

# FORMER FAIRFIELD HOSPITAL (H1878)

## MULTI-DECK CAR PARK Heritage Impact Statement

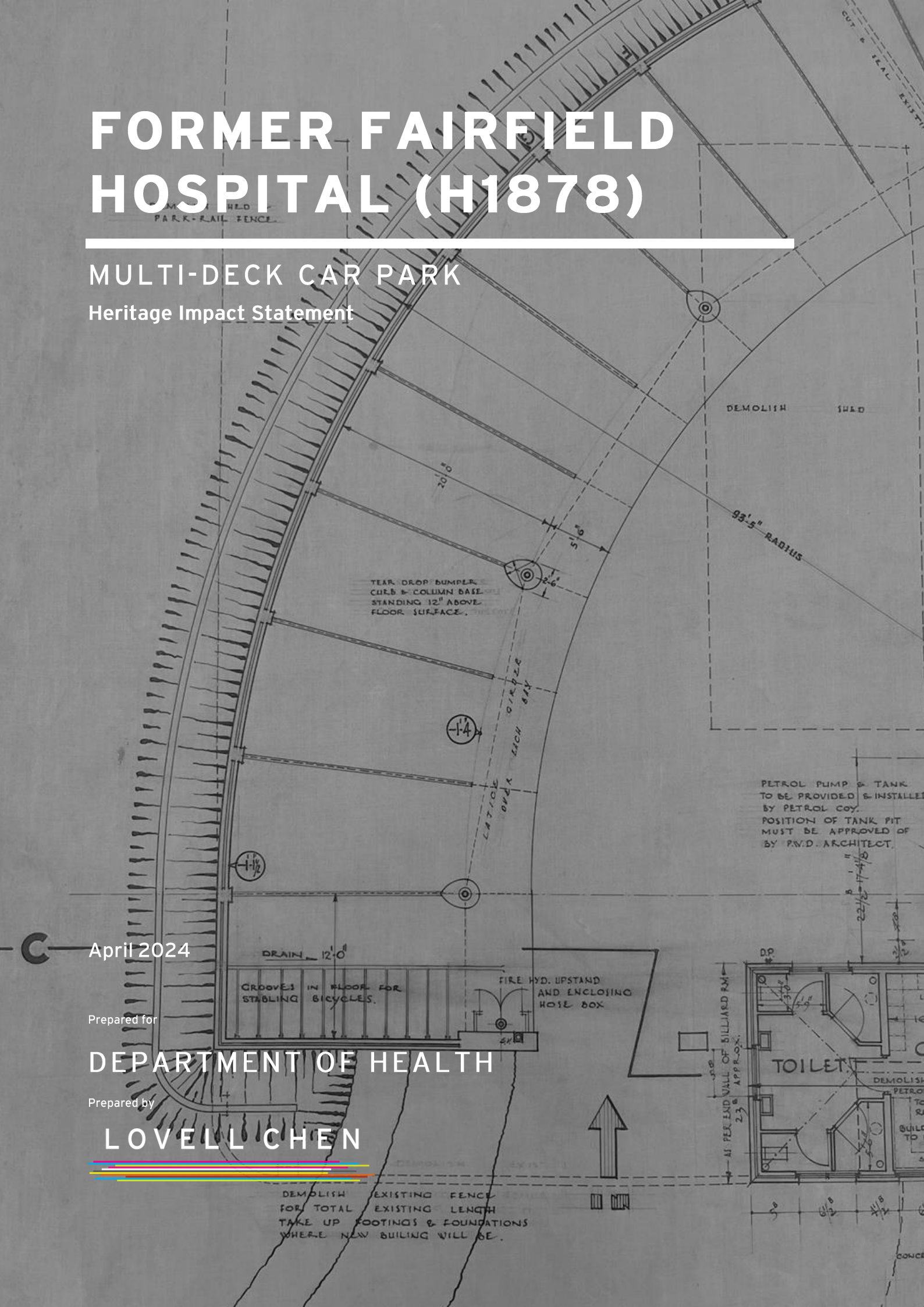
April 2024

Prepared for

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Prepared by

LOVELL CHEN



PETROL PUMP & TANK TO BE PROVIDED & INSTALLED BY PETROL COY. POSITION OF TANK PIT MUST BE APPROVED OF BY P.V.D. ARCHITECT.

DEMOLISH EXISTING FENCE FOR TOTAL EXISTING LENGTH TAKE UP FOOTINGS & FOUNDATIONS WHERE NEW BUILDING WILL BE.

TOILET

41' PER END WALL OF BILLIARD RM 23' APPROX.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

This report was prepared on the lands of the Wurundjeri 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.

Fairfield Hospital 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.

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

Project no.	Issue no.	Description	Issue date	Approval
9805.03	1	Draft HIS	15/12/2023	KG
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9805.03	4	Final HIS	29/02/2024	KG
9805.03	5	Final HIS – RFI	21/03/2024	KG
9805.03	6	Final HIS – RFI 2	30/04/2024	KG

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Cover image: 1940 Proposed New Garage, Staff Quarters and Trade Workshops plan detail, Percy Everett

Source: Public Records Office Victoria, VPRS 3686/P0019, HF 1.63 Hospitals

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared for the Department of Health to accompany a permit application to Heritage Victoria.

The HIS addresses a proposal to undertake works in the north-western part of the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) registered place Fairfield Hospital (Former) (H1878), located at 101-201 Yarra Bend Road, Fairfield. The property at 101 Yarra Bend Road is a large site which comprises most of the registered place and is occupied by the Fairfield campus of Melbourne Polytechnic. To its south is 201 Yarra Bend Road, also a very large site which includes a small extent of the registered place at its north-west corner. 201 Yarra Bend Road accommodates a secure forensic mental health facility, the Thomas Embling Hospital, which is managed by the Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health (Forensicare).

This application proposes a new multi-deck carpark in the location of an existing hardstand carpark area in the north-west corner of the Melbourne Polytechnic site, with new landscape treatment to the immediate surrounds, to provide additional carparking for Forensicare staff and Melbourne Polytechnic students and staff. The requirement for increased carparking capacity is being driven by the Victorian Health Building Authority (VHBA) project to expand and upgrade Thomas Embling Hospital facilities in response to the recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*. As part of the multi-deck carpark project, it is proposed to position solar arrays on the top level of the new building; the intention is that these would generate the total electricity supply for the Fairfield campus, contributing to the achievement of Melbourne Polytechnic's net zero by 2040 target.

Additionally, the application proposes minor alterations to the adjacent Ambulance Garage (B9 in the VHR extent of registration) to make its existing use for gardening equipment storage safe and secure. Adaptation and landscaping works associated with Melbourne Polytechnic's teaching and student programs are proposed to the Ambulance Garage driveway area.

The former Fairfield Hospital is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people, sited near the confluence of the Merri Creek (Merri Merri) and Yarra River (Birrarung). These waterways are important for many Eastern Kulin peoples. The Wurundjeri-willam people, the ancestors of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and the earliest known inhabitants of the area, would have seasonal settlements and ceremonies along the Merri Creek.

### 1.1 Documentation

The following documents are referenced in the historical information and heritage assessment in this HIS:

- Fairfield Hospital Conservation Management Plan (Draft), prepared by Graeme Butler & Associates, dated March 1997
- *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, by William Keys Anderson, published 2002
- City of Yarra Heritage Review, prepared by Allom Lovell & Associates, dated 1998

The following drawings and reports document the proposed works and are submitted with the permit application:

- Thomas Embling Hospital Expansion Multi-deck Carpark (Melbourne Polytechnic) architectural drawings, prepared by Guymer Bailey architects:

- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-000-0000-0000 Cover page and drawing list (Rev D)
- Context plan (Rev A)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-010-0000-0000 Context plan – Carpark (Rev E)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-030-0001-0000 Views – Sheet 1 (Rev C)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-030-0002-0000 Views – Sheet 2 (Rev C)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-030-0003-0000 Views – Sheet 3 (Rev C)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-030-0005-0000 Views – Sheet 4 (Rev A)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-050-0000-0000 Existing conditions – Carpark (Rev C)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-100-2G00-0000 Ground floor plan (Rev F)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-100-4100-0000 Level 1 floor plan (Rev E)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-100-5200-0000 Level 2 floor plan (Rev F)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-140-0001-0000 Roof plan (Rev B)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-200-0001-0000 Elevations – Sheet 1 (Rev F)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-200-0002-0000 Elevations – Sheet 2 (Rev E)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-200-0003-0000 Elevations – Sheet 3 (Rev E)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-300-0001-0000 Sections – Sheet 1 (Rev G)
- GBA-DRW-AR-CP-300-0002-0000 Sections – Sheet 2 (Rev G)
- Existing conditions – Ambulance Bay (Rev A)
- Ambulance Bay – Plan (Rev A)
- Ambulance Bay – Elevation and section (Rev A)
- Multideck Carpark Materials and Finishes Report, prepared by Guymer Bailey architects, dated November 2023
- Thomas Embling Hospital Expansion Multi-deck Carpark Melbourne Polytechnic Landscape Design, Schematic Design Report, prepared by Guymer Bailey landscape, dated 29 April 2024 (Revision E)

The following documents are also submitted to support the permit application:

- Letter, prepared by Victorian Health Building Authority, dated 18 December 2023
- Thomas Embling Hospital and Melbourne Polytechnic Arboricultural Impact Assessment, prepared by Civica, dated 10 April 2024
- Cultural Heritage Assessment and Implications for Development at Thomas Embling Hospital – SCO Extensions, prepared by Andrew Long & Associates, dated 8 December 2021

## 1.2 Pre-application meetings

Pre-application meetings with Heritage Victoria were conducted to discuss the proposal during the concept and schematic design stages. These comprised an online meeting on 13 April 2023, onsite

meetings on 11 May 2023 and 8 September 2023, a second online meeting on 15 November and a third online meeting on 9 February 2024.

Issues discussed included the background to the project, the history and specific characteristics of the project site, the design response and the application requirements.

## 2.0 STATUTORY HERITAGE CONTROLS

### 2.1 Victorian Heritage Register (VHR)

#### 2.1.1 *Fairfield Hospital*

The former Fairfield Hospital, located at 101 Yarra Bend Road, Fairfield, is a registered place included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR), with VHR number H1878. The extent of registration encompasses the majority of the former hospital complex and grounds as they had developed to the 1990s, excluding most of the southern part of the site (the majority of the land now occupied by the Thomas Embling Hospital site at 201 Yarra Bend Road was excluded).

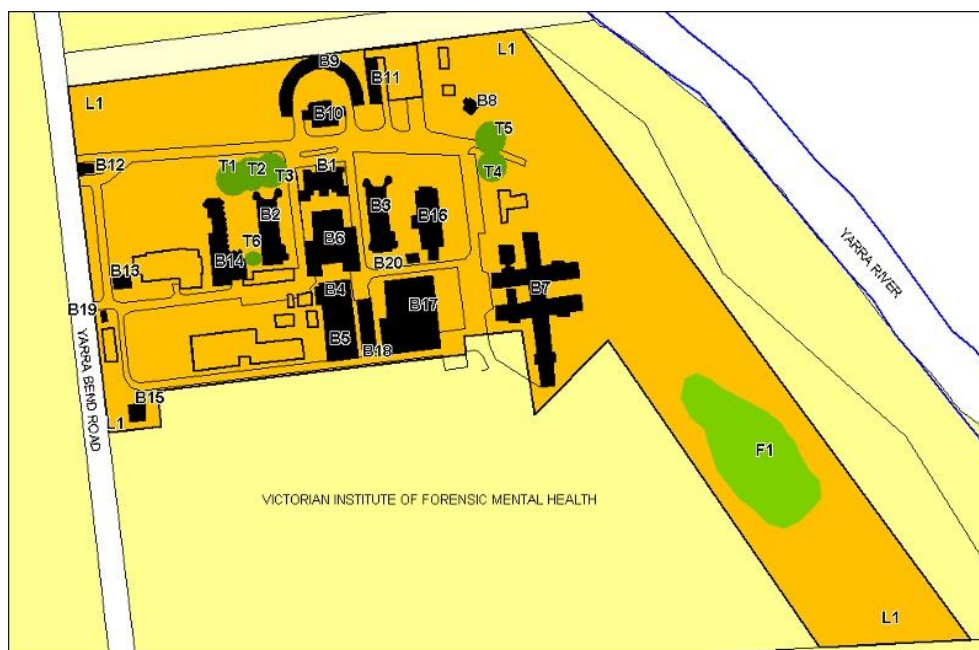


Figure 1 Extent of registration diagram for former Fairfield Hospital  
Source: Victorian Heritage Database, accessed 2 November 2023

The statement of significance for the former Fairfield Hospital, as recorded in the Victorian Heritage Database (VHD), is as follows:

#### What is significant?

The former Fairfield Hospital opened in 1904 as the Queen's Memorial Infectious Diseases Hospital, funded by money raised to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and was the first purpose-built, centralised isolation hospital for the treatment of infectious diseases in the State. The buildings, many of them in a consistent Federation style in red brick with terra cotta tile roofs, were constructed between 1900 and 1994 on a 22-acre site on the bank of the Yarra River. The hospital's name was changed to Fairfield Hospital in 1948. The hospital closed in 1996 and the southern part of the site was reserved for the construction of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Psychiatry. The northern part of the site was sold to the Northern Metropolitan Institute of TAFE. A section of land to the east of the present Victorian Institute of Forensic Psychiatry has been gazetted as a Public Park

and Memorial Garden (containing the AIDS Garden) under the supervision of the Northern Metropolitan Institute of TAFE as the Committee of Management.

How is it significant?

The former Fairfield Hospital is architecturally, aesthetically, historically and socially significant to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The former Fairfield Hospital is architecturally significant as being among the best examples of hospital architecture in Australia in the period 1900-49, and demonstrates changes in hospital design in response to developments in infection control and treatment from the first decades of this century.

The former Fairfield Hospital is architecturally significant for its early, rare and visually distinctive core of Federation style buildings designed by Clegg, Kell and Miller.

The former Fairfield Hospital is architecturally significant as the most comprehensive hospital complex design carried out by Anketell and Kingsley Henderson who were the state's most prominent commercial and hospital architects in the early twentieth century and whose work was influential in hospital design.

The former Fairfield Hospital is architecturally significant for the Modernist F VG. Scholes building and the Ambulance Garage, both designed by the prominent Public Works Department Chief Architect, Percy Everett.

The former Fairfield Hospital is architecturally significant for individual notable elements within the complex such as the formed fibrous plaster sheet ceilings seen in the 1900-03 buildings.

The former Fairfield Hospital is historically significant as the first and only purpose-designed and built infectious diseases hospital in Australia.

The former Fairfield Hospital is historically and socially significant as an institution responsive to the needs of patients during epidemics of infectious diseases for almost 100 years as it developed from isolation hospital to internationally recognised research and treatment centre. Its innovative responses to the challenge of caring for HIV/AIDS patients and their families from 1983 to 1996 included the establishment of the AIDS garden in 1988.

The former Fairfield Hospital garden is aesthetically significant as an example of the influence of the work of pioneering landscape gardener William Guilfoyle.

The former Fairfield Hospital is aesthetically significant for its mature and exotic vegetation, including fine mature specimens of *Cedrus deodara*, *Eucalyptus cladocalyx* and rare trees such as *Ficus palmata*.<sup>1</sup>

The standing specific permit exemptions for the registered place are as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Victorian Heritage Database, Fairfield Hospital (Former). <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/4884>, accessed 2 November 2023.

- No permits are required for works which are in accordance with the Fairfield Hospital Conservation Management Plan prepared by Graeme Butler and Associates in 1997.
- No permits are required for works which are in accordance with the Allom Lovell & Associates Review of Heritage Impact of Works to the Former Fairfield Hospital (July 2000).
- Buildings not specified in the extent of registration may be altered within their current envelope or demolished (but a permit would be required for any new buildings).<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1.2 Adjacent heritage place

The former Fairfield Hospital VHR registered place is bordered to the west (across Yarra Bend Road), east and south by a second VHR registered place, Yarra Bend Park (H2398) (Figure 2). Covering an extensive area of parkland, Yarra Bend Park is of historical and archaeological significance for its post-contact Aboriginal meeting places, mid-nineteenth to late-twentieth century government institutions, such as the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum, and long and ongoing development of active and passive recreation.

