

# Statement of Recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria

Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands,  
PROV H2454

153 Lower Plenty Road and 2,4,6 Bachli Court and  
1,3,5,7,11,15,17,23, 25,27,29, 31 Finlayson Street and 1-8 Cremin  
Court and 1-10 Ferrier Court and 1-11, 14 Von Nida Crescent,  
Rosanna, City of Banyule

Wurundjeri Country



## Executive Director recommendations

Under section 37 of the *Heritage Act 2017* (the Act) I make the following recommendations to the Heritage Council of Victoria (Heritage Council).

### Recommendation 1

That part of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands, being all of Rosanna Parklands and the residential subdivision between Bachli Court and the southern portion of Von Nida Crescent, located at 153 Lower Plenty Road and 2,4,6 Bachli Court and 1, 3, 5, 7, 11, 15, 17, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31 Finlayson Street and 1-8 Cremin Court and 1-10 Ferrier Court and 1-11, 14 Von Nida Crescent, Rosanna, 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:

- part of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is of State-level cultural heritage significance and is to be included in the VHR in accordance with section 49(1)(ab)(i) 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.

### Recommendation 2

That part of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands, being the area between the northern portion of Von Nida Crescent and the northern portion of Pickworth Court, located at 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49 Finlayson Street and 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 Von Nida Crescent and 1-15 Pickworth Court and 15 Phillips Crescent is not of State-level cultural heritage significance and should not be included in the VHR.

It is noted that the place is already included in the Heritage Overlay of the local planning scheme (HO92) but that a planning scheme amendment may be necessary if part of the place is included in the VHR. If this is the case, the Local Government Authority may wish to consider retaining the balance of the Elliston Estate in the Heritage Overlay.

I suggest that the Heritage Council determine that:

- part of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is not of State-level cultural heritage significance and should not be included in the VHR in accordance with section 49(1)(ab)(ii) of the Act
- the recommendation and any submissions be referred to the relevant planning authority to consider the inclusion of the place or part of the place in a planning scheme in accordance with section 49(1)(c)(i) of the Act.

### Recommendation 3

It is noted that the area nominated for consideration for the VHR was increased to include the northernmost portion of Rosanna Parklands after the initial nomination was accepted. This second application was made under 27B(1)(b) of 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), being the northernmost portion of the Rosanna Parklands, immediately south of Chapman Street.



**STEVEN AVERY**  
Executive Director, Heritage Victoria

**Date of recommendation: 2 June 2025**

## Background

### The heritage system in Victoria

The system of [heritage protection in Victoria](#) essentially operates at two levels.

Most heritage places in Victoria will be important at a local level. These heritage places are often protected via the Heritage Overlay of the local council's planning scheme.

A smaller percentage of places and objects will be important at the State level. This means that they tell an important story in the history of Victoria, rather than the history of their local area or region. Places and objects of State-level cultural heritage significance may be considered for inclusion in the VHR under the Act. There is a high benchmark or 'threshold' for inclusion in the VHR.

This current process under the Act has been initiated to establish whether the Elliston Estate and Rosanna Parklands is of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria. In this case, Heritage Victoria's view is that part of the place is of State-level cultural heritage significance and part is not.

Any recommendation to not include an area in the VHR should not be seen to overshadow or outweigh any significance that the place may otherwise retain, particularly at the local level. The place's local-level heritage significance is a matter for local government.

More information about heritage protection in Victoria can be found on the [Heritage Council website](#).

### Heritage Overlay for the place

The Elliston Estate and Rosanna Parklands has been protected by a Heritage Overlay in the Banyule Planning Scheme for many years in recognition of the heritage significance of the place at a local government level. A Vegetation Protection Overlay also applies under the Banyule Planning Scheme. This recommendation is being made to determine if the place also warrants inclusion in the VHR.

### Previous VHR process

The Rosanna Parklands was nominated for inclusion in the VHR in 2005. At that time, the Executive Director recommended that the Parklands should not be included in the VHR. Following a hearing, the Heritage Council concurred with the Executive Director's position. It is noted that the 2005 process dealt with the Rosanna Parklands in isolation, without consideration of the residential estate. This process considers both the residential estate and the parklands together.

### Nomination of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands

On 6 May 2025, the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria (**Executive Director**) nominated the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands for inclusion in the VHR. On 9 May 2025, Heritage Victoria formally accepted the nomination and wrote to all owners, including Banyule City Council, to notify them that the process had commenced.

The nomination document identified the area below (outlined in red in the diagram) for consideration for the VHR. It comprised the majority of Rosanna Parklands and part of Elliston Estate.





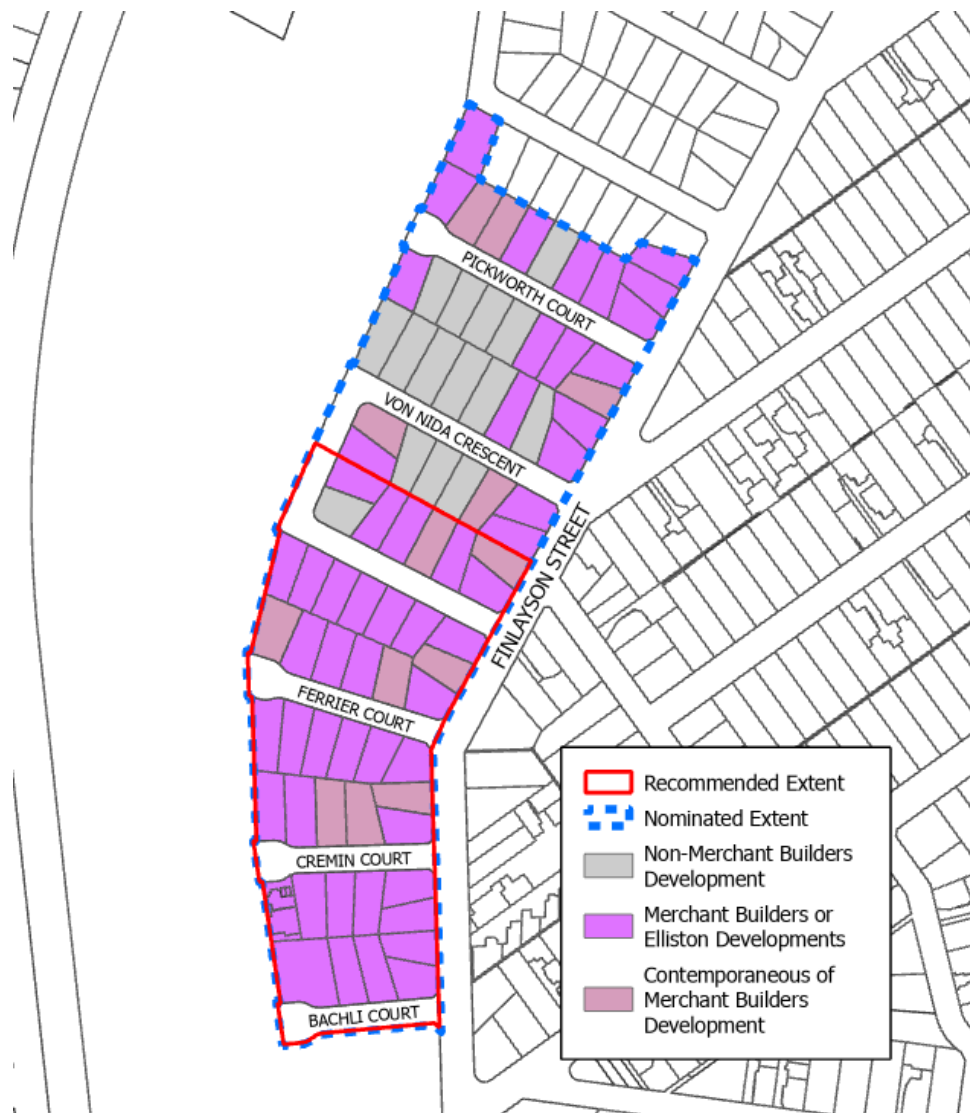
## Area recommended for inclusion in the VHR

