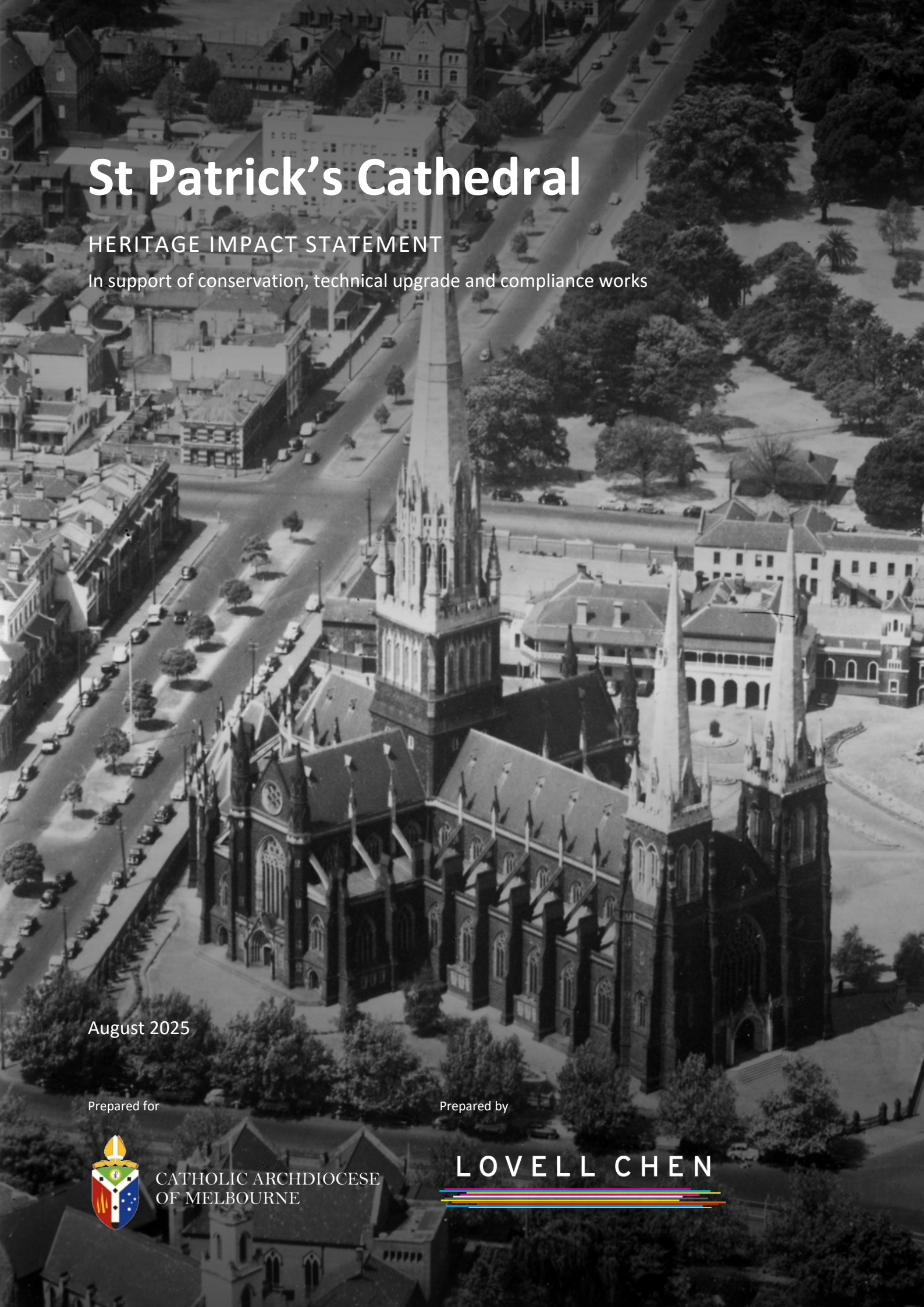

St Patrick's Cathedral

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

In support of conservation, technical upgrade and compliance works

August 2025

Prepared for

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

Prepared by

LOVELL CHEN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

This report was prepared on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people who have been custodians of this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge their stories, connection to land, water and culture which is embedded in Country. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and acknowledge that this report includes a post-contact history that forms only a small part of the ongoing story.

St Patrick's Cathedral is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, who are, and have always been the custodians of this land. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present, and acknowledge the stories, traditions and cultures of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Quality Assurance Register

The following register documents the development and issue of this report prepared by Lovell Chen Pty Ltd in accordance with our certified quality management system.

Project no.	Issue no.	Description	Issue date	Approval
20240322	1	Draft for review	28/05/25	AM
20240322	2	HV submission (draft)	15/08/25	AM
20240322	3	HV submission	21/08/25	AM

Referencing

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Cover: Oblique aerial view of St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne looking east, c. 1950s (cropped)

Source: Charles Daniel Pratt, H2008.41/75, Airspy Collection, State Library Victoria

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1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne (CAM). It provides a summary of conservation, compliance and technical upgrade works that are required to support the on-going operation of St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne.

The St Patrick's Cathedral Precinct (SPCP), East Melbourne is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR, H0008), which is established under the *Heritage Act 2017* (Victoria). The precinct is classified as a 'registered place' and includes 'registered objects integral to a registered place'. For the purposes of the VHR entry, the precinct is the area bound by 2-20 Gisborne Street (west), 2-60 Cathedral Place (south), 371-449 Albert Street (north) and 7-9 Lansdowne Street (east) (Figure 1). We note, respectfully, that the subject site is located on Wurundjeri Country.

A new master plan is also being prepared for the precinct, which will be the subject of a separate permit application to Heritage Victoria.

