

# POINT NEPEAN RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FIELD STATION

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## HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct, Defence Road, Portsea

January 2025

Prepared for

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Prepared by

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

This report was prepared on the lands of the Wurundjeri people who have been custodians of this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge their stories, connection to land, water and culture which is embedded in Country. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and acknowledge that this report includes a post-contact history that forms only a small part of the ongoing story.

The Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is located on the lands of the Bunurong People, who are, and have always been the custodians of this land. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present, and acknowledge the stories, traditions and cultures of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## Quality Assurance Register

The following quality assurance register documents the development and issue of this report prepared by Lovell Chen Pty Ltd in accordance with our quality management system.

Project no.	Issue no.	Description	Issue date	Approval
9246	5	Draft Heritage Impact Statement	08/01/2025	MK

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Cover image: Port Phillip Bay from the Point Nepean Quarantine Station

Source: Lovell Chen

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared on behalf of the University of Melbourne to accompany a permit application to Heritage Victoria for a proposed new Research and Education Field Station in the Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct located within the Point Nepean National Park (Figure 1).

The proposed field station will be jointly operated by Monash University and the University of Melbourne to provide an interdisciplinary science research and education facility. The proposal comprises the adaptation of an existing 1960s building (Badcoe Hall) and the construction of a new two-storey building to provide research, education and public engagement facilities, research laboratories, on-site accommodation and office/meeting rooms, with associated services, stores, landscaping and at-grade car parking. The field station will be confined to a lease area encompassing Badcoe Hall and the land behind this building (to the south) and a small curtilage of land to the east.

In the preparation of this report, reference has been made to the following:

- Architectural drawings prepared by Hassell, dated 11 October 2024 (Revision 2 and 3), and numbered TP-0000-TP-0004 (inclusive), TP-0007-TP-0018 (inclusive) and TP-0111
- Historical Archaeological Assessment, prepared by Ochre Imprints Pty Ltd, dated 26 March 2024
- NCCEC Point Nepean Research & Education Field Station Development Arboricultural Assessment and Report, prepared by Tree Logic Pty Ltd, dated 9 December 2024
- Former Quarantine Station Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan Non-Indigenous Cultural Heritage, Volume One & Two, prepared by Lovell Chen, September 2008
- Point Nepean National Park Master Plan 2017, prepared by TCL et. al. for Parks Victoria

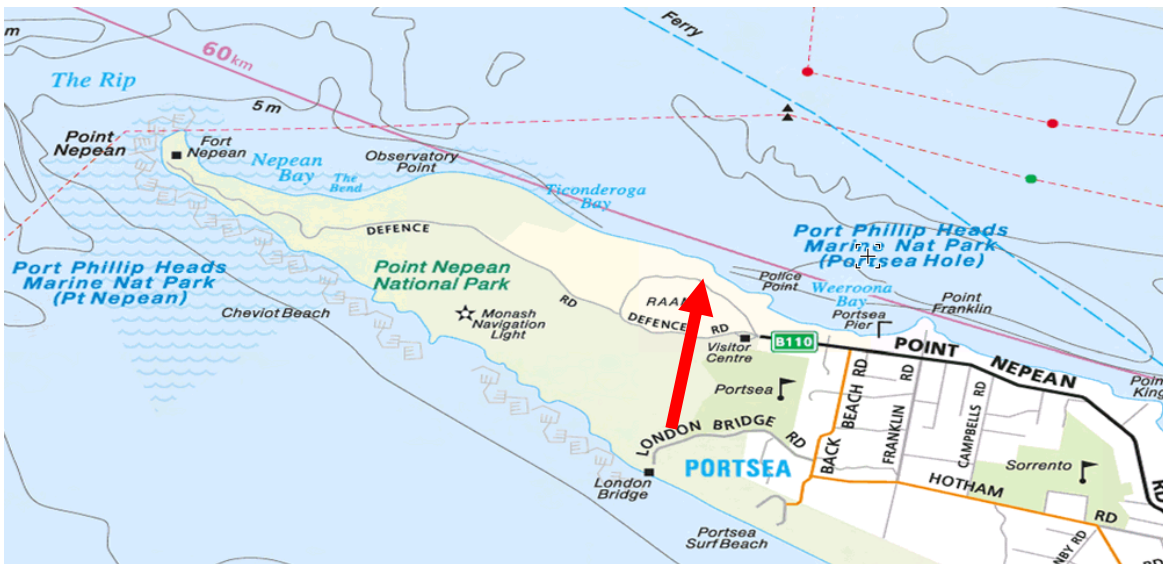


Figure 1 Plan showing the location of the proposed works (approximately indicated by the arrow) in the Point Nepean National Park

Source: [www.street-directory.com.au](http://www.street-directory.com.au)



## 1.1 Background

Several pre-application discussions have been held with Heritage Victoria, in September and November 2021, a site visit in December 2021, and subsequent meetings in July 2023 and February 2024. While the overall function of the field station for research and educational purposes has largely remained unchanged, the scope of the field station and the form of the proposed building and associated infrastructure/services has been through a series of revisions. These have been in response to Heritage Victoria comments as well as other matters including financial and funding considerations.

Initially, the proposal involved the provision of laboratories, workplace and gathering spaces, accommodation and common areas within an adapted building (Badcoe Hall) and the construction of a new building to the south (rear) of Badcoe Hall. The new building form initially comprised a two-storey building presented as a sequence of offset volumes, with external spaces and research tanks between the buildings. A render view of the building as proposed in 2021 is provided at Figure 2.

Pre-application comments provided by Heritage Victoria in November 2021 suggested that, while it was considered that the Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station may potentially be considered an appropriate and sensitive use for the place, the proposed building was considered inappropriate in size/bulk (including footprint and height) and location, did not adhere to the linear plan in an east–west arrangement and risked dominating the sensitive heritage landscape. Following a site visit and further discussions in December 2021, Heritage Victoria issued subsequent comments that acknowledged the proposed Field Station as an appropriate use for the heritage place. The siting of the new building as proposed to the rear (south) of Badcoe Hall was also addressed in these comments and considered to be the least impactful location within the heritage place. Concerns with regard to the height, massing and footprint of the proposed design were maintained by Heritage Victoria at this time.

Following a substantial revision of the project scope and design, a revised design was presented at pre-application discussions with Heritage Victoria in July 2023. This comprised the adaptive reuse of the Badcoe Hall building for office functions, communal spaces and accommodation, the construction of a new single-storey building to the rear (south) of Badcoe Hall for research infrastructure, including laboratories and research stores, and the introduction of an underground seawater pipeline system (intake and outfall seawater system) servicing a series of external tanks between the buildings. The amended new building form comprised a simple rectangular building with a low-pitched roof and fenced (unroofed) services area to the west. A render image of the 2023 revised design is provided at Figure 3.

Pre-application comments provided by Heritage Victoria in August 2023 indicated that the substantially reduced scale and footprint of the new building was considered to be a ‘positive outcome’, with a ‘level of comfort’ regarding the adaptation and internal changes to Badcoe Hall to allow a smaller footprint for the new building. Advice was also provided by Heritage Victoria Archaeology and Maritime Archaeology in relation to the underground seawater system, with consideration of potential impacts arising from the horizontal directional drilling for the pipeline, the infrastructure at seabed level within the bay and from vessels used during installation, including any points of anchoring.

The proposal for the field station was again revised and presented to Heritage Victoria in February 2024. Resulting largely from a requirement for additional on-site accommodation as part of the project, the current proposal (which is the subject of this permit application) includes the retention and adaptive reuse of Badcoe Hall for research and communal spaces, including laboratories, meeting rooms and equipment storage. A simple, rectangular two-storey building is proposed to the south of Badcoe Hall, providing accommodation and communal spaces. An external deck is proposed at the east end of new building with an open plant area on west side, and new landscaping between the buildings and to the

east of Badcoe Hall. The underground seawater pipeline and above ground tanks are no longer proposed.

Pre-application comments provided by Heritage Victoria in February 2024 confirmed there is a 'level of comfort' with the proposed works, and indicated that the removal of the potential for harm to any maritime archaeology is considered a good outcome for the place. Additional project details as related to use, function and the requirement for new built form were also sought in these comments and are provided at section 5.0 of this HIS.



Figure 2 Render of the initial (2021) proposal for the new field station building and associated landscaping; Badcoe Hall indicated  
Source: Hassell



Figure 3 Render of the revised (2023) proposal for the new field station building and associated landscaping and infrastructure; Badcoe Hall indicated  
Source: Hassell

## 1.2 Associated approvals

Several permit exemptions have been issued for the excavation of a number of boreholes, for the purposes of geotechnical testing to inform the proposed field station project, and for investigations of the fabric of Badcoe Hall comprising investigation of flooring/concrete slab, footings and bearing capacity, facade support and condition of the external walls as follows: P35095, issued 9 June 2021; P36422, issued 21 March 2022; and P36423, issued 21 March 2022.

Heritage consents have also been issued for the above works as follows: C1694, issued 9 June 2021; and C1774, issued 21 February 2022.

## 2.0 HERITAGE CONTROLS AND LISTINGS

### 2.1 Victorian Heritage Register

The Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is included on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) designated as place number H2030, and is identified as being of archaeological, aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific and social significance to the State of Victoria. The extent of registration is included at Figure 4 and Figure 5. It is noted that the proposed works will not impact any registered buildings. The VHR statement of significance for the Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is reproduced below:

#### **What is significant?**

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct at the western extremity of the Mornington Peninsula consists of approximately 526 hectares of land about 95 km from Melbourne. The site has an entry from Point Nepean Road, and is partially bounded on the east by the Portsea Golf Club. At the time of Federation, Point Nepean was transferred to Commonwealth ownership, although not gazetted until 1919. In 1988, as part of Australia's Bicentennial celebrations, 300 hectares were transferred to the State of Victoria to become part of a new Point Nepean National Park. This park incorporated the previous Cape Schanck Coastal Park and areas of the Nepean State Park. From August 1995 the park became known as the Mornington Peninsula National Park. A large section of land, some 220ha, south of Defence Road, remains in Commonwealth ownership with no public access due to unexploded ordnance. The Quarantine Station and Police Point have also been in Commonwealth ownership.