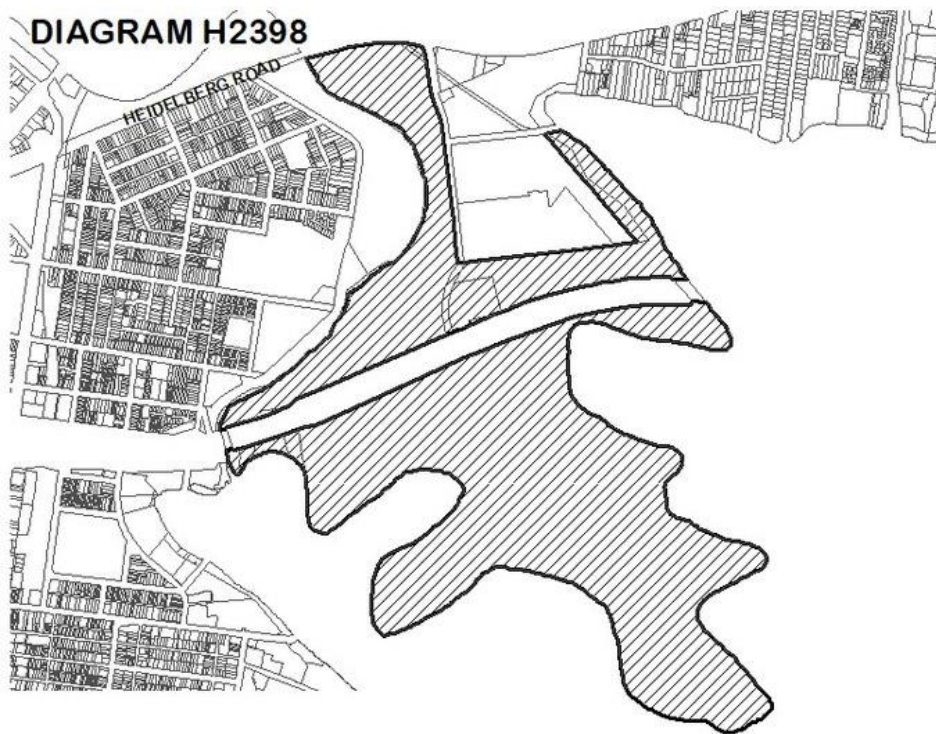


Figure 2 Extent of registration diagram for Yarra Bend Park  
Source: Victorian Heritage Database, accessed 12 December 2023

<sup>2</sup> Victorian Heritage Database, Fairfield Hospital (Former). <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/4884>, accessed 6 December 2023.

## 2.2 Heritage Overlay (HO)

### 2.2.1 *Fairfield Hospital*

The Heritage Overlay (HO) for the former Fairfield Hospital under the Yarra Planning Scheme is consistent with the VHR extent and is mapped and scheduled as HO303.

### 2.2.2 *Adjacent heritage place*

Neighbouring the subject site to the north is Fairfield Park, which is a site-specific HO in the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO147), identified as significant for its early recreational use (1912) and Edwardian landscape character.

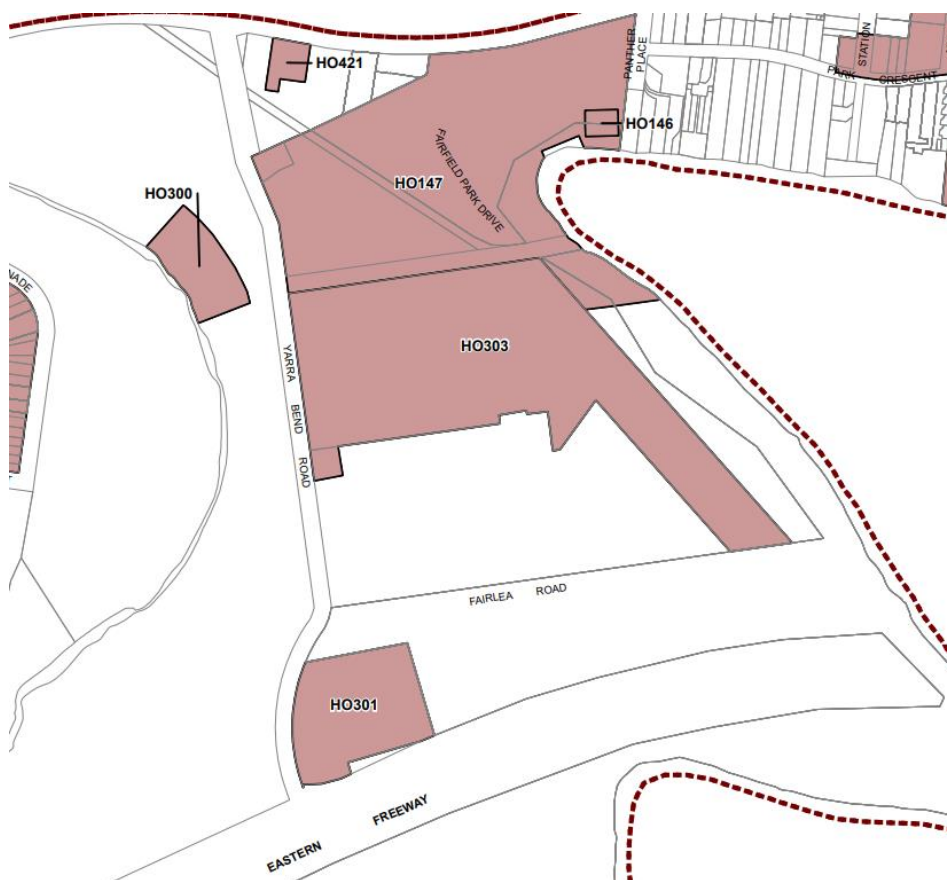


Figure 3 Detail of HO mapping, including Fairfield Hospital (HO303) and Fairfield Park (HO147), note that the HO mapping has not been amended to include the VHR registration for Yarra Bend Park

Source: Yarra Planning Scheme, accessed 12 December 2023

### 3.0 OVERVIEW HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

#### 3.1 History

Fairfield Hospital was the first purpose-built infectious diseases hospital established in Victoria, opening in 1904, soon after the death of Queen Victoria, as the Queen's Memorial Infectious Diseases Hospital.<sup>3</sup> The facility was commonly referred to as 'Fairfield Hospital' and this became its official name in 1948.<sup>4</sup> Fairfield Hospital patients were admitted for a variety of conditions over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including scarlet fever, diphtheria, malaria, measles, meningitis, whooping cough, tuberculosis, typhoid, and polio, with admissions spiking during major outbreaks.<sup>5</sup> The hospital played an important role in treating influenza patients during the 1918-19 epidemic.<sup>6</sup> By the early 1970s, Fairfield Hospital had become a valuable research facility.<sup>7</sup> The hospital was integral for patient care and research in Victoria during the AIDS epidemic in the 1980-90s.<sup>8</sup> Fairfield Hospital closed in 1996.<sup>9</sup>

The Yarra Bend site was chosen, in part, due to its proximity to, yet isolation from, the centre of Melbourne.<sup>10</sup> The land was also in government ownership and had previously formed part of the Melbourne 'Lunatic Asylum'.<sup>11</sup> The siting of the facility reflects its public health purpose, which was to not only treat infectious diseases but to control their spread. The site was planned for infection control, with separate buildings for administration, nurse accommodation, kitchen, laundry, and patient intake functions, and two separate wards for scarlet fever and diphtheria respectively.<sup>12</sup> There were also separate entries for infected and non-infected traffic.<sup>13</sup> The original buildings at the core of the complex were designed by architects Clegg, Kell and Miller, in a Federation style. The buildings were set in a designed landscape planned by William Robert Guilfoyle, Director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, and D Campbell, Superintendent of Tree Planting in the City of Melbourne.<sup>14</sup> The 1904 landscape treatment included plane tree avenue plantings, pepper trees on the grounds for shade and ornamental shrubs.<sup>15</sup> A hedge was established between this time and c. 1930, demarcating the building complex from an undeveloped portion of the site in the north-west corner (Figure 4).

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<sup>3</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, ch. 1.

<sup>4</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 106.

<sup>5</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002.

<sup>6</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, pp. 58-59.

<sup>7</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 146

<sup>8</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, ch. 5.

<sup>9</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 222.

<sup>10</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 19.

<sup>11</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 19.

<sup>12</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 24.

<sup>13</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> Graeme Butler & Associates, *Fairfield Hospital Conservation Management Plan*, 1997, pp. 16-17.

<sup>15</sup> Graeme Butler & Associates, *Fairfield Hospital Conservation Management Plan*, 1997, p. 17.



