

## 2.0 Significant fabric

### 2.1 BUILDINGS

The permit application proposed a heritage core area as a key feature of the public open space which retains three registered buildings, along with other heritage features and interpretative information.

The cottage system from the establishment of the site is represented by retention of the substantially intact buildings; 1887 B3 School House (Parents Retreat/Chapel) and the 1917 B6 Dining Room (STAD Building). The 1887 Building B1 Cottage (Unit 10) has been chosen for retention to represent both the establishment period and the ongoing reforms from 1954-60 and later.

Some submissions called for the retention of all six buildings on the Heritage Register. However, the financial implications in terms of the impact on service for people with a disability, difficulties for reuse and the concern about the effect on KRS residents has meant that DHS is unable to retain all six buildings.

A detailed proposal for the retention and restoration to their original 1887 condition of three buildings: B1 (Unit 10), B2 (House Hostel) and B3 (School House) was suggested in the Louise Godwin submission, dated 20 June 2005, and supported by some other parties. Ms Godwin proposed full restoration of the original exterior features of these buildings and a curtilage around the buildings. She further recommends the recognition of the original 1887 site allotment, the footprints of the two 1887 cottages (demolished in the 1970s) and original landscaping. Her proposal states that the 1954-60 extensions should be removed from the cottages and that there is little relevance in the retention of the 1917 B6 Dining Room (STAD Building).

The retention of B1 (Unit 10) and B3 (School House) are proposed in the current permit application. Ms Godwin's submission differs in that it proposes the retention of B2 (House Hostel) rather than B6 Dining Room (STAD Building). It also proposes the restoration of the 1887 period at the expense of the later stages of development on the site.

This position is not supported for two reasons: firstly it is against good heritage practice; and secondly, insufficient physical evidence remains to enable it to be achieved.

The *Burra Charter* states:

*Conservation of a place should identify and take into consideration all aspects of cultural and natural significance without unwarranted emphasis on any one value at the expense of others.<sup>1</sup>*

The Victoria Heritage Register Citation H2073 states that the site *is historically significant in demonstrating changing attitudes to the care of the intellectually disabled from 1887 to the*

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<sup>1</sup> The *Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 1999, Article 5.1

present.<sup>2</sup> The Citation highlights a number of periods of significance, including establishment of the site, and during the periods of association with Dr Ernest Jones, from 1905, and Dr Eric Cunningham Dax, from 1952, whose reforms are reflected in the development of the site and buildings. The Citation highlights the importance of public awareness campaigns such as the very successful Tipping and Minus Children Appeals which resulted in physical improvements on site. It is also important that some of the notable landscape features at Kew date from the early twentieth century, especially the period of association with Hugh Linaker who was appointed by the State Lunacy Department in 1913.

The Victoria Heritage Register Citation H2073 also highlights the significance of the functions of buildings, rather than just their dates. An important example of this, along with B3 School Building, is the 1917 B6 Dining Room (STAD Building) which is *of historical and architectural significance in demonstrating the development of the institution in the early twentieth century. The Dining Room was constructed to improve food hygiene as part of the reforms introduced by Dr Ernest Jones...in response to the regular outbreaks of typhoid and scarlet fever and the increase in the institution's population to over 300.*<sup>3</sup>

Hence Ms Godwin's proposal to retain and restore three 1887 buildings and represent the original allotment and the plan of the two demolished buildings would not be good heritage practice as it would be at the expense of many other aspects of the significance of the Kew site.

A further major problem with the proposal is that while it is based on a desire to show the earliest history of the institution, insufficient physical evidence remains to enable it to be achieved.

Development of the site over the last 120 years means that the remaining physical evidence no longer reflects the earliest period. Information about the establishment of the institution is more accurately represented in documentation rather than in the physical fabric of the place. The history of KRS is being researched and documented by La Trobe University, in partnership with DHS and KRS, through an Australian Research Council Grant. This will result in material that will be permanently displayed in a public venue as part of the interpretation of the site.

Ms Godwin's proposal to restore the core of the site to the 1887 form requires sufficient physical evidence to enable this to happen. The *Burra Charter* states:

*Changes to place should not distort the physical or other evidence it provides, nor be based on conjecture.*<sup>4</sup>

The 1887 B3 School House (Parents Retreat/Chapel) and the 1917 B6 Dining Room (STAD Building) are substantially intact. However B1 (Unit 10) and B2 (House Hostel) have both undergone considerable change.

