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30 July 2024

Jessica Antolino
Heritage Victoria
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Dear Jess,

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT - 355 ST KILDA ROAD, MELBOURNE MELBOURNE GRAMMAR SCHOOL - MAIN OVAL DEMOUNTABLE CLASSROOM INSTALLATION & RETROSPECTIVE PORTABLE BATHROOM INSTALLATION PERMISSION

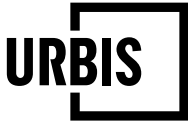
1. INTRODUCTION

Urbis Ltd act on behalf of Melbourne Grammar School (355 St Kilda Road, Melbourne) in relation to the installation of demountable classrooms associated with an education centre (secondary school), on the east portion of Main Oval and retrospective permission for the installation of portable bathroom facilities adjacent to the Shelmerdine Music Room (Memorial Hall). This application seeks approval for temporary structures to be located upon the subject site for a period of up to three (3) years.

This letter provides a heritage impact assessment of the proposed works supporting the heritage permit application to Heritage Victoria.

The following documentation is submitted in support of this application:

- Completed and signed Heritage Victoria application form.
- Proposed Modular Unit Hire Information and Construction Drawings (Classrooms), prepared by AUSCO Modular, dated 01.02.2024.
- Proposed Modular Unit Hire Information and Construction Drawings (Classroom End A), prepared by AUSCO Modular, dated 18.05.2024.
- Proposed Modular Unit Hire Information and Construction Drawings (Bathrooms), prepared by AUSCO Modular, dated 30.11.2023
- Site Plan, prepared by Wardle, dated 27.06.2023.
- Certificate of Title



2. BACKGROUND

The subject site is included in the registration of Melbourne Grammar School (MGS, Victorian Heritage Register H0019).

Works to the place are guided by the *Melbourne Grammar School Master Plan, Volume One 2003* (Peter Elliott Pty Ltd which is an incorporated document within the Melbourne Planning Scheme).

The *Melbourne Grammar School Management Plan* (Robert Sands Pty Ltd Architects, 1998) provides guidance regarding the conservation management of the heritage place and the relative heritage significance of its elements.

A heritage permit for the demolition of Neill and Rhoden buildings and construction of the new four storey Centre for Humanities on Domain Road was approved by Heritage Victoria on 07 October 2023 (No. P37599).

The demolition of the two buildings (Neill and Rhoden) will result in a temporary loss of ten classrooms, a number of house rooms and staff offices and student change rooms, toilets, lockers, and stores ahead of completion of the new Centre for Humanities building.

Temporary accommodation for these functions will be required for the next three years while construction of the new building is underway. Demountable buildings sited to the east of Main Oval proposed for this purpose are the subject of the current heritage permit application.

Portable buildings were installed adjacent to the Shelmerdine Music Room (Memorial Hall) MGS in early 2024 as a response to the closure of the Wadhurst Building for bathroom and facility upgrades (P38736, approved 13 September 2023). It is necessary to keep these temporary bathrooms for the duration of the Humanities Centre renovations (P37599) given the shortage of bathrooms that will result in the demolition of buildings housing existing facilities, namely the Rhoden, Neill, and Wadhurst buildings.

A retrospective heritage permit is sought for these facilities.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION, LISTINGS & HISTORY

SITE DESCRIPTION

Melbourne Grammar School is sited on an irregular 6.2 hectare site bounded by Domain Road (to the north), Domain Street (to the east), Bromby Street (to the south) and St Kilda Road (to the west) (Figure 1).

The main school buildings are centrally located, with further building located to the southeast and west of the site. The grounds include significant mature vegetation and three well maintained ovals, the Main Oval (to the east) and Steele and Wadhurst Ovals (to the west).



Figure 1– Melbourne Grammar School campus outlined in red and proposed works area outlined in yellow.

Source: Nearmaps May 2024

HISTORY

The following historical information is drawn from the Melbourne Grammar School Management Plan 1998 prepared by Robert Sands Pty Ltd Architects.

The foundation stone of Melbourne Grammar School's was laid by the Anglican Bishop of Melbourne, Bishop Perry, on July 30, 1856. In 1858, classes commenced under the leadership of Reverend John Edward Bromby.

