

FORMER AUSTRALIAN LICORICE FACTORY CHIMNEY AND FIRE TUNNEL REMAINS

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

342-348 Victoria Street, Brunswick

May 2024

Prepared for

ASSEMBLE COMMUNITIES

Prepared by

LOVELL CHEN



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Australian Licorice Factory Chimney and Fire Tunnel Remains are located on the lands of the Wurundjeri People, the custodians of this land. This report was also prepared on Wurundjeri Country. 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 all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and acknowledge that this report includes a post-contact history that forms only a small part of the ongoing story.

Quality Assurance Register

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
10418	1	Heritage Impact Statement	02/05/2024	KW/MK

Referencing

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Cover image: The Licorice Factory Chimney and Fire Tunnel

Source: Victorian Heritage Database

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared for Armitage Jones on behalf of Assemble Communities, to accompany a permit application to Heritage Victoria for stabilisation and conservation works as well as surrounding landscaping and lighting works to the former Australian Licorice Factory fire tunnel remains, located within the broader site at 342-348 Victoria Street, Brunswick, on Wurundjeri Country (Figure 1).

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

- Architectural drawings prepared by Lovell Chen, dated 2 May 2024, numbered HA00 – HA03 (inclusive, all Revision DD1)
- Landscape drawings prepared by Mala, dated 4 April 2024, and numbered L000-L002, L102, L202, L302, L400, L402, L501 and L603
- Lighting design documentation prepared by Norman Disney and Young, dated 4 April 2024, and numbered LL06[02]

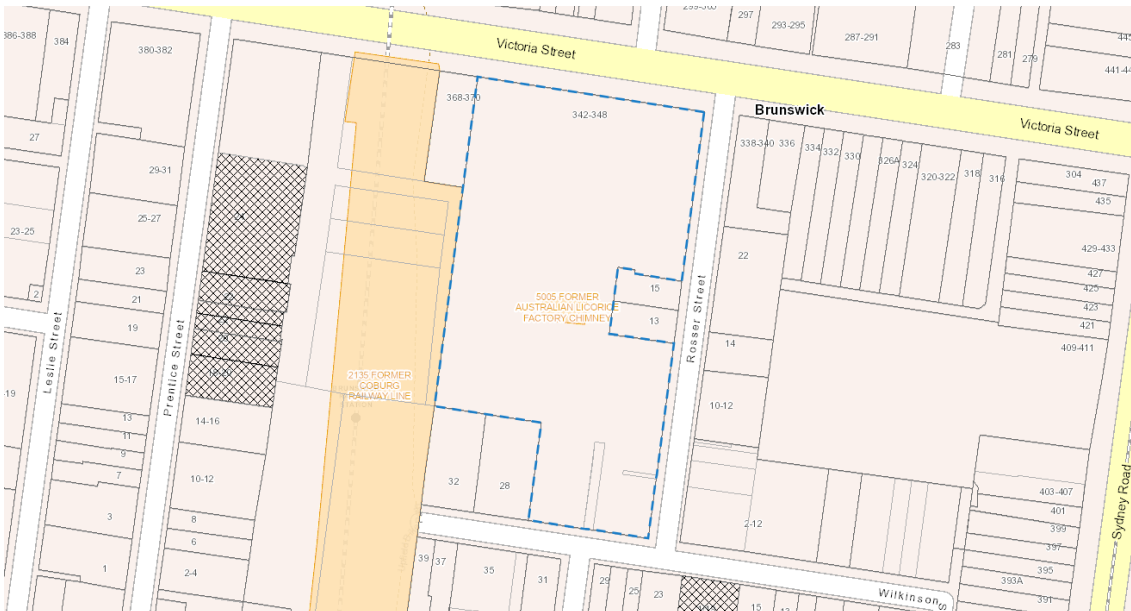


Figure 1 Plan showing the location of the Licorice Factory chimney and fire tunnel remains within the broader property at 342-348 Victoria Street, Brunswick, indicated in blue hatch
Source: VicPlan

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Relevant permits

Heritage permit for chimney crown reconstruction works

Permit No. P33440 was issued by Heritage Victoria on 6 November 2020 for the removal of unstable brickwork and reconstruction/reinstatement of the crown of the chimney to match the existing octagonal form, details and profile. This permit was sought to undertake urgent safety works to remove unstable brickwork forming the crown of the chimney.

The safety works have since been undertaken and a scaffold erected surrounding the chimney. The chimney crown reconstruction works will be undertaken at a later date, within the life of the permit (refer Figure 2).

Identification of required repair works for the entire chimney shaft was included as a condition of P33440. No works to the fire tunnel remains or otherwise within the registered land were included as part of this permit application.

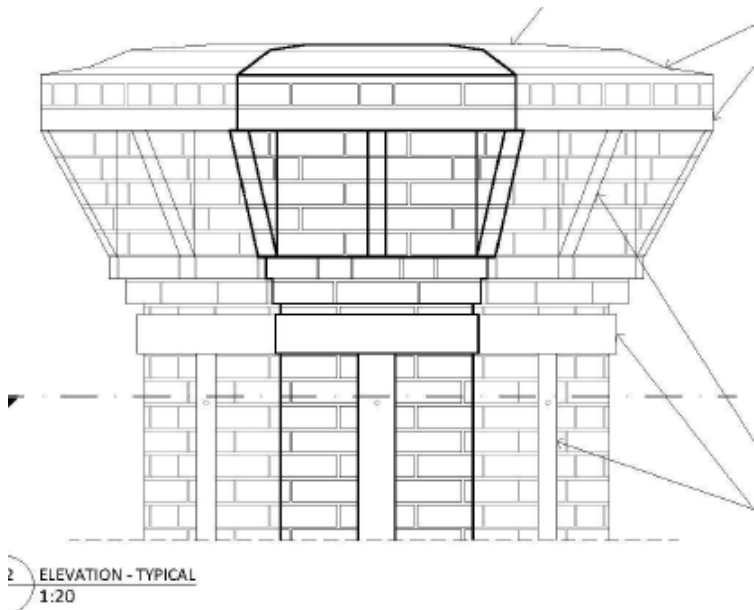


Figure 2 Documentation endorsed under Permit P33440 (shown in part) detailing the reconstruction works to the crown of the chimney
Source: Lovell Chen