After its first ten years in operation, it was evident that the facility was not adequately equipped for epidemics.<sup>16</sup> In 1914, Anketell and Kingsley Henderson, the most prolific hospital architects in Victoria at the time, were engaged to upgrade the complex.<sup>17</sup> Between 1916-17, a new administration building and two new ward pavilions were constructed,<sup>18</sup> and the laundry, kitchen and nurse accommodation buildings were extended. The construction of additional wards and another extension of the nurse accommodation building (later called 'Yarra House') were carried out in the early 1920s. Yarra House was extended further in 1932 and 1944-47. Trees and shrubs were planted around the buildings which were constructed or altered during the Anketell and Kingsley Henderson period of development.<sup>19</sup>

Fairfield Hospital operations were put under pressure during World War II. The conditions of military service increased the incidence of infectious diseases in the Melbourne population but the scarcity of labour, raw materials, and funding served to limit expansion projects. The year 1940 had the highest patient admissions in the history of Fairfield Hospital,<sup>20</sup> however the only building works in this year were for a new ambulance garage and quarters, and workshops,<sup>21</sup> designed by the Department of Public Works Chief Architect, Percy Everett (Figure 5). By this point, the hospital's ambulance service had evolved from a single horse and cart to a fleet of four motor vehicles;<sup>22</sup> this was short-lived however, and in 1951, the service was made redundant by Victorian Civil Ambulance Service.<sup>23</sup>

In 1950, the new isolation block, the F V Scholes Block, also designed by Percy Everett, was opened.<sup>24</sup>

The new buildings constructed in the 1960-80s reflected the growing research work at the hospital and the increasing understanding of infectious diseases. The Coates Block, designed by Hugh Peck and Partners and opened in 1963, centralised a range of medical services and education facilities.<sup>25</sup> In 1978, the Vivian Bullwinkel School of Nursing was opened and construction started on a national High Security Quarantine Unit.<sup>26</sup> Capital improvements and redevelopment continued into the early 1990s.<sup>27</sup>

Following the closure of the Fairfield Hospital in 1996, the site was divided. The northern and eastern parts of the site, which accommodated the majority of the early-mid twentieth century hospital buildings, was developed for use the Northern Metropolitan Institute of TAFE (now Melbourne Polytechnic), with the heritage buildings adapted for educational and associated uses.

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<sup>16</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, ch. 1.

<sup>17</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 40.

<sup>18</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 40.

<sup>19</sup> Graeme Butler & Associates, *Fairfield Hospital Conservation Management Plan*, 1997, p. 35.

<sup>20</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 95.

<sup>21</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 94.

<sup>22</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, ch. 2.

<sup>23</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 117.

<sup>24</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 110.

<sup>25</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 136.

<sup>26</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, pp. 164-65.

<sup>27</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, ch. 5.

The more sparsely developed southern part of the site was developed for a new secure forensic hospital complex run by the Victorian Institute of Forensic Psychiatry (Forensicare), which included the construction of new purpose-designed buildings.



Figure 4 c. 1930-40 aerial photograph of Fairfield Hospital and surrounds (Charles Daniel Pratt)  
Source: State Library Victoria, H91.160/856

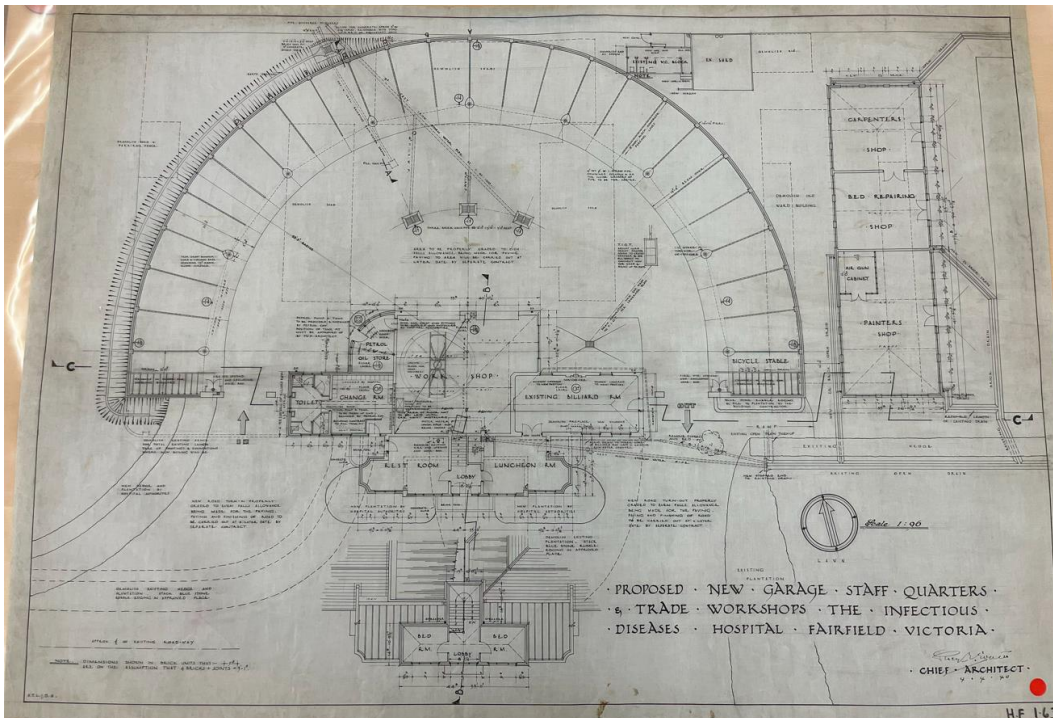


Figure 5 1940 proposed plans for Ambulance Garage, Staff Quarters and workshops (Department of Public Works)  
 Source: Public Record Office Victoria, VPRS 3686/P0019, HF 1.63



Figure 6 1969 aerial photograph detail of Fairfield Hospital  
 Source: Landata

### 3.2 Site description

The site of the proposed carpark is located in the north-west of the former Fairfield Hospital (Figure 7) and is currently occupied by an existing at-grade bitumen carpark. Aerial photographs and MMBW plans indicate this land was undeveloped prior to its use for staff carparking in the c. 1950s-60s (Figure 6, Figure 8, Figure 9).<sup>28</sup>

Along the northern boundary with Fairfield Park, there is a row of cypress trees which was planted c. 10 years ago to replace an earlier cypress hedge which was planted c. 1932 (Figure 10, Figure 11).<sup>29</sup> To the western edge of the carpark, there is a brick boundary fence with two entrance/exit driveways (Figure 11). Melbourne Polytechnic signage is displayed at the northern and southern ends of the fence. Located to the south, in alignment with the brick fence, a red brick gatehouse, constructed in 1917, sits between the two original vehicle entrances (Figure 12). These converge behind the Gatehouse to form the main drive which follows its original east-west alignment but has contemporary hard paving and painted road markings (Figure 13). The main drive runs parallel to the southern edge of the carpark, separated by a hedge which aerial photographs confirm as an early landscape feature (Figure 4). The hedge accommodates a number of openings for pedestrian access (Figure 14). At the eastern end there is a curved planting of dense hedging and mature trees which connects with the south elevation at the western end of the Ambulance Garage (Figure 15).

The Ambulance Garage (B9 in the VHR extent of registration, refer Figure 1) is a single-storey red brick building which is semi-circular in plan, half encircling the Staff Quarters building (B10) which sits to the south facing the main drive. The Staff Quarters is a Moderne style, two-storey brick building comprising offices and amenities (Figure 17). The ground surface between and around the Ambulance Garage and Staff Quarters is bitumen and is used as a driveway and carparking area by grounds staff.

The convex face of the semi-circular Ambulance Bay building is red face brick, visible from within the existing carpark and the adjacent part of Fairfield Park (Figure 9 & Figure 10). The building has a slight skillion roof of timber construction with metal cladding, supported by steel trusses and piers with teardrop-shaped bases. The metal roof cladding and fascia was installed in c. 2010 to replace corroded fabric. The concave side of the building, addressing the driveway, was originally open and has no load-bearing walls. Between the 1990s and early 2000s, partition walls were constructed to partially enclose the Ambulance Garage at its western and eastern ends. At the western end, the walls are clad with corrugated metal and have a freestanding metal structure (Figure 18). The wall facing the Staff Quarters building is built to the edge of the Ambulance Garage volume and has two roller doors. At the eastern end, the walls are clad with corrugated metal and plastic and have a free-standing metal structure (Figure 19). The wall facing the Staff Quarters building is set back behind the steel trusses and columns. The Ambulance Garage flooring is concrete. Parking bay numbers have been painted onto the internal face of the brick wall in at least two iterations.