Figure 1 Aerial photograph of St Patrick's Cathedral Precinct, East Melbourne
Source: Nearmap, 1 December 2024

1.1 Summary of works

This package of works forms the first major upgrade to the cathedral since the 1990s. The works include a package of external and internal conservation works, compliance works and technical upgrades. The building fabric – predominantly sandstone and bluestone – is ageing and requires conservation and repairs. Other objectives of the works – to achieve compliance and technical upgrades – are necessary to sustain the building as a place of worship.

In preparation of this report, reference has been made to the following documentation:

- Lovell Chen, St Patrick's Cathedral Restoration and Renewal, Architectural drawings, DD2 revision, 8 August 2025
- Lovell Chen, St Patrick's Cathedral Restoration and Renewal, Menu of methods of repair, DD3 revision, August 2025
- Lovell Chen, Schedule of Conservation Works, DD3 revision, August 2025
- Candelapas Associates, St Patrick's Cathedral Planning Application – Stage 1, Issue A, 20 August 2025
- NDY Light, Lighting design services, April 2025

1.2 Approvals pathway

The works will not result in 'harm' to the heritage place. Rather, they will support the on-going use and operation of the cathedral, as well as delivering positive conservation outcomes. As such, the works are exempt from the requirement to seek a permit. They are variously consistent with the General Permit Exemptions issued by Heritage Victoria (August 2024)[1] and/or s.90 of the *Heritage Act*, 2017 (Victoria) 'Exemption for the purposes of religious services or rites' (see Appendix A). Other works, while not expressly referenced in the General Permit Exemptions, would also be understood as permit exempt as they will not cause harm to the heritage place.

Recognising that the works are comprehensive and variously involve a level of technical complexity, it is anticipated that variations will be required as the works are delivered. As such, a permit is sought primarily for reasons of efficiency and to allow for conditions to be applied – it is anticipated, for instance, that conditions for monitoring and/or a schedule of site visits with Heritage Victoria will be applied to the permit.

The decision to apply for a permit – as opposed to a suite of exemptions – was discussed with Heritage Victoria,[2] and is consistent with the approach applied to a permit for conservation works to the western spires in 2023.[3] (*Note*: The conservation works to the western spires have yet to be completed, and have been incorporated into the broader package of works that is the subject of the present submission.)

1.2.1 General Permit Exemptions

The General Permit Exemptions are established under s.92(1) of the *Heritage Act* and provide guidance on the types of works to heritage places that do not require a permit or application for a permit exemption.

The works and activities covered by general exemptions are those with minimal effect on fabric (such that the heritage significance of the place is not harmed), and which positively contribute to the management of the heritage place.

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1 General Permit Exemptions, accessed via https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/permits-and-approvals/heritage-permit-exemptions, 22 May 2025.

2 Pers comm (email), from Nicola Stairmand, Heritage Victoria to Adam Mornement, Lovell Chen, 6 May 2025.

3 Heritage Victoria permit no. P38612.

The package of works to St Patrick's Cathedral includes external and internal works that are consistent with the General Permit Exemptions as follows:

- External conservation works to sandstone and bluestone elements; general cleaning of external fabric; repair and cleaning of stained-glass windows; re-roofing of chevet chapel roofs; localised replacement of roof slates; repairs to rainwater goods; access system upgrades; and repainting of previously painted timber elements
- Internal conservation works to sandstone and bluestone elements; localised floor tile replacement; repainting of previously painted hard plaster elements; repairs and repointing to the marble altar; and repair and re-finishing of timber pews and rood screens

While these works are exempt from the requirement to apply for a permit, they are included in this application for completeness and to allow for the monitoring of works. See sections 4.1 and 4.2 and architectural documentation, including Schedule of Conservation Works (attached).

1.2.2 Section 90 of the Heritage Act 2017

Section 90 of the *Heritage Act* provides exemption from permits for works or activities associated with religious services or rites. As provided in s.90, 'Exemption for the purposes of religious services or rites':

> (1) Subject to this section, a person may carry out works or activities in relation to the following places or objects for the purposes of religious services or rites without a permit—
>
> (a) a registered place which is a place of worship or in the precincts of a place of worship;
>
> (b) a registered object which is in a place of worship or in the precincts of a place of worship.

A 'place of worship' is defined in the Act as 'a place used for religious activities, including a chapel, church, mosque, synagogue or temple'. St Patrick's Cathedral is a place of worship under this definition.

The intent of s. 90 exemptions is understood to be to allow works or activities to proceed without a permit where such works are required for reasons of religious services or rites. Places of worship are living heritage places and need to respond to changes to liturgical practice and the evolving expectations of congregations. There are instances where changes to religious services or rites require alterations to the physical fabric of a heritage place.

The package of works to St Patrick's Cathedral includes works consistent with s.90 exemptions as follows:

- The refurbishment of confessionals, and reconfiguration of one confessional (to the south transept) to an AV livestream room
- Upgrades to internal services including lighting, heating, fire detection and protection, audio-visual (AV) and CCTV systems
- Renovation of the working sacristy
- Relocation of the Stations of the Cross
- Installation of new entry console and notice board display to the narthex
- Installation of new organ division to choir

While these works are exempt from the requirement to apply for a permit, they are included in this application for completeness and to allow for the monitoring of works. See sections 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 and architectural documentation (attached).

Pursuant to s.90(3), at least 20 business days' notice must be given to the Executive Director prior to the commencement of the works or activities. This must 'include a declaration by an officer of the place of worship, authorised by the place of worship for that purpose, that the proposed works or activities are required for the purposes of religious services or rites.' A declaration is attached to this application (see Appendix A).