The primary building, constructed of bluestone in the Tudor Collegiate style, was organized around a quadrangle. Initially, it consisted of the west wing, the south wing (with an incomplete tower), and a dining hall on the north side. In 1861, a gymnasium was built to the east of the quadrangle. Adjacent to Domain Road, the land north/northeast of the main quad served as a service area, where stables (1868) and a carpenter's workshop (1875) were later added.

While the school buildings and grounds have developed since the school's foundation, the location of the Main Oval has remained unchanged throughout the Schools history, functioning as a Cricket Ground in earliest plans and aerial photographs (Figure 2 and Figure 3).

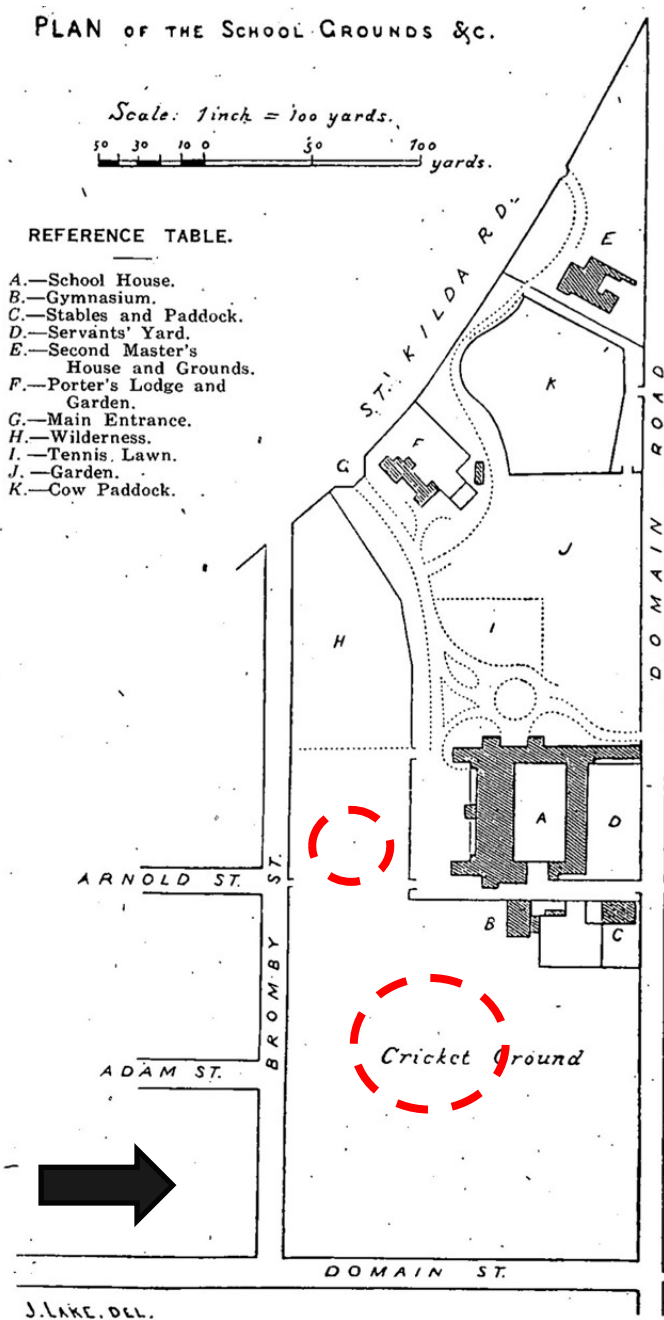


Figure 2 - Melbourne Grammar School site plan, 1876. Black arrow indicates North – Red hatched line indicates area of works.

