

## 5. Policy

### 5.1 Performance Criteria – What are the requirements of this policy?

This section of the Policy details Council's requirements.

#### 5.1.1 Location

- There are no restrictions on the location of places of assembly/worship within commercial areas, except for any specific strategic policy/plan which may be applicable to a particular centre.
- Places of assembly/worship in residential areas:
  - must only establish on roads that are designed to carry high levels of through (or non-local) traffic; and,
  - should preferably be located adjacent to existing or planned commercial or community-based uses such as shops, schools, community centres, major transport interchanges etc, or open space linkages.
- The location of places of assembly/worship along service roads in residential areas is not supported due to the impact on the residential character of the main road and the potential for 'ribboning' along the service road which is discouraged.

#### 5.1.2 Car Parking and Access

- 0.3 car parking spaces must be provided for each seat or to each square metre of net floor area, whichever is the greater. Any application for a variation to this parking rate will be considered on its merits in accordance with Clause 52.06-1 of the Planning Scheme, and any application must be supported by an independent traffic report prepared by a suitable qualified traffic engineer.
- The layout and dimensions of car parking spaces and access aisles must accord with the Planning Scheme requirements (applicants are advised to check with Council officers).
- Car parking spaces must be clearly line marked on the ground.
- All parking is to be provided on the site itself. There should be no reliance on on-street parking (even where indented parking bays are provided in the street).
- The car parking area must be highly visible and accessible from the street. Driveways providing access to car parking that is not visible from the street will generally be discouraged, as they may have a greater impact on neighbours' amenity and encourage on-street parking.
- All vehicles must be able to enter and leave the car park in a forward direction.
- All car parking and access ways shall be constructed in a sealed surface (such as concrete, asphalt or pavers) to the satisfaction of Council.

Construction plans will be required to be approved as a condition on the planning permit.

- The location and design of access points to the car park shall be to the satisfaction of Council (and Vic Roads, where applicable).

#### 5.1.3 Building Design

- The scale, character and design of places of assembly/worship should be compatible with and complementary to the streetscape and the surrounding physical environment.
- In residential areas, the design must respect the residential character of the area (or future residential area), having regard to the scale and form of building design, including setbacks, facade treatment, choice of building materials and colour scheme.
- In commercial areas, there is greater scope for variations in design. However, as a general principle buildings should still be compatible with the urban design themes of surrounding commercial development.

#### 5.1.4 Landscaping

- All places of assembly/worship must be landscaped to soften the visual impact of the development and assist in their integration into the streetscape. As a general principle, the landscaping should complement and be compatible with the landscape character of the surrounding area.
- Applicants should discuss specific landscaping requirements and species selection with Council officers prior to preparing detailed plan.
- Where car parking areas abut residential properties, a minimum width of 2 meters is generally considered necessary for screen planting. The width of the landscaping buffer along the street frontage should be commensurate with the size of the land and scale of the development (applicants are advised to check with Council officers). Extensive areas of parking should also include canopy planting.

#### 5.1.5 Advertising Signs

- As a general principle, the size and type of advertising signage should be able to clearly identify the place of assembly/worship without detracting from the surrounding locality.
- It is imperative that any signs be designed to complement the proposed building and landscaping, and should be incorporated on plans accompanying the application for permit.
- For more detailed assistance regarding Council's standards on advertising signs, applicants are also referred to Council's Advertising Signs Policy.

## 6. Administrative updates

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.

## **7. Review**

The next biennial review of this document is scheduled for completion by 31 January 2014.



### **Customer Service Centres**

**Cranbourne**  
Centro Cranbourne

**Narre Warren**  
Magid Drive

**Narre Warren South**  
Amberly Park  
Shopping Centre

Telephone: 9705 5200  
Facsimile: 9704 9544

TTY: 9705 5568  
TIS: 131 450  
(Translating and Interpreting Service)

Magid Drive  
PO Box 1000  
Narre Warren VIC 3805

Email: [caseycc@casey.vic.gov.au](mailto:caseycc@casey.vic.gov.au)  
Website: [www.casey.vic.gov.au](http://www.casey.vic.gov.au)