24MEL-0008 5 MAY 2025

Heritage Impact Statement

Installation of four (4) light towers

St Kilda Cricket Ground (Junction Oval), Queens Road and Fitzroy Street and Lakeside Drive, St Kilda



CRICKET VICTORIA



Heritage Impact Statement

5 May 2025

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URPS Ref 250423_Heritage Impact Statement Junction

Oval Albert Park

Document history and status

Revision	Date	Author	Reviewed	Details
V1	11/04/2025	L. Michael	P. Beatty	Draft for review
V2	17/04/2025	L. Michael	L. Michael	Draft for PV Review
V3	01/05/2025	L. Michael	P. Beatty	Final Draft
V4	05/05/2025	L. Michael	P. Beatty	Final for submission

We acknowledge the Bunurong/Boonwurrung People as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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1. Introduction

This heritage impact statement has been prepared on behalf of Cricket Victoria to support a permit application to Heritage Victoria.

This application is prepared in accompaniment of a planning scheme amendment lodged with the Department of Planning and Transport on 4 April 2025.

This proposal is funded by Cricket Victoria.

This application is proposed to facilitate the installation of four (4) light towers at the St Kilda Cricket Ground (the 'Junction Oval') to support the ongoing use of the oval for cricket, and to facilitate the primetime broadcast of domestic and international cricket, with a particular emphasis on supporting the growth of women's cricket.

Applicant	Cricket Victoria C/- URPS		
Property (Parcel)	St Kilda Cricket Ground (Junction Oval), 1 Lakeside Drive, St Kilda		
Pre-Application Meeting Number	P40484 (17 December 2024 with Jessica Hood)		
Parent Permit	P19600		
Parent Permit Preamble	Redevelopment of the Junction Oval for use by Cricket Victoria as a state of art cricket facility: including the demolition of the R L Morton Pavilion and MCC Tennis Academy, the construction of a new thee storey State Cricket Centre Building, new scoreboard and reconfiguration of the cricket oval (realignment of the oval boundary, new picket fencing and the re-grading of the playing surface) to comply with the requirements of the International Cricket Council as well as improvements to the Blackie Ironmonger and Kevin Murray stands, in accordance with the following documents, as endorsed by the Executive Director and forming part of this permit: [List of endorsed documents follows]		
Victorian Heritage Register Number	H2234		
Zone	Public Park and Recreational Zone (PPRZ)		
Overlays	Heritage Overlay HO463 – St Kilda Cricket Ground Heritage Overlay HO446 – Albert Park Lake Precinct Specific Controls Overlay 19 - Victorian Cricket and Community Centre, St Kilda Cricket Ground (May 2016)		

2. Site Features

2.1 Subject Site

The subject site is St Kilda Cricket Ground, colloquially called the Junction Oval, located within the Albert Park precinct. The site is bound by Lakeside Drive to the west, Queens Road to the north, St Kilda Road to the east, and Fitzroy Street to the South.

The proposed works are within the property boundary of the St Kilda Cricket Ground which aligns with the extent of VHI H2234. H2234 is irregularly shaped and has an area of approximately 3.4 hectares.

The site itself is occupied by a number of features and structures, with the most notable referenced below:

- The cricket field and adjoining training nets
- Cricket Victoria administrative headquarters (northern grandstand)
 - Includes administrative offices, training and coaching arears, player preparation facilities; media space including broadcasting facilities; medical facilities; gymnasium; function space/meeting rooms; and café.
- Blackie Ironmonger Stand and Shane Warne Stand (western grandstands, indicated at B2 and B1 respectively at Figure 1 below)
- Existing Scoreboard (indicated at B3 at Figure 1 below)
- Training nets (standalone, northwestern corner).

The land is formally known as Crown Allotment 2382 City of South Melbourne Parish of Melbourne South and is not burdened by any easements, encumbrances, or section 173 agreements.

