

WERRIBEE PARK

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

320 K Road, Werribee South



November 2023

Prepared for

PARKS VICTORIA

Prepared by

LOVELL CHEN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

This report was prepared on the lands of the Wurundjeri people who have been custodians of this land for thousands of years. 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 acknowledge that this report includes a post-contact history that forms only a small part of the ongoing story.

Werribee Park is located on the lands of the Bunurong people, who are, and have always been the custodians of this land. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present, and acknowledge the stories, traditions and cultures of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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
9147	1	Heritage Impact Statement	13/11/2023	SZ

Referencing

Historical sources and reference material used in the preparation of this report are acknowledged and referenced as endnotes or footnotes and/or in figure captions. Reasonable effort has been made to identify and acknowledge material from the relevant copyright owners.

Moral Rights

Lovell Chen Pty Ltd asserts its Moral right in this work, unless otherwise acknowledged, in accordance with the (Commonwealth) Copyright (Moral Rights) Amendment Act 2000. Lovell Chen's moral rights include the attribution of authorship, the right not to have the work falsely attributed and the right to integrity of authorship.

Limitation

Lovell Chen grants the client for this project (and the client's successors in title) an irrevocable royalty-free right to reproduce or use the material from this report, except where such use infringes the copyright and/or Moral rights of Lovell Chen or third parties. This report is subject to and issued in connection with the provisions of the agreement between Lovell Chen Pty Ltd and its Client. Lovell Chen Pty Ltd accepts no liability or responsibility for or in respect of any use of or reliance upon this report by any third party.

Cover image: Werribee Park Mansion, c. 1930

Source: Victor Cobb, State Library of Victoria Pictures Collection, accession no. H41864

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
2.0	HERITAGE CONTROLS AND LISTINGS	2
2.1	Victorian Heritage Register	2
2.2	Wyndham Planning Scheme	7
2.3	National Trust of Australia (Victoria)	8
3.0	DESCRIPTION	8
4.0	PROPOSED WORKS	10
5.0	ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACTS	13
5.1	Permit policy and permit exemptions	13
5.2	Conservation Analysis	14
5.3	Analysis of heritage impacts	14
	5.3.1 Arboricultural assessment	15
	5.3.2 Historical archaeology	16
6.0	CONCLUSION	16

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared on behalf of Parks Victoria to accompany a permit application to Heritage Victoria in relation to upgrades to the existing fire services at the mansion, located at 320 K Road, Werribee South, on Bunurong Country (Figure 1).

The mansion currently operates as a tourist destination, with a hotel and spa located in one wing of the mansion. The mansion is set within large grounds with some formal gardens.

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

- Plans prepared by OMNII Consulting fire engineers, variously dated 1 June 2023, revision T2, and 28 June 2023, revision T3, variously numbered and comprising 17 pages
- Fire Protection Services Specification, prepared by Omnii, dated 18 April 2023
- Architectural plans prepared by Lovell Chen, dated 19 October 2023, and numbered A00-A02 (inclusive)
- Archaeological Impact Statement prepared by Ecological Australia, dated 23 September 2023
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Contingency Plan, prepared by Parks Victoria, dated 26 July 2022 and updated 16 August 2023
- Arboricultural report prepared by Green Change Solutions, dated 5 June 2023 and associated plans dated 15 October 2023

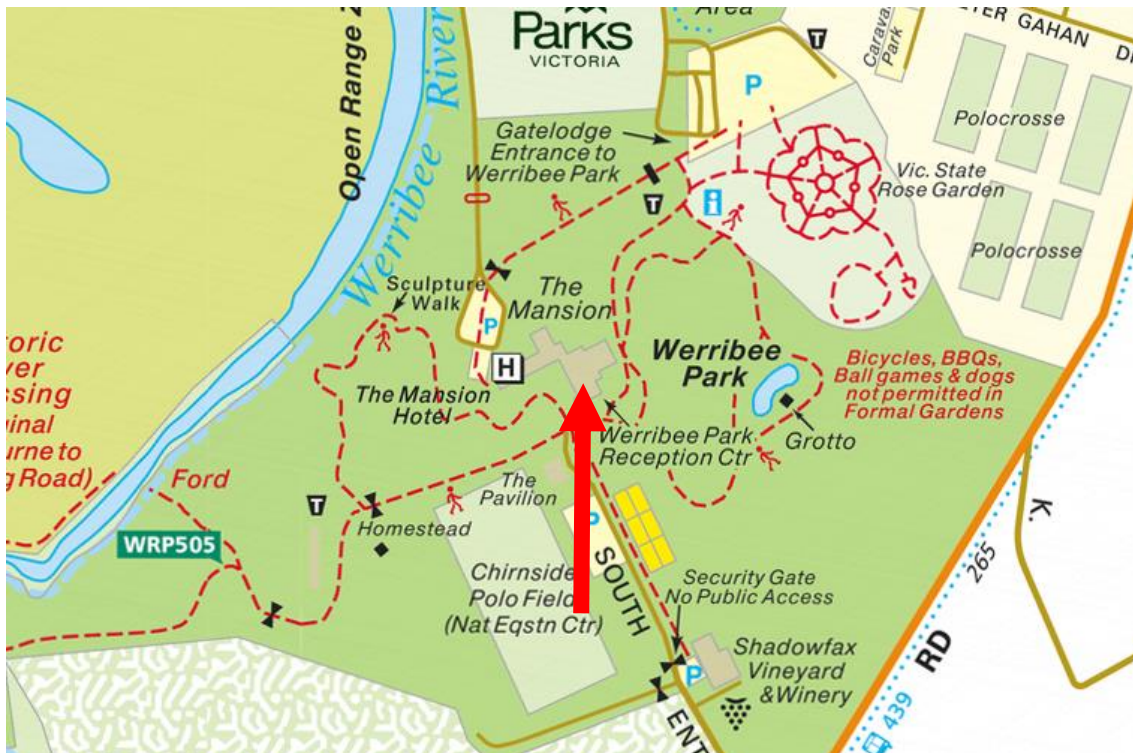


Figure 1 Plan showing the location of the location of the mansion (indicated by the red arrow)
Source: www.street-directory.com.au