1.2.3 Compliance

Under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) (DDA), people with disabilities require equal access to the cathedral and must not be discriminated against. The National Construction Code (NCC) 2022 Building Code of Australia (BCA), 'Part D4 Access for people with a disability', sub-section D4D3 stipulates that:

> In a building *required* to be *accessible*, an *accessway* must be provided through the principal pedestrian entrance, and—
>
> - through not less than 50% of all pedestrian entrances including the principal pedestrian entrance; and
> - in a building with a total floor area more than 500 m2, a pedestrian entrance which is not accessible must not be located more than 50 m from an *accessible* pedestrian entrance,

The existing ramp to the north entrance of the cathedral is not DDA-compliant. There is also no ramp access to the principal (west) pedestrian entrance of the cathedral. As the west and north entrances are greater than 50 metres apart, compliant ramps are required to be installed to both entrances to ensure that people with disabilities have equal and dignified access to the cathedral.

See section 4.3 and architectural documentation (attached).

2.0 Statutory heritage controls

2.1 Victorian Heritage Register

St Patrick's Cathedral Precinct is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) as place number H0008 for its architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria. The extent of registration for the precinct as included in the VHR documentation is shown at Figure 2 and described as follows:

1. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 601951A held by the Executive Director, being all of the land described in Certificates of Title Volume 2209 Folio 644, Volume 2394 Folio 704, Volume 2209 Folio 677 and Volume 3694 Folio 694.
2. All the buildings, including, all the fences and hard landscaping, the Cathedral marked B1, the Sacristy B2, the remnant tower of St Patrick's College B3, the offices B4, the Presbytery B5, B6 the statue of Daniel O'Connell and B7 the statue of Archbishop Daniel Mannix on Diagram 601951A held by the Executive Director.
3. The following objects: pair of Blackwood credence tables, Wardell; Blackwood Faldstool, Wardell; Pair of brass Sanctuary lamps, Wardell; Brass Eagle lectern, Wardell; Pair of brass gasoliers to either side of original sanctuary, Wardell; The brass sanctuary Gong, Wardell; 2 gold chalices, Wardell; The Monstrance, Wardell; Pectoral Cross, Wardell.

The statement of significance for the cathedral precinct as included in the VHR documentation is as follows:

> **What is significant?**
>
> The site on which St Patricks Cathedral now stands was part of a five acre government grant to the Catholic Church given over the years 1848-53. The western section of the site was set aside for a church, the central portion for clergy accommodation and the eastern part was designated for educational purposes. The present St Patricks Cathedral designed by William Wardell replaces two earlier structures which were both demolished to make way for a larger church. A foundation stone was blessed on 9 April 1850 for a church designed by Samuel Jackson. This was partly built but his association with the church was discontinued in 1854 and architects George and Schneider were then appointed. The partly built sandstone church designed by Samuel Jackson was demolished. The first section of the bluestone church designed by George and Schneider opened on 14 February 1858. This was partially demolished to make way for the

present cathedral proposed by architect William W Wardell. Construction commenced in 1858 and the nave and aisles were opened in 1869. The remainder of the church itself and the sacristy were completed in 1897. The spires and confessional were added and the west door rebuilt in 1936-40. The spire is higher than Wardell originally intended. The majority of stained glass in the cathedral is by Hardman of Birmingham, with two windows by Mayer of Munich and one by Montgomery. The stencilling and painting of the sanctuary is by Charles Firth and carved altars by Farmer and Brindley. C N Bell carved the throne, credence tables, bishop's chair and confessionals. The intended wall mosaics and paintings were not completed. The statue of Catholic emancipator Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847) by sculptor Sir Thomas Brock was erected by public subscription and unveiled on 30 May 1891. The statue of long-serving former Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr Daniel Mannix by English sculptor Nigel Boonham, was unveiled in March 1999.

The bluestone tower in the south east corner of the site is all that remains of St Patricks College. The construction of the college, the first Diocesan Grammar school in Victoria, commenced in 1854 with the laying of the foundation stone by Bishop Goold. The architect for the building was Patrick Scanlan. Extensions to the building were carried out at some time between 1857 and 1861, by which time the existing tower had been constructed. The next major additions occurred early this century. The college closed in December 1968, and the majority of St Patricks College was demolished in January 1971 after a lengthy but unsuccessful campaign by the National Trust. It was replaced by a largely subterranean building comprising offices, hall and presbytery designed by Roy Simpson of Yuncken Freeman Architects.

How is it significant?

St Patricks Cathedral precinct is of architectural and historical importance to the state of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

It is of architectural importance as the largest Gothic revival building in Victoria and one of the finest works of prominent Victorian architect William Wardell with impressive scale and masterly handling of space. The apsidal chevet chapels, ambulatory and sanctuary based on French models are of particular note. The stained glass by Hardman of Birmingham and Mayer of Munich. The remaining tower of St Patricks College is interesting for its concave roof. The offices and presbytery, while the result of demolition of the St Patricks College buildings, are of architectural importance as an outstanding work of Roy Simpson, of Yuncken and Freeman. The unusual subterranean design around the central circular courtyard allows the cathedral to dominate the surrounding area and opens up the vistas to it. The sympathetic use of materials, low profile and use of water ponds to the roofs fronting Victoria Parade helps the offices and presbytery to seem more of a landscape element than a building. The cathedral, and the furniture and objects within the cathedral which were designed by Wardell reflect the strong influence of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1842) and his writings on medieval architecture and Catholicism. Pugin's designs for buildings extended to the design of objects such as chalices, lamps, and even to the vestments.

