

Statement of Recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria

Benalla Playground Rocket VHR PROV H2472
Bridge Street, West Benalla, Benalla Rural City
Yorta Yorta Country



Executive Director recommendation

Under section 37 of the *Heritage Act 2017* (**the Act**) I recommend to the Heritage Council of Victoria (**Heritage Council**) that the Benalla Playground Rocket, located at Bridge Street, West Benalla, Benalla Rural City, is of State-level cultural heritage significance and should be included in the Victorian Heritage Register (**VHR**) in the category of Registered Place. In accordance with section 38 of the Act I include in this recommendation categories of works or activities which may be carried out in relation to the place without the need for a permit under Part 5 of the Act.

I suggest that the Heritage Council determine that:

- the Benalla Playground Rocket is of State-level cultural heritage significance and is to be included in the VHR in accordance with section 49(1)(a) of the Act
- the proposed categories of works or activities which may be carried out in relation to the place for which a permit under the Act is not required will not harm the cultural heritage significance of the place under section 49(3)(a) of the Act.



STEVEN AVERY
Executive Director, Heritage Victoria

Date of recommendation: 12 January 2026

The process from here

1. The Heritage Council publishes the Executive Director's recommendation (section 41)

The Heritage Council will publish the Executive Director's recommendation on its [website](#) for a period of 60 days.

2. Making a submission to the Heritage Council (sections 44 and 45)

Within the 60-day publication period, any person or body may make a written submission to the Heritage Council. This submission can support the recommendation, or object to the recommendation and a hearing can be requested in relation to the submission. Information about making a submission and submission forms are available on the [Heritage Council's website](#).

3. Heritage Council determination (sections 46, 46A and 49)

The Heritage Council is an independent statutory body. It is responsible for making the final determination to include or not include the place, object or land in the VHR or amend a place, object or land already in the VHR.

If no submissions are received the Heritage Council must make a determination within 40 days of the publication closing date.

If submissions are received, the Heritage Council may decide to conduct a hearing in relation to the submission. The Heritage Council must conduct a hearing if a submission requests a hearing, and that submission is made by person or body with a real or substantial interest in the place, object or land.

If a hearing does take place, the Heritage Council must make a determination within 90 days after the completion of the hearing.

4. Obligations of owners of places, objects and land (sections 42, 42A, 42B, 42C, 42D and 43)

The owner of a place, object or land which is the subject of a recommendation to the Heritage Council has certain obligations under the Act. These relate to advising the Executive Director in writing of any works or activities that are being carried out, proposed or planned for the place, object or land.

The owner also has an obligation to provide a copy of this statement of recommendation to any potential purchasers of the place, object or land before entering into a contract.

5. Further information

The relevant sections of the Act are provided at the end of this report.

Description

The following is a description of the Benalla Playground Rocket at the time of the site inspection by Heritage Victoria on 28 October 2025.

The Benalla Playground Rocket is a rocket-shaped playground climbing structure made of welded, galvanised steel tubes. It is located in the children's playground area in the southwest of the Benalla Botanical Gardens. The structure has four levels and is approximately eight metres high. The main components of the structure are a central pole, four external stabilising legs or fins, and four interior platforms with ladders between them. The platforms are encased in a rocket-shaped cage, and a steel slide provides an exit to the ground from the second platform. There is a 'captain's wheel' unit with lever on the fourth level. An anemometer sits atop a narrow pole projecting from the rocket tip.

Description images

All photographs taken by Heritage Victoria staff unless otherwise stated.



Undated c.2020, Benalla Playground Rocket, Source: [Walking Maps](#). St Joseph's Catholic Church, Arundel Street VHR H0842 is in the background.



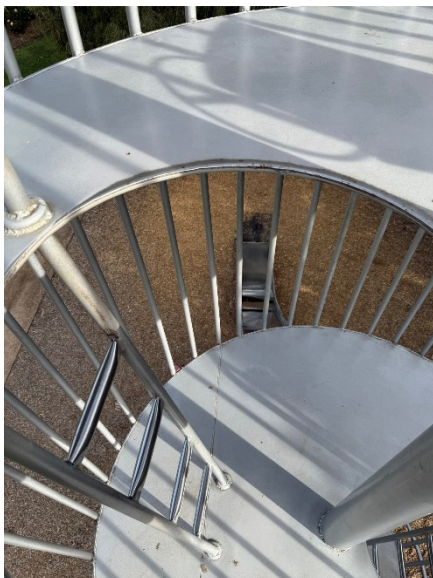
2025, Benalla Playground Rocket plaque, showing erection date of 16 September 1966.



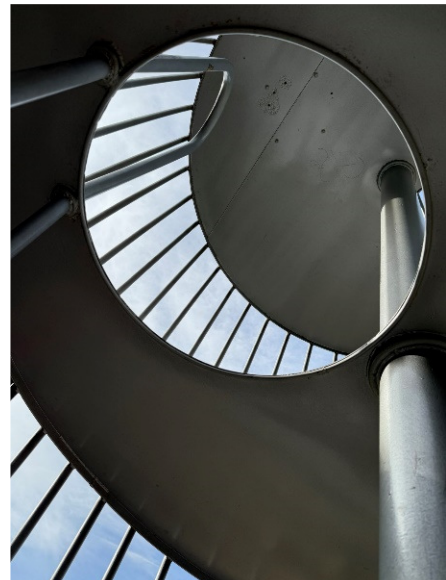
2025, Benalla Playground Rocket, view south towards Bridge Street West (Midland Highway).



2025, Benalla Playground Rocket, view towards northwest.



2025, Benalla Playground Rocket, interior.



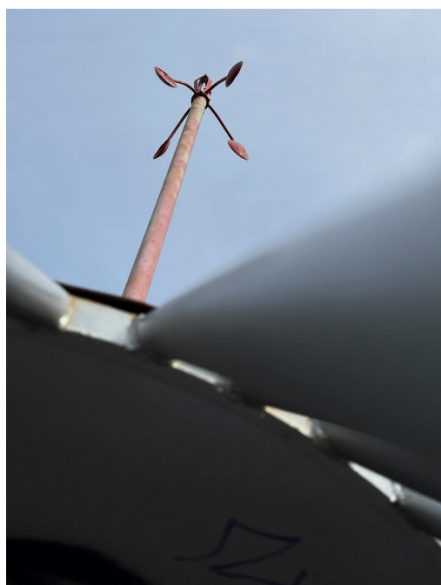
2025, Benalla Playground Rocket, interior.



2025, Benalla Playground Rocket, top level (level 4).



2025, Benalla Playground Rocket view from top level (level 4) over the Benalla Rose Garden.



2025, Benalla Playground Rocket, anemometer on top.



2025, Benalla Playground Rocket, galvanised pipe construction detail.

History

Benalla

Benalla is located on Yorta Yorta Country on the Broken River about 200km northeast of Melbourne. After the expeditions of Hume and Hovell in 1824 and Thomas Mitchell in 1834, the Yorta Yorta were forcibly dispossessed, as pastoralists claimed and farmed the rich farming land along the Broken River. In 1839 a police station was established and in 1844 a post office opened. In 1849 the township's name changed from Broken River to 'Benalla', and in 1861 Benalla was officially proclaimed a town, developing into an important regional centre.

Benalla Botanical Gardens

During the 1880s, the Benalla Botanical Gardens were commissioned by the Shire Council, and noted Melbourne landscape designer, Alfred Sangwell, completed them in 1887. Besides the unusual combination of a large oval and ornamental garden, Sangwell installed gracefully curved walking paths to sweep through plantings of trees and shrubs in keeping with the typical nineteenth-century 'Gardenesque' trend for public gardens. In 1959 the Benalla Apex Club planted the first roses in the Botanical Gardens to beautify the town's southern entrance.