2.0 HERITAGE CONTROLS AND LISTINGS

2.1 Victorian Heritage Register

Werribee Park is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) as place number H1613, and is identified as being of architectural, historical, scientific (horticultural), archaeological, and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria. The extent of registration is identified at Figure 2 and is described in the extent of registration as follows:

1. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 1613A held by the Executive Director being all of Crown Allotments 1, 2, 3A and 3B Section 5 Parish of Deutgam, all of Crown Allotment 5 and part of Crown Allotment 6 Section A Parish of Mambourin.
2. All of the buildings and features marked as follows on Diagrams 1613A, 1613B, 1613C and 1613D held by the Executive Director:

- B1 Woolshed
- B2 Shearers' house
- B3 Hastie's house
- B4 Werribee Mansion
- B5 Mansion laundry, covered cistern and drying yard
- B6 Mansion gate lodge
- B7 Chirnside homestead
- B8 Bellenger's house
- B9 Implement shed
- B10 Stables
- B11 Blacksmith's shop
- B12 Men's quarters
- B13 Ration store
- B14 Glasshouse (sunken)
- B15 Glasshouse
- F1 Sheep dip
- F2 Mansion gates
- F3 Victoria State Rose Garden
- F4 Parterre and fountain
- F5 Lake and grotto
- F6 Water tank
- F7 Chirnside homestead ha-ha wall
- F8 Former duck pond

F9 Covered cistern

F10 Ruins in the orchard

F11 Ford

F12 Burial site

The statement of significance for the place as included in the VHR documentation is reproduced below:

What is significant?

Werribee Park is set on approximately 1,000 acres of land 35 kilometres southwest of Melbourne. The area includes the Werribee Mansion (1873) with formal garden, grotto, mansion gates and gate lodge, freestanding laundry, the Chirside homestead (1865) with ha-ha wall, ration store (built by 1861), blacksmith shop, men's quarters, stables, implement shed, Bellenger's house, ford, woolshed, shearers' house, Hastie's house, sheep dip, and burial site.

Edward Wedge, brother of John Wedge (John Batman's surveyor), was the first to establish European settlement at Werribee Park (by 1836). In 1852 a devastating flood claimed the life of Edward, and his wife and daughter. In 1853, the remaining Wedge family members left the Port Phillip District, and the land was transferred to their neighbour, Scottish pastoralist Thomas Chirside.

Thomas Chirside arrived in Australia in 1839 to invest in sheep. By 1875, Thomas and his younger brother Andrew owned 250,000 acres of freehold land, and large areas of leasehold land, in Victoria. In addition to running the 93,000 acre Werribee Park sheep station, the Chirside family also hosted numerous sporting events, hunts, picnics, balls, vice-regal visits, and the first Volunteer Military Encampment in Victoria (1857).

The Chirside family built a complex of bluestone buildings in the 1850s and 1860s, the oldest being a bluestone four-room ration store, with each room only accessible externally, and a four-room bluestone house, known as Bellenger's house. Both are believed to have been built sometime in the late 1850s or early 1860s, based on the style and materials available at that time. A large bluestone woolshed (1861-2) saw 45,000 sheep produce 506 bales of wool in one year. Originally a one-room building, the simple four-room bluestone shearers' house, just east of the woolshed, and the basalt and brick sheep dip, just southeast of the woolshed, are likely to have been built in the early 1860s.

The bluestone Chirside homestead (1865), with associated ha-ha wall (1867), was built primarily as a permanent base for Thomas's nephew Robert, who managed the sheep station from 1859 until 1866 and was then a lessee until 1873. The garden surrounding the homestead features and impressive *Ficus macrophylla*, and framing the central view are two *Lagunaria patersonia*, near the ha-ha wall. The bluestone stables (built by 1868) housed prize winning stallions and the winners of the Melbourne, Caulfield and Geelong Cups. The men's quarters (1880s) is a large rectangular bluestone building with a bell turret. The large rectangular bluestone blacksmith's shop (post 1880) retains its original forge. The U-shaped brick implement shed (1890s) reflects the Chirside family's move away from pastoral activities to farming. The burial area, surrounded by a near-square bluestone wall, contains the graves of Patrick Logan Edgar, who died in 1858, and John L. Hamilton, who died in 1863.

Hastie's house (1890s), named after Adam Hastie who managed Werribee Park for George Chirnside, is a 10-room double fronted building located near the shearers' house. It is the last surviving substantial weatherboard building associated with the Chirnsides on the property, and one of the few known to be occupied by staff.

Thomas and his brother Andrew began construction of the mansion in 1873, primarily for Andrew and his family. The large basalt and sandstone mansion, built in a Renaissance Revival style, is a two storey central block, with dominant tower and an arcade surrounding three sides of the block. The fine interior with some original furniture features a richly decorated entry hall, containing a Minton encaustic tiled floor, niches, Corinthian pilasters and free standing columns, leading to a grand staircase and providing access to the main reception rooms. The library and dining room have heavy pedimented polished timber architraves, and tongue and groove Kauri pine floors with deep polished parquet borders.