A number of Aboriginal sites have been identified on Point Nepean. These include coastal shell middens which reflect indigenous food gathering practices over the past 6000 years.

The first European use of the land was for grazing and lime burning. From the 1840s, lime burning became the chief industry in the Portsea area, supplying lime to Melbourne's building trade. Nepean limestone was shipped to Melbourne from the late 1830s. Many of the early lime kilns at Portsea were located along the shoreline. By 1845, a regular fleet of 20 to 25 schooners carried lime to Melbourne. Large quantities of local timber were cut to supply the lime kilns, causing the natural vegetation of banksia and sheoak to become scarce. Two lime kilns are known to remain on the site.

The limestone Shepherd's Hut (c.1845-54) is believed to be a rare example of employee housing from this period. Although all the fabric is not original, this may



well be of high significance and requires further investigation. It is possible that only the cellar dates from 1845. The hut was used as a dairy from the 1880s until 1897, and as a dispensary until 1908. It became the Regimental Sergeant Major's Office during the Army occupation of the site.

Point Nepean contains the oldest surviving buildings erected for quarantine purposes in Australia. The peninsula was chosen as the first permanent quarantine station in Victoria because of its early isolation, access to shipping, deep-water anchorage and security. The Quarantine Station was constructed from 1852 and operated from the 1850s until 1979. Point Nepean was also used in the management of infectious diseases within Victoria, housing a leper colony from 1885 to the 1930s, when the surviving patients were transferred to Coode Island, and a consumptives' colony from the 1880s. Although the buildings of the leper colony were burnt down in the 1930s, at least one grave of a Chinese leper patient is in the Point Nepean cemetery.

The Point Nepean site housed a remarkable medical complex for its time. The development of the quarantine station reflected changes in medical knowledge about infection and the transmission of disease over the years of its existence and the way major public health issues were dealt with in Victoria. The arrangements of the hospital buildings mirrored the class distinctions of the ships bringing passengers to Melbourne, separating upper class passengers from the rest. The Quarantine Station buildings include: Boatman's Quarters (1888) & Original Entry Road Alignment, Staff Quarters, Hospitals 2-5 (1858-59), Hospital No. 1 (1917), Kitchen No.2 (1858-59), Kitchen No. 3 (c. 1869) Kitchen No.5(c.1885) , First Class Dining Room (1916) Administration Building (1916), Disinfecting & Bathing Complex (1900), Isolation Hospital (1916-20) , Cemetery (1852-54) Cemetery (1854-90) , Crematorium (1892), Heaton's Memorial (1856-58), Isolation Hospital (1916-20), Matron's Quarters (1856-58), Morgue and Mortuary (1921) , Doctor's Consulting Room and Post Office (1913) relocated in 1925 and used as a Maternity Hospital, Administrative Building and Visiting Staff Quarters (1916-17)and Influenza Huts (1919). The Influenza Huts housed soldiers with influenza returning from World War I when almost 300 ships with over 11,800 passengers were quarantined between November 1918 and August 1919. Other uses of the Quarantine Station have included the temporary housing of several hundred children from the Industrial School at Prince's Bridge in 1867.

The security of the Quarantine Station was crucial to its function. Police guarded a forty foot stretch of land between two fences to keep passengers in and others out of the station. A prefabricated iron police house was replaced in 1859 by a barracks to house a number of police sent from other stations to guard the site whenever passengers were in residence. The single storey timber Superintendent's quarters were built on the site of this barracks in 1916. Police were then accommodated in the new administrative complex. There is some evidence that this 1916 house may contain part of the 1859 police barracks including a simple symmetrical two roomed cottage with a hipped roof, similar to the plan of two-roomed hipped-roof police barracks built by the Public Works Department in several locations in 1859. The police barracks site is also of archaeological significance. A number of wells and possible cess pits are visible in that area.

The Quarantine school (Portsea No. 2929) was located near the east boundary of the site. The remains have not so far been located. The school opened in 1889 with

about 23 pupils and appears to have closed in 1894. The site, inside the fences of the Quarantine Station, caused difficulties when there were patients in quarantine. Some of the children subsequently attended Sorrento School No. 1090.

The Quarantine Station jetty, built in timber in 1859-60, was demolished in 1973. The cattle jetty was built in 1878. The anchorage around the Quarantine Station and also that around the Fort Nepean jetty are of archaeological significance.

The other staff residences on the site reflect the quarantine and defence functions. These include the 1899 Medical Superintendent's house, its size and siting appropriate to his position. The house retains its stable, which has been converted to other uses. The 1899 house may include elements of the first doctor's house constructed in 1854. The Matron's House was formerly Pike's Cottage, one of three original stone labourer's cottages built in 1856-58. The Gatekeeper's House was formerly the Boatman's Cottage built in 1888. Residences from the early twentieth century relate mainly to the public health usage of the site such as the four attendants' cottages of c. 1922 near the entrance gate. Their location was well away from the hospital buildings, perhaps to protect families from infection. Buildings dating from the period of Army occupation such as the Cadet Accommodation blocks may not be individually significant but as a collection illustrate this period of development of the site.

A small quarantine cemetery located near the water's edge was used for the burial of passengers from the 'Ticonderoga' and other early ships between 1852 and 1854. The Heaton Monument, a 12-foot high Neo-Egyptian sandstone monument built in 1856-58 still remains at this site.

A new cemetery was established in September 1854, just outside the Station's western boundary and is now located within the Mornington Peninsula National Park. Many early settlers were buried in the new cemetery, as well as sailors from the ships 'Tornado (1868) and 'Cheviot' (1887), wrecked at the Heads. This cemetery was used by local residents until the General Cemetery at Sorrento was opened to the public in 1890. In 1952 the surface remains (several stone monuments and the remains from the Heaton Monument vault), in the old cemetery were relocated to the new cemetery.

The crematorium was built of brick on high ground south of the Quarantine Station complex. Built in 1892, it is said to have been primarily intended for the cremation of people who died of leprosy and is strongly associated with the Quarantine Station operation.

In 1951 the Officer Cadet School of the Australian Army took over the main buildings on the quarantine station site. Very small numbers of people were quarantined from that time until the official closure of the Quarantine Station in 1980. A number of new buildings were constructed c.1963-65 as part of the Officer Cadet School such as a gymnasium, barracks, library and gatehouse. In 1984 the Officer Cadet School was relocated to Canberra. The main Parade Ground and Flagstaff have an historical association with the Officer Cadet School.

The School of Army Health replaced the Officer Cadet School from 1985 to 1998. This was the main establishment in Australia for the training of Army health officers. In 1999 the Quarantine Station buildings were used to accommodate Kosovar refugees.

Point Nepean was a major part of the Victorian coastal defence system which made Port Phillip Bay reputedly the most heavily defended harbour of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the southern hemisphere. It is said that the fortifications at Point Nepean are the best examples demonstrating the development of military technology of the Port Phillip Bay network. Remaining buildings and structures from the defence use of the site include the gun emplacements, light emplacements, observation posts, tunnels, Pearce Barracks, Fort Pearce, Eagle's Nest, and the Engine House, and a number of archaeological sites such as Happy Valley, the site of a World War II camp. The land south of Defence Road was used by the Army as an operational training ground. Rifle, mortar, anti-tank and machine gun firing ranges were constructed in this area. The Lewis Basin was used for field training exercises, as evidenced by the obstacle course facility built in this area. The Monash Light navigational aid is located in this area, with a cleared tree/fire break maintaining an uninterrupted line of vision between the Light and the navigational beacon located at the western end of Ticonderoga Bay. This area has had limited disturbance over the past hundred years because it has been used only for defence activities. The area contained observation points associated with the fortifications, observation points for range firing at sea targets and range points for such firing.

The coastline of Point Nepean, on one side of the hazardous entrance to Port Phillip Bay, has been the site of many wrecks, as ships passed through the Heads to and from the port of Melbourne. The causes of the wrecks have included collisions, weather conditions, ignorance of the hazards of the Rip, negligence, drunkenness, navigational errors and arson. In December 1967 the Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt disappeared and was believed to have drowned while swimming in the surf at Cheviot Beach.

There has been a long association between the community and the defence occupation of the site, in particular, involvement with the activities of the Officer Cadet School and School of Army Health. The community holds strong shared memories of experiences and social life on that land, which have created a strong connection to the place. The ovals north of Defence Road and west of the Quarantine Station were used for joint defence-community and local sporting activities. The areas of community activity were not restricted to the buildings but included privileged access to various parts of the whole of Point Nepean.

After determining in 1998 that the Point Nepean land was surplus to Australian Defence Force requirements, Commonwealth Government offers to return large sections of the land to the Victorian people were rejected several times by the Victorian Government.

The Commonwealth's insistence in 2001 that the Victorian Government pay the cost of clearing unexploded ordnance from the land on offer led to a protracted political dispute between the two governments.

In April 2002 the Commonwealth announced its intention to dispose of its land at Point Nepean after a community consultation process to evaluate future usages. During this process in late 2002 and early 2003, a series of public protests demonstrated widespread community support for a campaign to 'Save Point Nepean' by keeping the land in public ownership. In March 2003 the Commonwealth Government agreed to give 205 hectares of native bushland to the Victorian Government for a national park, with the Commonwealth paying for the

clearance of unexploded ordnance, and 17 hectares of land at Police Point to the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council for use as public open space.

The remaining 90 hectares of Commonwealth land were offered to the Victorian Government as a priority sale at market value. When the Victorian Government rejected these terms, the Commonwealth invited tenders for a 40-year lease. During the tender period, the National Trust and the Victorian National Parks Association led a vigorous protest campaign against the proposed lease. After announcing a preferred tenderer in October 2003, the Commonwealth said in December 2003 that it had terminated the lease process after failing to reach a 'satisfactory outcome'. At the same time, the Commonwealth declared that the remaining 90 hectares would be vested in a charitable trust called the Point Nepean Community Trust with the intention of transferring the land to the Victorian Government for integration into a national park within five years.