During the assessment of the place, the Executive Director formed the view that only a portion of the residential subdivision within the Elliston Estate met the high threshold for inclusion in the VHR. This area comprises the southernmost portion of the estate, between Bachli Court and the southern half of Von Nida Crescent. This area has been recommended for inclusion in the VHR because it features a high proportion of houses constructed by Merchant Builders and designed by its architectural team. It has a greater level of integrity and intactness to the era in both its buildings and landscaping than the area to the north.

It is noted that not every residence within the area recommended for inclusion in the VHR was designed by Merchant Builders, or that this is still to be established. Nonetheless, the non-Merchant Builders houses in this area are designed and constructed in a sympathetic manner and share landscape characteristics with the remainder of the estate.

## Area not recommended for inclusion in the VHR

Although there are individual houses associated with Merchant Builders and of architectural value to the north of this area, this area includes a greater number of houses designed by other architects and constructed by other builders. It is less cohesive and less expressive of the era. Accordingly, the Executive Director has recommended this area is not included in the VHR.



## 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 hold a hearing in relation to the submission. The Heritage Council must conduct a hearing if the submission is made by a 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 Elliston Estate and Rosanna Parkland at the time of the site inspection by Heritage Victoria in March 2025.

Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is a public parkland and residential subdivision located in the Melbourne suburb of Rosanna on Wurundjeri Country. The place is bounded by Chapman Street to the north, Lower Plenty Road to the south, the Hurstbridge Railway Line to the west, and Finlayson Street to the east. The residential estate and public parklands are both part of the related whole envisioned by Merchant Builders and its architects and designers.

## Diagram of main elements



## Elliston Estate

Elliston Estate is a project housing estate that adjoins the Rosanna Parklands. The Estate was developed in the late 1960s to the early 1970s by Merchant Builders with their design team that included leading architects such as Graeme Gunn and Charles Duncan, as well as noted landscape designer Ellis Stones. Merchant Builders' vision for the place was mostly realised in the southern section of the broader Estate, from Bachli Court to the southern half of Von Nida Crescent. This area shares landscape characteristics with the Parklands, featuring native vegetation and rockworks in both the

public and private realms. There are very few concrete footpaths and powerlines have been placed underground. The houses are constructed with brown, tan or clinker brick with timber joinery and detailing, creating an earthy material palette. Most residences present as low-profile and often single-storey from the street, with integrated carports or garages. Residences that border the Parkland feature minimal or no fencing, further reinforcing a sense of subtle transition between the public and private spaces.

Beyond the southern section of Von Nida Crescent, the visible influence of Merchant Builders begins to diminish. Although there are examples of Merchant Builders' houses, there are also a greater number of residences designed by other architects. This area is predominantly characterised by later housing development and features varied architectural styles and landscaping treatments.

## Rosanna Parklands

Rosanna Parklands is an expansive public parkland of roughly 25 hectares that is bisected in a north–south alignment by the Salt Creek. The main public access routes are from the north and south, and a series of gravel trails provide access throughout the park. The park can also be accessed from the series of courts and crescents that abut the parklands from the residential estate. The landscape of the park is characterised by a mix of open, grassed areas, native shrubs and stands of mature eucalypts. These native plantings are a hallmark of Ellis Stones' approach to landscape design, as are the rockery features of which there are several examples. There are occasionally mounds and rises that recall the place's former use as a golf course. There are also occasional examples of exotic tree species that may also date from this era, and which Stones specified should be retained. The park features other amenities, including play equipment and timber seating, located at various points throughout the park.

## Description images

### Elliston Estate



*2025. Street view of Bachli Court. The residences were built with tan bricks and are in a landscaped setting with extensive native vegetation. Source: Heritage Victoria.*



*2025. Street view of a residence in Cremin Court. Native vegetation extends to the property boundary. Source: Heritage Victoria*





2025. These two images show two residences in Cremin Court that border Rosanna Parkland (on the right). The minimal fencing integrates the private space into public realms. Source: Heritage Victoria



2021. The image shows the later housing development within the northern half of Von Nida Crescent. Source: Google Street View.

2014. The image shows the southern side of Pickworth Crescent, to the north of Von Nida Crescent. Note the varied architectural styles and landscaping treatments. Source: Google Street View.

## Rosanna Parklands



2025. Images showing the general view of Rosanna Parklands. Source: Heritage Victoria



## History

### Merchant Builders

Post-war suburban development in metropolitan Melbourne was generally characterised by the rapid expansion of single dwellings on 'quarter acre blocks' in the middle suburbs and new greenfield sites in the outer suburbs. From around 1960, figures such as Robin Boyd criticised the 'uglification' of the Australian countryside and new suburbs.<sup>1</sup> In the view of critics of conventional suburban development, the local climate and landscape were often ignored in the planning of the suburbs, and the houses were designed in a mix of styles with no coherence.

In 1965, John Ridge and David Yencken founded Merchant Builders, with the aim of providing an alternative to standard suburban residential development. Its approach used the project house model in which homebuyers could select an architect-designed residence of standardised design, often marketed via a display home. Merchant Builders recognised an opportunity for 'good-quality, medium-cost housing' and promoted a design approach that integrated 'architecture, landscape and interiors'.<sup>2</sup> Central to its principal design philosophy was integration of residential development with the surrounding environment. Employing some of Victoria's leading architects, houses were designed along Modernist principles and the firm became known for its low-profile residences in a palette of natural materials, set in landscapes of native planting. Although homebuyers could vary standardised plans, a degree of consistency in housing design was emphasised. Merchant Builders also promoted energy-efficient and passive energy features.

The firm was at its most prolific in the 1960s and 1970s, and Elliston Estate was the largest of Merchant Builders' housing developments. The Elliston Estate project was followed by the commencement of its Winter Park Cluster Housing project – a 'cluster' subdivision in Doncaster comprising 20 detached houses constructed between 1970 and 1974. Winter Park received a citation from the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1975 and was included in the VHR in 1997 ([VHR H1345](#)).<sup>3</sup> Merchant Builders received numerous other awards before disbanding in the 1980s, including Royal Australian Institute of Architects (Victorian Chapter) Bronze Medals (1970 and 1978), the Robin Boyd Environmental Award (1972) for the firm's 'decade of outstanding contributions to housing development in Melbourne'<sup>4</sup>, the Herald-HIA housing prize (1978) and the Australian Design Council Award (1982).<sup>5</sup> Merchant Builders is regarded as one of the most influential building companies in Victoria in the post-war era.