Source: Melbourne Grammar School Archives

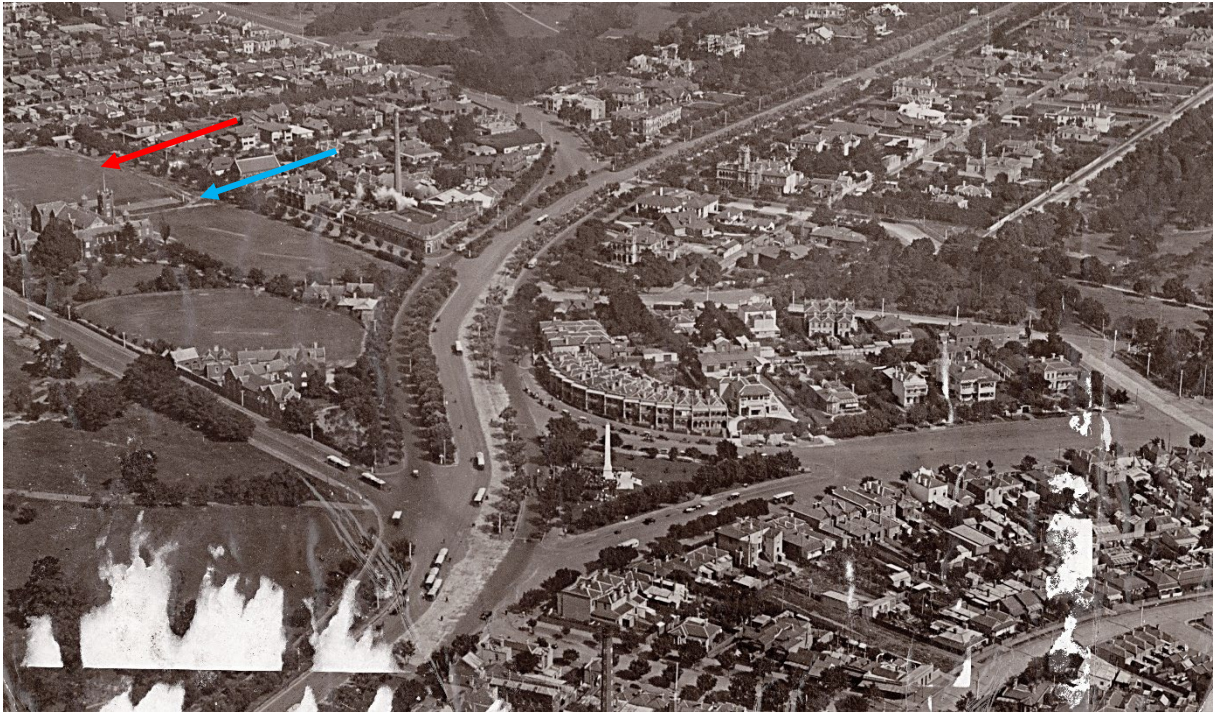


Figure 3 – Aerial photograph, c1926 showing Melbourne Grammar School to the right, with Main Oval indicated by a red arrow and location of bathroom facilities indicated by a blue arrow.

Source: State Library of Victoria, Sir Raymond W Garrett

HERITAGE LISTINGS

Victorian Heritage Register

Melbourne Grammar School is included on the Victorian Heritage Register (H0019). The extent of registration is shown in Figure 4 and includes:

1. All the buildings marked on Plan 19 held by the Executive Director:

B1 The Quadrangle 1858-1876 & Quadrangle Lamp

B2 Cuming Wing, 1898, 1907

B3 Jubilee Wing 1913

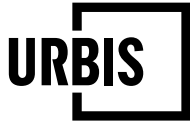
B4 Chapel, 1892

B5 Ross Gates 1910

B6 Remnant Gymnasium, 1907

B7 Lodge 1858-1916

B8 Barrett Gates 1927



B9 Memorial Hall 1928

B10 Wadhurst Hall 1940

B11 Residence 1939

B12 Bromby Street Retaining Wall and Fence

B13 Bromby Street Wall

2. All the Trees and Landscape Features

T1 Magnolia grandiflora

T2 Araucaria heterophylla

T3 Ulmus procera

T4 Platanus x acerifolia

T5 Ulmus x hollandica x20

T6 Ulmus x hollandica 'Purpurascens' x2

O1 Main Oval

O2 Steele Oval

O3 Wadhurst Oval

S1 Chapel Square

D1 Driveway from St Kilda Road

3. All the land marked L1 on Diagram 19 held by the Executive Director, being the land described in Certificate of Title Vol. 2500 Fol. 960 at South Yarra Parish of Melbourne South, County of Bourke. of the building B1, as marked on Diagram 68 held by the Executive Director.

