

What is the Cerberus?

The iron clad turret ship *HMVS Cerberus* (1867-1926) is an important example of innovative mid-19th century naval technology,

As the flagship of Victoria's early colonial navy, it represents the period where coastal defences against enemy invasion were a serious concern.

The *Cerberus* was scuttled as a breakwater in 1926 about 200 metres from the shore in Half Moon Bay at Black Rock. It is now owned by the City of Bayside. Its iconic outline has become a well-known feature of the Black Rock seascape

The *Cerberus* is listed in the National Heritage List under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and included as an Historic Shipwreck in the Victorian Heritage Register under the State *Heritage Act 2017*.

Why has the City of Bayside applied for permit under the *Heritage Act 1995*?

In 1993 and 1994 intense storms caused catastrophic collapses of the hull, under the influence of the great weight of the turrets, armoured breastwork, and guns. The deck of the wreck became partially submerged but the iconic shape and profile of the vessel is still intact.

In 2005 Heritage Victoria issued a permit to allow the four 18-ton guns to be removed from the wreck and placed on the seabed to reduce the weight on the deteriorating hull. Heritage Victoria also placed zinc anodes on the site to slow corrosion. The iron hull is in an advanced stage of deterioration and continues to degrade.

Despite warning signs, the placement of exclusion zones, and attempts at preventing access through deck openings, members of the public still regularly access the wreck. In 2010 a snorkeler died at the wreck.

On 25 October 2017, City of Bayside applied to the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria for a permit under the *Heritage Act 1995* to use marine concrete infill to support the armoured breastwork and turrets of the *Cerberus*. The City of Bayside favours the use of the infill option because it mitigates the public safety risk presented by the wreck while at the same time stabilising the wreck and preventing further collapse.

How will the permit application be assessed?

As the permit application was made prior to the commencement of the *Heritage Act 2017*, the permit application must be assessed under section 113 of the *Heritage Act 1995*. It should be noted that the process for assessing permits for shipwrecks is the same in the *Heritage Act 1995* and *Heritage Act 2017*.

Although not required to do so under the *Heritage Act 1995* or *Heritage Act 2017*, in this instance, because of the high level of public interest in the wreck of the *Cerberus*, the Executive Director will advertise the permit application and invite public submissions before making a determination.

When determining the permit application, the Executive Director will consider a range of matters including the extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of the *Cerberus*, public safety and submissions made in the advertisement period.

The Executive Director will consider all submissions received within 28 days of publication of the advertisement. In the interest of making a timely determination, late submissions will not be accepted.

Is a separate approval required by the Commonwealth Government?

The *Cerberus* is included on the National Heritage List managed by the Commonwealth Government. The permit application has been assessed by the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Energy as not requiring an approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.