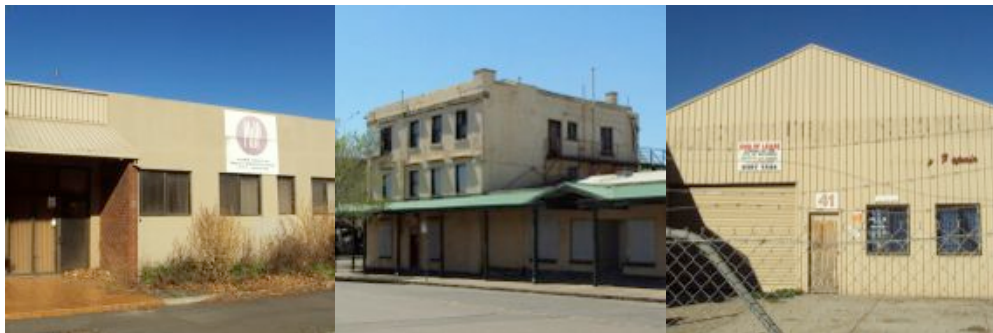


Former Port Phillip Woollen Mills &
Former Oriental Hotel
3-39, 41 & 57 Nelson Place, Williamstown

Analysis of proposed demolition and
redevelopment – heritage issues



Statement of Evidence to the VCAT

Prepared under instruction from Planning & Property Partners Pty Ltd

*VCAT Reference Numbers: P74/2013, P398/2013
P625/2013, P611/2013, P73/2013, P401/2013*

June 2012

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1.0 Introduction

This statement of evidence was prepared under instruction from Planning & Property Partners Pty Ltd on behalf of the owner of the subject site at 3-39, 41 and 57 Nelson Place, Williamstown. It has been prepared with assistance from Martin Turnor of this office. The views expressed in it are my own.

The statement has been prepared with regard to six proceedings arising from four separate planning permit applications:

- P74/2013 (objector review) & P398/2013 (conditions review) - known as Stage 1- Seven townhouse application.
- P625/2013 (review of refusal) - known as Stage 2 – Oriental Hotel application as well as Stage 1 works for the site)
- P611/2013 - known as Stage 3 - Option A (alternative) apartments application.
- P73/2013 (objector review) & P401/2013 (conditions review) - known as Stage 3 - Option B (alternative) townhouse application.

By way of background, a Design and Development Overlay (DDO11) was introduced across the subject site and some adjacent industrial sites on 1/12/2011 (Amendment C86 to the Hobson's Bay Planning Scheme). It is proposed to redevelop the subject land within this DDO with a series of townhouses and multi-storey residential apartment buildings including some commercial uses (known as Nelson Place Village).

I have provided heritage advice to the applicant in relation to the preparation of the DDO for the site and in relation to the planning applications that are the subject of this application for review. In 2003 I provided expert evidence in relation to the former Oriental Hotel to the Panel hearing concerning Amendment C34 to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme on behalf of a previous owner. I have also provided a heritage report in relation to the application for a permit to demolish and redevelop the former Oriental Hotel site.

2.0 Sources of Information

The following analysis draws upon numerous inspections of the subject site[s] and the associated environs, along with a review of the relevant documents such as the *City of Williamstown Conservation Study* (1993), the *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study* (Amended 2010), and the relevant sections of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, including Clauses 43.01, 21.07 and 22.01.

I have also made reference to Council Planning Officer's reports in relation to the applications under review. Furthermore, I have been provided with structural condition reports by BHS Consultants and Aurecon and heritage reports relating to the former Oriental Hotel including the following:

Lelsey Alves & Associates, *Heritage Report Oriental Hotel, 55 Nelson Place Williamstown* (prepared for Hobsons Bay City Council, June 2012).

Lovell Chen, *Preliminary Assessment The former Oriental Hotel 55 Nelson Place Williamstown* (prepared for Nelson Place Village Pty Ltd, April 2012).

Helen Lardner HLCD Pty Ltd, *Proposed Demolition Former Oriental Hotel 57 Nelson Place Williamstown* (prepared for Hobsons Bay City Council, February 2013).

Mark Laurence Sheldon, Aurecon – *Williamstown Tavern, 55 Nelson Place, Williamstown, Expert Witness Report, VCAT proceeding P625/3013* (prepared for NP Developments Pty Ltd, 7 June 2013).

In addition, this statement has been informed by research into the history of the subject site and its component parts, using primary historical sources, such as the Sands and McDougall Directories, MMBW plans, the *Argus* and *Williamstown Chronicle* newspapers, the State Library of Victoria picture collection and liquor license files held at the Public Record Office of Victoria.

The report as a whole is to be read in conjunction with the drawings prepared by SJB Architects and other documents submitted with respect to this application.

3.0 Author Qualifications

A statement of my qualifications and experience with respect to urban conservation issues is appended to this report. Note that I have provided expert witness evidence on similar matters before the VCAT, the Heritage Council, Planning Panels Victoria and the Building Appeals Board on numerous occasions in the past, and have been retained in such matters variously by municipal councils, developers and objectors to planning proposals.

4.0 Summary of Views

In summary, I find the proposed demolition and redevelopment of the subject site[s] to be appropriate, with regard to heritage considerations, for the following reasons.

- The proposed development of the site has been prepared with appropriate regard for the streetscapes within which the buildings are to be inserted and any neighbouring heritage buildings, and for the heritage overlay and associated policies and guidelines of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme.
- The streetscapes neighbouring and facing the subject site on all sides are also relatively low in heritage interest, and feature a substantial extent of modern and recent development that is not contributory to the heritage values of the precinct.
- The low heritage values of the subject site and contiguous streetscapes means that redevelopment with modern townhouses and apartments would not have the same adverse impact had the works been taking place in the more intact and cohesive parts of HO8.
- The proposed demolition of the former Oriental Hotel is acceptable having regard for its significance, its poor integrity and its poor condition. While this evidence does not comment in any detail on structural matters, and relies on the evidence of others in relation to that issue, it does comment on matters in relation to significance and integrity.

5.0 Declaration

I declare that I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate, and that no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Tribunal.



BRYCE RAWORTH

6.0 History

The subject site falls within the Government survey of 1837, and by the early 1860s had been developed with a mixture of businesses (often maritime related) and a small number of residences. Sands and McDougall directories of 1860 list a milliner and straw bonnet maker, hairdresser, carpenter and undertaker, bootmaker, sign writer and decorator, and a boarding house on the Ann Street frontage of the subject site. Nelson Place contained a shipsmith, carpenter, sail maker, commission agent, general store, and boarding house as well as three vacant allotments.¹



Figure 1 Part of Cox's 1864 map of Melbourne showing Nelson Place. Source: State Library of Victoria.

Hotels also sprang up on prominent corner lots within the subject site. First came the Barkly Arms Hotel (later the Oriental Hotel) which was built c. 1854 on the south east corner of Nelson Place and Ann Street. This was followed by the Prince of Wales at the eastern end of Nelson Place (c1857); the Telegraph Hotel, north-east corner of Ann Street and Aitken Street (1862); and, the Charles Darling Hotel (1867, later rebuilt as the Britannia Hotel) on the corner of Little Nelson Street (now Aitken Street) and Morris Street (now Kanowna Street).²

By 1870, the west side of Morris Street between Nelson Place and Little Nelson Street contained the Prince of Wales Hotel, a boarding house, a ship smith and the Dock Hotel. The south side of Nelson Place had the Prince of Wales Hotel, residences at no.3 and 5, J McNeal ship and boiler smith (no.5), Mrs Crowl's boarding house (no.6), James Challis butcher (no.11), Abraham Danes bootmaker, Henry Stewart shipsmith and boilermaker (no.12), James Evans bootmaker (no. 17) and the Barkly Arms Hotel on the corner of Ann Street.³ Photographs of the streetscape from this period show the corner hotels bookending scattered small-scale commercial development (see figure 1 below).

¹ Sands and McDougall directories, 1860.

² *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study*, hotel citations (unpaginated).

³ Sands and McDougall directories, 1870.



Figure 2 Nelson Place, looking west from the corner of Kanowna Street (then Morris Street), c1870-1875. The corner building in the foreground is the Princes of Wales Hotel. Source: State Library of New South Wales.

A 1908 MMBW plan of Williamstown shows a number of vacant or undeveloped allotments remaining along Nelson Place and Nelson Street and Morris Street (see figure 2 below). The Ann Street frontage of the subject site was by this time more fully developed with allotments between the corner hotels mostly occupied by residences.

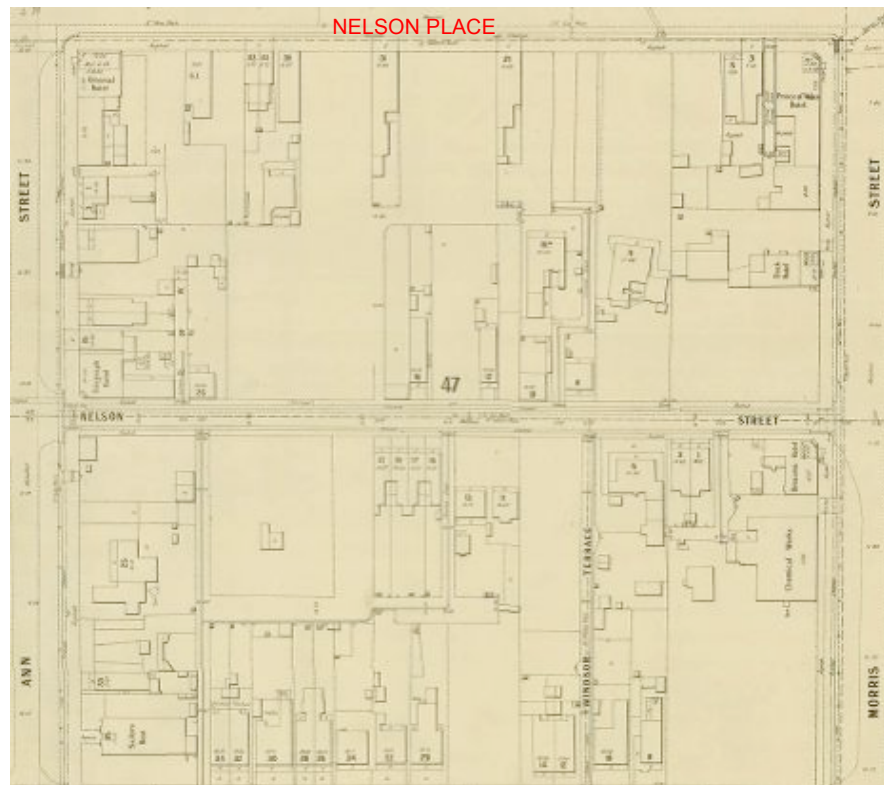


Figure 3 1908 MMBW plan of Williamstown showing the block bound by Nelson Place, Kanowna Street (then Morris Street) Aitken Street (then Nelson Street) and Ann Street. Source: State Library of Victoria.

Former Port Phillip Woollen Mills

Morris Street became the site of another factory c1930 when ‘The Carbonisers Pty Ltd’ established a wool carbonising works at numbers 2-6 (between Nelson Place and Aitken Street).⁴ The carbonising works are shown in a 1933 photograph occupying a relatively small portion of the block (see figure 3 below). The remainder of the block’s Nelson Street frontage appears to be undeveloped land with a smattering of small scale commercial development.