A detached bluestone laundry, with its own cistern and drying yard, was built in the mid 1870s. The gates and gate lodge were built in 1877. It was reported that by completion of works, the mansion cost over £60,000.

The flat open plains contain scattered River Red Gums, Lightwood and She-oak, windbreaks of Monterey Cypress, Monterey Pine, Aleppo Pine and Sugar Gum trees and an orchard, enclosed by a post and rail fence with an English Hawthorn hedge.

The Chirnsides' active membership in the Acclimatization Society is reflected in the mansion's large formal garden (from 1877). Features within the garden include a man-made lake and grotto (1870s), large circular parterre (1882) and a rustic fountain, two glasshouses (1880 to 1890s - the sunken glasshouse was replaced by an identical structure in the 1970s), and an iron hurdle fence and Pittosporum hedge. The intact rock-work grotto is lined with decorative seashells, fragments of mirrored glass, pebbles, and sheep bones and teeth. The outside of the grotto is covered by a large *Aloe arborescens*.

The formal garden's meandering paths, shrubberies and trees were used to frame views, illustrating the influence of the 18th century English landscape movement. There is a dominance of conifers and evergreen trees, especially *Araucaria*, *Pinus*, *Cupressus*, *Ficus*, *Cedrus*, *Schinus*, *Lagunaria*, *Corymbia* and *Eucalyptus*. Deciduous *Ulmus*, *Quercus Phytolacca*, and the palms, *Phoenix canariensis*, *P. reclinata*, *Trachycarpus fortunei* have been planted to provide foliage contrast in the landscape.

The Park also contains a significant collection of cypress (*Cupressus* now *Hesperocyparis*), including the State's largest and finest *Cupressus torulosa*, rare and outstanding *Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Filipendula', 'Aurea Saligna', and 'Horizontalia Aurea', large and outstanding *Ficus macrophylla*, *Lagunaria patersonia*, *Phytolacca dioica*, *Elaeodendron croceum*, *Quercus bicolor*, *Ulmus minor* 'Variegata', and *Corymbia citriodora*. The garden includes Victoria's only known example of *Plagianthis betulinus*, and one of 6 plants of *Dovyalis caffra*.

Following the deaths of Thomas, in 1887, and Andrew, in 1890, the property was passed on to Andrew's sons, George and John Percy. The dissolution of the Chirnside estate began in 1893, when 8,847 acres were sold to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. A further 23,485 acres was acquired by the Victorian

Government in 1906 under the Closer Settlement Scheme, reducing Werribee Park to 2,270 acres.

The scaled down area of Werribee Park remained in the ownership of the Chirnside family until George Chirnside sold the land to grazier Phillip Lock in 1921. The following year, Lock sold the property to the Catholic Bishops of Victoria. The mansion was converted into a seminary, Corpus Christi College, for the training of priests. Major additions to the mansion at this time included the St Joseph's wing, a library and the refectory (1925-28), and the theatre wing (1936-37), altering the mansion's function from domestic to institutional. Imitative detail was used externally to unite the early and modern work.

The Catholic Church owned the property until it was acquired by the Victorian Government in 1973. Approximately 130 acres was reserved for the Werribee Park Golf Course, which opened in 1976. In 1977, the Victorian Government opened the mansion and gardens for public viewing. At that time a substantial part of the original furnishings supplied by Taylor & Sons, Queen Victoria's Edinburgh cabinetmaker remained in the house, together with a significant collection of nineteenth century decorative arts provenanced from elsewhere.

The northern section of Werribee Park was handed to the management of the Zoological Board of Victoria, who opened the Werribee Open Range Zoo in 1983. A further portion was designated for the development of the Werribee Park National Equestrian Centre, officially opened in 1984 as the state centre for equestrian activity. The Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works assumed management responsibility of the 1870s mansion in 1985. Another six acres of the Werribee Park property was developed as the Victorian State Rose Garden (1986), which contains over 5,000 locally and internationally bred roses. It was the first garden outside of Europe awarded the International Garden of Excellence by the World Federation of Rose Societies (2003).

In 1996, management of the mansion was transferred from the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works to Parks Victoria. In the late 1990s, the seminary wings were converted for hotel use and a hotel building was added between 1998 and 2000. The hotel opened in June 2000. A vineyard and winery, and polo pavilion were also added at this time.

Werribee Park is the traditional land of the Wurundjeri on the east side of the Werribee River and the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation (trading as Wadawurrung) on the west side of the river.

How is it significant?

Werribee Park is of architectural, historical, scientific (horticultural), archaeological, and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

Werribee Park is of architectural significance for the number of intact buildings and features constructed during the late 19th century, under the ownership of the Chirnside family. The mansion, with its fine interiors and some original furniture, is one of Australia's grandest and most finely designed English country houses. Since its construction in the 1870s, little has been altered internally and externally. The mansion demonstrates the finest application of renaissance detailing in Victoria. It

is also the largest and most intact example of the use of Barrabool Hills sandstone applied to a domestic building in Victoria. The Chirnside homestead and associated buildings are one of the most intact groups of homestead buildings in Victoria. Their relationship is visually discernable in design and date and historic use. The intact mansion laundry is architecturally significant as a rare example of a late 19th century freestanding purpose built laundry facility. The remarkably intact grotto (1870s), a traditional component of 17th century garden design, is the only known example of its type in Victoria if not Australia. The sunken glasshouse, although not the original, is one of only two known in Victoria.