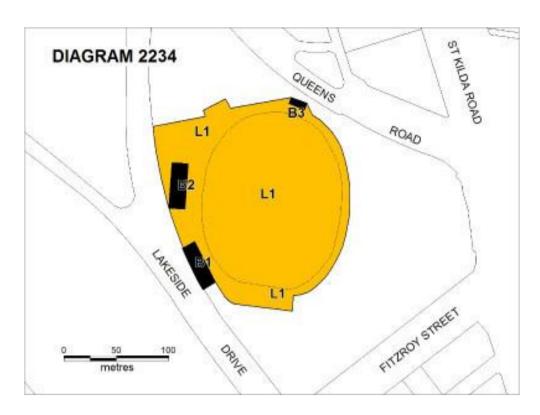


Figure 1. VHI Boundary (Victorian Heritage Database Report)

Junction Oval has capacity for up to 5,000 spectators. Junction Oval is widely recognised as a significant sporting venue within Victoria and as a boutique venue for cricket.

Junction Oval (St Kilda Cricket Ground) is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (H2234) as a place of historical, architectural and social significance to the state of Victoria.



Figure 2: Aerial image of subject site indicating extent of VHI registration (SearchComm)



Figure 3: Oblique aerial image of subject site (Google Maps)

2.2 Heritage Significance

The heritage significance of the St Kilda Cricket Ground (Junction Oval) is set out in the extract below, from the Statement of Significance from the Victorian Heritage Database Report.

What is significant?

St Kilda Cricket Ground was established on its present site in 1856 as the home of the St Kilda Cricket Club, which was formed in 1855. Its location near what was to become St Kilda Junction gave rise to its nick-name Junction Oval. The ground also became the home ground of the St Kilda Football Club, which was formed in 1873. This was one of the first members of the Victorian Football Association (VFA), which began in 1877, and in 1897 became a foundation team in the Victorian Football League (VFL). The St Kilda Cricket Ground has always been one of Victoria's most important sports grounds, and was often used for important cricket matches when the MCG was unavailable. Twenty-eight first class cricket matches have been played there, including twenty-five Sheffield Shield games. The VFL Grand Finals were played there in 1898 and 1899, and other major events have been held there, including the 1898-9 Victorian athletic titles, numerous bicycle meets, and two inter-colonial lacrosse matches between Victoria and New South Wales. The first grandstand at the ground was purchased from the old Elsternwick racecourse and erected in 1892 at the southern end of the ground. A new grandstand was built in 1925-6 at a cost of £7000, designed by the architect E | Clark and built by H H Eilenberg. It was originally called the GP Newman Stand but has been renamed the Kevin Murray Stand after one of the club's most famous footballers. It is no longer used for spectator seating, but the administration and changing rooms beneath are still used. A second brick stand designed by E J Clark to complement the Murray Stand was built by H H Eilenberg in 1933-4 at a cost of £7500. It was named the Don Blackie Bert Ironmonger Stand in honour of the St Kilda Cricket Club and Test cricketers. It still functions as a public pavilion. A new £6000 manual scoreboard and kiosk at the northern end of the ground was built in 1956-7, the club's centenary year. Many famous players have been associated with the St Kilda Cricket Ground, notably Bill Ponsford and Shane Warne. The ground is still used by the St Kilda Cricket Club. It was the home ground of the St Kilda Football Club until 1965, and of the Fitzroy Football Club from 1970-84.

The St Kilda Cricket Ground, comprising the grassed playing field, surrounded by a white picket fence, the terraces around the ground, the two grandstands and the scoreboard, is considered to be one of the finest combined cricket and football grounds in Victoria. The playing field occupies the same site as it has since 1856. Much of the ground is surrounded by sloping concrete terraces with timber bench seating. The Kevin Murray Stand is a red brick structure with a timber roof and seating. It has administration rooms and dressing rooms beneath. The Don Blackie Bert Ironmonger Stand is also made of red brick and timber, and was designed to complement the earlier Kevin Murray Stand. Inside are the St Kilda Cricket Club's dressing rooms, members' bar, containing the 1956-7 honour boards and various memorabilia, and the committee room with its original furniture. In front of the stands are sloping grassed viewing areas. The old timber scoreboard at the north end of the ground is operated manually by a series of pulleys. Player and team names are displayed using metal sheets, and the scores are displayed on cloth banners.

