

Heritage Impact Statement

Prepared for Heritage Victoria for the
subdivision of land within stage 2 and
removal of six trees at the former Kew
Cottages (Kew Residential Services)
site, Main Drive, Kew

June 2008

Heritage Victoria Register Number: H2073



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Document Control				
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by the Walker Corporation Pty Ltd on behalf of Kew Development Corporation in support of an application for approval of the stage 2 subdivision to Heritage Victoria.

This application to Heritage Victoria is the result of an extensive background process, involving the preparation of a development plan and subsequent subdivision which created the lots that are now the subject of this application. The planned subdivision process and the creation of building envelopes for all allotments provides for a development that is sensitively designed to respond to its surrounds.

The following report adheres to the Heritage Council's Guidelines for Heritage Impact Statements. The report has been prepared to assist the Executive Director in the decision making process of the impacts of this proposal on the cultural heritage significance to the former Kew Cottages Site.

The report shows that in lodging this application a number of discussions and considerations have been given to the important elements of this portion of the site. Equally, regard has been given to the position of this, the stage 2 portion, sitting within a larger development of the former Kew Residential Services site, which is of cultural heritage significance. The consultation process with Heritage Victoria, Kew Residential Services Staff, Major Projects Victoria and the City of Boroondara demonstrates a clear process has been followed in arriving at the final plan. This process addresses the impacts of the proposal on the cultural heritage significance of the place.

Note:

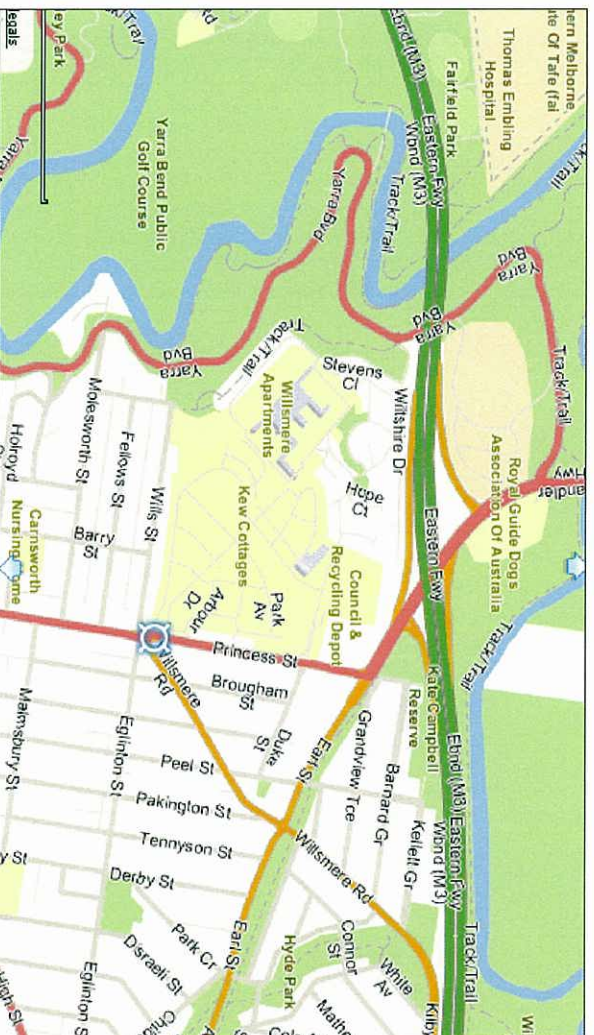
A Conservation Management Plan is currently under preparation and is nearing completion. This report will set out the potential for archeological areas of significance across the site. Given the location of a building within the Stage 2 area, which is recognised as being from the pre-1920's (Female Hospital Block), it is possible that the stage 2 area subject to this application may have some areas that are potentially of archaeological significance. As is required by permit P9639 a Conservation Management Plan must be completed prior to the demolition of this building. Therefore, should the situation arise whereby this building and its environs are identified as being of potential archaeological significance then the Conservation Management Plan would prevent the demolition of the building until such a time as it is appropriately monitored.