Planning permit for mixed-use development

A planning permit has been issued by Merri-bek City Council for a mixed-use development of the property at 342-348 & 368-370 Victoria Street, 13 & 15 Rosser Street and 32 Wilkinson Street, Brunswick. Permit no. MPS/2017/745/A as amended comprises four mixed-use buildings for residential, retail and commercial uses, with community use provided in the existing residences at 13-15 Rosser Street, which are outside of the registered land for the chimney/fire tunnel remains but included as HO239 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

The overall massing is four distinct volumes, with a laneway extending north-to-south through the property, and a courtyard running east-to-west. No new built form is proposed adjacent to the chimney/fire tunnel remains or within the registered land (refer Figure 3).

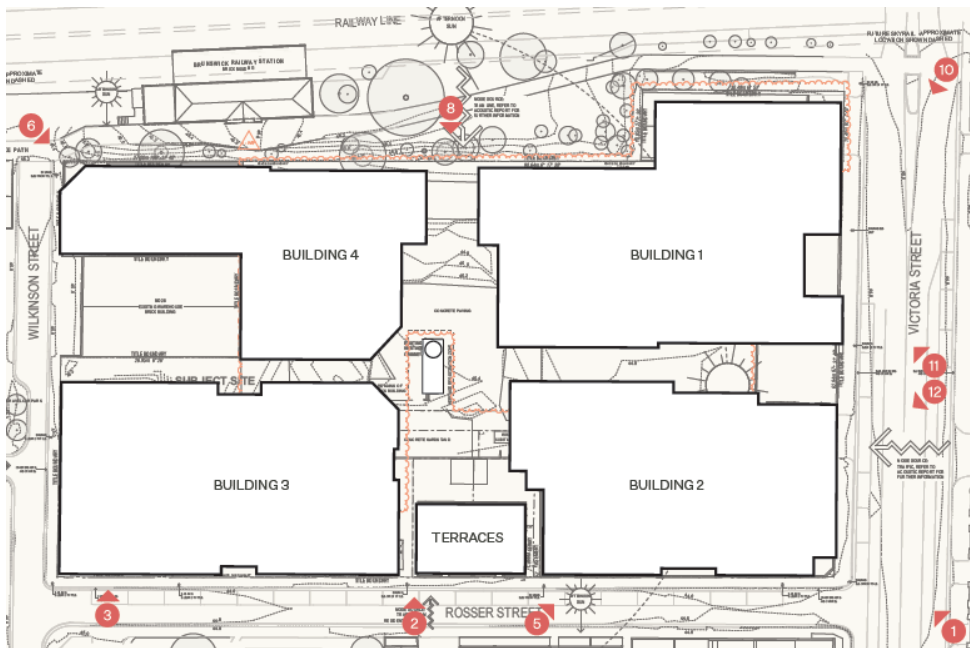


Figure 3 High-level site plan showing the general form and location of the new mixed-use development of the property at 342-348 Victoria Street, with the chimney and fire tunnel remains identified centrally within the site; note north is to the right
 Source: Fieldwork Design Report, 342-348 Victoria Street, 23/11/2023

2.0 HERITAGE CONTROLS AND LISTINGS

2.1 Victorian Heritage Register

The Former Australian Licorice Factory Chimney and Fire Tunnel Remains are included on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR), designated as place number H1289. The extent of registration is indicated at Figure 4 and described as follows:

1. All of the buildings known as the former Australian Licorice Company Chimney (marked B1) and Fire Tunnel Remains (marked B2) on Diagram 607315 held by the Executive Director of the Heritage Council.
2. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 607315 held by the Executive Director of the Heritage Council, being part of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 8980, Folio 527.

The statement of significance for the chimney and fire tunnel remains forming part of the registration for H1289 is as follows:

The Australian Licorice Company was registered as a company under the Firms Act (1892) on 13 March 1903. By September the well-known manufacturing confectioner, Abel Hoadley of Hoadley's had joined the company as a partner. Little is known of the company until 1922 when it erected a new steam-driven factory at 41a Victoria Street, Brunswick on a large allotment behind a row of tenanted shops. Rival manufacturing confectioner, Macpherson Robertson of MacRobertson's was a joint partner in the establishment of the new licorice factory, and both parent companies used the venture to economically recycle their scrap into a variety of licorice products which were promoted for their health-

giving qualities alongside the more glamorous chocolate lines of the companies. Like the large steam-driven premises of Hoadley's and MacRobertson's, the brick licorice factory was conspicuous for its chimney stack.

Over succeeding years a number of rival licorice companies were established but none could wrest the market from the Brunswick firm. By the 1950s another confectionery firm, Rowntree, was a third party in the company. From the late 1950s Allen's Sweets became the majority shareholder and proceeded to expand the premises and increase production to capture 85% of the Australian licorice market. The factory closed in 1985 when Nestle overtook Allen's. Today it operates as a chocolate factory, and the redundant chimney now stands as a relic in testimony to the might of the former licorice company.

The brick chimney stack of the former Australian Licorice Company is of historic, social, architectural and scientific importance to the State of Victoria.