The Domain Parklands (HO398) to the north of Melbourne Grammar School also listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

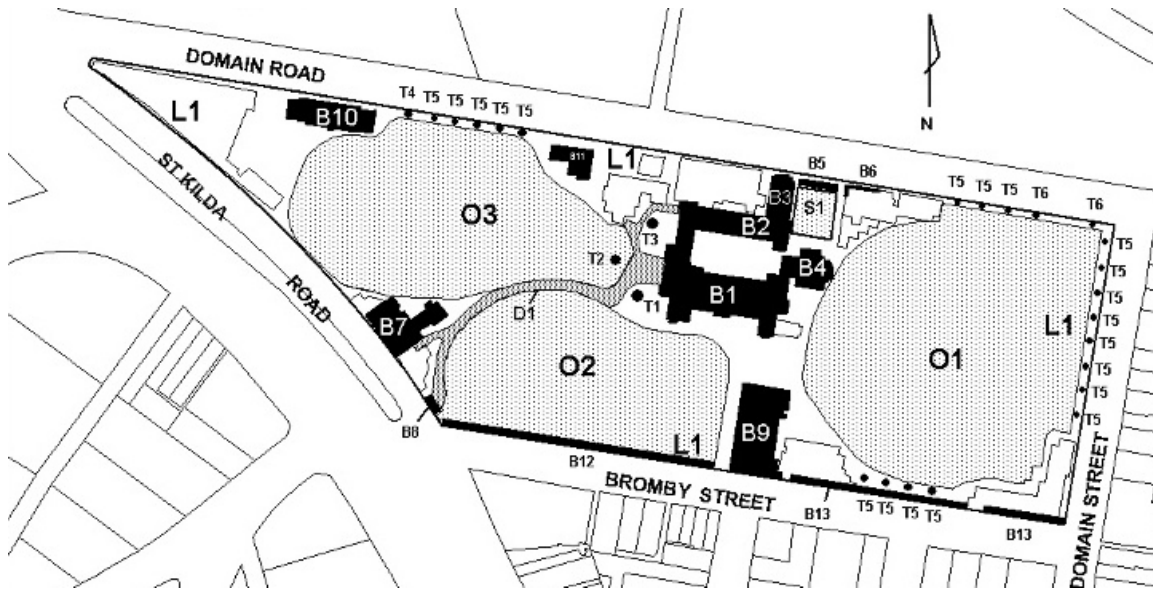


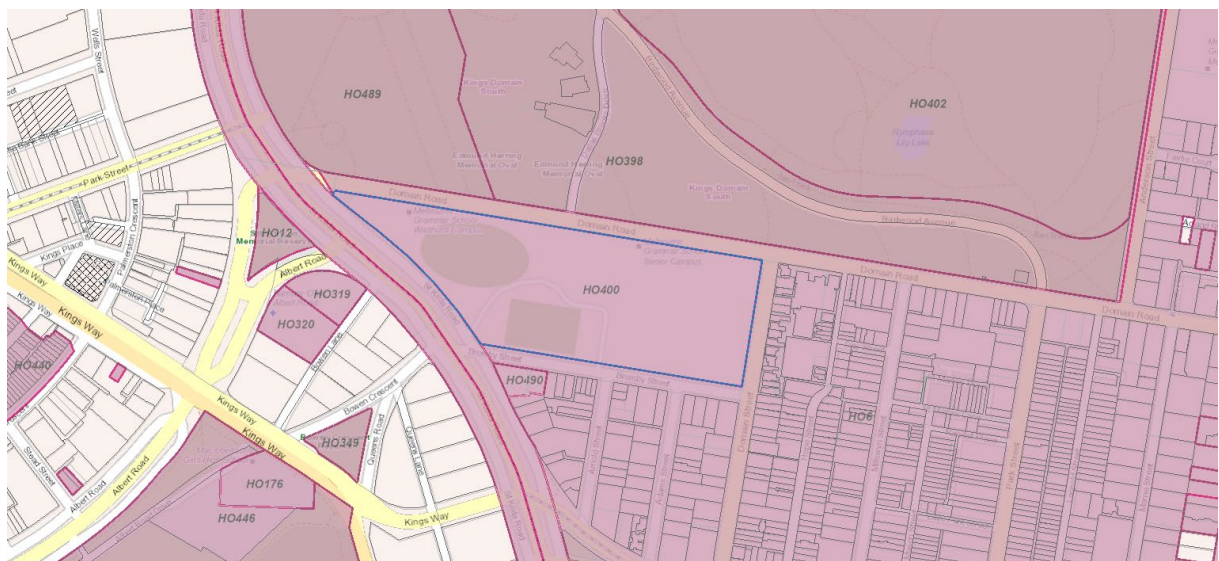
Figure 4 – Plan of Melbourne Grammar School’s extent of registration (Diagram 19 held by the Executive Director)