With regard to the evidence available in the physical fabric of the remaining buildings to enable restoration, an analysis of B1 (Unit 10) compared with B2 (House Hostel) follows. It

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<sup>2</sup> VHR H2073, p5.

<sup>3</sup> VHR H2073, p6.

<sup>4</sup> *Burra Charter*, Article 3.2

is important to understand that these two buildings were essentially the same design (refer to appendix 6.1, discussion of historical images). The analysis to support the following summary is in appendices 1 and 2 of this report.

<b>Original 1885-7 design</b>	<b>B1 (Unit 10)</b>	<b>B2 (House Hostel)</b>
Building form Image 2, 4 & 5	Easily understood and substantially intact. Service block and associated earth closet removed. Photos 10,11,12,13 & 14.	No longer evident as little physical fabric remains unaltered. Service block and associated earth closet removed. Photos 1,2,4,5,6,7& 9
Roof form Image 2, 4 & 5	Visible from the north, south & east, obscured by additions to the west but still able to be understood. Photos 10,11,12, & 13	Not visible from any side. Photos 1, 2, 4, 7 & 8
Roof detailing Image 2, 4 & 5	Cladding altered, vents to north and south remain, internal evidence of former vents, now skylights on western side. New boxed eaves. Photos 12 & 13	None remains. Photos 1, 2, 4, 7 & 8
Siting Image. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 & 10	Original siting and extent of building evident from the north, south & east, obscured by additions to the west but still able to be understood. Photos 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15	Original siting of north/west corner remains, extent of building to all sides confused by additions in the same wall planes and continuation of roof forms. Siting on the southern side altered by extension of building and creation of a tall retaining wall. Photos 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, & 8
Plan form Image, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9 & 10	Extent of original plan and some sections of internal walls still evident. Image 11	Extent of original plan difficult to understand but parts of the built fabric remain on the north, west and east. Not evident from the south. Internal walls are later partitions. Image 12
Northern elevation Image 2 & 5	Original extent apparent despite small addition at a lower level over part of the facade. Photo 12	Close inspection reveals about 50% of the current north wall is the original. Photos 1 & 2
Northern elevation detailing Image 2, 3 & 5	Original bluestone plinth evident. Middle window original, windows either side are original/early but are slightly altered. Photo 12	Three early/original windows remain and a section of bluestone plinth. Other windows and features date from the 1960s onwards. Photos 1, 2 & 3
Southern elevation	Original extent apparent, addition to the west has separate form.	Original southern elevation lost. Photos 6 & 7

Image 2 & 4	Photos 13 & 14	
Southern elevation detailing Image 2, 3 & 4	Original bluestone plinth evident. Three original/early windows remain. Photos 13 & 14	All original southern elevation detailing lost. Photos 6 & 7
Eastern elevation Image 2, 4 & 5	Original elevation apparent. Photos 10 & 11	Original eastern elevation no longer understood. Two large wings added to the east with a small section of the original wall visible as the western edge of the courtyard. No evidence of service block. Photos 8 & 9
Eastern elevation detailing Fig. 2, 3, 4 & 5	Original bluestone plinth evident. Eastern verandah lost. Original openings remain, two end windows intact, central door converted to a window and two windows altered into doors. One new opening made. Photos 10 & 11	Detailing of the remaining portion of the original eastern elevation lost. The remaining portion of original wall has two new doors and new highlight windows. No bluestone plinth is visible. Photos 8 & 9
Western elevation Image 2 & 4	Original western elevation lost due to additions to the west but partly understood because additions are at lower wall height. No evidence of service block. Photo 15	The original western elevation remains at the northern end but has been extended by about a third of its length in the same line. Photos 4 & 5
Western elevation detailing Image 2, 3 & 4	Detailing of the original western elevation, including plinth and openings lost. Photo 15	Detailing of the original western elevation confused by many additional openings, some converted doors and windows and some relocation of old windows. Detailing of the southern end clearly later. Photos 4 & 5

In conclusion, B1 (Unit 10) retains clear physical evidence of its earliest form compared with B2 (House Hostel) which has very little original fabric remaining. Additions made to B1 (Unit 10) have distinct roof forms and are at lower levels so that they are easily distinguished from the original building form. Additions made to B2 (House Hostel) have altered the roof form and continued the same wall planes and heights. This makes it much harder to interpret the stages of change in this building.