St Patricks Cathedral precinct is of historic importance as being the centre of Roman Catholic activity in Victoria since its opening in 1869. The cathedral building is of historical importance for the way in which its scale and monumentality reflect the change in Melbourne from a provincial town to a prosperous provincial city following the goldrushes in Victoria. St Patricks College is of historical importance as Victoria's first Catholic secondary school and the second home of the original seminary in the colony. The school was conducted by the Jesuit fathers from 1854-1968.

2.2 Melbourne Planning Scheme

St Patrick's Cathedral Precinct is individually identified as HO129 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (HO) of the Melbourne Planning Scheme. The extent of the heritage overlay matches the VHR extent of registration for the place. It is noted that under Clause 43.01 of the Melbourne Planning Scheme, no permit is required for works or to develop places included on the VHR (with the exception of applications for subdivision).

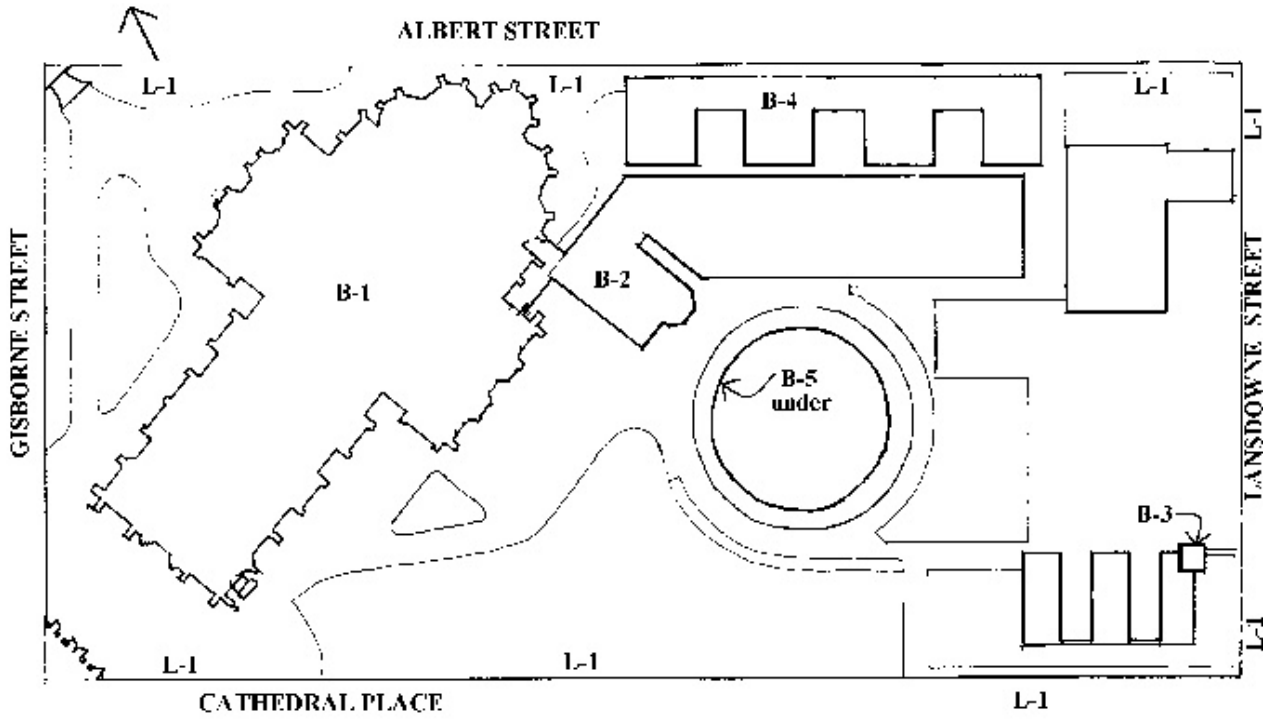

Figure 2 Diagram 601951A showing the extent of registration for St Patrick's Cathedral Precinct
Source: Victorian Heritage Database

3.0 Brief history and description

The following is intended to provide a context for the current programme of works. It addresses the history of change to and conservation of the cathedral from the 1850s to present.

The cathedral is not aligned to true north – this relates to the decision, taken in c. 1850, to locate the main entry elevation at the south-west corner of the site, aligned with Bourke Street. For the purposes of this HIS, the main entry is to the west and the chevet chapels are to the east.

The cathedral was constructed in two phases (1859-97 and 1936-40) in the Gothic Revival style to designs by William Wardell. It is built of bluestone with sandstone dressings. The cathedral adopts a cruciform plan comprising a nave with side aisles, transepts with side aisles and a sanctuary. At the western end, the cathedral has twin towers with sandstone spires which were added in a second stage of works (1936-40) to designs by W P Connolly and G W Vanheems.

The main entrance is reached via a small flight of bluestone steps to the western end and was remodelled in the late 1930s, as the original entrance was thought to be too narrow and lacking in eminence as a main approach. Further works undertaken from 1936-40 included the enlargement of the narthex, and the introduction of a gothic balustrade, bronze screen and gabled canopy in the space. Also in the 1930s, alterations were carried out to the lighting and

acoustics inside the cathedral, including the installation of cast bronze lanterns in the sanctuary and nave, and the introduction of audio speakers.

A new organ was installed in in the cathedral in 1964, built by George Fincham and Sons and funded by public subscription. Other changes to the cathedral, and the broader precinct, followed the liturgical reforms of Vatican II (1962-65). In direct response to Vatican II reforms, the sanctuary was reconfigured and a new bluestone High Altar installed and consecrated in 1971. Other changes made in the 1970s included:

- Improvements to lighting and acoustics within the Cathedral
- Installation of a new bronze crucifix in the Sanctuary
- Relocation of the organ console from the Sacred Heart Chapel to the south transept (1972)
- Construction of new diocesan offices and a presbytery to the east side of the precinct (1971-72, designed by Yuncken Freeman)
- Installation of floodlighting to the cathedral on the occasion of its hosting the 40th Eucharistic Congress (1973)
- Installation of the cross keys of St Peter over the west entrance following the conferral of the title 'Minor Basilica' on the cathedral (1974)

Launched in 1977, the Cathedral Maintenance and Restoration Fund Appeal also funded a condition survey and emergency repairs to the upper parapet pinnacles.