#### **How is it significant?**

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is of archaeological, aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific and social significance to the State of Victoria.

#### **Why is it significant?**

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is of outstanding aesthetic significance for its landscape, its open space, some avenues and stands of trees, and its internal and external views. These views include the relationship between bush and sea, between the buildings and their context, the views across the Heads to Queenscliff and the Otways, views back towards Melbourne, to the Bay and from the water to the site, and the 360 degree views from the narrowest portion of land near the tip of the peninsula.

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is of architectural significance for the limestone Shepherd's Hut [c.1845-54] believed to be a rare example of employee housing from this period.

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is of architectural significance for its quarantine station buildings, a rare example of a building type and the only example in Victoria. The hospital buildings of 1858-59 are important examples of Early Colonial buildings, which are rare in Victoria, and the work of the Public Works Department architect, Alfred Scurry. The design of the Administration building is an accomplished example of Colonial Revival architecture, with planning influences from noted architect, J S Murdoch. The y-shaped Isolation Hospital (1916-20) is a rare example of a building type with an exchange room for staff to change their clothes between wards. The other residential buildings of the later period of construction are of architectural significance as representative examples of twentieth century government employee housing

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is of outstanding historical significance for its capacity to demonstrate the historic use of the site over a long period, from the Aboriginal period to the most recent use of the land for recreation. Each phase of use has left evidence in the landscape, in built form, or in archaeological remains. The shell middens demonstrate the use of the place by indigenous people. The limestone Shepherd's Hut (c.1845-1854) reflects the early grazing use by Europeans and the remaining lime kilns, the lime burning industry. Significant historical archaeological sites are likely to exist across the whole of Point

Nepean, from pre-quarantine use of the land right through to the defence operations.

The Point Nepean site, including the Quarantine Station and the two cemetery sites and crematorium, is of historical significance in the history of migration and the history of public health in Victoria. The Station is historically significant as the first permanent quarantine station in Victoria and one of the earliest and most substantial in Australia. It contains the oldest surviving buildings erected for quarantine purposes in Australia.

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is historically significant in the history of defence in Victoria from its first use as one of a number of colonial defence installations round Port Phillip Bay, as an important Commonwealth defence site before and during the two World Wars and in the latter twentieth century, the site used for the training of Australian Army personnel at the Officer Cadet school and the School of Army Health.

The staff residences of all periods of construction are of historical significance in reflecting the quarantine and defence functions. Buildings dating from the period of Army occupation may not be individually significant but as a collection illustrate this period of development of the site.

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is historically significant as the site of many shipwrecks in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, demonstrating the importance of maritime activity to the development of Victoria.

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is historically significant as the place where Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt is believed to have drowned.

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is an area of high archaeological significance as the location of early European settlement in Victoria, which included agricultural and lime burning activities. Significant historical archaeological sites exist across the whole of Point Nepean, from pre-quarantine use of the land right through to the defence operations. Archaeological remains on the police residence site are particularly important. The defence exercise area south of Defence Road and Happy Valley are also of archaeological significance.

The Disinfecting and Bathing Complex at the Quarantine Station is of scientific significance as a rare representative of its type which became the model for a series of similar complexes around Australia. The complex retains equipment and fabric which can demonstrate the history of the control and management of infectious diseases in Australia.

Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is of social significance for its recreational use since at least the 1950s when defence authorities allowed community use and joint defence-community sporting activities. The part of Point Nepean which has been a national park since 1988 is of social significance as a tourist attraction in allowing public access to a unique site of natural and historic value within Victoria

The Precinct is also of social significance because of the sustained and effective broad based community action involved in having the entire site set aside as public



land rather than being sold to private interests which was the Federal Government's original plan.<sup>1</sup>

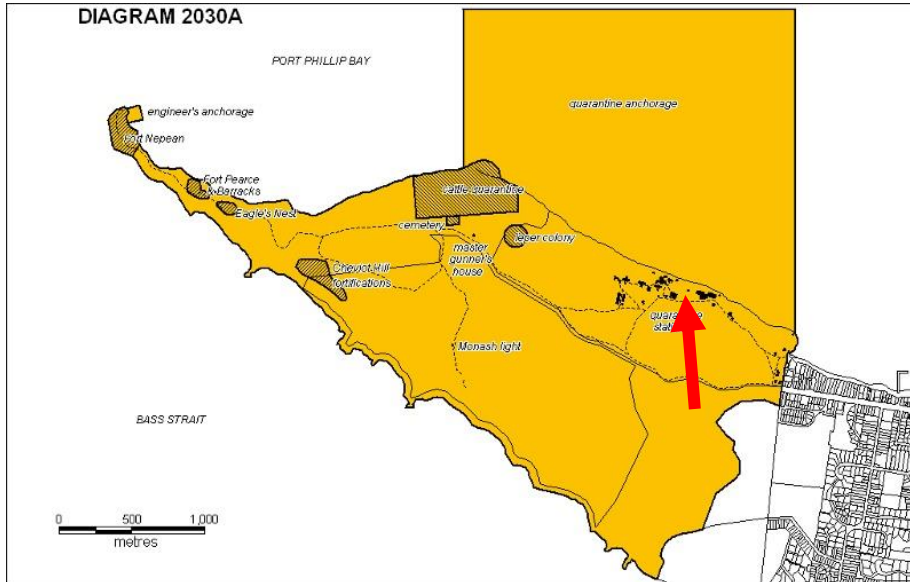


Figure 4 Diagram 2030A showing the extent of registration for the Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct with the location of the proposed works approximately indicated  
Source: Victorian Heritage Database

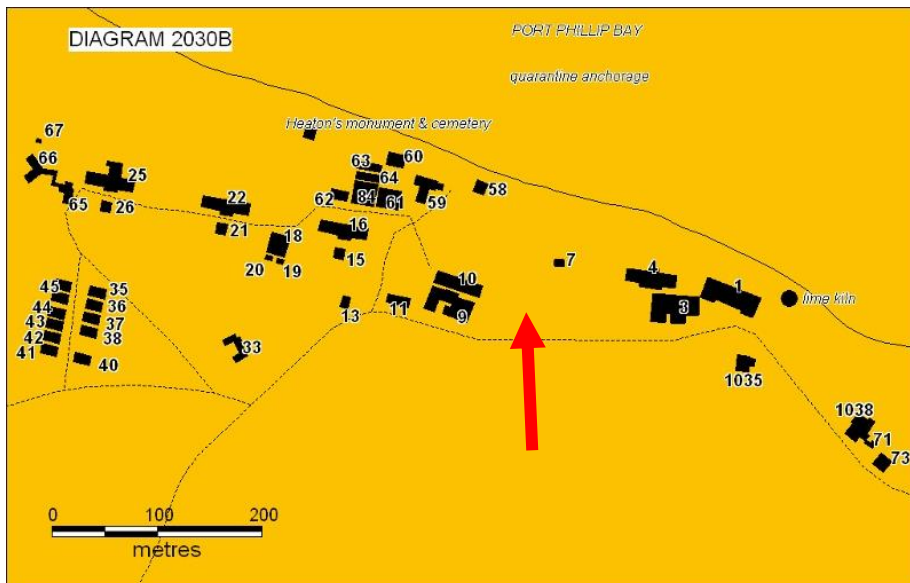


Figure 5 Diagram 2030B detail extent of registration plan with the location of the proposed works approximately indicated  
Source: Victorian Heritage Database

<sup>1</sup> Victorian Heritage Database, *Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct*, available at: <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/3256> viewed 18 April 2024.

## 2.2 Victorian Heritage Inventory

The Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct contains several historical archaeological sites that are included on the Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI). There is one VHI site for which the mapped extent is included within the works area. This is the Limestone Cottage, Point Nepean (H7821-0054). Additionally, there is one additional VHI site in the vicinity of the proposed works. This site is the Point Nepean Limestone Quarry (H7821-0122).

Notwithstanding that consent has been issued for geotechnical testing associated with the proposed works (refer 1.2), all subsurface works associated with the proposed works for the field station will form part of this permit application.

## 2.3 National Heritage List

The Point Nepean Defence Sites and Quarantine Station Area is included on the National Heritage List (NHL) as Place ID: 105680, and Place File No: 2/18/021/0015. Additionally, the Quarantine Station and Surrounds (Place ID: 105756 and Place File No: 2/18/021/0158) is included within the listed place. As such, the site is subject to the provisions of the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). A self-assessment was prepared for the proposed works which determined that the works would not result in a significant impact on the National Heritage values of the place.

The project was formally referred to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), and on 24 October 2024, DCCEEW issued a referral decision that the proposal is not a controlled action if taken in a particular manner.<sup>2</sup>

## 2.4 Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme

The Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is included as HO165 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme, matching the VHR extent of registration for the place. In accordance with Clause 43.01-03 of the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme, no permit is required under the Heritage Overlay to develop a heritage place which is included on the VHR with the exception of subdivision.



Figure 6 Detail of HO map for HO165; location of the proposed works approximately indicated  
Source: Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme

<sup>2</sup> DCCEEW, Notification of referral decision, Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station, (EPBC 2024/09963).

## 3.0 BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

### 3.1 History

The Bunurong People, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the Quarantine Station is located, were frequent visitors to the peninsula, with a number of semi-permanent camps in the area. The arrival of Europeans to the peninsula resulted in the displacement of the Traditional Custodians and a significant increase in disease and illness so by 1856, Indigenous people had been all but eradicated from the area.

The former Point Nepean Quarantine Station is located in a larger area known as Point Nepean which comprises approximately 530 hectares (some 1300 acres), and forms the western end of the Mornington Peninsula. Point Nepean, together with Point Lonsdale to the west, constitutes the heads at the entrance to Port Phillip Bay. Within this area, to the north of the site facing Port Phillip Bay is the former quarantine station and surrounds, which comprises a large historic area with numerous buildings and structures of varying age (particularly dating from the periods 1852-1875, 1875-1899 and 1900-1925). Established in 1852, Point Nepean is the second oldest, purpose-built, quarantine station in Australia.