The brick chimney stack of the former Australian Licorice Company factory is historically and scientifically important as the only known surviving chimney remaining from the steam-driven years of Melbourne's nationally significant confectionery industry. The chimney has further importance for being one of a small number remaining from the hundreds of industrial chimneys that dominated Melbourne's diverse manufacturing landscape. The elaborate, octagonal chimney stack is architecturally and scientifically important as a fine example of the fully refined skills of the bricklayer.

The former Australian Licorice Company chimney and fire tunnel remains are scientifically and historically important for their potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the technology of steam generation for factory purposes and confectionery manufacturing in Victoria from the 1920s to the 1980s.

The chimney stands as an historically and socially important symbol of the well-known Australian Licorice Company that operated for the greater part of this century and monopolised the Australian licorice market. As a symbol of the Australian Licorice Company the chimney has further social and historical importance for its association with three of Australia's most successful confectionery companies, Hoadley's, MacRobertson's and Allen's Sweets.¹

¹ Victorian Heritage Database, *Former Australian Licorice Factory Chimney and Fire Tunnel Remains*, available at: <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/5005>

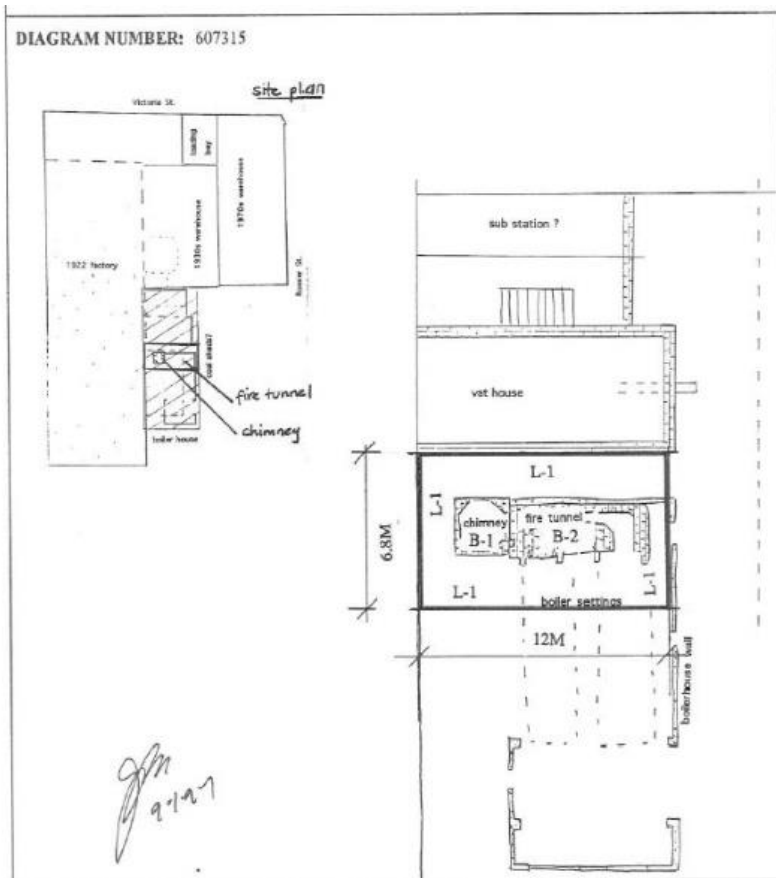


Figure 4 Diagram 607315 showing the extent of registration for the chimney and fire tunnel remains; note that the buildings shown in this plan surrounding the registered land have since been demolished
Source: Victorian Heritage Database

2.2 Merri-bek Planning Scheme

The former Australian Licorice Factory Chimney and Fire Tunnel Remains are included as HO183 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Merri-bek Planning Scheme (Figure 5). The mapped extent of the HO is consistent with the VHR extent of registration.

The statement of significance for the chimney at a local level is as follows:

The chimney stack of the former Australian Liquorice Co. factory is of local historical significance. It is a local landmark and a reminder of the liquorice factory, which was well-known in Brunswick, particularly due to the liquorice aroma which emanated from it.²

In accordance with Clause 43.01 of the Merri-bek Planning Scheme, a permit is not required under the Heritage Overlay to develop a heritage place which is included in the VHR, other than applications to subdivide.

² Victorian Heritage Database, *Australian Licorice Factory Chimney and Fire Tunnel Remains*, available at: <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/59126>

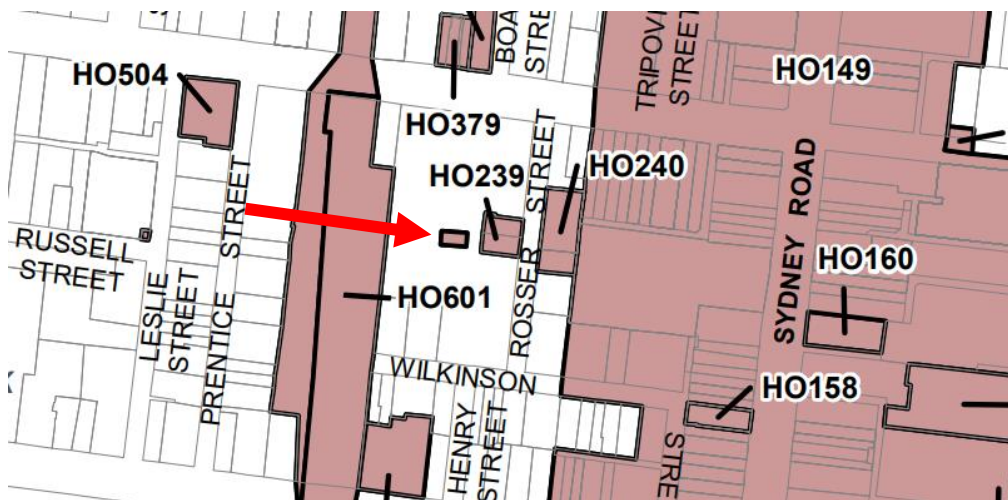


Figure 5 Detail of 14HO map with the subject site indicated by the red arrow
Source: Merri-bek Planning Scheme

3.0 BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

The Wurundjeri People were forced from the land by European settlement in the nineteenth century.³ During the late nineteenth century, it appears that the subject site was originally used as a timber yard, and later cleared for use by travelling carnivals,⁴ with early plans from 1904 depicting a vacant site (Figure 6).