### Early Development of the place

Year	Event
1840	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>James Watson purchased Crown Portion Five in the Parish of Keelbundora in 1840, which became the Rosanna Estate.</li></ul>
1911	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A golf course and club house were established on part of the estate, to the immediate east of the Hurstbridge Railway Line. The course was first known as the Yarra Yarra Golf Club, then became Rosanna Golf Links.</li></ul>
1936	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The property was purchased by Bruce Treganowan, who retained the golf course and renamed it Rosanna Golf Club.<sup>6</sup></li></ul>
1961-1968	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In 1961, the lease of Rosanna Golf Club expired. The post-war residential boom in the area inspired the owner of the golf course to propose a residential subdivision of the site. Heidelberg City Council reported receiving vast opposition from the local community to the proposal.<sup>7</sup></li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> Graeme Davison, 'The suburban idea and its enemies', *Journal of Urban History*, 39 (5), 2013, p 842.

<sup>2</sup> Anne Gartner, 'Merchant Builders' in Philip Goad and Julie Willis (eds), *The Encyclopedia Australian Architecture*, p. 451.

<sup>3</sup> Winter Park Cluster Housing statement of significance, [vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/5076](http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/5076).

<sup>4</sup> *The Age* 27 November 1972, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Anne Gartner, 'Merchant Builders' in Philip Goad and Julie Willis (eds), *The Encyclopedia Australian Architecture*, p. 451.

<sup>6</sup> Ellis Stones, 1971, *Australian Garden Design*, p 192.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

- Heidelberg City Council purchased the golf course site in 1968,<sup>8</sup> having agreed to develop half of the site as a residential subdivision and retain the other half as public parkland.<sup>9</sup>

## Development of Elliston Estate and Rosanna Parklands

1969	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In February 1969, Heidelberg City Council engaged with Merchant Builders Pty Ltd for the development of the land. Merchant Builders announced their project 'Elliston', with the housing to be developed over a three-year period.<sup>10</sup> The Estate was to have underground power lines, individual courtyards, landscaped gardens and an abundance of natural parkland.<sup>11</sup></li> <li>• The design team for the Estate consisted of the following renowned architects of the period: <b>Graeme Gunn (1933-2024), Charles Duncan (1933- 2022), Daryl Jackson (1937-) and Evan Walker (1935-2015) (with Jackson as lead), and David McGlashan (1927-1998) and Neil Everist (1929-2016) (with McGlashan as lead).</b></li> <li>• <b>Ellis Stones (1895-1975)</b>, a notable landscape designer, was responsible for the overall landscape design concept for the estate as well as consulting with individual house owners on detailed designs of gardens. Stones was also responsible for the landscape design of the adjacent parklands in harmony with the Estate.</li> <li>• Each architect designed a series of at least four houses in order that a wide choice of house designs be given to the prospective homebuyer.<sup>12</sup> The plan could be modified, altered or extended to suit the homebuyer's requirements.<sup>13</sup></li> <li>• By November 1969, a display area and site office were completed within the southern portion of the Estate. The display area was between Cremin and Bachli Courts and the site office on the corner of Finlayson Street and Bachli Court.</li> </ul>
1970- c1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Elliston Estate project received wide industry acclaim at the time. The architects employed natural stained finishes, pale or clinker bricks and heavy exposed beams throughout the Estate, allowing the residences to integrate with the surrounding natural landscape.</li> <li>• The Estate sold slowly and only approximately 70 of the projected 250-300 houses were completed by Merchant Builders. Some have speculated that the homebuying public may have found the houses too 'homogenous' for their taste and struggled to appreciate Merchant Builders' design principles.<sup>14</sup> This may have resulted in the unsatisfactory sales result.</li> <li>• In 1971, Merchant Builders made the decision to cease involvement at Elliston, with housing that was underway or subject to contract completed by c1972.<sup>15</sup> The original part of Elliston Estate developed by Merchant Builders comprises Bachli, Cremin and Ferrier courts and Von Nida Crescent, at the southern end of the estate.<sup>16</sup> The remaining residential lots were developed by private homeowners and builders.</li> <li>• Further historical research indicates that Merchant Builders also developed areas of Pickworth Court and Finlayson Street to the north of Von Nida Crescent. Nonetheless, development within this northern extent became more diffused.</li> <li>• Aerial photographs show the rapid development of Elliston Estate in 1972-75, with the broader subdivision largely developed by various owners by 1975.</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> Certificate of title V6555 F838.

<sup>9</sup> Stones, 1971, p. 192.

<sup>10</sup> Phillip Goad, 1992, 'The Modern House in Melbourne, 1945-1975', p. 6/161.

<sup>11</sup> *The Age*, 12 Apr 1969: 10 and 10 May 1969: 6.

<sup>12</sup> Goad, 1992, p. 6/162.

<sup>13</sup> *The Age*, 20 Nov 1969: 9.

<sup>14</sup> Goad, 1992, 6/163.

<sup>15</sup> Latreille, 1990, p 214 and Goad, 1992, p 163.

<sup>16</sup> Latreille, 1990, p. 217.



## Selected bibliography

Davison, Graeme, 'The suburban idea and its enemies', *Journal of Urban History*, 39 (5), 2013 pp. 829-847.

Gartner, Anne, 'Merchant Builders' in Philip Goad and Julie Willis (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press p. 451.

Goad, Philip, 'The Modern House in Melbourne, 1945-1975', PhD Thesis, 1992.

Certificates of Title, Volume and Folio numbers as cited.

Latreille, Anne, *The Natural Garden: Ellis Stones: His Life and Work*, Ringwood, 1990.

Melbourne School of Design, University of Melbourne, *Merchant Builders: towards a new archive*, 2015.

Stones, Ellis, *Australian Garden Design*, South Melbourne, 1971.

*The Age*.

## Acknowledgements

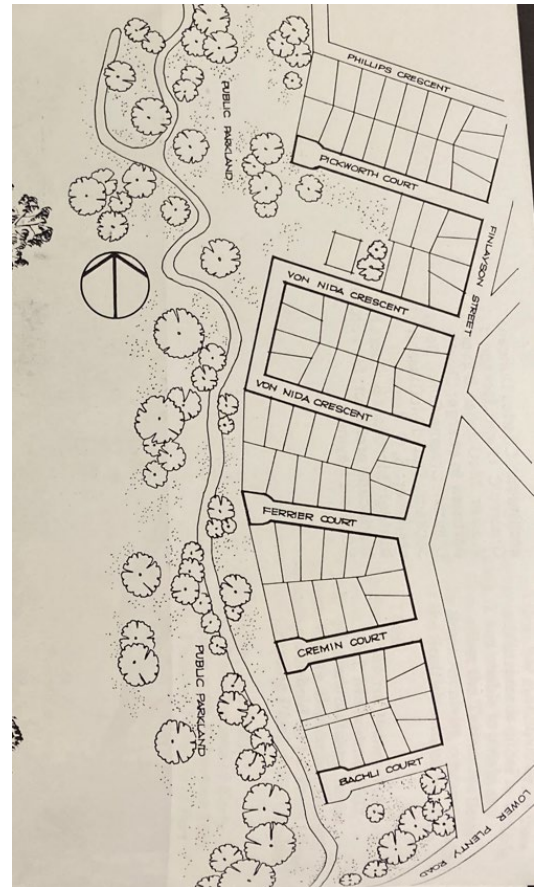
The Executive Director thanks the following people for sharing their knowledge of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands.

