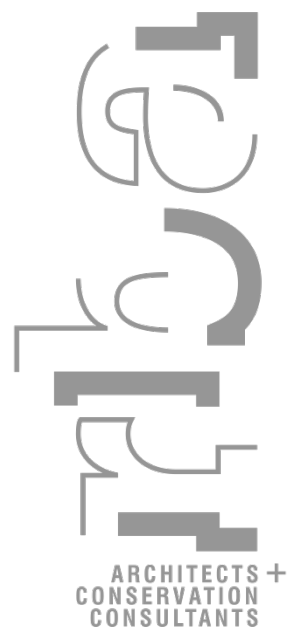




HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT
99 ST VINCENT PLACE SOUTH, ALBERT PARK
PROPOSED REDDEVELOPMENT
JULY 2025



ARCHITECTS +
CONSERVATION
CONSULTANTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge Traditional Owners and their Elders past, present and emerging, as the original custodians of the land and waters we work across and recognise that sovereignty has never been ceded. We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart to achieve justice, recognition, and respect for all First Nation people.

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Contemporary and historical sources utilised in the preparation of this Heritage Impact Statement are acknowledged and referenced in footnotes and/or figure captions.

REPORT REGISTER

PROJECT NO.	VERSION	ISSUED TO	DATE ISSUED
2025.20	DRAFT	Client	18 July 2025
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1.1 PURPOSE

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared for the Applicant (property owners) in relation to a permit application for partial demolition, alterations, and additions at 99 St Vincent Place South, Albert Park (subject place), which falls within the Victorian Heritage Register extent of registration for *St Vincent Place Precinct* (H1291).

It has been prepared in the context of a scheme developed in consultation with Heritage Victoria (HV) that seeks to replace the existing secondary wing with a new two-storey volume (above a basement) and undertake conservation works to the retained principal part of the subject terrace. This report provides an independent assessment of the potential heritage impacts of the new work on the site and broader precinct.

1.2 LOCATION

The subject place – a single-family terraced residence – comprises an irregular single allotment (formally identified as Lot 1, TP384710) at the southwest corner of St Vincent Place South and St Vincent Street, broadly opposite St Vincent Gardens. The broader context is the urban historic environs of Albert Park, an inner suburb of Melbourne.



Figure 1. Aerial photograph of the subject place (arrowed) – north is top of the image.
(Source: Nearmap, April 2025)



Figure 2. Panoramic aerial photograph of the subject place (arrowed), facing south.
(Source: Nearmap, April 2025)

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The terminology and principles in this report are based on sound values-based heritage management practice, namely as expressed by *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance: The Burra Charter* (rev. 2013). This report is duly informed by the Heritage Victoria-prepared *Guidelines for Preparing Heritage Impact Statements* (rev. June 2021).

RBA carried out non-invasive inspections of the subject place in May 2025. Unless otherwise specified, the images included in this report derive from this investigation.

1.4 HERITAGE STATUS

VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER

The subject building is not individually heritage listed but forms part of the *St Vincent Place Precinct* (H1291), which is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) that is maintained by the Victorian Heritage Council and subject to the *Heritage Act 2017*. Heritage Victoria (HV) is the consent authority. The extent of registration encompasses the St Vincent Gardens and the surrounding housing (Figure 3).

As per the VHR citation – a complete copy of which is attached in Appendix A – and relevant to the scheme at hand, the following works have specific exemptions:

All internal works to buildings.

Repairs, conservation and maintenance to the hard landscape elements, structures and ornaments, drainage and irrigation systems.

The process of gardening and maintenance to care for trees and plantings themes.

Management of trees in accordance with Australian Standard; Pruning of amenity tree As 4373.

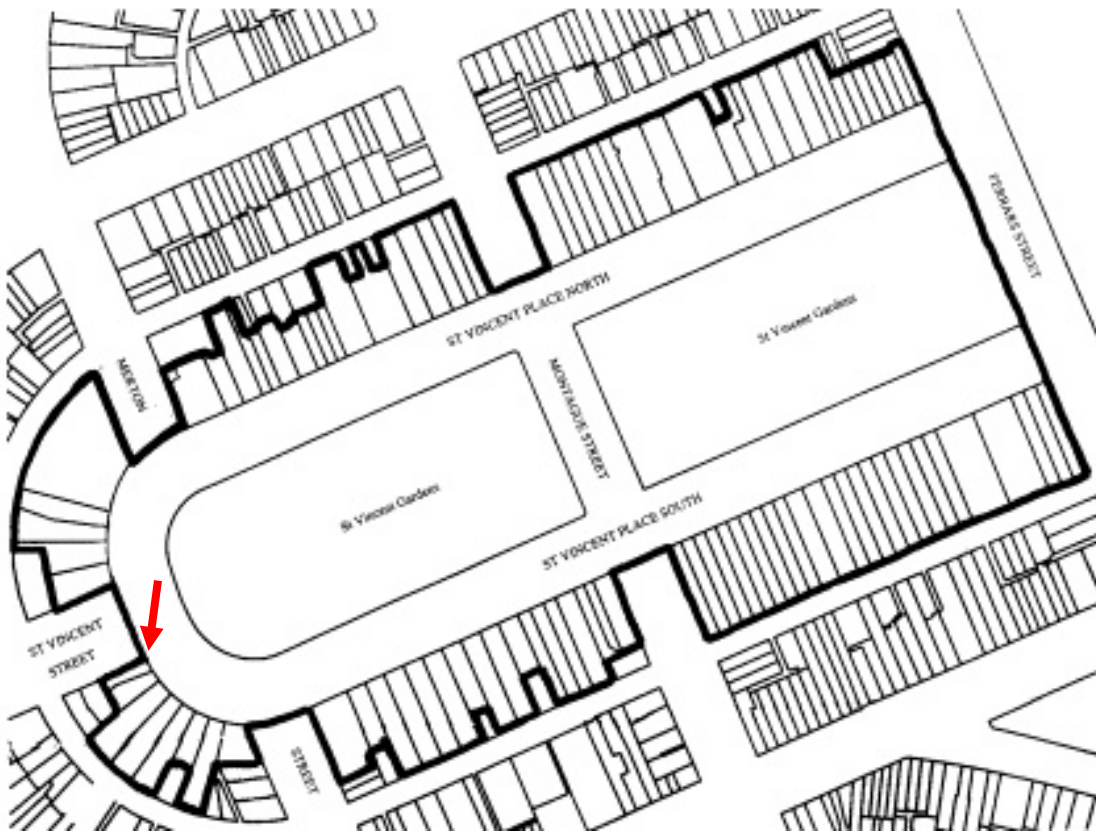


Figure 3. Extent of Registration Diagram 600821 with the black border indicating the precinct's boundaries. The arrow indicates the location of the subject place. (Source: Victorian Heritage Database)

The full Statement of Significance for *St Vincent Place Precinct* is reproduced below:

What is significant?

The St Vincent Place precinct was first designed in 1854 or 1855, probably by Andrew Clarke, the Surveyor-General of Victoria. The current layout is the work of Clement Hodgkinson, the noted surveyor, engineer and topographer, who adapted the design in 1857 to allow for its intersection by the St Kilda railway. The precinct, which in its original configuration extended from Park Street in the north to Bridport Street in the south, and from Howe Crescent in the east to Nelson Road and Cardigan Street in the west, was designed to emulate similar 'square' developments in London, although on a grander scale. The main streets were named after British naval heroes. The development of the special character of St Vincent Place has been characterised, since the first land sales in the 1860s, by a variety of housing stock which has included quality row and detached houses dominated by Rochester Terrace (Heritage Register Number 813), and by the gardens which, although they have been continuously developed, remain faithful to the initial landscape concept.