A licorice factory was established at the site by 1922 (Figure 7) which incorporated a building along the western boundary of the site with two projecting elements to the east, in the centre of the factory site. Based on later aerial photos, it appears that the chimney and associated fire tunnel were located within these projecting elements (Figure 8). By 1924, a row of cottages, with frontages to Victoria Street had been constructed (Figure 7) and were likely related to the factory, possibly occupied by workers. The cottages and alterations can be seen in the aerial photograph at Figure 8.

Further additions to the factory had been constructed by 1935 (Figure 9). These eastern additions appear to have undergone various alterations through the twentieth century extending to the north and south of the original building form (Figure 10 and Figure 12), many of which can be seen in the aerial photograph included at Figure 11. Further additions were constructed to the south of the site in 1979 (Figure 13).

The chimney and associated fire tunnel were used in the manufacturing processes of the factory, likely associated with the production of steam to operate the manufacturing equipment and/or processes. The chimney and fire tunnel remains are remnants of the factory complex and are located centrally within the site. There are some remnant factory buildings on the north and east site boundaries, and a shed at the southern end (outside the VHR extent). Demolition of other buildings on the site has occurred in recent times (refer for comparison Figure 14 and Figure 15). The remainder of the site includes some areas of hard paving, grassed and gravelled areas, bound by a temporary fence.

³ Brunswick Daily, *The Merri Merri*, available at <https://brunswickdaily.com.au/community/heal-country-the-merri-merri/>

⁴ Victorian Heritage Database, *Australian Licorice Factory Chimney and Fire Tunnel Remains*, available at: <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/59126>

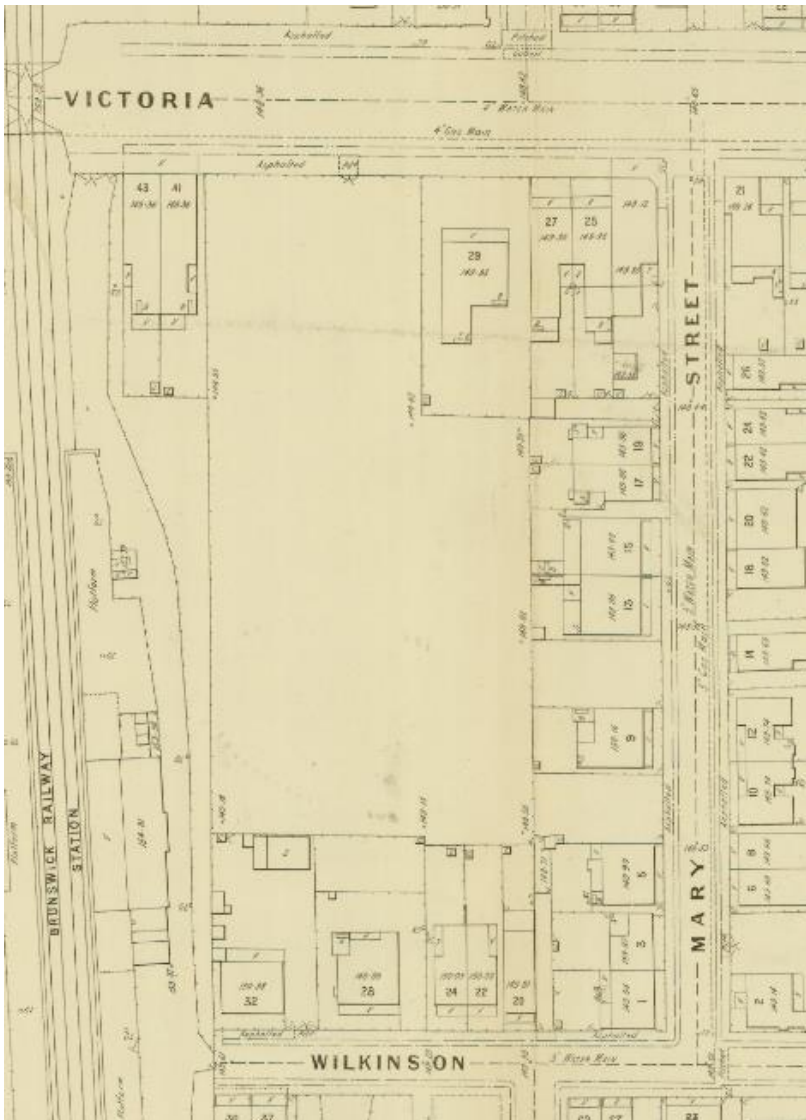


Figure 6 MMBW detail pan no. 1895 from 1904, prior to the construction of the factory
 Source: State Library Victoria