A subsequent programme of restoration works was carried out to the cathedral in the 1990s. This included works and repairs to masonry, stained-glass windows, roofing, plumbing, fire safety, the installation of heating under pews and a new lighting system, and improvements to the acoustics. Sections of the floor tiles, which had lifted and cracked, were also re-laid, and internal renovations were completed to the Sacristy. The Stations of the Cross were repaired as part of the works. Australian Pipe Organ P/L was commissioned to undertake maintenance and replacement of parts of the organ. A major event was the installation of a new altar and sanctuary on a concrete base with marble and mosaic flooring, unveiled at a mass on St Patrick's Day eve in 1997.

During the 1990s, in the build-up to the centenary of consecration, a major package of conservation and maintenance works was carried out by Richard Falkinger Conservation Architects. The works included, but were not limited to:

- Stage 1 (1991/92):
    - Roof slates lifted and re-nailed
    - New copper trays introduced to the aisle roofs in lieu of corrugated sheet metal (the original lead trays remain on west side of the South Transept)
    - Roof plumbing upgrade
    - Masonry works to the spires
    - Upgrade of the lightening conductor system
    - Masonry works to clerestory level
    - Works to stained glass and leaded windows to clerestory level (continued in Stage 2, below)
    - The introduction of exit and emergency lighting
    - A new ramp and push button door to the North Transept entry
    - New under-pew electric heating
    - Remedial works to floor tiles, areas of which had lifted and cracked

- Fire prevention/mitigation works, including the introduction of hose reels; fire ring main and hydrants to cathedral exterior and compartmentation and intumescent strips against the spread of fire in roof spaces and at the spire internal apertures

- Stages 2 and 3 (1993-94)
  - Cleaning of timber woodwork, ceilings, trusses throughout
  - New lighting throughout
  - New audio system
  - Cleaning/stain removal from stone vaulting to aisles, ambulatory and chapels
  - Repainting of previously painted surfaces, including within the sacristy
  - Conservation of polychromatic decoration in the chapels and sanctuary
  - Pew upgrade works
  - New fit-out to sacristy
  - Organ upgrade (1994-95)
  - New sanctuary platform in the crossing (1995/96)
  - New permanent altar
  - Cleaning and polishing of marble throughout

From 2011-12, the 'Cathedral Stone Restoration Project' was carried out to restore external fabric, including the two west spires.

Ongoing maintenance and repair works undertaken in the last decade include make-safe works to the spires and bluestone towers; roof tile repairs; internal tile repairs; and conservation works to the sacristy roof.

4.0 Works

4.1 Conservation – exterior

A comprehensive package of conservation works will be undertaken to the cathedral exterior. These works are consistent with the General Permit Exemptions and will not result in 'harm' to the heritage place. As noted above, they include the conservation works to the western spires which are the subject of permit no. P38612 and are yet to be completed.

The works are included in the documentation referenced at section 1.1 and repair methodologies described in the 'Menu of methods of repair' (Lovell Chen, August 2025).

External conservation works comprise:

- Cleaning, minor repairs, consolidation, repointing and block replacement of damaged or deteriorated sandstone to match existing
- Cleaning, minor repairs and repointing to damaged or deteriorated bluestone to match existing
- Dismantling and rebuilding of top 18 courses to north spire and top 20 courses to south spire
- Removal of embedded metal or timber items from stone and patching of repairs/indent repairs
- Repainting of previously painted timber elements

- Cleaning, minor repairs and replacement of damaged or deteriorated roofing and rainwater goods, including localised replacement of slates throughout nave and transept roofs
- Re-roofing of chevet chapel roofs, including replacement of slate, battens, cappins, flashing and sarking
- Replacement of waterproofing membrane to western spires
- Repairs to mortar
- Access system upgrades for three spires including replacement of roof access door and internal access ladders
- Repair, restoration and cleaning of stained glass windows
- Cleaning of the west gate

4.2 Conservation – interior

Conservation works will also be undertaken to the internal fabric of the cathedral. The works are included in the documentation referenced at section 1.1 and repair methodologies described in the 'Menu of methods of repair' (Lovell Chen, August 2025).

Internal conservation works comprise:

- Minor repairs to sandstone and bluestone columns, quoins, buttresses, including removal of embedded metals, crack repairs, indent repairs and treatment of efflorescence
- Repointing sandstone and bluestone pilasters, columns, bases, piers, moulded indents, windowsills, stringcourse, archways and hood moulds
- Patching, repairing and repainting to previously painted plaster walls
- Cleaning of timber roof structure
- Localised floor tile replacement, limited in scope to damaged tiles that are lifting due to high traffic and critical areas (aisles of nave and transept) only
- Lifting of tiles for services works (see section 4.4)
- Minor repairs and repointing to the marble altar
- Off-site repair, re-finishing and reinstatement of timber pews
- Repair and re-finishing to rood screens

These works are assessed as being consistent with the General Permit Exemptions and will not result in 'harm' to the heritage place; rather, they will deliver a positive conservation outcome.

4.3 Compliance works

There is currently no access ramp to the principal (west) entrance of the cathedral, meaning that equal and dignified access is not possible for people with disabilities. The existing ramp to the north entrance of the cathedral is also not DDA-compliant.