B1 (Unit 10) can be restored to show its earliest form and still provide evidence of the significant changes in the 1950s. However, restoration of B2 (House Hostel) would need to be based on documentary rather than physical evidence. Much of this is based on plan drawings and would involve conjecture. The extent of reconstruction would be too great. The *Burra Charter* states:

*Reconstruction is appropriate only where a place is incomplete through damage or alteration, and only where there is sufficient evidence to reproduce an earlier state*

*of the fabric. In rare cases, reconstruction may also be appropriate as part of a use or practice that retains the cultural significance of the place.<sup>5</sup>*

In its reconstructed form, B2 (House Hostel) would also remove evidence of the later significant periods because the built form is not so clearly articulated into the original building and additions as B1 (Unit 10).

Ms Godwin has also suggested that the development of KRS should include the depiction of the original 1887 allotment, its original landscaping and footprints of the two 1887 cottages which were demolished in the 1970s. Like the arguments presented for B2 (House Hostel) above, this is not supported as it would result in a loss of other aspects of cultural significance for the site, and would rely too greatly on conjecture. For example, reinstatement of the original landscaping would be based on unclear photographs, such as Images 4 and 5, and involve the removal of highly significant and established trees now growing in the core area, such as those in the Vegetation Protection Overlay in the Boroondara Planning Scheme. Even reinstatement of the original topography of the area, the slope and relationship between buildings, would be based on conjecture. This has been altered greatly with the introduction of retaining walls, such as that immediately to the south of B2 (House Hostel), and is hard to interpret from photographs, like Images 4 and 5.

Ms Godwin's proposed block plan (Attachment B of her submission) proposes recognising the original 1887/1888 allotment of the institution. However a comparison of her plan with figure 3 on which it is based reveals that the proposed plan:

- doesn't include the service blocks attached to each cottages;
- doesn't include the earth closets associated with each cottage;
- shows B3 (School House) with the c1901 addition;
- doesn't include the building to the north or
- acknowledge that the site continues further to the north than this block plan shows.

In other words, it is proposing a selective reinstatement of evidence to be shown as interpretation of the 1887 conditions when documentary evidence is already available which provides a more full and accurate interpretation of the site's past. Reconstruction such as this would not add to our knowledge of the site, it would detract by only providing a simplified interpretation of a small part of the wealth of available documentary evidence.

This is also the case with the argument that retention of B2 (House Hostel) adds to our understanding of the original cottage development. Retention of B1 (Unit 10) retains sufficient evidence of the form, appearance and layout of the original cottages. These were repeated designs and providing two rather than one does not provide further information. The documentary evidence which will be included in interpretation on the site demonstrates that the original cottages were laid out symmetrically and that the male wards were to the west and that the female wards were to the east, refer to Image 7. However, the physical evidence on site does not even reveal this much information and does not add to our interpretative knowledge. There is nothing about B1 (Unit 10) and B2 (House Hostel) which tells us about the division of males and females.

The permit application proposal focuses on retaining the evidence which currently remains in the physical fabric and is able to be accurately restored or reconstructed and interpreted. Hence B1 (Unit 10), B3 School House and B6 Dining Room (STAD Building) are retained as they can demonstrate evidence of their earlier form and later significant changes. The layout of the three remaining buildings, the walkways and spaces between will be evident, along with some aspects of the later changes. These include part of the B4 (Unit 11) footprint and significant later tree specimens which will be retained. This makes for a richer depiction of the cultural heritage of the place which, along with its documentary evidence, can be clearly interpreted.

As proposed in the permit application, Heritage Impact Statement, Section 6.3, the demolition of the historic buildings: B2 Cottage (House Hostel), B4 Cottage (Unit 11) and B5 Female Hospital Block (Unit 9) would not be undertaken until satisfactory completion of the following conditions:<sup>6</sup>

A photograph record of existing conditions and detailed drawings to show conservation works and any other works to the following buildings: Exterior only of B1 Cottage (Unit 10), Interior and exterior of B3 School House (Parents Retreat/Chapel) and Interior and exterior of B6 Dining Room (STAD Building).