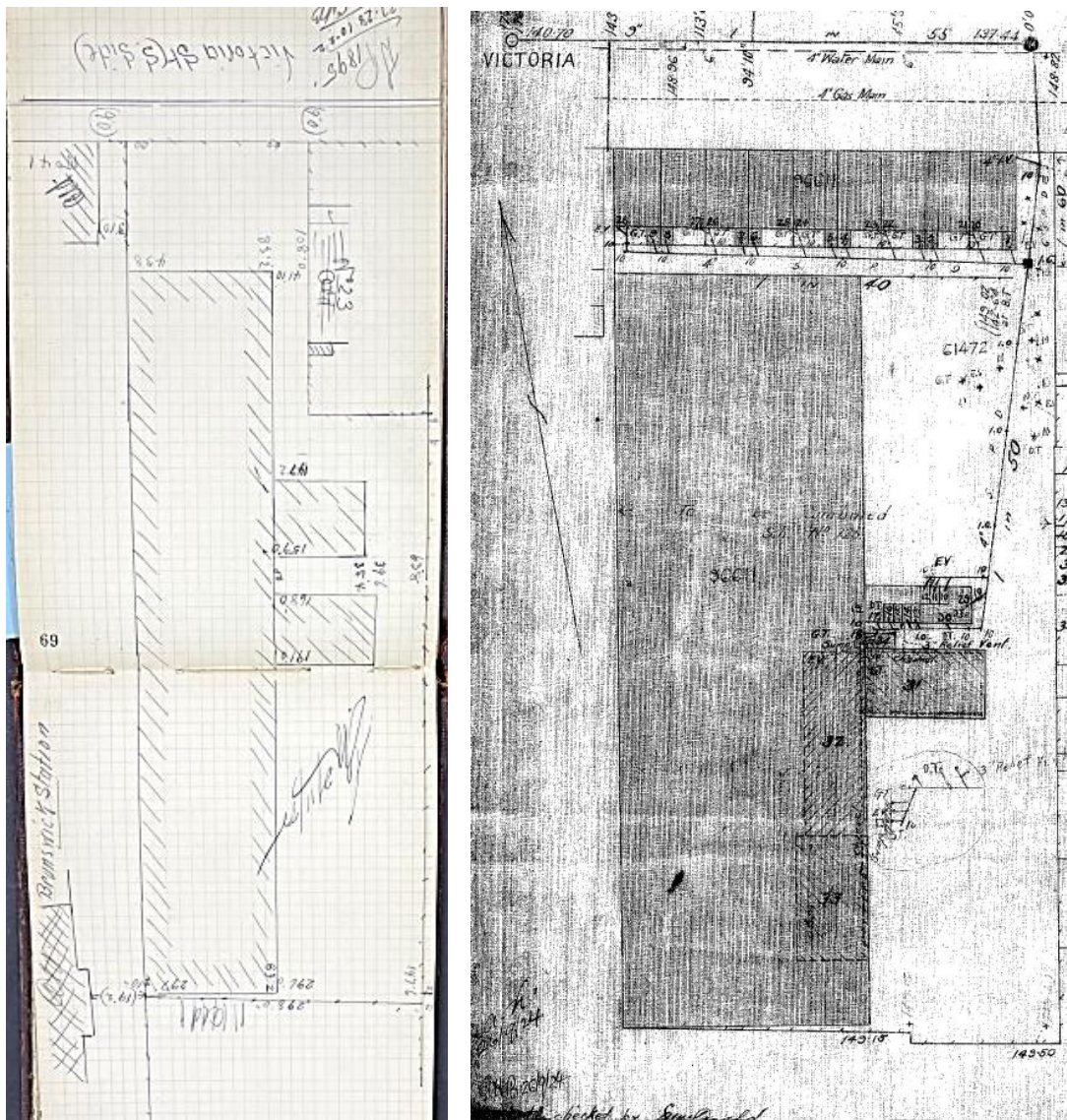


Figure 7 (Left) Plan of the site from 1922 showing a factory building on the western boundary of the site, with two building forms to the east; (Right) Property Service Plan of the site in 1924, showing the factory on the western extent of the site, with some additions to the east, and the cottages at the northern end of the site
 Source: MMBW Field Book 2173, Public Record Office Victoria and Yarra Valley Water



Figure 8 Aerial photograph from 1931 showing the factory, chimney and fire tunnel, with the cottages to Victoria Street visible to the north of the factory; the chimney is indicated by the red arrow

Source: Land Victoria Aerial Photography Collection, Landata, SERV

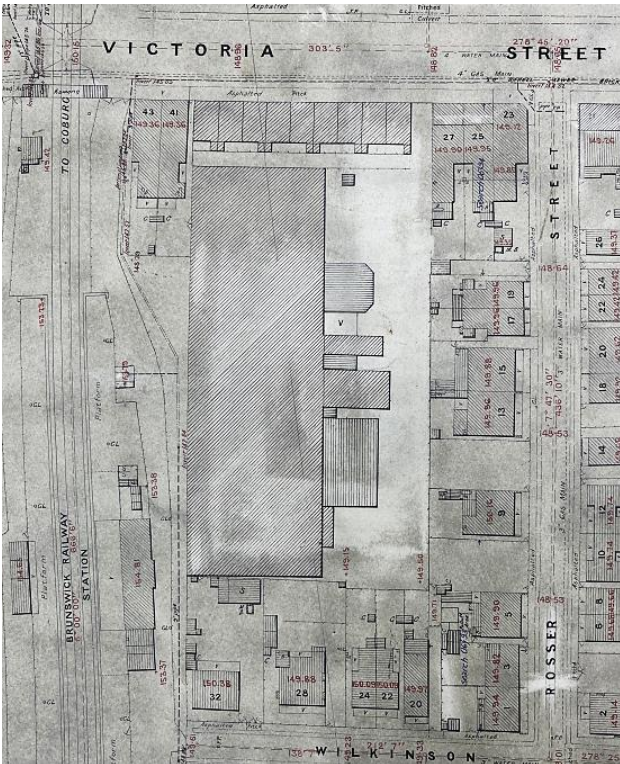


Figure 9 Plan from 1935 of the subject site showing more significant additions to the east of the factory