- Professor Alan Pert, Melbourne School of Design, University of Melbourne
- Theo Blankley, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, University of Melbourne

## Historical images



*c1968, the proposed plan for the Rosanna Golf Course. Source: State Library Victoria, record item 9935556823607636*



*April 1971, the plan shows the subdivisions of Elliston Estate. Source: Journal of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, April 1971, p 176.*



November 1969, Lift-out supplement featuring Elliston Estate, Source: The Age, November 24 1969.



Early view of Elliston Estate as photographed by Kurt Veld, Source: 'Merchant Builders: Celebrating a fifty-year legacy' Pursuit, 22 January 2016, via <<https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/merchant-builders-celebrating-a-fifty-year-legacy>>.





*Early photograph of Elliston Estate, Source: University of Melbourne, Merchant Builders: Towards a new archive, 2015, p. 95.*



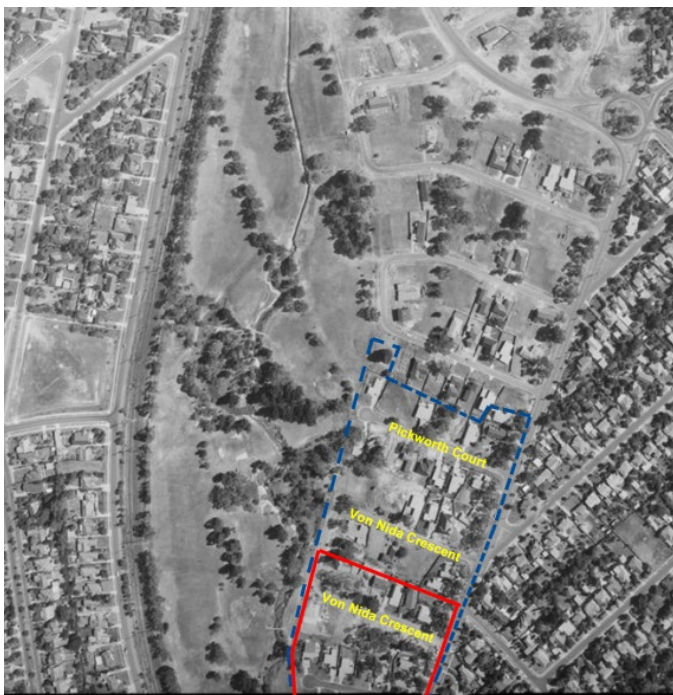
*Early photograph of Elliston Estate, Source: University of Melbourne, Merchant Builders: Towards a new archive, 2015, p. 94.*



*c1969, Charles Duncan designed house at Elliston Estate as photographed by Peter Wille, Source: State Library of Victoria.*



*c1969, Charles Duncan designed residence at Elliston Estate as photographed by Peter Wille, Source: State Library of Victoria.*



*1972. Aerial view shows the northern portion of Elliston Estate. The nominated extent (blue) and recommended extent (red) are labelled. Source: Landata Victoria.*



*1975. Aerial view shows the extent of development of Elliston Estate in 1975. The northern section has been developed by various homeowners by this stage. Source: Radius*

## Further information

### Traditional Owner Information

The Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is located on the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people. Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, the Registered Aboriginal Party for this land is the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

### Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register

The place is in an area of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity associated with the Salt Creek. There are also registered Aboriginal places in the vicinity.

May 2025

### Integrity

The integrity of the area recommended for inclusion in the VHR is very good. There have been relatively minor changes to some residences such as the introduction of fences and the rendering of brickwork. It is highly legible as a fine 1960s/1970s housing estate in its architecture, streetscape and landscaping in both private and public realms. The Rosanna Parklands still reflects Ellis Stones' design intent. The cultural heritage values of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands can be easily read in the physical fabric.

It is noted that not every residence within the area recommended for inclusion in the VHR was designed by Merchant Builders, or that this is still to be established. Nonetheless, the non-Merchant Builders houses in this area are designed and constructed in a sympathetic manner and share landscape characteristics with the remainder of the estate.

Further to the north, in the area not recommended for inclusion in the VHR, the ability to read the cultural heritage values of the place is diminished.

May 2025

### Intactness

The intactness of the area recommended for inclusion in the VHR is very good. It remains highly intact to its era of its construction.

May 2025

### Condition

The condition of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is very good.

May 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.



## Heritage Overlay

HO92 (Elliston Estate, Rosanna) currently applies to the following area:



## Other relevant planning scheme overlays

The place is subject to the following environmental and landscape overlays.

A Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO4) applies to both the Rosanna Parklands and Elliston Estate. The VPO is relevant to the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation, including trees, in this area. There is more information available in the [Banyule Planning Scheme](#).

Additionally, an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO4) applies to the Rosanna Parklands.

## Other Listings

There are no other known listings for the place.

## Date of construction/creation

c1969–72

## **Architects/Builders**

### *Architectural team*

Graeme Gunn

Charles Duncan

Daryl Jackson (with Evan Walker)

David McGlashan (with Neil Everist)

### *Landscape*

Ellis Stones

### *Builders*

Merchant Builders

## **Architectural style**

Late Twentieth Century Modernist

## Amendment recommendation – Northern extremity of Rosanna Parklands

The contents of this page relate specifically to land on the south side of Chapman Street, Macleod which forms the northern extremity of Rosanna Parklands. This strip of land is not currently included in Heritage Overlay HO92 or Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 4.

### State-level cultural heritage significance of the place

The State-level cultural heritage significance of the place is explored under the Reasons for Recommendation and Summary of Cultural Heritage Significance in this report. It is noted that the cultural heritage significance of the place relates to Rosanna Parklands and its landscape qualities.

### Amendment application

On 28 May 2025 the Executive Director made and accepted an application to nominate additional land for consideration for inclusion in the VHR. This second application was made under 27B(1)(b) of the Act. The additional land comprised the northernmost portion of the Rosanna Parklands, immediately south of Chapman Street.

### 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 consider this additional land for inclusion in the VHR 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 land proposed for inclusion both is currently and has been used in conjunction with the place. This northern extremity was originally occupied by several dwellings which were removed in the 1970s onwards with the land being acquired by Banyule City Council and incorporated into the Rosanna Parklands.
- Landscape designs for Rosanna Parklands by Ellis Stones show proposed plantings on the south side of Chapman Street in the proposed overall landscape treatment of the place.

The Executive Director is of the view that:

- The additional land is of significance to the place, having been part of Ellis Stones' vision for the landscape design of the place. In the present day, this area reads as an integrated part of the Rosanna Parklands.
- Development within this area may have the potential to diminish the significance of the place, depending on its nature and intensity.
- This additional area of land contributes to the understanding of the place. The Parklands was central to the proposal for Elliston Estate and this area was part of that vision.
- The additional land will assist in the protection and conservation of the place.



## Statutory requirements under section 40

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

#### Recommendation 1

The Executive Director recommends that the southern portion of Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is included in the VHR.