How is it significant?

The St Vincent Place Precinct is of aesthetic, historical, architectural and social significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The St Vincent Place Precinct is aesthetically important for the outstanding quality of its urban landscape. The major elements that reflect this importance are the gardens with their gardenesque style layout and fine collections of mature specimen trees, and the harmonious relationship of the gardens with the residential buildings facing them around St Vincent Place.

The St Vincent Place Precinct is historically important as the premier 'square' development in Victoria based on similar models in London. It is significant as the largest development of its type in Victoria and for its unusual development as gardens rather than the more usual small park as at, for

example Macarthur, Murchison, Lincoln and Argyle Squares in Carlton. The precinct is also historically significant for its associations with Surveyor General Andrew Clarke, and more particularly with Clement Hodgkinson, a prolific and influential surveyor engineer in early Melbourne.

The St Vincent Place Precinct is architecturally important for the consistent quality of its built form and its high degree of intactness from its earliest phase of development, characterised by a mixture of one and two storey terraces and detached houses.

The St Vincent Place Precinct is socially important as a reflection of the aspirations of middle class residents in South Melbourne. Because of the shared outlook on and use of the gardens, the precinct has developed a sense of community cohesion unusual in the Melbourne context. The gardens are also socially important as a focus of community life for the surrounding district with the maintenance of their amenity a priority of municipal government since their inception. The existence of the tennis and bowls clubs in the gardens for over a century is a further manifestation of this social importance.

PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME

St Vincent Place Precinct is identified as a precinct-based heritage overlay (HO258) in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (HO) of the Port Phillip Planning Scheme. This overlay reflects the extent of the VHR entry, although it includes some individual HOs that derive from the Allom Lovell Sanderson conservation study (1987), which is retained in the current *City of Port Phillip Heritage Review* (Version 15).

No permits are required pursuant to the HO provisions, as there is an exemption specified in Clause 43.01-2 for places included in the VHR.

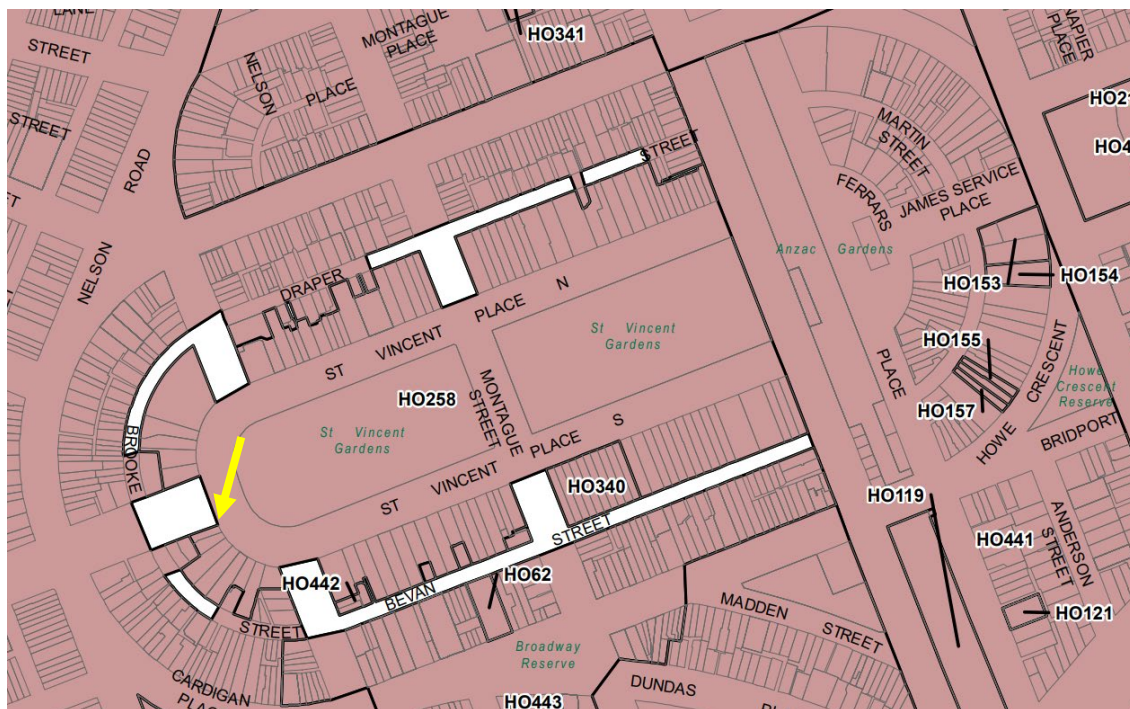


Figure 4. Heritage Overlay diagram with subject site arrowed
(Source Map 3 HO, Port Phillip Planning Scheme)

NON-STATUTORY LISTINGS

The subject precinct is listed in the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Heritage Register at the 'National' level (*St Vincent Place & Gardens, Historic Area*, Place no. B2231).

It is also included on the Australian Heritage Council's defunct Register of the National Estate (*St Vincent Place Conservation Area*, Place ID 5460).

There are no statutory implications associated with these classification.

2 SUMMARY HISTORY

2.1 CONTEXTUAL

St Vincent Place is situated in Albert Park and South Melbourne, south of Melbourne's centre. Its pre-contact landscape comprised swampland and the elevated volcanic formation of Emerald Hill. The area holds deep cultural significance as a traditional camping ground, or *willam*, for the Yalukit Willam clan of the Boon Wurrung people, and was a site where inter-tribal corroborees were regularly held.¹ Its strategic location and natural prominence also attracted early European settlers in the 1830s, and it became one of the first localities to be surveyed by the Crown.²

Surveyor Clement Hodgkinson is responsible for the climatically sensitive (unusually so for its era) layout of St Vincent Place, clearly drawing inspiration from the Georgian garden squares of London, Bath, and Bristol. The urban plan is organised around a central garden square bordered by two rows of houses on either side, oriented to take advantage of sunlight: morning for St Vincent Place North and afternoon for St Vincent Place South.³ While it has been claimed that the distinctive shape reflects a former racecourse, there is no evidence to support this interpretation.⁴

The design evolved under Captain Andrew Clarke, the surveyor who succeeded Robert Hoddle, with contributions from draftsman James Kearney and engineers David Miggy and James Brown. Clarke revised the plan following the St Kilda train line extension (1857), which interrupted the eastern end of the plan (now outside the precinct), altering Hodgkinson's original garden layout.⁵

Land sales within the precinct commenced in December 1864, with initial housing development following in 1866. The central gardens had been established by 1868.⁶ The earliest residences were located in St Vincent Place North, although much of this early layer was redeveloped in later years. Nos. 56-58 and 'Rosebank' at No. 30 are among the earliest surviving examples from this initial phase.⁷ By the 1880s, the area had consolidated, with commodious terraces, many of which were architecturally designed, predominating.