Werribee Park is of historical significance for its association with the early establishment of permanent European settlement of the Port Phillip District, dating to 1836 by Edward Wedge. It is significant for its association with prominent Victorian pastoralists Thomas, Andrew and Robert Chirnside. In addition to using Werribee Park as a sheep station, it was also a centre for numerous and lavish social activities in the 19th and early 20th century.

Werribee Park is of historical significance for the mansion's conversion into the first major Catholic seminary for secular priests in Victoria, Corpus Christi College. The foundation of the College in 1923 was an important achievement by Daniel Mannix, Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, who established the seminary to train Australian-born students.

Werribee Park is of scientific (horticultural) significance for its rare and outstanding collection of trees, especially conifers comprising of *Pinus Araucaria*, *Cedrus* and cypress (*Cupressus* now *Hesperocyparis*). The garden includes Victoria's only known example of *Plagianthus betulinus*, and one of 6 plants of *Dovyalis caffra*.

Werribee Park is of archaeological significance for its demonstrated and potential archaeological values relating to the Wedge family occupation, and the occupation and pastoral activities of the Chirnside family. Archaeological surface deposits have been identified in the area of the 1865 homestead, ration store, men's quarters, stables and Bellenger's house, as well as the orchard remnants, ruins within the orchard, the ford and the burial site.

Werribee Park is of aesthetic significance for its extensive size and collection of planting, landscape styles and features. The formal garden contains a number of well established specimen trees, rows, avenues and groups of trees to create a landscape of outstanding quality and diversity. The garden has contrasting informal and formal areas with layers of 19th and 20th century planting and development. The colourful circular parterre is the best example of this design feature in Victoria.

Werribee Park mansion and formal garden are of aesthetic significance as one of the few places in the State to retain the characteristics of a 19th century English country house and landscape. The retention of the original layout, boundaries, early plantings and garden features are fundamental to the significance of the mansion. The landscape of the property including its relationship with the Werribee River and the formal presentation of the Mansion are also significant.

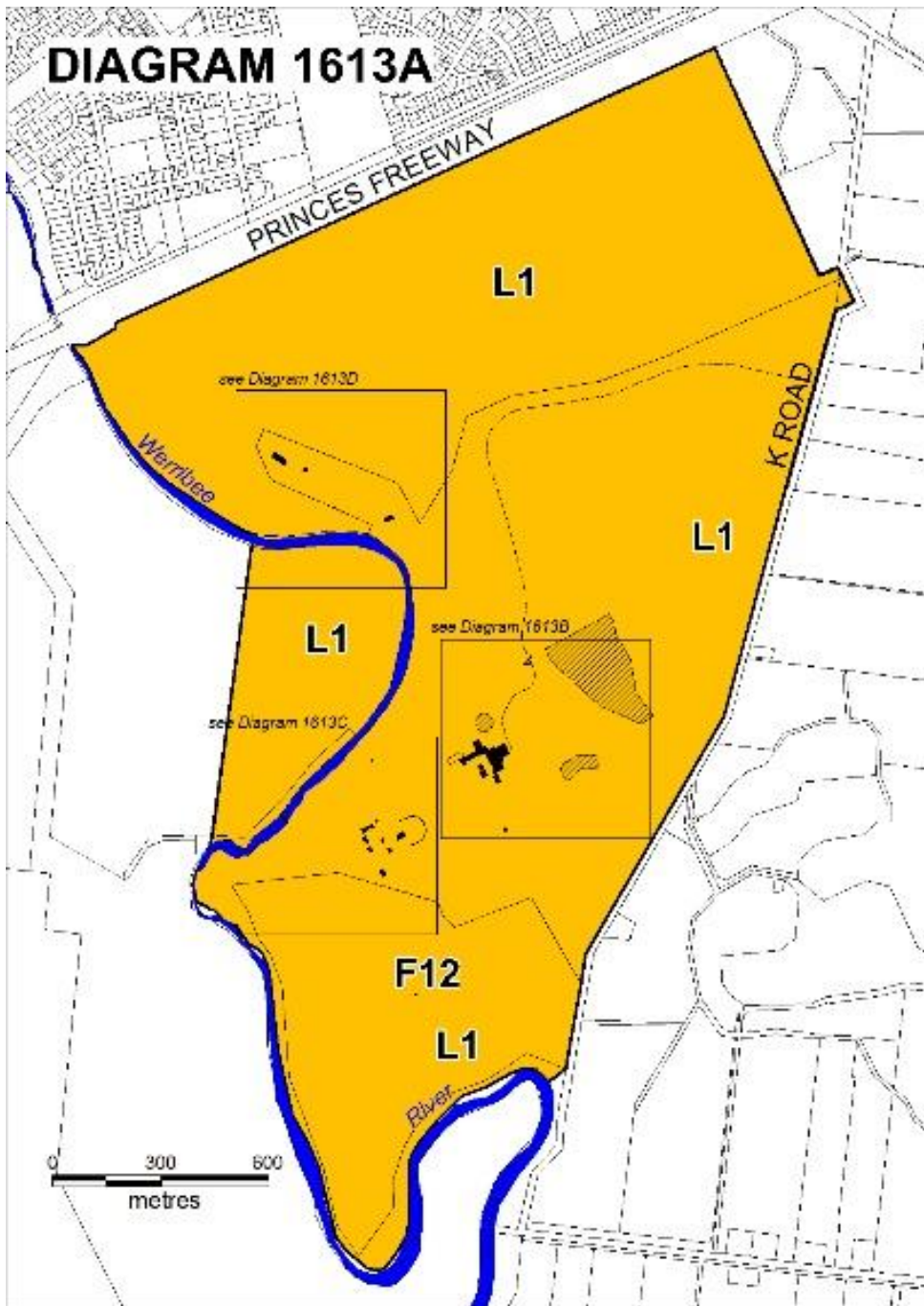


Figure 2 Werribee Park Plan A – Extent of Registration 2012
Source: Victorian Heritage Database

2.2 Wyndham Planning Scheme

Werribee Park is individually identified as HO64 the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay (HO) of the Wyndham Planning Scheme. The extent of the heritage overlay matches the VHR registered land extent.