The following works to the north and west entrances are required to satisfy DDA compliance and ensure equal and dignified access to the cathedral for people with disabilities.

West entrance

It is noted that the western entry is not original and was remodelled in the 1930s. The works to the west entrance are included in the documentation referenced at section 1.1 (Candelapas Associates, St Patrick's Cathedral Planning Application – Stage 1, Issue A, 20 August 2025) and comprise:

- Demolition of existing stairs and surrounding hardscape
- Installation of new stair and entry ramps
- Installation of two statues to either side of external entry (to be confirmed as part of master plan submission)
- Installation of glass sliding door to the internal side of the existing timber doors
- Re-grading of west forecourt and relocation of existing Bunjil eagle stone inlay (to be confirmed as part of master plan submission)

North entrance

Works to the north entrance comprise:

- Demolition of existing ramp, entry steps, airlock and surrounding hardscape
- Installation of step ramp with handrail
- Installation of new automatic glass sliding door to the internal side of the existing timber doors
- Re-grading of hardscape and reinstatement of hard landscaping following completion of new entry ramp

4.4 Services

Services upgrades are required to the lighting, heating, fire protection, AV and CCTV systems.

Lighting works comprise:

- Removal of existing internal lighting, redundant wiring and cabling
- Preparation of connections for new light fittings and installation of new internal lighting to nave, aisles and transepts, comprising:
    - High level lighting for: timber roof and angels, window uplighting
    - Low level lighting for: reading within pews, wall washing, Stations of the Cross, aisle window uplights
    - Pendant lighting to nave, aisle, transepts, and ambulatory
- New internal lighting to chevet chapels, including uplighting of the ceiling, accent lighting of the altars and other liturgical elements
- New internal lighting to high altar and crossing, including lighting for choir reading and tabernacle
- New emergency and exit lighting systems throughout cathedral

Heating works comprise:

- Removal of existing under-seat pew heaters
- Installation of new hydronic underfloor heating to nave

Fire protection/detection works comprise:

- Extending the existing VESDA and OWS fire detection and alarm systems to provide coverage in confessionals and bell tower

- Replacement of door hardware to all designated fire egress doors

AV and CCTV works comprise:

- Removal of existing speakers and cabling
- Removal of existing CCTV cameras (to be retained and reinstalled in more discreet locations)
- Installation of new external connection points to provide AV to external locations around the cathedral during large events (1 x point to west entrance, 1 x point to north entrance, 1 x point to south entrance, 1 point to north side of nave)
- Installation of new hearing augmentation system including underfloor hearing loop
- Installation of new AV system, including:
    - Network of cabling infrastructure and cabling reticulation
    - Sound reinforcement system (new loudspeakers, microphones, amplifiers)
    - New microphones above the choir to pick up and balance audio throughout cathedral, and to feed into broadcasting control system
    - Camera relays to small displays throughout cathedral (bell tower, west entrance and sanctuary)

These works will require the lifting of floor tiles to allow for trenching and installation of the new underfloor heating and hearing loop to the nave. Where possible, existing tiles will be salvaged for re-use, however it is likely that new tiles will be required. These will be installed in the same position, resulting in no change to the presentation of the tiles.

As the intent of these works is to facilitate religious services in the cathedral, and meet the changing expectations of the congregation, it is understood that a permit application or exemption is not required under s.90 of the *Heritage Act*.

4.5 Confessionals

The confessionals will be refurbished, with one confessional (to the south transept) to be reconfigured as an AV livestream room. This requires the installation of a lightweight partition, new storage cupboard, livestream desk, AV rack and flooring.

Other confessionals will be reconfigured to provide larger spaces for the priest including updated joinery, smoke detection systems, and restoration of joinery as well as plaster work and floor finishes.

As the intent of these works is to facilitate religious services in the cathedral, and to meet the changing expectations of the congregation regarding online access to services, it is understood that the works are consistent with s.90 of the *Heritage Act*.

4.6 Working sacristy

The working sacristy is a room used for the storage and preparation of vestments and other liturgical materials.

The works comprise:

- Demolition of non-original services cupboards, partitions and joinery to the working sacristy
- Installation of new cabinetry, cupboards, and benchtop with sink
- Mechanical services (heating and cooling) upgrades
- Replacement of existing smoke detection system with alternative heat detection system

- Modification of fireplace and chimney to allow new incense cupboard to utilise existing chimney
- Installation of a new ambulant toilet to the sacristy corridor
- Upgrading of cabinetry within sacristy corridor to house new services equipment

The renovation of the working sacristy is also consistent with s.90 of the *Heritage Act*, as the intent is to facilitate better use of the space for carrying out religious services and rites.

4.7 Other internal works

Internal works submitted under s.90 of the *Heritage Act* comprise:

- The relocation of the Stations of the Cross from existing locations in the transepts to the aisles of the nave (their traditional location in Christian churches)
- Installation of a new freestanding entry console and notice board display/shelving to the narthex
- Installation of new organ division to choir
    - Pipework divisions will be installed to either side of the high altar, suspended between columns (using a structural connection to engineers' details, to be determined). Partial lifting and replacement of tiles will be required in the choir (see comments on methodology in section 4.4).

As these works are required for the purposes of religious services, they are consistent with the provisions of s.90 of the *Heritage Act*.