How is it significant?

St Kilda Cricket Ground is of historical, architectural and social significance to the state of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The St Kilda Cricket Ground is historically significant as the home ground since 1856 of the St Kilda Cricket Club, which was formed in 1855, and is one of the oldest clubs in Victoria still playing at its original home. It is also significant as the home from 1873 of the St Kilda Football Club, one of Victoria's major football teams, which was a foundation member of the Victorian Football Association (VFA) and of the Victorian Football League (VFL). It has been associated with some of Victoria's most famous and popular sportsmen, such as Bill Ponsford and Shane Warne.

The Murray and Blackie Ironmonger Stands at the St Kilda Cricket Ground have architectural significance as fine examples of early twentieth century grandstands. The manual scoreboard is significant as a now unusual example of its kind at a major sports ground in Victoria.

The St Kilda Cricket Ground has social significance as the home of the St Kilda Cricket Club and for many years of the St Kilda and Fitzroy Football Clubs, all of which have always had a strong following in Victoria, and their supporters have maintained a strong attachment to the Ground.

2.3 Surrounding Site Context

The site is located within the southeast corner of the Albert Park precinct and is predominately surrounded by public parks and recreational areas to the north and west. To the south and east, the site is abutted by transport infrastructure and commercial zones.

Albert Park is significant in a local context, providing a substantial amount open space for leisure and organised sports, community gatherings and general recreation needs within an inner-city context.

On a broader scale, Albert Park plays a significant role in state, national, and international contexts. It is home to major sports facilities such as Lakeside Stadium, the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre and the Junction Oval. Albert Park continues to a host a range of state, national and internal events such as the 2006 Commonwealth Games and the annual Australian Formula One Grand Prix.

As demonstrated by Figure 4, there are a number of nearby items which are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register. These items are noted in the below table.

Ref #	Name	VHR Number	Notes
1	St Kilda Cricket Ground	H2234	Subject Site
2	Ulimaroa	H0658	
3	St Kilda Road	H2359	
4	Ornamental Tramway Overhead Poles	H1023	Row of lighting poles on Fitzroy Street

Ref #	Name	VHR Number	Notes
5	Former Wesleyan Methodist Church	H0818	
6	St Kilda Bowling Club	H1913	
7	St Kilda Park Primary School	H1637	



Figure 4: Aerial Diagram showing all nearby areas listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (source: Vicplan)

Further information regarding the site context and the surrounding areas is contained within the accompanying planning report.

2.4 Recent Site History

A substantial redevelopment of the site was undertaken in 2016 following the concurrent planning scheme amendment (C119) and planning permit awarded to the site by Heritage Victoria (Permit Number P19600) on 29 April 2016. The redevelopment was completed in 2017 and is occupied by Cricket Victoria. The aerial images included at Figures 5 and 6 show the subject site pre and post this redevelopment.



Figure 5: Aerial image of subject site dated 15 Feb 2001 (Source: SearchComm)



Figure 6: Aerial image of subject site dated 12 Feb 2025 (Source: SearchComm)

3. The Proposal

3.1 Proposed Buildings and Works

It is proposed to construct four (4) light towers encircling the Junction Oval.

The number of nights that the lights will be utilised will be no more than 45 evenings per year.

When utilised, the lights will not be used later than 11.00pm.

The proposed light towers have the following specifications:

- Mounting structures with a height of 44 metres. Lighting mount/headframe is attached above this at a controllable angle. The total maximum height of the structure when the headframe is at maximum pitch is approximately 50 metres
- To be finished with a galvanised (non-reflective) finish.
- Each tower will have a diameter of approximately 1.62 metres at the base.
- Towers will be fitted with 64 LED lighting cells and baffled as to ensure light spill does not occur.
- Underground boring will be utilised for the installation of the required electrical work to connect the towers.