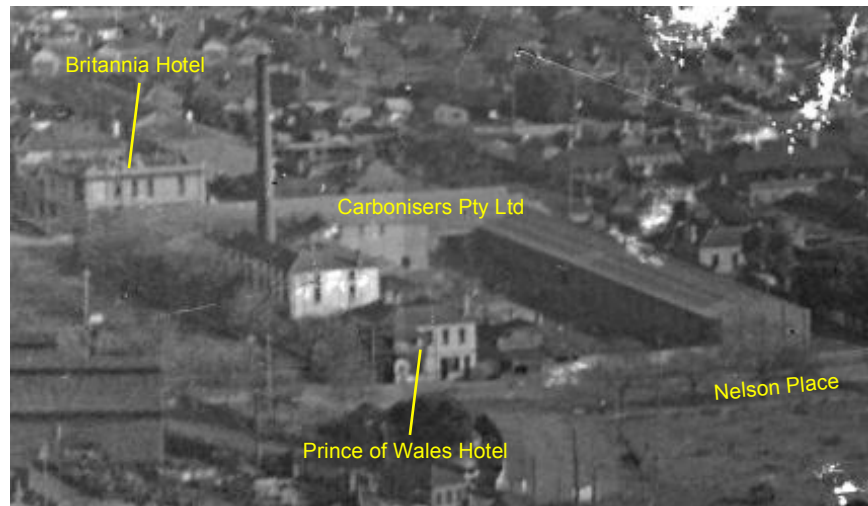


Figure 4 Part of a 1933 photograph of Williamstown showing the eastern half of the former Port Phillip Woollen Mills site. Source: State Library of Victoria.

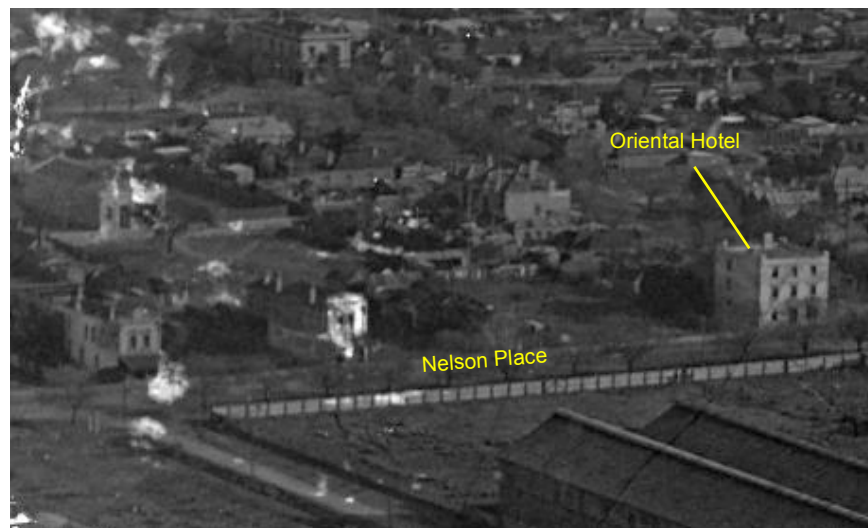


Figure 5 The western half of the former Port Phillip Woollen Mills site, 1933. Source: State Library of Victoria.

⁴ Sands and McDougall directories, 1870.

In March 1936, “The Carbonisers Pty Ltd” factory on the corner of Morris Street and Nelson Place was taken over by the newly formed Pacific Wools (Aust.) Pty Ltd.⁵ This company had modest beginnings with fewer than 60 employees operating the existing wool scouring and carbonising plant. Management was housed in cramped offices on Morris Street, facing the Williamstown Pier railway station.⁶ A programme of expansion began shortly after. Several old bluestone cottages were demolished to make way for a new woollen mill building with modern plant and machinery. The expanded mill complex operated as James Seymour and Co. Pty Ltd wool top manufacturers and Pacific Wools Australia wool scourers.⁷

Within a few years further expansion of the mill was necessary, including the completion of a three-storey building facing Aitken Street, which reputedly had the largest expanse of glass roof in Australasia⁸, and a wool store on the south side of Aitken Street. Later additions to the complex included an administrative block on Nelson Place (now demolished) with a square clock tower and flagstaff. The ground floor of this building contained office space whilst the upper level was taken up by wool buyers and a laboratory staffed by industrial chemists.⁹



Figure 6 A 1945 aerial photograph of the Port Phillip Woollen Mills site. Source: Melbourne University Library Map Collection.

⁵ *Wealth of a City: An Account of the Industries of Williamstown* (unpaginated).

⁶ *Wealth of a City: An Account of the Industries of Williamstown* (unpaginated).

⁷ Sands McDougall Directories, 1940.

⁸ *Wealth of a City: An Account of the Industries of Williamstown* (unpaginated).

⁹ *Wealth of a City: An Account of the Industries of Williamstown* (unpaginated).

Production rose sharply during the Second World War when the mill turned out vast quantities of khaki material for the Armed forces.¹⁰ At the wars end in 1945, the mill complex had expanded to occupy most of the eastern half of the block bordered by Nelson Place, Morris, Aitken and Ann Streets. Sands and McDougall Directories list James Seymour Co. Pty Ltd wool top manufacturers, Pacific Wools (Australia) Pty Ltd wool scourers and Nelson Combing mills wool dyers at 7-31 Nelson Place. James Seymour & Company also had storage facilities on the north and south sides of Aitken Street at numbers 9 and 10.¹¹ Judging by the factory roofscape in a 1945 aerial, most of the original 1930s buildings had been demolished or substantially altered by this time (refer figures 3 and 4 above).

By 1947, the James Seymour & Company woollen mills had 650 employees, engaged in 'non-stop combing, carding and manufacture of wool tops'.¹² The *Argus* provided the following account of working conditions in the mill during this period:

Employees at the Williamstown Mills work under ideal conditions. And the Amenities Division is a very important part of the organisation. Amenities installed at the Mills include "change" and "wash" rooms, with every modern convenience, including individual steel lockers A large and well-equipped canteen and dining-room manned by an efficient Staff, is in operation to supply meals for the various working shifts, and an up-to date Surgery in charge of an ex-AIF Sister, provides free medical treatment where required, as well as advice upon all health matters. There is also in operation at Williamstown Mill a Sick and Accident Fund providing generous benefits at particularly low cost.

Sport (including Cricket, Football and Basket Ball) is fostered, as also are Social functions of all descriptions. This aspect of Mill activity is controlled by the Works Council-a body elected by the employees from amongst their own ranks.

Management makes provision for a monthly Magazine, the "See More" News, which is issued without cost to every employee. Many literary contributions for the Magazine are the work of the employees themselves, and this aspect is being particularly encouraged.

The "Seymour" Williamstown Mills provide a large field for full-time employment under Ideal conditions for skilled and semi-skilled artisans of both sexes, and offer excellent openings for young men and women to be thoroughly trained in any particular department, with the opportunity of reaching executive status in their expanding Textile activities.¹³

The woollen mill site had been developed to more or less its current extent by the end of the 1950s. A photograph of the mill at this time shows a varied amalgam of hipped and sawtooth roofed factory buildings and what may have been a water tower on Nelson Place, adjacent to the office building.

¹⁰ *Wealth of a City: An Account of the Industries of Williamstown* (unpaginated).

¹¹ Sands McDougall Directories, 1944/45.

¹² *Wealth of a City: An Account of the Industries of Williamstown* (unpaginated).

¹³ *Argus* March, 1947, p.8.

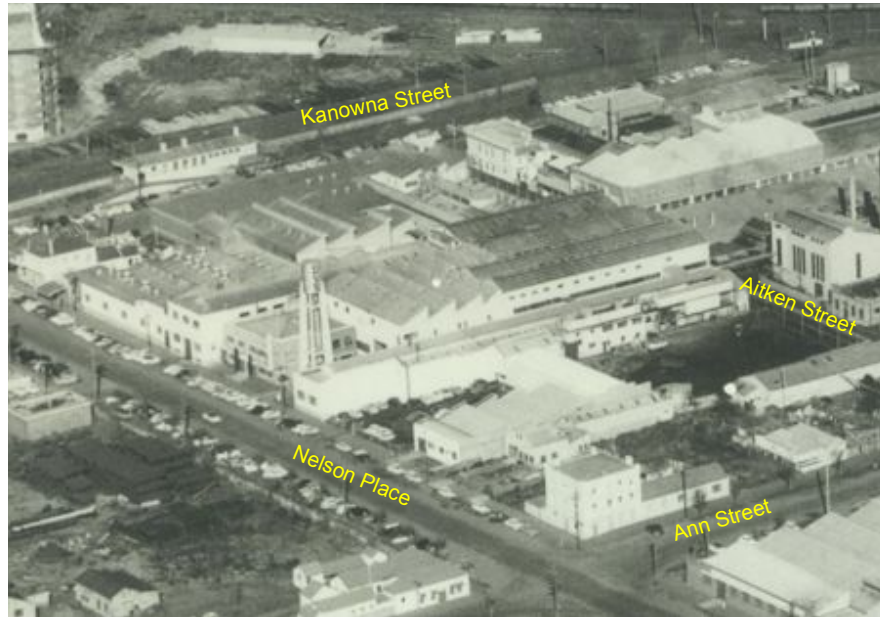


Figure 7 *A c1950-1960 photograph of Williamstown showing the James Seymour & Co woollen mills occupying most of the block bound by Nelson Place and Ann, Aitken and Kanowna Streets. Source: State Library of Victoria.*



Figure 8 *James Seymour & Co buildings on Nelson Place, 1961. The Prince of Wales Hotel is visible on the far left. Source: Picture Australia.*

In the latter part of the twentieth century, large parts of the woollen mill complex were rebuilt, or at the very least substantially modified. The mill operated under the name of the Port Phillip Woollen Mills until its closure. The complex as it stands today bares little resemblance to either the original 1930s carbonising works or the James Seymour & Co. mill in its mature 1950s state.

Former Oriental Hotel

According to the heritage report prepared by Lesley Alves and Associates, a three-storey hotel has existed on this site since c1854.¹⁴ It was initially named Cox's Family Hotel before becoming the Barkly Arms Hotel c1856 (presumably named after Sir Henry Barkly who was appointed Governor of Victoria in 1856). Council's citation gives an 1856 construction date for the Barkly Arms, but research by Alves suggests the original c1854 hotel was renamed at this time, rather than being rebuilt. This view is supported by an 1854 lithograph of Williamstown, which shows a tall three-storey building resembling later images of the hotel.



Figure 9 Part 1854 lithograph of Williamstown purporting to show the three-storey Oriental Hotel (then named Cox's Family Hotel). Source: State Library of New South Wales.

The report prepared by my office in June 2012 in support of the application to demolish the former Oriental Hotel stated that the original 1850s building was destroyed by fire and entirely rebuilt in 1871.¹⁵ This information was taken from the citation for the hotel in the *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study* (Amended 2010). According to the citation, the fire took place c1870 (but no reference is provided). Alves cites various primary sources as evidence that the fire did not take place at this time, and also points to early photographs showing little apparent change in the building through the nineteenth century. Alves' conclusions with respect to construction date seem to me to be reasonable ones. My own research using TROVE (the National Library of Australia's online resource) did not find any account of the hotel being totally destroyed by fire. A fire broke out in the hotel's billiard room in August 1865, but the extent of damage is not described in detail in

¹⁴ Lesley Alves and Associates, *Heritage Report Oriental Hotel, 55 Nelson Place Williamstown*, p.5.