Other minor internal works include:

- Introduction of internal glass sliding doors to the west, north and south entrances to allow for the cathedral to be 'opened up' while ensuring weather protection:
    - To the north and south entrances, steel beam supports for the sliding doors will be fixed to existing masonry reveals with hardware concealed behind a pelmet. See Lovell Chen, Architectural drawings, 8 August 2025
    - To the west entrance, the sliding door operator will be fixed into the internal façade of the sandstone wall using helical fixings with fixings into the existing wall to be minimised and existing mortar joints used where possible. Hardware will be concealed behind a timber-clad pelmet. Vertical supports may be required subject to on-site structural engineering testing – to be confirmed. See Candelapas Associates, St Patrick's Cathedral Planning Application – Stage 1, Issue A, 20 August 2025
- Removal of the non-original glass screen door to the pilgrim's path entrance to the south elevation

4.8 Other external works

The existing external lighting to the cathedral is reaching end-of-life and provides insufficient illumination to the cathedral. The existing external lighting, redundant fixtures and fittings will be removed and replaced with a contemporary approach to lighting a cathedral (see documentation at NDY Light, Lighting design services, April 2025). The existing heritage lanterns to the west, north and south entrances will be restored and re-instated.

An options analysis has been undertaken and it has been determined that the proposed scheme is the best response to lighting a building of this nature.

The scope comprises new lights in the following locations:

- In-ground recessed spotlights and uplights to discreet locations (landscaping and ramps)
- Surface-mounted window shaper luminaires mounted to bottom edges of windows

- Surface-mounted linear LED grazer luminaires to confessional roofs
- Mini LED projector lights to chevet chapel roofs and main nave roof
- Roof-mounted LED spotlights to illuminate main spire
- Modular LED grazer lights mounted to parapet edge of bell tower and spire to illuminate towers and spires
- LED spotlights mounted to parapet ledge of bell tower and spire to illuminate crenellations
- LED spotlights mounted to parapet ledge of spire to illuminate windows
- Surface-mounted adjustable flood lights mounted to interior of spire to backlight windows
- Surface-mounted adjustable LED flood lights mounted to interior wall of bell tower and spire behind louvre windows to backlight
- Pole-mounted spotlights to locations in precinct to illuminate west, north and south elevations (6-metre high poles)

Methods of fixing light brackets to the cathedral are to be determined, but will be into mortar joints where possible (avoiding fixing directly into stonework). Visibility of fittings from the ground level will be minimised as much as possible, with lights to be fixed in-ground, behind parapets, to roof surfaces and in spires. Visible light fittings will only be installed to minor locations such as windowsills.

5.0 Commentary

The works outlined at section 4.0 are necessary to sustain both the heritage significance of the cathedral, and its use as a place of worship.

5.1 Conservation works

The conservation works have been designed to have minimal effect on significant fabric, and to ensure that the overall external presentation of the cathedral will be maintained. It is noted that the works will result in an initial change in the presentation of the external façades and spires while the new stone ages and weathers. The distinction in the new stone will be subtle and become less prominent over time, with the works resulting in an improved presentation to the façades and spires in the long term.

The safe access system is required to replace the existing non-compliant access within the spires to enable maintenance works to be undertaken. The new system will be attached to the existing fabric using braces to limit the level of intervention required to the existing fabric. The safe access system will have no external visibility, with the angle of the slate louvres preventing any visibility into the interior of the spire. In addition, the access system will have no public access and will be used for maintenance purposes only.

As part of the internal conservation works, pews will be repaired off-site and cleaned and re-finished as required. The pews will be labelled with recording of individual locations prior to removal and re-installed to their existing conditions. (See INT17 in the Menu of methods of repair documentation.)

Sections of the floor tiles were previously re-laid in the 1990s to address lifting and cracking. Localised replacement of tiles and substrate is now required to those lifting due to high traffic and in critical areas (aisles of nave and transept) only. Tiles to be replaced will match existing tile layout and presentation, using the traditional wet-bedding method. (See INT16 in the Menu of methods of repair documentation.)

These works are consistent with the General Permit Exemptions as established under s.92(1) of the Heritage Act and will positively contribute to the management of the cathedral.

5.2 Compliance works

The introduction of new access ramps to the west and north entrances is required for the purposes of DDA compliance. The north ramp replaces an earlier non DDA-compliant ramp of the 1990s, while the west ramp will provide equal and dignified access to the principal entrance of the cathedral. The existing north ramp and steps are non-original, and the west entrance was remodelled in the 1930s.

The ramps have been designed to be recessive in terms of materiality, with the use of bluestone and sandstone consistent with the cathedral. The interface between the ramps and the cathedral has been designed to have minimal impact on original fabric.

Proposed works to the west forecourt (regrading and relocation of the Bunjil eagle stone inlay) will form part of the master plan permit application to Heritage Victoria.

These works will not result in 'harm' to the heritage place, but rather will improve access to and use of the cathedral.

5.3 Section 90 works

Works that are consistent with s.90 of the *Heritage Act*, 'Exemption for the purposes of religious services or rites' are required to support the ongoing use of the cathedral as a place of worship, and to respond to changes to the needs and expectations of the congregation. This includes internal services works (lighting, heating, fire protection/detection, AV and CCTV) that are intended to meet the expectations of amenity for modern congregations. These works typically comprise the updating of non-original services fixtures and equipment, with minimal intervention to original fabric.

Internal lighting to the cathedral has been upgraded several times over the course of its history. Lighting upgrades required include the replacement of non-original lighting, redundant lighting and cabling, and installation of a new lighting system to support the ongoing function of religious services. Existing cable pathways within roof spaces and column capitals will be used for new lighting.

The upgrading of heating – comprising the removal of existing under-seat pew heaters and installation of new hydronic underfloor heating – will improve the comfort of the congregation. While localised lifting of sections of the tile floor is required to provide access for subfloor heating, existing tiles will be salvaged for re-use where possible. Where new tiles are required to be installed, these will be installed in the same position, resulting in no change to the presentation of the tiles.

Fire protection and detection upgrades will provide increased safety and protection for members of the congregation, clergy and staff, and the cathedral.