The site of the quarantine station and defence sites was initially used for grazing of livestock following the arrival of John Batman in the Port Phillip district in 1835. The discovery of limestone deposits, used in the making of mortar resulted in the lime burning industry being established on the peninsula using bush kilns, followed by brick kilns. Lime production ceased in 1853, following the beginning of the development of the place for quarantine purposes.

The quarantine station was established at this site in the early 1850s, being gazetted as a Sanitary Station until it was renamed the Quarantine Station in the 1880s. Construction commenced on the first buildings in 1853, with further construction undertaken between 1856 and 1875, the latter including two hospital buildings. The facilities were further amended in 1870, with the construction of a water tank, amenities and an additional cookhouse had been added to the site. By 1875, the quarantine station was well established with a jetty, hospital buildings, cook houses, amenities, storage and quarters for the doctor and labourers.

Upgrades to the station were undertaken in the early twentieth century, with some of the original buildings demolished. The most significant developments occurred to address the influenza pandemic at the end of WWI, with 12 timber huts erected as emergency accommodation for soldiers, located some distance from the existing buildings.

The army had a base at Port Phillip Heads, having been established on the site in the 1880s. The army occupied much of the land on the peninsula outside of the quarantine station. Following WWII, the fortifications at the Heads were dismantled with materials salvaged. The army began to occupy some of the quarantine buildings in 1952 to facilitate the establishment and operation of an Officer Cadet School. This was initially a temporary arrangement however in 1954, a transfer of the site to the army was made as a result of the declining use of the quarantine station. Construction of buildings for use by the army within the former quarantine area commenced in 1963 with barrack accommodation, entrance gates, guard house, Officer Cadet Barracks, Badcoe Hall and a gymnasium constructed over a two year period.

The quarantine station had a small revival in 1970 with air passengers unvaccinated against small pox taken to the station and two modern accommodation blocks were constructed (Cox and Cumpston Cottages). However were only used for a short time with new arrivals being taken to Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital. The quarantine station was officially closed on 2 August 1980. The Cadet School remained on site until 1984 when it was relocated to Canberra. The Army School of Health occupied the site from 1986 for training defence medical personnel, but relocated to Bonegilla in 1998. The site was used to house Kosovo refugees for a brief period in 1998-9. The management of the site was transferred to the Point Nepean Community Trust until its transfer to the Victorian Government for its inclusion as the Point Nepean National Park, and has been progressively opened to the public.

### 3.2 Description

The former Point Nepean Quarantine Station and Surrounds comprises the area bounded by Portsea to the east, Observatory Point to the west, Defence Road to the south and Port Phillip Bay to the north. The former Quarantine Station includes a complex of buildings and landscape elements (Figure 7). The station complex is sited within a largely cleared grassy setting, surrounded by coastal scrub. The proposed works will predominantly be located within the cleared area of land to the south of Badcoe Hall (Figure 8).

Constructed in 1963, Badcoe Hall contained a library and hall and was named after Major Peter Badcoe, who undertook his initial training at Point Nepean and was a Victoria Cross recipient from the Vietnam War. Located in front of the Parade Ground and forming part of the precinct of buildings relating to the use of the place as an Officer Cadet School between 1951 and 1985, Badcoe Hall was constructed to support the use of the site as an officer training facility. Following the departure of the Officer Cadet School, the upper level of Badcoe Hall was used as a field hospital by the School of Army Health.<sup>3</sup>

Badcoe Hall is a rectangular two storey building rising to a total height of approximately 9.2m and constructed of cream brick with a shallow gable roof and gable ends; a single-storey bay is located at the west end. The north and south elevations are delineated into bays with concrete pilasters and pebble-in-concrete panels; there are steel-framed windows in horizontal bands, and arched awnings over the entrances. The principal entrance on the north façade has three sets of double glazed doors, and is elevated and accessed via a short flight of steps. A later concrete ramp has been added to the north entrance, for disability access.

To the south of Badcoe Hall, in the location of the proposed building, is a lawn area, bounded by asphalt paved roads, with parking to the north. There are two tree rows that date from the 1960s. To the south of this site, separated by the Jacksons Road roadway, is native bushland (Figure 10).

To the north of Badcoe Hall, between Badcoe Hall and the bay, is the Parade Ground. This is a large open grassed area located adjacent to the site of the former jetty and sanitation block and between the two groups of main hospital buildings. The area was also the site of a number of early, since demolished, buildings.

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<sup>3</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. D.14





Figure 7 Recent satellite imagery of the former Point Nepean Quarantine Station (approximate location of the proposed works indicated)  
Source: Nearmap, image date March 2024



Figure 8 Detail of the above image approximately indicating the location of the proposed building with Badcoe Hall to the north (indicated by the red arrow); north is at the top of the image  
Source: Nearmap, image date March 2024





Figure 9 East and rear (south) elevation of Badcoe Hall; this building will be adapted for reuse as part of the Research and Education Field Station project. A section of path proposed to be removed indicated by the red arrow; relocated at-grade car parking proposed to be relocated indicated by the blue arrow



Figure 10 Roadways surrounding the land to the south of Badcoe Hall; this is the location of the proposed new field station building and infrastructure

## 4.0 PROPOSED WORKS

The proposed works are detailed on the accompanying architectural drawings prepared by Hassell, dated 11 October 2024, for the establishment of a Research and Education Field Station. The works for the field station comprise the adaptation of Badcoe Hall, the construction of a two-storey building, and the installation of associated services and hard and soft landscaping comprising paths, stairs, at-grade car parking, tree removal and new planting.

### 4.1 Badcoe Hall

Badcoe Hall will be refurbished to accommodate teaching and research functions, as well as to address the condition of the building and meet current standards. Externally, the proposed conservation and make good works to Badcoe Hall comprise the following:

- Full replacement of roof cladding and fascia on east and west elevations to match the existing in colour and profile
- Retention of existing gutters on north and south elevations if technically viable
- Retention of existing curved roofs above the main entrances on north and south elevations, with repainting or replacement of the soffits, light fittings and fascias, and full replacement of the corroded columns
- Cleaning of bricks and exposed aggregate concrete
- Repainting of expressed concrete columns in similar colour
- Make good works to Badcoe Hall signage

In addition, the doors and windows will be removed and replaced to match the existing in presentation. All windows will be replaced with new aluminium-framed double-glazed windows in a dark bronze finish to match the existing style and arrangement. A section of the ground floor façade below the existing windows on the north elevation will be removed to provide larger windows on this elevation. One door will be fixed shut on the south elevation, and new glazed doors will be installed to the front (north) and rear (south) elevations of Badcoe Hall. As the existing handles are not compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1428.1, new operable door handles to match the existing will be provided on these doors to maintain the existing presentation, in addition to vertical pull bars on each door to provide a compliant door control.

One new opening at ground level is proposed on the east elevation to accommodate an additional entry to the building, as well as a small opening on the west elevation for services reticulation. No other new openings are proposed. A new low-scale services enclosure will be constructed on the west elevation, enclosed by an aluminium fence. The existing access ramp, handrail and balustrades on the north elevation will be removed including the step at the top of the landing. New DDA, at-grade access will be provided from the east to the existing entries on the north elevation.

Internally, all of the walls and fitout will be removed including three sections of the existing concrete slab to enable the introduction of vertical access (stair and lift) within the existing building footprint. The new building fitout will comprise research, teaching and gathering spaces as well as amenities and support areas on both levels of the building.

## 4.2 New accommodation building

The proposed building to the south of Badcoe Hall will provide accommodation for the teaching staff and students occupying the Field Station. This building will be a rectangular plan building over two levels with the east end partly set into the ground level.

The new building will be rectangular in form, with a low pitched roof with grey steel cladding. The building will rise to an overall height in the order of 9.7m and will be constructed of masonry with a two-level verandah extending partway along the north elevation. The building will feature a regular arrangement of double glazed windows. These will be light bronze aluminium framed windows with an operable panel. An unroofed services area will be located at the western end of the building, enclosed by an aluminium batten screen set below the eave line of the proposed building. An external stair is proposed at the east end of the building on the north side, to provide access to the lower level of the building.

Some excavation will be required to construct the new building, as well as for CHMP salvage works (comprising 33sqm within the footprint of the proposed new building), and for services (waste water and fire services). Some areas of fill are also proposed due to the gradient of the land in this location.

## 4.3 Landscaping

To accommodate the proposed building, 12 trees in the grass area to the south of Badcoe Hall will be removed (refer Figure 10). The existing trees within and surrounding the project area will otherwise be retained. It is also proposed to remove a section of a paved pathway to the east of Badcoe Hall, and to relocate the at-grade carparking to the east of Badcoe Hall (described below, refer Figure 9).

A landscaped area will extend between the two buildings comprising a series of concrete paved pathways interspersed with native groundcovers. These paths will provide DDA access across the slope of the land.

To the east of Badcoe Hall, terraced seating and a gathering space will be constructed with the existing memorial (outside of the leased area) to remain in place. A seating area will be constructed on a paved terrace to the east of the proposed building.

To the south of the new building at grade car parking will be provided from Jacksons Road, including a DDA space and drop off zone.

A new road will extend around the western end of the new building and to the south of Badcoe Hall for services access. Make good works will be undertaken to the turf adjoining the north stepped entry to Badcoe Hall; no landscaping works will extend outside the existing roadway or into the parade ground.

## 5.0 REASONS FOR THE WORKS

As outlined in Section 1.1, the most recent pre-application comments from Heritage Victoria sought additional project details related to use and function of the proposed field station and the requirement for new built form. Specifically, Heritage Victoria requested the following information:

- Further information as to why the proposed works are required in this location/within the extent of registration now that the access to obtain water samples from the bay is longer required.
- Further information as to why a new building is required now that the new build would be largely accommodation and why an existing building or buildings cannot be adaptively reused.