Playground

From at least 1928, there was a children's playground at the Benalla Botanical Gardens, reflecting the town's growing population.¹ The location of the playground between the 1960s and 2003 was closer to Bridge Street than it is now. It is unclear what equipment was installed in the early to mid-twentieth century, but playgrounds of this era typically comprised the "four S's": swings, seesaws, slides (fixed steel equipment) and sandboxes.²

Postwar playground design and the 'space race'

The large number of children born during the baby boom of the 1950s and 1960s was accompanied by a growing number of playgrounds, which increasingly included a greater diversity of equipment.³ In the context of the USA versus USSR space race, there was a popular enthusiasm for all things space-related, and this found particular expression in the material culture of children.⁴ In Australia, this was evident in television shows such as *Mr Squiggle*, which started on the ABC in 1959, and *Thunderbirds*, which aired in Australia from c.1965. In 1962, the theme for Melbourne's famous Christmas windows at Myer department store (VHR H2100) was 'Santa goes to space'.⁵ Space-inspired play equipment also began to be constructed in playgrounds – particularly rockets.

The earliest known playground rocket in the USA was built in Ontario, California in 1959, designed and constructed by American sculptor John Svenson. In 1963 a later design by Jamison Fantasy Equipment was featured in the popular American magazine *LIFE*, which reported that there were as many as 160 playgrounds in the Philadelphia region alone which featured space-themed play equipment.⁶ Part of the success of playground rockets was that from the perspective of a child, they seemed enormous and offered a sense of danger and risk. The iconic Jamison rocket shape was replicated all over the world, including in Australia.

Australia's playground rockets

In Australia the first playground rocket was installed in 1962 in the Blackheath Soldiers' Memorial Park in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney.⁷ The design specifications were developed by John Yeaman, Chief Engineer for the Blue Mountains City Council after returning from a visit to the USA in 1961. They were nearly identical to the Jamison design.⁸ After his success at Blackheath, Yeaman then gave his plans to Dick West, a metal fabricator from the area, who started

¹ See 'Benalla Shire Council', *Benalla Standard*, 4 Sept 1928, p.5; 'Cost of the Gardens', *Benalla Standard*, 11 Jan 1929, p.5. Further research is needed to determine the location, form and equipment in this playground.

² See Naomi Heller, 'A Brief History of Playground Design, Part 1', in *The Field*, American Society of Landscape Architects, 12 March 2020 [accessed 1 October 2025].

³ The idea of adventure playgrounds also emerged in the postwar era. They principally consisted of natural elements (such as logs and water) as well as recycled materials (ropes and tyres) for imaginative play. In Britain some of these were built in areas that had been bombed during the war.

⁴ This section of the report is largely drawn from Alice Gorman, 'Gravity's playground: dreams of spaceflight and the rocket park in Australian culture', in D. Jordan and R. Bosco (eds), *Defining the Fringe of Contemporary Australian Archaeology. Pyramidiots, Paranoia and the Paranormal*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017, pp.92-107. Also see Tim Barlass, 'Space oddity: The retro slippery dip making a comeback', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 May 2023.

⁵ See <https://blogs.slv.vic.gov.au/such-was-life/myer-christmas-windows/>

⁶ 'Playgrounds take a space-age spin', *LIFE*, 15 March 1963.

⁷ See Alice Gorman, 'Gravity's playground'; John Morcombe, 'When Balgowlah Heights had a Moon Rocket that could take children's imaginations to the stars', *Manly Daily*, 16 February 2024.

⁸ It does not appear that this design was patented or sold by Jamison and the structure appears to have been reproduced freely.

making the rockets from 1963, and other companies followed.⁹ West's playground equipment used steel pipes sourced from BHP in Wollongong and were often marked with a manufacturer's plaque.¹⁰

During the 1960s, 'rocket playgrounds' became increasingly popular, often funded by service clubs such as Apex and Rotary.¹¹ It should be noted that although playground rockets looked the same (which was part of their aesthetic appeal), they were built to slightly different specifications according to the manufacturer. Variations included construction with galvanised pipes or flat metal bars, and either one or two slides, the original Jamison rocket having only one.

Arrival of the Benalla Playground Rocket

Construction of the Benalla Playground Rocket was under discussion by the Benalla City Council from at least early 1966.¹² By May 1966, the Council had secured \$1000 from the Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria towards its construction.¹³ Benalla was an important regional administrative centre on the Hume Highway between Melbourne and Sydney.¹⁴ Council members were of the view that the rocket 'would help to publicise the town'.¹⁵ Notably the Benalla Rose Festival in the Botanical Gardens commenced a year later. In an era when car ownership was increasing, a rocket no doubt appealed to families seeking a 'child friendly' rest stop on long drives.

The rocket was delivered to the Benalla Botanical Gardens in August 1966. It was constructed from welded galvanised pipes and had one slide. On 1 September 1966 the local newspaper featured a photo of Mr Norm Sheean, a Benalla tyre service proprietor, and a crew of workmen craning the eight-metre high structure up from the ground.¹⁶ Norman Sheean's RAAF papers indicate that at the time of his enlistment he was a rubber vulcaniser who also had experience as a boiler attendant. During World War II, Sheean received training as a fitter in the RAAF's No 1 Engineering School. In the 1950s, he served as Benalla Branch President of the RSL. Electoral rolls in the 1960s give Sheean's profession as tyre service proprietor. It appears likely that Sheean was responsible for fabricating the rocket and there is no Dick West makers mark.

The rocket was officially 'launched' on 16 September 1966 with a plaque (text below) that noted the contribution of the Playgrounds and Recreation Association, Mrs Pearl Longmore and Benalla Apex Club. Later that year, Benalla Council was made aware of concerns about the safety of the rocket. The Apex Club noted that 'it may be possible for a child to sustain injury' because of the design of the slide', and the Council Engineer was sent to investigate.¹⁷

In 2003 the Benalla Council moved the playground further into the park away from Bridge Street to its current site which had been part of the old caravan park.¹⁸ Upgraded playground equipment was installed, but the iconic rocket was proudly retained, as it had become a symbol of the town. The new playground location was safer for children and created a more attractive entry into the park. In 2016, the rocket was re-painted in its original colours of red and silver and the other playground equipment was again upgraded.

Survival of the Benalla Playground Rocket

From the 1980s, ongoing concerns about the safety of playground rockets in Australia and internationally gradually led to their demise. Many were either removed from playgrounds or altered to prevent falls, typically by replacing metal slides with enclosed plastic slides. In Victoria, a Warrnambool City Council court case in 1991 is thought to have sparked major revaluations on the safety of 'antiquated' playground equipment.¹⁹ Gradually iconic playground rockets began to disappear from playground landscapes.

The Benalla Playground Rocket is one of four known to survive in Victoria, and one of ~15 in Australia. Although its slide has been replaced, it retains a metal slide and is the most intact in Victoria. This is thanks to the Benalla Community, Benalla Rural City Council and their heritage advisor, Deborah Kemp.

⁹ Tim Barlass, 'Space oddity: The retro slippery dip making a comeback', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 May 2023.

¹⁰ Heritage New South Wales, Cultural heritage assessment of the Moree Rocket, 2025.

¹¹ Alice Gorman in John Morcombe, 'When Balgowlah Heights had a Moon Rocket'.

¹² 'Chamber discuss children's playground rocket', *Benalla Ensign*, 26 May 1966.

¹³ 'Chamber discuss children's playground rocket'. The Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria was formed from the Guild of Play in 1912.

¹⁴ See Chapter 19 'A look ahead in AJ Dunlop, *Benalla cavalcade: a history of Benalla and district*, Mullaya Publications, Canterbury, 1973.

¹⁵ 'Chamber discuss children's playground rocket'.

¹⁶ 'The Rocket is Here', *Benalla Ensign* of 1 September 1966.

¹⁷ 'Apex Club concerned over rocket', *Benalla Ensign* of 15 December 1966.

¹⁸ Andrew Laidlaw and Richard Barley, *Benalla Botanical Gardens, Conservation Plan Review*, 2012, pp.11-12.

¹⁹ Heritage New South Wales, Cultural heritage assessment of the Moree Rocket, 2025.