The statement of significance for the place as included in the *City of Wyndham Heritage Study* (Context, 1997) is as follows:

Werribee Park is of national significance as the centre of the Chirnsides' pastoral empire, a vast and influential enterprise. The family played an important role in the development of rural enterprises in Werribee, including the Closer Settlement Scheme and Metropolitan Farm. The Corpus Christi College played a role in supporting the Italian migrants who were to become significant in Werribee's market gardening development. Its setting within a rural landscape substantially unaltered from the grazing lands of the early Chirnsides, and now distinctive within the largely irrigated Werribee farming landscape.

In accordance with Clause 43.01-3 of the Wyndham Planning Scheme, no permit is required under the HO to develop a heritage place which is included on the VHR. This is with the exception of applications to subdivide a heritage place included on the VHR, which require a permit under Clause 43.01-2.

2.3 National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

Werribee Park is classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) as a place of State significance (B1475). The statement of significance for Werribee Park as prepared by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is as follows:

One of Australia's grandest and most architecturally sophisticated mansions, notable especially for fine freestone exterior; its largely surviving and partly restored interiors and furnishings; its extensive garden, lake and grotto; its gatehouse and the partially surviving avenue of trees along the line of the driveway to the town of Werribee; the surviving former homestead, ha-ha, and outbuildings; the woolshed and other more distant structures; the old ford and the general relationship of the river to the property and the successive homestead sites.

The mansion, built in 1874-7, is an unusually symmetrical pyramidal composition in a Roman Renaissance Revival style with some scholarly Palladian details and exquisite ornamental carving, and is the only major freestone house in Victoria. The architect is claimed to have been London-born James Henry Fox, quantity and measuring surveyor to the Victorian Government and architect also of 'Chatsworth House' in Hopkins Hill. Deleterious additions made in the twentieth century, particularly the large wing to the west, are excluded from the Classification. The open setting of the property is of significance and the views from the old homestead to the south-east and south-west are critical to it.

The mansion was built for brothers, Andrew and Thomas Chirnside - Scottish-born pastoralists and as such is a unique example of the material existence of the very wealthy in 19th century Victoria. The Chirnside family have significance in the Victoria for their many pastoral ventures. The grounds are also of historical significance, having been laid out by W.R. Guilfoyle, Curator of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens.

There are no statutory implications as a result of this listing.

3.0 DESCRIPTION

The proposed works are located within the landscape surrounding the mansion including the south drive, and some alterations to the interior of the mansion to enable the upgrades of the existing fire services (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

The mansion is constructed of basalt and sandstone and comprises a main central block adjoined on its west façade by two wings enclosing a large rectangular courtyard. The mansion is two and three-storeys in height with a tower placed centrally on the east façade of the main part of the mansion (main mansion). A later wing extends to the south-west of the mansion, with other additions on the south-eastern side. A contemporary three-storey building is located to the north of the later addition (St Josephs Wing). Internally, the rooms within the mansion and St Josephs Wing are relatively intact, with minor alterations to support contemporary services including sprinklers, smoke detectors and the like.

The mansion is located within a landscaped garden setting, with gravel pathways surrounding the mansion and areas of open lawn to the north, east and south of the building. A driveway approaches from the south-east of the site to the rear of the mansion, where open lawn areas are located, referred to as the South Drive (commencing at Shadowfax Winery) which is located off K Road (Figure 3). Along South Drive, the landscaping comprises some mature and juvenile trees with low-lying shrubs and grass beneath. Services and various other back-of-house items are located along this drive including a small car park, and remnant water tanks.



Figure 3 Recent satellite image of the mansion and South Drive (north is to the top of the image)
Source: Nearmap, September 2023

