

TORBANLEA PRECINCT

PRECINCT MAP



KEY CHARACTER ELEMENTS

Key character elements	Descriptions
Architectural style	Predominantly Victorian and Federation, with small number of Interwar Bungalow and Postwar Conventional housing.
Business signage	Very modest and complementary.
Building materials	Timber, fibro, corrugated iron.
Building form and layout	Mix of symmetrical and asymmetrical forms.
Roof style	Gable, Pyramid, Hipped and Bungalow.
Setbacks	Modest setback for few commercial buildings. Larger setback for residential properties, with the largest reserved for the elaborate Queenslanders in the northwest section of the town. Town blocks also have large side setbacks.
Building height	Predominantly one storey or raised.
Orientation to the street	Parallel to the street.
Car parking / vehicle storage	Single crossover with informal driveways to the side / rear of residential properties. Predominance of detached garages.

Key character elements	Descriptions
Garden style	Predominance of lawn and modest garden beds. Elaborate gardens for Managers' residences.
Front boundary treatment	Nil, or low, permeable front fencing constructed from timber palings or wire mesh with timber frame.

CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct is an excellent example of a small, late 19th century town with commercial premises and community facilities, including a school and racecourse.

Coal was discovered near Torbanlea in the 1860s, but the first successful mining venture, the Torbanlea Colliery Company, did not appear until the 1880s. The Company established the town, subdividing land and building cottages. The school, Miners Arms Hotel and the railway station were in place by the end of the 1880s. The racecourse, located on the recreation reserve, was built in 1893. The Bruce Highway went through the town until the late 20th century.

Torbanlea has a clear urban structure. The urban and commercial centre of the town is located on the south side of the railway line and major community facilities, the school and racecourse, on the north side of the line. This demarcation is typical of small, rural towns.

The principal town core is also divided into areas, one for mining cottages (small allotments) and another for mine managers and other important residences (larger allotments). The delineation provides a symbolic and tangible separation of workers and bosses demonstrating 19th century class distinctions.

The smaller residential allotments form four distinct blocks with an open space in the centre, providing a central, civic place. The houses here are typically modest Victorian and Federation buildings, displaying a range of roof types (hipped, pyramid and bungalow) and some gabled cottages, with occasional Interwar Bungalow and Postwar Conventional infill. Landscaping is minimal.

Larger Victorian Queenslander houses are located to the north west. These houses are more elaborate than those found in the urban core. The significance of the houses is reflected in the garden landscaping, which is more substantial than the workers' residences. This area also includes a bowling club that dates to the mid-1920s.

The commercial core of the settlement is located on Robertson Street, based on proximity to the former railway station building (which is no longer extant). Buildings include the Miners Arms Hotel (1889) and small shops. The core of the Miner's Arms Hotel is a single storey structure with a hipped roof, typical of the late 19th century. The shops are all single-storey, front-facing gable structures with fibro or weatherboard cladding and awnings, a common style in small, early twentieth century towns.

The major social facilities are located on the north side of Burgowan Road. These are the school (established in 1887) and the racecourse (1893). The separation provides a further window into the design of the town as they are close to, but distinctly separated from, the town environ. The community hall is located where the railway facilities were once concentrated. It appears to have been moved here from a different location, possibly after the railway closed.