Source: MMBW Detail Plan No. 1895, Public Record Office of Victoria

LICORICE FACTORY CHIMNEY AND FIRE TUNNEL REMAINS

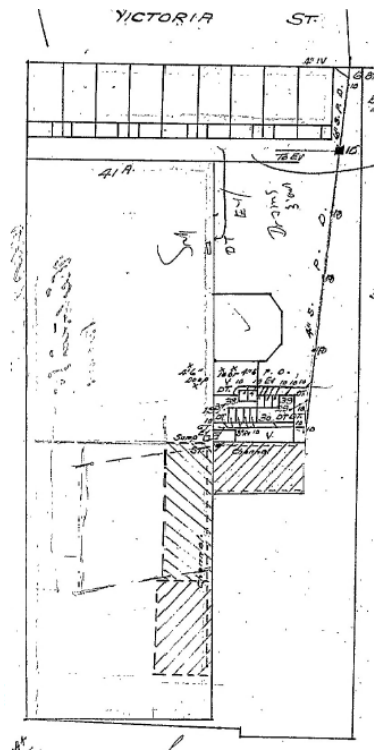


Figure 10 Property service plan from 1944, showing the factory on the western side of the site, with various additions extending to the east
Source: Yarra Valley Water

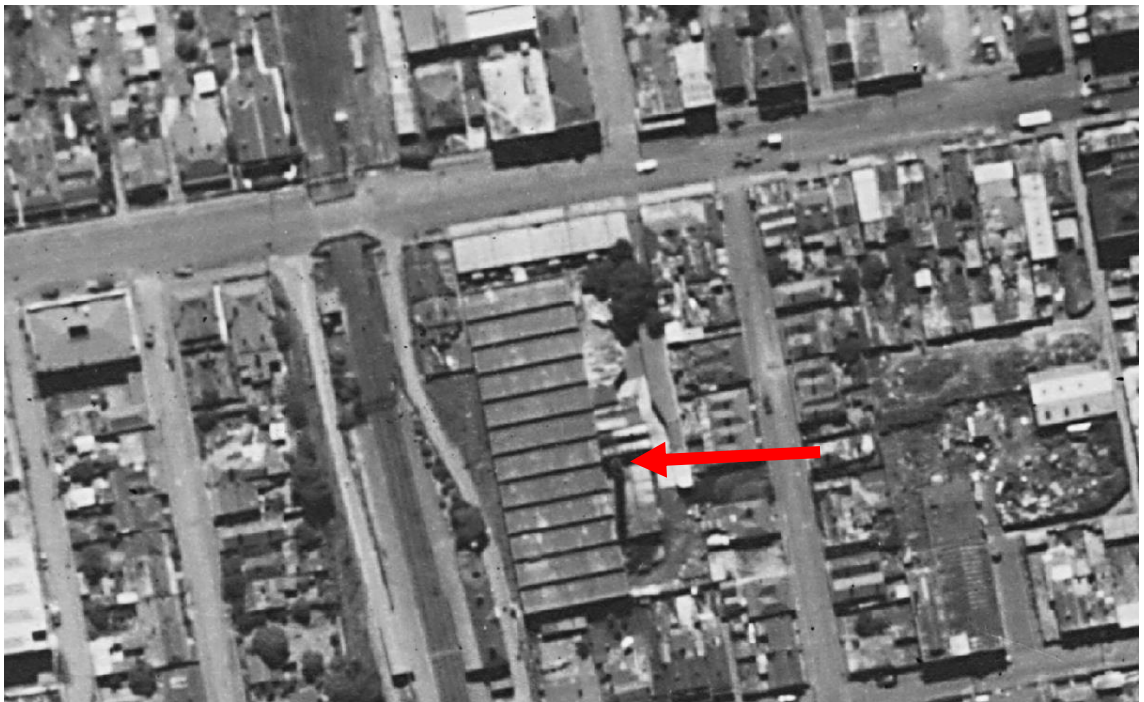


Figure 11 Aerial photograph from 1945 showing the factory with the chimney and fire tunnel (indicated by the red arrow) evident to the east of the main factory
Source: Land Victoria Aerial Photography Collection, Landata, SERV

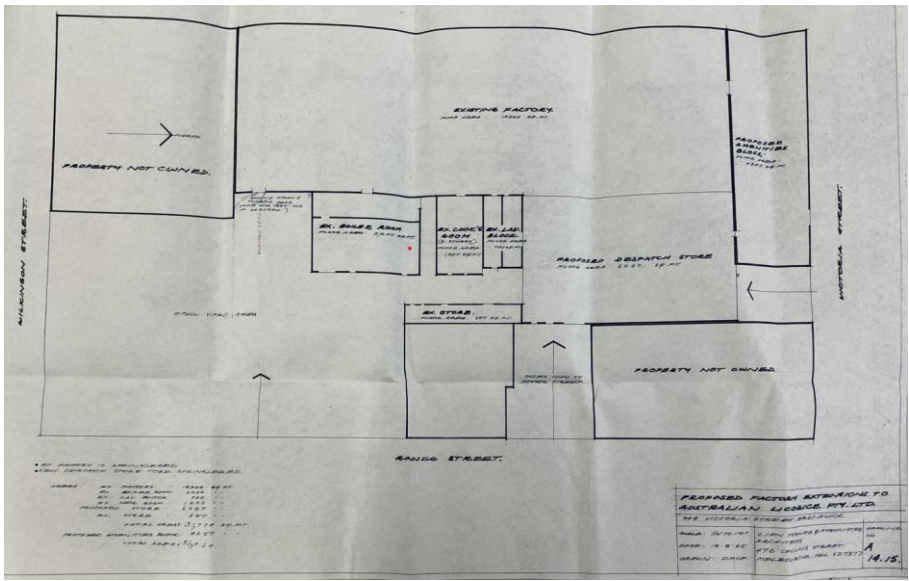


Figure 12 1965 plan of a proposed extension to Australian Licorice Factory Pty Ltd, noted as the erection of a despatch store, office and amenities block
 Source: C Ian Turner & Associates Architects, Public Record Office of Victoria

