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HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT – Permit Application P42859

Place:	Amenities – Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve VHR no. H1517 & HO84
For:	The Borough of Queenscliffe
Date:	17 March 2025 – Updated 17 August and 30 October 2026

Introduction

On behalf of the Borough of Queenscliffe, this Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) addresses the proposed demolition and replacement of the public toilet block at the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve as well as associated pathway, with undergrounding the electrical supply to the Boar Riders Club. The previously included fencing, signage and wayfinding upgrade has now been deleted from the permit application and will be addressed separately when detail is available. It is understood that the Gowayn entry sign has been issued with a permit. The new toilet block is to be powered with solar panels and so no electrical connection is required to mains power.

The HIS is provided in support of a permit application addressing the works as shown in the following documentation:

1. QS240905_Point Lonsdale Amenities_ARCH_IFA
2. QS240905_Point Lonsdale Amenities_FFE_IFA
3. 2324A PLL Indicative DDA path plan to toilets (2025.08.19)
4. 12063-2025_08_11-Point Lonsdale Electrical - CD – 01

Now added to the set are:

5. Archaeological Assessment
6. Engineering to the Amenities
7. Pt Lonsdale Lighthouse - updated ramp details

The proposed upgrade of electrical works involve undergrounding powerlines to remove overhead lines from the poles to the Pier and to the Board Riders Club building with introduction of pits and new

metres. These works are considered uncontentious for the heritage perspective and will reduce the intrusive modern elements.

Toilet Block

The existing toilet block was constructed in the later 20th century and is an unremarkable and utilitarian block form with mudstone facing to a random pattern. The stone has the appearance of slate from Castlemaine. The amenities block has come to the end of its serviceable life and new amenities meeting contemporary expectations are required. The relatively unobtrusive and unassuming building whilst readily identifiable as a toilet block is located opposite the P1 sheds, beside the access road to the lighthouse car park and makes no contribution to the heritage significance of the Lighthouse Precinct. The non-contributory status of the toilet block is clearly stated in the Borough of Queenscliffe Citation for the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve, HO84. There is no record of toilet block under What is Significant?, in photographs, or in the Extent of Registration in the Heritage Victoria Citation for the Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defense Precinct, VHR No. 1517. As the existing toilet block is not counted as one of the "array of buildings and other features which demonstrate maritime navigation and rescue techniques and technologies from various eras" the toilet block has not heritage value in the State or Local context and no harm to cultural heritage significance would be caused by demolition of the building.



Figure 1 Existing public toilet block, Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve (Google)

As the proposed replacement amenities building would be installed within the foot print of the existing toilet block upon a new 100mm thick concrete slab with appropriate perimeter beams, also to be wholly within the footprint of the area disturbed by the, to be demolished, existing slab, the proposed replacement will have no adverse impact on heritage significance. The materials and colours for the replacement amenities building are to match those on the POW sheds opposite the existing stone faced toilet block.

The General Exemptions for heritage places, as set out in August 2024, allows for internal elements that have been previously refurbished, or modernized and for upgrade of service that are not early or original and non-contributory to heritage significance. Whilst the proposed replacement of the amenities is external, rather than an internal change to the place, there will be similarly no change or impact upon any element having heritage significance. Given the evident absence of risk of impact upon heritage significance the granting of a permit exemption may be appropriate, under section .92 of the Heritage Act, for the work to replace the existing amenities with new to meet contemporary standards.

Heritage Significance

The site is currently listed on the Victorian Heritage Register maintained by the Victorian Heritage Council, and is designated entry H1517. The Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Precinct is included in the Queenscliffe Planning Scheme at the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay, Clause 43.01 as HO84. The mapped area of the Heritage Overlay matches the area of the Heritage Victoria Registration of the Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defense Precinct, a shown on Diagram 1517.



Figure 2 Queenscliffe Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay Map of the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Precinct

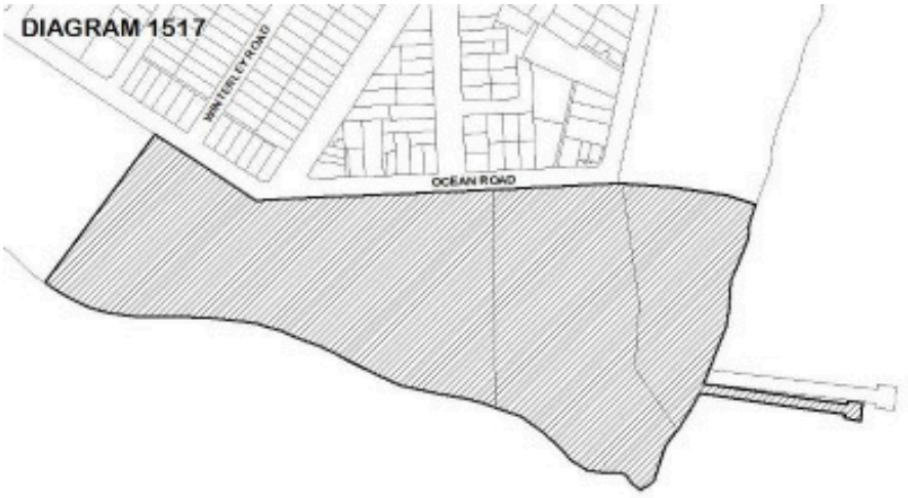


Figure 3 Victorian Heritage Registration Diagram 1517 of the Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct



Figure 4 Location of the public toilet block at the Point Lonsdale Lighthouse Reserve (Google)

The statement of significance from the Heritage Victoria citation for the Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defense Precinct is retrieved from the Victorian Heritage Database, last updated in 2009. This earlier Statement of Significance is included for demonstration of the change in understanding and heritage practice from 2009 to 2022, particularly in responding to evolving convention of format and content of a statement of significance.

The 2022 statement of significance is as follows:

What is significant?

The Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct including all buildings, structures, objects, ruins and archaeological features and deposits related to the location's strategic role in both defence and maritime navigation and rescue. Buckley's Cave is also significant for its association with William Buckley.

How is it significant?

The Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct is of archaeological and historical significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion C

Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history. Criterion D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

Why is it significant?

The Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct is significant at the State level for the following reasons: Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct is historically significant for the strategic role it has played in maritime navigation and rescue since the 1850s. The establishment of maritime navigational aids at Point Lonsdale was key in assisting the safe passage of vessels from Bass Strait into Port Phillip Bay. Safe passage through this stretch of water was important in the development of Melbourne as a major port. The Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct is also historically significant its role in maritime rescue and its connections to the numerous shipwrecks that have occurred off its coast. [Criterion A]

The Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct is also significant for its associations with the military in both World War I and World War II. Its strategic location at the entry to Port Phillip Bay made it key in the defence of Victoria from potential seaborne attack. It is was one of a network of strategic defence locations around Port Phillip Bay, that also includes Point Nepean and Shortlands Bluff. [Criterion A]

Buckley's Cave is significant as it is widely believed that William Buckley sheltered here. Buckley was an absconder from the 1803 camp at Sullivan Cove near Sorrento. He is a key figure in early contact between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people around Port Phillip Bay. [Criterion A]

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Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct is archaeologically significant for its potential to contain archaeological remains, features and deposits relating to the location's maritime and defence history. Valuable information is likely to be yielded about the place's maritime functions throughout various eras of its operation. Information is also likely to be yielded about the lives of personnel stationed at Point Lonsdale during World War I and II. [Criterion C]

The Point Lonsdale Maritime and Defence Precinct is significant as both a notable maritime precinct and a notable defence precinct. Located strategically at the dangerous entry point to Port Phillip Bay, it contains an array of buildings and other features which demonstrate maritime navigation and rescue techniques and technologies from various eras. The Lighthouse is notable for its early use of reinforced concrete. The precinct also contains examples of a range of elements associated with the defence of Port Phillip Bay during World War I and World War II. [Criterion D]

The existing toilet block located on the east side of the access road to the lighthouse car park in a relatively undistinguished area within the heritage precinct makes no contribution to understanding or appreciation of either the historical defense or maritime use of the precinct. Neither the toilet block or its immediate locality make any contribution to heritage significance, although the locality is withing the curtilage of the heritage place.



Figure 5 The existing public toilet block viewed from the road (Google)



Figure 6 Panoramic view of the existing public toilet block (Google)

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Proposed Works

The proposed replacement toilet building is to be supplied and installation by Stellar Washrooms Stellar Modular Amenities Building of prefabricated design including an accessible cubicle, 2 ambulant cubicles and a rear service area. The external cladding is proposed in corrugated galvanized steel with white frames to match the finishes on the P huts on the opposite side of the roadway.



Figure 7 Former POW sheds (Accuraco)



