

Memorandum of Heritage Advice

1450 Thompsons Road, Cranbourne East

7 October 2024



Initial consultant heritage advice regarding the Heritage Overlay

This memorandum of advice has been requested on behalf of the owner of the subject site at 1450 Thompsons Road, Cranbourne. It comments on the potential to reduce the curtilage of the existing Heritage Overlay on the subject site and to introduce a windmill into the curtilage boundaries.

An inspection of the site (both internal and external) and its environs has been undertaken, together with a review of the relevant planning scheme provisions and Council documents. These include *Casey Planning Scheme Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay* and *Clause 15.03-1S Heritage conservation*, the *City of Casey Heritage Study Significant Places* (Butler & Associated 1997) and the *Croskell Precinct Structure Plan, Cranbourne East, City of Casey, Victoria: Post Contact Heritage Assessment* (Ecology and Heritage Partners, May 2023).

The property is included within the broader Croskell (employment) Precinct Structure Plan (PSP), which extends from Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road in the west through to Berwick Cranbourne Road in the east. Thompsons Road is the northern boundary, with the southern boundary irregularly shaped. The Victorian Planning Authority has undertaken a number of technical studies as part of the PSP process, with one of these reports by Ecology and Heritage Partners (EHP), who assessed post-contact sites within the PSP area.

The subject property, 1450 Thompson Road, Cranbourne East, is a large parcel of land on the south east corner of Thompsons Road and Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road, Cranbourne East. The property is known as Springmont Farm and is used as a market garden. Accessed via a long driveway from Thompsons Road is a late 19th/early 20th century red brick dwelling with hipped roof recently reclad in corrugated metal. Two face brick chimneys punctuate the roof, with both appearing to have been altered. The house faces west, with a former verandah removed and the western elevation enclosed behind a metal addition, used as a garage. While the verandah has been removed, the composition of the double fronted facade remains intact with a central door flanked by two tall timber framed sash windows. To the eastern side, a skillion roofed metal addition encloses what was formerly the rear of the dwelling. A timber framed carport has been constructed on the northern side of the house. Beyond the dwelling, a former outside toilet is located just south east of the house. Leyland cypress trees have been planted close to the northern and western sides of the house, with lemon, fig and other mature trees (both native and exotic species) located to the south and east of the dwelling. A palm tree is located north west of the house.

The remainder of the property is occupied by market gardens, along with a dam and metal sheds, all of which are of no heritage significance. To the north east of the house, just beyond the current boundaries of 1450 Thompsons Road is a steel windmill. The windmill is a relatively modest structure and is in a dilapidated condition.



Figure 1 View of the heritage dwelling, facing west.

The City of Casey Heritage Study Significant Places provides a description for the house, which is reproduced as follows:

This is a semi-derelict cavity red brick house set in a remnant house garden and orchard which in turn is now part of a large market garden. The house has a hipped roof clad with corrugated iron, a new verandah roof and concrete verandah floor, and many rear skillion extensions. It is set well back from the road in a small group of mature exotic trees, including a Canary Island date palm, old olive (stump, reshooting), lillypilly, silky oak, flowering gum, 'Pittosporum undulatum', lemon and other citrus trees in the house orchard set to one side, along with 'Brachychiton populneus' (old) and at the rear an old 'Camellia japonica'. The Czar, 'Erythrina sp.' (old), peach or almond trees and a well.

The side drive to the house from Thompsons Road and the main drive is lined with Monterey cypress.

It is noted that the 'house orchard' described above appears to have been removed, with no olive trees, lilly pilly, silky oak, Pittosporum undulatum, and 'other citrus' surviving near the dwelling. Similarly, the Camellia japonica, Czar, Erythrina sp., peach/almond trees also appear to have also been removed. While there is a lemon tree just to the south of the house, it is unknown if this is the same tree referred to in the citation. In essence, the Canary Island palm, flowering gum and a single lemon tree are still present. In addition, it is also noted that the verandah referenced in the citation has since been demolished.

The dwelling is subject to an individual Heritage Overlay, identified as HO137 in the Heritage Overlay in the Casey Planning Scheme. The curtilage of the Heritage Overlay only impacts the dwelling and an extent of land around it, rather than the whole of the property. The boundaries are approximately 130m to the west of the dwelling, 60 metres south, 12 metres east and 27 metres north. The place is not subject to external paint or internal alteration controls, but is subject to tree controls, presumably relating to the trees mentioned in the

above description. This accepted, as mentioned above, it appears that only the lemon tree, flowering gum and Canary Island palm are still retained, with the palm tree is just outside of the curtilage. The Statement of Significance for the dwelling is reproduced from the *City of Casey Heritage Study Significant Places* as follows:

The house and associated trees are of local significance for their altered expression of the Edwardian-era, in both house and landscape form, and their association with one of the Clyde pioneering families and prominent local identified, William Hardy.