2.0 HISTORY OF THE SITE & ITS CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Site

The subject site is located within the established inner suburb of Kew located approximately 6 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD. The title form Attachment A to this report.

The land was formerly home to the Kew Residential Services (KRS). The larger development site is triangular in shape and is bounded by Hutchinson Drive to the north, Princess Street to the east and Wills Street to the south. To the west of the site is Willsmere, a former Asylum for the mentally ill, now converted to residential apartments. The site has good access from the Eastern Freeway via the Chandler Road exit. The site is then on the western side of Princess Street.



Current use and condition of the Registered Place

The Kew Residential Services still operates out of one of the buildings on site although it has been scaled back and is expected to cease by July 2008.

Stage 1 of the planned development of the whole of site is nearing completion. The Kew Residential Services dwellings have been occupied for some time and are reportedly providing high quality residential amenity for people with intellectual disabilities. Stage 1 will be completed by February 2009.

Other buildings on site are vacant.

A site office and vehicle parking area is provided to the north of the site, accessed off Hutchinson Drive.

Landscaping on site while being maintained is reflective of a site that is under development with only general maintenance being carried out (mowing, removal of debris, rubbish, etc.).

Summary of the Cultural Heritage Significance

The former Kew Cottages Site, or Kew Residential Services site, is documented on the Victorian Heritage Register as being of architectural, historical, aesthetic, scientific (horticultural) and social significance to the State of Victoria. Attachment B comprises the relevant extract from the Victoria Heritage Register.

Historically the site is of significance representing the first government institution to be set up for intellectually handicapped children within Australia. The institution provided education and training to residents who would prior to that have been sent to lunatic asylums. The six buildings, now referred to as the Heritage Core, constructed between 1887 and 1917 are particularly important demonstrating the form and function of the original institution.

Historically and architecturally the site is representative of the first example of the European 'cottage system' applied in full to the intellectually handicapped. While changes have been made to the buildings their form and remaining fabric still present and indicate the original arrangement of the institution.

Additional historical significance of the site emerges from its association with Dr Ernst Jones and Dr Eric Cunningham Dax whose reforms resulted in altering the attitudes of society to the needs of the intellectually handicapped. Evidence of the influence of the doctors and the changing attitudes are reflected in the built forms of the development at Kew Cottages. While the buildings have been altered they still retain evidence of the original domestic scale and are representative of the development of the institution.

The landscaping on site is of state historical and aesthetic significance. The planting is dominated by towering conifers from the nineteenth century. Avenue planting of elms and oaks is also significant.

The Main Drive comprises an unusual double avenue of trees (Algerian Oaks on the outer rows and English Elms on the inside). The Boundary Drive is planted with an avenue of Algerian Oaks and the Lower Drive mainly pairs of alternating English Oaks and Algerian Oaks. Additional avenue planting is seen along Oak Walk. The landscape also houses several River Red Gums, two Yellow Box and a fine Lightwood tree.

The Main Drive is historically significant for its association with Willsmere and Kew Cottages but the landscaping itself is also significant for its association with landscaper Hugh Linaker. Linaker is regarded as one of the most significant landscape designers in Victoria of the early 20th century. His style is characterised by a use of a mix of exotics and natives employed in alternating arrangements to give an interesting contrast.

The planting is scientifically (horticulturally) significant for its collection of trees rarely cultivated in Victoria and trees of outstanding size and forms.

The Algerian Oaks are of scientific (horticultural) significance because they were unusually grafted onto English Oak rootstock (this is only seen in one other location in Victoria).

The former Kew Cottages site is of social significance in that it shows the position of the intellectually disabled in society over time. Memorials on site are also socially significant in that they serve today as a reminder of society's duty of care to the intellectually disabled.