◀ **Figure 5.** 1855 survey map of South and Port Melbourne with St Vincent Place. The plan shows the geographic features of the area prior to its widespread development and the original design of St Vincent Place before it was altered. (Source: James Kearney, Port & South Melbourne map, no. 3, 1855, SLV)

¹ Meyer Eidelson, 'Yalukit Willam: The River People of Port Phillip,' *City of Port Phillip*, 2014

² 'South Melbourne,' *Victorian Places*, Monash University, 2015: <https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/south-melbourne>

³ John Watts, 'A History of St Vincent Place, South Melbourne,' Undergraduate Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1976, p12

⁴ Max Nankervis, 'St Vincent Place Gardens: Where landscape becomes townscape,' *Australian Garden History*, Vol. 35, no. 4, April 2024, p12

⁵ *St Vincent Gardens Conservation Analysis & Management Strategy*, City of Port Phillip, 1997, p5

⁶ *St Vincent Gardens Conservation Analysis*, 1997, p6

⁷ Watts, 1976, p12

2.2 PLACE SPECIFIC

The subject place originally formed part of Lot 1, Section 44 in the Parish of South Melbourne. This parcel, which extended to Brooke Street and measured 1 rood and 12 perches, was purchased by W. Thistlewaite in September 1866.⁸

By 1873, this holding had been subdivided and advertised for sale as part of a four-lot auction. The property that included the subject land, referred to as Lot 3, was promoted in the *Record* newspaper as 'a splendid corner' lot and the 'cream of the Hill', comprising a block measuring 38 feet to Merton Crescent (now St Vincent Place South) and 80 feet to St Vincent Street.⁹

William McKean, a contractor, is shown in the rate records to have acquired Lot 3 by 1875. He re-subdivided it into two, creating the subject allotment.¹⁰ McKean was behind the construction of the subject building, the northwestern member of a semi-attached terrace (nos 97 and 99) named *Eglinton Villas* (inscribed on the central parapet).

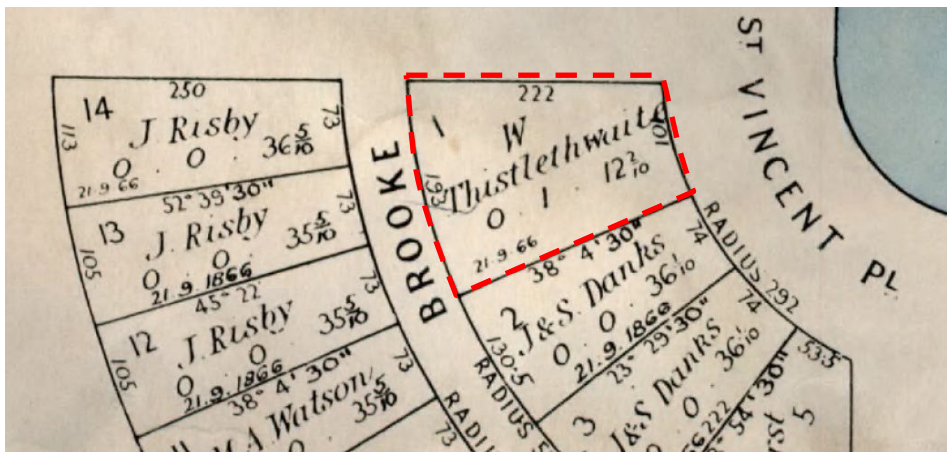


Figure 6. Crown allotment purchased by W Thistlewaite in 1866
(Source: Parish Plan, City of South Melbourne, PROV M333 [36])

On the basis of a review of the *Sands & McDougall Directory*, which first identified McKean as in occupation of the subject building in its 1877 edition, a circa 1876 construction date for *Eglinton Villas* is likely (given the year-long lag time associated with listing in the *Directory*). This date is also supported by the rate book evidence.

McKean was professionally associated with the architect Robert Adamson in the mid-to-late 1870s, raising the possibility of the latter's involvement in the design of *Eglinton Villas*. Adamson, an English born and trained architect who immigrated to Melbourne in the late 1850s, was active across the emergent metropolis in residential and commercial projects.¹¹ Adamson and McKean were collaborating on building the *Former Freemasons Hall* (H0538) at 254–256 Ferrars Street around the time the subject building was constructed.¹²

A review of the rate books shows that McKean resided in the subject terrace and leased no. 97, with each described as constructed of brick and containing nine rooms each.¹³ McKean remained in occupation until 1879.¹⁴

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plan, dated 1894 (Figure 7) depicts the original footprint of *Eglinton Villas*, showing the principal form with front verandah and linked-in rear secondary wing (set off the northern boundary), both detailed as of masonry construction, with timber outbuildings attached in the southwest corner (since removed). A closely following MMBW plan (Figure 8), dated 1895, shows that the outbuilding contained the water closet, and the rear yard was asphalted over.¹⁵

⁸ Parish Plan, City of South Melbourne, PROV M333 (36)

⁹ 'Auction,' *Emerald Hill Record*, 24 April 1873, p2

¹⁰ Emerald Hill Rate Book, 1875, Entry nos 3936-37, p95

¹¹ George Tibbits, 'Robert Adamson,' in *Biographical Index of Australian Architects*, 1/A/2

¹² *Former Freemasons Hall* (H0538), VHD Report, accessed June 2025

¹³ Emerald Hill Rate Book, 1877, Entry nos 4047-48, p98

¹⁴ *Sands & McDougall Directory*, 1879

¹⁵ MMBW Detail Plan no. 550, 1895

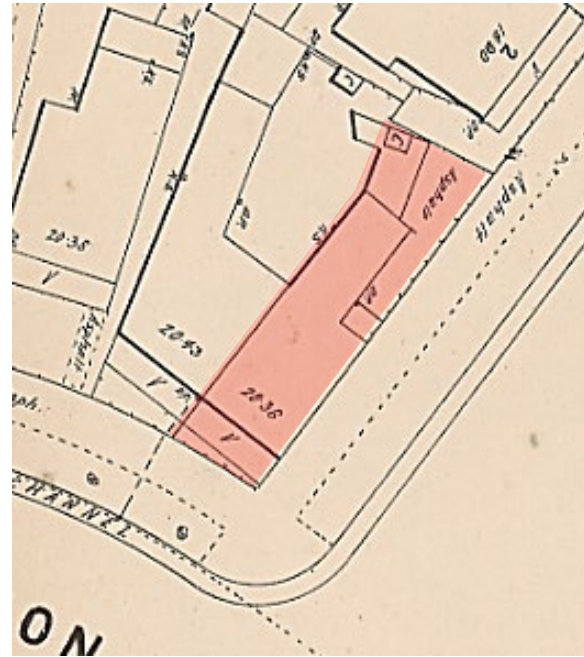
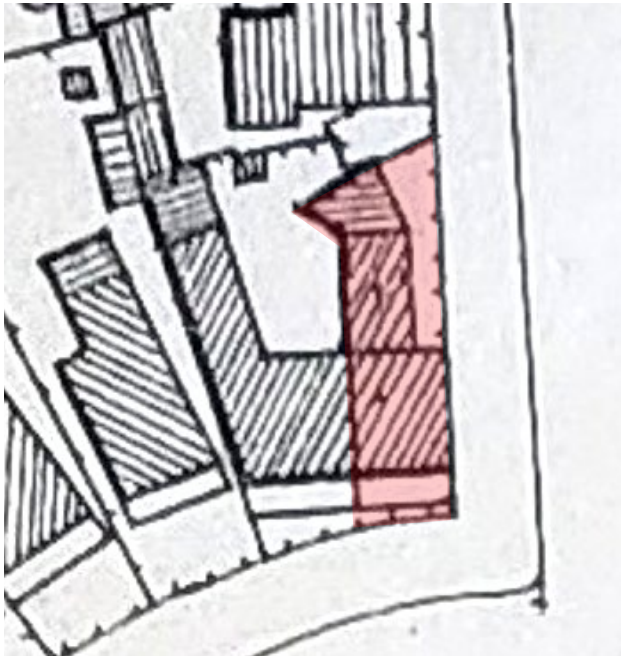


Figure 7. (Above left) MMBW Detail Plain, dated 1894, with the subject place shaded, north is right of the frame.
(Source: MMBW Detail Plan no. 19, State Library Victoria)

Figure 8. (Above right) MMBW Detail Plan, dated 1895, with the site shaded, north is right of frame.
(Source: MMBW Detail Plan no. 550, SLV)

Around 1897, McKean sold *Eglinton Villas* to the Australian Mutual Provident Society.¹⁶

An aerial photograph (Figure 9) from the late interwar period displays the rear of the subject place as viewed from St Vincents Place. It reveals the original window configuration, and a probable rear entrance located on the north elevation of the rear wing which is consistent with the kitchen placement shown on the 1973 drainage plan (Figure 10). There was no window in the north elevation of the main wing at this time.