This section provides a response to these queries.

The University of Melbourne and Monash University, in a joint commitment with the Australian Government, seek to establish the Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station, home of the National Centre for Coasts, Environment and Climate. The field station, to be operated by the universities, is to be an interdisciplinary science research and education facility with a focus on coastal environments, climate change, history and culture, the arts and community engagement. The field station will make use of Point Nepean's unique marine and coastal environment. Work will include habitat and ecological restoration, with focus areas to include research into dune management, coastal erosion and inundation, marine ecosystem preservation, pollution control, biodiversity conservation for threatened flora and fauna, habitat restoration and management of Indigenous and historical heritage sites at risk of sea-level rise.<sup>4</sup>

The new field station will house research and education infrastructure including laboratories, workspaces and meeting rooms. Accommodation and dining facilities will also be provided, with larger gathering spaces incorporated to support various public engagements and immersive teaching experiences including exhibitions, lectures and classes.

The proposed use of part of the former Point Nepean Quarantine Station for targeted research is driven in large part from a marine perspective. Point Nepean is situated close to a diversity of marine environments, from the shallow protected waters of the bay to the exposed rocky reef habitat on the exposed coast. The location provides unique research and teaching opportunities that are unavailable in other locations or within the existing university campuses and will allow for intensive study of unique marine biology in this location.

The location of the new facility has been carefully selected to be in close proximity to the bushland and water, with easy connections to main roads and transportation options. Consideration of several options for the provision of such a facility within the registered place was undertaken in the development of the proposal and is detailed below.

## 5.1 Options analysis

As outlined at Section 1.1, the development of the Research and Education Field Station project has included various iterations of the design and scope. A number of considerations have directed the development of the current proposal for the works.

In terms of the siting of the proposed field station, the location for the proposed building is consistent with the Quarantine Station Activation Strategy as outlined in the *Point Nepean National Park Master Plan 2017*. This activation strategy identifies the location for a potential new building site to the south of Badcoe Hall. In addition, the lease area with Parks Victoria for the Research and Education Field Station is confined to Badcoe Hall and the land behind. In considering the potential for heritage impacts related to siting, the location for the proposed works was considered by Heritage Victoria to be the least impactful location within the registered place (refer Section 1.1).

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<sup>4</sup> Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station, <https://www.pointnepeanfieldstation.org.au/> and University of Melbourne, <https://www.unimelb.edu.au/newsroom/news/2023/april/universities-to-support-field-station-at-point-nepean> viewed 22 April 2024.

As part of the project, the adaptation of Badcoe Hall has included options for both research and accommodation purposes. The current proposal confines research and educational functions within the existing external footprint of Badcoe Hall, with accommodation to be provided exclusively in the proposed new building to the rear. This is to provide sufficient on-site accommodation for staff, students and visitors to the field station. In terms of potential for impacts on the registered place from the adaptation as proposed of Badcoe Hall, this is not a registered building and was a later (1963) addition to the former quarantine station associated with the use of the site by the Australian Army. This building will be retained, generally maintaining the external presentation with modification to some windows, and with new additions limited to a services enclosure on the west elevation. Greater intervention is required internally to adapt the building for the proposed new use. Accordingly, the required extent of internal intervention, in combination with the limitations of the lease area as outlined above, is such that no consideration could be given to an alternative/historic building within the registered place for adaptation for the proposed research and workplace use for the field station.

In terms of the proposed building, and given the shift in the use of this building to accommodation only, consideration has been given to the potential for adaptation of an existing building within the registered place for accommodation purposes. By way of general comment, this is constrained by the total number of rooms required for the project, which is in the order of 50 available rooms on site. The location of Badcoe Hall within the former quarantine station also limits the potential for the use of existing buildings within the broader place for accommodation.

Existing buildings considered for potential adaptation include:

- Building 5 – Officer Cadet Accommodation (1963)
- Building 6 – Officer Cadet Accommodation (1963)
- Building 25 – Hospital No. 5 (1857-59, with 1892-93 addition)
- Buildings 65 and 66 – Isolation Hospital Administration Building and Isolation Ward (c. 1912)
- Buildings 16 and 22 – Hospital No. 3 and Hospital No. 4 (1857-59, with 1915-16 alterations)

Buildings 5 and 6 are located in relatively close proximity to the east of Badcoe Hall, and as non-registered former army accommodation buildings, consideration has been to the potential for use of either of these buildings as part of the field station. Building 5 is in reasonable condition<sup>5</sup>, however is already being considered by Parks Victoria for a different use and is therefore not available to the University of Melbourne and Monash University for use as part of the field station project. In a recent assessment, Building 6 was found to be in poor condition, with significant rectification work required to make the building safe to occupy.<sup>6</sup> This building also disrupts the east-west alignment of the former quarantine station planning and is identified in the Master Plan to be demolished. Accordingly, neither Building 5 nor Building 6 presents a viable option for adaptation for accommodation purposes for the field station.

Although consideration was given to the potential adaptation of Buildings 65 and 66, these buildings are already associated with the Point Nepean facilitated camping project and are distant from Badcoe Hall.

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<sup>5</sup> WSP, Project Advice Notice, Point Nepean Buildings 5 and 6 Structural Condition Assessment, 13 December 2021, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> WSP, Project Advice Notice, Point Nepean Buildings 5 and 6 Structural Condition Assessment, 13 December 2021, p. 7.



Buildings 16, 22 and 25 were former quarantine station hospital buildings and later used for accommodation as part of the army occupation of the site. Having reviewed the capacity for accommodation available in these buildings, it was determined that the use of Building 25 would still require a new building to achieve target accommodation for the field station project. It is also the furthest of the hospital buildings from Badcoe Hall. In considering Buildings 16 and 22, significant intervention into the fabric of these buildings would be necessary to provide the required accommodation numbers. This is because the existing rooms are double the required size, and would therefore be difficult to alter the internal planning of the buildings without impacting the heritage fabric. In addition, there would be construction complexities associated with making these buildings compliant for use, including access and egress requirements (likely by way of a lift), as well as services including fire sprinklers and the like. The required adaptation works would likely be inconsistent with Conservation Management Plan (CMP) policy recommendations for Buildings 16 and 22 which note that the original or early form and fabric should be retained, including the verandah, staircases, ceilings, joinery and internal north-south wall. The CMP policies also note that no new additions should be made to the east and west ends of the buildings and that no new structures (other than minor elements) should be constructed to the north or south sides of the buildings. Even if either building could be reasonably adapted to be fit for use, the accommodation numbers that could be provided by either Building 16 or 22 would still require a new building to achieve target accommodation which is contrary to the CMP policies for these buildings.

In addition to the above, there is also a real and ongoing safety concern regarding pedestrian movement of staff and students between Buildings 16, 22 or 25 and Badcoe Hall, particularly during the evening/night. This is due to the distance between the former hospital buildings and Badcoe Hall.

On balance, it is considered that the adaptation of Badcoe Hall and construction of a new building for accommodation is an appropriate and viable proposal to meet the functional requirements of the field station while responding to the heritage sensitivity of the registered place. Further consideration of the potential for heritage impacts from the proposal is provided below.

## **6.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACTS**

### **6.1 Information to support an assessment against sections 101(2) of the *Heritage Act 2017***

Section 101 of the *Heritage Act 2017* sets out the considerations which must be made in determining permit applications. As relevant to the proposal, the primary considerations of the Executive Director in determining a permit under Division 2, Section 101(2) are:

- (a) The extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of the registered place or registered object:
- (b) The extent to which the application, if refused, would affect the reasonable or economic use of the registered place or object.

6.1.1 *The extent to which the cultural heritage significance of the place or object is affected by the proposal [s 101(2)(a)]*

The following assessment of heritage impacts has had regard for the cultural heritage significance of the registered place, as described in the VHR statement of significance.

#### **Permit policy and exemptions**

The VHR documentation for the Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct includes a suite of standing permit exemptions for the place, none of which are relevant to the proposed works.

#### **Assessed significance of the place**

The VHR statement of significance states that the Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct is of archaeological, aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific and social significance to the State of Victoria (as summarised):

- For its landscape including open space, avenues, stands of trees, internal and external views including views across the bay.
- For being an example of early employee housing, and quarantine buildings, demonstrating early colonial buildings and the works of Alfred Scurry, a Public Works Department architect, and for government employee housing.
- For its capacity to demonstrate the historic use of a site over a long period with evidence of each phase including shell middens, Shepherd's Hut, lime kilns.
- For demonstrating the history of migration and public health in Victoria, as the first permanent quarantine station in Victoria.
- For its association with the defence of Victoria including as a site during the two World Wars and for the training of Army personal at the Officer Cadet School and later the School of Army Health.
- As the site of many shipwrecks and the site of the drowning of Harold Holt.
- As a place of high archaeological significance as the location of early settlement in Victoria including agriculture and lime burning.
- The Disinfecting and Bathing Complex is a rare example of its type and retains equipment and fabric which demonstrates the history of management of infectious diseases.
- As a place of recreational use following the departure of defence operations from the fort and as a national park and tourist location.
- For the community action which resulted in the entire site being public land.

In considering the assessed significance of the registered place, the proposal will have no impact on an appreciation of the former use of the place as a quarantine station. None of the buildings or site planning associated with the former quarantine station will be affected by the proposed works, and the proposal will have no impact on the capacity of the place to demonstrate the historic use of the site over a long period. Where the existing buildings are demonstrative of this former use, no change or new development is proposed that would affect this expression of the place.

The historical associations with Harold Holt will not be affected by the establishment of the proposed field station, and with the removal of the seawater pipeline from the proposal, there will be no potential for impacts on shipwrecks from the works.

The works have been carefully designed to respond to the open character and setting of the former Quarantine Station. The new building will be located to the south of the precinct to ensure significant viewlines between the buildings and the setting of the registered buildings is not impacted by this addition. The limited landscaping works will also not disrupt the institutional character of the open setting, surrounded by bushland.