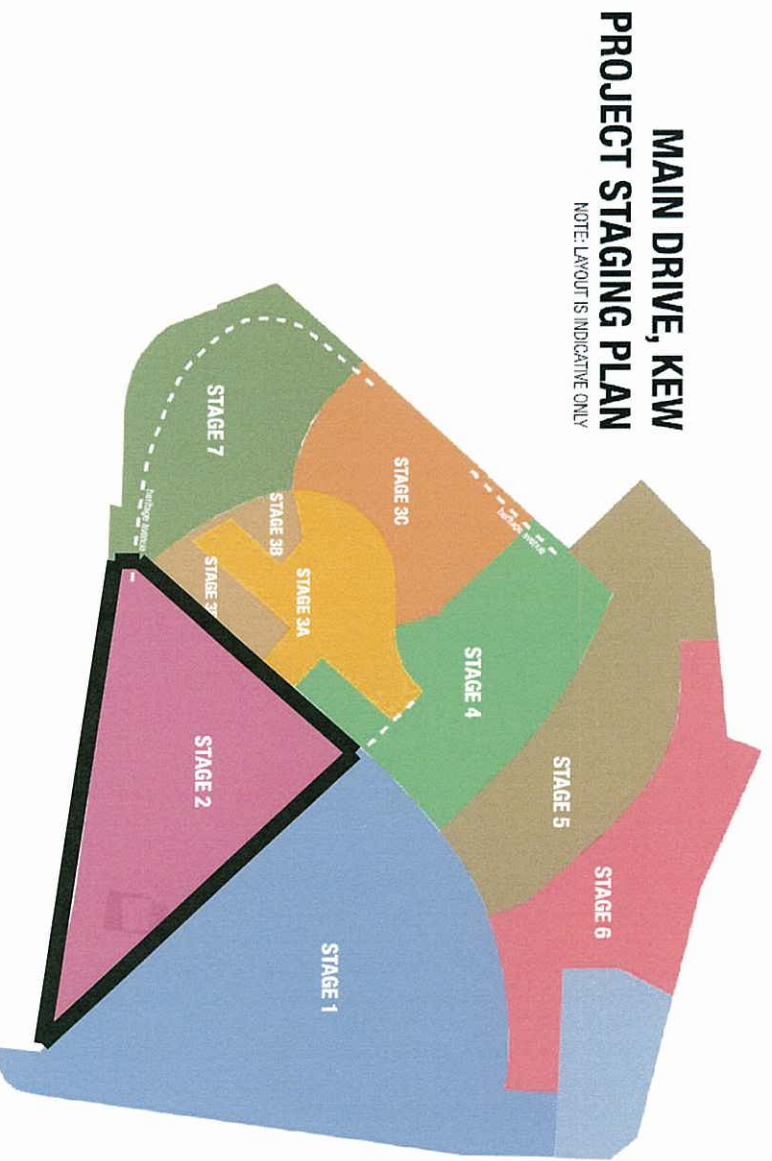
3.0 THE LAND – STAGE 2 – MAIN DRIVE, KEW

The subject land, known as stage 2 of the larger development site at Main Drive, Kew comprises approximately 2.8 hectares. The land forms a triangular shape with Main Drive defining its south boundary and Lower Drive its north east. The existing Avenue planting along each of these Drives plays a significant role in the approved subdivision layout and in the resultant development of the lots. The land generally slopes from south to north although the fall is not consistent.

The area, like the larger site is treed with a mix of species, although a number of these are to be removed to make way for the subdivision and resultant development of lots. This portion of the site houses the building known as B5 or Unit 9 or The Women's Hospital Block. Three memorials of heritage significance are located within the stage 2 area. Removal of these has been approved previously (P9639) and finalisation of their temporary locations to ensure their protection in the interim is currently being investigated. Similarly investigation into the relocation of an Aboriginal scarred tree trunk is in process.

The staging

The larger site known as Main Drive, Kew has been broken into several land parcels which form components of the greater staged development. The larger development site is subject to a Development Plan which was approved by the Minister. This approval required the land to be developed in a manner generally in accordance with the approved plan.



At this time Stage 1 has almost reached completion.

The approval process

The Minister for Planning is the Responsible Authority for the site. This application has been submitted and approved by the Minister for Planning (through the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD)) as the responsible authority for assessment.

