

Statement of Recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria

Mandalay, VHR H0232

24 The Strand, Williamstown, Hobsons Bay City
Bunurong Country



Executive Director recommendation

I recommend to the Heritage Council of Victoria (**Heritage Council**) that Mandalay, located at 24 The Strand, Williamstown in the Victorian Heritage Register (**VHR**) be amended.

In accordance with section 62 of the *Heritage Act 2017* (**the Act**), I suggest that the Heritage Council determine:

- to include additional land in the VHR (section 49(1)(d)(i) and (ii) of the Act)



STEVEN AVERY
Executive Director, Heritage Victoria
Date of recommendation: 9 February 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.

History

Bunurong

The Bunurong people have had an unbroken connection to the land and waters around Williamstown since time immemorial.

Bunurong Country includes the area from the Werribee River in the northwest, across Westernport and the Mornington Peninsula, and encompassing part of southwest Gippsland.

The Yoorrook Justice Commission (2025) has recorded how colonisation caused irreparable damage to First Peoples in Victoria through the dispossession of Country, massacres, the introduction of diseases, confinement on missions and reserves, forced labour, the separation of families, and ongoing policies and practices that have resulted in systemic injustice.¹

The Bunurong continue to live, work, practice culture, and manage land and waters around Williamstown.

Abberton House

The land on which Mandalay now sits was first rated to a John C. Riddell by 1857. Between 1858 and 1862, the land was owned by Captain William Probert who constructed the house in 1858 and is shown on the G.A. Windsor (Public Lands Officer) plan of July 1858. Captain Probert was a ships chandler (supplier of equipment for ships) and a partner in the firm Probert, Verdon & Co, Merchants and Sailmakers.²

Probert engaged municipal surveyor and local Williamstown architect William Bull to design the house, which was constructed from local basalt by builder Charles Pinckney. Other contractors included J & N Henderson for the joinery, J. Winch for the roof slating, T.W. Hodgson for the papering and decorating, and blacksmiths, Roberts & Co. to supply a colonial oven (open fire) and a British oven (gas stove).³

At the time of its construction, the two-storey Colonial Georgian house was oriented to the south, facing the Williamstown port, as indicated by the extant small porch on this elevation. The stuccoed bluestone building featured a hipped roof clad in Welsh slate, with architraved window openings on the eastern elevation, and plain window openings at staggered heights to the northern elevation. At this time the house had six rooms.⁴

In 1862, Captain Probert sold the property to his former business partner, George Verdon. Verdon was a successful politician who won the seat of Williamstown in 1859, became Treasurer in 1860 and again in 1863, travelled to London as Agent General in 1869, was knighted in 1872, and later had a successful career in banking in Victoria.⁵ Verdon named the property 'Abberton House'.

In 1869, Verdon sold the house to Williamstown Grammar headmaster Charles Steedman. Under Steedman's ownership the house was extended from six rooms to nine between 1874 and 1875. This may be when the single storey wings (being the kitchen and laundry) at the rear of the house were built. Between 1879 and 1883 it was rented to a Mrs Clarissa Usher, who operated a day school from the residence and used it for night classes.⁶

'Mandalay'

After Steedman's death in 1899, his widow sold the house in 1902 to Captain William Hearn, a harbour trust employee. Captain William Hearn was responsible for renaming the house Mandalay. He also planted the Canary Island date palm and *Magnolia grandiflora* tree in the eastern (now front) garden.⁷

¹ Yoorrook Justice Commission. *Truth be Told*. 2025.

² Australian Dictionary of Biography. *Sir George Frederic Verdon (1834–1896)*. 1976.

³ Hobsons Bay City Council. *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study Revised*. 2017.

⁴ Public Records Office of Victoria. *VPRS 2132 Rate Books*. 1858-1959.

⁵ ADB. *Sir George Frederic Verdon (1834–1896)*. 1976.

⁶ PROV. *VPRS 2132 Rate Books*. 1858-1959.

⁷ Hobsons Bay City Council. *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study Revised*. 2017.