Playground rocket nostalgia

Playground rockets are rare and have become a focus of nostalgic remembrance.²⁰ Numerous blogs and Facebook posts celebrate the surviving rockets, and many people post photos of the 'lost' rocket parks of their childhoods:

[Gippsland History | I remember this rocket at the Apex park in Stratford when I was a kid | Facebook](#)

[Growing up in Australia | The 'rocket ship'](#)

[Rocket playgrounds became a common sight in Australian parks in the 60s | Facebook](#)

[Enmore Park and the famous 'Rocket' | Facebook](#)

[Big Things in Australia | The big rocket slide | Facebook](#)

[I Grew Up In Kiama | A poignant photo of the Kiama Rocket in bygone days when she took pride of place in Hindmarsh Park | Facebook](#)

[Bundaberg: Remember When | This was the rocket at Ratray park located on Northside of Bundaberg | Facebook](#)

[Old Time Photos Of Yesteryear | The Space Rocket in playgrounds, This one, from 1967, was located in Kensington, Victoria | Facebook](#)

It is also possible to buy 'playground rocketania', see below.



Tea towel depicting the original Dick West rocket at Blackheath (1962). Note the recent addition of a covered slide.²¹



Print depicting the Benalla Rocket (1966). This is an artwork by Benalla artist, Courtney Stafford, 2017. The 'red apple' is in the background, and the 'rocky boat' is in the foreground (both demolished).²²

²⁰ In 1997, Australia's original 1962 Blackheath rocket ship was removed, see Alice Gorman, 'Gravity's playground', p.97 and 104; Sydney heritage consultant Susan Jackson-Stepowski quoted in John Morcombe, 'When Balgowlah Heights had a Moon Rocket'. In 2016 a community campaign led to a replica of the Blackheath Rocket being built, some 54 years after the original. See Hamish Dunlop, 'Water Play Area and Rejuvenated Pond Opens at Blackheath Soldiers Memorial Park', *Blackheath Area Local News*, 19 December 2023.

²¹ [Blackheath Rocket tea towel – Mount Vic and Me](#)

²² [Rocket Park Night Blue - Homage to Home Print – cjo stafford](#)

Selected bibliography

Primary sources

- 'Benalla Shire Council', *Benalla Standard*, 4 Sept 1928.
- 'Cost of the Gardens', *Benalla Standard*, 11 Jan 1929.
- 'Chamber discuss children's playground rocket', *Benalla Ensign*, 26 May 1966.
- 'The Rocket Is Here', *Benalla Ensign*, 1 September 1966.
- 'Apex Club concerned over rocket', *Benalla Ensign*, 15 December 1966.
- 'Playgrounds take a space-age spin', *LIFE*, 15 March 1963.

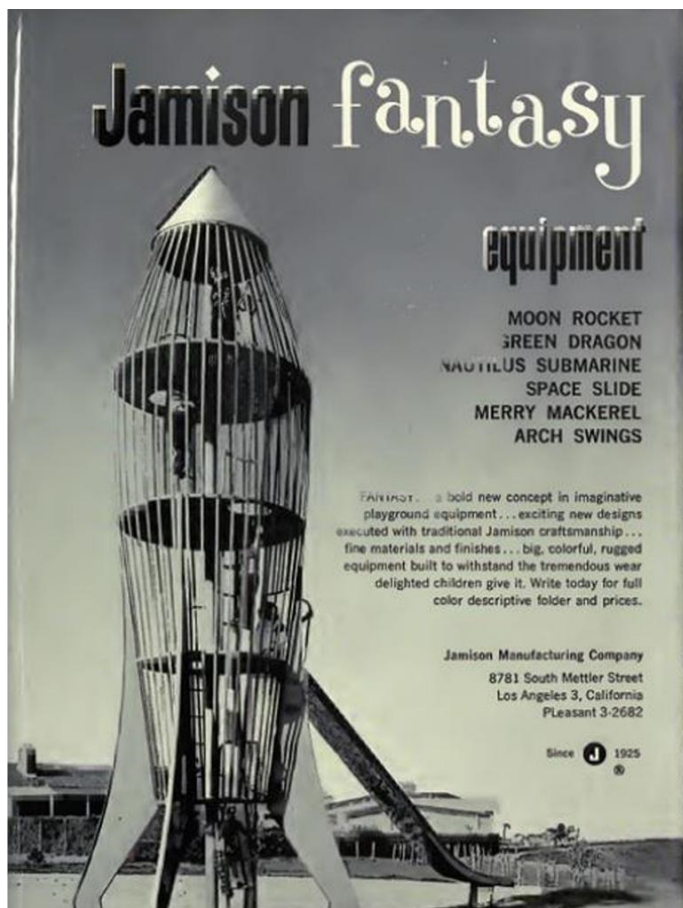
Secondary sources

- Tim Barlass, 'Space oddity: The retro slippery dip making a comeback', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 May 2023.
- AJ Dunlop, *Benalla cavalcade: a history of Benalla and district*, Mullaya Publications, Canterbury, 1973.
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- Carissa Goudey, The Central Gardens Playground Rocket (Hawthorn), unpublished research paper, Heritage Victoria, 2021.
- Andrew Laidlaw and Richard Barley, *Benalla Botanical Gardens, Conservation Plan Review*, 2012.
- John Morcombe, 'When Balgowlah Heights had a Moon Rocket that could take children's imaginations to the stars', *Manly Daily*, 16 February 2024.
- National Trust of Australia, Victoria, 'Community win fight to save iconic "Rocket Ship"', *Trust Advocate*, 18 June 2021.

Acknowledgements

The Executive Director thanks Deborah Kemp for sharing her knowledge of the Benalla Playground Rocket.

Historical images



April 1962, Advertisement from Recreation magazine, Los Angeles. Source: Flickr.



1966, 'The Rocket is Here', Benalla Ensign, 1 September 1966.



1968, The Benalla Playground Rocket in its original location when the playground was closer to Bridge Street, until its relocation in 2023. Note original colours of red and silver, as well as the shorter slide. Source: Heritage Victoria.

Further information

Registered Aboriginal Party information

The place is located on Yorta Yorta Country.

Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, the Registered Aboriginal Party for this land is the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register

The place is not included in the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register and is not in an area of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity.

(9 December 2025)

Integrity

The integrity of the place is excellent. The cultural heritage values of the Benalla Playground Rocket can be easily read in the extant fabric.

(28 October 2025)

Intactness

The intactness of the place is very good.

The metal slide of the rocket is non-original to 1966. It was not uncommon for local councils to upgrade the slides of playground rockets for safety reasons. The rocket was re-painted in 2016.

(28 October 2025)

Condition

The condition of the Benalla Playground Rocket is excellent.

There was some minor graffiti observed during the site visit, but this does not detract from the overall excellent condition of the place.

(28 October 2025)

Note: The condition of a place or object does not influence the assessment of its cultural heritage significance. A place or object may be in very poor condition and still be of very high cultural heritage significance. Alternatively, a place or object may be in excellent condition but be of low cultural heritage significance.

Other information

Heritage Overlay

The place is currently included in the VHR, being part of the Benalla Botanical Gardens and Art Gallery registration (VHR H2260). A corresponding Heritage Overlay (HO12) applies under the Benalla Planning Scheme.

Other relevant planning scheme overlays

The place is subject to the following overlays.

- Design and Development Overlay (DDO)
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)

Other Listings

There are no other listings for the place.

Other Names

Benalla Rocket Park

Date of construction/creation

September 1966

Designer

Unknown. Built to a common design which can be traced to the American company Jamison Fantasy Equipment c.late 1950s/early 1960s.

Maker

Unknown.

Constructor

Norm T Sheean, Benalla.

Statutory requirements under section 40

Terms of the recommendation (section 40(3)(a))

The Executive Director recommends that the Benalla Playground Rocket is included in the VHR.