To the south of the existing carpark, across the main drive, there are ornamental gardens which provide a landscape setting to one of the original ward buildings, and the Scholes and Coates blocks. The gardens have lawn areas with c. 2010 paths and low scale plantings, as well as two mature deodar cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) trees which were planted during the Anketell and Kingsley Henderson period of

<sup>28</sup> William Keys Anderson, *Fever Hospital: A History of Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital*, 2002, p. 110.

<sup>29</sup> Graeme Butler & Associates, *Fairfield Hospital Conservation Management Plan*, 1997, p. 33.

development (T1 and T3 in the VHR extent of registration) and a mature Punjab fig (*Ficus palmata*) tree which was retained during the construction of the Scholes Block (T6).



Figure 7 2023 aerial imagery of former Fairfield Hospital (subject site indicated)  
Source: Nearmap



Figure 8 View from north-east corner of existing carpark looking west  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021



Figure 9 View from within the carpark looking east to the west elevation of Ambulance Garage  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021



Figure 10 View from Main Yarra Trail in Fairfield Park looking west, the subject site is on the left, brick rear wall to the Ambulance Garage in the foreground  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021



Figure 11 View from Yarra Bend Road looking east to the existing boundary fence and carpark access  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021



Figure 12 View from Yarra Bend Road looking east to main drive access and Gatehouse  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021



Figure 13 View from main drive near Gatehouse looking east  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021





Figure 14 View from main drive near eastern pedestrian access to carpark looking west, mature deodara cedars on left  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021



Figure 15 View from intersection of main drive and Ambulance Garage driveway entry (to the right) looking west



Figure 16 View from the south of the main drive and Ambulance Garage driveway intersection looking north, note mature vegetation  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021



Figure 17 View from the Ambulance Garage driveway to the north elevation of the Staff Quarters  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021



Figure 18 View of Ambulance Garage from the driveway looking west, Staff Quarters on left  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021



Figure 19 View to the eastern end of the Ambulance Garage and driveway, Staff Quarters on left  
Source: Lovell Chen, 2021

## **4.0 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

### **4.1 Summary of significance**

#### *4.1.1 Fairfield Hospital*

The former Fairfield Hospital is recognised as being of state architectural, aesthetic, historical and social significance, summarised as follows:

- Fairfield Hospital was the first and only purpose-built infectious diseases hospital in Australia
- Fairfield Hospital treated patients with infectious diseases for nearly a century and evolved from a hospital for isolating infectious patients in Melbourne to a research and treatment centre which became internationally recognised for its medical work
- The Fairfield Hospital complex is an exemplary example of hospital architecture from the first half of the twentieth century, evidencing advances in design for infection control
- The original, core Fairfield Hospital buildings, designed by Clegg, Kell and Miller, are early, rare and distinctive buildings designed in the Federation style
- Additions and alterations to the Fairfield Hospital complex were comprehensively designed and carried out by Anketell and Kingsley Henderson, who were the preeminent hospital architects of the early twentieth century
- Modern buildings constructed at Fairfield Hospital included the Scholes and Ambulance Garage blocks, were designed by prominent Department of Public Works Chief Architect Percy Everett
- The landscaped grounds of Fairfield Hospital show the influence of William Guilfoyle on landscape and garden design in the early twentieth century
- Fairfield Hospital has mature and exotic tree specimens in its gardens.

### **4.2 Significant attributes at and in proximity to the subject site**

The following attributes, which relate to the subject site, contribute to the cultural heritage significance of Fairfield Hospital:

- The planning and arrangement of buildings, gardens and internal roads, including the main drive and hedge running parallel with the site, and the Gatehouse (B12)
- Mature exotic and native vegetation, including the deodar cedar trees (T1 and T3) planted during the Anketell and Kingsley Henderson era and the Punjab fig tree (T6) which was retained during the Department of Public Works development of the Scholes Block (B14)
- The 1940 Ambulance Garage (B9) and Staff Quarters (B10), designed by Percy Everett, Chief Architect of the Department of Public Works

## 5.0 PROPOSED WORKS

The proposed works comprise the construction of a new multi-deck carpark in the location of the existing at-grade carpark in the north-western corner of the registered land, as well as adaptation works to the Ambulance Garage and associated landscaping.

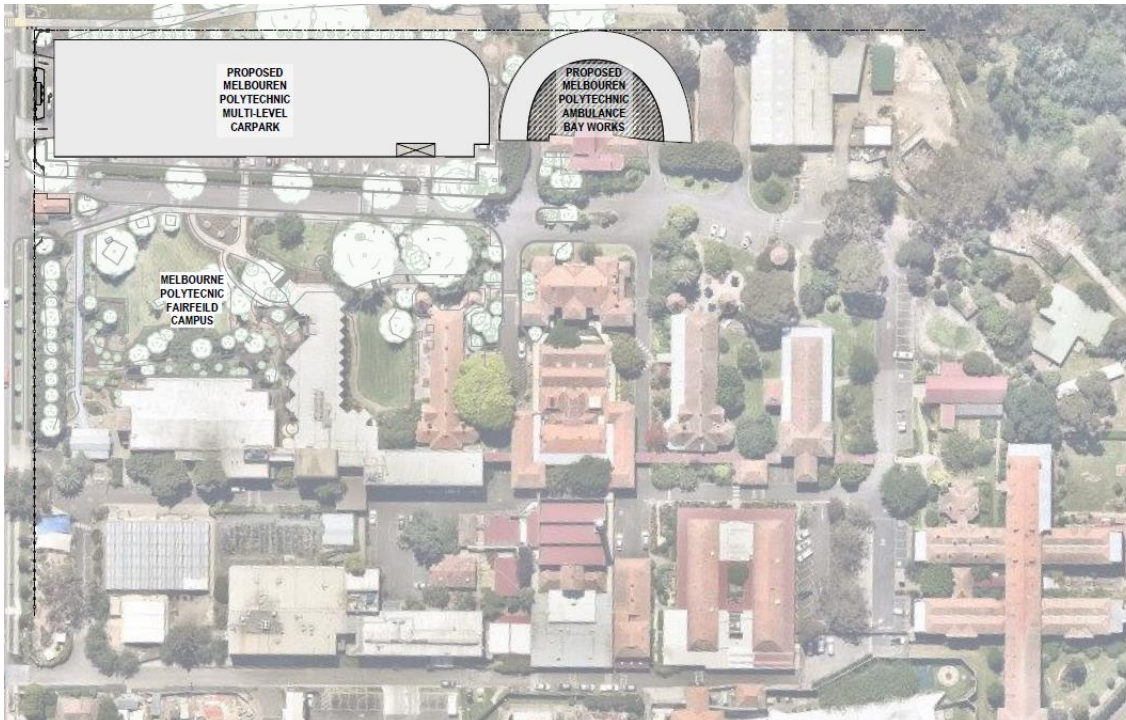


Figure 20 Context plan  
Source: Guymer Bailey architects

### 5.1 New multi-deck carpark

It is proposed to construct a new three-level (ground, first and second floors) multideck carpark on the site of the at-grade carpark. Solar arrays are proposed to be positioned on the top level of the building. The proposed building is documented in the schematic design architectural drawings and the Materials and Finishes Report prepared by Guymer Bailey architects. Note that details of some of the required services associated with the multi-deck carpark and solar installation are to be resolved in the design development phase. In the event a permit is granted for the project works, it is anticipated that these details would be provided under a permit condition.

The existing fences to the northern and western boundaries, and the hedge to the south, are to be retained. The existing carpark driveways and pedestrian paths will also be retained and will be integrated into the new development. Within the footprint of the proposed new building, minor ground levelling works and are to be carried out and new surfaces are to be installed with finishes to match existing.

The proposed new building comprises a grid of concrete columns supporting two concrete floor levels. The top level, level 2, is unroofed but supports solar structures. The height of the building is 7.6 metres to the top of the level 2 balustrade, 8.3 metres to the lowest point of the solar structures and 10.71 metres to the highest point of the solar structures. A lift core in the centre of the south elevation will

rise to 11.55 metres. The location of the lift (centrally and on the south side of the building) has been resolved optimally based on pedestrian walking distances for users from both Melbourne Polytechnic and Thomas Embling Hospital. The building has a setback of 6 metres from the Yarra Bend Road boundary fence to the west and 2.91 metres from the Ambulance Garage building to the east. The building adopts a rectilinear plan except for its curved north-east corner which responds to the adjacent semi-circular Ambulance Garage.