It is not proposed to increase the capacity of the venue.

To improve heritage outcomes, it is also proposed to remove all existing overhead electrical wiring between the two western heritage grandstands and the individual lighting units affixed to the top of the grandstands (see figures 10 and 11).

The towers are spaced at the positions around the sports oval demonstrated at Figure 7 (see attached plans for exact locations).

There is no proposed demolition of the heritage components of the site as part of this amendment.



Figure 7: Aerial image of subject site indicating position of the four new proposed light towers

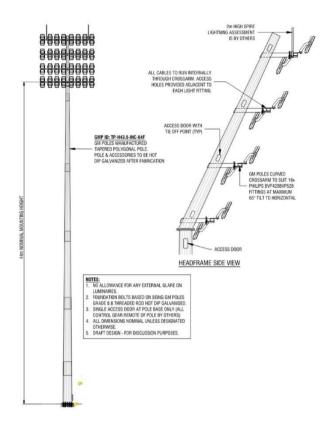


Figure 8: Excerpt from Development Approval Technical Report (CME)



Figure 9: Photo montage - proposed light towers (Orbit Solutions)



Figure 10: Existing overhead wires between heritage grandstands



Figure 11: Existing overhead wires between heritage grandstands

Additional visualisations of the proposal are included within APPENDIX 1 of this report.

3.2 Alternative Options Considered

Throughout the development of the proposal, the project team contemplated a number of different outcomes to ensure that any heritage impact could be minimized and balanced against the requirements of different statutory organisations and reference documents. Most notably, this considers the following:

Port Phillip Planning Scheme

- The views of the City of Port Phillip, Parks Victoria and the Department of Planning and Transport
- AS/NZS 4282 Control of The Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting
- AS 2560.2 Sports Lighting Standards

Design options have been investigated which reduced the height of the individual towers. Given the broadcast requirements of cricket (which necessitate higher light sources – otherwise camera/lens flaring will occur), if smaller towers were elected, a minimum of 6 towers would be required to achieve the broadcast capacity lighting. It was determined that an outcome that accommodated 4 towers reduced visual impacts and was preferable.

The proposed height of the towers also facilities the lighting to be pitched at a further angle, reducing any light spill impacts to sensitive uses within proximity of the oval.

The proposed locations of the towers have been carefully considered in order to ensure compliance with lighting standards, retention of all established vegetation on site and appropriate separation from established heritage components of the site (grandstands and scoreboards). All towers have been situated such that they are not directly in front of any heritage elements (when viewed from the centre of the pitch). This is demonstrated via the visual impact assessments prepared as part of this application (and included in the appendix of this report).

3.3 Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) Requirements

It is recognised that the subject site is partially affected by an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, relating to the nearby Ngargee Tree located approximately 70 metres east of the oval.

It is noted that no Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is required given the following:

- Pursuant to the 'Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018' [The AHR] (Part 2 Section 7) a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is required when any high impact is proposed in an area which is affected by an area of cultural heritage sensitivity.
- Whilst a Major Sports Facility is typically considered a high impact activity, pursuant to Section 46(3) of the AHR" the construction of a building or the construction or carrying out of works on land is not a high impact activity if it is for, or associated with, a purpose listed under subregulation (1)(b) for which the land was being lawfully used immediately before 28 May 2007."
- Given "Major Sports Facility" is a purpose listed under subregulation (1)(b), it is not classified as a high impact activity in this instance and therefore no CHMP is required.



Figure 12: VicPlan Excerpt showing the bisection of the subject are and the Area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity (area circled in red)

There are no construction impacts to occur outside of the subject site or within any area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity.

