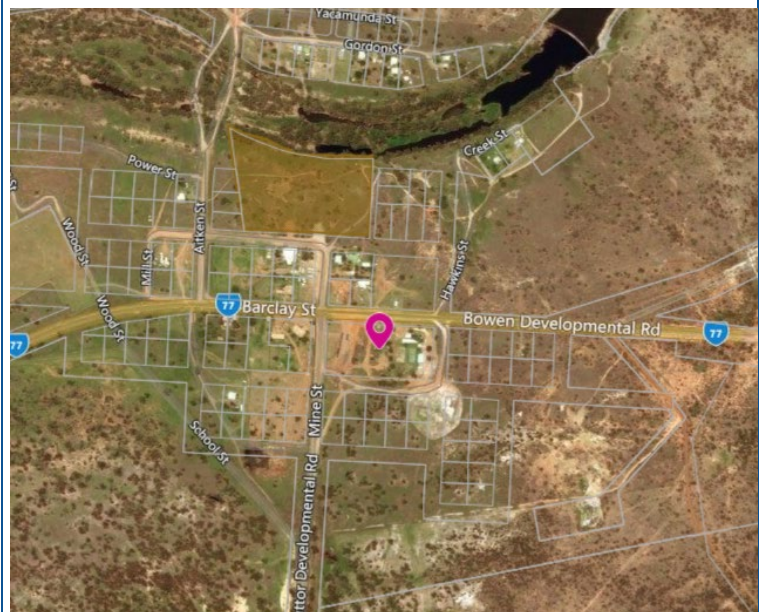


MT COOLON STATE SCHOOL AKA KOALA STATE SCHOOL

Address	Mine Street, Mt Coolon
Lot Plan	Lot 1 M7218
Coordinates	21°23'10.3"S 147°20'37.4"E
Integrity	Fair
Condition	Good
Statutory Listings	Nil
Non-Statutory Listings	Nil
References	Historical information and photos provided by the Collinsville Historical Society, Les Tuttle and Collinsville Community Association

Street View

Location Map

Physical Description

Mt Coolon State School is located alongside the former Police Station and Lockup fronting Barclay Street at Mt Coolon's eastern entrance.

It is designed as an old Queenslander atop stilts with a broad front veranda, front steps and water tank to the side. It has an open gable tin roof and refurbished wooden walls. The front façade is protected from the elements and wildlife by thin metal grates, however, historic windows and doors behind it are well maintained to preserve the character of the building.

To the rear of the building is an open barbeque area, tennis courts and small playground to support the present use of the building as a community centre.

Historical Context

Mt Coolon State School was constructed in 1924/25 alongside the first school in Mt Coolon known as Koala Provisional School to support the rapid growth in school age children as a result of the town's gold boom.

The small provisional school was conceived in 1918 when parents wrote several letters to the Minister of Education identifying the demand for a school to support the 11 school age children that were in the Town.

Parents stressed the need for a school and identified the impending gold mining boom that began in 1917 as a major driver for the Town's future growth.

In November 1918, the Secretary of the School Building Committee noted that 11 students was not enough to grant the construction of a new school, however, it was noted the application warranted the Department to appoint a teacher and provide necessary school materials. The Provisional School was constructed by parents and later opened on the 11 July 1921 led by the inaugural head teacher Edward L. Asmus.

As the Town grew, the Koala Provisional School building that was only 20ft by 12ft quickly reached capacity resulting in the Department of Public Works approving the erection of a new school building in August 1924 to support the 31 children enrolled at the time. The school's expansion and official support from the Department granted it's renaming to Koala State School. The new building absorbed the demand of school age children and in time, the original Koala Provisional School building was re-purposed as the Teachers quarters in 1930.

Koala State School remained open until 1950, only being renamed to Mt Coolon State School in 1946. Mt Coolon State School was later re-opened in 1962 for 9 years before being closed again in 1971. During this period, school operations were shifted to two new buildings constructed in 1930 and 1969 respectively. The original Koala State School building is the only remaining structure from the historic school and is today re-purposed as the Mt Coolon Community Centre.

Historical Significance

Criteria A - *the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region's history*

Mt Coolon State School was constructed following lobbying from the Town's residents in the early years of the Mt Coolon gold rush. Residents identified the impending growth of the Town in response to the rapid expansion of gold mining operations and following letters to the Minister of Education identifying a lack of capacity within Koala Provisional School, Mt Coolon State School was approved for construction in August 1924.

Criteria B - *the place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the region's cultural heritage*

Though modified into a Community Centre, Mt Coolon State School is one of the few remaining structures from Mt Coolon's boom days between 1917 and 1936.

Criteria C - *the place has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the region's history*

Mt Coolon State School was the second school constructed in response to the Town's gold mining boom. It is one of the many new buildings that were constructed to support the prosperous town during its boom years and is one of the few buildings that are left remaining from that era.