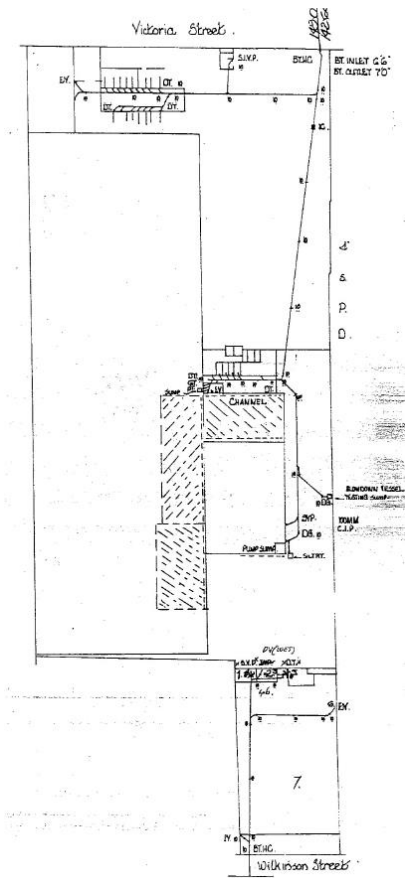


Figure 13 1979 property service plan (revised 1994), showing the greater extent of the additions to the east, and broader enclosure of the additions
 Source: Yarra Valley Water

LICORICE FACTORY CHIMNEY AND FIRE TUNNEL REMAINS



Figure 14 2009 aerial image of the site prior to the demolition of the surrounding buildings
Source: Nearmap, image date October 2009



Figure 15 Recent aerial photograph of the subject site with the location of the chimney and fire tunnel remains indicated by the red arrow
Source: Nearmap, March 2024

The VHR extent comprises the remnant chimney and fire tunnel remains, and a curtilage of land only. The chimney is 'constructed using standard Victorian red bricks in a stretcher bond pattern. Octagonal shape in plan, its sides are approximately 1200 mm long at the base tapering to about 700 mm sides at the top. The brickwork walls are restrained by steel straps... vertical steel straps run down each side of the octagon.'⁵ A recent scaffold has been erected surrounding the chimney as part of the approved works to the chimney crown and remains in place (Figure 16).

The fire tunnel remains extend to the east from the base of the chimney and comprise a red brick structure with various openings and a steel strap supported angled roof form (Figure 17). The removal of previously adjoining structures is evident in the fabric of the structure, and the brickwork in some areas is in poor condition. There are the remnants of a concrete structure to the west of chimney / fire tunnel and a blockwork wall to the north and east of the fire tunnel (visible at Figure 18).



Figure 16 View to the chimney and fire tunnel remains, showing the current context of the site

⁵ Rincovitch, inspection report for the Licorice Factory chimney, dated 6 May 2022 and submitted to satisfy condition 6 of permit P33440.



Figure 17 Interior of the fire tunnel remains
Source: Lovell Chen archives, 2015



Figure 18 View of the fire tunnel remains and chimney prior to the demolition of the surrounding factory buildings
Source: Lovell Chen archives, 2015

4.0 PROPOSAL

The proposed works comprise conservation works to the fire tunnel remains, and landscaping around the fire tunnel structure, within the land extent of the VHR registration. The existing fire tunnel remains and chimney will be retained in situ. It is noted that no works are proposed to the chimney itself, with the exception of actions to allow structural works approved under Permit P33440.

The conservation works to the fire tunnel, as detailed on the enclosed documentation prepared by Lovell Chen include:

- Demolition of concrete structure to the west of chimney / fire tunnel.
- Demolition of the blockwork wall to the north and east of the fire tunnel.
- Geotechnical investigation to be completed following demolition works to determine if any structural remediation works are required.
- Removal of debris and soil/fill to reveal original internal floor level of fire tunnel.
- Existing fire tunnel roof has decaying steel T sections between the walls which support the brick roof. The roof will be dismantled to allow replacement of the steel T sections. The roof will be reconstructed with new steel T sections and original bricks.
- New formed metal roof to the fire tunnel including gutter and downpipe to provide weather protection to the fire tunnel.
- Replacement of damaged or decayed brickwork with salvaged bricks.
- Repointing to brickwork in new lime mortar to match existing adjacent colour and finish.
- Render ledge to the base of the chimney to be removed to enable the structural works endorsed under P33440 with new render to match the existing shape and falls following installation of structural works.
- Preparation and painting of all metal work in the same paint system and colour approved under P33440.
- Installation of new security door and fixed panel to fire tunnel opening to prevent access by public and vermin. Height to be confirmed following removal of debris and soil to internal of fire tunnel. Steel frame fixed to wall of opening, fixings to be installed to mortar joints.

The proposed landscaping works adjacent to the fire tunnel remains are associated with the broader redevelopment of the subject site. These works comprise the introduction of two narrow garden beds to the east of the existing chimney along the northern and southern edges of the fire tunnel. The northernmost of the garden beds will curve around to the south, at the eastern end. The garden beds will comprise low ground covers with varied species and mixed density planting. Two timber benches constructed of recycled hardwood will be installed within the garden, to the outer side of the garden beds.