While the works will refurbish and adapt an existing building constructed for the use of the site by the Officer Cadet School, there will be no impact on the understanding of the defence occupation of the site. The external appearance of Badcoe Hall will remain largely unchanged and it will be legible as one of a suite of twentieth century buildings constructed for this phase of use.

The approach to the works has had consideration of the values of the heritage place, with the intent to limit impacts, retaining significance fabric, while enabling a new use to be implemented. This is considered further below.

### Conservation Management Plan

A CMP for the former Point Nepean Quarantine Station was prepared by Lovell Chen in 2008. The CMP includes a comprehensive history and description of the site, including datasheets for each of the buildings and landscape areas. The CMP also includes levels of significance and policies to guide and manage change at the site.

#### *Levels of significance*

The CMP identifies Badcoe Hall as being of secondary significance<sup>7</sup>, with the surrounding landscape identified as the Badcoe Hall precinct also being of secondary significance.<sup>8</sup> Secondary significance is defined in the CMP as follows:

Elements of secondary significance are associated with the former Quarantine Station in a secondary or supporting way. For instance they may be associated with later quarantine operations, thereby providing evidence of later site development and use; or they may include earlier quarantine station structures which have been altered in a manner which has impacted on their ability to provide demonstrable evidence of their original quarantine form and operation. Alternatively, they may include buildings and elements associated with the Army use of the site. These elements variously have historical, architectural, aesthetic and technological significance, but at a lower level than those of primary significance.<sup>9</sup>

The significance and significant elements of Badcoe Hall as identified in the CMP are as follows:

Of Secondary significance: principally of historical significance, the latter due to it being one of a collection of buildings which are associated with, and help to demonstrate, the post-WWII Army use of the former Quarantine Station, including the Officer Cadet School use. The naming of the building after Major Badcoe, an OCS graduate and Victoria Cross winner, is also of note. Architecturally, the building has some interest deriving from the external detailing, the entrance form and presentation, and the building's orientation (slightly off axis) to the Parade

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<sup>7</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. 167.

<sup>8</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. 173.

<sup>9</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. 182.

Ground which emphasises and reflects the military association with and use of the latter, but is otherwise not considered to be of architectural significance. As with the other post-WWII structures the building does not contribute to the valued character and qualities of the site which derive from the historic Quarantine Station era. The siting of Badcoe Hall (unlike Building 6 to the east) also maintained the historical east-west alignment of the historic Quarantine Station Buildings.

Elements of interest include the external detailing, entrance form, and the building's orientation and presentation to the Parade Ground.<sup>10</sup>

The recommendations for Badcoe Hall as included in the CMP are as follows:

This building preferably should be retained and conserved, as evidence of the Officer Cadet School use, but as a secondary element and a building of limited architectural interest, it offers some flexibility with regard to full retention, adaptation and alteration.

Any proposal to undertake works to this building should not involve additions to the east, west or north sides of the building, so as to contain the overall massing of the building within this sensitive context including the proximity to the Parade Ground. New works associated with the building should also not extend closer to (or intrude into the setting of) the significant Administration Building (Building 10) to the west.<sup>11</sup>

The CMP dates the development of the Badcoe Hall landscape precinct as c. 1963-66. The significance and significant elements of the landscape precinct as identified in the CMP are as follows:

The Badcoe Hall precinct plantings are considered to be of secondary significance. They are representative of landscape works undertaken during the period of the Officer Cadet School and are considered to be an appropriate landscape treatment between the buildings group to the north, and the semi-natural bushland setting to the south. The footings of the Memorial Wall are not considered to be of significance.

The significant elements of this landscape precinct as identified in the CMP are as follows:

- Row tree plantings and turfed area to the south of Badcoe Hall.
- Shrubbery plantings and turf at the east end of Badcoe Hall.<sup>12</sup>

### *Conservation policy*

In addition to policies which recognise the assessed significance of the place and seek to conserve significant fabric, the relevant policies in relation to the proposed works are as follows:

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<sup>10</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. D.15.

<sup>11</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. D.15.

<sup>12</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. F.61.

## **Conservation Policy 13 – Building and Structures**

### **Policy Statement**

*The retention and conservation of the significant heritage fabric of buildings, structures and other man-made features at the former Quarantine Station and its surrounds should be a key consideration in the future management of the place, subject also to other relevant policies and recommendations of this report.*

### **Rationale and discussion**

Both individually and collectively, buildings, spaces and structures of primary and secondary significance retain significant fabric, which variously demonstrates and provides evidence of the function and use of the building, including multiple uses from different periods, and of the place overall. While the policies included in this chapter allow for appropriate adaptation and other changes to buildings and structures, the retention and conservation of significant fabric and spaces remains a key consideration in planning future works and development, and in the long-term management of the place. The retention of evidence of layers of history at the site, including fabric/elements associated with pre- and post-quarantine operations, is also an objective.

### **Actions and guidelines**

For individual buildings and structures, the datasheets at Appendices C and D provide specific recommendations relating to works; adaptive re-use; restoration and reinstatement where appropriate or recommended; and guidance on significant fabric ('Significant Elements'), integrity and intactness. These represent the level of investigation and analysis of the buildings which was undertaken for this CMP.

Additional investigation, analysis and documentation may be required for individual significant buildings and structures where future works are proposed including conservation, maintenance, or a form of physical intervention, other than those addressed or anticipated in this CMP, and depending on the nature and extent of the works.<sup>13</sup>

As a building of secondary significance, Badcoe Hall is representative of a later phase of occupation of the former Quarantine Station by the army. The elements of interest for the building include the external detailing, entrance form, and the building's orientation and presentation to the Parade Ground.

The adaptive reuse of Badcoe Hall will largely retain the identified elements of interest for Badcoe Hall and will result in a broadly unchanged external presentation of the building. The external expression and materiality of the building will generally be retained (except where new replacement materials will match the appearance of the existing in presentation, albeit with some modification to the ground floor windows), reinforcing the understanding of the building as part of the later phase of occupation of Point Nepean.

The proposal for Badcoe Hall is consistent with the relevant policies included in the CMP which contemplate some change to this building, and will not result in an adverse impact on the identified significance of the building or broader heritage place.

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<sup>13</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. 218.

## **Conservation policy 15 – Future Uses**

### **Policy statement**

*Any future use of parts or all of the site, or its component buildings and features, including a use not contemplated in this CMP should have regard for conserving the National and other heritage values, for the particular physical and fabric-related constraints, and for the policies and recommendations included in this report.*

### **Rationale and discussion**

... New uses should be 'compatible' and a reasonably comfortable 'fit' in terms of the nature of the buildings and the overall site, and the physical and heritage constraints.

... Ideally, a compatible new use is one which can be accommodated through the refurbishment and restoration of existing buildings; can generally fit within the physical constraints of form, fabric and architectural character; requires limited change to meet the needs of the new use; and/or is a change which is ultimately reversible...

... A new use and its associated change should also minimise any adverse impact on the overall ability of the site to continue to convey its origins and subsequent history. The heritage attributes and characteristics of the broader site go also to character and spatial qualities...including the sense of isolation and separateness, connection with the surrounding (currently National Park) bushland context, austerity, and the unity of function and design which typifies the Quarantine Station. Activities, finishes or new elements in the landscape that trivialise or detract from an understanding of these characteristics should also be avoided or minimised.

A range of uses could be considered compatible including education, accommodation, tourism, conference, function, community and event use.

It is also preferable that new uses generally not prevent public access to the majority of areas within the subject site, although it is recognised that some uses may in fact require restricted access at times.

### **Actions and guidelines**

In seeking to establish a new use or operation within the former Quarantine Station, significant buildings and structures should, in the first instance, be investigated for their adaptive re-use potential before consideration is given to constructing a new building. The aim is to find an ongoing viable use for all significant buildings within the site.

Acceptable uses are typically those which can be accommodated within the physical constraints of form, fabric and architectural character of a significant building (or buildings), requiring limited change to meet the needs of the new use, or a change which is ultimately reversible.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, pp. 223-224.

The proposed use of part of the former Quarantine Station site for research and education purposes is consistent with this policy and is an appropriate, compatible and sustainable use for the place. The project will utilise an existing building and implement a program of works that will support public engagement with the site and will not prevent public access to the significant quarantine buildings within the place. As outlined above, Badcoe Hall will be adapted internally, but the new use will be accommodated within the existing building and will not require extensive external change to facilitate the proposed new use.

As addressed in Section 5.1 above, consideration was given to the adaptation and use of existing buildings within the site for use (accommodation) as part of the field station project. However, the condition, siting, physical constraints and/or level of intervention required into the existing fabric of the identified buildings was such that these were dismissed as viable options for adaptive reuse as part of this project. This approach is primarily to avoid adversely impacting on the significant form and fabric of the registered buildings.

The proposed Research and Education Field Station will be limited to a small, confined, and discreet location within the former quarantine station and no works or change to any other part of the registered place will be required for the proposed new use.

### **Conservation Policy 16 – Adaptation and Alteration**

#### **Policy Statement**

*Adaptation of, and alterations to, significant buildings and other elements (primary and secondary) should have regard for the assessed level of significance of the structure or element and the degree of impact that the proposed alterations may have on the structure.*

*Adaptation should involve the minimum amount of change necessary to achieve the requirements of the proposed use, and any impact on the cultural significance of the building should be limited as far as is possible.*

*Adaptation of, and alterations to, buildings and other elements of primary and secondary significance should also support, and not detract from, the overall cultural significance the former Quarantine Station as a whole.*

#### **Rationale and Discussion**

...Future management of the place will therefore require the management of change, not prohibition of change, but within a framework of conserving the highly significant cultural heritage values. Many buildings and other elements of the site, including landscape, have also evolved over time, with different phases of use adding layers of physical change. This historical process of change will inevitably continue into the future.