¹⁵ Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, *Former Oriental Hotel 57 Nelson Place, Williamstown Proposed Demolition and Redevelopment – Heritage Issues*, June 2012, p. 4.

contemporary newspaper reports other than making reference to the back of the building being ‘in flames’.¹⁶

In December 1886 fire broke out in premises adjoining the hotel (by then renamed the Oriental). Reports in the *Williamstown Chronicle* do not describe the extent of damage to the hotel in detail but do suggest that it was extensive: ‘*The Oriental Hotel, being of brick, was saved from total destruction, but it sustained much damage*’.¹⁷

Rate books show an increase in the number of rooms in the hotel from 16 to 24 between 1886-87 and 1887-88.¹⁸ These additions were reflected by an attendant increase in the Net Annual Value of the hotel and may have been carried out as part of repairs to the fire damaged hotel. The heritage study citation suggests that the changes were made in response to the introduction of new licensing laws in 1877, which required hotels to have a certain number of rooms of minimum dimension in order to obtain a license.¹⁹



Figure 10 A c1870-1875 photograph looking east along Nelson Place towards the three-storey Oriental Hotel. Source: State Library of Victoria.

The Oriental Hotel was extensively renovated in 1891, as reported in the *Williamstown Chronicle*:

A Transformation has been effected in the Oriental Hotel, that must soon make it a favourite with the general public. The Carlton and West End Breweries have secured a long lease of the hotel from its proprietors, and have bought out the previous tenants. Their first action was to take out and destroy every stick of furniture, to take down and replace

¹⁶ *Kilmore Free Press*, 17 August 1865, p. 4.

¹⁷ *Williamstown Chronicle*. 11 December, 1886. p.2.

¹⁸ Lesley Alves and Associates, *Heritage Report Oriental Hotel, 55 Nelson Place Williamstown*, p.8.

¹⁹ *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study* (Amended 2010).

*dilapidated inside walls, relay new floors, and generally to fit out the place in a manner not surpassed in the town. Alterations to meet the times are everywhere noticeable, especially in the bar, sitting rooms, billiard room and bed-rooms. Messers. Krakowski and Fredman have excelled in their firm's reputation in the furnishings throughout. While the alterations in the house made by Mr H. Hick completely transform it.*²⁰

A 1904 photograph shows the building without verandah, but with a substantial cornice to its upper level, a string course between ground and first floor and substantial pediments to both Ann Street and Nelson Place featuring the name 'Oriental Hotel'.²¹ This photograph also shows a single storey hipped roof extension along Ann Street. The shadow of this extension is still visible on the south wall of the building, the extension itself having been demolished.



Figure 11 The Oriental Hotel, 1904. Source: 'Williamstown Illustrated'.

The *Williamstown Conservation Study* notes that the hotel was renovated in the interwar period (c 1925), and it seems likely that the building was modified with a view to giving it a more modern appearance. A photograph of the hotel taken in 1933 after the renovations appears to show the pediments removed and small projections added to the corners of the parapet (refer figure 4 below). Window hoods also seem to have been added to the façade by this time.

In 1947, the rear portion of the hotel was demolished and new bathrooms, a large dining room, lounge area, kitchen and servery were added at a cost of £3000.²²

²⁰ *Williamstown Chronicle*, 21 February, 1891, p.2.

²¹ *Williamstown Illustrated*, 1904. Facsimile of the original, reprinted by the Williamstown Historical Society Inc, 1996, no page numbers.

²² Bruce Tait, *Pubs of Williamstown*, p.113.



Figure 12 *The Oriental Hotel, 1933. Source: State Library of Victoria.*



Figure 13 *The Oriental Hotel, c1950-60. Source: State Library of Victoria.*

Little, if any, work was carried out to improve the standard of the hotel in the post war period. According to a 1956 Licensing Inspector's report 'it would be many years since the premises have been redecorated'. The same report also described the hotel as being in 'poor condition' and requiring 'extensive renovation'.²³

²³ License Case File No. 224580, PROV VPRS 7712, Unit 175.

In 1973, architects HJ Summers and Associates prepared a two-stage plan for redevelopment of the hotel, consisting of a drive-in bottle shop (subsequently built on the south side of the hotel) and a new bistro/lounge (presumably the single-storey wing on Ann Street).²⁴

The Oriental Hotel was purchased by Collingwood footballer Peter Daicos in January 1989.²⁵ The hotel was renovated and opened a year later as the 'Willy Tavern'. Local residents soon found cause to complain about the antisocial behaviour of drunken hotel patrons. In 1990, less than a year after opening, the Willy Tavern ceased trading. A proposal to redevelop the hotel site with a three-storey motel was approved by the Williamstown City Council in 1993 but did not proceed.²⁶

7.0 Description

The subject site occupies the western third of the block bound by Nelson Place, Aitken Street, Ann Street and Kanowna Street (formerly Morris Street). Existing structures on this block mainly comprises interwar and post war industrial buildings associated with the former Port Phillip Woollen mills, but also include three Victorian era hotels.

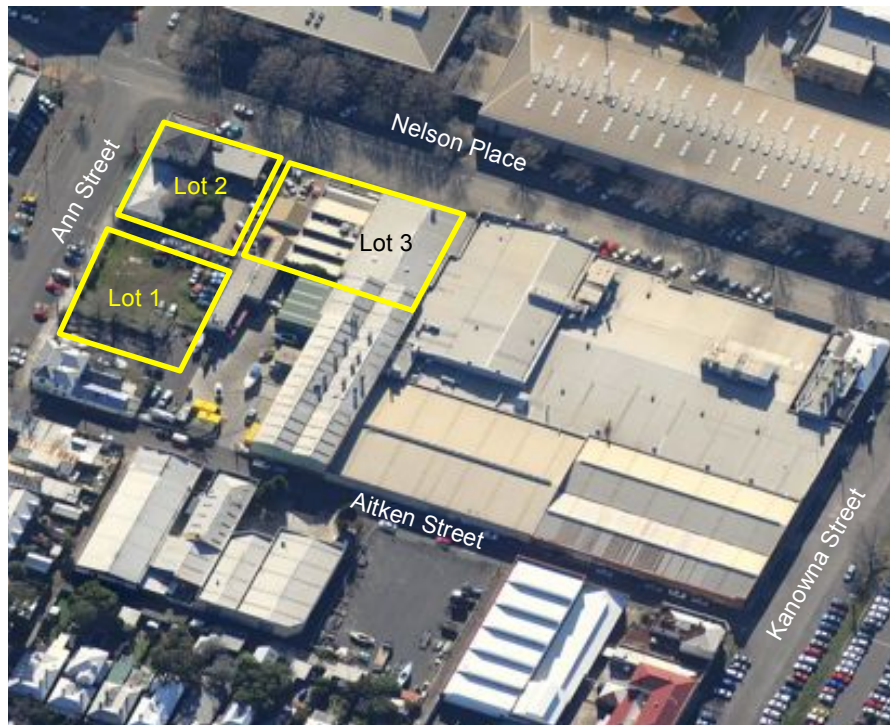


Figure 14 Aerial photograph of the former Port Phillip Woollen Mills, c2011. Source: Nearmap.

²⁴ License Case File No. 224580, PROV VPRS 7712, Unit 175.

²⁵ Bruce Tait, *Pubs of Williamstown*, p.200.

²⁶ Bruce Tait, *Pubs of Williamstown*, p.201.

The applications under review are concerned with three parcels of land, known at Lots 1, 2 and 3. Lot 1 fronts Ann Street and is vacant land. Lot 2 is located on the corner of Nelson Place and Ann Street and is presently occupied by the former Oriental Hotel (described in further detail below). Lot 3 fronts Nelson Place and supports a nondescript metal clad auto repair workshop (41 Nelson Place) and an office building and other structures associated with the former Port Phillip Woollen Mills.

The former Oriental Hotel stands today untenanted and in poor condition. There is a modern single-storey addition to the south facing Ann Street, and a modern drive-in bottle shop on the east side, accessed from Nelson Place. The hotel verandah is also modern. All of the Victorian stucco mouldings and ornamentation on the main three storey envelope – including cornice, stringcourses, and the crowning pediments – have been removed, and the chimneys have been altered. Ornament is confined to the rather ugly window ‘hoods’ that presumably were also added in the interwar period (this detail is not visible in the 1904 photograph).

All the original multi-paned double-hung windows have been replaced with more simply detailed versions, the exception being a solitary multi-paned window to the east elevation. Ground floor openings have also been modified. The 1904 photograph above [Figure 11] shows two doors and two windows on the ground floor of the Ann Street facade. There is presently a single door opening to this elevation, flanked on either side by a window (one being a converted door opening).

The extent to which the hotel façade survives in its original c1854 state (accepting this to be the date of construction) is possibly limited to the masonry walls and the window openings to the first and second floors (not the window frames themselves).



Figure 15 The Nelson Place elevation of the hotel showing the modern drive-in bottle shop addition on the east side.



Figure 16 *The Ann Street elevation showing modern single-storey wing and verandah to the south of the corner three storey building.*

Looking at the surrounding built form on the former Port Phillip Woollen Mills site, there is a modern utilitarian façade to Nelson Place, replacing the more varied arrangement of hipped and sawtooth roofed mill buildings that can be seen on the c1950-60 aerial of the site above. The mill's Kanowna Street frontage consists of a utilitarian red-brick and render façade. The Aitken Street frontage has an unadorned red-brick factory façade at its eastern end and blank concrete panel wall at its centre. West of this is a three-storey post war factory building with corrugated iron clad walls and twin gabled roof. The former Telegraph Hotel stands on the corner of Ann and Aitken Street (immediately south of Lot 1). The hotel is a largely intact double-storey building dating from 1862.



Figure 17 *The Ann Street frontage of the subject site (Lot 1). The former Oriental Hotel is visible to the far left. Part of the former Telegraph Hotel can be seen to the right.*



Figure 18 Former Port Phillip Woollen Mills office building on Nelson Place (part of Lot 3).



Figure 19 Vacant auto repair workshop at 41 Nelson Place (part of Lot 3).



Figure 20 Former Port Phillip Woollen Mills buildings fronting Nelson Place (east of Lot 3).



Figure 21 *Former Port Phillip Woollen mills façade to Kanowna Street.*



Figure 22 *The Aitken Street frontage of the subject site looking west from Kanowna Street.*

It is noted that a permit with conditions has been issued at the direction of the VCAT for demolition of all former Port Phillip Woollen Mills factory buildings (VCAT Ref. No. P785/2012). The demolition works have been allowed in order to determine if contaminants are present in the soil, and to enable other preparatory works necessary for the future development of the site.

In terms of its context, the subject site is located in a heavily industrialised ship-building and docks area in the northeast corner of Williamstown. To the north of the subject site, across Nelson Place, is the BAE site, presently used for offices, warehousing and ship building activities. It contains a variety of building forms and heights, typically equivalent to 3-5 storeys in scale.

To the east of the subject site is a large open car park (most of which is associated with the BAE site) and beyond this the open land of the Point Gellibrand Coastal Heritage Park, and the historic Time Ball Tower. The carpark and adjacent open

parkland form part of the Point Gellibrand Heritage Precinct (HO210). The Time Ball Tower has a separate listing on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR 1649). A little to the north of the Time Ball Tower are the Mobil storage tanks and associated wharf.

Buildings on the south side of Aitken Street are mainly industrial in nature, with the exception of the Edwardian Free-classical style Britannia Hotel and the former Port Phillip Stevedore Club Hall. The hall is an Edwardian single storey building with a stuccoed classical style façade.