Paving within the extent of registration and more broadly within the site at 342-348 Victoria Street will comprise concrete paving with inset paths of recycled brick aggregate in an east-west orientation. The paving will be introduced with a fall from the chimney and fire tunnel remains to the surrounding garden beds and drainage pit (forming part of the broader development, outside the VHR extent of registration).

Within the landscaping, it is proposed to add uplighting to the fire tunnel by way of spike spot lights mounted in a concrete base set within the garden bed planting. The pipe will sit below the top of the garden bed to ensure it is concealed from view. The lights will have an aged brass finish. Cabling for the lights will be reticulated to the nearest dry/ground pit, and concealed beneath the soil level.

Linear LEDs will be surface mounted within the channel to the bottom of the timber bench seating with cables reticulated to the dry/ground pit.

5.0 REASONS FOR THE WORKS

As noted above, a planning permit (as amended) has been issued for the mixed-use redevelopment of the broader site, with a centrally located landscaped area surrounding the chimney and fire tunnel remains. The proposed works within the VHR extent of registration involve stabilisation and conservation works to the fire tunnel remains and the introduction of a small landscaped space to the east of the chimney, in the area surrounding the fire tunnel. The proposed works will form a focal point to the landscaped space at the centre of the redeveloped site.

With specific regard to the registered structure, the works are proposed to stabilise and repair the brickwork of the fire tunnel as required, and replace decaying sections of the steel supports. The existing condition of the structure presents as a safety hazard, and the works will stabilise and introduce security measures to prevent access to the structure, but allow for ongoing maintenance works. Alongside the repair works for the chimney approved and endorsed under the permit conditions for P33440, the proposal will improve the overall stability and presentation of the fire tunnel remains.

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACTS

6.1 Information to support an assessment against sections 101(2) of the *Heritage Act 2017*

Section 101 of the *Heritage Act 2017* sets out the considerations which must be made in determining permit applications. As relevant to the proposal, the primary considerations of the Executive Director in determining a permit under Division 2, Section 101(2) are:

- (a) The extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of the registered place or registered object:
- (b) The extent to which the application, if refused, would affect the reasonable or economic use of the registered place or object;

6.1.1 *The extent to which the cultural heritage significance of the place or object is affected by the proposal [s 101(2)(a)]*

The chimney and fire tunnel are identified as being of historic, social, architectural and scientific significance. These elements as remnants of the Australian Licorice Factory use of the site are to be retained and conserved within the broader redevelopment of the site (outside of the VHR extent of registration and not subject to approval under the *Heritage Act 2017*). The assessed significance of the place demonstrating manufacturing processes will be maintained and will continue to contribute to the understanding of stream driven factories and confectionary manufacture in Victoria. The chimney stack will also be retained (outside of the scope of this application) and will continue to be a fine example of the bricklayers art and a historical and social symbol of the former Australian Licorice Company.

The works as proposed to the fire tunnel remains include conservation works to improve the presentation and stability of the remnant structure. These works will ensure the fire tunnel remains within the site and associated with the chimney in a stable condition, enabling their retention and longevity within the redeveloped site. The works will also improve the overall presentation of the fire tunnel remains which will result in a positive heritage outcome. While the introduction of a new formed metal roof, including gutter and downpipe, will introduce new elements to the fire tunnel outside of the

stabilisation scope, these works will provide weather protection to improve the longevity of the structure. The whole of the stabilisation and conservation works package has been carefully designed to minimise and/or prevent any adverse impacts on the historical, architectural or scientific significance of the remaining fabric.

The surrounding area, outside of the extent of registration, will form part of a redevelopment scheme, with the land forming part of the VHR extent of registration landscaped but otherwise kept free of built form. This approach provides a generous curtilage around the retained heritage elements at the centre of the site, with only new low-scale landscaping and seating proposed within the extent of registration. The landscaping has been carefully designed to enable the fire tunnel to be retained in full (as existing) to form a focal point and significant feature of the landscape.

The landscaping and conservation works will result in an increased appreciation of the registered elements, with the landscaping enabling greater appreciation and connectivity to these elements. The low ground cover will provide a garden setting while ensuring the planting does not obscure views to the registered elements, including all existing openings, ensuring they will be maintained as a highlight in the landscape.

The materiality of the landscaping, including recycled face red brick, and brick aggregate in the concrete paving, directly reference the existing fabric, specifically the fire tunnel and chimney. While they will be readily identifiable as new materials within the landscape, there will be a visual connection provided to the registered fabric through the materiality. The works will not adversely impact the identified values of the place and will ensure the ongoing visibility and appreciation of the retained chimney and fire tunnel remains.

6.1.2 The impact on reasonable and economic use [s 101(2)(b)]

In considering reasonable use of the place, the proposed works relate to the conservation of an existing element and the introduction of new landscaping to support the continued, albeit changed, use of the place (noting that the former factory use of the site has been discontinued with most factory buildings demolished).

The intent of the proposed works is to improve the overall presentation and stability of the fire tunnel remains, and to create a landscape feature within the extent of registration as part of a broader redevelopment of the site (which is largely outside the VHR extent). The works will make an active contribution to the surrounding new development by providing an open space, while ensuring the existing heritage features are retained in situ in a safe and stabilised condition.

No submission is being provided in relation to economic considerations.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed works are focused around the retention and stabilisation of the significant fire tunnel remains (and associated chimney) located in the centre of the site. The incorporation of a landscaped treatment around the retained heritage fabric is a sensitive and low scale approach which will enhance the visibility and appreciation of the chimney and fire tunnel remains and will form the centrepiece to the broader redevelopment of the site. The works will result in an improved outcome for the registered heritage elements and will not impact the identified values of the place.