External works, such as extensions and additions (and including new stairs, lifts or similar amenities required to support a new use for a building) should have regard for minimising visual impacts on the subject buildings, including impacts on principal facades of buildings, and main roof forms. Generally additions and extensions, if required to support a viable new use for a building, should be recessive to the original building, so as to limit visual impacts and dominance on the subject building. This can be achieved through adopting a respectful scale to the addition; locating an addition to the rear of buildings; separating the addition by a link; or setting the addition back a respectful distance from the principal



facade/front building component. The addition/new works should also be distinguished from the old in terms of fabric, the objective being to ensure that the original building form remains readable and evident...

...Changes to buildings and their elements may also be required under the BCA and other Australian Standards.<sup>15</sup>

As outlined above, the adaptive reuse of Badcoe Hall will retain the identified elements of interest for this building and will result in a largely unchanged external presentation of the building. With the exception of a minor addition in the form of a services enclosure and a new entry on the east elevation, there will be no major change to its presentation. Minor upgrades to the existing windows to incorporate double glazing will be undertaken, as well as new glazed doors to match the existing, but this will not result in a perceptible change to the external presentation of the building.

The external expression of Badcoe Hall will not be impacted by the works, with external conservation works proposed (including make good works to the existing pebble-in-concrete panels) which will improve the overall presentation of the building.

### **Conservation Policy 17 – New Development**

#### **Policy statement**

*New works and development, intended to support the management and viability of the former Quarantine Station, should be sympathetic and responsive to the National and other heritage values, and not adversely affect the significance of the place. The siting, scale and placement of new works should also have regard for the character, scale, setting and curtilage of significant buildings, the historical pattern of development on the site, and the significant landscape values. New works should additionally not impact on significant archaeological fabric, and should have regard for the archaeological potential of areas within the site.*

#### **Rationale and Discussion**

##### *Siting, Placement and Scale of New Buildings*

In terms of the siting and placement of new buildings, development in the central historic area of the Quarantine Station has historically and typically followed a linear plan in an east-west arrangement, with space between and around buildings; this is evident in the historic images and plans used throughout this report. Buildings constructed during the Army era, from 1950s onwards, such as the Officers' Accommodation (Building 5) and Badcoe Hall (Building 8) also largely followed this arrangement although Building 6 (another Officers' Accommodation block) did not and is accordingly intrusively placed within this area of the site. New works, particularly if contemplated for this central area of the site, should therefore have regard for, and be sensitive to, this historical pattern of development. New works placed outside the central historic area can adopt a different approach, but not where such works have a high level of visibility from Port Phillip Bay or within the site, or in relationship to the historic buildings.

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<sup>15</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, pp. 225-226.

New buildings and development should have regard for this, and not compete with, or visually impact on, these buildings in terms of height, scale, massing, placement and settings. This will help to ensure that new buildings are not dominant elements. New development, other than minor elements, should also not be placed in the space between these buildings (i.e. in the space between the gable ends of the east and west elevations), where it would disrupt the regularity of building placement and impact on an understanding of the planned spatial separation of the buildings.

...The Parade Ground is another sensitive area of the site in heritage terms, and a central focus of the core historic area. It is currently free of buildings, and has been for a considerable period (since approximately the early twentieth century). It is also prominent in views from Port Phillip Bay, with buildings forming a backdrop and emphasising its open and informal character. Functionally, it provided an area of informal recreation for the Quarantine Station (and later for the Army). It is also associated with the location of the jetty and main arrival point for ships to the Quarantine Station. Notwithstanding the historic presence of mostly modest buildings within this open space, it is recommended that no new development be placed within the Parade Ground so as to maintain its open and informal qualities. An exception can be made for temporary structures, such as marquees, tents, etc, which support functions or events focused on the Parade Ground area. The informal landscape treatment should also be maintained.

#### *Orientation*

Many of the historic buildings within the site present to Port Phillip Bay, with their principal facades oriented in that direction (to the north). This has resulted in the rears of the buildings often being the first view of buildings, when visitors approach from the current main vehicle access to the site (along Ochiltree Road). Accepting this, a northern orientation remains the overriding pattern and is another aspect of overall site development which should be maintained with new works, other than minor elements or additions.

#### *Design, Form & Materials*

The adoption of a contemporary design aesthetic for new works is generally an appropriate response, although the selection of materials and colours is important... materials such as timber, iron and steel, brick, concrete and render, are all used within the area, in a variety of applications and textures, and provide a suite of robust materials for future reference and contemporary application.

The design and form of new works should also avoid a 'faux' historical approach, or one which seeks to reproduce the character and appearance of the historic buildings. Generally, the prevalence of buildings with a horizontal massing on linear footprints offers guidance on what might be appropriate for new works, but this is subject also to the placement of the works and their visibility within the site.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, pp. 228-230.

As outlined above, the location of the proposed field station is confined to the leased portion of the site, with the proposed building to the south of Badcoe Hall and landscaping works to the south and west. This location did not historically form part of the cleared institutional setting for the quarantine station and it was not until the mid-twentieth century that the bushland in this location was cleared for the construction of the buildings associated with army use. Accordingly, there will be no impact from the proposed field station on the historical planning/pattern of development of the former quarantine station, and no impact on an appreciation of the east-west arrangement of buildings, with the space between and around these buildings to be maintained. The proposed new building has been sited to sit against the backdrop of the bushland to the south of the former quarantine station to ensure it does not impede viewlines across the site, and does not disrupt viewlines between buildings. There will also be no change to the open space of the Parade Ground to the north of Badcoe Hall as no part of the project will extend into this area.

In considering the arrangement of the proposed building, this will be oriented on a generally east-west arrangement and facing north to ensure it sits comfortably in the existing environment, with a large proportion of the building to be concealed behind Badcoe Hall (refer Figure 11 and Figure 12). The building as proposed will adopt a simple rectangular form with horizontal massing and a low-pitched roof which is responsive to the character and appearance of the historic buildings within the site. The regular arrangement of windows also responds to the utilitarian aesthetic of the buildings constructed during the defence occupation of the site, including Badcoe Hall (refer Figure 13). The proposed building will present as a respectful contemporary new built form within the site, finished with masonry cladding which responds appropriately to the materiality of a number of the historic buildings. The setback from the quarantine station setting and use of similar materials and a discreet and simple rectangular form will assist in the blending of the building into the existing context.

The potential visibility of the proposed building has been carefully considered, and although the proposed axial alignment has been rotated slightly to the north, the building as proposed will largely adopt the siting of the previously revised and simplified form (refer for comparison Figure 3 and Figure 14). In considering the height of the proposed building, this will overall be less than 1.5 metres above the height of Badcoe Hall (Figure 15). Although the proposed building is two-storeys, compared with the previously revised single-storey form, the overall height of the new building has been maintained from the previously revised form (refer Figure 16), managed by way of recessing the building into the existing ground level. Although it will be slightly taller than Badcoe Hall, the siting of the new building to the south of Badcoe Hall, the gradient of the land in this location and views available from the north (i.e. from the Parade Ground) are such that the new building will not be visible above Badcoe Hall in these views (refer for example Figure 12). It is acknowledged that the new built form that extends to the south-east of Badcoe Hall will be visible in these views, however the potential for visual impact is balanced by the simple discreet form and materiality.

On balance, the proposed building presents as a respectful and responsive contemporary addition to the registered place and one which has had due regard to the relevant CMP policies for new development. Historical archaeological considerations as related to the proposed extent of excavation for the new building in this location are addressed below.



Figure 11 Oblique aerial render of the proposed field station  
Source: Hassell



Figure 12 Render view south from the Parade Ground towards Badcoe Hall and the proposed building to the rear  
Source: Hassell





Figure 13 Render view of proposed landscaping between Badcoe Hall (to the right of the image) and the proposed building  
 Source: Hassell

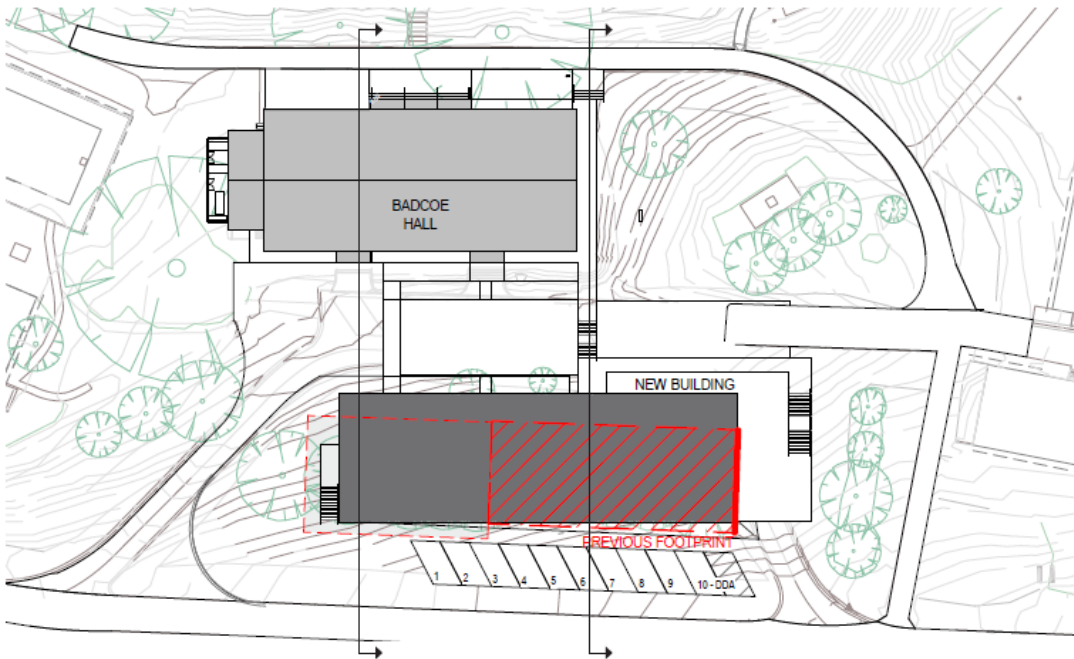


Figure 14 Comparison of the siting and envelope of the currently proposed building compared with the previous single-storey revision (in red)  
 Source: Hassell