Prior to 1905, an Edwardian-style timber verandah and gabled porch was added to the eastern elevation (captured in the 1905 MMBW plan) effectively reorienting the house towards the Strand. The original entrance on the southern elevation was retained as a secondary side entrance.

In the mid-1940s Captain George Molyneux, a sea pilot in the Melbourne Pilot Service, purchased Mandalay. It has since then remained in the ownership of that family.

Selected bibliography

Australian Dictionary of Biography. *Sir George Frederic Verdon (1834–1896)*. 1976.

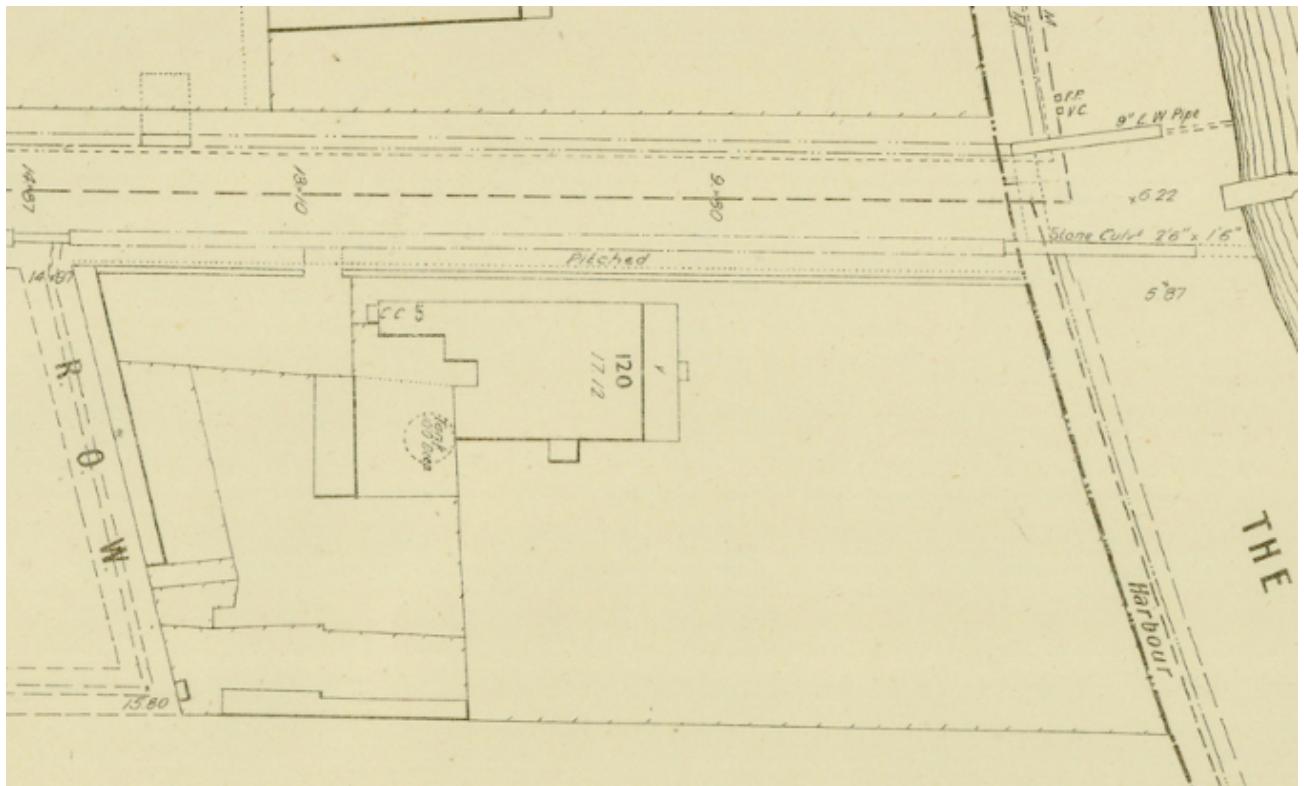
Public Records Office of Victoria. *VPRS 2132 Rate Books*. 1858-1959.

Hobsons Bay City Council. *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study Revised*. 2017.