The first Hardy to own this land, Embling Hardy was an early Clyde storekeeper while William Hardy, the builder of the house, was a Cranbourne Shire Councillor 1909-21 and president 1910-11, 1920-1 in the period when this property was developed.

As part of the property has an individual Heritage Overlay, development on that portion of the land is subject to the Heritage Overlay provisions at Clause 43.01 of the Casey Planning Scheme. *Inter alia*, Clause 43.01 has the objective of conserving and enhancing those elements that contribute to the significance of a heritage place.

Any redevelopment proposal will also need to be assessed against the Clause 15.03 – Heritage conservation, the relevant objectives and strategies of which are as follows:

15.03-1S Heritage conservation

Objective

To ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance.

Strategies

Identify, assess and document places of natural and cultural heritage significance as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.

Provide for the protection of natural heritage sites and man-made resources.

Provide for the conservation and enhancement of those places that are of aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, scientific or social significance.

Encourage appropriate development that respects places with identified heritage values.

Retain those elements that contribute to the importance of the heritage place.

Encourage the conservation and restoration of contributory elements of a heritage place.

Ensure an appropriate setting and context for heritage places is maintained or enhanced.

Support adaptive reuse of heritage buildings where their use has become redundant.

Consider whether it is appropriate to require the restoration or reconstruction of a heritage building in a Heritage Overlay that has been unlawfully or unintentionally demolished in order to retain or interpret the cultural heritage significance of the building, streetscape or area.

We have been asked to complete a review of the subject site, and to assess the recommendations relevant to Springmont Farm included in the EHP post-contact study of the PSP. These recommendations include reducing the size of the Heritage Overlay curtilage, incorporating the windmill to the north east within the Heritage Overlay HO137, and that a Conservation Management Plan for the dwelling be prepared.

In short, we can support a reduction of the Heritage Overlay curtilage. Comments in the EHP report that the current extent and curtilage does not reflect the place's historic value appear reasonable and considered. In considering the Statement of Significance, the heritage values of the place relate only to the dwelling and associated nearby trees. The overall curtilage appears to have been placed in a somewhat ad hoc manner, possibly to capture the western outlook to the property, given historically the property was accessed from the west. In consideration of the previously identified significance of the place, the reduced extent that EHP has proposed appears appropriate, with the reduced curtilage to encompass the dwelling and some surrounding features. That the Canary Island palm mentioned in the description is not currently within the curtilage is possibly a result of a mapping error rather than an intention not to include it. Provisions for the palm tree in future development should be considered.

With respect for the windmill, EHP recommended the extent of the existing Heritage Overlay curtilage could be altered to also include the windmill to the north east, owing to the windmills historical association with the property.

It is noted the windmill was not identified in the citation for the property within the *City of Casey Heritage Study Significant Places*. Whether this was because the windmill was not deemed to be a significant element associated with the property when assessed, or because it was not located within the property boundaries and was not assessed as a result is unknown.

The windmill is a very modest structure and in a heavily dilapidated state, and there is an argument that can be raised against incorporating it into the Heritage Overlay curtilage. The windmill does not provide a meaningful story about the history of the property, beyond it having previously been a rural farm. The proposal to incorporate open space between the windmill and the heritage dwelling will likely leave the windmill as an isolated object, without a meaningful heritage context in which its former use could be understood. The windmill could, in theory, be dismantled and relocated as part of an interpretation strategy, however this strategy would also depend upon what the proposed use for the house is and whether its interpretation could be completed in a meaningful way.



Figure 2 The windmill, which is a modest structure and dilapidated, on the adjacent property to the north.

In addition to the above, EHP suggest a Conservation Management Plan be prepared for the dwelling, which also appears to be an appropriate course of action as part of the place's retention and conservation.

We hope the above is clear and look forward to further discussions in relation to this matter.

Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd

7 October 2024

This advice is provided on a preliminary basis only, having regard for a site inspection and review of the current design documentation. The author has not had the benefit of an exhaustive briefing or of extensive research into the site or any related matter. This memorandum is provided for use by the client group only, and is not suitable for consideration by Council, Heritage Victoria, or any third party entity or individual.