The streetscape on the west side of Ann Street between Nelson Place and Aitken Street consists entirely of recent double-storey residences in an attached townhouse format. There is also a long row of modern three and two storey townhouses on the south side of Nelson Place, extending west from the corner of Ann Street almost as far as Thompson Street. The former Royal Hotel at 85 Nelson Place stands in midst of the townhouse row. The hotel is an 1890 building with an architecturally impressive three-storey red-brick and render facade.



Figure 23 Recent housing development on the west side of Ann Street, opposite the subject site.



Figure 24 *Modern residential development on Nelson Place directly west of Ann Street. The taller building at the far right is the former Royal Hotel.*



Figure 25 *Large modern industrial building located diagonally opposite the former Oriental Hotel.*



Figure 26 *Large-scale industrial buildings on the north side of Nelson Place, near the corner of Kanowna Street.*

8.0 Listings and controls

Hobsons Bay

The subject site is located within the Government Survey Heritage Precinct (HO8). The former Oriental Hotel is listed individually on the schedule to the heritage overlay as HO211.

The following individual heritage overlay controls apply to adjacent or nearby sites: the former Prince of Wales Hotel (HO210), located at 1 Nelson Place; the former Telegraph Hotel (HO43), located at 17 Ann Street; the former Britannia Hotel (HO162), located at 14 Kanowna Street; and, the former Port Phillip Stevedore Club Hall (HO35), located at 23-25 Aitken Street. The site also adjoins the Point Gellibrand Heritage Precinct (HO25), located on the east side of Kanowna Street.



Figure 27 Heritage overlay map showing the subject site.

Heritage Victoria

No part of the subject site is included on the Victorian Heritage Register. In the surrounding area, sites on the Register include the Time Ball Tower (VHR no. H1649), Williamstown Railway Station (VHR no. H1599) and Fort Gellibrand (VHR no. H1811).

National Trust

None of the buildings on the subject site have been classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria). Adjacent and nearby sites included on the Trust's register are the former Prince of Wales Hotel (file no. B239) and the Point Gellibrand area (file no. B6670).

Australian Heritage Council

The subject site is not included on the Register of the National Estate, the Commonwealth Heritage List or the National Heritage List.

9.0 Significance

The *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study* (Revised 2010) provides the following statement of significance for the Government Survey Heritage Precinct:

What is Significant?

The Government Survey Heritage Precinct which comprises all land included within HO353 and places individually listed in the schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the area generally bounded by Ferguson Street, Nelson Place, Kanowna Street, Morris Street, Esplanade, Giffard Street and Railway Place. It does not include land in HO68.

How is it Significant?

The Government Survey Heritage Precinct is of local historic, social and aesthetic significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, the Government Survey precinct demonstrates the most important and prosperous phase in the development of Williamstown from the mid nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, which was directly associated with the development of the port and later influenced by the development of railways and associated industries. The early settlement of Williamstown and its importance as a port and defence facility also contributes to a broader understanding of the history of Victoria.

Socially, the Government Survey is important for its ability to assist in understanding and interpreting the life style of this isolated and close knit community during the nineteenth century.

Aesthetically, while there are examples of unrelated postwar development within the precinct, as a whole it retains remarkably intact and cohesive groups of nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings that are an integral part of the special character of early Williamstown. Key elements include:

- The distinctive street layout based on a series of intersecting grids, which illustrates prevailing attitudes towards town planning in the nineteenth century.*

- *Unusual or rare early building styles and types such as the basalt houses and the timber duplex houses with no dividing wall that are characteristic of this part of Williamstown but less common elsewhere in the metropolitan area.*
- *The major nineteenth century community and civic buildings, many designed by noted Melbourne architects, both individually and in key groups – notably in Electra Street and the former Market Reserve.*
- *The unifying effect throughout the precinct of groups of predominantly Victorian and Edwardian era houses with common or similar characteristics of design, siting and scale that create cohesive and homogeneous streetscapes. Many are externally intact and others, although altered, still retain their distinctive form and siting and hence contribute to the precinct.*
- *The basic nineteenth century or early street construction and the remnant mature exotic street planting found in some streets that combines with exotic planting in private gardens to reinforce and enhance the period expression of the precinct.*

The citation for the Government Survey precinct also includes a schedule of places that contribute to its significance. A key point to note is that none of the buildings on the subject site have contributory status. Streetscapes adjacent to the subject site are also largely bereft of contributory places, apart from isolated sites with individual heritage overlay controls.

The *City of Williamstown Conservation Study* (1993) also identified few buildings in this part of Williamstown as being of any substantial heritage value. Although the 1993 study has been superseded by the *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study* and no longer has the status of a reference or incorporated document in the planning scheme, it still provides a useful insight into the relative significance of streetscapes and buildings under the heritage overlay. It is therefore worth noting that none of the buildings on the subject site apart from the former Oriental Hotel were graded in the *City of Williamstown Conservation Study* (1993) and there is no reference to them in the Site Schedule (Appendix E) to the study. Nor did the subject site form part of a conservation area identified in the 1993 study.

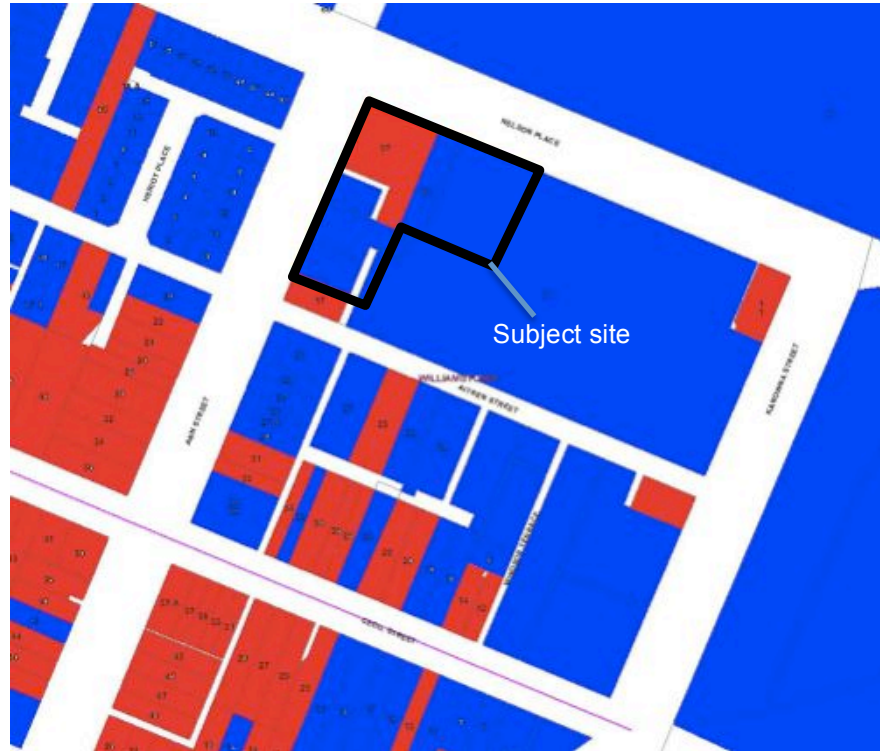


Figure 28 Map of the subject site and its environs showing contributory buildings in red and non-contributory buildings in blue (gradings taken from the 'Hobsons Bay Heritage Study', Revised, 2010).

All of the above serve to demonstrate that the subject site and contiguous streetscapes have an overwhelming majority of non-contributory building stock and relatively little remnant historic character.

The former Oriental Hotel, being an individually listed site, has its own statement of significance in the *Hobsons Bay Heritage Study*, thus:

What is Significant?

The former Oriental or Builders Arms Hotel, constructed c.1871, at 55 Nelson Place, Williamstown.

How is it Significant?

The former Oriental or Builders Arms Hotel at Nelson Place, Williamstown is of local historic and aesthetic significance to the City of Hobsons Bay.

Why is it Significant?

Historically, the hotel is significant as one of a number along Nelson Place in proximity to the waterfront, which demonstrates their important role in the early development of the town and the importance of Nelson Place as the commercial heart of Williamstown during the mid to late nineteenth century. It also illustrates how hotels were upgraded following changes to licensing laws during the late nineteenth century, which required hotels to have a certain number of rooms of minimum dimensions to be licensed. (AHC criteria A4 and D2)

Aesthetically, although altered, it is significant as a rare example of a three-storey corner hotel that relates to other similarly sited nineteenth century hotels in the Nelson Place and Government Survey Heritage Precincts. (AHC criteria B2 and E1)

The heritage study citation rates the external integrity of the hotel as 'low' and the condition as 'poor'.

The City of Williamstown Conservation Study 1993 adopted a very different position with respect to the significance of the hotel. It identified the building as being an E grade building. E grade buildings were defined:

... by their limited integrity, and relative isolation from buildings of higher integrity, represent neither individual form or style types well, nor contribute to a streetscape or precinct. They possess some period detail and thus can be recognised as belonging to a general era and may, by restoration or renovation, achieve a viable new use and potentially may contribute more to the area's period content.

The former Oriental Hotel was not recommended for individual heritage control in the 1993 study, nor was it included in any of the conservation precincts identified in the 1993 study. Outside of these precincts, only sites graded A-B were recommended for individual planning controls.

The history and significance of the former Oriental Hotel was examined in detail in a report by Lesley Alves and Associates prepared for Council (*Heritage Report Oriental Hotel 55 Nelson Place*, June 2012). The report suggested the following revised and updated statement of significance:

What is significant?

The former Oriental Hotel is a three storey brick building on the corner of Nelson Place and Ann Street Williamstown, constructed in 1854 as Cox's Family Hotel. It was renamed the Barkly Arms in 1857, presumably in honour of Victoria's third governor. Since around 1881 it has been known as the Oriental Hotel, apart from a brief in the late 1980s when it was known as the Willy Tavern.

How is it Significant?

The former Oriental Hotel is historically significant as the earliest remaining example of the hotels that proliferated in and around Nelson Place Williamstown in the mid to late nineteenth century. With its proximity to waterfront [sic] Nelson Place was the commercial heart of Williamstown during its heyday as a major port. The former hotel has provided various kinds of hospitality, including family accommodation for travellers through the port during the gold rush years, and later as a boxing venue for sports fans. It also illustrates the development and upgrading of hotels to comply with licensing laws.

The former hotel is aesthetically or architecturally significant as an example of the corner hotels that proliferated in nineteenth century Williamstown although as a three storey building it is rare for the district.

