

Emerald Hill Estate (VHR H1136)

Clarendon, Park, Cecil, Dorcas, Marshall, Fishley, Layfield, Perrins and Bank Streets, South Melbourne

Permit Application P41777

Why is Emerald Hill Estate of cultural heritage significance?

Emerald Hill Estate is included in the Victorian Heritage Register under the provisions of the *Heritage Act 2017* for its historical, social and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. It is an extraordinary example of municipal planning dating to the 1880s, with a high degree of intactness unmatched anywhere else in Victoria.

What was the permit application for?

At pre-application stage, it was discovered that pools had been constructed within 230-236 Bank Street, South Melbourne without approval. Enforcement action under the *Heritage Act 2017* was considered and the owner was asked to stop works and submit a permit application.

On 15 January 2026, Heritage Victoria received a permit application for works associated with the adaptation of 230-236 Bank Street for use as a wellness centre including construction of internal pools, saunas, and associated amenities and services. The permit application was publicly advertised between 11 February 2026 and 24 February 2026.

The unapproved works complicated and extended the assessment process.

Why has the permit been issued?

Following a comprehensive assessment of the proposal against the relevant tests of the *Heritage Act 2017*, a permit with conditions was issued on 24 July 2026 for works associated with adaptation of 230-236 Bank Street for use as a wellness centre.

The proposed development has been approved for the following reasons:

- The scale of the internal fitout is commensurate with previous refurbishments and upgrades to adapt the building to a new use. The pools are located in an area which has already undergone substantial change.
- The physical impacts of new amenities and services will be minimised through conditions on the permit requiring changes to the internal design.
- The high reliance on continuous and active mechanical and management protocols will be managed through a comprehensive maintenance plan, secured with a covenant on title.
- The internal works are reversible and are required to be removed at the end of lease.

Can the applicant appeal the decision?

The applicant or the owner may make a request to the Heritage Council to review the Executive Director's determination to impose a condition on the permit. A request for a review must be made to the Heritage Council of Victoria within 60 days of the determination of the application. The Heritage Council is an independent statutory authority established under the *Heritage Act 2017*.