

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

27 February 2023

Dear Mr Avery

**Re: Permit Application P36825 – Malvern House (H0379)**

I refer to a request for further information (RFI) received from Heritage Victoria, dated 27 October 2022, in relation to permit application P36825 for the installation of lift access between ground and first floor levels within Malvern House, the installation of ramp access into the mansion and removal of a non-original additions to the south elevation of the mansion.

The following information was requested in the RFI:

- A robust reasonable and economic use statement
- Further options analysis for locating the lift in an area which does not require the removal of the original stairs, such as the music room
- Further options analysis for locating the lift in an area which will require partial removal of the stairs, such as the fire stair

This correspondence has been prepared on behalf of Caulfield Grammar School to provide the additional information requested in the RFI.

There have been some revisions made to the proposed works as a result of further investigation into alternative locations for the proposed lift as requested in the RFI. These revisions are shown on the enclosed drawings prepared by Lovell Chen (dated 31 January 2023, Revision P3 & P4) and are submitted for endorsement to replace the previous application documentation. These revisions comprise the relocation of the proposed lift to allow the retention of the service wing staircase. The remainder of the proposal remains unchanged. An updated HIS addressing the revised proposal also accompanies this correspondence.

**Reasonable use considerations**

The registered place includes Malvern House, numerous other buildings constructed during the twentieth century, and school grounds which together form the Malvern Campus of Caulfield Grammar School. The existing and reasonable use of the place is as a school campus, which provides preschool and primary school education from early learning to year six. The Willoby Avenue site has been



occupied by Caulfield Grammar since 1961, and Malvern House is a main component of the campus, currently utilised to provide classroom and staff facilities and amenities.

Malvern House is a two-storey rendered brick mansion, although there is a difference in floor levels at first floor of the mansion and service wing. In effect, this means there are three levels to navigate from ground floor and between the mansion and service wing at level 1. Currently, the only means through which vertical circulation is provided in the building is by way the existing main and service wing staircases, and the fire stairs at the rear of the building, with a small flight of stairs and landing in place to facilitate access between the difference in floor levels of the main building and service wing.

As such, the existing mansion is currently not accessible in its entirety to people unable to navigate stairs. The permit application has been prepared to provide DDA access within the mansion and enable access for young students and staff to each level of the building. The external ramp and internal lift as proposed will ensure that equitable access into all areas of the building is provided for those who would otherwise be unable to access these spaces. This is critical for educational purposes, particularly where specialist classes and facilities which are provided solely within the mansion must be made readily available to all students and staff at Caulfield Grammar School.

The revised proposal for the provision of DDA access into the building is considered to be appropriate in terms of location and extent of works, whereby the existing service wing stair will be retained and the lift accommodated with only limited and targeted impact on the original fabric of the building.

Refusal of the application would affect Malvern Campus's ability to meet Caulfield Grammar School pedagogy and accessibility policies, plus DDA legislation. Operationally, refusal would directly affect the use of the place as an inclusive educational facility and adversely impact on the provision of equitable access into the building.

No response is provided in relation to economic use as the applicant considers that factors relevant only to reasonable use are present in this case.

### **Options analysis**

#### *Fire stair option*

The fire stair is located at the rear of the building, at the very end of the service wing. This location has not been considered for the installation of the proposed lift due to the difficulty in navigating narrow corridors with crutches or a wheelchair etc. and because a lift in this location would not service for both level 1 floor levels (i.e. main building and service wing). Ramping would need to be installed to provide an accessible connection between the main building and service wing which would require the removal of the upper section of the existing service wing staircase and impact on the internal layout of the service wing at level 1. This is not considered to be a good heritage outcome for the registered building and it is not proposed to further consider or pursue this option.

#### *Music room option*

As noted above, the proposal for the installation of a lift within the building has been revised, and is now proposed to be located adjacent to the existing service wing staircase, in the area currently utilised for bathrooms on the ground floor and within a former bedroom (now music room) at level 1.

This revised proposal will provide DDA access to all floor levels within the building, and will manage the transition between floor levels at level 1 by way of minor and targeted change to the existing fabric of the building. This proposal will allow for the retention in full of the existing service wing staircase (with

a minor change to the bottom tread only as it extends beyond the balustrade. This minor change is necessary to provide sufficient corridor width for wheelchair access). The change to the internal room layout required for the installation of the lift will be limited in extent with evidence of the original room layout retained within the existing fabric.

Where demolition for the lift shaft is proposed, this will not impact on the legibility of the historical layout or function of the service wing. This is considered to be an acceptable and appropriate outcome for the registered building which retains the existing original staircase with limited and targeted change to the fabric of the building entirely within an area identified as being of supporting significance in the CMP.

This response is provided to assist in the assessment of permit application P36825 for the proposal for a lift and ramp access at Malvern House. The revised HIS which accompanies this response provides additional information in relation to the proposal and an assessment of heritage impacts.

I trust the information submitted provides the additional information as requested, but please contact the undersigned on [REDACTED] should any additional information be required.

Yours sincerely  
Lovell Chen



Michelle Knehans  
Senior Associate