More recently, Council commissioned HLCD Pty Ltd to undertake a further assessment of the hotel, including a peer review of all reports prepared in relation to the proposal to demolish the hotel. The HCLD review (dated February 2013) proposed a statement of significance for the hotel which reads thus:

The former Oriental Hotel, constructed in the mid 1850s, forms part of the significant establishment phase for Williamstown. The commercial function as a hotel linked with the life of the port and its location Nelson Place, the commercial centre at the time, demonstrates aspects of this important maritime phase in the history of Hobson Bay. In addition, the place is able to illuminate aspects of the customs and way of life of the isolated and close knit Williamstown community from the mid 1850s onwards particularly as it opened as a hotel until 1990. (Criterion a)

The former Oriental Hotel is one of only six comparable buildings that demonstrate the important role of hotels Williamstown as the major port of Melbourne in its establishment phase. As a rare pre-1860 building, it demonstrates aspects of the very early origins of the area and forms part of a significant collection of places from this period in the Government Survey Heritage Precinct. (Criterion b)

The former Oriental Hotel demonstrates some of the principal characteristics of Early Victorian hotels including its corner location, substantially intact built form, roof, fenestration and some details. These characteristics are able to be recognised and related to other hotels from the same period despite the loss of detailing and the recent accretions made to the building. (Criterion d)

As one of the few extant buildings from the 1850s, the former Oriental Hotel is likely to have a special value to Williamstown's current community as a tangible reminder of the value of its maritime history and the relative isolation from metropolitan Melbourne for a long period. (Criterion g)

10.0 Heritage Overlay

As noted, the subject site at 3-39 and 41 Nelson Place, Williamstown is located within the Government Survey heritage overlay precinct (HO8). The former Oriental Hotel is also covered by an individual heritage overlay control (HO211). As such it is subject to the provisions of **Clause 43-01**, the heritage overlay. The purpose of this overlay is as follows:

- *To implement the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework, including the Municipal Strategic Statement and local planning policies.*
- *To conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance.*
- *To conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places.*
- *To ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.*
- *To conserve specifically identified heritage places by allowing a use that would otherwise be prohibited if this will demonstrably assist with the conservation of the significance of the heritage place.*

Before deciding on an application, in addition to the decision guidelines in **Clause 65**, the responsible authority will need to consider, as appropriate:

- *The State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework, including the Municipal Strategic Statement and local planning policies.*
- *The significance of the heritage place and whether the proposal will adversely affect the natural or cultural significance of the place.*
- *Any applicable heritage study and any applicable conservation policy.*
- *Whether the location, bulk, form or appearance of the proposed building will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.*
- *Whether the location, bulk, form or appearance of the proposed building is in keeping with the character and appearance of adjacent buildings and the heritage place.*
- *Whether the demolition, removal or external alteration will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.*
- *Whether the proposed works will adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the heritage place.*
- *Whether the proposed subdivision will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.*
- *Whether the proposed subdivision may result in development which will adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the heritage place.*
- *Whether the proposed sign will adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the heritage place.*
- *Whether the pruning, lopping or development will adversely affect the health, appearance or significance of the tree.*

The proposal can also be reviewed in light of **Clause 21.07** of the planning scheme, the *City of Hobsons Bay Heritage Policy*, which has the objective, inter alia, of protecting and conserving the heritage of Hobsons Bay.

Policy found at **Clause 22.01-1 (General Heritage Policy)** provides more specific guidance with respect to demolition and new development in heritage overlays:

Policy

Exercising discretion

It is policy to conserve heritage places and precincts by:

- *Ensuring the maintenance and preservation of heritage places;*
- *Ensuring the restoration or reconstruction of fabric where opportunities arise.*
- *Discouraging the demolition of heritage places unless the demolition is only part of the heritage place and it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority that, as appropriate:*
 - *Ensuring the fabric to be removed is not significant;*
 - *Ensure the fabric to be removed will not adversely affect the significance of the heritage place;*
 - *Ensuring development will assist in the long term conservation of the heritage place;*
 - *In the case of an industrial heritage place, ensuring development will facilitate the historic use of the heritage place and will not result in the loss of fabric of primary significance;*
- *Discouraging the demolition of heritage places unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority that the structural integrity of the heritage place has been lost;*
- *Generally not accepting the poor condition or low integrity of a heritage place as justification for its demolition, particularly if in the opinion of the Responsible Authority the condition of the heritage place has deliberately been allowed to*

deteriorate;

- *Maintaining and enhancing the setting of heritage places and precincts by the removal of non-significant fabric and by ensuring that infill buildings or additions to existing buildings are visually recessive. This includes views and vistas to a heritage place from public places;*
- *Encourage the removal of alterations and additions except where they contribute to the significance of the heritage place;*

It is also policy that before deciding on an application Council must also consider:

- *The significance of the heritage place or precinct as described in the Hobsons Bay Heritage Study Amended 2010 and whether the proposed buildings or works will adversely affect the cultural significance of the heritage place or precinct;*
- *Whether the application has responded appropriately to the relevant design guidelines in the Guidelines for Infill Development in Heritage Areas in Hobsons Bay 2006 or the Guidelines for Alterations and Additions to Dwellings in Heritage Areas in Hobsons Bay 2006.*

Whether the proposed buildings or works will assist in the conservation of the place by:

- *Maintaining, protecting, restoring, repairing or stabilising significant fabric;*
- *Supporting the continued original use of the building by enabling it to be upgraded to meet present day requirements and standards;*
- *Implementing works in accordance with a Conservation Management Plan that has been prepared to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority;*
- *Allowing an alternative use (where this is permitted by the Planning Scheme) when the original use of the building is no longer viable, or in accordance with a Conservation Management Plan;*
- *Whether the proposed buildings or works will have an adverse effect on a significant tree identified by the Hobsons Bay Heritage Study Amended 2010, or any tree that contributes to the setting of a heritage place or precinct.*

In addition to the above, works to the subject building need to be tested against the policies specific to the surrounding Government Survey Heritage Precinct at **clause 22.01-2:**

Objectives

To retain the distinctive cultural heritage significance of this precinct which is derived from:

- *The strong associations with the maritime and railway industries that were key influences in the early historic development of Williamstown;*
- *The strong associations with the formative civic, public and commercial development that occurred in Williamstown during the nineteenth century;*
- *The setting and visual prominence of the civic, public and commercial buildings on key sites throughout the precinct, and in particular the grouping of related basalt public buildings in Cecil Street and public buildings in Electra Street;*
- *The strong and distinctive urban form created by the regular grid subdivisions, separated by areas of open space, which exemplifies nineteenth century town planning;*

- *The pre-1860 buildings, which demonstrate the very early origins of this precinct and comprise one of the most significant collections of buildings from this period within Victoria;*
- *The Williamstown railway line corridor;*
- *The generally uniform scale (predominantly single storey), siting (generally detached, parallel to frontage), construction (predominantly horizontal weatherboard with pitched hipped or gable roof) and subdivision pattern (single dwellings on rectangular regular shaped allotments) of residential buildings, which provide a unifying element throughout the precinct. Typically, car parking is not provided on site;*
- *Regular shaped lots with frontages predominantly between 6-9 metres, which create a distinctive pattern of development;*
- *The rare surviving examples of early housing construction such as pre-fabricated timber dwellings, basalt houses, and attached row houses with undivided roofs;*
- *The unique nineteenth century road layout in key streets, and other historic public infrastructure;*
- *Significant trees on public and private land, which contribute to the cultural landscape character.*

Policy

It is policy to encourage infill development that has:

- *Respect for the single storey scale of the precinct generally with detached siting;*
- *Simple single or double fronted building forms;*
- *Horizontal weatherboard cladding for walls visible from the street. Alternatively, smooth render brick or masonry or a combination of these may be provided;*
- *Simple hipped corrugated iron or slate roof forms; § Windows visible from the street that are rectangular, timber-framed and vertically orientated if single, or in a horizontal bank if grouped;*
- *Eaves and verandahs in street elevations.*

It is policy that alterations and additions to existing dwellings should:

- *Be single storey scale when viewed from a street (not including a right-of-way);*
- *Be sited to the rear of the existing building;*
- *Be setback from side boundaries to reflect the existing pattern of development;*
- *Be the same, or a contemporary interpretation of the wall cladding of the existing dwelling for walls visible from the street;*
- *Be compatible with the heritage place's roof form and material as visible from the street;*
- *Be the same as the significant fabric of the facade or profile of the main roofline as viewed from the street;*
- *Retain contributory features such as chimneys and bluestone foundations;*
- *Avoid windows in upper floor elevations facing the street;*
- *Be ground floor windows visible from the street that are rectangular, timber-framed and vertically orientated if single, or in a horizontal bank, if grouped.*

As discussed below, it is my view that the proposal in its present form has been prepared with appropriate regard for the Heritage Overlay provisions at Clause 43.01, and the objectives for heritage places set out in Clause 21.07. The proposal has also been developed with appropriate regard for Council's heritage guidelines and local heritage policies contained within Clause 22.01 of the *Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme*.

11.0 Proposals

As already noted, this statement of evidence concerns six proceedings arising from four separate planning permit applications.

P74/2013 & P398/2013 (known as Stage 1 – 7 townhouse application – PA1225057)

This proposal relates to the construction of a row of seven three-storey townhouses on vacant land fronting Ann Street. This subject site, known as Lot 1, is located to the immediate north of the former Telegraph Hotel at 17 Ann Street. On the north side of the subject site, a proposed roadway (Waterline Place) would separate the subject site from the site of the former Oriental Hotel on the corner of Ann Street and Nelson Place. The hotel is proposed for demolition under a separate application discussed below. The site's broader urban context is described in more detail in section 7.0 of this report above.

The proposed townhouses have a rectilinear plan form and adopt a restrained contemporary architectural expression using a varied (but subdued) palette of materials and finishes drawn from or inspired by the surrounding industrial context – including steel sections, perforated metal screens and timber battens.

The townhouses present six equal frontages to Ann Street, with the northernmost corner lot containing a pair of townhouses (townhouses 1-2). The townhouses adopt a typical format for this dwelling type with living spaces to the front and garages to the rear accessed via a new laneway.

The maximum overall height of the proposed development is 10.4 metres at the northern end (townhouses 1-2) and approximately 10 metres across the remainder of the building (this being lower than the ridgeline of the adjacent former Telegraph Hotel). Townhouses 3-7 have consistent front setbacks at ground floor level of 3.4 metres. Townhouse 1 (the corner townhouse at the north end of the site) has a modest setback of approximately 800mm to Ann Street and zero set back on the north side. The decrease in setbacks at this point is part of the overall design concept which seeks to emphasise the role of townhouse 1 as corner 'gateway' element. The setback also reflects the zero setbacks of the Victorian corner hotels on this block.

Council have issued a notice of decision to grant a permit for the townhouse development (PA11225057) subject to a number of conditions. The applicant is contesting the following permit condition relevant to heritage considerations:

1(e) The third level of Townhouse 7 be deleted

P625/2013 (known as stage 2 – Oriental Hotel application and Stage 1 works for the site- PA11225056)

This matter concerns the proposal for demolition of the former Oriental Hotel at 57 Nelson Place and redevelopment of the site (known as Lot 2) with a six-storey apartment building with ground floor commercial tenancies and basement level carparking. The proposal also includes the construction of a new road to the south of the subject site (Waterline Place) and landscaping.

The proposed apartment building has a rectilinear plan form and adopts a contemporary architectural expression using adjustable screens as the primary corner façade element. The flanking side wings are treated differently as a composition of solid and void panels using natural off-form precast concrete wall panels and laser-cut aluminium balcony screens. The ground floor is generally built with no setback from the boundary other than for a recessed entry to Tenancy 1 (fronting Ann Street) and small recessed entries to three apartments fronting Nelson Place. The upper levels have a more varied pattern of setbacks created by recessed balconies, ranging from 1.5 metres in depth to a little over 5.0 metres. The building has been given a complex and well considered façade articulation that prevents it from appearing a monolithic form.

Heritage reports prepared for Council by Lesley Alves and Associates (June, 2012) and HLCD Pty Ltd (June February 2013) both concluded that the hotel was of local significance to the City of Hobsons Bay (in its own right and as a contributory element to the Government Survey Heritage precinct). The HLCD report made the following comment with respect to the building's poor condition:

The current condition of the Oriental Hotel is very poor. Given the significance of the Hotel, the preferred action is restoration. The nature of the significance of the former Oriental Hotel means that relatively extensive remedial works would be acceptable without detracting from the heritage values of the place.

Council's heritage advisor generally concurred with the findings of the Lesley Alves and HLCD reports. Based on these assessments and findings, demolition of the former Oriental Hotel was not supported by Council and a notice of decision to refuse to grant a permit was issued (PA1225056).