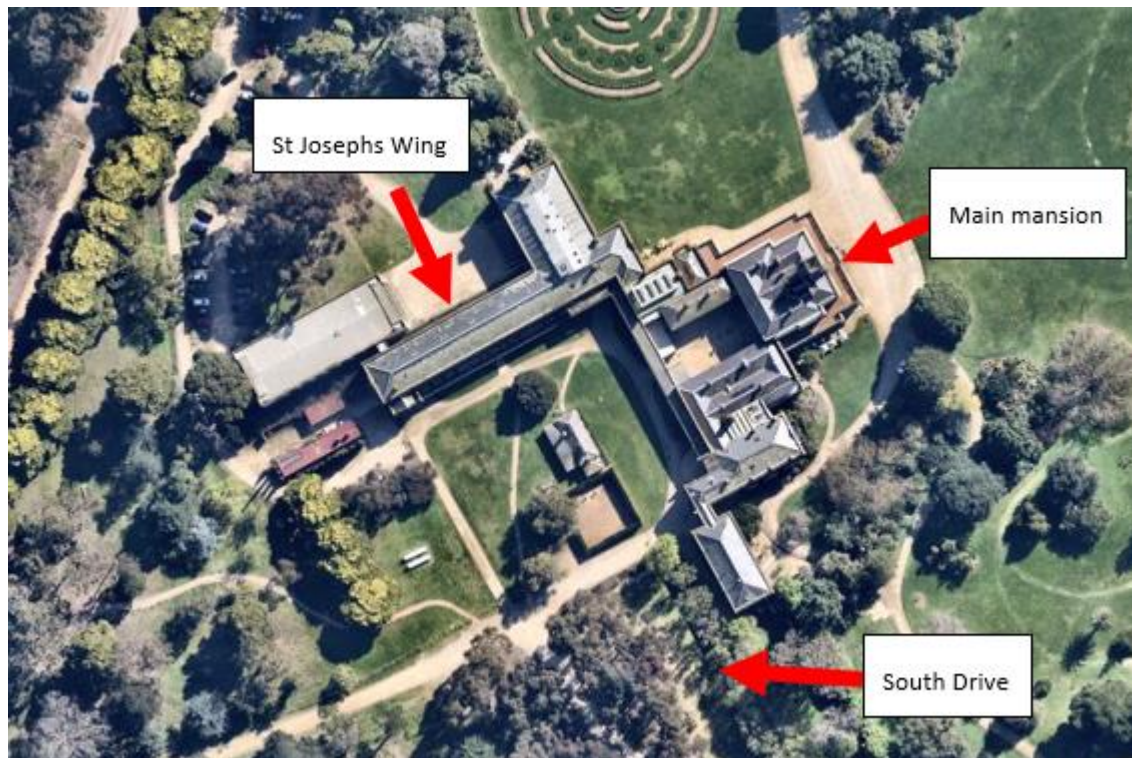


Figure 4 Recent satellite image of the mansion and St Josephs Wing (north is to the top of the image)

Source: Nearmap, September 2023

4.0 PROPOSED WORKS

The proposed works comprise the upgrading of the existing fire services including the fire sprinkler system, fire hydrant system and fire hose reel system.

Currently the existing water supply system utilises mains water which does not provide sufficient pressure to facilitate the required fire suppression activities. As such, a second pipeline is required to achieve adequate pressure and a sufficient water supply to the mansion in the event of a fire. Additionally, the current fire suppression system including fire hose reels, hydrants and sprinklers is not sufficient to cover all areas of the mansion and requires updating to meet current standards.

Two new 144,000 litre fire tanks and hydrant pump with enclosure, and fire brigade booster and suction assembly will be installed adjacent to South Drive, in proximity to Gate Five in a largely open area. Installation works require limited removal of and impact on adjacent trees (Figure 7). All new pipework will be connected to these pumps and tanks.

A new inground pipe will be laid, providing a ring around and under the mansion to provide water to the new hydrants (Figure 5). The new pipeline will be laid in a trench, to a depth in the order of 450mm to a maximum depth of 650mm and in the order of 475mm wide enabling the installation of a 125mm wide pipe. The pipe will extend along the existing driveway (South Drive) from K Road passing underneath the mansion in the sub-floor space of the St Josephs Wing (Figure 6). The inground pipe will continue around the north and east of the mansion connecting to the new hydrants and extending to the south, reconnecting with the pipe and fire pumps along South Drive to form a closed loop. The pipe will be laid in trenches, to be backfilled and made good, and will be located beneath existing pathways wherever

possible. Boring will also be utilised where required to ensure there is limited disturbance of the existing ground and tree roots. Adjacent to the inground pipe, running along South Drive will be a fire sprinkler line and dry fire conduit. These services will extend to the mansion only, also entering the sub-floor area of St Josephs Wing.

Externally, the existing spring fire hydrants connected to the water mains will be disconnected and removed. New inground spring fire hydrants will be installed in identified locations around the mansion, at least 10 metres from the building. Adjacent to the new hydrants blue raised road reflective markers will be installed to indicate the location of a hydrant, while new fire hydrant marker posts will be installed in proximity to the new hydrants, located within existing garden beds and lawn areas.

Internally, works including the introduction of new fire hose reels and hydrants, in discreet locations within the hotel and mansion (specifically St Josephs Wing and the south wing of the mansion). The services will utilise the existing risers, pipework and penetrations where required with new openings made in specified locations. Where new penetrations are required, the existing plasterwork will be repaired and repainted to match the existing colour. Similarly, where new fire hose reels are required to replace an existing, the wall will be made good, with a new cupboard constructed to house the new reels. The new pipework associated with the new hydrants will run through the roof cavity of the mansion wings. Existing sprinklers will also be updated with new where required.