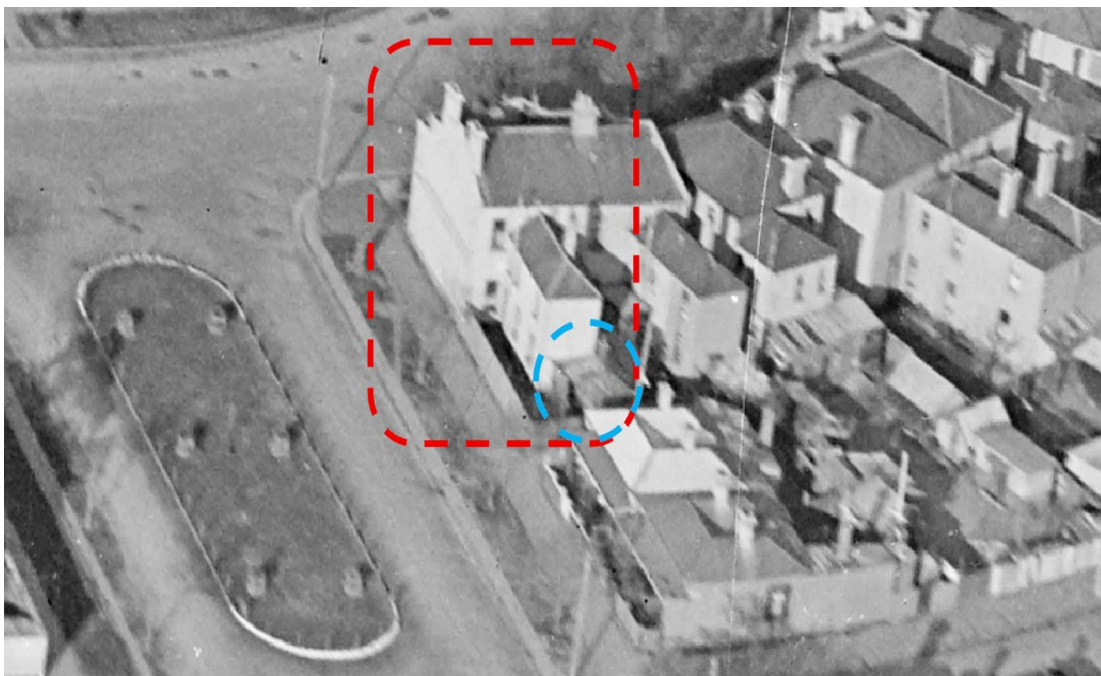


Figure 9. Subject place (outlined in red), facing east above St Vincents Street. Original timber outbuildings are circled in blue. (Source: Charles Pratt, 'Albert Park, showing St Vincent Place,' circa 1925-1933, SLV, H91.160/1590)

¹⁶ South Melbourne Rate Book, 1897, Entry nos 1108-09, p29

Drainage plans from 1973 (Figure 11) depict alterations to the subject place's sanitation, with the external toilet, originally located in the timber outbuilding per the 1895 MMBW detail plan, internalised within the house.¹⁷ This involved extending pipes beneath the rear wing to approximately the location of the current ground-floor toilet.

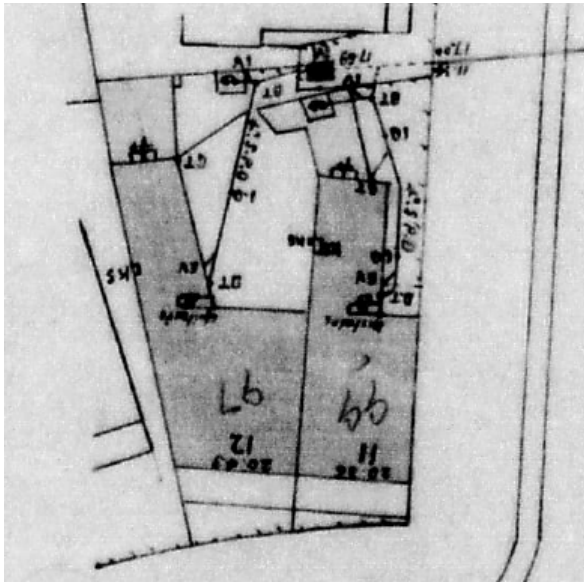


Figure 10. (Above left) Drainage plan, dated 1898, subject place indicated, north is right of frame.
(Source: Southeast Water)

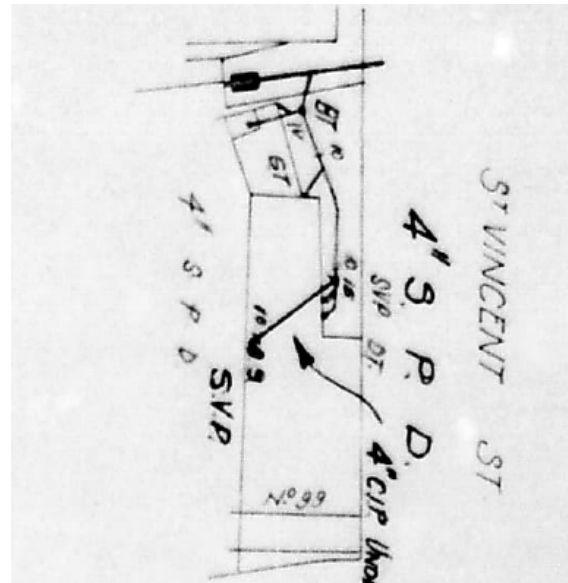


Figure 11. (Above right) Drainage plan, dated 1973, note the internalisation of the drainage for the WC.
(Source: Southeast Water)

The subject façade was photographed in the mid-1970s (Figure 12), by which point the original slate roof tiles had been replaced with corrugated metal sheeting and the chimney cap and pots removed.¹⁸



Figure 12. *Eglinton Villas*, from St Vincent Place South, dated 1974.
(Source: Committee for Urban Action, CUASM 2191/2, SLV)

¹⁷ Drainage Plan, 1973, Southeast Water

¹⁸ Committee for Urban Action, 'Vincent Place South from Merton to St Vincent Street, SLV: CUASM 2191/2

An auction notice in 1991 confirms the existence of an introduce window on the first floor of the north elevation. It also shows a new gabled-roofed addition/outbuilding along the St Vincent Street boundary, which was later demolished to make way for the present ground-floor addition (built circa 2006, Figure 15).