#### Recommendation 2

The Executive Director recommends that the northern portion of Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) is not included in the VHR.

#### Recommendation 3

The Executive Director recommends that the additional land forming the northern extremity of Rosanna Parklands is included in the VHR.

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

**Number:** PROV H2454

**Category:** Registered place

**Name:** Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands

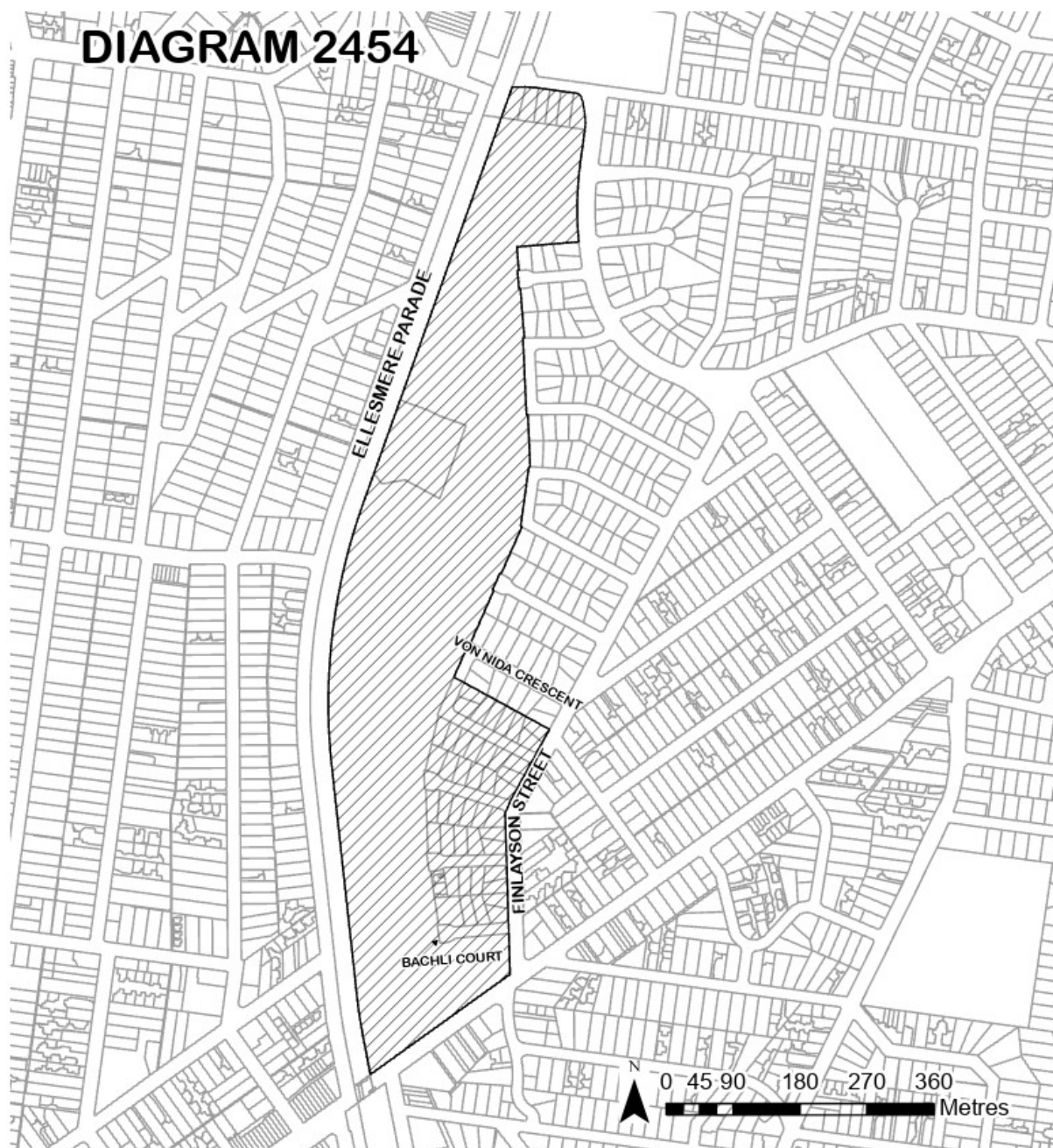
**Location:** 153 Lower Plenty Road and 2,4,6 Bachli Court and 1,3,5,7,11,15,17,23, 25,27,29, 31 Finlayson Street and 1-8 Cremin Court and 1-10 Ferrier Court and 1-11, 14 Von Nida Crescent Rosanna

**Municipality:** Banyule City

### Proposed extent of registration

The Executive Director recommends that the extent of registration for the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands be gazetted as:

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2454 encompassing all of Crown Allotment 2233 Parish of Keelbundora; Lot 1 on Title Plan 968111; Lot 1 on Title Plan 872987; Lot 1 on Title Plan 323038; Crown Allotment 9D Parish of Keelbundora; Lots 500, 501 and 502 on Plan of Subdivision 8663; Plan of Consolidation 104941; Lots 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55 and 56 on Plan of Subdivision 83446; Lots CM, 1, 2, 3, and 4 on Registered Plan 19865 and all of the road reserves of Bachli Court, Cremin Court and Ferrier Court and part of road reserves for Thomson Drive and Von Nida Crescent.





## 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 the entire Rosanna Parklands (as outlined above) and the southern portion of the Elliston Estate, beginning at Bachli Court in the south, encompassing all of Cremin Court and Ferrier Court, and extending to the southern half of Von Nida Crescent. The recommended extent of the registration varies from the nominated extent of registration.

The recommended extent includes the highest concentration of houses designed by Merchant Builders architects in collaboration with landscape designer Ellis Stones and is the most representative of their design principles. While there are also houses associated with Merchant Builders in the northern part of the Elliston Estate (beyond the northern half of Von Nida Crescent), this area features a greater number of houses by other architects and builders, resulting in a mix of architectural styles and landscaping treatments. The Executive Director considers this northern section to be less cohesive and less expressive of the Merchant Builders' design approach. On this basis, the Executive Director has recommended the northern residential area not be included in the VHR.

In the case of the Rosanna Parklands, the northern section proposed for inclusion has historically been and continues to be used in conjunction with the broader parkland. This northern extremity was originally occupied by several dwellings which were removed in the 1970s onwards, when the land was acquired by Banyule City Council and incorporated into the Rosanna Parklands. This area was part of Stones' vision for the parkland and is included on landscape drawings for the place. Accordingly, the Executive Director forms the view that this land contributes to the overall understanding of Rosanna Parklands and should be included in the VHR.

It should be noted that everything included in the proposed extent of registration including all of the land, all soft and hard landscape features, plantings, and all buildings 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.

## 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 Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands 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 have a clear association with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in Victoria's cultural history?	Yes	The place has a clear association with post-war suburban housing estate development.  It was constructed by Merchant Builders in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the aim of providing high-quality suburban housing integrated into the natural environment.
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	This phase is of historical importance having made a strong and influential contribution to Victoria.  Post-war housing estates are a prominent feature of built environment in Melbourne and beyond and are places where a great number of Victorians grew up and reside.
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	There is ample documentary and physical evidence of the association between the place and the historical phase.
If A1, A2 and A3 are <u>all</u> 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.