A photographic record of existing conditions prior to demolition of the following buildings: B2 Cottage (House Hostel), B4 Cottage (Unit 11) and B5 Female Hospital Block (Unit 9).

An interpretation plan for the whole of the site with the focus to be in a public area within building B3 or B6 within the Heritage Core.

A list of costed conservation works to retained registered heritage features to the satisfaction of the Executive Director and submission of a bank guarantee or similar security to ensure satisfactory completion of these works.

In addition, if any archaeological evidence was uncovered as part of the works, an archaeologist would assess the evidence and Heritage Victoria would be notified. Any additional physical evidence found may be able to contribute to interpretation of the site.

These measures will help ensure that the site sufficiently interprets the original cottage establishment using the available physical evidence remaining on site and without detracting from the significant later periods. The scope of works to the retained heritage buildings will be determined in consultation with Heritage Victoria and reflect the cultural significance of the site and the need for viable ongoing uses for the buildings.

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<sup>6</sup> Note that these are only part of the list of proposed conditions refer to HIS section 6.3 for the full list.

## 2.2 Trees

After discussions with John Hawker on site, the landscape information has been updated on the drawings HVS 1 which shows the existing conditions and cultural significance, and HVS 3 –Site Concept Plan. The changed information is summarised below:

- Additional concrete lamp posts are shown north of B6 and west of tree 436. No change is proposed to any lamp posts on site.
- The *Callitris columellaris*, east of 436, is shown as a significant tree and will be removed because it is located in the road alignment.
- The Bhutan Cypress at the east corner of B4 is shown as a significant tree and will be retained.
- Tree 307A, *Melaleuca armillaris*, is not shown as a significant tree.
- The *Ficus macrophylla* and *Arbutus unedo* trees, south of tree 436, are shown as significant trees and will be retained.
- Trees 455A, 456 & 457 are not shown as significant trees.
- Tree 455 *Cupressus torulosa* is shown as a significant tree and will be removed because of the location of the apartment.
- The *Rhamnus alaternus* 'Variegata', north of tree 388, is not shown as a significant tree.
- The *Duranta erecta* on the east side of 388 is shown as a significant tree and will be removed as it is in the proposed road alignment.
- Tree 386 *Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Aurea', which is behind the paling fence east of 388, is shown on the drawings and will be removed as it is in the proposed road alignment.
- Tree 298 *Prunus ilicifolia* (Holly leaved Cherry) a Significant Tree is shown on the drawings and will be retained. This tree and the two Algerian Oaks have a VPO line around them.
- West of building B1 there are two significant trees shown, both *Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Fastigiata' and a third tree is now shown at the south west corner of B1, all are to be retained.
- The *Cupressus macrocarpa* (unusual single trunk) north west of the *Pinus muricata* (north of F4), towards B5, is shown as a significant tree and will be retained.
- The asphalt path beside the row of Concrete Lamp Posts, south of Willsmere Drive, is shown and will be retained. It will be connected to the Oak Walk.
- The elms along the south side Main Drive are shown as significant trees.
- Tree 388 *Prunus ilicifolia* (Holly leaved Cherry) is a significant tree which will be relocated to another position in the Heritage Core to be determined with John Hawker.
- The Narrow-leaved Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia* subsp. *angustifolia*) is not shown as a significant tree.
- The dead *Thuja plicata* will be removed.
- Beside the new road is a *Cedrus deodara*, and a *Eucalyptus globulus* subsp. *Globulus*. The *Cedrus deodara* must survive the construction of a new road, even if this results in the loss of the *Eucalyptus* (which is of lesser value).
- The two young *Arbutus canariensis*, north of B3 are to be retained.
- The clump of the uncommon *Wiganda caracasana*, a shrub with large leaves, around the base of a building NE of B6, will be relocated

- The road alignment where the new road comes off Main Drive will result in Trees 134A, 133 and 134 to be removed and Trees 103 and 127 to be retained.
- Tree 142 is shown as a significant tree and will be retained.
- Tree 624 is a significant tree to be removed as part of Stages 1 and 2.