P611/2013 (known as Stage 3 – Option A (alternative) apartments application – PA1225060)

This concerns the proposal for construction of four storey apartment building with a basement level carpark. The site, known as Lot 3, fronts Nelson Place and is located on the east side of the former Oriental Hotel.

The proposed development has a rectilinear plan form and contemporary architectural expression. It uses a varied, but subdued, palette of materials and finishes including: textured paint, natural off-form and grit blasted concrete (with

selected areas given a yellow or brown stain), perforated aluminium screens, aluminium louvres and composite metal panels (in grey, charcoal and yellow). In terms of setback, the ground floor apartments are built to the boundary with a setback for private open space. Upper levels have staggered front setbacks to a maximum of 6.3 metres, creating sophisticated interplay of solid and void. The basement carpark is accessed from the new roadway at the rear of the site (Waterline Place).

Council's heritage advisor made comment that a three level building would be more appropriate than a four level building and that the design has no apparent link with existing context.

This notwithstanding, the Council officer's assessment against the *Guidelines for Infill Development in Heritage Areas in Hobsons Bay* (2006) exhibited a 'high degree' of compliance. Council officer also made the following comments with respect to heritage issues:

To conclude the proposed built form meets the objectives of the various heritage policies including the Heritage Overlay by being respectful of the existing streetscape in terms of height, bulk and colours whilst providing for a modern development that will be clearly distinguishable from the heritage buildings in the area.

It was the Council officer's recommendation to grant a permit for the proposal with a number of permit conditions. None of the conditions seem to me be relevant to heritage considerations. Council chose to set aside the officer's recommendation, and issued a notice of decision to refuse a permit.

P73/2013 (known as Stage 3 – Option B (alternative) townhouse application)

This concerns an alternative proposal for Lot 3 involving the construction of twelve townhouses ranging in height from three to four storeys. The townhouses are arranged in two rows, with six dwellings fronting Nelson Place and six fronting the proposed new roadway to the south (Waterline Place). The proposal adopts a modern architectural expression that is broadly similar to the townhouse row proposed for Lot 1 of the former Port Phillip Woollen Mills site (discussed above). The townhouses are each provided with a two car garage, accessed via a common driveway running east west through the middle of the lot.

Council have issued a notice of decision to grant a permit (PA11225059) subject to a number of conditions. The applicant is contesting permit conditions 16, 20, 22 and 35, none of which are relevant to heritage considerations.

12.0 Analysis

From a heritage perspective, the four proposals raise two separate issues – firstly, the demolition of the Oriental Hotel, and, secondly, the appropriateness of new built form. These two issues are discussed separately below.

Demolition of the Oriental Hotel

Council's heritage policy generally discourages full demolition of a heritage place apart from circumstances where it can be demonstrated that the building has lost its structural integrity.

This evidence does not comment in any detail on structural matters, and relies on the evidence of others in relation to that issue. It is nonetheless accepted that severe cracking, of an extent to suggest structural failure, is apparent between the first floor and the roof along the east elevation. Major cracking is also evident along the west elevation. The combination of these structural defects indicate that the building is in very poor condition. These observations are drawn from the findings of the Aurecon structural engineering report (submitted as part of the application to Council) and also from the expert witness evidence of Mark Sheldon of Aurecon in relation to the present application for review. It should be noted at this point that the findings of the peer review by Beauchamp Hogg Spano Consultants (on behalf of Council) were generally similar those in the Aurecon report prepared on behalf the applicant as part of the application documentation.

Regardless of its condition, it has previously been accepted that the former Oriental Hotel is of low significance, and should not be listed on the Heritage Overlay schedule. This was the position adopted by the Hobson's Bay Planning Scheme Amendment C34 Panel. The Panel concluded that the hotel was not of local heritage significance and should be removed from the Heritage Overlay:²⁷

We note that the Williamstown + Newport Heritage Place Citations places much importance on the fact that the building is a rare example of a three-storeyed hotel (one of only three in the area) and is situated on a corner site. Other Panels such as Bayside Planning Scheme Amendment C29 (Part 2) have concluded that it is not appropriate to subdivide a general category of building (e.g. Victorian multi-storeyed hotels) into a series of sub-categories such as corner/non-corner sites and number of storeys. Most buildings could be defined as rare if their general category is divided into sufficiently small sub categories. We consider it appropriate to adopt a similar view and to assess this building within the larger group of Victorian hotels.

On this basis, we conclude that the building does not meet AHC Criterion B2 – importance in demonstrating a ... distinctive land use, function or design in danger of being lost, or of exceptional interest. Because of the substantial alterations that have been made to its exterior, we also do not consider that this building satisfied AHC Criterion E1 (Importance for a community for aesthetic characteristics). Because of the building's

²⁷ *Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme Amendment C34 (Parts 1 and 2) Report of the Panel* (April 2004), pp.47-50.

substantial loss of integrity, together with the large number of other hotels along Nelson Place that have much greater historic integrity, we further do not consider that the building satisfies any of the following AHC Criteria:

- *A4 – importance for association with ... developments ... which have had a significant role in the human occupation ...*
- *D2 - importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of the range of human activities, ... including way of life, ..., land use, function, ...*

The Panel also accepted the following as facts on the basis of expert evidence by the author of this statement, and engineers Walbridge and Gilbert:

- *The building’s condition is extremely poor and, although no evidence was provided as to whether, or at what cost this building could be restored to a safe and habitable condition, the cost would clearly be very substantial. The assessment of this property that is provided in the Williamstown + Newport Heritage Place Citations as being in “good” condition is not accepted. Rather, it should read as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’.*
- *The historic, three-storeyed section of building has been substantially altered and its integrity is at best moderate or possibly poor (taking account of the single storeyed extensions). We accept Mr. Raworth’s conclusion that the building presents as a “Victorian building that is... lacking much of its former detail.”*

Council chose to disregard the Panel recommendations and listed the hotel on the schedule to the heritage overlay. Nonetheless, Council made some concession to the findings of the Panel by amending the citation so that the integrity rating was changed from ‘moderate’ to ‘low’ and the condition from ‘good’ to ‘poor’.

Issues relating to the hotel’s significance were discussed at length in my evidence to the Amendment C34 Panel, but are worth repeating here.

The analysis in Council’s citation conceded that the former Oriental Hotel ‘directly compares with the more intact examples’ in the area, but fails to mention that the hotel compares rather unfavourably on several levels. Even within Nelson Place itself, for example, there stand a number of much more significant and intact hotels such as the former Royal Hotel at 85 Nelson Place (1890), graded A in the *Williamstown Conservation Study*; the former Clarendon Hotel at 231 Nelson Place (1859), graded A; the former Prince of Wales Hotel at 1 Nelson Place (c.1858), graded B; the Yacht Club Hotel at 207 Nelson Place (c.1892), graded B; the Customs House Hotel at 161-163 Nelson Place (c.1880), graded C; and the Bay View Hotel at 175 Nelson Place (c.1910), also graded C.

The relatively low significance of the former Oriental Hotel is further supported by the fact that the building was not among the five most significant Williamstown hotel buildings identified in *the Inner Metropolitan Hotels Study* prepared by Bryce Raworth in conjunction with Allom Lovell & Associates (1992). This study focused on the more significant public hotel buildings that were established prior to WWII in Melbourne’s inner metropolitan area. Twenty-one Williamstown hotels were assessed in the study, including the former Oriental Hotel (under the name ‘Willy

Tavern'), but only five hotels were deemed significant enough to warrant a datasheet with a more detailed assessment - the five examples being: the Prince Albert Hotel, (149 Douglas Parade) the former Clarendon Hotel, the former Royal Hotel, the former Bridge Hotel (72 Thompson Street) and the former Alfred Hotel (92 Stevedore Street). The latter was singled out for attention as a 'notable' A grade building.



Figure 29 *The Former Alfred Hotel, Stevedore Street, Williamstown (1859-60).*

As already noted, it seems probable that the Oriental Hotel was built c1854 as Cox Family Hotel, making it an earlier building than previously thought. This gives the hotel some added historical significance but does not fundamentally change my opinion with respect to the appropriateness of demolition. Nor does an earlier construction date invalidate the findings of the Amendment C34 Panel quoted above – particularly in relation the rarity of three-storey hotels. Regardless of whether the hotel was built c1856 or c1871, it remains a building of low intactness and integrity and limited architectural interest.

The recent assessments of the former Oriental Hotel by Lelsey Alves and HLCD Pty Ltd do not claim significance beyond a local level but it is instructive to see how the building compares with contemporaneous hotels outside of Hobsons Bay. The examples illustrated below remain largely intact and better demonstrate principal design characteristics of early to mid-Victorian hotels. According to Lardner, the Oriental Hotel demonstrates these characteristics through its 'corner location, substantially intact built form, roof, fenestration, and some details'. The hotel façade has been stripped of most early details and the roof is concealed from view. These aspects of the design aside, a corner location, three storey form and regular fenestration pattern are not unique to 1850s hotels. The hotel's plain façade treatment recalls simple pre-boom vernacular designs – but this is more a result of stripping away of ornamentation than a reflection of early character.

The former Oriental Hotel is not a good example of an 1850s hotel. It also lacks even the splayed corner entry – this being one of the principal leitmotifs of Victorian hotel design.



Figure 30 (left) Former Oddfellows Hotel, Little Lonsdale Street. Built in two stages between c1848 and 1853 (VHR H2266).



Figure 31 (right) Former Queens Arms Hotel, Dorcas Street, South Melbourne. A notably intact 1854 corner hotel (VHR H1827).



Figure 32 (left) Former George and Dragon Hotel, Moorabool Street, Geelong. Built 1858. (VHR1163).



Figure 33 (right) Terminus Hotel, Mercer Street, Geelong. A three-storey corner hotel, built in 1853-54. An unusually sophisticated design for the period (VHR1162).



Figure 34 (left) Golden Age Hotel, Gheringhap Street, Geelong. A three-storey hotel built in 1854 (VHR1161).



Figure 35 (right) Bay View Hotel, Mercer Street, Geelong. Built in 1853, this is another of Geelong's notable three-storey hotels distinguished by rounded corners. (VHR1159).



Figure 36 (left) Former Eastern Hill Hotel, Victoria Parade, Fitzroy. Built c1854-1856, this substantial three-storey hotel demonstrates the impact of the gold-rushes on Melbourne's development (VHR816).

Figure 37 (right) Grace Darling Hotel, Smith Street Collingwood. A largely intact 1854 corner hotel.

Looking at a broader range of 1850s building in Hobsons Bay, there are better preserved examples of a similar or earlier age that far better demonstrate this phase of Williamstown's development. Examples include the cottages at 11 and 12 Cox's Gardens (1851); the Timeball Tower (1849-51), residence, 46 Hamner Street (c1852-58); former residence, 231 Nelson Place (c1852-55); former shop and residence, 28 Parker Street (1856); residence, 62 Electra Street (1856); former Presbyterian Manse, 27 Lyons Street (1856-57); Tide Gauge House (1857), Williamstown Railway Station (1858); Former morgue, 8 Ann Street (1858), Mandalay, 24 The Strand (1858); and, the bluestone cottage at 24 James Street (1859).

Also of note is that fact that between the Prince of Wales Hotel at 1 Nelson Place, and the former Royal Hotel at 85 Nelson Place (a distance of nearly 300 metres), the former Oriental Hotel is the only building to be graded in the *Williamstown Conservation Study* at all. This reflects the fact that the hotel no longer sits within an intact streetscape, but within a heterogeneous and degraded environment. This is not to deny that a heritage overlay precinct extends across the hotel and neighbouring sites, but the extent to which hotel's environs it could be said to reflect the core heritage values of the Government Survey Heritage precinct is limited.