Images



1858. G.A. Windsor Williamstown Survey (Mandalay indicated in red circle). Source: PROV.



1905. MMBW Plan, note verandah and steps added to eastern elevation. Source: SLV.



1927. Williamstown looking south along The Strand. (Mandalay indicated with red arrow.) Source: SLV.



[between 1950 and 1960]. Aerial view of Williamstown, Victoria, screen clipping showing Mandalay's garden with Canary Island date palm tree visible. Source: SLV.



2026, Edwardian timber verandah fronting The Strand.



2026, original portico entry on southern façade.



2026, bluestone wall to northern property boundary.



2026. *Canary Island Palm and Magnolia grandiflora viewed from the verandah.*



2026. *Subject land to the west of the house.*



2026. *Single storey, skillion roofed extension to southwestern corner of the house, containing laundry (internal kitchen on the left).*



2026. Shed in rear garden of unknown date.



2026. Single storey, skillion roofed services area in the northwestern corner of the house containing kitchen and former outdoor toilet.

Further information

Registered Aboriginal Party information

Mandalay is located on Bunurong Country.

Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, the Registered Aboriginal Party for this land is the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.

Native Title

Native Title is the recognition in Australian law that some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to hold rights and interests in land and water. Native Title is not granted by governments. It is recognised through a determination made by the Federal Court of Australia under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).

In 2010, acknowledging the difficult nature of having native title determined under the Native Title Act, the Victorian Government developed an alternate system for recognising the rights of Victorian Traditional Owners. The *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* (Vic) allows the government and Traditional Owner groups to make agreements that recognise Traditional Owners' relationship to land and provide them with certain rights on Crown land.

There is not a Native Title determination or a Recognition and Settlement Agreement for the place.

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register

The place is in an area of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity associated with Hobsons Bay.

(January 2026)

Integrity

The integrity of the place is very good. The cultural heritage values of Mandalay can be easily read in the extant fabric.

Mandalay is still legible as an early residence in Williamstown.

(January 2026)

Intactness

The intactness of the place is very good.

Mandalay is highly intact. There has been minimal alteration to the internal arrangement because the house has been in the same family's ownership since the 1940s. Most changes have been cosmetic, e.g. re-wallpapering of walls.

(January 2026)

Condition

The condition of the place is poor.

The single storey services area housing the former toilet at the rear is in very poor condition. The northwestern corner has collapsed, and the western wall is experiencing a significant lean that is currently braced with timber members. The original stone wall along John Street, built c.1864 appears to have been rebuilt in several sections in varying quality, and part of it has been dismantled while other sections lean towards the footpath. The section west of the back gate and the pillar at the eastern end, on the corner of John Street and the Strand do appear to be original.

Internally, there is significant cracking on most walls and ceilings. Some of the flooring in the library is soft underfoot. Some rooms show signs of water damage and in several places the rendered wall and ceiling finishes and wallpaper is cracking and peeling off.

(January 2026)

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.

Condition, intactness and integrity images



2026. Dismantled section of bluestone wall and dismantled skillion-roofed service wing.



2026. Cracking to walls in dining room.

Amendment recommendation

State-level cultural heritage significance of the place

The State-level cultural heritage significance of Mandalay was recognised in 1974 by its inclusion in the Register of Historic Buildings.

Amendment application

On 22 January 2026 the Executive Director made and accepted an application to amend the registration of the place to ensure it is consistent with current practices under the Act.

Assessment of additional land and summary of significance

The information below is provided under s.40(3A)(c)(i)(ii) and s.40(4)(c)(i)(ii) as part of the Executive Director's Statement of Recommendation.

The Executive Director recommends that the Heritage Council amend this registration because it is his view that:

- The State-level cultural heritage significance 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 [s.40(3A)(c)(i)].
- The additional land surrounds the place and is important to the protection or conservation of the place; or contributes to the understanding of the place [s.40(3A)(c)(ii)].

The Executive Director notes that:

- The current extent is limited to the fabric of the building, and is insufficient to protect, conserve and allow for a proper understanding of the place.
- The current extent:
 - excludes the front and rear gardens.
 - excludes the bluestone wall along John Street.
- The land proposed for inclusion both is currently and has been used in conjunction with the place since 1858 which is almost 170 years.