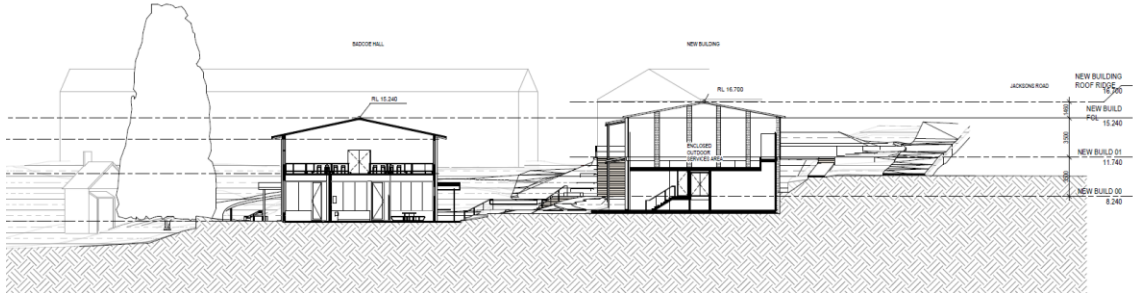


Figure 15 Section drawing illustrating the height of the proposed building relative to Badcoe Hall (at left)

Source: Hassell

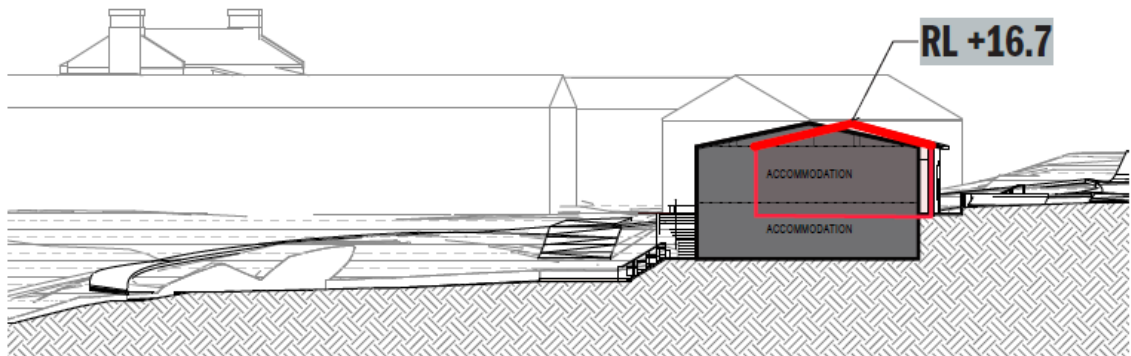


Figure 16 Comparison section drawing showing the height of the currently proposed building relative to the previous single-storey revision

Source: Hassell

### Conservation Policy 30 – Landscape Setting

#### Policy Statement

*The landscape of the former Quarantine Station is an important attribute of the heritage character and significance of the place, and should be managed in a manner that recognises and provides for the conservation and enhancement of the landscape values.*

#### Rational and Discussion

... Inappropriate modifications or development will undermine the structure, scale and character of the landscape setting and potentially result in a loss of heritage value.

... Inappropriate development or planting, particularly of trees, within these view lines may adversely affect the quality and character of significant views and the relationship between the institutional and bush setting.



...The unadorned nature of the site i.e. the general absence of ornamental garden beds in most areas and lack of plantings of a domestic scale should also generally be maintained...<sup>17</sup>

As outlined above, the location of the proposed field station historically formed part of the surrounding bushland setting of the quarantine station and was not cleared for development until the mid-twentieth century. The current landscape setting, identified as the Badcoe Hall landscape precinct, was established in c. 1963-66 and later. This precinct was identified in the CMP as being of secondary significance with the row tree planting and turf area to the south of Badcoe Hall identified as significant elements of this landscape precinct. This more recent landscape area however does not contribute in a meaningful way to the outstanding aesthetic significance of the registered place associated with the relationship between bush and sea and between the buildings and the surrounding open space. This is confirmed in the accompanying arboricultural report prepared by Tree Logic Pty Ptd which establishes that the trees proposed to be removed, tree numbers 2 and 4-14 in this report, are approximately 30 years old only and are not associated with the former Quarantine Station layout. The proposal will result in the removal of this recent tree row with no impact otherwise on the surrounding trees and will establish an appropriate landscape treatment between the two field station buildings that manages the steep gradient of the land in this location and provides unobtrusive outdoor gathering spaces for the field station. The landscape treatment as proposed will provide an appropriate transition between the open space of the Parade Ground to the north and the semi-natural bushland setting to the south of Jacksons Road.

### *Historical archaeology*

The CMP identifies areas that may be of historical archaeological potential within the registered place. The land surrounding Badcoe Hall and to the south of this building is identified as being of low archaeological potential.<sup>18</sup> Places of low archaeological potential are defined in the CMP as:

Areas of low archaeological potential are those where the identified structures and features date to later periods of Quarantine Station use and have a limited potential to provide insights into particular aspects of the history of the site; no pre-twentieth century structures or features are known to have been situated; or, as is the case with the remote western area, the location of any structures or features cannot be identified.<sup>19</sup>

An Historical Archaeological Assessment (HAA) for the site of the proposed works has also been prepared by Ochre Imprints Pty Ltd (March 2024) to assess the likelihood and nature of potential archaeological features or deposits within the identified project area. This assessment outlines a strategy for the management of potential archaeological material in the context of the proposed works.

In addition to the known historical archaeological sites present in or close to the development area (i.e. VHI sites), the HAA assessed the area in the immediate vicinity of Badcoe Hall to the north of the existing car park to be an area of low-moderate archaeological potential. The area to the south of Badcoe Hall was assessed to be an area of low archaeological potential related to the quarantine use of the site (Figure 17).

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<sup>17</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. 256.

<sup>18</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. 120.

<sup>19</sup> Lovell Chen, *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan*, 2008, p. 123.

The HAA provides a management strategy for the works, which includes archaeological monitoring of all subsurface works in the area of low-moderate potential and establishes an unexpected finds protocol for the area of low potential in the event archaeological features or deposits are uncovered during the works. This management strategy will ensure that any archaeological remains which relate to the previous occupation of the site are appropriately managed and recorded, including by way of an artefact management and conservation policy.



Figure 17 Contemporary aerial of development area showing areas of archaeological sensitivity  
Source: Ochre Imprints, Historical Archaeological Assessment, p. 53.

### 6.1.2 The impact on reasonable or economic use [s 101(2)(b)]

In considering the reasonable use of the registered place, the proposed works comprise the refurbishment of an existing (non-registered) building and the addition of a new building and associated landscaping works to support the introduction of a new use to a small and contained portion of the place. The Heritage Victoria Policy for reasonable or economic use (June 2021) notes that relevant considerations for reasonable use of a registered place include the historic, recent and current uses of the place, other compatible uses of the place and the context and setting within which the place is located.

The proposed field station is to be located to the rear of the part of the registered place that was historically developed for quarantine purposes and the management of infectious diseases. It operated from the 1850s to the late-1970s, and was officially closed for quarantine functions in August 1980. From the mid-1950s, the place was also used by the Army Cadet School which remained on site until 1984. Later uses by the army continued until the late-1980s. The historical functions of the place are no longer carried out on site, and the former Quarantine Station and buildings now form part of the Point Nepean National Park. The place is open to the public with interpretive functions being provided in some of the registered buildings.

As the place is no longer in use or required as a quarantine station or for army purposes, it is appropriate to consider compatible uses for the registered place, noting the importance of maintaining evidence of the historical functions, as well as the appropriate management of the heritage buildings and elements. Education-related functions were identified as an appropriate use for the registered place in the 2017 Masterplan as well as in the CMP. As a collaboration between the University of Melbourne and Monash University, the proposal demonstrates a considered approach for the use of part of the registered place to provide a Research and Education Field Station which will have a particular focus on marine life in the area. The specific location is important to this use, as the field station will research and make use of Point Nepean's unique marine and coastal environment. This location provides unique research and teaching opportunities that are unavailable in other locations or within the existing university campuses and will allow for intensive study of unique marine biology in this location. It has also been carefully selected to be in close proximity to the bushland and water, with easy connections to main roads and transportation options.

While the CMP prioritises appropriate adaptive reuse of the registered buildings over the introduction of new buildings in addressing future use of the former Quarantine Station, the CMP policy also notes that acceptable uses are those which can be accommodated within the physical constraints of form, fabric and architectural character of a significant building (or buildings), requiring limited change to meet the needs of the new use, or a change which is ultimately reversible. The functional requirements of the field station (including minimum requirements for on-site accommodation numbers and spatial requirements for laboratory functions and the like) are such that inappropriate and impactful intervention into the physical fabric of the registered buildings would be required for adaptive reuse for the proposed field station. User safety and accessibility considerations have also formed part of the development of the proposal.

In considering the potential for adverse impacts, it is noted that no further university buildings are proposed now or anticipated in the future to support the field station. The proposal will facilitate further engagement with the whole of the registered place through the ongoing occupation of an educational facility set back within the site. As addressed at Section 6.1.1 above, the proposal has had due regard for the values of the heritage place and the key elements and features from which the significance is derived to ensure no change to an understanding of the former use of the place or historic buildings will result from the proposed new works.

A refusal of the permit application would affect the reasonable use of the place which is in accordance with the guiding heritage policies and master planning documents for the place.

No submission is made in relation to economic considerations.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

The proposed Research and Education Field Station has been developed to respond to the existing conditions of the Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Precinct and comply with the relevant policies in the CMP. The works will result in the introduction of new built form which has been carefully designed to sit comfortably within the setting of the place. These works will not obscure sightlines between existing buildings, or disrupt the layout or historical arrangement of buildings. The works will activate this part of the precinct and facilitate further public access to the broader site to encourage greater interaction and engagement with the former Quarantine Station. The new field station has had due regard to the identified heritage values of the place, and outside of the lease area, the remainder of the registered place, buildings and features will not be affected by the proposed works.