## Step 2 State-level test for Criterion A

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
SA1)	Does the place 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 place allows the association with the phase to be better understood than most other places in Victoria with substantially the same association.</p> <p>Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is an important example of post-war housing estate development in Victoria. It demonstrates progressive design and planning philosophies of the 1960s and 1970s that sought to provide housing that was high quality, humanistic and integrated with the environment. It is an early and important housing development by influential project building firm Merchant Builders and is highly intact. It integrates high-quality residential architecture with a naturalistic setting, including expansive public parklands. The place features a group of Modernist residences that are stylistically coherent and integrated into the surrounding landscaping.</p> <p>The place also serves as an important precursor of Merchant Builders' Winter Park Cluster Housing (VHR H1345). On this basis, the place allows the historic phrase of post-war suburban housing development to be better understood than other places in the VHR.</p>

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

Executive Director's Response:	Yes	Criterion A is 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 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 place has a clear association with post-war suburban housing estate development.
B2)	Is there evidence of the association to the historical phases etc identified at B1)?	Yes	There is ample documentary and physical evidence of the association between the place and the historical phase.
B3)	Is there evidence that place is rare or uncommon, <u>or</u> has rare or uncommon features?	No	<p>B3(i) There is no evidence that the place is rare or uncommon.</p> <p>Post-war suburban housing estates are not rare or uncommon in Victoria.</p>



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B3(ii) There is no evidence that the place has rare or uncommon features.

Although the place has many fine and well considered design characteristics, these can best be considered under Criterion D below. Documentary evidence and visual inspections do not indicate that the place has rare or uncommon features.

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**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:	No	Criterion B is not likely to be relevant.
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## **CRITERION C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.**

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### **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 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?	No	It is unlikely that the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands contains evidence of cultural heritage significance that is not currently visible and/or well understood or available from other sources. Similarly, the physical evidence and documentary evidence are unlikely to reveal further information about the Golf Course that predated the development of the place.
C2)	And, from what we know of the place, is the physical evidence likely to be of an integrity and/or condition that it could yield information through detailed investigation?	N/A	The integrity and condition of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands 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).

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**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 one of a class of places that has a clear association with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in Victoria's history?	Yes	Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands belongs to the class of post-war housing estate. This class has a clear association with the historical phase of post-war suburban housing estate development.
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	This phase is of historical importance having made a strong and influential contribution to Victoria, as above.
D3)	Are the principal characteristics of the class evident in the physical fabric of the place?	Yes	<p>The principal characteristics of the class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a subdivision plan to provide for numerous freehold titles</li> <li>• street layouts of cul-de sacs and crescents</li> <li>• freestanding family residences with garden settings</li> <li>• A project house approach, where buyers purchased from set plans.</li> </ul> <p>These are evident in the physical fabric of the place.</p>

**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 D

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
SD1)	Is the place a notable (fine, influential or pivotal) example of the class in Victoria?	Yes	<p>Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is a notable example of the class of post-war housing estate.</p> <p>It is a particularly fine example of the class. It was established by highly influential project house building firm Merchant Builders and is an early and important example of its work. In 1972 the firm was awarded the RAIA Robin Boyd Environmental Award for its contributions to housing development.</p> <p>It demonstrates highly considered planning and design principles in the integration of housing and landscape and features such as undergrounding of services and minimal footpaths and front fencing.</p> <p>The place includes a group of finely designed Modernist dwellings by leading architects of the era. Homes are realised in a consistent natural palette of materials. They create a cohesive group with similar design qualities.</p>

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Housing is integrated with the informal, naturalistic landscape conceived by noted landscape designer Ellis Stones, which includes the adjacent Rosanna Parklands, which is dominated by native Australian plantings and vegetation.

Collectively, the place is a particularly fine example of housing development in Victoria during the post-war period.

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**If SD1 is satisfied, then Criterion D is likely to be relevant at the State level**

<b>Executive Director's Response:</b>	Yes	Criterion D is likely to be relevant at the State level.
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## **CRITERION E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.**

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### **Step 1 Test for Criterion E**

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
E1)	Does the physical fabric of the place clearly exhibit particular aesthetic characteristics?	Yes	The physical fabric of the place clearly exhibits aesthetic characteristics particular to Modernist residential architecture of the latter decades of the twentieth century. It also displays aesthetic characteristics in its associated landscaping and parkland which reflect the design philosophy of Ellis Stones.

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

<b>Executive Director's Response:</b>	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"> <li>Evidence from within the relevant discipline (architecture, art, design or equivalent); and/or</li> <li>Critical recognition of the aesthetic characteristics of the place within a relevant art, design, architectural or related discipline within Victoria; and/or</li> <li>Wide public acknowledgement of exceptional aesthetic qualities of the place in Victoria expressed in publications, print or digital media, painting, sculpture, songs, poetry, literature, or other media?</li> </ul>	No	<p>The aesthetic characteristics of the place are clearly attractive and appreciated by a range of people. However, these characteristics cannot be said to have garnered a level of critical recognition or wide public acknowledgement that surpasses many other examples in Victoria and cannot be considered 'beyond the ordinary' or outstanding in terms of this criterion. Although the work of Merchant Builders and Ellis Stones has received acclaim, it does not equate to critical recognition of the place's aesthetic characteristics in particular, and is more appropriately considered under Criterion D.</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 contain physical evidence that clearly demonstrates creative or technical achievement for the time in which it was created?	No	The Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands exhibits fine design characteristics. However, it does not contain physical evidence that clearly demonstrates creative or technical achievement for the time in which it was created.
F2)	Does the physical evidence demonstrate a high degree of integrity?	NA	The physical evidence at the place demonstrates a high degree of integrity; however, it does not contain physical evidence that clearly demonstrates creative or technical achievement for the time in which it was created.

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
<b>G1)</b>	Does the place 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 of communities and groups associated with the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands.
ii)	Existence of a strong attachment of a community or cultural group to the place or object; <u>and</u>	Yes	<p>There is evidence of a strong attachment to the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands in the present day.</p> <p>There is evidence that residents are strongly attached to Elliston Estate as their home, sometimes for several decades.</p> <p>Community groups, such as the Friends of Salt Creek and Associated Parklands (FoSCAP) have formed to care for Rosanna Parklands.</p> <p>The Elliston Estate is well known and appreciated by people with an interest in twentieth-century architecture and the work of Merchant Builders and its architects and designers.</p>
iii)	Existence of a time depth to that attachment.	Yes	There is evidence of the attachment potentially dating to the 1970s when the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) was developed.