Figure 8 Example image of the proposed Amenities building provided by Stellar

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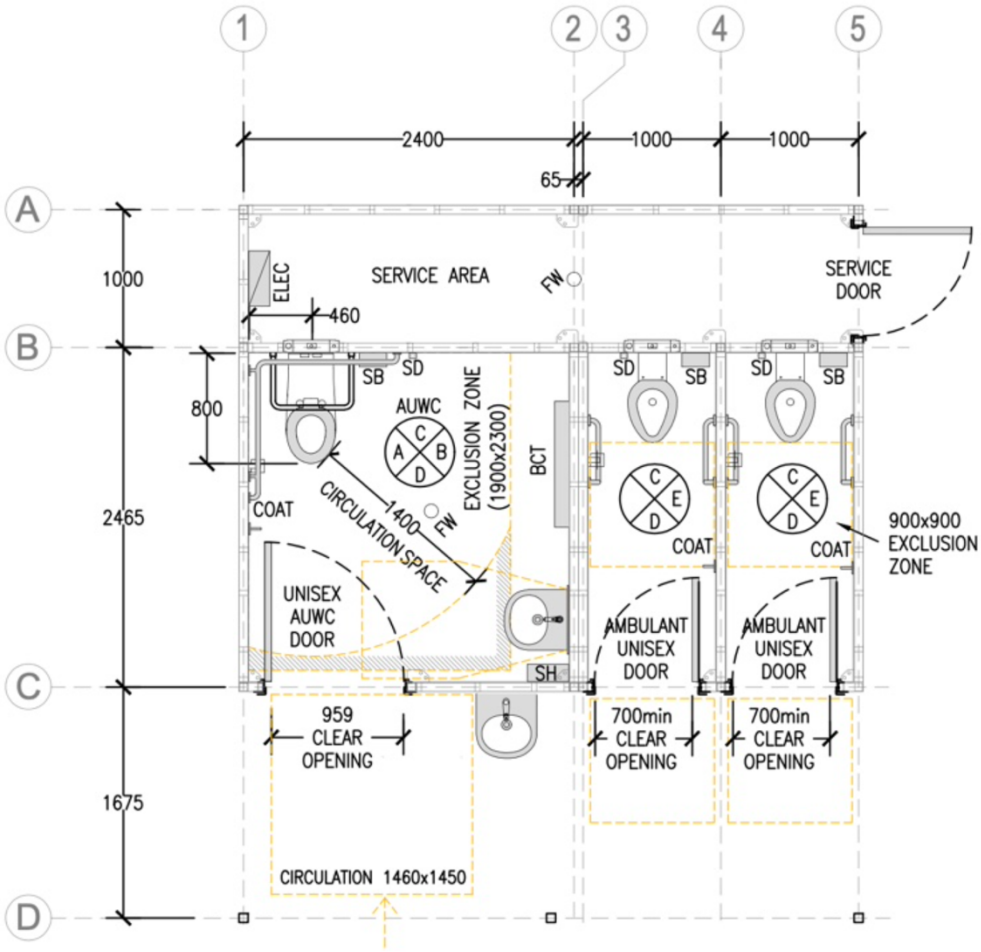


Figure 9 Plan of the proposed Amenities building provided by Stellar

The proposed construction of the new floor slab to replace the existing slab will cause no addition disturbance or penetration of the ground beyond the disturbance that has already occurred with the construction of the existing toilet block.

The sections of plain panel to the walls of the proposed lightweight public toilets offer areas that could be of any number of different materials. The selection of a final material and colour has been matched to the materials and finishesof the former Prisoner of War Huts on the west side of the roadway opposite the site of the toilet block.

Associated with new amenities building it is proposed to construct an above ground DDA compliant access ramp extending to the southeast and then returning to the northeast (to the right side in figure 5) to arrive at the floor level of the new amenities floor 1.1 metres above the car park. The existing gravel path is to be retained and the new ramp whilst occupying a part of the existing grassed area will cause no disturbance or the ground.

Assessment

As the existing toilet block including the stone facing makes no contribution to either State or Local heritage significance there is no heritage obstacle to the demolition of the existing structure.

The toilet block locality is of lesser sensitivity in the Lighthouse Reserve and is an appropriate locality for the public toilets that provide necessary amenity.

Just as the existing toilet block is a design that is both readily recognizable and unobtrusive in form and presence, the proposed replacement public toilets are a contemporary light weight option that will be readily recognizable and, with appropriate colour selection, will be readily seen and overlooked in the existing setting. The proposed use of galvanized corrugated steel will relate to the former POW and Administration huts to the west on the opposite side of the road.

As the footprint of the proposed will be wholly within the footprint of the existing toilet block, other than for the new above ground DDA compliant access pathway, and as the existing floor slab has previously disturbed the ground there will be no risk of further archeological disturbance that could result from the works.

For the above reasons it is my view that there can be no reasonable expectation that the change to the appearance of the necessary amenities will have any impact upon the understanding or appreciation of the heritage setting in which the amenities are located.

Whilst there will be change to the appearance of the public toilets there is in my view no contention that the change, now to relate the heritage sheds opposite, will present any risk to heritage significance or to appreciation of that significance.

The other elements of the upgrade to the facilities of the Lighthouse Reserve are to provide a safe and accessible environment for visitation improved with the removal of some overhead wires. The proposed changes follows generally from the existing character and will not present as out of place, or unexpected in the context of the Lighthouse Reserve.



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