Given the identification of the site as being of heritage significance separate approval is required from Heritage Victoria.

The two applications for approval are consistent.

Previous approvals on site

Provided below is a list of approvals already granted for the site.

Minister for Planning (Responsible Authority for the City of Boroondara)

- Permit No: 20060415 approved – The development and use of land in Stage 1 for development of the Kew Residential Services site for a (temporary) Sales and Information Centre
- Permit No: 20060395 approved – The subdivision of land
- Permit No: 20060364 approved – The removal of native vegetation
- Permit No: 20060465 approved – The erection and display of one temporary Advertising Sign
- Permit No: 20060396 approved – Construction of dwellings on lots less than 500 square metres
- Permit No: 2007/0638 approved – subdivision of land into 37 allotments and removal of vegetation

Heritage Victoria

- Permit No: P10367 approved development and landscaping works
- Permit No: P9639 approved - Demolition of three heritage registered places, known as B2, B4 and B5, relocation of three memorials, removal of specified vegetation, and approval of the layout for the site
- Permit No: P12688 approved Northern Park Landscape works, Shelter and feature wall at Bio-retention Basin No.3 shown on Kew Cottages northern park concept plan Drawing Number. 0418N/LDD01 [c] and 0418N/LDD02[a]
- Permit No: P12879 – subdivision of land into 39 allotments and removal of vegetation

4.0 PROPOSAL

The proposal forms Stage 2 of the development at Main Drive, Kew. The application proposes to subdivide the land in question into residential housing allotments. The allotments vary in size from 280 square metres to 1702 square metres.

A reserve of land is to be created along the north side of Main Drive to ensure future protection of the trees of historical cultural significance.

To make way for the subdivision of land and the later development of it with residential dwellings this application also seeks approval for the removal of 6 trees recognised by Heritage Victoria as being of cultural historical significance.

A copy of the plans forms Attachment C to this document.

5.0 BOROONDARA PLANNING SCHEME

Zoning & Overlay Controls

Pursuant to the Boroondara Planning Scheme the subject site is zoned Residential 1. The proposal considered here for a residential subdivision is appropriate to this zoning.

The land is subject to a Development Plan Overlay (schedule 3), a Heritage Overlay (schedule 253 & 254) and a Vegetation Protection Overlay (schedule 2). These controls are relevant to the proposed subdivision of stage 2 and are detailed below.

Development Plan Overlay – Schedule 3 (DPO3)

Schedule 3 to the Development Plan Overlay (DPO3) relates the Kew Residential Services Development Plan (WDP-K). The WDP-K has been prepared in accordance with Development Plan Overlay 3 (DPO3). The WDP-K was endorsed by the Minister for Planning in accordance with clause 61.01 of the Scheme on 9 March 2006.

The WDP-K includes the following (for further details refer to the WDP-K) information.

- A context of the site and its relationship with the surrounding area.
- Existing conditions of the site and surrounding area.
- A full and detailed description of the WDP-K plan and design response, including the following:
 - subdivision and dwelling design;
 - community facilities and services;
 - roads, traffic and transport;
 - significant vegetation and landscaping;
 - heritage features;
 - sustainable development;
 - engineering services.

The WDP-K also provides a broad direction in which the proposed development of the site will be implemented, including the development approvals process.

Previous heritage studies have been completed for the WDP-K area and various features and buildings identified.

The WDP-K proposes to retain three buildings identified under the VHR, two of which are also covered by a heritage overlay in the Scheme. None of these buildings are located in the area defined by Stage 2. Similarly the WDP-K shows the retention of three memorials on site. The memorials are currently located within the Stage 2 subdivision area. The movement of these monuments has been approved under a previous Heritage Victoria Permit (P9639). Their final location has not been finalised at this time but will be done so in consultation with Heritage Victoria and other relevant parties.

A cultural heritage survey by Biosis Research in 2001 identified three areas of potential Aboriginal significance and one Aboriginal scarred tree within the WDP-K area. Of these, the Aboriginal scarred tree is within the site. Approval is being sought from AAV to relocate the scarred tree remnant to a more appropriate location.