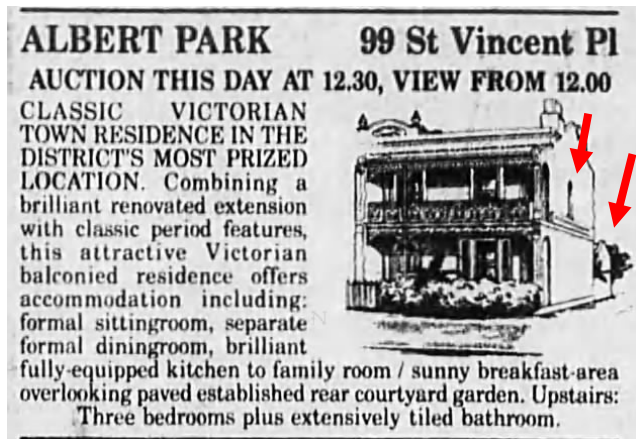


Figure 13. (Above left) Advertisement for the subject place, additions arrowed.
(Source: Age, 30 November 1991, p41)

Figure 14. Photograph of the subject place showing the façade and north elevation, dated 2003, with additions arrowed. (Source: H1291, VHD)

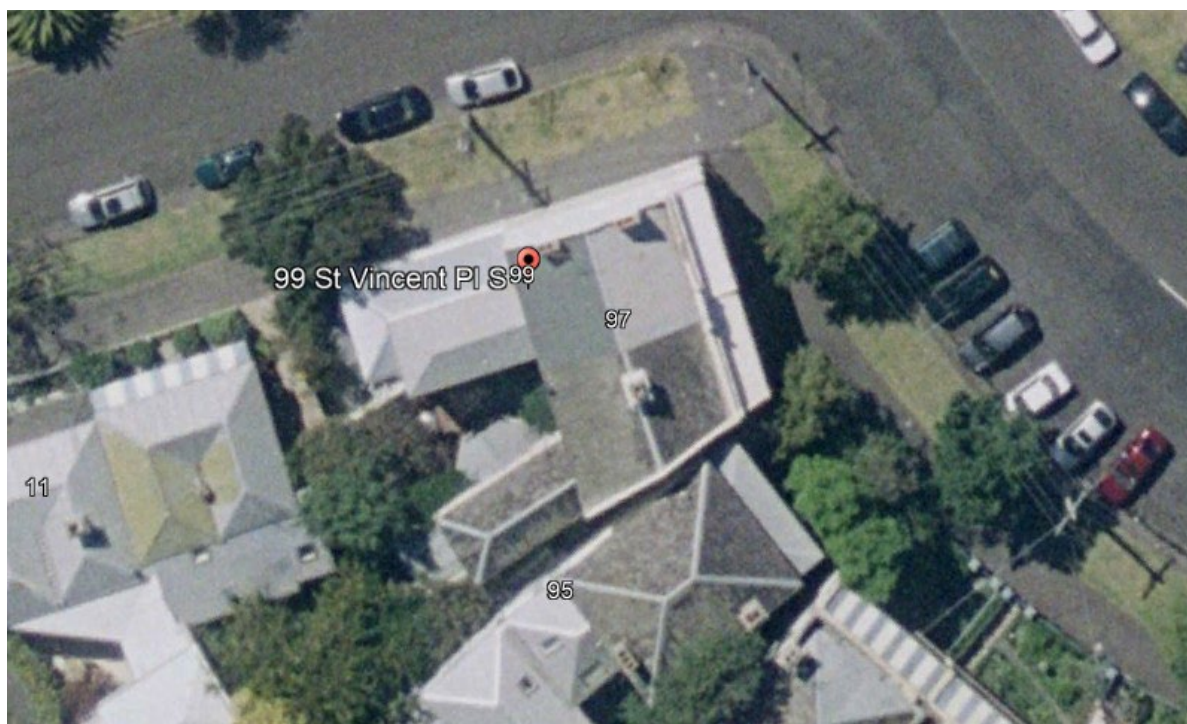


Figure 15. 2006 aerial photograph showing the apperance of the rear ground-floor addition.
(Source: Google Earth, March 2006)

3 PLACE DESCRIPTION

3.1 ST VINCENT PLACE PRECINCT (H1291)

The immediate setting of the subject place is the southwest quadrant of *St Vincent Place Precinct* (H1291), which is characterised by a semi-oblong layout, with central gardens bordered by predominantly grander one- to two-storey late 19th-century terraced residences. The precinct is important for the 'outstanding quality of its urban landscape.'¹⁹ This includes the gardenesque style layout and mature specimen trees of the St Vincent Gardens and the shared outlook of the surrounding residential buildings.

The subject place is part of a terraced pair (*Eglinton Villas*, along with no. 97), constructed circa 1876, which has direct views of St Vincent Gardens to the east. There is a strong connection between the terraces, the formal front garden layouts, substantial street trees, and the main gardens opposite.



Figure 16. View from the gardens towards the subject place



Figure 17. Subject place and adjoining paired terrace.

¹⁹ VHD Statement of Significance

The earliest buildings within the precinct generally date to the 1870s and consist of one and two-storey terraces and detached houses. Larger groups of terraces, such as the subject building, are typically concentrated in the eastern part of the precinct, to the east of Montague Street.

The subject terrace group is unusual in being the smallest allotment within the precinct (154m²) – a spatial reality that has factored into decision-making about the reasonability of the proposal. The next largest, located at the other end of the precinct at 2 St Vincent Place North, is 55m² larger (totalling 209m²).

There are fewer examples of paired terraces overall in the precinct. Examples are largely concentrated in the southern half of the precinct and include examples at the neighbouring 91-93 St Vincent Place South as well as at 79-81 and 55-57 St Vincent Place South.

Most of these terrace groups feature two-storey verandahs with cast-iron elements, tripartite grouped timber-framed double-hung sashes, and front yards with palisade fencing and basalt edging.



Figure 18. Aerial photograph of St Vincent Place with property boundaries highlighted, depicting the fine-grain urban subdivision pattern with variations in width and length. The arrow indicates the location of the subject place. (Source: Nearthmap, May 2025)

Contemporary Layer

Contemporary additions within the precinct are not uncommon. At 46 St Vincent Place North, a contemporary two-storey rear addition has been built to the rear of the main house, and a solid fence/wall constructed on the side boundary. To the rear of the site, along Draper Street, is a contemporary two-storey building with a garage that has a curved roof.

At 30 St Vincent Place North is a two-storey contemporary addition which is highly visible from the public realm. A similar addition is seen to 28 St Vincent Place North, adjoining its eastern elevation.

Both of these additions are clearly visible from the front façades and the central parklands, contributing to a varied presentation of built form within the precinct. In contrast, the proposed addition at the subject site will not be visible from the front elevation or central gardens, and will be primarily perceptible from St Vincent Street to the west; outside the bounds of the heritage overlay.



Figure 19. (Above left) 46-50 St Vincent Place North



Figure 20. 46 and 48 St Vincent Place North – rear additions
(Source: Nearmap, August 2022)



Figure 21. 28 St Vincent Place North. (Source: Google Streetview, July 2019)



Figure 22. 30 St Vincent Place North (Source: Google Streetview, July 2019)

Directly opposite the subject place in the precinct, at 94 St Vincent Place North, is a bold contemporary infill development. This was constructed in 2013 and replaced a single storey interwar period residence.



Figure 23. Contemporary redevelopment at 94 St Vincent Place North.
(Source: Google Streetview, July 2019)



Figure 24. 94 St Vincent Place North.



Figure 25. Subject place.

3.2 SUBJECT PLACE

EXTERIOR

The subject site is a small irregularly shaped allotment, which widens moderately at the rear. Its topography falls gently west. Secondary access is provided via a rear laneway.

The subject built form is a freestanding two-storey, late Victorian period, symmetrical terrace known as *Eglington Villas* (nos 97 and 99). The western member to the corner is the Applicant's property. Its principal form has a mirrored design to its counterpart (no. 97), although the first-floor balustrade motif differs, which could be an original individualising detail. Both of these principal forms are largely intact externally. Only conservation works and the provision of a single opening (north primary elevation) are proposed as part of the scheme (see Section 4.2 of this report).

The original cast iron palisade fence and gate with basalt plinth extends the front property boundary. There is soft landscaping along the fence line comprising a small garden bed and vines. One spearhead, near the northeast corner, is partially missing.



Figure 26. Subject place (right) and adjoining terrace, 97 St Vincent Place South (left).