**If all facets 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.
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### Step 2 State-level test for Criterion G

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
<b>SG1)</b>	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>SG1(i) The social value of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is part of a story in Victoria that contributes to Victoria's identity. Establishing and developing housing estates is an important theme in Victoria's history.</p> <p>SG1(ii) There is no evidence that the social value of the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands to the groups above 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.**

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**Step 1 Test for Criterion H**

No.	Test	Yes/No	Reason
H1)	Does the place have a direct association with a person, or group of persons who has made a strong or influential contribution in their field of endeavour?	Yes	<p>H1(i) There is a direct association between the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands and the building firm Merchant Builders (and its founders David Yencken and John Ridge), as well as Merchant Builders architects and designers, which include Ellis Stones, Graeme Gunn and Charles Duncan.</p> <p>H1(ii) Both individually and collectively, these people have made a strong and influential contribution within their field, being leaders in the fields of building, architecture and landscape design.</p>
H2)	Is there evidence of the association between the place and the person(s)?	Yes	There is evidence of the association between the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands and the people above. It can be found in both the physical fabric of the place itself and in documentary evidence.
H3)	Does the association relate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• directly to achievements of the person(s); <u>and</u></li> <li>• to an enduring and/or close interaction between the person(s) and the place?</li> </ul>	No	<p>H3(i) The association between the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands and the people above relates directly to their achievements.</p> <p>H3(ii) The Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands are a result of the vision and philosophies of Merchant Builders and their design team. However, the association did not go beyond the establishment and early development of the place and could not be considered close or enduring for the purposes of Criterion H.</p>
<b>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)</b>			
Executive Director's Response:		No	Criterion H is not likely to be relevant.



## Comparisons

These places were selected as comparators to the Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands because they represent similar place types, design approaches or historical contexts. Comparable places already included in the VHR provide the threshold for State-level cultural heritage significance lies. Additional places from the local heritage overlays have also been selected to support the assessment of Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders). Other examples of Merchant Builders' projects are also included to provide context for their work.

Currently, there is no place in the VHR that combines both a housing estate and parkland. As such, examples from both categories were selected in evaluating the significance of Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands. In the case of Rosanna Parklands, the VHR currently includes no parkland or public reserves developed during the post-war period. However, both Royal Park (VHR H1954) and Yarra Bend Park VHR H2398) retain extensive indigenous vegetation, along with layered landscape designs from various stages of their development. On this basis, Royal Park and Yarra Bend Park were selected as the comparators for the Rosanna Parklands.

## Twentieth-century housing developments in the VHR

### WINTER PARK CLUSTER HOUSING

**137-148 HIGH STREET AND 6-17 TIMBER RIDGE,  
DONCASTER, MANNINGHAM CITY**

**VHR H1345**

Winter Park is a Merchant Builders cluster subdivision comprising twenty detached houses set within 2.43 hectares of landscaping. It was designed by Graeme Gunn and constructed in stages from c1970 until 1974. It was included in the VHR in 1997 and is of historical, architectural and aesthetic significance to Victoria. It is important as a prototype cluster housing project and an attempt to provide an alternative to the existing suburban subdivision. The development was influential in encouraging the Victorian Government to introduce the Cluster Titles Act 1974.

The place is significant for its association with Merchant Builders and with noted architects, builders and landscape designers, including Graeme Gunn, David Yencken and Ellis Stones.

The place is aesthetically significant for its outstanding landscape and architectural design qualities. The aesthetic qualities are heightened by the central parkland planting, naturalistic landscape design and Australian native plantings.



## **RANELAGH ESTATE**

### **MOUNT ELIZA, MORNINGTON PENINSULA SHIRE**

#### **VHR H1605**

Ranelagh Estate is a residential subdivision established in the 1920s that developed through to the 1960s. It is of historical and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria. The subdivision plan was prepared by Walter Burley Griffin (1876-1937) and Marion Mahony Griffin (1871-1961), along with notable town planner Saxil Tuxen (1885-1975). It is a rare example of a fully realised Griffin-designed residential estate in Victoria.

Ranelagh Estate is of aesthetic and historical significance as an essentially intact example of garden suburb development. The estate is a fine example of a residential subdivision designed to harmonise with the topography and the surrounding native vegetation, featuring recreational and internal reserves, communal facilities and long curved roads.

It is aesthetically significant for its landscape planting from Blue Ridge Lane to Ravenscourt Crescent.



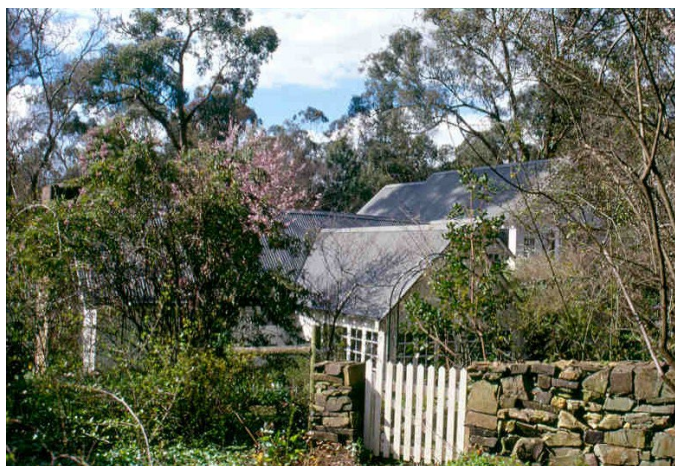
## **BICKLEIGH VALE**

### **5-27 BICKLEIGH VALE ROAD AND 2-28 BICKLEIGH VALE ROAD AND 112-142 CARDIGAN ROAD AND 9-23 PINE ROAD AND 80-106 PEMBROKE ROAD AND 1-9 EDNA WALLING LANE AND 2 EDNA WALLING LANE MOOROOLBARK, YARRA RANGES SHIRE**

#### **VHR H2053**

Bickleigh Vale is a landscaped village of approximately 10 hectares created in the 1920s by leading landscape designer Edna Walling. It is of State-level historical, aesthetic and architectural significance as the major work of Walling. The aesthetic qualities include the apparently casual nature of the internal lanes, the complementary relationships between exotic and Australian plants, and the carefully sited cottages. The cottages exemplified Walling's approach of a united and integrated cottage-village design ideal.

The place is of significance for its many outstanding trees and planting, including rare oaks and other deciduous varieties. Many plants established at the place were popularised by Walling.





## Merchant Builders housing developments in local heritage overlays

### VERMONT PARK

**531 BURWOOD HIGHWAY, VERMONT SOUTH,  
WHITEHORSE CITY**

#### HO118

Vermont Park comprises 45 residences designed by Merchant Builders over several years from 1972. It is of local heritage significance as an important example of a 1970s residential development. All houses are arranged around numerous cul-de-sacs that form communal driveways. In the centre of the place is a communal swimming pool and barbeque area surrounded by lawn.

Vermont Park is aesthetically significant within the City of Whitehorse as an award-winning complex of housing development in the 1970s. It was an innovative and influential experiment in terms of planning, prefabrication and energy efficient design. Vermont Park is an early and unique cluster housing development example in the City of Whitehorse.



### BEACH GROVE, TOWNHOUSES AND LANDSCAPE MORNINGTON, MORNINGTON PENINSULA SHIRE

#### HO387

Beach Grove is of local architectural significance for being an outstanding example of small cluster housing development, including courtyard houses, shared driveways and private and communal open space enhanced by mature tree planting. The modular courtyard houses designed by Cocks and Carmichael illustrate typical design features of Merchant Builders houses including sun-shading, diagonal timber cladding and lightly bagged block walls.

The place is of local historical significance as a small but influential cluster housing development that sought to provide architecturally-designed houses in a master-planned, landscaped setting.