Information to identify the place or object or land (section 40(3)(b))

Number: H2472

Category: Registered place

Name: Benalla Playground Rocket

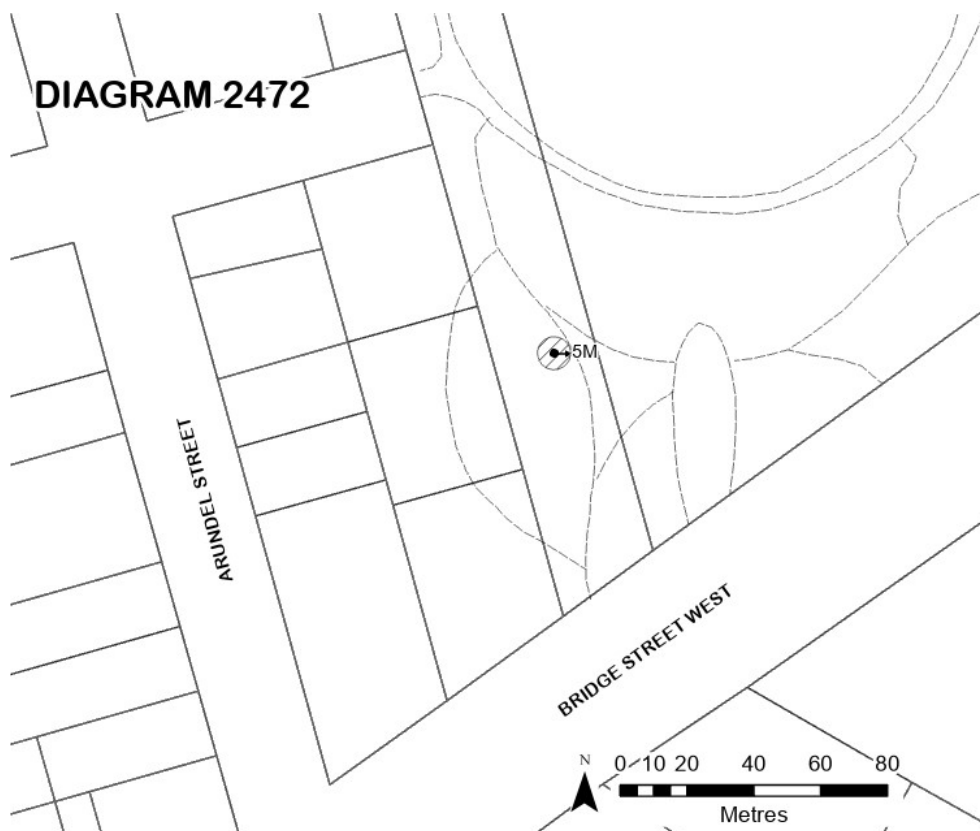
Location: Bridge Street, West Benalla

Municipality: Benalla Rural City

Proposed extent of registration

The Executive Director recommends that the extent of registration for the Benalla Playground Rocket be gazetted as:

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2472 encompassing part of Crown Allotment 15 Section 7A Township of Benalla within a 5 metre radius of the centre of the rocket's main structural pole.



Non-statutory information about the proposed extent of registration

Aerial photo of the place showing proposed extent of registration



Note: This aerial view provides a visual representation of the place. It is not a precise representation of the recommended extent of registration. Due to distortions associated with aerial photography some elements of the place may appear as though they are outside the extent of registration.

Rationale for the proposed extent of registration

The recommended extent of registration comprises all of the Benalla Playground Rocket structure including a five-metre circular area of land from the centre of the rocket's main structural pole. This extent does not take in the garden pathway approximately 5.6 metres on the eastern side of the rocket.

The recommended extent of the registration is the same as the nominated extent of registration.

It should be noted that everything included in the proposed extent of registration including all of the land, and all soft and hard landscape features, is proposed for inclusion in the VHR. A permit or permit exemption from Heritage Victoria is required for any works within the proposed extent of registration, apart from those identified in the categories of exempt works or activities in this recommendation.

Relationship with the registration of the Benalla Botanical Gardens and Art Gallery (VHR H2260)

The proposed extent of the Benalla Playground Rocket (PROV H2472) is part of the registered extent of the Benalla Botanical Gardens and Art Gallery (VHR H2260).



The proposed registration of the Benalla Playground Rocket would coexist with the VHR registration of the Benalla Botanical Gardens and Art Gallery (one 'sitting over the other') to reflect the cultural heritage values of both places. A specific s.38 permit exemption is provided to ensure that two permit approvals are not required for works to the Benalla Playground Rocket.

Other examples of coexisting registered extents include Federation Square (VHR 2390) and the Princes Walk Vaults (VHR H0646). In this case, Federation Square is located on top of the Princes Walk Vaults, each having its own cultural heritage significance.

Reasons for the recommendation, including an assessment of the State-level cultural heritage significance of the place (section 40(3)(c))

Following is the Executive Director's assessment of the Benalla Playground Rocket against the tests set out in [The Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Thresholds Guidelines \(2022\)](#). A place or object must be found by the Heritage Council to meet Step 2 of at least one criterion to meet the State level threshold for inclusion in the VHR.

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

Step 1 Test for Criterion A

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
A1)	Does the place/object have a clear association with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in Victoria's cultural history?	Yes	<p>The Benalla Playground Rocket has a clear association with the following in Victoria's cultural history:</p> <p>The history of childhood play</p> <p>The rocket was designed specifically for children to encourage imaginative play.</p> <p>The influence of the 'space race' on popular culture</p> <p>The rocket design reflects the popular fascination with the 'space race' during the 1960s.</p>
A2)	Is the event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life of historical importance, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria?	Yes	<p>The history of childhood play</p> <p>This theme is of historical importance and has made a strong and influential contribution to Victoria.</p> <p>Childhood play is and has been fundamental to the lives of Victoria's children and contributed to their wellbeing and development. Fostering positive childhood interactions and supporting learning through imaginative play have had a strong influence on the lives of generations of Victorians. For this reason, the history of childhood play is important, and affects all Victorians who have been a child, or raised a child in the state.</p> <p>The influence of the 'space race' on popular culture</p> <p>The impact of the space-race on popular culture is a phase of historical importance to Victoria, having made a strong contribution to design vocabularies and the popular imagination of the 1960s.</p> <p>The interest in the 'space race' manifested in various ways during the 1960s, in TV shows, advertisements and in futuristic design motifs in fashion and even architecture. It prompted creative responses from Australian scientists, designers, architects, television producers, community groups and children.</p>

A3) Is there evidence of the association to the event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in Victoria's cultural history?	Yes	<p>There is evidence of the association between the place and these historical phases:</p> <p>The history of childhood play</p> <p>The Benalla Playground Rocket is a piece of children's play equipment.</p> <p>The influence of the 'space race' on popular culture</p> <p>The Benalla Playground Rocket directly references in its form the 'space race' of the 1960s.</p>
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If A1, A2 and A3 are all satisfied, then Criterion A is likely to be relevant (but not necessarily at the State level)

Executive Director's Response:	Yes	Criterion A is likely to be relevant.
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Step 2 State-level test for Criterion A

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
SA1)	Does the place/object allow the clear association with the event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life of historical importance to be understood better than most other places or objects in Victoria with substantially the same association?	Yes	<p>The history of childhood play</p> <p>The Benalla Playground Rocket does not allow the history of childhood play as a historical theme to be understood better than most other places or objects in Victoria with substantially the same association.</p> <p>As one piece of play equipment in one location, it has limited capacity to represent this theme in the context of Victoria's history.</p> <p>By contrast, Luna Park (VHR H0938) allows childhood play to be better understood in the context of Victoria's history. It was designed to be enjoyed by children and families and still attracts visitors from across the State. Visitors enter through Mr Moon's open mouth, an iconic design which has become a symbol of seaside recreation and leisure. For over 100 years, this place has been one of the most popular destinations for children to play and enjoy themselves on a day out.</p> <p>In addition, Victoria's history of childhood play is more comprehensively represented by Museum Victoria's Childhood Collection. This collection was commenced in 1986 and includes the Australian Children's Folklore Collection which was recognised in July 2004 by acceptance onto the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register.²³</p> <p>The influence of the 'space race' on popular culture</p> <p>As one piece of play equipment in one location, the Benalla Playground Rocket has limited capacity to represent this theme in the context of Victoria's history of design and popular culture.</p>

²³ See [Museum Victoria, Childhood Collection](#).

The 'space race' is better represented in other examples of Victoria's material culture – design collections, magazines, photography, and objects from the era – not in one playground rocket in Benalla.