The level 2 solar arrays comprise galvanised steel columns and purlins supporting photovoltaic panels, arranged over the majority of the carparking bays. The total area of solar arrays has been calculated based on the annual electricity usage of the Melbourne Polytechnic Fairfield campus and the layout has been resolved with consideration of the building's structural constraints, spatial allowances for vehicles, emergency and servicing access, and heritage sensitivities.

A tensile mesh façade system wraps levels 1 and 2. To the north, west, and part of the south facades, the mesh has an overlay of aluminium panels in a copper-colour finish, screening the stainless steel crash barriers and parked vehicles. The intention for the remainder of the mesh façade is to use a similar system but with the potential to display rotating installations of Melbourne Polytechnic student work utilising aluminium clip-on panels (Figure 21).

It is proposed to locate cupboards to house the distribution board (DB), mechanical switchboard (MECH SB) and photovoltaic switchboard (PV SB) within the footprint of the new carpark, on ground floor and centred in the west elevation.

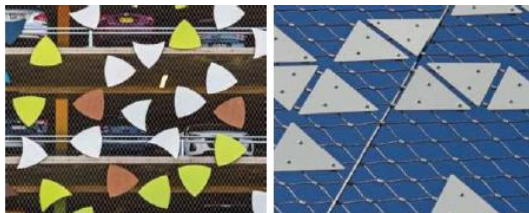


Figure 21 Example designs for student artwork clip-on panels  
Source: Guymer Bailey architects, Materials and Finishes Report

## 5.2 Ambulance Garage alterations

The proposed alterations to the Ambulance Garage are documented in the schematic design architecture drawings prepared by Guymer Bailey architects.

It is proposed to enclose the open bays with new infill walls with roller doors and pedestrian access doors, to be constructed as a freestanding steel structure and metal sheet cladding, supported by strip footings to an approximate depth of 0.5 metres

The design concept includes the incorporation of historical images onto the new walls and doors as a reference to the original function of the building.

## 5.3 Landscape works

The proposed landscape works are documented in the Landscape Design Schematic Design Report prepared by Guymer Bailey landscape. The proposed services to be located outside the carpark footprint are documented in the schematic design architectural drawings prepared by Guymer Bailey architects. Note that the details of some required services associated with the multi-deck carpark and solar installation, which may include works near the subject site, are to be resolved in the design

development phase. In the event a permit is granted for the project works, it is anticipated that these details would be provided under a permit condition.

The landscaping works are in two parts, works associated with the new carpark, and those associated with the Ambulance Garage (in the existing hardstand area between the Ambulance Garage and the Staff Quarters).

### 5.3.1 *Landscaping and services associated with the new carpark*

To the north of the proposed new building, it is proposed to remove the existing boundary plantings of cypress trees and to replace these with a new row of cypress trees. It is also proposed to establish a level ground between the new carpark area and the northern boundary to allow for erection of scaffolding during construction.

To the north-west corner of the site, it is proposed to remove the weeping bottlebrush tree (identified as T502 in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Civica) to allow for the installation of a new water meter assembly.

Adjacent to and behind the existing fence between the car park entry and exit to Yarra Bend Road, it is proposed to remove the existing shrub and to install a new main switchboard (MSB) cupboard with a dark grey powder coat finish, with new trees planted either side. Another new tree is proposed to be planted on the other side of the existing southern driveway.

The Canary Island date palm (identified as T501) to the south-west corner of the site would need to be excessively pruned to avoid damage caused by its growth into the new carpark façade, so it is proposed to remove it and to plant a new tree, which would not pose the same maintenance issues, in this location. A suggested species is a Greenspire Linden (*Tilia cordata*). There is opportunity to relocate the Canary Island date palm to an appropriate landscape context within the registered place.

It is proposed to locate the new fire booster cabinet to the east of the eastern access path to the carpark area, to the northern edge of Campus Drive. This would entail the removal of the succulent shrub in this location but the existing hedge to the north would be protected and retained.

It is proposed to remove the existing bitumen and ground cover to the areas between the new carpark building and the Ambulance Garage and between the new carpark building and the existing hedge, which is to be retained. In these locations, a new concrete path flanked by new shrub and groundcover plantings will be established, providing pedestrian circulation between the new carpark and the existing pathways. There will be a new seating area within the carpark building footprint opposite the existing opening at the eastern end of the hedge as well as a student plant 'library' to the east of the new carpark building (Figure 22). In the area for the new plant library, it is proposed to remove the Chinese Privet (T537), which has been identified as a weed.

### 5.3.2 *Landscaping associated with the Ambulance Garage*

In the bitumen-surfaced area between the Ambulance Garage and the Staff Quarters, it is proposed to resurface the driveway with a pavers 'library', the layout of which adopts the curved form of the Ambulance Garage (Figure 22). To the balance of this semi-circular area, the existing bitumen is to be retained and painted patterns applied (Figure 22). It is also proposed to install metal fence piers to allow for flexible installation of planter boxes to display student horticultural projects (Figure 22).

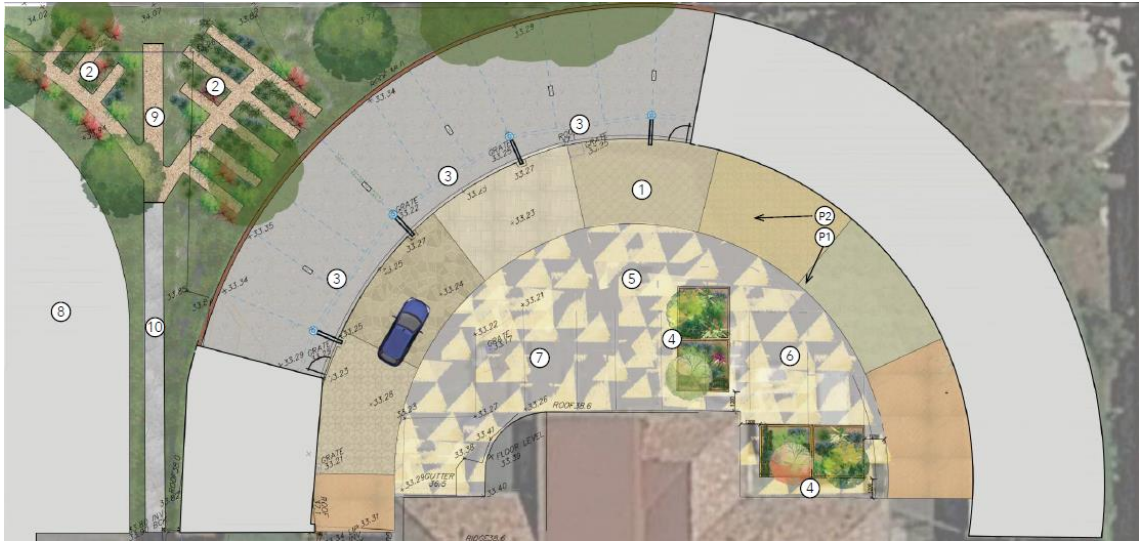


Figure 22 Proposed plant library (2), pavers library (1), and new paint treatment (5) and planters (4)  
Source: Guymer Bailey landscape, Landscape Design Schematic Design Report, p. 5



## 6.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACTS

### 6.1 Impacts to heritage significance

Pursuant to section 101(2)(a) of the *Heritage Act 2017*, the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, in determining whether to approve a permit application, must consider the extent to which approval of the application would affect the cultural heritage significance of the registered place.

#### 6.1.1 *New multi-deck carpark and landscaping*

The multi-deck carpark is proposed to be located on land as part of the registered place which did not form part of the early masterplan for Fairfield Hospital complex as delivered in the three significant stages of construction (Clegg, Kell and Miller; Anketell and Kingsley Henderson; Percy Everett of Department of Public Works). The land was largely undeveloped prior to being used for staff and visitor carparking in the c. 1950s-60s, with hardstand areas being introduced by the c. 1980s.

As a consequence, there would be no impact on significant fabric of any kind, and the use of this part of the site for carparking is consistent with its historical use.

