

D-day looming

HERITAGE Victoria is expected to wait until the 11th hour before announcing its decision on the proposed redevelopment of the Kew Residential Services site.

The state heritage council has requested more information from the Human Services Department over its application to transform the 27ha property.

Assistant operations director Ray Osborne said Heritage Victoria would probably take most of its allotted 60 days to hand down its decision.

A flood of detailed submissions, including one from Heritage Australia, have slowed the process.

Boroondara Council has lodged an application against the plan, which includes demolishing six heritage-listed buildings, removing significant trees and relocating three memorials.

The department lodged the application in June and Heritage Victoria must decide by August 6.

Mr Osborne said Heritage Victoria officials would revisit the site before making its decision.



Brian Walsh with David Pym.

N02PP307

"It certainly is a fairly large matter of importance," Mr Osborne said.

"There is a lot of local interest and outside interest.

"It is a complex matter involving heritage, other issues and also deals with the disabled, which is very important.

"I think we'll be running pretty close to the deadline."

The Kew Cottages Coalition lodged a submission including its own heritage precincts plan, which retains all historic

buildings, most of the landscape and trees.

Coalition president Brian Walsh said its plan allowed development at the site, but only after clearly defined boundaries were set to protect its heritage.

Mr Walsh said Heritage Victoria had a responsibility to protect a site of Aboriginal significance and Boroondara's largest heritage site.

"The government doesn't ... formally control Heritage Victoria and so the ball is in Heritage Victoria's court," he said.

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