If SA1 is satisfied, then Criterion A is likely to be relevant at the State level

Executive Director's Response:	No	Criterion A is not likely to be relevant at the State level.
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CRITERION B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

Step 1 Test for Criterion B

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
B1)	Does the place/object have a clear association with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life of importance in Victoria's cultural history?	Yes	The Benalla Playground Rocket has a clear association with the historical phases which are of importance in Victoria's cultural history as established at A1 above.
B2)	Is there evidence of the association to the historical phases etc identified at B1)?	Yes	See A2, above.
B3)	Is there evidence that the place/object - is rare or uncommon? <u>or</u> - has rare or uncommon features?	Yes	B3(i) There is evidence that the place is rare and uncommon. The Benalla Playground Rocket is the only one of four remaining in Victoria, from a much larger number (possibly over 20) built in the 1960s-70s.

If B1, B2 AND B3 are satisfied, then Criterion B is likely to be relevant (but not necessarily at the State level)

Executive Director's Response:	Yes	Criterion B is likely to be relevant.
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Step 2 State-level test for Criterion B

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
SB1)	Is the place/object rare or uncommon, being one of a small number of places/objects remaining that demonstrates the event, phase, etc identified at B1)?	No	Many places and objects in Victoria represent the history of childhood play and the influence of the 'space race' on popular culture. The Benalla Playground Rocket is not rare on these grounds.
SB2)	Is the place/object rare or uncommon because it: - contains unusual features, <u>and</u> - these features are of note, <u>and</u> - these features were not widely replicated in Victoria?	Yes	The Benalla Playground Rocket is rare and uncommon for its iconic and unusual design of note. A limited number were erected in Victoria (possibly 20) of which four remain.

SB3)	Is the existence of the class that demonstrates the historical phases at B1) endangered to the point of rarity due to threats and pressures on such places/objects in Victoria?	Yes	<p>The class 'playground equipment' is constantly under threat and pressure because it requires continually upgrades due to wear and tear and safety concerns.</p> <p>Within the class 'playground equipment' the sub-class 'rockets' are particularly endangered to the point of rarity. This is because in the context of current playground safety standards in Victoria, they are considered potentially unsafe, mainly due to the risk of falling from uncovered slides.</p>
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If any one of SB1, SB2 OR SB3 is satisfied, then Criterion B is likely to be relevant at the State level

Executive Director's Response:	Yes	Criterion B is likely to be relevant at the State level.
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CRITERION C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

Step 1 Test for Criterion C

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
C1)	Does physical fabric and/or documentary evidence and/or associated oral history or cultural narratives relating to the place/object indicate a likelihood that the place/object contains evidence of cultural heritage significance that is not currently visible and/or well understood or available from other sources?	No	<p>The:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) physical fabric and 2) documentary evidence and 3) associated oral history or cultural narratives <p>relating to the Benalla Playground Rocket do not indicate a likelihood that the place contains evidence of cultural heritage significance that is not currently visible and/or well understood or available from other sources.</p> <p>The construction methodology is visible, and the structure's form and function are well understood.</p>
C2)	And, from what we know of the place/object, is the physical evidence likely to be of an integrity and/or condition that it could yield information through detailed investigation?	No	<p>The integrity and condition of the place may be good, but it is unlikely to yield information through investigation that is not currently visible and/or well understood or available from other sources (see C1).</p>

If both C1 AND C2 are satisfied, then Criterion C is likely to be relevant (but not necessarily at the State level)

Executive Director's Response:	No	Criterion C is not likely to be relevant.
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CRITERION D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects

Step 1 Test for Criterion D

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
D1)	Is the place/object one of a class of places/objects that has a clear association with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in Victoria's history?	Yes	Yes. See A1.
D2)	Is the event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life of historical importance, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria?	Yes	Yes. See A2.
D3)	Are the principal characteristics of the class evident in the physical fabric of the place/object?	Yes	The Benalla Playground Rocket belongs to the class 'playground equipment' and sub-class 'rockets'. The principal characteristics of the class are evident in the physical fabric of the place.

If D1, D2 AND D3 are satisfied, then Criterion D is likely to be relevant (but not necessarily at the State level)

Executive Director's Response:	Yes	Criterion D is likely to be relevant.
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Step 2 State-level test for Criterion

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
SD1)	Is the place/object a notable (fine, influential or pivotal) example of the class in Victoria?	NA	Given that there are only four playground rockets extant in Victoria, it is the view of the Executive Director that this place is more appropriately assessed for its State-level significance under Criterion B (Rarity) rather than Criterion D (Notable example).
Executive Director's Response:		NA	NA

CRITERION E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Step 1 Test for Criterion E

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
E1)	Does the physical fabric of the place/object clearly exhibit particular aesthetic characteristics?	Yes	The physical fabric of the Benalla Playground Rocket clearly exhibits aesthetic characteristics particular to playground equipment and 'space race' design.

If E1 is satisfied, then Criterion E is likely to be relevant (but not necessarily at the State level)

Executive Director's Response:	Yes	Criterion E is likely to be relevant.
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Step 2 State-level test for Criterion E

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
SE1)	<p>Are the aesthetic characteristics 'beyond the ordinary' or are outstanding as demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence from within the relevant discipline (architecture, art, design or equivalent); and/or Critical recognition of the aesthetic characteristics of the place/object within a relevant art, design, architectural or related discipline within Victoria; and/or Wide public acknowledgement of exceptional aesthetic qualities of the place/object in Victoria expressed in publications, print or digital media, painting, sculpture, songs, poetry, literature, or other media? 	No	<p>There is no evidence that the aesthetic characteristics at the place are 'beyond the ordinary' or are outstanding.</p> <p>The aesthetic qualities of the Jamison Fantasy Equipment playground rocket have been widely acknowledged in public forums, acclaimed within design communities, and among advocates of creative play. This iconic design was adapted and reproduced in Australia and internationally.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the aesthetic characteristics of the Benalla Playground Rocket have specifically been widely acknowledged by the public or valued by experts in design.</p> <p>This can also be said of many iconic design objects which are mass produced or copied on a mass scale.</p>

If SE1 is satisfied, then Criterion E is likely to be relevant at the State level

Executive Director's Response:	No	Criterion E is not likely to be relevant at the State level.
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CRITERION F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Step 1 Test for Criterion F

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
F1)	Does the place/object contain physical evidence that clearly demonstrates creative or technical achievement for the time in which it was created?	No	<p>The Benalla Playground Rocket does not contain physical evidence that clearly demonstrates creative or technical achievement for the time in which it was created.</p> <p>The Jamison Fantasy Equipment rocket design is iconic (see above). But the particular rocket at Benalla does not represent a creative achievement for its era, primarily because it was a copy. The welded galvanised pipe construction method was not a technical achievement for its time.</p>
F2)	Does the physical evidence demonstrate a high degree of integrity?	NA	The physical evidence at the place demonstrates a high degree of integrity, but as the rocket does not represent a technical achievement this test is not applicable.

If both F1 and F2 are satisfied, then Criterion F is likely to be relevant (but not necessarily at the State level)

Executive Director's Response:	No	Criterion F is not likely to be relevant.
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CRITERION G: Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

Step 1 Test for Criterion G

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
G1)	Does the place/object demonstrate social value to a community or cultural group in the present day in the context of its cultural heritage significance? Evidence must be provided for all three facets of social value listed here:		
i)	Existence of a community or cultural group; <u>and</u>	Yes	There is evidence that a community or cultural group exists. The Benalla community value the rocket, as evidenced in newspaper articles and homage to the rocket in artwork.
ii)	Existence of a strong attachment of a community or cultural group to the place or object; <u>and</u>	Yes	There is evidence of a strong attachment of the Benalla community to the Benalla Playground Rocket in the present day. Commentary in the Benalla Ensign has described the climbing rocket as a rite of passage for local children. Artwork depicting the rocket has been created by a local artist, demonstrating there is attachment to the place. ²⁴
iii)	Existence of a time depth to that attachment.	Yes	There is evidence of the attachment dating to its time of construction. Within the Benalla Community there is an attachment to the rocket and locals recall it with affection and nostalgia. ²⁵
If <u>all facets</u> of G1 are satisfied, then Criterion G is likely to be relevant (but not necessarily at the State level)			
Executive Director's Response:		Yes	Criterion G is likely to be relevant.