Were a building of limited individual interest such as the hotel to stand within a more consistent and valued streetscape of similar heritage buildings where it had an historic context to which it might contribute (i.e. a Victorian context), its loss might create something of a hole or gap in an otherwise intact row. In this particular circumstance, however, the surrounding streetscapes are dominated by modern factory buildings and are of marginal heritage interest.

If the hotel were to be retained and made safe for occupation, it seems likely that a substantial amount of existing fabric would need to be replaced. This point is made in the report into the structural condition of the hotel prepared for Council by Beauchamp Hogg Spano Consultants:

The Hotel Building could be retained with appropriate remedial works however this would be at considerable expense and depending on the standard of the development required to be achieved may involve extensive replacement of the building fabric.²⁸

Lovell Chen made a similar observation in their preliminary assessment of the hotel dated April 2012:

Further to the consideration of its significance the building is in a severely degraded state. By way of simple observation it is evident that it suffers from major structural movement and decay. While it would be possible to repair, rebuild and reconstruct, such a process would be highly invasive and involve considerable cost.²⁹

Lovell Chen were also of the opinion that the hotel made a contribution to the heritage precinct, but not one that was highly important:

In considering the immediately relevant sections of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme at Clauses 21.07 Heritage and Clause 22.01 Heritage Policy, the conclusion of this preliminary assessment is that the former Oriental Hotel is not a building in which the fabric is considered to be of 'primary significance' to the heritage precinct in which it is located and that it is a place in which the 'structural integrity' is at a minimum compromised and that its poor condition and low integrity is a product of long term neglect and change and not a consequence of the deliberate actions by its current owner. Under such circumstances it is a place where demolition, while not a preferred outcome, can reasonably be supported. It is an outcome which would remove a building which makes a contribution to the heritage and significance of the local area but not at a level which would result in the significance of the area being unacceptably compromised or diminished.³⁰

I generally concur with the Lovell Chen assessment above but I am of the opinion that the hotel makes a minor contribution only to the precinct because it stands isolated in a poor quality industrial streetscape, well removed from Williamstown's historic core.

The combination of its low intrinsic interest, its poor integrity, and the low integrity of the surrounding streetscape mean that demolition of the subject building would have a negligible impact upon the character and integrity of the broader Government Survey heritage overlay. Demolition of the former Oriental Hotel can therefore be seen to be acceptable subject to an appropriate replacement building.

²⁸ Beauchamp, Hogg Spano Consultants, *Structural Condition Assessment Report of the Oriental Hotel at 57 Nelson Place Williamstown*. p.17.

²⁹ Lovell Chen, *Preliminary Assessment The Former Oriental Hotel 55 Nelson Place*. April 2012. Prepared for Nelson Place Village Pty Ltd. p. 9.

³⁰ Lovell Chen, *Preliminary Assessment The Former Oriental Hotel 55 Nelson Place*. April 2012. Prepared for Nelson Place Village Pty Ltd. p. 9.

Proposed Redevelopment

While the various proposals for the subject sites adopt a character, scale and configuration that is quite different to that of the predominately Victorian and Edwardian building stock in other parts of HO8, this is not inappropriate in either a heritage or urban design sense. As discussed above, formerly industrial sites such as this have historically been distinct from their surroundings in terms of developmental character and use, and this distinction might in itself be seen to be part of the character of the immediate environs. Further to this, the subject site is located in a part of Williamstown that has for a very long time had a built form and development character distinct from that of the finer grain commercial and residential streets to the south and west.

The proposed new works will be neutral in impact upon the character and significance of the surrounding heritage overlays, HO8 and on adjacent individual heritage overlay sites (including the former Telegraph Hotel, HO43).

With regards to the Lot 1 townhouse proposal (PA1225057), the Council officer made the following comments relevant to heritage issues:

In summary, the proposed built form meets the objectives of the various heritage policies including Heritage Overlay by being respectful of the existing streetscape in terms of height, bulk and colours whilst providing for a modern development that will clearly distinguish from the heritage buildings in the area, namely the Telegraph Hotel.

Council's heritage advisor took a different view:

The development proposed for this site especially proposal for Lot 1 and 2 will have a negative impact on the heritage integrity and significance of the Telegraph Hotel (former) due to the proposed setting and bulk/mass.

Further to this, Council's heritage advisor made a number of recommendations to modify the design, including a reduction in height at the southern end (to bring the development below the wall height of the former Telegraph Hotel). This is reflected in the permit conditions requirement to delete the third level of the end townhouse.

In my opinion, the proposal is acceptable without a reduction in height or any other modification.

In terms of height, it should be noted that the townhouse parapet is only 700mm taller than the masonry façade of the former Telegraph Hotel, but lower than the hotel's ridgeline by 1.15 metres. The townhouses have a recessed balcony treatment at the interface with the hotel and use visually lightweight materials at this point (as opposed to rendered masonry). In the context of a mixed streetscape with little consistency in terms of façade articulation, fenestration patterns and the like, there should be no requirement for the proposal to use levels (such as string

courses) or forms that are overtly linked to the hotel design. In its current form, the proposal makes a carefully considered response to its context and is not of a scale that will dominate the hotel.

The three-storey townhouse proposal is very similar to the modern three-storey development built adjacent to the Steam Packet Hotel, Cole Street, Williamstown. In that case, the new building has a contemporary architectural character with a recessed balcony treatment, very much like that proposed for Lot 1 of the subject site. Also like the proposal under review, the development at Cole Street was marginally taller than the hotel parapet, but this has not resulted in an improper scale relationship.



Figure 38 Recent three-storey residential development adjacent to the Steam Packet Hotel, Cole Street, Williamstown.

It is noted that the Steam Packet Hotel has an individual heritage overlay control (HO73) and is located in a more intact part of HO8, much closer to commercial heart of Williamston.

The proposal would result in a superior outcome to that created by the townhouses development located on Nelson Place, either side of the former Royal Hotel (HO212). In that case, the hotel has a very long row of townhouses to either side that are overtly modern and rather clumsily designed. The townhouses were built hard up against the hotel and are not provided with any type of façade articulation to make them visually recessive. The townhouses to the east side of the hotel are three-storey and have balconies that do not correspond to the hotel's floor/string course levels. They also make liberal use of stacked stone cladding, a material that has been very much in vogue in recent years, but one that is entirely alien to the Royal Hotel's red-brick and render materiality. The Nelson Place townhouse row, being considerable in its extent, exerts a strong influence on the area's urban character and sets a clear precedent for further modern development in this part of Williamstown.



Figure 39 Modern three-storey townhouses on Nelson Place adjacent to the former Royal Hotel (the taller building to the right).

Further to the Lot 1 proposal, objections have been made on the grounds that the development would block views to the mural of CSS Shanandoah on the north wall of the former Telegraph Hotel. This mural is understood to be approximately 10 years old and does not contribute to the identified heritage values of the place. It is also the case that building close to the north side of the hotel essentially replicates historical conditions on this site (as shown on the 1908 MMBW below).

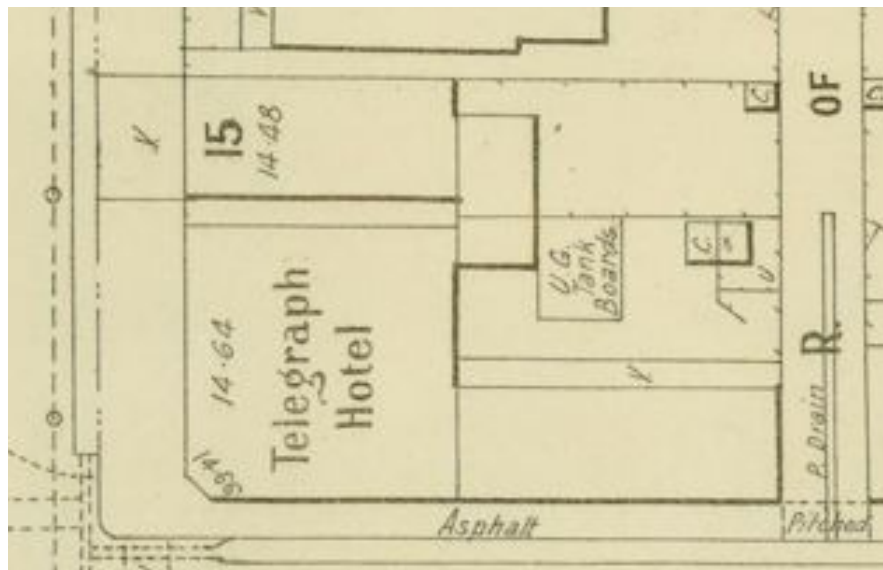


Figure 40 Part of an 1908 MMBW Detail Plan showing a building at 15 Ann Street in close proximity to the north side of the Telegraph Hotel. Source: State Library of Victoria.

In respect to the replacement six-storey building on the former Oriental Hotel site (Lot 2) Council's heritage advisor stated that the proposal was not respectful of its context, for the following reasons:

- Inappropriate height;

- Inappropriate design and form;
- Inappropriate treatment of footpaths;
- Inappropriate use of ramps;
- Inappropriate use of floor levels which do not consider the existing land contours but uses stairs and ramps to accommodate the inappropriate basement levels;
- Inappropriate overall design which makes no reference to the existing context;
- Possibly inappropriate finishes and details which cannot be fully assessed but which appear to be inappropriate for the setting and context.

This notwithstanding, the Council officers assessment against the objectives of the *Guidelines for Infill Development in Heritage Areas in Hobsons Bay* (2006) showed a ‘high degree’ of compliance.

The six-storey design proposed for the Oriental Hotel site is clearly larger in scale than the three-storey hotel currently on this site (and of an entirely different architectural character), but it will fit comfortably with the already established scale of the industrial shipyard buildings in this section of Nelson Place.

In regards to the Lot 3 ‘alternative townhouse’ application, Council’s heritage advisor stated that the proposal ‘has more of a positive impact on the overall layout of the development’ [presumably in relation to the apartment proposal] but also commented that the overall design was dependent on the outcome of the proposal for the adjacent former Oriental Hotel site. According to the Council Officer’s report, the heritage advisor also expressed a preference for there to be no difference between the footpath levels and ground floor. In the context of a degraded and heavily industrialised streetscape, this aspect of the proposal is inconsequential to heritage concerns.

As per the alternative apartment application for the same site, discussed above, Council officer’s assessment against the *Guidelines for Infill Development in Heritage Areas in Hobsons Bay* (2006) showed a high degree of compliance.

A key point to be made in relation to all of the proposals under review is the existence of a Design Development Overlay (DDO11) that specifically allows for building developments within the range of heights proposed. It is nonetheless still a requirement that the proposal be tested against the relevant heritage policies and guidelines.

The basis of policy in relation to heritage and infill considerations in Hobsons Bay is complex, insofar as there are multiple layers of policy, multiple citations, and a range of studies from which one gains information. There are also separate guidelines for the development of heritage places. The key local heritage policy is found at clause 22.01. It contains general policy for heritage places and also more specific policy for the Government Survey Heritage Precinct.

There is a common thread running through most of these documents, being that development should respect and respond to the special character of Williamstown and its heritage places, a character which is in large part informed by the predominantly one and two storey character of the overall area. Similarly, a key aspect of the policy objectives outlined at clause 22.01 (p3) is ‘to ensure new development does not visually dominate a heritage place or precinct’.