It is noted that the scarred tree and the monuments identified do not necessarily have any meaningful relationship to their existing locations. Their relocation does not alter their significance to the site.

The subdivision of Stage 2 area is consistent with the approved development plan.

Heritage Overlay - Schedules 253 and 254

The site is affected by a Heritage Overlay (HO) schedules 253 and 254 (HO 253 and HO 254) which relate respectively to the buildings known as the 'Parents Retreat / Chapel' and the 'STAD Building'. Neither of these buildings fall within the stage 2 area.

Vegetation Protection Overlay - Schedule 2

A number of trees within the site are included in Vegetation Protection Overlay (Schedule 2). These are as follows.

The avenue plantings along Lower Drive comprising a mix of Algerian oaks and English oaks; The avenue plantings along Main Drive comprising a mix of Algerian oaks, English elms, Moreton Bay figs and Bhutan cypress; and River Red-gums.

The vegetation protection objectives outlined in VPO2 include.

- *To recognise the contribution that the significant trees make to the landscape quality of the Kew Residential Services site.*
- *To conserve trees of historical, visual, landscape or botanical significance.*
- *To protect significant trees during construction and after the redevelopment of the Kew Residential Services site.*
- *To plan the redevelopment of the site in a way that is compatible with the retention and continued health of the significant trees.*

A planning permit is required to remove, destroy or lop vegetation included in VPO2. The subdivision application submitted to the Department of Planning and Community Development sought approval for the removal of four trees (which are also of historical cultural significance). This has been approved.

Boroondara City Council local policies

No local policies are of relevance given the items identified under the planning scheme are not located within the stage 2 subdivision area.

6.0 DISCUSSION

SUBDIVISIONAL AREA AND LAYOUT

The subdivision area for stage two is located between Main Drive and Lower Drive. It is the retention of these roads and the significant planting that adorns both sides of the roads that forms the integral component in the design of the stage 2 subdivision.

The retention of the existing alignment is important in preserving the cultural heritage significance of the site. These roads form the main accessway to the Kew Lunatic Asylum, later Willsmere, and to the Kew Cottages Complex. They also form the two most dramatic avenues on site in terms of planting with Main Drive being lined with a double avenue of trees. The outer avenue comprising Algerian Oaks and the inner English Elms (it is noted that this planting changes as you move further west along Main Drive). Lower Drive features pairs of alternating English Oaks and Algerian Oaks along the avenue.

In designing the subdivision layout of the area known as Stage 2 it was clear that the avenue planting was of particular importance to this application. While one of the buildings of significance is located within the stage 2 area, the Women's Hospital Block, it has already been granted approval to be demolished (subject to conditions)(P9639) and as such does not hold as such an influence over the final design.

Initial proposals to subdivide this portion of the site showed that Main Drive would be wider than its existing form. While still following the road alignment as it exists on site the arrangement would have seen the trees, which are recognised as being of significance, being located within private property. This was not considered an ideal response when regard was given to the future management and protection of the trees. The plans were reviewed with comments sought from Heritage Victoria, Major Projects Victoria and the City of Boroondara. What resulted was a plan that included an additional reserve along the northern side of Main Drive. The reserve forms a narrow strip to the front of a number of properties to the north of the road reserve. This places the trees in the public domain and renders them the responsibility of the developer in the interim and later the City of Boroondara. This is considered a much improved arrangement for the protection of the significant avenue planting along Main Drive.

Significant trees forming avenue planting to the north-west side of Lower Drive are located within the public realm in a similar reserve arrangement.

Allotments abutting Main Drive and Lower Drive will have their outlook, or frontage, to these tree lined streets. Given the size of the trees and the extent of their significance it is important that the future development of the allotments must consider the potential impacts of the building forms to the avenue planting. For this reason it is considered reasonable that a condition be included on the permit requiring building envelopes to be submitted to, and approved by, Heritage Victoria prior to the development commencing within the stage 2 area.