²⁴ <https://www.benallaensign.com.au/news/rocket-a-rite-of-passage/>, <https://cjustafford.com.au/products/rocket-park-night-blue-homage-to-home-print?variant=7894199926830>

²⁵ [Victoria's rocket playgrounds | Philip Mallis](#)

Step 2 State-level test for Criterion G

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
SG1)	Is there evidence that the social value resonates across the broader Victorian community as part of a story that contributes to Victoria's identity?	No	<p>The social value of the Benalla Playground Rocket is part of a story in Victoria that contributes to Victoria's identity.</p> <p>The rocket is fondly remembered by locals as a beloved feature of their childhood. But there is no evidence that the social value of the Benalla Playground Rocket resonates across the broader Victorian community.</p>

If all facets of SG1 are satisfied, then Criterion G is likely to be relevant at the State level

Executive Director's Response:	No	Criterion G is not likely to be relevant at the State level.
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CRITERION H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

Step 1 Test for Criterion H

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
H1)	Does the place/object have a direct association with a person, or group of persons who has made a strong or influential contribution in their field of endeavour?	There is a direct association between the Benalla Playground Rocket and:	
		Yes	<p>Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria</p> <p>This organisation made a strong and influential contribution to Victoria through their funding and establishment of playgrounds. Established in 1912 at the Guild of Play, the organisation has been known as Play Australia since 2011.</p>
		Yes	<p>Benalla Apex Club</p> <p>This club made a strong and influential contribution to Benalla through the works of its members to benefit the local community. This organisation made a strong and influential contribution to Benalla.</p>
		No	<p>Mrs Pearl Longmore and Mr Longmore</p> <p>Mrs Longmore provided funds to the playground rocket in honour of her husband. Her contribution to community life appears to be linked to Benalla only. They cannot be said to have made strong or influential contribution as philanthropists, or through other recorded activities.</p>
		No	<p>Mr NT Sheean, Benalla</p> <p>Mr Sheean erected the playground rocket. He was the proprietor of a local tyre service business. Although a valued member of the community contracted to erect the rocket, he cannot be said to have made strong or influential contribution beyond the Benalla region and community.</p>

H2)	Is there evidence of the association between the place/object and the person(s)?	Yes	All the people and groups listed above are named on the 1966 plaque on the rocket.
H3)	Does the association relate:	No	Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria Although this association provided funds for the Benalla Playground Rocket, they funded many playgrounds in Victoria and do not have an enduring and/or close interaction to the Benalla rocket.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • directly to achievements of the person(s); and • to an enduring and/or close interaction between the person(s) and the place/object? 	No	Benalla Apex Club Benalla Playground Rocket relates directly to the achievements of the club. This organisation no longer survives, so there is no enduring or close interaction between the Benalla Apex Club and the place.
If <u>all facets</u> of H1, H2 AND H3 are satisfied, then Criterion H is likely to be relevant (but not necessarily at the State level)			
Executive Director's Response:		No	Criterion H is not likely to be relevant.

Comparisons

Rarity

Number in Australia

It is difficult to obtain accurate data on the number of playground rockets. Commentators have suggested:

Number constructed

- From the early 1960s, around 32-38 were built by Dick West, fabricator located in the Blue Mountains.
- Most Dick West rockets were installed in New South Wales.²⁶
- An unknown number were manufactured to substantially the same design by other companies across Australia.

Surviving rockets

- In 2017, around 26 rockets were extant across Australia.²⁷
- In 2017, there were five directly attributable to Dick West.²⁸
- In 2024, around 15 were left in Australia.²⁹
- In 2025, there were three directly attributable to Dick West.³⁰

Number in Victoria

The number of playground rockets built in Victoria is unknown – a rough estimate may be more than 20. Currently four playground rockets are known to survive.

	Date	Original location	Metal slide(s) retained	Imposing modern plastic slide added	Able to be accessed and played on
Hawthorn	1960s-70s	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Syndal South	1965	Relocated	Yes	No	No
Moorabbin	1960s-70s	Relocated?	No	No	No
Benalla	1966	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

State heritage listings

The Moree Rocket (1972) by Dick West was included in the New South Wales Heritage Register in November 2025. It no longer retains its slide.

²⁶ John Morcombe, ‘When Balgowlah Heights had a Moon Rocket.’
²⁷ Alice Gorman, ‘Gravity’s playground’, p.103.
²⁸ Alice Gorman, ‘Gravity’s playground’, p.103.
²⁹ Sydney heritage consultant Susan Jackson-Stepowski quoted in John Morcombe, ‘When Balgowlah Heights had a Moon Rocket.’
³⁰ Heritage New South Wales, Cultural heritage assessment of the Moree Rocket, 2025.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAYGROUND ROCKET, HAWTHORN

30 HENRY STREET, HAWTHORN

Included in HO146 Central Gardens Precinct, Hawthorn

The Central Gardens Playground Rocket, Hawthorn was installed in the c.1960s-70s. The rocket form is constructed of flat metal bars. In 2021, the Boroondara City Council proposed to remove it. As a result of feedback from the National Trust and a community campaign, the council decided to keep the rocket.³¹ It was retained as an element in the upgraded playground. A new plastic enclosed slide was installed for safety reasons.



SYNDAL SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

14 MONTGOMERY AVENUE, MOUNT WAVERLEY

No heritage listing

The rocket at Syndal South Primary School was originally constructed in 1965 at the Forest Hill Chase Shopping Centre. It was relocated to the school in 1988.

The rocket form is constructed of flat metal bars. It has two slides, possibly both original, and two fins. Access openings have been sealed off.



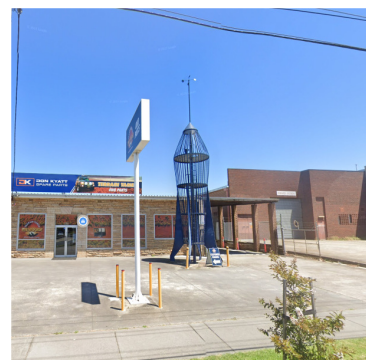
MOORABBIN ROCKET

177 CHESTERVILLE ROAD, MOORABBIN

No heritage listing

This rocket is located outside the shop Don Kyatt Spare Parts. The building was rented from 1974-75 by Don Kyatt, and the rocket has been in situ since that time. A staff member says that members of the public show a great deal of interest in it and ask if their children can climb it.³²

The lower opening has been closed off, and internal ladder and slide removed. At one point, the rocket had signage on it for shop Don Kyatt Spare Parts, but it was removed.



³¹ National Trust of Australia, Victoria, 'Community win fight to save iconic "Rocket Ship"', *Trust Advocate*, 18 June 2021.

³² Phone call with Nyah, Don Kyatt Spare Parts, 13 November 2025.

Children's play equipment at VHR parks and gardens

Like the Benalla Botanical Gardens, many public parks and botanical gardens in the VHR contain children's playgrounds. Most were developed after the establishment of the original park or garden and have generally been redeveloped at least once for safety and insurance reasons. The VHR places listed below have parks, but no 'heritage' play equipment:

- Colac Botanical Gardens (VHR H2259)
- Flagstaff Gardens (VHR H2041)
- Royal Park (VHR H2337)

Children's play equipment at primary schools

All primary schools in the VHR relate to the history of children, and their playgrounds are associated with the history of childhood play. Schools have traditionally had playgrounds, but for the reasons outlined above, schools seldom retain their original playground equipment, as it is continually upgraded.

History of childhood play

The following places and objects in the VHR relate to the history of childhood play

LUNA PARK

18 CAVELL STREET, ST KILDA, PORT PHILLIP CITY

VHR H0938

Luna Park, built in 1912, is rare as an extant operating example of a fun park constructed in the early era of this form of entertainment. It was designed to be enjoyed by children and families and still attracts visitors from across the state. Visitors enter through Mr Moon's open mouth, an iconic design which has influenced Victorian's understandings of play, leisure and childhood. The place is a landmark, and images are commonly seen on Melbournealia, such as tea towels and mugs.



TATURA WORLD WAR II INTERNMENT AND POW CAMPS COLLECTION

49 HOGAN STREET, TATURA, GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY

VHR H2373

The Tatura World War II Internment and POW Camps Collection consists of an assemblage of approximately 1,700 heritage objects and archival materials made and used by internees – including families with children – and prisoners of war (POWs) in the seven World War II internment camps at Tatura. The collection includes paintings and drawings made by children, puppets for plays and musical instruments for children to learn to play.