The Executive Director is of the view that:

- If any of the additional land proposed for inclusion in the registration were developed, depending upon the nature of the proposal, there is potential for the development to impact upon Mandalay and substantially reduce its State-level cultural heritage significance.
- In the context of other nineteenth-century houses with registered land in the VHR, Mandalay is an outlier because its current extent of registration does not cover the entire garden area.
- The proposed inclusion of additional land, particularly around the currently registered building will enable works that could potentially impact on its conservation, such as drainage and paving, to be managed under a heritage approvals process.
- The proposed inclusion of additional land will ensure that the following elements are included in the extent of the Registered Place and will be subject to a heritage approvals process to manage change. These features and fabric will become registered:
 1. The original bluestone pillar on the northeastern corner of the property.
 2. The bluestone wall along John Street.
 3. The front garden including a mature *Magnolia grandiflora* tree and Canary Island Pine.
 4. The rear garden area, inclusive of a timber shed of unknown date.

Amending the Heritage Council Criteria

This place is currently registered on the basis of the following Criteria:

None.

The Executive Director recommends that the place is registered on the basis of the following Criteria:

Criterion A (Historical Significance)

Criterion D (Architectural Significance)

The existing Statement of Significance dates from a 2009 Online Data Upgrade Project but does contain references to the architectural value of the Colonial Georgian house, and the historical value of Mandalay's ownership by several figures in the maritime field. It is proposed to convert the existing Statement of Significance into the current format.

Change of name

Not Applicable.

Statutory requirements under section 40

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

The Executive Director recommends that the registration of Mandalay in the VHR is amended.

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

Number: H0232

Category: Registered Place.

Name: Mandalay

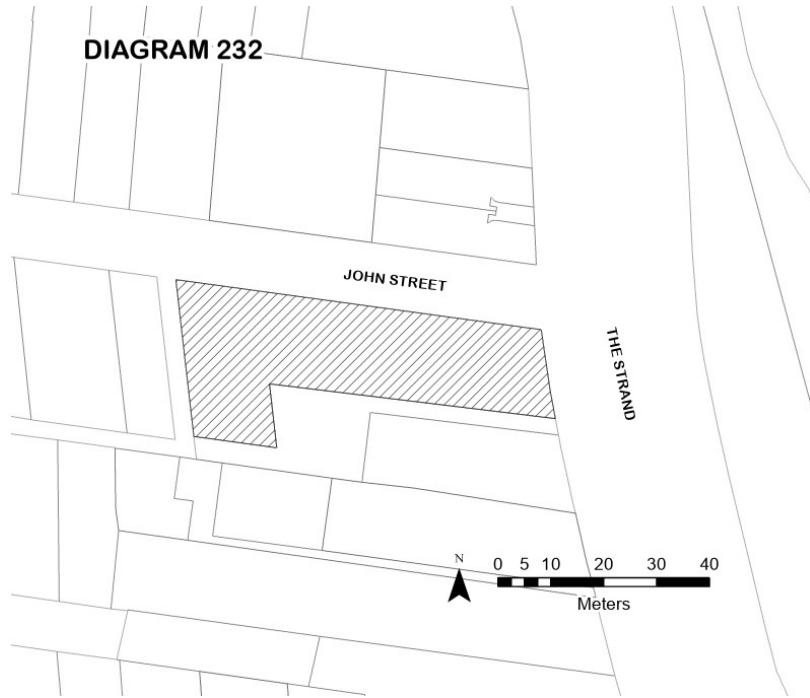
Location: 24 The Strand, Williamstown

Municipality: Hobsons Bay City

Proposed extent of registration

The Executive Director recommends that the extent of registration for Mandalay be gazetted as:

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 232 encompassing all of Lot 1 on Title Plan 894768.



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 place, including elements and features of State-level cultural heritage significance, being the house and extension, the bluestone wall to John Street and the garden and significant trees.

This extent of registration has been chosen to align with the title boundaries for Mandalay. This is the remaining land from a half-acre block on which Mandalay was originally located. It is considered that the title boundary is an appropriate curtilage to provide an appropriate setting in the garden and maintain the visual connection between the house and the Strand.