Development in the Government Survey Heritage Precinct is also assessed with reference to the ‘Guidelines for Infill Development in Heritage Areas in Hobsons Bay’. This document is not particularly helpful in the context of the Nelson Place Village. By and large, its detailed guidelines have been written with reference to smaller, more typical infill exercises on standard size allotments, set in typical heritage streetscapes – this does not describe the context of the subject site. The same point is made in Council officer’s comments with respect to the redevelopment of the former Oriental Hotel site:

It must be acknowledged though that the Infill Guidelines do not readily relate to the site in question being more suited to an infill dwelling within an existing typical residential street. The former Woollen Mills site is primarily industrial in nature and will be establishing its own character.

It is readily apparent that this is an exceptional or unusual area rather than a typical site in the context of Williamstown, in terms of its scale, siting, form and neighbourhood character. This was also the view of the Former Port Phillip Woollen Mills Advisory Committee:

The Committee concludes that the relative isolation of the site and its location at the edge of Williamstown gives it a lower ‘redevelopment’ sensitivity than other sites in Williamstown. On this basis, a more robust urban design solution can certainly be considered. Within its heritage context, this is one of the few sites in Williamstown that provides an opportunity for a higher built form which does not impact on the undeniable but different heritage qualities of other parts of Williamstown.

The Committee has considered whether assessing an application under Council’s existing heritage controls over the land is the most effective way to address current heritage issues while at the same time seeking to ensure that the renewal of this site represents a worthy future heritage for Williamstown. Overall, the Committee has formed the view that any proposal should be able to meet the heritage challenges inherent in this site and the objective of becoming a valued addition to Williamstown. The Committee concludes that:

- *development per se will not diminish the heritage values of the Government Survey Heritage Precinct or Williamstown at large;*
- *heritage issues are not determinative in generating urban design and built form outcomes for this site. The site will inevitably generate a scale and type of development atypical of, say, Cecil Street; and*
- *that the Guidelines for Infill Development in Heritage Areas in Hobsons Bay is useful where detailed design is proposed, and should be referred to in the control for the land.*

The Advisory Committee was also of the opinion that varying parts of the Nelson Place Village site could be redeveloped to varying extents. Cecil Street was singled out for attention as one of the more sensitive interfaces where new development should not visually dominate the established single-storey residential character. This is not a consideration relevant to the subject sites because they are located some distance from Cecil Street and do not form part of a contiguous streetscape. The nearest building of identified heritage significance is the former Telegraph Hotel at 17 Ann Street. The proposal for the development of the land adjacent to the hotel land is for a three-storey townhouse row, which mediates between the six-storey scale of the proposed development on the former Oriental Hotel site and the double-storey scale of the former Telegraph Hotel.

In the context of policy, it is to be understood that discretion should be exercised in the application of Council's guidelines that are intended for more typical sites in more sensitive heritage environments. A six storey building of the type proposed for the former Oriental Hotel site might be out of character in the more intact and consistent parts of HO8 in terms of scale, character and materials. However, in this part of the heritage overlay, where modern development has greatly diminished the heritage character of the streetscape, an unequivocally modern residential development of the type proposed will sit comfortably in this diverse urban context.

Further to broader issues of precinct significance, it can be inferred from the description of the site and its environs above that the subject site is highly unusual in the context of HO8, insofar as many of the structures on this extensive area of land are of little interest in relation to heritage considerations. This can be contrasted with the more typical scenario in HO8, where residential streetscapes comprise predominantly nineteenth and early twentieth century heritage buildings, albeit with some non-contributory elements.

Moreover, the streetscapes neighbouring and facing the subject site on the north, west and south are relatively low in heritage interest, and feature a substantial extent of modern and recent development that is not contributory to the heritage values of the precinct. In particular, the built form to the north, on the opposite side of Nelson Place, is generally industrial in character and of mixed scale, but with some very substantial structures. The land to the east, HO25, the Point Gellibrand Heritage Precinct, is of a completely different, mostly undeveloped character with a large asphalt paved carpark directly opposite the subject site.

The means by which HO8 came into being is also of relevance to issues of precinct significance. HO8 was one of a number of heritage overlay precincts created by Amendment C34 to the Hobsons Bay planning scheme in recent years. These precincts were intended to replace the blanket heritage overlay HO22 that previously covered much of the former City of Williamstown, but are nonetheless much larger in extent than those originally proposed and exhibited under Amendment C34. It is of particular note that the subject site and most adjacent

properties were excluded from the exhibited HO area (see figure 32 below). The Amendment C34 Panel made the following comment specific to the subject site:

... No. 55 Nelson Street [sic, Former Oriental Hotel] is one of only three buildings of identified heritage value in its block – with the other two being located on the extreme corners of the block [Former Prince of Wales Hotel and Former Telegraph Hotel]. We have separately concluded that 55 Nelson Street [sic] is not of heritage value. The balance of the block, which contains fairly modern industrial/warehouse-type buildings, falls within a proposed DDO11. At present, the whole of this block is located within HO22. We do not consider that any heritage precincts should be applied to this whole block, but only to the two remaining buildings of identified heritage value.³¹

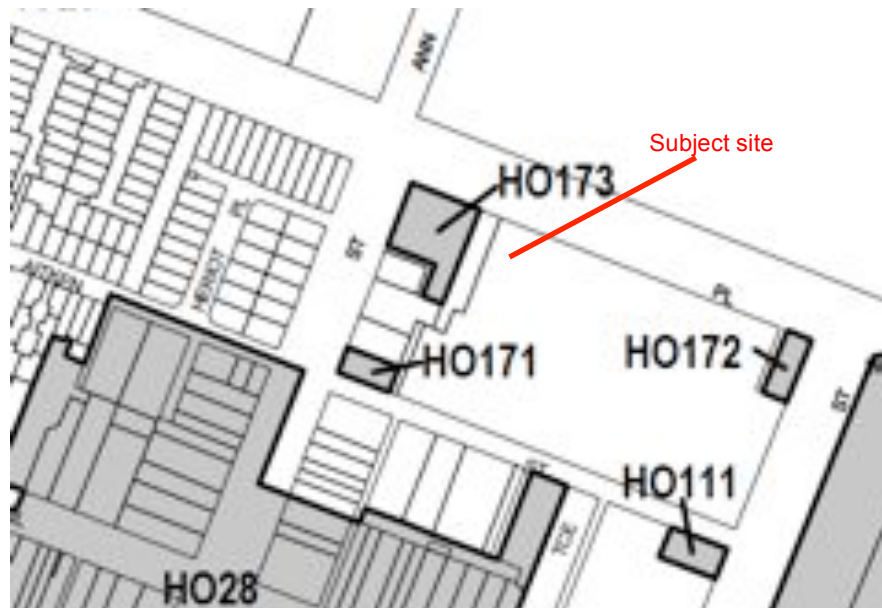


Figure 41 The Hobsons Bay Amendment C34 exhibited HO map showing heritage overlay precinct controls entirely removed from the subject site and most adjoining streetscapes

I note that the statement of significance for HO8 places an emphasis on nineteenth and early twentieth century building stock – very little of which exists on the subject site and neighbouring properties. The site is instead an example of ‘unrelated post war development’ (to quote the precinct statement of significance). The intact and cohesive nineteenth and twentieth century streetscapes that characterise the better parts of the Government Survey precinct are not at risk of being diminished by the proposed demolition and redevelopment.

Redevelopment in this instance would not have the same potential for disruption of streetscape rhythm and character had the works been taking place in the midst of an intact and consistent streetscape.

³¹ Amendment C34 to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme Report of the Panel (April 2004), p.29.

13.0 Conclusion

In summary, the former Oriental Hotel is in poor condition, has been substantially altered in appearance, is of little architectural distinction and makes only a limited contribution to its context which is, in any case, no longer intact. Its structural and superficial deterioration has further reduced its integrity and significance. While it is accepted that the building has some historical interest, it is clear that the overall integrity, condition and significance of the place is of a low order relative to that exhibited by other nearby and/or early hotels.

The contrasts in scale and character that are already in evidence at this particular site suggest that this is a case in which a great deal of discretion can be exercised with regard to the appropriateness of demolition and new works. It is an environment of low heritage significance, which can readily absorb the scale and modernity of the proposed apartment and townhouse buildings. Clearly, the proposed scheme will bring about change. However, this change is acceptable from a heritage perspective given the mixed character of the area.

On this basis, the proposal has been prepared with sufficient regard for the purposes and objectives of **Clauses 43.01** and **22.01** of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme. The proposal is a considered and appropriate development, will result in negligible adverse impact upon the cultural significance of the surrounding heritage overlay precinct, and should be considered acceptable with regard to heritage considerations.

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Bryce Raworth has worked with issues relating to heritage and conservation since the mid-1980s, and has specialised in this area since establishing his own consultant practice in 1991. **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd, Conservation•Urban Design**, provides a range of heritage services, including the assessment of the significance of particular sites, preparation of conservation analyses and management plans, design and/or restoration advice for interventions into significant buildings, and detailed advice regarding the resolution of technical problems relating to deteriorating or damaged building fabric.

From 2004-2010 Raworth was a member of the Official Establishments Trust, which advises on the conservation and improvement of Admiralty House and Kirribilli House in Sydney and Government House and The Lodge in Canberra. As a member of the former Historic Buildings Council in Victoria, sitting on the Council's permit, planning and community relations committees, Raworth was involved with the registration and permit processes for many registered historic buildings. In 1996 he was appointed an alternate member of the new Heritage Council, the successor the Historic Buildings Council, and in 1998 was made a full member. At present he provides regular advice to architects and private owners on technical, architectural and planning issues relative to the conservation and adaptation of historic buildings, and is occasionally called upon to provide expert advice before the VCAT. He is currently the conservation consultant for the cities of Stonnington, Frankston, Kingston and Yarra and conservation consultant to the Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund.

Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd is an office comprising six experienced staff plus support that has prepared conservation plans for a number of registered historic buildings, including Walter Burley Griffin's Essendon Incinerator. The company's experience with institutional buildings has led to preparation of conservation plans for the Mac.Robertson Girls' High School, Castlemaine Gaol, J Ward, Ararat, the former Russell Street Police Headquarters, Ballarat State Offices, Camberwell Court House, Shepparton Court House and the Mont Park asylum precinct.

With respect to historic precincts, the company has provided detailed advice towards the resolution of heritage issues along the Upfield railway line. The company has contributed to redevelopment plans for the former Coburg Prisons Complex (comprising Pentridge Prison and the Metropolitan Prison) and the former Albion Explosives Factory, Maribyrnong. In 1993 Bryce Raworth led a consultant team which reviewed the City of Melbourne's conservation data and controls for the CBD, and in 1997 **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd** revised the former City of South Melbourne Conservation Study with respect to the area within the present City of Melbourne. The firm has also undertaken heritage studies on behalf of the cities of Melbourne, Kingston and Frankston, and is completing documentation for significant heritage places and areas in the City of Stonnington.

In recent years **Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd** has also provided documentation and advice during construction on the restoration of a number of key registered and heritage overlay buildings, including the Ebenezer Mission church and outbuildings, Antwerp, the former MMTB Building, Bourke Street West, Melbourne, the former Martin & Pleasance Building, 178 Collins Street, Melbourne, the former Uniting Church, Howe Crescent, South Melbourne. The office has also documented substantial restoration works to the MOMA at Heide, Templestowe Road, Bulleen, to the Church of the Sacred Heart, Grey Street, St Kilda, to the Coburg Prisons Complex (including the Pentridge Prison entry buildings and walls to Champ Street), to Melbourne Grammar School, South Yarra, and to Coriyule Homestead, Drysdale.

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