Source: Victorian Heritage Database

City of Melbourne

Melbourne Grammar School is identified as heritage overlay HO400 under the Melbourne Planning Scheme. While heritage permit applications will be assessed by Heritage Victoria, the City of Melbourne remain a referral authority.

The South Yarra Precinct (HO6) encompasses the residential area to the east and south of the school, extending along Domain Road to its northern boundary.



Picture 1 - Map showing heritage overlay and surrounds of Melbourne Grammar School (HO400) (subject site shown in blue outline)

Source: VicPlan (DTP)

National Trust of Victoria

Melbourne Grammar School is included on the Register of the National Trust of Australia (Vic), being identified as a place of state significance (File No. B0217)

4. SIGNIFICANCE

HERITAGE VICTORIA

The statement of significance for Melbourne Grammar School is reproduced in full below:

What is significant?

From 1850 the Anglican Bishop of Melbourne, Bishop Perry made requests to the Superintendent of Port Phillip, Charles La Trobe for a site for an Anglican school, but the present site was not chosen until 1855. In the interim a constitution for a church grammar school was adopted and funds were received from the government and by public subscriptions. An architectural competition in 1856 selected a Tudor style design by the partnership of Webb and Taylor. On 30 July 1856 Bishop Perry laid the foundation stone and in 1858 classes began under the headmastership of Reverend John Edward Bromby.

In June 1875 the school library was established and the school crest and motto adopted. Wadhurst was established on the site in 1878, at first to accommodate an overflow of boarders, but in 1886 it became the junior school. In 1918, when the school acquired Grimwade House for its junior school, Wadhurst became the junior section of the high school. In 1942, soon after America entered the war, US forces took over the Senior School and Wadhurst as their Melbourne headquarters. The school regained use of these buildings at the beginning of 1944.

Melbourne Grammar School is situated on a large block of 15 acres bounded by St Melbourne Grammar School is architecturally significant for its collection of bluestone buildings, forming the core of one of the finest educational building complexes in Australia. Designed in the Tudor Gothic style, they reflect the desire to invoke the prestige of traditional English colleges. Buildings added after the Second World War are significant as distinctive examples of the International style, contrasting markedly but successfully to the earlier buildings. The design of the Bromby Building broke the tradition of employing old boys as architects.

The grounds are aesthetically significant for their broad open landscape featuring three sports ovals, for the spatial arrangement of buildings, ovals and trees, and for the views to and from these elements. The axial position of a large Araucaria heterophylla planted in 1859 opposite the entrance to the 1858 Quadrangle building and the framing by a Magnolia grandiflora on the south corner and an exceptionally large Ulmus procera near the north corner are significant landscape features. The landscape is further enhanced by the perimeter planting of twenty Ulmus x hollandica and two uncommon Ulmus x hollandica Purpurascens and a single Platanus x acerifolia.

NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (VIC)

Melbourne Grammar School is also included on the Register of the National Trust of Australia (VIC) (B0217) and is identified as being of State significance. The place citation describes the site as follows:

A fine group of two-storey bluestone buildings enclosing a quadrangle and defining a series of interlocking spaces opening onto equally historic playing fields. The school buildings were commenced in May 1856 to the design of architects Webb & Tayler who also provided the master plan. Although the Witherby tower was lower than the original design the buildings of the first twenty years were very much as Webb and Tayler intended. They formed the core of the school then, as now, and consist of the north, west and south wings around the quadrangle, except the eastern most ends of the north and south wings. The gatehouse and the lodge are of the same period. The school has provided the background to the early years of many of Australia's most prominent people in many spheres and it is in keeping with this fact that so many of the additions have been carried out with a skill and sympathy that now provides a coherent composition without the detail of the early Tudor Gothic being slavishly followed by the later buildings or disturbing the original layout of the cricket ground. The bluestone of the earlier buildings was carried through to much of the fencing, which was then surmounted by iron railing to match the major gateways which, together with the fences and the lamp post in the quadrangle are included in the Classification. The consistency of form is remarkable for a school that was founded in 1856 and has occupied the same site since.