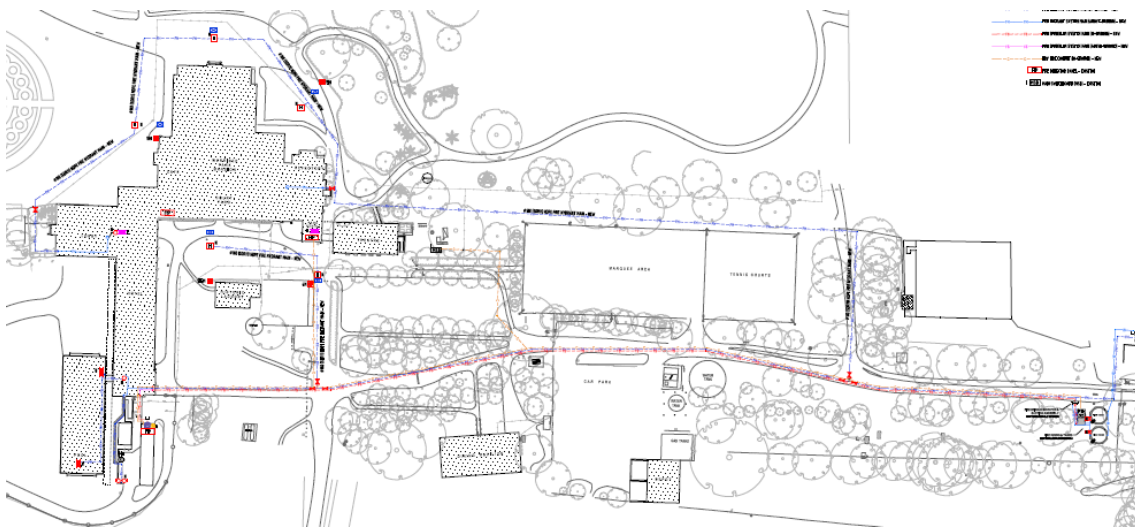


Figure 5 Plan showing the location of the new pipeline (blue line), refer to drawing F-SP-00, Revision T2
Source: Omnii Fire Consultants



Figure 6 View of existing access to the sub-floor area of St Josephs Wing



Figure 7 Approximate location of the proposed new tanks and pump

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACTS

5.1 Permit policy and permit exemptions

The VHR documentation includes a permit policy and suite of standing permit exemptions, in addition to the general standing exemptions.

The permit policy as included in the VHR documentation is as follows:

The addition of new buildings and structures to the site may impact upon the cultural heritage significance of the place and requires a permit. The purpose of this requirement is not to prevent any further development on this site, but to enable control of possible adverse impacts on heritage significance during that process. All of the buildings and features identified in the extent of registration are integral to the significance of the place and any alterations are subject to permit application.

The importance of the Werribee Park lies primarily in its layers of development and planting which combine to create a cultural landscape of considerable individuality and diversity. The Grotto and lake, the Ha Ha Wall, iron hurdle fencing and the half sunken glasshouse are all of outstanding significance.

The standing permit exemptions, as relevant to the proposed works are reproduced below:

Exterior

The following permit exemptions apply to the exterior of buildings B1-13 as identified in the Extent of Registration:

- Repainting all previously painted surfaces in the same colour scheme and paint type.

Landscape

- Subsurface works involving the installation, removal or replacement of watering and drainage systems or services, outside the canopy edge of significant trees in accordance with AS4970 and on the condition that works do not impact on archaeological features or deposits.

Buildings not identified in the Extent of Registration

- Below is a list of buildings, features and areas that are exempt from obtaining permits for alteration to the existing fabric only:
 - hotel building and service areas, e.g. laundry, steam room (constructed 1998-2000)
 - Shadowfax Winery buildings

The works are not covered by any of Heritage Victoria's general exemptions.

Comment

As noted above, some of the works, including the repainting of the plasterwork, where existing fire hose reels and sprinklers are removed is considered to be exempt under the standing exemptions. While the standing exemptions facilitate the installation of services, on the basis that the pipeline will be in proximity to the canopy edge of significant trees, and has the potential to impact upon archaeological deposits (albeit unknown) a permit application has been pursued.

5.2 Conservation Analysis

The *Werribee Park Metropolitan Park Conservation Analysis* was prepared by Allom Lovell Sanderson Pty Ltd in 1985 and provides a detailed history of the site and some limited guidance for change at the place.

The *Conservation Analysis* provides guidance with regard to specific conservation approaches and change to buildings. The general approach of works to the property as a whole is that:

The physical fabric of the Estate as a whole, although altered, is dominated by structures that were constructed during Chirnside ownership...individually they reflect the changing directions in pastoral and farming techniques...outstanding amongst all is the mansion...Structures and landscape features identified as being significant should be conserved as individually recommended, emphasising the historic phase to which significance relates...

The *Conservation Analysis* notes that landscape surrounding the built up area of Werribee Park is significant for displaying changes in the plant material and structures associated with the evolution of a major pastoral property, and contains the remains of orchards, plantations, fencing, roadways and recreational areas. The *Conservation Analysis* notes that the ha-ha wall and mansion garden are of significance.

5.3 Analysis of heritage impacts

The installation of new pipework is required to support the fire services at Werribee Park. Currently, in the event of a fire, the fire brigade are required to use the mains water which does not provide sufficient pressure and inadequately covers the mansion and does not meet current standards. As such, the upgrades and installation of additional facilities is required to provide adequate protection and fire suppression systems to the mansion, which in turn, will aid in the protection and conservation of the existing fabric of the place.

The works have had consideration for the existing presentation of the place, including the trees and significant fabric. Careful review of the existing landscaping and heritage fabric was taken into account to ensure the proposed works have a limited impact on the significance and fabric of the place. This included the use of existing subfloor hatches to enable the pipeline to extend through the subfloor area without impacting on the external fabric of the St Josephs wing. The pipe will pass beneath the building in the subfloor area, departing in the wing on the northern side. This approach also removes the requirement to excavate in close proximity to the mansion reducing the likelihood of encountering archaeological deposits.

Similarly, the decision to locate the new pipework beneath existing footpaths and vehicle driveways was considered to be a better outcome as these areas, with the gravel surfaces, have already undergone some change to implement the paths. This approach also ensures the pipelines are more easily accessible without impact to the fabric or garden, in the event future access is required. It is noted that three options for the location of the pipeline have been included for the area around the theatre. This is due to unknown ground conditions in this area which include a number of services, tree roots and existing garden. While the preferred option is Option B on the plans, the alternatives have been provided to enable the contractor to undertake investigations and select the option which will result in the least impactful outcome. Other alterations to the original plan included locating the infrastructure away from the tree protection zones and structural root zones as far as possible to limit the impact of the works on established trees, and in particular, trees of significance.