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 the land, all soft and hard landscape features, plantings, and all buildings (exteriors, interiors and fixtures) 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 works or activities in this recommendation.

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

Statement of significance

Mandalay is located on Bunurong country.

What is significant?

Mandalay, formerly 'Abberton House', built in 1858 for Captain James William Probert, to a design by Williamstown architect and municipal surveyor William Bull and constructed by local builder Charles Pinckney. The house is comprised of a two-storey building of stuccoed basalt, locally quarried from Williamstown. The later additions to the house, including the eastern verandah with timber arch, the Canary Island Pine and *Magnolia grandiflora* tree, and the bluestone wall to the northern boundary are also of significance.

How is it significant?

Mandalay is of historic and architectural 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 D

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

Why is it significant?

Mandalay is historically significant as an early residence that demonstrates Williamstown's pivotal role in Melbourne's maritime history. Mandalay's first owner, Captain William Probert, was a Williamstown ships chandler who likely selected the site for its proximity to the port. Probert was a partner with George F. Verdon in the company Probert, Verdon and Co. Merchants and Sailmakers. The location of Mandalay, and its original south-facing orientation towards the port, reflects the early residential development of Williamstown in connection with the maritime industry, as the first seaport of Melbourne. [Criterion A]

Mandalay is architecturally significant as a fine example of a colonial Georgian residence, in the maritime context of Williamstown. The stuccoed bluestone building has a hipped roof clad in Welsh slate. The original Georgian entrance on the southern elevation is sheltered by a simple portico. The single storey, timber verandah to the eastern (now front) elevation is an Edwardian-era addition and features a gabled porch with an unusual timber arch to the entry. [Criterion D]

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

It is recommended that a Conservation Management Plan is utilised to manage the place in a manner which respects its cultural heritage significance.

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 Act.

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](#).

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.

Appendix 2: Existing registration details

Existing extent of registration

City of Williamstown. No. 232. Mandalay, 24 The Strand, Williamstown.

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No 100 Wednesday, October 9 1974 p.3649]

Existing extent diagram

This registration was gazetted on 9 October 1974 without an extent diagram.

Existing statement of significance

This notional statement was produced as part of an Online Data Upgrade Project 2009.

Mandalay was built in 1858-9 by the builder Charles Pinckney to the design of the Williamstown surveyor and architect William Bull for Captain William Probert, a Williamstown ships chandler. It is said to have been built from basalt quarried from Captain Ruffles' quarry further along The Strand. Probert was a partner of George F Verdon (1834-96) in the company Probert, Verdon & Co, Merchants and Sailmakers, which failed in 1858. Verdon purchased the house in 1862, named it Abberton House and lived there from 1862-8. Verdon was a successful politician, winning the seat of Williamstown in 1859, became Treasurer in 1860 and again in 1863, travelled to London as Agent General in 1869, was knighted in 1872, and later had a successful career in banking in Victoria. Verdon sold the house c1869 to the teacher Charles Steedman, who extended it from six to nine rooms in 1875. From c1879-83 it was rented to Mrs Clarissa Usher, who used it as a day school and for night classes. Steedman lived there from 1883 until his death in 1899, and his widow sold it in 1902 to Captain William Hearn, a Harbour Trust employee, who renamed the house Mandalay and is believed to have developed the garden and planted the Canary Island palm and the pepper trees in the front garden. The house originally faced south, towards the port, and a boathed and two jetties are shown to the south-east of the house in the 1905 MMBW plan. Construction of The Strand apparently influenced the construction of a new verandah and gabled porch on the east side of the house in c1905.

Mandalay is a two storey rendered bluestone house in a simple colonial Georgian style. At the rear is a single storey bluestone service wing in poor condition. The low-pitched pyramidal roof is covered with roof slates reputedly from Carnavon in Wales, and the roofing timbers are of cedar. The early twentieth century single-storey verandah has an unusual arched timber entrance porch in the centre. The c1864 bluestone wall along John Street appears to have been rebuilt in stages during the twentieth century, and the former picket fence along The Strand has been replaced with a modern fence.

Existing permit policy and permit exemptions

Nil.