5. PROPOSAL

It is proposed to install two banks of temporary demountable buildings (including space for eight classrooms, three house rooms and four locker areas) to the eastern portion of the Main Oval for a period of three years (Figure 5).

The installation of the demountable buildings upon the Main Oval and adjacent to the Sheldermine Music Room was and is required to accommodate students on site while the new Centre for Humanities and Wadhurst Building, permitted in accordance with heritage permit P37599 and heritage permit exemption P38736, are under construction.

Infrastructure to service the buildings and a concrete path (2m wide) to facilitate access to the buildings will also be installed.

Apart from minor excavation work, no demolition works are required to facilitate works to install the demountable buildings and the associated services and pathway.

Retrospective permit approval is sought for the installation of portable bathroom facilities to the east of the Sheldermine Music Room (Memorial Hall) for the previous six months (January 2024 – July 2024), and an additional three years (2024-2027) (Figure 6).

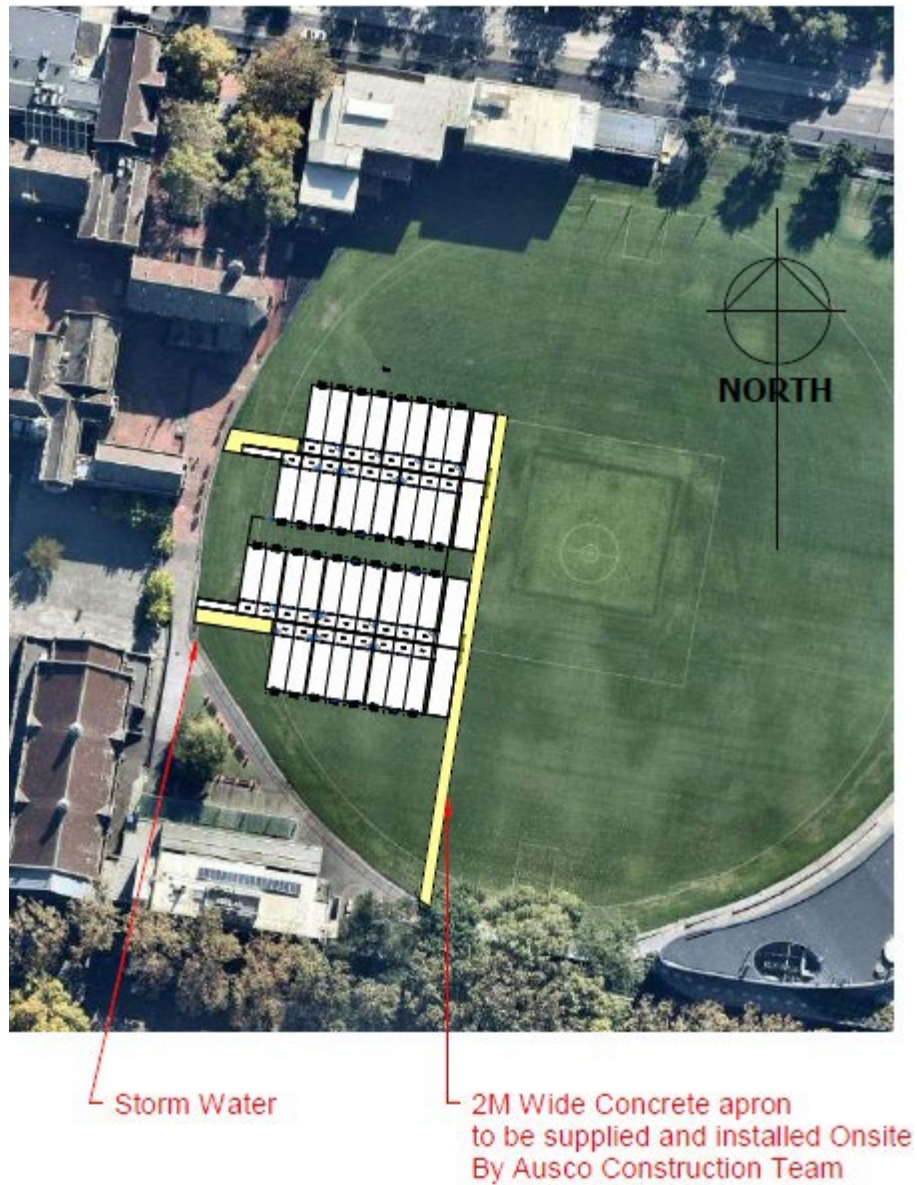


Figure 5 - Proposed Demountables, services and concrete paths

Source: Ausco Modular



Figure 6 – Existing temporary bathrooms

Source: Ausco Modular



Figure 7 - Existing Site Conditions (Bromby Street – Taken from fence line)

Source: Urbis 14.06.2024



Figure 8 - Existing Site Conditions (Bromby Street - Opposite Streetside View)

Source: Urbis 14.06.2024

6. HERITAGE IMPACTS

This section will assess the proposal against the relevant Heritage Victoria guidelines for such assessments.

Options Considered:

Main Oval Demountables

Due to site constraints, the school was limited to two options for student relocation during the three-year period while the Centre for Humanities is under construction:

- Relocate students within existing classrooms as available.
- Install demountable classrooms on one of the site's three ovals.

Given the high enrolment rates across the Melbourne Grammar School South Yarra campus, the new Centre for Humanities project was initiated to expand limited classroom capacity in the school. Reallocating students within existing classrooms was not found to be a viable option.

The provision of temporary demountable classrooms provided a solution to the reallocation of classroom space that did not place additional pressure on already stretched space within the school.