It is also appropriate that the protection of any tree along Main Drive is covenanted to ensure development of the adjoining lots is not detrimental to their long term health.

ROAD JUNCTIONS

Discussions had with interested parties to date have indicated a general desire to obtain some formalised arrangement for the treatment of Main Drive where it terminates at the stage 2 western boundary. It is accepted that at this stage there is an expectation, given the recognised significance of the alignment that the avenue along Main Drive be retained, both visually and physically. It is accepted that this is an integral component of the sites significance and that its continuation is important in maintaining the cultural

historical significance of the site. How this is to be done at this time has not been finalised. It is considered that there are a number of treatment options that would see this visual and physical avenue of trees continued. It would be considered reasonable that this treatment form a condition on the permit. It would be suggested that any such condition be mindful not to tie the portion of land to the west to the future treatment of this road juncture.

Similarly, treatment of the road junction where Main Drive and Lower Drive connect needs to be finalised. Given the almost complete nature of stage 1 which abuts stage 2 to the north-east it is considered necessary that as a result of any subdivision and/or development approval given for stage 2 that this be required to be finalised. With much of the landscaping done at this point on the north-east side in association with stage 1 it may be that a bollard treatment be used or similar to define the traditional road alignment. It is considered reasonable that a condition be included on permit requiring that this be a requirement prior to the completion of stage 2.

TREE REMOVAL

The stage 2 subdivision area includes 194 trees in total of which 76 are to be removed. Only six of these trees are of cultural heritage significance. The trees are detailed in the table below.

Table 6 : Removal of Heritage Victoria trees

Tree number	Species name	Common name	DBH	Condition	WOR	Grid reference
42	<i>Pinus radiata</i>	Monterey Pine	120	Poor	2	K10
55A	<i>Ficus macrophylla</i>	Morton Bay Fig	28	Fair	4	I11
292	<i>Quercus robur</i>	English Oak	48	Poor	1	I8
331	<i>Pinus radiata</i>	Monterey Pine	45	Poor	2	H9
1178	<i>Ficus macrophylla</i>	Morton Bay Fig	37	Fair to Poor	5	E10
1179	<i>Cupressus torulosa</i>	Bhutan Cypress	43	Fair to Poor	4	E10

An Arborist report forms Attachment D to this report. The report justifies the condition status of each of the trees as indicated above.

The importance of the planting arrangements on site has been integral in arriving at the proposed subdivision layout and design. The form of the subdivision has been heavily influenced by the avenue planting along Main Drive and Lower Drive. Ongoing discussions, as well as site visits, were held with officers from the City of Boroondara as well as the Department of Planning and Community Development to determine the best possible arrangement for the ongoing protection and maintenance of the trees with particular regard to the importance of the avenue planting.

The current and future health of the trees, their location relative to the proposed lots, the presence of other significant trees within stage 2 and their relationship to Main Drive and Lower Drive were considered in arriving at the final design. These discussions included time with officers from Heritage Victoria who provided their expert comments in response to the fine tuning of the design and ensuring the historical cultural significance of the site, predominantly through its trees where stage 2 is concerned, is retained.

6.0 Conclusion

The proposed subdivision of the stage 2 area at Main Drive, Kew is considered acceptable in terms of its response to the cultural heritage significance of the site. The subdivision will allow the development of a high quality residential development that retains the historical cultural heritage of the site. Most notably the avenue planting along Main Drive and Lower Drive has been treated in a manner appropriate to its ongoing maintenance and significance.

The proposal to remove trees from the site has been approached in a well considered manner with a number of factors being considered. The loss of six trees is considered reasonable given the retention of the vast majority of trees within stage 2 and the continued protection of the avenue planting along Main Drive and Lower Drive.

The proposed subdivision layout is consistent with the WDP-K and previous approvals given to the site.

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Appendix A – Copy of Title

Appendix B – Extract from Heritage Register H2073

Appendix C – Proposed plan of Subdivision

Appendix D – Tree Identification Table

Appendix E – Aborist Report