Figure 27. Subject façade

A transverse gabled roof clad in non-original corrugated metal sheeting surmounts the primary form of *Eglington Villas*, accompanied by a pair of chimneys built into the northern parapet at the subject site (only one to the ridgeline of no. 97). Unlike its counterpart, both of the subject chimneys have had their original caps and pots removed. The metal gutters to the main wing are contemporary but have a sympathetic ogee profile.

The shared parapet across the terraced pair features a moulded cornice with a central entablature inscribed '*Eglington Villas*'. Flanking the entablature are decorative scrolls with the pediment above supporting a pair of urns. The party and end walls are finished with coping and feature a scrolled bracket beneath.

The façade is defined by its double-height verandah, which extends between projecting rendered fin walls. There is an open arch on the north elevation of the first floor. The verandah has retained all of its ornamental and structural cast iron elements. On both levels, there is a finely detailed frieze (floral motif) with timber trim, delicate brackets, and two (one per level) smooth columns with Corinthian capitals. The upper storey displays a cast-iron balustrade with a non-original timber top rail.

The cream and brown ceramic tiles on the verandah deck are mostly original but have been re-laid (likely due to subsidence) in a crude manner, resulting in a poor presentation. The first-floor balcony deck displays tongue-and-groove timber boards.



Figure 28. Verandah deck, tiles relaid, poorly.

Elington Villas is of traditional masonry construction, with load-bearing walls finished in a smooth ashlar-lined (very faint in part, due to overpainting) render to all visible elevations. The basalt plinth is evident on the façade and north elevation. To the side it appears to comprise two courses, though the raised street level has obscured part of the lower rock-faced course. The upper course is dressed stone.

A moulded string course runs along the north elevation of the main wing; it widens and incorporates an inset detail past the open verandah niche.



Figure 29. North elevation, from carriageway (St Vincent Street).



Figure 30. North elevation, from opposite St Vincent Street.

Original decorative stencilling (cut into the render) in a light blue colour featuring motifs of a sun and floral bouquets has been applied to the face of the party walls.

Façade fenestration for the principal form is generally intact. The main six-panelled timber door is original, including its hardware and moulded wooden transom bar and fanlight. Adjacent is a timber-framed double-hung sash with sidelights and a corbelled sill. On the first floor of the principal form, there are two tall double-hung sashes that provide access to the balcony.

As noted, an arched window has been inserted into the first floor of the principal north elevation, with what appears to be a concrete sill. At the rear of the principal form, to the first floor (facing the breezeway), is a timber-framed double-hung window with a basalt sill.

Attached to the rear of the primary form, at a setback from St Vincent Street, is a two-storey hipped-roofed secondary wing. It is proposed for removal as part of the proposal. This architecturally restrained volume has been progressively modified over the late 20th century. Its roof has been re-clad in corrugated metal sheeting and the chimney on the southern plane demolished (see Figure 9). The water good system is contemporary.

The ground-floor section of the north and west (rear) wall has been punctured to facilitate internal circulation as part of the single-storey 1990s addition, which has extended the footprint to the north and into the rear yard. The north elevation (St Vincent Street) elevation of the addition includes a horizontal band of timber-framed windows with a projecting sill and rendered wall below. This wall has ashlar lining to match the original fabric, imparting a faux impression to this addition.

Only two (the eastern and westernmost) of the first-floor openings of the north elevation (facing Vincent Street) are original, albeit both are altered. The easternmost aperture retains its timber-framed double-hung sash; however, its glazed panes have been removed and sheeted over, concealed this opening internally. The fixed timber-framed window to the western opening is modern.

The central rear wing window is a non-original arched timber-framed casement with etched glass and a concrete sill.



Figure 31. Original timber sash windows (one concealed internally) to rear of main wing and rear wing and non-original arched casement (dashed red).

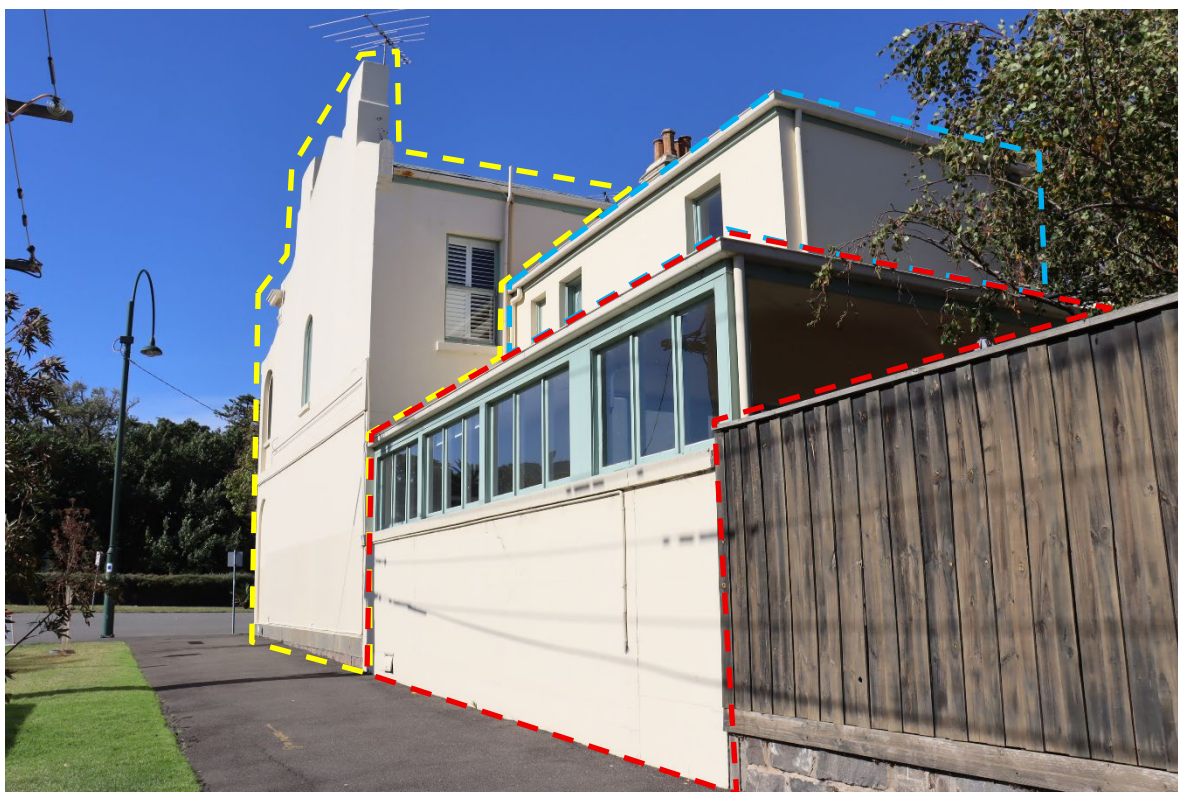


Figure 32. Oblique view of north elevation with visible fabric of the main wing highlighted yellow, the rear wing blue, and the addition red.

At the rear, the final quarter of the addition comprises a covered verandah opening to the garden via two pairs of French doors with sidelights. Adjoining the verandah is a non-original brick shed with a skillion roof, timber double doors, and a concrete foundation.



Figure 33. Rear addition as seen from rear garden. The brick shed is highlighted in red.

The rear yard is enclosed by a tall timber paling fence on a non-original basalt rubble course plinth. A matching vertical timber gate is located at the southwest corner, opening to the rear laneway. The back yard is paved in non-original pavers. There is a small garden bed and a small tree along the rear boundary

INTERIOR

The two-up, two-down original layout of the principal footprint remains intact, including some key internal elements, namely:

- Plaster ceiling roses, present in most of the original rooms,
- Fireplace mantels to the ground floor, both marble, one with a cattail motif,
- The original stair railing, featuring turned timber posts and decorative timber fretwork,
- Moulded timber architraves to several internal doors and openings, including the entry hall,
- Within the entry hall, scrolled console brackets are positioned beneath a moulded arch, and
- Moulded cornices are also retained in a number of rooms.