4. Heritage Impact

4.1 Reasons for the Proposed Works & Activity

The proposed works are required to accommodate the following:

- Cricket Australia and Cricket Victoria are endeavouring to increase the exposure of women's cricket via
 the continued upgrades to Junction Oval and its broadcasting facilities. A statistical analysis of 2023
 WBBL viewership data reveals significantly higher audience engagement for evening matches (122%
 higher than morning games and 39% higher than afternoon games). Cricket Victoria is not currently
 able to broadcast evening matches from Junction Oval given the lack of broadcast capacity lighting.
- Further to the above, Victoria lacks a smaller scale venue with broadcast capacity lighting. Whilst other Australian states contain a range of oval sizes to accommodate respectively sized matches, Victoria does not currently possess a cricketing oval with broadcasting capacity that has a capacity of less than 40,000 making it unfeasible for events without an equivalent patronage.
- The installation of the proposed broadcast lighting will facilitate the broadcast of domestic and international evening games, including to accommodate the growing demand for the WBBL.
- The proposal will assist with greater broadcast and in-person patronage of the oval, given the increased exposure that will be facilitated by the late-night games.

4.2 Impact of the proposal on the cultural heritage significance of the place or object and adjacent or neighbouring properties

It is considered there is broad strategic support for the proposal in consideration of section 101(2) of the Heritage Act 2017. The following comments are made in consideration of this statement:

- The lean frame and modern design of the light towers ensures that any visual intrusion of the heritage fabric of the area is limited and not unreasonable when viewed from nearby areas.
- The proposed light towers will reinforce the social and cultural significance of the Junction Oval, and are considered to integrate well in sporting field setting of the site within Albert Park.
- A supporting set of images have been produced by Orbit Solutions which show the towers superimposed into their proposed locations. These images are shown in appendix one of this report and clearly depict that the towers will have a nominal visual impact on heritage character of the area.
- As previously discussed, the minimum height of the light fixtures cannot be further reduced, as this would result in "flaring" of the broadcast equipment. If this avenue were to be proposed, additional towers would be required to achieve broadcast capacity.

- The proposed broadcast lighting will enable evening domestic and international cricket games, supporting women's cricket in Victoria and Australia, and aligning with the economic development objectives the Heritage Act 2017 (at Section 101(2)(b)).
- In consideration of the above, it is submitted that any potential impacts on the heritage significance of the St Kilda Cricket Ground are not unreasonable, are minimised through the location and design of the light towers, and approval of this proposal will support the longer term viability of both this venue, and domestic and international cricket in Victoria.

In addition to the above, it is recognized that the Executive Director may consider the matters set out at Section 101(3) of the Heritage Act. These matters are concerned with the potential for any approved activities to affect the cultural heritage significance of any nearby or abutting items listed on either the Heritage Register, or subject to heritage requirements in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

Firstly, nearby items on the Heritage Register will be considered.

It is recognised that the proposed towers are in proximity of a number of items listed on the Heritage Register. A map identifying these items is included within section 2.2 of this report. It is considered that the proposal will not detract or affect the significance of these items. The following comments are provided in support of this statement.

- None of the items listed within the Victorian Heritage register are immediately adjacent to the Junction Oval, with the nearest being approximately 90 and 110 metres from the perimeter of the subject site (Ornamental Tramway Overhead Poles and Ulimaroa respectively). It is therefore considered that the proposed works will have a limited impact to the existing character of these items.
- The Ornamental Tramway Overhead Poles are smaller lighting infrastructure items which have been
 retained through the centre of Fitzroy Street (and several other locations irrelevant to this application).
 Given their minor size, the highly urban character of the environment and their separation from the
 proposed works, it is not considered that their significance will be unreasonably impacted by the
 proposal.
- Further to the above, given the existing infrastructure and buildings which separate Ulimaroa House and Junction Oval, it is not considered that the two items are visible from the same aspect/interface except in contrived view lines.
- The commercial area immediately to the north and northeast of the subject site is occupied by several residential and commercial buildings with substantially larger built forms than what is proposed at Junction Oval. It is therefore expected that any views from the south aspect of Junction Oval (including areas on the Heritage Register) will not be further detracted from.
- All other items listed on the Heritage Register are a minimum of 140 metres from the perimeter of the subject site. Given the highly urban nature of the area and the eclectic mix of building styles and

infrastructure items the proposed works will not materially affect the heritage significance of any other listed items on the Heritage Register.