Locating the demountable buildings on Main Oval was considered the best siting option because it provides the best access to the school's main buildings and would involve the least impact on student sporting activities. As the Rhoden Building, which currently houses changerooms associated with Main Oval is to be demolished as part of the P37599 works, the use of the oval for sporting activities during the construction of the Centre for Humanities would have been restricted during this period. Larger school sporting activities will instead be directed to Edwin Flack Park facilities, and the redeveloped Edmund Herring Oval upon its opening in late-2024.

The Main Oval will however continue to maintain limited accessibility and use through the Centre of Humanities construction period. The portable classrooms have been designed and located to accommodate physical education classes and student access during recess and lunch hours upon the eastern section of the Main Oval.

Portable Bathroom Facilities

The current portable buildings were installed in the same location by MGS in early 2024 as a response to the closure of the Wadhurst Building for bathroom and facility upgrades (P38736, approved 13.09.2023). It is necessary to keep these temporary bathrooms for the duration of the Humanities Centre renovations (P37599) given the shortage of bathrooms that will result in the demolition of buildings housing existing facilities, namely the Rhoden, Neill, and Wadhurst buildings.

The portable bathroom facilities are currently sited to the east of the driveway south of the main Melbourne Grammar School building complex on a non-contributory bluestone plinth facing Memorial Hall. This site, on a service accessway and in one of the few areas of the school grounds not programmed with buildings, transition areas or sporting grounds, has housed portable bathroom buildings in the past. In 2022 portable bathrooms for Metro tunnel workers were installed here in response to significant vibrations associated with the tunnel works.

While sited in a visually sensitive area to the front of the main school complex and partially obscuring primary views to the school from Bromby Street and St Kilda Road this location has the benefit of not resulting in a physical impact to original school fabric (buildings, sporting grounds or paved transition areas) or obstructing the use of main transition areas or spots grounds.

Impact Assessment

The proposed works will introduce some visual and minor physical impacts to the setting of the Melbourne Grammar School and the Main Oval, which contributes to the aesthetic significance of the place, during the proposed three years of their installation.