A contemporary expectation is that religious services will be livestreamed to allow access to those who cannot be physical present in the cathedral. As such, the AV system will be upgraded. This includes a new sound reinforcement system to deliver intelligible speech across all seating areas within the cathedral; new microphones above the choir to pick up and balance audio; and camera relays to small displays throughout the cathedral, namely the bell tower (for ringing bells), the west entrance (for wedding party arrivals), and within the sanctuary to enable greater control over event proceedings. A network of new cabling infrastructure will be installed to facilitate greater connectivity throughout the cathedral, with one confessional renovated to provide a dedicated broadcast control position. Existing cable pathways in columns will be used where possible, with minimal new penetrations to column bases to match existing penetrations. There will also be new external connection points to provide AV to external locations around the cathedral during larger events or for outside broadcasters. A new wifi/bluetooth-based hearing augmentation system will also be installed, supported by an underfloor hearing loop system to the nave.

Refurbishment of the confessionals, and the reconfiguration of one confessional (to the south transept) to an AV livestream room (see discussion above), is necessary to respond to contemporary expectations of amenity for

religious rites. The reconfigured confessionals will provide larger spaces for the priest, updated joinery and smoke detection; the timber joinery, plaster work and floor finishes will be restored as part of the works. The conversion of one confessional to AV livestream room, with installation of lightweight partition, new storage cupboard, livestream desk, AV rack and flooring, provides a sensitive and discreet location for services functions and equipment.

The working sacristy, which was last renovated in the mid-1990s, will also be renovated for the purpose of facilitating religious services and rites.

The Stations of the Cross will be relocated from the transept to the aisles of the nave, where they will be installed (with supports) to pilasters. The fixings will be to stone bed joints to the hard plaster aisle wall on either side of the pilaster, using a powder-coated metal removable cover plate to conceal supports. This method of installation will avoid penetrations and the attachment of fixings to the pilasters, with the supports attaching to the hard plaster walls instead. The aisles are a traditional location for Stations of the Cross to be displayed; as such, this is consistent with the exemptions provided for at s.90.

Works to the narthex, which was enlarged and reconfigured in the 1930s, comprise the installation of a new freestanding timber entry console and timber notice board display/shelving. These works will facilitate the use of the cathedral as a place of worship, are reversible, and will not have an impact on significant fabric.

The installation of the new organ division to the choir is required to improve the connection between the choir and the organ during religious services. At present, the cathedral choir is positioned at too great a distance from the existing organ divisions, which affects musical performances. Maintaining a high-quality organ is critical to the ongoing operation of the cathedral as a place of worship. The organ has previously been modified and upgraded on a number of occasions, and is a composite of fabric and elements that has evolved since the 1870s.

These works will not result in 'harm' to the heritage place, but will allow the continued use of the cathedral as a place of worship for religious services and rites.

5.4 Other works

Other works which do not fall under the s.92(1) or s.93 exemptions (and which are not required for compliance) are minor in nature and/or will not result in 'harm' to original or early fabric. These works include:

- Upgrade of external lighting to the cathedral
    - The new external lighting scheme replaces existing external lighting which is reaching end-of-life and provides insufficient illumination
    - Upgrades to the external lighting will have a positive effect on the presentation of the cathedral. The new lighting scheme is a contemporary approach to lighting a public building, and the increased illumination will allow for greater appreciation of the cathedral in low-light conditions and at night
    - The impact of attaching light fixings to significant fabric will be minimised by fixing into mortar joints where possible, and avoiding fixing directly into stonework. The visibility of light fittings from the ground level will be minimised as much as possible, with most lights fitted to recessed in-ground locations, roof surfaces and the rears of parapets, and spires
- Introduction of internal glass sliding doors to the west, north and south entrances
    - By allowing the cathedral to be 'opened up', the glass sliding doors will have a positive effect on access to the cathedral, while providing weather protection
    - The impact of attaching fixings to significant fabric will be minimised by using minimal fixings into the existing wall and fixing into mortar joints where possible. Hardware will be concealed behind pelmets to minimise visual impact

- Removal of the non-original glass screen door to the pilgrim's path entrance to the cathedral

6.0 Conclusion

This package of works to St Patrick's Cathedral represents the first major upgrade to the cathedral since the 1990s. The works respond to the need for conservation of significant fabric; the requirement to provide compliant access for people with disabilities to the cathedral; and to meet the expectations of contemporary congregations and visitors. The works will enhance the presentation of the cathedral within the broader precinct, and improve access, amenity and comfort for congregations. The works will not have an adverse impact on the heritage significance of the place, and are considered to form a positive heritage outcome that supports the ongoing use of the cathedral as a place of worship.

As discussed at section 1.2, a permit is sought primarily for reasons of efficiency in managing a complex and comprehensive set of works. It is anticipated that conditions for monitoring and/or a schedule of site visits with Heritage Victoria will be applied to the permit.

APPENDIX A

Section 90 declaration

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We proclaim a crucified Christ
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29 July 2025

Mr Steven Avery
Executive Director
Heritage Victoria
Level 10
2 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Mr Avery ,

Re: St Patrick's Cathedral Precinct (H0008) – Cathedral restoration

I, Most Rev Peter A Comensoli, Archbishop of Melbourne, Authorised officer of St Patrick's Cathedral Precinct (VHR H0008), and applicant for this permit application to the above-mentioned place, declare that the proposed works to St Patrick's Cathedral, as documented in the permit application, are required for the purposes of religious services or rites.

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne

St Patrick's Centre, PO Box 146, East Melbourne VIC 8002 Australia
Tel: +61 3 9926 5612 Email: archbishop@cam.org.au