The following collection relating to the history of childhood play is not included in the VHR.

CHILDHOOD COLLECTION

MUSEUMS VICTORIA

11 NICHOLSON STREET, CARLTON, MELBOURNE CITY

The Childhood Collection contains a broad range of material by children and about children. It encapsulates the Australian Children's Folklore Collection which documents children's verbal folkloric traditions from the 1870s. It is included in the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register.³³ It contains more than 10,000 card files recording children's games; homemade play artefacts; photographs and audiovisual material; and field and research studies. This collection contains intangible heritage such as rhymes, riddles, jokes, superstitions, taunts and chants.



Influence of the 'space race' on popular culture

OAKLEIGH MOTEL

1650 DANDENONG ROAD, OAKLEIGH EAST, MONASH CITY

VHR H2193

The Oakleigh Motel (1956-57) is of architectural significance as an example of 1950s modernism in Victoria and is aesthetically significant as an example of the American 'Googie' style of architecture. This aesthetic was inspired by the atomic age, the space race, and the optimism of a technologically advanced future.

The Oakleigh Motel was designed to be visually striking from the road, using prominent signage and lighting to advertise the place and its function. It was the first motel erected in metropolitan Melbourne and represents a new type of building, associated with the economic and social changes occurring in Victoria after the Second World War, particularly the rise in family travel by private car in the 1950s.



³³ See [The AMW Register | Australian Memory of the World](#)

Summary of Comparisons

Historic play equipment generally does not survive. It is typically upgraded every few years to meet safety standards, thresholds for public liability insurance, and respond to the latest in child development and play theory.

The Benalla Playground Rocket is rare being one of the last of four in Victoria. It is also in its original location and the most intact. Notably it retains a metal slide and has not been 'upgraded' with an enclosed plastic slide. This is partly because the iconic Benalla Rocket shape is now associated with the town and used as a brand for the town. In addition, the inclusion of the Benalla Botanical Gardens in the VHR means that the management of the gardens been undertaken by Benalla Rural City and Heritage Victoria with an awareness of the design significance of the rocket and its rarity.

The Benalla Playground Rocket is associated with the history of childhood play and the influence of the space race on popular culture. Although the rocket demonstrates these historical themes, this one piece of play equipment, does not do so at a State-level in the context of Victoria's broader history.

In 2025, playground rockets are rare to the point of being endangered. The few remaining in Victoria and Australia have become a nostalgic touchstone for adults throughout Victoria who used to play on them in the 1960s and 70s. Their rarity is one factor that has seen a proliferation of nostalgic discussions in online forums, such as Facebook. In the absence of fabric, old photographs of rocket ships have gained much public attention, as locals remember 'lost places'.

Summary of cultural heritage significance (section 40(4))

Statement of significance

The Benalla Playground Rocket is located on Yorta Yorta Country.

What is significant?

The Benalla Playground Rocket, an eight-metre high rocket-shaped piece of playground equipment of welded galvanised pipe construction made to a popular design and erected by Benalla resident Norman Thomas Sheean in 1966.

How is it significant?

The Benalla Playground Rocket is of historical significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion B

Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

Why is it significant?

The Benalla Playground Rocket is a rare surviving example of a 'playground rocket', a tall distinctive rocket-shaped climbing structure for children. These were popular and widespread in Australia and internationally in the 1960s and 1970s. The Rocket demonstrates the influence of 'space age' design on popular culture in Victoria, particularly in relation to the material culture of childhood. It evokes the spirit of the 'space race' and encourages children's exploration and adventure through play. Playground rockets have become an icon of Australian childhood and are discussed with affection and nostalgia in online forums. Due to evolving safety standards and changing attitudes toward playground design, the majority have been removed or substantially altered. The Benalla Playground Rocket is thought to be one of the last four in Victoria and is the most intact. [Criterion B]

Recommended permit exemptions under section 38

Introduction

A [heritage permit](#) is required for all works and activities undertaken in relation to VHR places and objects. Certain works and activities are [exempt from a heritage permit](#), if the proposed works will not harm the cultural heritage significance of the heritage place or object.

Permit Policy

Permit Exemptions

General Permit Exemptions

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the VHR. General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the *Heritage Act 2017*.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must notify the Executive Director before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Specific Permit Exemptions

The works and activities listed below under the heading 'Exempt works and activities' are not considered to cause harm to the cultural heritage significance of the Benalla Playground Rocket. These are subject to the following guidelines and conditions:

Guidelines for specific permit exemptions

1. Where there is an inconsistency between permit exemptions specific to the registered place or object ('specific exemptions') established in accordance with either section 49(3) or section 92(3) of the Act and general exemptions established in accordance with section 92(1) of the Act specific exemptions will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency.
2. In specific exemptions, words have the same meaning as in the Act, unless otherwise indicated. Where there is an inconsistency between specific exemptions and the Act, the Act will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency.
3. Nothing in specific exemptions obviates the responsibility of a proponent to obtain the consent of the owner of the registered place or object, or if the registered place or object is situated on Crown Land the land manager as defined in the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*, prior to undertaking works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions.
4. If a Cultural Heritage Management Plan in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* is required for works covered by specific exemptions, specific exemptions will apply only if the Cultural Heritage Management Plan has been approved prior to works or activities commencing. Where there is an inconsistency between specific exemptions and a Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the relevant works and activities, Heritage Victoria must be contacted for advice on the appropriate approval pathway.
5. Specific exemptions do not constitute approvals, authorisations or exemptions under any other legislation, Local Government, State Government or Commonwealth Government requirements, including but not limited to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth). Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to obtain relevant planning, building or environmental approvals from the responsible authority where applicable.
6. Care should be taken when working with heritage buildings and objects, as historic fabric may contain dangerous and poisonous materials (for example lead paint and asbestos). Appropriate personal protective equipment should be worn at all times. If you are unsure, seek advice from a qualified heritage architect, heritage consultant or local Council heritage advisor.
7. The presence of unsafe materials (for example asbestos, lead paint etc) at a registered place or object does not automatically exempt remedial works

or activities in accordance with this category. Approvals under Part 5 of the Act must be obtained to undertake works or activities that are not expressly exempted by the below specific exemptions.

8. All works should be informed by a Conservation Management Plan prepared for the place or object. The Executive Director is not bound by any Conservation Management Plan and permits still must be obtained for works suggested in any Conservation Management Plan.

General conditions for specific permit exemptions

1. All works or activities permitted under specific exemptions must be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents harm to the registered place or object. Harm includes moving, removing or damaging any part of the registered place or object that contributes to its cultural heritage significance.
2. If during the carrying out of works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the registered place are revealed relating to its cultural heritage significance, including but not limited to historical archaeological remains, such as features, deposits or artefacts, then works must cease and Heritage Victoria notified as soon as possible.
3. If during the carrying out of works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions any Aboriginal cultural heritage is discovered or exposed at any time, all works must cease and the Secretary (as defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*) must be contacted immediately to ascertain requirements under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.
4. If during the carrying out of works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions any munitions or other potentially explosive artefacts are discovered, Victoria Police is to be immediately alerted and the site is to be immediately cleared of all personnel.
5. If during the carrying out of works or activities in accordance with specific exemptions any suspected human remains are found the works or activities must cease. The remains must be left in place and protected from harm or damage. Victoria Police and the State Coroner's Office must be notified immediately. If there are reasonable grounds to believe that the remains are Aboriginal, the State Emergency Control Centre must be immediately notified on 1300 888 544, and, as required under s.17(3)(b) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, all details about the location and nature of the human remains must be provided to the Aboriginal Heritage Council (as defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*).

Exempt works and activities

The Executive Director proposes the following specific permit exemptions for the Benalla Playground Rocket.