Junction Oval is abutting or within close proximity to a number of Heritage Overlays which will be discussed independently within the following section. It is noted that the independent comments provided in response to each of the Heritage Overlay is statement in additional to the above statements regarding the generally, limited impact, the proposed works will have:

HO446 – Albert Park Lake Precinct

- This precinct overlay affects the entirety of the Albert Park and is generally bound by Fitzroy St to the south, Queens Road to the east, Albert Road to the North and Canterbury Road to the west
- It is considered that the proposed works do not detract from the heritage characteristics of the Albert Park Precinct given the accepted existing recreational and entertainment purposes of the park
- The proposal represents an extension of the infrastructure required to support Junction Oval and Albert Park in general, in order to maintain and continue the valued position as a destination for sports and recreation as supported by the Albert Park Masterplan.
- It is considered that sports lighting is an expected feature of such a substantial integrated sporting park such as Albert Park. This is evident by the established nature of a number of sports lighting installations already in place within Albert Park.
- Sports lighting is an established feature of many of the sports grounds at Albert Park. As such, the proposed lighting will not appear out of place as demonstrated by the Visual Impact Assessment KOP3 provided in the Appendix to this document.

HO14 - Ngargee Tree

- This overlay considers the nearby Ngargee Scar Tree, and is located a minimum of approximately 60 metres from the subject site (the tree itself is located approximately 70 metres from the subject site).
- As demonstrated within section 3.3 of this report, the proposed works are exempt from requiring a CHMP given they are associated with an existing Major Sports facility.
- Notwithstanding the above, given the urban environment of this heritage overlay and the existing light spill associated with existing vehicle lighting infrastructure (Queens Road and St Kilda Junction) as well as the closer proximity to nearby tower developments (636 St Kilda Road), it is considered that the heritage and cultural values will not be detracted from.

4.3 Why the proposed works should be supported.

• The proposed works reinforce the historic social use of Junction Oval as a Cricketing/Sports facility by encouraging viewership and patronage of the oval. This significant social importance is recognised via Heritage Victoria's Criteria Assessment, which state "The St Kilda Cricket Ground has social"

significance for many Victorians. [...], and has played an important role in the lives of many Victorian sports fans".

- The proposed works will not detract from the heritage characteristics of the original heritage grandstand and oval and contribute to the ongoing and improved original use of the site (as a major sport facility).
- No demolition is proposed as part of the works and the heritage grandstands will continue to operate in their existing capacity.
- The proposed towers, as demonstrated by the attached visualisations will not detract, obscure or diminish the heritage significance of the place given their spacing from the existing heritage structures and the lean frame of the towers.
- Without appropriate modern sporting infrastructure, Junction Oval may face underutilisation, which could lead to neglect or a decline in its long-term viability.

5. **Conclusion**

It is submitted that the report comprehensively details how the amended proposal achieves an appropriate Heritage outcome with regard to the relevant considerations. We note the following concluding statements with respect to the above statement:

- The proposed broadcast lighting will enable evening domestic and international games, supporting women's cricket and aligning with the economic development and employment objectives of the Heritage Act 2017.
- The slim and considered design and sitting of the towers minimises any adverse impact to the heritage values of the VHR place and any adjoining or nearby items listed on the heritage register or otherwise afforded heritage protection by the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.
- The proposal reinforces Albert Park's role as a key venue for leisure, recreation and entertainment, contributing to the Purpose of the Albert Park Master Plan.

We respectfully seek Heritage Victoria's favourable consideration of the application and remain available to provide any additional information required.

6. **Appendix 1: Visual Impact Assessment Excerpts**



Figure 1A: Junction Oval lighting from Fitzroy Street (facing north)



Figure 2A: Junction Oval lighting from Albert Park (facing southeast)



Figure 3A: Junction Oval lighting from Albert Park (facing east)



Figure 4A: Junction Oval lighting (facing east)



Figure 5A: Junction Oval lighting (facing west)

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