Main Oval Demountables

Existing buildings to the Domain Road, to the north, and Bromby Street, to the east, of the proposed works area, would provide some screening of public realm views of the demountable – reducing the visual impacts of the temporary structures on the heritage place during this period.

Physical impacts on the oval associated with the installation of the demountable buildings, services and a concrete access path would be remediated following their removal when the Centre of Humanities is complete. It is intended that the aesthetic significance of this landscape element will be restored following the works and it will return to active use as a sports ground.

A condition requiring remediation of the oval could be made to any heritage permit granted for the works.

The temporary impacts on the heritage significance of the Melbourne Grammar School associated with the works are minor and acceptable within the context of the current permit application works and those already permitted by P37599.

Portable Bathrooms

Given their siting just to the east of the front driveway to the Quadrangle and the main school complex (Figure 7; Figure 8), it is acknowledged that the existing portable present visual impacts to the Melbourne Grammar School site when viewed from Bromby Street to the south and southwest and St Kilda Road to the west.

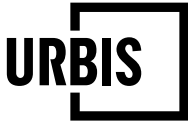
The portable bathrooms partially obstruct views to the east wing of the Quadrangle when viewed from Bromby Street and the rear section of Memorial Hall when viewed from the west and southwest. However, the extent of this impact is tempered by the relatively small scale of the portable buildings within the context of the much grander proportions and material gravitas of the bluestone Quadrangle and Memorial Hall buildings. The portable bathrooms clearly read as temporary contemporary installations within the context.

Physical impacts on the non-contributory fabric associated with their siting would be remediated following their removal when the Centre of Humanities and Wadhurst Building is complete.

A condition requiring remediation of the site could be made to any heritage permit granted for the works.

The temporary impacts on the heritage significance of the Melbourne Grammar School associated with the works are relatively minor and have a finite duration. They are sited in an area that has housed portable bathroom buildings in the past in an acceptable manner with no lasting impact on the heritage values of the place.

Maintaining the bathrooms during the permitted Centre of Humanities works is considered necessary to the functioning of the school and is considered acceptable within the context of the works permitted by P37599 and P38736.



Mitigation measures

Main Oval Demountables

As noted above, the temporary buildings are sited to be screened from public realm views of the site by existing buildings to the north and south of the proposed works area.

The proposed 2m wide concrete path will limit the impact of erosion that may otherwise be introduced by unmanaged foot traffic in the area.

Installation of appropriate storm drainage will manage water retention upon the oval.

It is proposed that the works area is appropriately remediated, restoring the aesthetic qualities and use of the Main Oval upon completion of the Centre for Humanities.

Portable Bathrooms

As noted above, the temporary bathrooms are sited on non-original bluestone plinth on a service accessway in one of the few areas of the school grounds not programmed with buildings, transition areas or sporting grounds. The buildings are associated with temporary visual impacts but no lasting physical impacts on the significant fabric of the site.

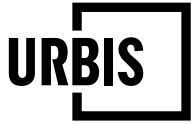
It is proposed that the works area is appropriately remediated, restoring the aesthetic qualities and use of the location upon completion of the Centre for Humanities and Wadhurst Building.

Reasonable or Economic Use

The proposal needs to be considered within the broader requirements of the *Heritage Act 207*, which are intended to support the sustainability of places and consider the reasonable or economic use of a place.

As noted above, the demolition of the Neill and Rhoden buildings ahead of the construction of the Centre for Humanities will result in a temporary loss of ten classrooms, a number of house rooms and staff offices and student change rooms, toilets, lockers, and stores at Melbourne Grammar School. Upgrades the Wadhurst Building have further resulted in the loss of approximately ten cubicle stalls and eight urinals.

It is reasonable that the school provide temporary alternative classrooms, bathrooms and support spaces for its students and staff for the duration of the permitted Centre for Humanities and Wadhurst Building works, works that will facilitate the long-term replacement of outdated classrooms with new facilities.



7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposed development will result in an acceptable temporary heritage impact upon the registered place. The proposal should be considered appropriate having regard to the identified significance of the registered place and the provisions of the *Heritage Act 2017*.

Melbourne Grammar School will seek to fully remediate effected sites and redesign the Oval in 2026-27 through a separate Heritage Victoria application.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eli Moore".

Eli Moore
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