The installation of hydrants in proximity to the mansion is required to ensure the fabric of the place is adequately covered. The proposed hydrants are the minimum number required to provide sufficient coverage to the mansion. They have been located at points which provide the required access to the various areas of the mansion while also providing the minimum number of hydrants to reduce the overall impact on the place.

The use of in-ground spring hydrants in front of the key views of the mansion reduces the visual impact arising from their presence. While above-ground hydrants were avoided in front of the mansion, associated markers are required to ensure the hydrants can be easily located by emergency responders could not be avoided. As such, discreet locations in proximity to the hydrants was selected, generally in garden beds or lawn areas to mitigate the visual intrusion as far as possible. This distance from the hydrants therefore requires the installation of small in-ground blue markers. The location of the hydrants more than 10m from the mansion will assist in reducing the impact, however there will be some minor visual intrusion as a result of the blue markers in the ground. As these are low-lying features, general views and vistas of the mansion from within the ground will be maintained.

The location of the fire tanks, pumps and associated infrastructure in proximity to gate five, adjacent to South Drive was selected as it is a back of house area, and in proximity to other services. This was considered to be a discreet location that would have no visual impact on the mansion and would not impact on any identified features or elements of significance. While the new tanks, pump and associated infrastructure will require the removal of a non-significant tree and will be visually intrusive along this entry, the location was considered to be the most appropriate for the infrastructure required to support the upgrade fire services, and one which would not impact the identified significance of Werribee Park.

The internal works comprising the introduction of fire hose reels in cupboards, updated internal hydrants and sprinklers within the mansion will address the current insufficiencies of the fire services. The installation of these elements will replace existing, either in the same or adjacent location reducing the need to create further penetrations in the existing fabric. Where fabric is impacted, it will be made good following the works to ensure there are no visual impacts as a result of the changes, and no adverse impact on the identified significance of the place.

It is noted that a reasonable or economic use case has not been put forward for this application.

5.3.1 *Arboricultural assessment*

The *Werribee Park Tree Management Guidelines* were prepared in 2012 for Parks Victoria. This document outlines guidelines for the management of veteran and significant trees within the landscape of the park, to protect the natural features including conservation, removal and risk management. The document identified a number of protection measures for works occurring within TPZs.

To accompany the application, a tree assessment and management report, prepared by Green Change Solutions to identify the potential impact of the proposed works on the trees and gardens within Werribee Park. The report noted that the Tree Protection Zones (TPZs) and Structural Root Zones (SRZs) will be encroached upon by the works but noted that alterations to the pathway of the pipework had been undertaken to minimise the impact. Further mitigation measures include reducing encroachment into the TPZs and SRZs, inclusion of tree protection, use of alternative excavation methods including boring and ground protection. These measures were considered to be appropriate to manage the retention and protection of all trees, including significant trees within the area of the works. The management plan identified TPZs and approach of the proposed protection mechanisms identified in

the tree assessment are compliant with the protection measures identified in the *Werribee Park Tree Management Guidelines*.

5.3.2 Historical archaeology

The statement of significance for the place as included in the VHR documentation for the place, notes the following in relation to archaeological value:

Werribee Park has been identified as being of archaeological significance for its demonstrated and potential archaeological values relating to the Wedge family occupation and pastoral activities of the Chirnside family. Archaeological surface deposits have been identified in the area of the 1865 homestead, ration store, men's quarters, stables and Bellenger's house, as well as the orchard remnants, ruins within the orchard, the ford and the burial site.¹

An archaeological impact statement (AIS) was prepared by Eco Logical to assess the potential for the proposed works to impact archaeological deposits and identify protocols for the management of discoveries. As noted in the AIS, the proposed works are occurring in areas around the mansion which have been impacted through the numerous stages of development at the site, including changes to the grounds surrounding the mansion including re-landscaping in the early 1900s.

While the proposed works are generally located at some distance from the areas where surface deposits have previously been located, the AIS notes that there is some likelihood of encountering small archaeological deposits associated with the occupation of the site from the 1870s onwards in proximity to the mansion. In order to address the likelihood of uncovering artefacts during sub-surface works, a management plan outlining the unexpected finds protocol and measures to manage uncovered finds including identification of significance has been prepared. This management protocol will ensure that any archaeological remains which relate to the previous occupation of the site are appropriately managed and recorded.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The works will support the continued use of Werribee Park as a hotel, tourist attraction and venue, with the installation of fire services which address the requirements of the site and meet current standards. The locations of the new infrastructure has been carefully considered to reach an outcome which has the least possible visual impact on the heritage place, while also mitigating impacts on the existing fabric.

The use of in-ground hydrants and discreet markers has been utilised to limit the visual impact of these additions to the heritage place. The hydrants will provide the required water and access points in the event of an emergency while remaining a discreet introduction in the key views and vistas of the mansion.

While having some visual impact, including subsurface works which may impact existing archaeological deposits and resulting in the minor loss of existing trees, mitigation measures have been implemented as far as possible to support the works which are required to support the ongoing use of the place.

¹ Victorian Heritage Database, *Werribee Park*, available at: <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/1207>

In considering the identified values of Werribee Park, the works will not have an adverse impact on the architectural, historical, scientific (horticultural), or aesthetic significance of the place and will assist in ensuring its long-term protection and conservation.