In consideration of the broader layout and composition of the historic complex, the proposed new building is sited in the north-west corner of the place, well-separated from the core Fairfield Hospital buildings. Its location and siting are such that there will be no impact on an appreciation of the original planning of the complex and no disruption to the significant pattern and layout of buildings and internal road networks.

It is proposed to retain the existing hedge to the south, a long-standing element on the north side of the main drive which has historically separated the carpark from the main building complex and the contrasting character of the ornamental gardens to the south.

The proposed new building will obstruct views currently available from Fairfield Park across the at-grade carpark towards the former Fairfield Hospital complex, but these views are limited and distant. They are not considered significant from a heritage perspective. It is noted that the hospital complex historically was a secured complex, one that was appreciated largely from within, without a significant public-facing built form presentation, and certainly with no formal presentation to the north.

In terms of its immediate context, the western end the proposed building will be set back from the existing boundary fence to Yarra Bend Road and from the Gatehouse, and an understanding of the latter's historical function at the site entry will be maintained.

The Ambulance Garage's plain but distinctive semi-circular plan and red face brick construction will continue to be viewed from Fairfield Park as well as from the new activated landscaped area between the two buildings.

The proposal will introduce new built form in proximity to the Ambulance Garage, but a sense of separation will be achieved – enhanced on the south side by the mature plantings immediately south of the Ambulance Garage – and the height and scale difference are well managed. The design response on the north side is one that holds the building back through a curved treatment at the north-east corner, as a direct and appropriate response to the form of the heritage building (Figure 25). The proposed solar structures are pulled back from this part of the plan to allow for a stepped transition between typologies and to avoid disruption to the curved interfaces.

In other views from within the site, the proposed new carpark will have a presence in views along the main east-west drive (in both directions) as well as in oblique views to the north-west from within the

main building complex and garden, however in these views the building will present as a relatively neutral backdrop element of controlled height and mass. While a long building, it is modest in terms of height and will sit back behind the traditional hedge and garden bed plantings on the north side of the drive, and the existing landscape edge will soften its presentation. It will have a presence but one that will be perceived as an edge condition to the heritage place and will not be dominant in a manner that detracts from the heritage context. The façade system offers a relatively neutral but finely patterned and textured aesthetic which responds appropriately to the inherent challenge of managing visual bulk for a building of this type and scale. The solar arrays layout has been resolved so that solar structures are not present along the southern edge to the west of the lift core, which interfaces with the Gatehouse adjacent Yarra Bend Road entry. The setbacks from these interfaces and the positioning of the south-eastern solar structures beside the lift core reduce potential visual clutter in west-east views along Campus Drive (Figure 23).

Sitting forward of the carpark building and positioned behind the existing non-original fence, the proposed MSB cupboard to the western boundary is of understated and neutral design, presenting as a minor visual change in a location of very limited heritage sensitivity. The proposed water meter assembly will be mostly concealed in views from Yarra Bend Road by the existing fence and signage. The new landscaping to this edge will soften the presentation of new built elements to Yarra Bend Road.

As a general comment, the project seeks to maintain and enhance the landscape character of the site and the retained mature trees, historic hedge and other landscape elements will continue to contribute to the aesthetic quality of the place. The Canary Island date palm (T501) was not planted as part of the original or early landscape stages and dates from the early 2000s, however it is consistent with the overall planting scheme. Canary Island date palms can generally be transplanted successfully and the new location, which could be confirmed under a permit condition, would be chosen with consideration for the aesthetic values of the place's landscapes. The Chinese privet (T537) and weeping bottlebrush (T502) are not significant specimens and do not contribute to the aesthetic quality of the place. The proposed new fire booster cabinet is a minor visual change in its context, located near an existing fire booster cabinet, and the succulents to be removed are not significant. The northern row of pencil pines, which are not significant specimens, are to be replanted in a complete hedge to better define this boundary.. Elsewhere, existing plantings will be supplemented with new tree plantings and soft landscaping treatment to the interfaces with the new carpark building, including the new plant library garden at the north-east of the carpark.



Figure 23 Proposed view east along Campus Drive from near Gatehouse  
Source: Guymer Bailey architects



Figure 24 Proposed view to new multi-deck carpark from main drive near Staff Quarters  
Source: Guymer Bailey architects



Figure 25 Proposed view to new multi-deck carpark from Fairfield Park, Ambulance Garage on left  
Source: Guymer Bailey architects

### 6.1.2 *Ambulance Garage alterations and landscaping*

The form of the Ambulance Garage was determined by its intended function, applying Modern design principles. This is evident in its semi-circular plan, which proposes the efficient circulation of motor vehicles, and its structural system which allowed for open ended garaging bays.

The existing infill walls partially enclose spaces at the western and eastern ends of the building. The proposed new infill walls will enclose the remaining open bays, providing secure storage. This will alter the presentation of the building and, when the roller doors are closed, will obstruct visual access into the bays. The viewer's reading of the semi-circular plan from the driveway area will be maintained as the new infill walls will align with the building perimeter. The curvature will be emphasised by the proposed new pavers, which mark the vehicle route.

The infill walls are structurally independent of the existing structure and there would be no impact on original fabric, noting that the existing concrete flooring is not original and will be made good. The works are reversible.

The new infill walls offer an interpretation opportunity as the cladding can be printed with historical images to promote understanding of the heritage place.

In terms of the landscape treatment, the existing driveway surface between the Ambulance Garage and the Staff Quarters is of recent construction. The proposed new surface treatment (paving and painting) will introduce new colours and textures to the setting of the Ambulance Garage and Staff Quarters, but these will present as a playful contemporary layer that will not impact on the presentation of the heritage buildings. The new planters are temporary and related to the use of the place for horticultural education. They will have no adverse impact.

## 6.2 Historical archaeology

It is noted that the subject site is in close proximity to Yarra Bend Park, which is a registered archaeological place.

The former Fairfield Hospital is not a registered archaeological place in the VHR, nor is it included in the Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI).

Areas of excavation (possible quarries) or natural depression appear to be indicated in a 1903 MMBW plan in and near the proposed works area (Figure 26) and the proposed multi-deck carpark site remained almost entirely undeveloped until its use for at-grade parking in c. 1950s-1960s.

Across the board, the proposed works propose relatively limited areas of significant subsurface disturbance, however the potential for archaeology cannot be dismissed.

Recognising the blanket protections under the *Heritage Act 2017*, an unexpected finds protocol and low significance finds protocol may be appropriate for managing archaeological potential in areas with proposed ground works.



Figure 26 1903 Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plan no. 63 detail  
Source: State Library Victoria

## 7.0 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Sections 101(2) and 101(3) of the *Heritage Act 2017* list the matters the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, must and may consider when determining a permit application. Relevant information is provided below as related to the considerations of 'reasonable use' (section 101(2)(b)), the applicant's ability to perform its statutory duties (section 101(2)(d)), and potential for impacts to adjacent heritage places (section 101(3)(a)), in relation to the permit application.

### 7.1 Reasonable use

Pursuant to section 101(2)(b) of the *Heritage Act 2017*, the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, in determining whether to approve a permit application, must consider the extent to which refusal of the application would affect the reasonable or economic use of the registered place.

The following general comments are made in relation to reasonable use:

- While historically it formed part of the hospital site, the site where the new multi-deck carpark is proposed to be constructed was essentially undeveloped and did not form part of the designed building complex nor its ornamental garden setting. The only known dedicated use for this part of the registered land was for at-grade carparking, which dates to a time in the Fairfield Hospital's history when motor vehicles became a common mode of transport for staff and visitors. The proposal relates to and is an intensification of this existing use, providing replacement and additional carparking for both Melbourne Polytechnic and Forensicare.
- The proposed solar scope is the minimum area of solar panels needed to generate 100% of Melbourne Polytechnic Fairfield campus' electricity usage and would therefore allow for sustainable energy self-sufficiency, supporting the continued use of the place. The proposed new multi-deck carpark is an opportunity to co-locate the total extent of solar panels and structures in an area of low heritage sensitivity and constraints. This has a significant heritage benefit in providing support for the ongoing reasonable use of the heritage place and avoiding pressure to explore alternatives in more sensitive locations.
- The Ambulance Garage's purpose-designed and historical use became obsolete in the 1950s. At least since Melbourne Polytechnic's acquisition of the property at 101 Yarra Bend Road, the Ambulance Garage has been used for storing maintenance and gardening equipment and supplies. The proposal to enclose the remainder of the partially enclosed bays will ensure that machinery and hazardous materials are secured. The full capacity of the Ambulance Garage is needed for these storage purposes.
- The proposed landscaping to this area will support the ongoing use of the registered place for education by providing learning aids and exhibition opportunities for landscape design and horticulture students.