1. Like for like repair, maintenance and painting of the rocket structure, in a manner that does not damage its fabric.
2. Like for like repair, maintenance and replacement of the surface around the base of the rocket structure.
3. The removal of graffiti in a manner that does not harm the fabric of the rocket structure.
4. The Benalla Playground Rocket is registered as a heritage place and is located within the registered Benalla Botanical Gardens and Art Gallery (VHR H2260). Works or activities approved under a permit application or exemption obtained for the Benalla Playground Rocket are exempt from the need for a permit or permit exemption under the registration of the Benalla Botanical Gardens and Art Gallery (VHR H2260).

Appendix 1: Important information for owners and interested parties

Heritage Council determination (section 49)

The Heritage Council is an independent statutory body that will make a determination on this recommendation under section 49 of the Act. It will consider the recommendation after a period of 60 days from the date the notice of recommendation is published on its [website](#) under section 41.

Making a submission to the Heritage Council (section 44)

Within the period of 60 days, any person or body may make a submission to the Heritage Council regarding the recommendation and request a hearing in relation to that submission. Information about making a submission and submission forms are available on the [Heritage Council's website](#). The owner can also make a submission about proposed permit exemptions (Section 40(4)(d)).

Consideration of submissions to the Heritage Council (section 46)

(1) The Heritage Council must consider—

- (a) any written submission made to it under section 44; and
- (b) any further information provided to the Heritage Council in response to a request under section 45.

Conduct of hearings by Heritage Council in relation to a recommendation (section 46A)

(1) The Heritage Council may conduct a hearing in relation to a recommendation under section 37, 38 or 39 in any circumstances that the Heritage Council considers appropriate.

(2) The Heritage Council must conduct a hearing if—

- (a) a submission made to it under section 44 includes a request for a hearing before the Heritage Council; and
- (b) the submission is made by a person or body with a real or substantial interest in the place, object or land that is the subject of the submission.

Determinations of the Heritage Council (section 49)

(1) After considering a recommendation that a place, object or land should or should not be included in the Heritage Register and any submissions in respect of the recommendation and conducting any hearing, the Heritage Council may—

- (a) determine that the place or object is of State-level cultural heritage significance and is to be included in the Heritage Register; or

(ab) in the case of a place, determine that—

- (i) part of the place is of State-level cultural heritage significance and is to be included in the Heritage Register; and
- (ii) part of the place is not of State-level cultural heritage significance and is not to be included in the Heritage Register; or

(ac) in the case of an object, determine that—

- (i) part of the object is of State-level cultural heritage significance and is to be included in the Heritage Register; and
- (ii) part of the object is not of State-level cultural heritage significance and is not to be included in the Heritage Register; or

- (b) determine that the place or object is not of State-level cultural heritage significance and is not to be included in the Heritage Register; or

- (c) in the case of a recommendation in respect of a place, determine that the place or part of the place is not to be included in the Heritage Register but—
 - (i) refer the recommendation and any submissions to the relevant planning authority or the Minister administering the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to consider the inclusion of the place or part of the place in a planning scheme in accordance with the objectives set out in section 4(1)(d) of that Act; or
 - (ii) determine that it is more appropriate for steps to be taken under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 or by any other means to protect or conserve the place or part of the place; or
 - (ca) in the case of a recommendation in respect of an object nominated under section 27A, determine that the object, or part of the object, is to be included in the Heritage Register if it is integral to understanding the cultural heritage significance of a registered place or a place the Heritage Council has determined to be included in the Heritage Register; or
 - (d) in the case of a recommendation in respect of additional land nominated under section 27B, determine that the additional land, or any part of the additional land, is to be included in the Heritage Register if—
 - (i) the State-level cultural heritage significance of the place, or part of the place, would be substantially less if the additional land or any part of the additional land which is or has been used in conjunction with the place were developed; or
 - (ii) the additional land or any part of the additional land surrounding the place, or part of the place, is important to the protection or conservation of the place or contributes to the understanding of the place.
- (2) The Heritage Council must make a determination under subsection (1)—
- (a) within 40 days after the date on which written submissions may be made under section 44; or
 - (b) if any hearing is conducted, within 90 days after the completion of the hearing.
- (3) A determination made under subsection (1)(a), (ab), (ac), (ca) or (d)—
- (a) may include categories of works or activities which may be carried out in relation to a place, object or land, or part of a place, object or land, for which a permit under this Act is not required, if the Heritage Council considers that the works or activities would not harm the cultural heritage significance of the place, object or land; and
 - (b) must include a statement of the reasons for the making of the determination.
- (4) If the Heritage Council determines to include a place, or part of a place, in the Heritage Register, the Heritage Council may also determine to include land that is not the subject of a nomination under section 27B in the Heritage Register as part of the place if—
- (a) the land is ancillary to the place; and
 - (b) the person who owns the place, or part of the place—
 - (i) is the owner of the land; and
 - (ii) consents to its inclusion.
- (5) If a member of the Heritage Council makes a submission under section 44 in respect of a recommendation, the member must not take part in the consideration or determination of the Heritage Council.
- (6) The Heritage Council must notify the Executive Director of any determination under this section as soon as practicable after the determination.

Obligations of owners (section 42, 42A, 42B, 42C, 42D)

42 Obligations of owners—to advise of works, permits etc. on foot when statement of recommendation given

- (1) The owner of a place, object or land to whom a statement of recommendation has been given must advise the Executive Director in writing of—

- (a) any works or activities that are being carried out in relation to the place, object or land at the time the statement is given; and
- (b) if the place, object or land is a place or additional land, any application for a planning permit or a building permit, or any application for an amendment to a planning permit or a building permit, that has been made in relation to the place or additional land but not determined at the time the statement is given; and
- (c) any works or activities that are proposed to be carried out in relation to the place, object or land at the time the statement is given.

(2) An advice under subsection (1) must be given within 10 days after the statement of recommendation is given under section 40.

42A Obligations of owners before determination or inclusion in the Heritage Register—to advise of permits

(1) This section applies if—

- (a) an owner of any of the following is given a statement of recommendation—
 - (i) a place or object nominated under section 27;
 - (ii) an object nominated under section 27A;
 - (iii) land nominated under section 27B; and
- (b) any of the following occurs within the statement of recommendation period in relation to the place, object or land—
 - (i) the making of an application for a planning permit or a building permit;
 - (ii) the making of an application for an amendment to a planning permit or a building permit;
 - (iii) the grant of a planning permit or building permit;
 - (iv) the grant of an amendment to a planning permit or building permit.

(2) The owner must advise the Executive Director in writing of—

- (a) the making of an application referred to in subsection (1)(b)(i) or (ii), within 10 days of the making of the application; or
- (b) a grant referred to in subsection (1)(b)(iii) or (iv), within 10 days of the owner becoming aware of the grant.

42B Obligations of owners before determination or inclusion in the Heritage Register—to advise of activities

(1) This section applies if—

- (a) an owner of a place, object or land is given a statement of recommendation; and
- (b) within the statement of recommendation period it is proposed that activities that could harm the place, object or land be carried out.

(2) The owner, not less than 10 days before carrying out the activities, must advise the Executive Director in writing of the proposal to do so.

42C Obligations of owners before determination or inclusion in the Heritage Register—to advise of proposal to dispose

(1) This section applies if—

- (a) an owner of a place, object or land is given a statement of recommendation; and
- (b) within the statement of recommendation period a proposal is made to dispose of the whole or any part of the place, object or land.

(2) The owner, within 10 days after entering into an agreement, arrangement or understanding for the disposal of the whole or any part of the place, object or land, must advise the Executive Director in writing of the proposal to do so.

42D Obligations of owners before determination or inclusion in the Heritage Register—requirement to give statement to purchaser

(1) This section applies if—

- (a) an owner of a place, object or land is given a statement of recommendation; and
- (b) the owner proposes to dispose of the whole or any part of the place, object or land within the statement of recommendation period.

(2) Before entering into an agreement, arrangement or understanding to dispose of the whole or any part of the place, object or land during the statement of recommendation period, the owner must give a copy of the statement of recommendation to the person who, under the proposed agreement, arrangement or understanding, is to acquire the place, object or land or part of the place, object or land.

Owners of places and objects must comply with obligations (section 43)

An owner of a place, object or land who is subject to an obligation under section 42, 42A, 42B, 42C or 42D must comply with that obligation.

Penalty: In the case of a natural person, 120 penalty units;
 In the case of a body corporate, 240 penalty units.