The interior of the secondary wing is thoroughly modernised.

4 THE PROPOSAL

In summary, it is proposed to demolish the original secondary wing to allow for the construction of a new two-storey volume (above a basement) with a rooftop terrace accessed via a compact ‘tucked in’ addition that would be situated on the back primary roof plane, along with conservation/presentation works to the retained primary form and façade.

The primary reasons for undertaking this work are to provide additional living space at the subject place and to enhance its amenity, without excessively encroaching upon its private open space. A challenge navigated by the proposal is the limited size of the allotment – the smallest in the precinct – alongside the necessity of maintaining the three-dimensional form and interpretability of the building’s principal part.

4.1 BACKGROUND TO THE APPLICATION

Prior to the engagement of RBA, a pre-application meeting (P40825) with Heritage Victoria (HV) was held on 25 March 2025, during which an earlier version of this scheme, detailed in drawings titled ‘*Renovation and Extension to 99 St Vincent Place South*’ by Studio 35 Architecture, was discussed.

HV noted their general support for the scheme pending further resolution and provided the following comments in correspondence dated 25 March 2025:

- *There is general comfort with the proposed scheme, as the new additions are replacing non-original rear additions.*
- *The insertion of a room into the rear roof plane of the Victorian section is not a preferred design response but if pursued, should be kept to the minimum possible size and views of it from the public realm as minimal as possible.*
- *The proposed north window should also be carefully considered as it would be introducing a new element to a highly visible, unaltered original elevation. Utilising the north aspect available at the rear half of the site within the new addition should be considered. If it remains included in the design, it should adopt a simple, minimal, contemporary style that is sympathetic but does not imitate or compete with the original windows.*
- *Colour schemes should be based on era-appropriate tones.*
- *Returning the roof to a slate materiality is supported, provided there is evidence that the original roof was slate (which is likely). As Welsh slate is unlikely to be available, Canadian ‘Glendyne’ slate is a common, generally accepted alternative.*

It is assumed that when HV characterised the rear wing as ‘non original’ in writing, it was instead intended to convey the existing rear wing’s modified state, as RBA understands was communicated during the pre-application meeting.

In the wake of this engagement, the Applicant and their design team sought the advice of RBA to address the issues raised by HV and further refine the proposed works from a heritage perspective.

4.2 SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

The submitted scheme is laid out in a set of architectural drawings prepared by Studio 35 Architecture, dated 10 July 2025 (Revision A, HV01-HV11).

A permit is sought for the following summarised works:

Partial demolition

Partial demolition of the secondary wing (retain southern party wall), including the contemporary ground floor addition.

Remove an internalised portion of the rear (west) primary elevation and the rear first-floor opening and section of adjacent wall (principal footprint).

Demolish the modern shed.

Removing the existing timber fence, salvaging the non-original basalt plinth.

Alterations

Insert a new frameless arched opening into the rear part of the primary footprint's north elevation (facing St Vincent Street) to the kitchen.

Reform a narrower opening in the rear first-floor of the principal footprint (to the ensuite).

Additions

Construct a new two-storey rear addition above a basement with a rooftop terrace accessed via a compact 'pop up' to the rear primary roof plane.

Construct a new garden shed within the rear yard.

Construct a new boundary wall.

Conservation Works

Remove existing corrugated metal roof sheeting to the primary gable and reinstate Glendyne slate roofing.

Reconstruct chimney caps and pots to match those surviving at no. 97 (counterpart of the subject place).

Investigate the sensitive removal of non-original acyclic paint and repair/reinstatement of the original or an appropriate ashlar/tinted finish,

Repair and, where necessary, replace front verandah deck tiles.

Renew corrugated metal sheeting to the verandah roof.

Repaint gutters, window and door joinery, and cast iron elements.



Figure 34. Render of the proposal, showing the proposed rear addition – a low-key, unobtrusive contemporary wing. (Source: Studio35 Architecture, July 2025)



Figure 35. Render of the proposal, showing the proposed rear addition from St Vincent Place (outside the extent of registration for the precinct). Note the degree to which the 'popup' to the rear primary roof plane would blend in with the proposed slate tiling. (Source: Studio35 Architecture, July 2025)

5 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

5.1 RELEVANT HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

The following key considerations under the Heritage Act must be taken into account by the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria in determining whether to approve the application:

s. 101(2)(a) the extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of the registered place or registered object.

s. 101(2b) the extent to which the application, if refused, would affect the reasonable or economic use of the registered place or registered object.

The Executive Director may consider, if relevant, the matters at s. 101(3)(a):

the extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of any adjacent or neighbouring property that is—

- i. included in the Heritage Register; or
- ii. subject to a heritage requirement or control in the relevant planning scheme.

In the application of s. 101(2)(a), consideration should be given to the Statement of Significance.

5.2 DISCUSSION

5.2.1 VHR STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As outlined in the VHR Statement of Significance, the St Vincent Place Precinct is of State significance for its historical, aesthetic/architectural, and social heritage values.

Of particular relevance to the current proposal, the Statement highlights the ‘harmonious relationship’ between the residential buildings and the central, semi-oblong, gardenesque-style formal parklands. It also emphasises the strong interpretability of the precinct as Victoria’s ‘premier “square” development’ and its role as a social centre for the surrounding district. In addition, the Statement notes the ‘consistent quality’ and high level of intactness of the late 19th-century middle-class housing stock.

The focus of the Statement is on the primary public domain of the precinct. That is the interface between the principal frontages/forms and the landscaped centre, as opposed to, say, the more utilitarian ‘back of house’ areas, which are mostly concealed or, as in the case of the subject place, less prominent and generally viewed from beyond the extent of registration.

5.2.2 CONSERVATION WORKS

The proposed conservation investigations and actions are described indicatively in the submitted drawings. It is anticipated that, should a permit be granted, a Schedule of Conservation Works, prepared by an appropriately qualified heritage practitioner, to the satisfaction of HV would be required as a condition of approval.

The works envisioned would entail a significant capital investment by the Applicant in reinstating the authentic late Victorian presentation of the subject place’s principal form, which has the greatest resonance with the surrounding precinct.

The conservation scope is broad and would dramatically amplify the contributory value of the subject place within the precinct.

In our view, the overall positive outcomes of the conservation-led approach to the principal subject form, which most strongly influence one’s appreciation and experience of the precinct, are a factor in mitigating any perceived impact associated with the demolition of the modified secondary wing, as discussed below.

The existing colour scheme of the cast iron and timber elements of the principal form is not original, having been previously painted in a light blue-green colour. As part of the scheme, the timber verandah trim and fascia, window architraves, and door surrounds are to be repainted using Peter Lewis Paints ‘Black Oxide’ (linseed-oil-based). While the timber window frames and front door will be painted in Dulux ‘Monument’. The new aluminium-framed north window will also be finished in Monument to maintain consistency. All cast iron elements, including the

fence, balustrade, and frieze, are likewise proposed to be painted in Dulux 'Monument'. We note that this colour scheme was endorsed by HV at other locations within the precinct, including 53 St Vincent Place South (approved in 2022).

5.2.3 PARTIAL DEMOLITION

The proposal includes the demolition of the rear wing and other non-original/non-contributory elements (circa 2006 ground floor rear addition, brick shed, and north/west fencing).

The secondary rear wing is original, albeit architecturally unremarkable in itself, particularly when compared to other equivalents in the precinct, where the design of the rear volume is substantial and/or explicitly designed to address/activate the corner or secondary streetscape; for example, at 51 and 53 St Vincent Place South.

