

Heritage Council Determination

Determination date	6 August 2026
Place/Object name	Barwon Bank
Location	35-43 Riversdale Road, Newtown, Greater Geelong City, Wadawurrung Country
VHR number	H0425
Category	Registered Place
Relevant legislative provision/s	Amendment to the Heritage Register, pursuant to section 62 of the <i>Heritage Act 2017</i>

Determination of the Heritage Council

The Heritage Council of Victoria determined on **6 August 2026**, in accordance with Part 3 of the *Heritage Act 2017* ('the Act'), that the above place is to be amended in the Heritage Register.

The Heritage Council determined to make the following amendments to the Heritage Register:

- including additional land in the Heritage Register being all of the Place shown hatched on Diagram 425 in accordance with section 49(1)(d)(i) and (ii) of the Act.
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Executive Director's Recommendation ('the Recommendation')

The State-level cultural heritage significance of Barwon Bank, located at 35-43 Riverside Road, Newtown, Greater Geelong City, Wadawurrung Country ('the Place') was recognised in 1977 by its inclusion in the (former) Register of Historic Buildings.

On **18 May 2026** the Executive Director made an Interim Protection Order for the land on the northern boundary of the property that was not included within the extent of registration in 1977. The title for this land has since (1994) been consolidated into the Barwon Bank parcel.

On **20 May 2026** the Executive Director made a recommendation to the Heritage Council ('the Recommendation') that the existing registration for the Place should be amended by including additional land in the Heritage Register.

The Recommendation was advertised publicly for a period of 60 days, beginning on **22 May 2026**.

Section 44 submissions

During the 60-day public advertisement period no submissions were received pursuant to section 44 of the Act.

The Place

Description

The following extract is taken verbatim from page 4 of the Executive Director's Recommendation:

The residence has two storeys, with the upper floor being an attic storey that is partially concealed by a high parapet. The exterior walls are of coursed quarry-faced ashlar bluestone, with vermiculated voussoirs above the windows and quoining in contrasting Barrabool sandstone. The design of the house was by local architect Thomas Yabsley.

The bluestone for Barwon Bank is likely to be locally quarried. An advertisement for subdivided lots within the Barwon Bank estate in 1853 suggests that the bluestone quarry on site would save prospective purchasers in building costs. Physical evidence of this bluestone quarry remains in the steep embankment to the north of the property.

The north elevation of the house features a Tuscan porch with square piers. The southern elevation overlooks the Barwon River and features two bay windows with battlemented parapets. To the eastern elevation a conservatory was constructed in the 1990s, and to the western elevation is the kitchen wing and a reconstruction of the earlier colonnade.

Reasons for the amendment application

Additional land

The Executive Director recommended that the Heritage Council amend the registration for the Place having formed the 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 noted that:

- The current extent relates to the boundary of a cancelled title. The land proposed for inclusion in the registered extent was consolidated with the Barwon Bank parcel in 1994.
- The current extent:
 - excludes the driveway, which provides present day access to Barwon Bank.

- does not allow for a continuous physical connection between the residence and Riversdale Road.
- The land proposed for inclusion both is currently and has been used in conjunction with the place since John Alexander Gregory's period of ownership between 1850 and 1855, which is over 170 years.
- While the subject land was excluded from the extent of registration in 1977 it was the subject of an adverse possession claim in the 1990s that demonstrated use of the land in conjunction with Barwon Bank for a period exceeding 30 years.
- Prior to the adverse possession claim and subsequent consolidation of titles, the subject land to the north had no recorded dealings on the title for over 100 years. The last registered owner was John Alexander Gregory, an early occupant of Barwon Bank, until the sale of the Barwon Bank parcel in 1855.

The Executive Director expressed 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 the place and substantially reduce its State-level cultural heritage significance.
- The proposed inclusion of additional land, particularly the land to Riversdale Road and driveway access, will enable works that could potentially impact on the setting of the place to be managed through an approval process.
- Barwon Bank was designed with two facades, facing south to the Barwon River and facing north to Riversdale Road. The additional land to Riversdale Road is vacant and underneath an embankment, however if it were developed, depending on the height and scale of the development, it would interrupt views towards the north from the primary façade.

Heritage Council's findings

The Heritage Council's statutory remit is confined by the Act. When a place or object is included in the Heritage Register, the description, history, Statement of Significance and permit policy do not form components of the Heritage Register.

However, the Heritage Council records the following suggestions:

- That the word 'exotic' be removed from descriptions of mature trees at the Place in the Statement of Significance;
- That reference to the mature Australian specimen trees, including what appear to be Bunya Bunya Pines, be included in the History section of the registration;
- That references to the Place as being in the 'Regency' architectural style be removed (for example, that references to the Place being a 'Colonial Regency-style mansion' in the Statement of Significance be amended to 'Colonial mansion');
- That the architecture style for the Place be updated in the Victorian Heritage Database from 'Victorian Period (1851-1901) Regency' to 'Victorian Period (1851-1901)'; and
- That minor wording corrections, as suggested by Heritage Council Members at Heritage Council meeting HC295, be considered by the Executive Director.

The Heritage Council notes that the Executive Director may make non-statutory amendments as set out in the Recommendation. The Heritage Council's decision in relation to the Place is confined to the extent of registration.

The Heritage Council's findings accord with the Executive Director's Recommendation.

Additional Land

The extent of registration is provided as **Attachment 1** and includes all the Place shown hatched on Diagram 425 encompassing all of PC356198.

Conclusion

The Heritage Council of Victoria determined on **6 August 2026**, in accordance with Part 3 of the *Heritage Act 2017*, that the registration for Barwon Bank is to be amended in the Victorian Heritage Register.



Professor Philip Goad
Chair, Heritage Council of Victoria

Attachment 1

Extent of Registration

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 425 encompassing all of PC356198.