These comments are provided as relevant to the uses proposed and their relationship to the current and historical uses of the place.

No specific matters are raised in relation to economic use, but it is noted that the installation of solar arrays would result in a substantial reduction of costs for electricity used in the ongoing operations at the place and will support its economic functioning.

## 7.2 Statutory duties

Pursuant to section 101(2)(d) of the *Heritage Act 2017*, the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, in determining whether to approve a permit application, must consider the extent to which refusal of the application would unreasonably detrimentally affect the ability of the applicant public authority to perform a statutory duty specified in the application.

The applicant, Victorian Health Building Authority (VHBA), is a branch of the Department of Health and therefore a public service body and a 'public authority' for the purposes of section 101(2)(d) of the *Heritage Act 2017*. VHBA is responsible for delivering Victorian Government health infrastructure projects.

A letter prepared by VHBA, submitted in the permit application, provides an overview of the work of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health (Forensicare) at Thomas Embling Hospital and the purpose of the multi-deck carpark proposal as it relates to the statutory duties of the Department of Health under the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022*. In summary, the facilities at Thomas Embling Hospital are being upgraded and expanded to support the provision of safe mental health care. The project will deliver additional hospital beds to improve access to specialised forensic mental health services and implement Recommendation 38(1) of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. Due to the location of Thomas Embling Hospital and the nature of shift work, most staff rely on car transport. The number of staff needed for the increased provision of inpatient care exceeds the available carparking at and near the site. Carparking being developed at the Thomas Embling Hospital site, outside the extent of VHR registration, cannot meet the entire demand, thus the proposed multi-deck carpark is an essential component.

If the permit application were to be refused, it would detrimentally affect the ability of the applicant to perform the following duties under the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022*:

'To plan, develop, fund, provide and promote a comprehensive range of mental health and wellbeing services' (section 254(a))

'To promote the objectives of this [Mental Health and Wellbeing] Act and the mental health and wellbeing principles' (section 254(c))

'To promote continuous improvement in the quality and safety of mental health and wellbeing services' (section 254(g))

'To oversee and support the development of mental health and wellbeing service providers' (section 245(p))

'To implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System' (section 254(r))

## 7.3 Impacts to adjacent heritage places

Pursuant to section 101(3)(a) of the *Heritage Act 2017*, the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, in determining whether to approve a permit application, may consider the extent to which approval of the application would affect the cultural heritage significance of an adjacent VHR or HO place.

In this context, it is relevant to consider whether there is any potential for impacts on:

- the locally-listed Fairfield Park (HO147 Yarra) directly adjacent to the north (historical and aesthetic significance)

- the VHR-listed Yarra Bend Park (H2398), nearest interface to the west of Yarra Bend Road (historical and archaeological significance).

Both Yarra Bend Park and Fairfield Park are of historical significance for the development of their public recreational uses since the c. 1910s, at state and local level respectively. Yarra Bend Park was formalised for public recreational uses in the 1930s, whereas Fairfield Park was established in c. 1912.<sup>30</sup> The landscapes in both places were designed to accommodate public recreational uses: Hugh Linaker designed the landscape plan for Yarra Bend Park and the Fairfield Park plantings and paths were laid out by the Heidelberg Shire Parks and Garden Committee.<sup>31</sup>

In relation to these values, the proposal will not affect the historical significance of either place, nor will it impact on an understanding of their character as related to their historical and ongoing public recreational uses.

Fairfield Park additionally has aesthetic significance, which derives from its extensive tree plantings and its Edwardian landscape design.<sup>32</sup> The new multi-deck carpark building on the adjacent site will not impact on these aesthetic values; no significant trees will be impacted, nor will there be any impact on the important garden layouts expressed in the tiered rockeries by the Yarra River (Birrarung), some distance from the proposed works location. The proposal will introduce a new building of some scale outside the park, at its south-west corner, with the interface to be softened by the re-establishment of the cypress hedge along this boundary. While the building will be viewed from within Fairfield Park, the affected views are not considered to be critical to the local aesthetic values of the park.

There would be no impact on the archaeological values of Yarra Bend Park.

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<sup>30</sup> Allom Lovell & Associates, City of Yarra Heritage Review Thematic History, 1998, pp. 50 & 52.

<sup>31</sup> Allom Lovell & Associates, City of Yarra Heritage Review, Landscape Citations (Vol. 4), 1998, pp. 50 & 52.

<sup>32</sup> Allom Lovell & Associates, City of Yarra Heritage Review, Landscape Citations (Vol. 4), 1998, p. 50.



## 8.0 CONCLUSION

The proposal is in two parts:

- The construction of a new multi-deck carpark, with solar arrays to the upper deck, and associated landscaping in the location of an existing at-grade carpark in the north-west corner of the former Fairfield Hospital VHR registered place.
- The construction of new infill walls with roller and pedestrian doors to enclose the open bays of the Ambulance Garage (B9 in the VHR extent of registration), with a new landscape treatment to its hardstand apron.

In relation to the new multi-deck carpark, the siting of the building is consistent with the historical pattern of use of this part of the site, which was initially undeveloped and subsequently (from the c. 1950s) was used for carparking. The site is separated from the main heritage building complex by the east-west road and traditional hedge treatment. On this basis, the proposed new building in the selected location will have no impact on an appreciation of the planning and layout of the Fairfield Hospital complex.

In terms of broader visual impacts, the new building will present as significant new built form in this location and will alter the context of the heritage place. It will be visible from within the site and will be variously a backdrop element or one that is perceived as sitting off to the side, depending on the viewer's position. In that regard, the potential impact has been mitigated by the controlled scale and massing (the building is long but its height has been minimised), the selection of a relatively neutral but textured façade system and the use of existing and proposed new vegetation to soften the interface. The relationship with the Ambulance Garage in particular has been carefully considered, on the south side through the maintenance of the vegetation buffer and, to the north, through the adoption of a curved plan form to mirror the distinctive form of the existing building. The solar arrays and associated structure have been arranged to minimise impacts on more sensitive views and manage the interface with the Gatehouse entry sequence from the west and with the adjacent Ambulance Garage. As proposed, the arrangement of solar arrays represents the minimum needed to deliver the required capacity and will enable the environmentally sustainable use of the place without physical interventions to heritage fabric to facilitate such infrastructure.

No views of heritage importance would be blocked or obscured by the building.

In considering the potential to impact on significance, while the new building will be an element of some scale which will change some aspects of the presentation of the place, it is the conclusion of this assessment that the state level heritage values will be maintained.

Specifically, the *historical* and *social* significance of the place – as related to its role in responding to outbreaks and epidemics of infectious diseases and caring for patients and their families for almost 100 years – would be unaffected. There would be no impact on the legibility of the layout and combination of buildings and landscape that help to demonstrate those historical and social values.

In terms of *architectural* and *aesthetic* values, these equally would be maintained. There would be no change to the completeness of the complex or its scale and no impact on building fabric or landscape features of significance. The new building would be evident in some views within the place but as a backdrop or side presence, clearly present and contrasting in form and scale, but not dominant in the way it relates to the heritage buildings and landscape.

With respect to the consideration at section 101(2)(d) of the *Heritage Act 2017* (ability of a public authority to perform a statutory duty) the multi-deck carpark is considered critical to the operations of the Thomas Embling Hospital as it will deliver a substantial portion of the carparking spaces needed to transport an increased number of clinical staff to the facility, enabling the provision of additional beds for patients. Refusal to issue a permit for the proposed works would detrimentally impact the ability of the applicant (as a branch of the Department of Health) to perform a number of specified statutory duties under section 254 of the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022*.

In relation to the adjacent locally-listed Fairfield Park, the building will be a change to the context of the park but with no adverse impacts on its heritage values. The park does not rely on an extended setting for an appreciation of its values.

The works to the Ambulance Garage are relatively minor, will have no impact on significant fabric and are entirely reversible. The new infill walls and roller doors will support the long-standing, ongoing and reasonable use of the building for gardening and maintenance storage.

The proposed landscaping works associated with the multi-deck carpark and the Ambulance Garage will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place and will support ongoing educational and student uses.