The subject secondary wing is also highly modified at the ground floor level and, to some extent, at the first and roof levels (the chimney has been removed and a window added), diminishing its integrity and intactness.

Its visibility – relative to the precinct – is muted, being limited to a fairly narrow oblique viewshed on approach along St Vincent Place South from the north (Figure 36). While of some historic interest, its retention is not considered integral to safeguarding the contribution of the subject place to the precinct (to be amplified by the proposed conservation works), or the overall heritage value of H1291.



Figure 36. Oblique view to the unremarkable and compromised secondary wing on approach from St Vincent Place South.

In addition, the spatial constraints faced by the subject property, as the smallest allotment in the precinct, and the modest size of the secondary wing, greatly restrict the ability to either sympathetically modify this element or extend it. These options have been tested but would simply not allow for a reasonable expansion of the floor space to support an amenity uplift commensurate with the location.

Given the above, in our opinion, the proposed loss of the secondary wing would not establish a precedent for the precinct. There would be a firm basis to require the more architecturally impressive corner secondary wings and/or those with greater scope or surrounding space to absorb additions to be conserved.

Presumably, these factors and reasoning influenced HV's pre-application support for the demolition of the rear wing.

Having regard to the above, RBA is also supportive of the proposed removal of the secondary wing, finding it to have only a minor and acceptable impact on the identified heritage values precinct.

5.2.4 ALTERATIONS

A new arched window is proposed for the north elevation at ground level. Historically, this elevation did not contain windows to the main wing, and the existing arched first-floor window was introduced in the late 20th century. The amenity boon offered by the submitted ground-floor elevation is clear, and at the proposed size, it would not erode the overall solidity of this elevation. The proportions of this opening would be respectful of the character of the site but nonetheless gently distinguishable as an insertion, with frameless glazing and a lack of any decorative surrounds.

Also proposed is a low-profile skylight to be located within the rear section of the original roof form. The skylight would have a low profile and be painted in a colour matched to the slate, ensuring its unobtrusiveness.

5.2.5 NEW WORKS

An infill two-storey rear addition is proposed with a basement level and rooftop terrace, accessed via a 'popup' to the retained original rear primary roof plane.

The rationale of the design is clear, with a low-key contemporary but contextually responsive rear form proposed that, while having its own presence at the corner as a deferential 'back of house' wing, does so without competing with the prevailing significant characteristics of the retained section terrace or the precinct.

Massing and scale

The proposed addition would match the footprint of the current rear wing at the ground floor, extending approximately 10 metres from the rear wall of the principal wing and spanning the full width of the property. Departing from the existing, the upper storey will also extend across the full width. The proposed new boundary wall will match the height of the current timber fence.

To maintain a visual distinction with the retained original principal forms, a recessed lightwell is proposed between the main wing and the new addition. This would establish a one-metre setback from St Vincent Street and a three-metre setback from the west elevation of the main wing. A corresponding upper-storey setback, incorporating an open balcony, would enable the addition's massing to be articulated and create a visual break from the original form. The setback and horizontal emphasis of the addition contrast with the verticality of the original terrace, ensuring the new element presents as visually recessive and clearly subordinate and respectful of the heritage place.

The existing terrace rises to a ridge height of 9.85 metres, while the proposed addition, measured to the height of the roof terrace wall, sits approximately 2.5 metres below the ridge. Visibility of the addition would be limited to an oblique viewing corridor to the site's north. Additionally, the existing southern boundary brick wall is to be retained that will, in combination with a louvred screen, obscure the addition from the adjacent property.

The overall scale and massing would ensure the new work would present as an appropriately deferential and secondary element to the retained principal form of the subject place, avoiding a relationship that would be interpretable as dominating or competing.

Roof form

The proposed addition will incorporate a flat roof, with a roof terrace above. A lightweight pergola structure is proposed over the first-floor balcony. The use of a flat roof without a formal ridgeline allows the addition to be easily distinguished from the gabled roof form of the original residence. The horizontality of the roof form allows it to be a lower profile and reinforces its contemporary character, ensuring visual differentiation from the Victorian fabric.

Materials

The proposed material palette has been selected to complement the heritage residence while remaining legible as a contemporary addition and distinguishable from the existing heritage fabric.

At ground level, the boundary wall will be clad in natural limestone with a saw-cut basalt plinth, intentionally distinct from the original rubble-coursed basalt plinth. While the upper storey balcony will be clad in AHBP blended bricks, a narrow-format brick product that is easily interpretable as modern. The off-white tones of both the

limestone and the AHBP bricks will subtly contrast with the likely, darker grey of the original render, which is to be reinstated as part of the conservation works. This restrained and tonal contrast reflects similar finishes used elsewhere in the precinct, as seen at 30 St Vincent Place North.

The north-facing elevation, which is visible from the public realm, will be largely glazed, contributing to a lightweight visual appearance and maximising access to natural light. A similar approach has been taken to the visible additions at 28 St Vincent Place North, 30 St Vincent Place North, and 46 St Vincent Place North. The window frames will be aluminium and finished in Dulux 'Monument', matching the proposed scheme to the existing external elements.

The non-glazed portions of the ground floor and balcony balustrade, including the rear elevation which is only visible outside the precinct, will be clad in fibre cement sheeting, finished in a natural white tone to complement the masonry elements.

The combination of masonry materials and light tones, coupled with glazing and flat-roofed forms, ensures the addition remains visually recessive and complementary to the heritage place.

Basement

A new basement is proposed, extending beneath the rear addition, the existing entry hall, and the proposed kitchen space. The design has been developed with consideration for the heritage fabric, and a structural engineer is to be engaged to ensure excavation is undertaken in a manner that protects and underpins the significant elements of the building, including the party wall to the south. While the site is not known to contain archaeological features, excavation will be managed with oversight, and any unexpected finds will be reported in accordance with HV guidelines.

Access to the basement is to be provided via a new stair located beneath the existing Victorian staircase, in the location currently occupied by a 1970s ground-floor toilet. The original staircase will be retained in situ.

A rooftop terrace is proposed within the rear roof form of the original building. In response to HV's pre-application advice, the terrace has been reduced in size and recessed approximately 1.3 metres behind and 700 mm below the ridge of the roof. This ensures that it is not visible from the primary elevation and has only limited oblique visibility from the public realm. The terrace provides for additional private open space at the site, which is notably constrained due to its small lot size.

REAR GARDEN

The proposed works to the rear garden will maintain the existing footprint of the open space. The proposal includes the construction of a new shed in the southwest corner of the site, in a location similar to the existing non-original brick shed, and the introduction of a small plunge pool. The existing tree within the rear yard is to be removed and replaced with an evergreen; however, it is not of heritage significance.

The garden works are entirely concealed from the public realm and do not affect any original or significant built fabric. As such, they are considered to have a neutral heritage impact.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The proposed works at the subject place have been designed in respect to the heritage values and significance of the *St Vincent Place Precinct* (VHR H1291) and are considered to provide a balanced and respectful response to the place's contribution to the precinct's cultural heritage significance.

The proposal retains and conserves the most intact and significant components of the subject terrace. Conservation works, including reinstatement of original slate roofing, chimney pots, and render finish, will enhance the building's Victorian-era character and streetscape contribution.

While the demolition of the original rear wing results in some loss of historic fabric, this has been justified on the basis of extensive prior modification, diminished legibility, and the constraints of the allotment size. The replacement addition has been designed to be clearly legible as new, visually recessive, and subordinate in form and size.

On balance, the proposal is assessed as sufficiently respectful, with any impacts low and acceptable in magnitude. The identified heritage values of H1291 would not be adversely impacted.