## **TOWNHOUSES**

### **1-9/17 SORRETT AVENUE, MALVERN, STONNINGTON CITY**

#### **INTRIM HO 666**

The townhouse development was built in 1967–68 by Merchant Builders for Tract P/L and was designed by renowned architect Graeme Gunn. It was one of Merchant Builders' earliest cluster developments, which integrated architecture, landscape setting, shared space and native planting. The landscape was designed by Ellis Stones.

The development is of local historical significance as an early example of post-war project housing development, designed by Merchant Builders and Ellis Stones. It is significant for being a representative example of post-war suburban housing built in the City of Stonnington.



## **Parklands and reserves in the VHR**

### **ROYAL PARK**

#### **PARKVILLE, MELBOURNE CITY**

##### **VHR H1954**

Royal Park is historically significant to Victoria as an outstanding and largely intact example of public parks established by Lieutenant Governor Charles La Trobe. It is also historically significant as the starting point of Burke and Will's expedition to the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Royal Park is aesthetically significant as an outstanding example of a large metropolitan park, notable for its remnant indigenous vegetation, demonstrating an ongoing dedication to planting native and indigenous plants over a period of 150 years. The development associated with the 1984 Master Plan is significant for its design philosophy and natural landscape aesthetic.



## **YARRA BEND PARK**

### **FAIRFIELD, YARRA CITY**

#### **VHR H2398**

Yarra Bend Park is historically significant to Victoria for its associations with several government institutions from the mid-nineteenth to the late twentieth century, including several asylums. It is also historically significant as a site of contact and interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the early stages of Victoria's history.

The Park is historically significant for its long association with active and passive recreational use, including open parkland, walking tracks and sporting grounds.

The Park is archaeologically significant for its potential to contain features, deposits and artefacts that relate to various government institutions, their establishment, use and change over time, and landscape and garden features.



## **Summary of Comparisons**

### **Housing estate developments**

Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) is most comparable to Winter Park (VHR H1345), as both were planned and designed by Merchant Builders and Ellis Stones during a similar period, reflecting shared architectural and environmental design principles. Both projects demonstrate efforts in the 1960s and 1970s to develop alternatives to standard suburban subdivision. Winter Park is distinguished by its cluster housing approach, which incorporates communal areas and internal reserves. While Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) follows a more conventional subdivision pattern, it is earlier and more substantial than Winter Park, and was an important precursor through the provision of quality architecturally designed residences in a setting which integrates the Australian bushland environment.

Ranelagh Estate (VHR H1605) and Bickleigh Vale (VHR H2053) are earlier examples of large-scale twentieth-century housing developments. Both estates integrated houses and gardens with broader landscaping schemes and featured communal pathways and internal reserves, fostering a strong sense of shared space and community. In the case of Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders), the houses were deliberately designed to harmonise with the surrounding soft landscaping and native plantings, allowing private gardens to blend subtly with public spaces and the adjoining parklands, which offsets the requirements of internal communal spaces. In this regard, Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) compares well with these two earlier VHR registered places.

### **Merchant Builders housing estates**

In comparison to Vermont Park, Beach Grove and the Sorrett Avenue Townhouses, Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) is an early and important example of Merchant Builders' work. It is more substantial than the firm's townhouse developments, and gave the firm free reign to demonstrate its planning and design approach. On this basis, Elliston Estate is considered to demonstrate a high level of cultural heritage significance.

## Parklands and Reserves

Royal Park (VHR H1954) and Yarra Bend Park (VHR H2398) are early examples of metropolitan recreational reserves. Similar to Rosanna Parklands, they have retained extensive areas of indigenous vegetation and incorporated later design principles, which informs their selection as comparators. However, both Royal Park and Yarra Bend Park are widely recognised for their aesthetic qualities, as well as historical and archaeological significance at the state level.

When considered in conjunction with the adjacent Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders), Rosanna Parklands forms part of a purposefully integrated naturalistic parkland, designed to be immediately accessible to residents of the estate. Together, Rosanna Parklands and Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) embody the design principles of both Merchant Builders and Ellis Stones, representing a notable example of post-war housing development in the State of Victoria

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

### Statement of significance

Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is on the land of the Wurundjeri people.

#### What is significant?

Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands, Rosanna, is a post-war project-housing estate developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s by the influential building company, Merchant Builders. Landscaping of the estate and adjacent Rosanna Parklands was designed by renowned landscape designer Ellis Stones from 1969-72.

#### How is it significant?

Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is of historical 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?

Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is historically significant as a post-war housing development in Victoria that epitomises the progressive planning and design ideals of the 1960s and 1970s. It was established by the influential firm Merchant Builders to designs of a group of leading architects and renowned landscape designer Ellis Stones. It demonstrates an attempt to provide an alternative to standard suburban subdivisions, through the provision of high-quality Modernist residences, merging private and public spaces, integration of dwellings and landscape, and via the incorporation of native Australian plantings, rockworks and landforms. [Criterion A]

Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands is significant as a notable post-war housing estate complemented by an integrated public parkland. It is the work of leading project housing firm Merchant Builders and is a fine example, displaying progressive principles of post-war housing development in a naturalistic landscaped setting. The place demonstrates particularly considered planning and design. It features a group of Modernist residences designed by leading architects Charles Duncan, Graeme Gunn, Daryl Jackson and Evan Walker, and David McGlashan and Neil Everist. Dwellings are stylistically coherent and surrounded by informal, naturalistic landscape, which is dominated by native Australian plantings and vegetation. Collectively, the place is a particularly fine example of post-war housing development in the State of Victoria. [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 do not harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Act *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](#).

#### 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 Elliston Estate (Merchant Builders) and Rosanna Parklands. 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

### Buildings

#### *Interiors*

1. All internal alterations to residences, lock-up garages, sheds and other outbuildings, providing they do not alter the external appearance of the building. This includes all updates to kitchens, bathrooms and toilets.

#### *Exteriors*

2. Minor repairs that replace like with like.
3. Removal of mechanical items such as air conditioners, pipe work, ducting, wiring, antennae, aerials and making good.
4. Installation of rainwater tanks where these are not visible from a street or public park.
5. Installation of solar panels where these are not visible from a street or public park.
6. Installation of external lighting normal to a residence.

### Landscaping, vegetation and tree planting

7. A heritage permit or permit exemption is not required under the *Heritage Act 2017* to remove, destroy or lop vegetation, including native vegetation, where the requirements of the Banyule Planning Scheme relevant to the removal, destruction or lopping of the vegetation are satisfied.
8. The process of gardening and maintenance to care for existing plants.
9. The removal of trees, shrubs and vegetation within residential properties where the vegetation is not a species which is native to Australia.
10. The planting of trees, shrubs, grasses and other vegetation where the species is native to Australia.
11. Repairs, conservation and maintenance to the hard landscape elements (for example, driveways and paths), structures and rockworks drainage and irrigation system.

### Roadworks and utilities maintenance

12. Maintenance and repair of underground power lines.
13. General maintenance and repair works to road reserves.
14. Temporary buildings and works associated with environmental monitoring (including monitoring groundwater, noise or air quality) constructed or carried out by or on behalf of the Head, Transport of Victoria.
15. A temporary shed or temporary structure for construction purposes.
16. Emergency works undertaken by, or on behalf of, a municipality, public authority or utility service provider in the exercise of any power conferred under any Act.



## 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 with a real and substantial interest in the place or object 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.