

DENDY STREET BEACH AMENITIES

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Dendy Street Beach, Brighton VIC 3186



October 2024

Prepared for

BAYSIDE CITY COUNCIL

Prepared by

LOVELL CHEN

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 Dendy Street Beach 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
20240419	1	Heritage Impact Statement	16/10/2024	MK

Referencing

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Cover image: View (render) of the proposed Dendy Street amenities building from the south-west

Source: Cohen Leigh Architects, Dendy Street Beach Amenities, Drawing No. SK-19

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This heritage impact statement (HIS) has been prepared for Bayside City Council to accompany a permit application to Heritage Victoria for the proposed demolition of the Dendy Street Beach public amenities block (amenities block) and replacement with a new amenities building in the same location, with associated landscaping works.

This amenities block is located within the Jim Willis Reserve (between the foreshore and Esplanade), to the east of the Dendy Street Bathing Boxes and opposite Norwood Avenue, Brighton, which we respectfully acknowledge is on Bunurong Country (Figure 1).

The amenities block is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) extent of registration for the Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach (H2369). The proposed works are confined to the amenities block and the immediate surrounding area. There are no proposed works to the bathing boxes or otherwise along the foreshore.

1.1 Documentation

Reference has been made to the following documentation in the preparation of this HIS:

- Cohen Leigh Architects, *Concept Design - Dendy Street Beach Amenities* (10 October 2024)
- Pollen, *Landscape Integration Plan and Master Planting Schedule – Dendy Street Beach Amenities* (10 October 2024).

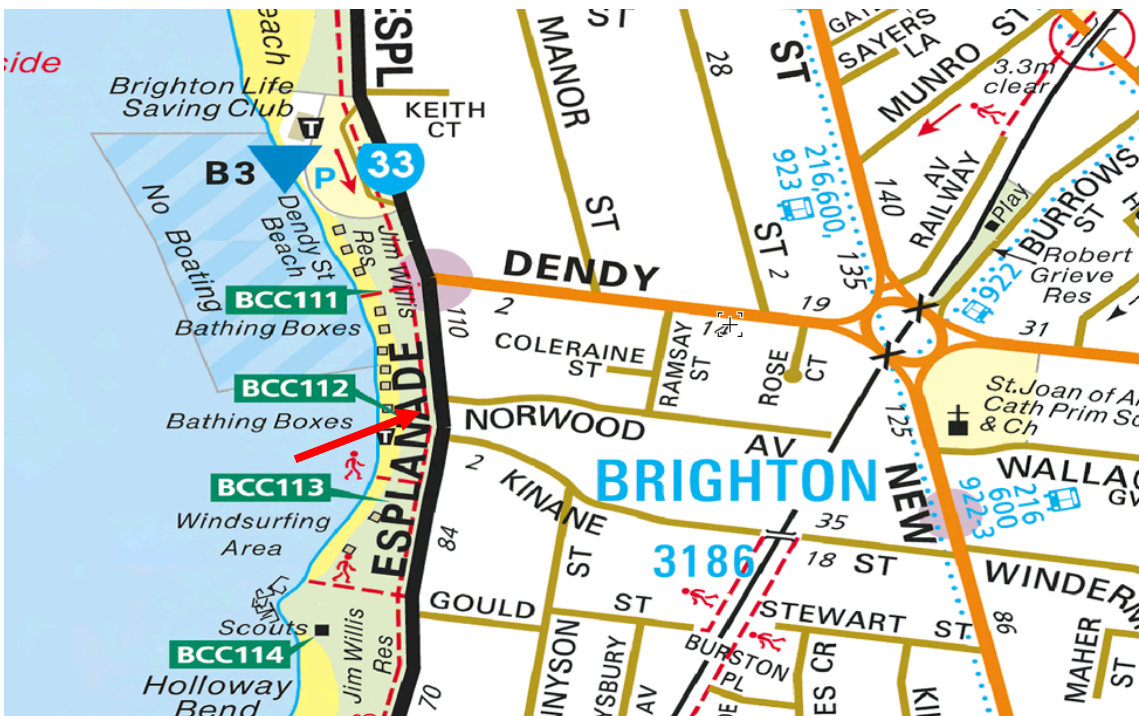


Figure 1 Location plan for the Dendy Street Beach amenities block (approximately indicated)
Source: Nearmap, captured 1 August 2024

1.2 Pre-application consultation

Initial pre-application comments were received from Heritage Victoria in July 2024, confirming the required approvals process for the proposed works. This advice acknowledged a reasonable need for the proposal and a level of comfort with the works, but confirmed that a permit application would be required, supported by architectural renders of the proposed works. A pre-application meeting (P39903) with Heritage Victoria was held on site on 26 July 2024 at which the proposed scheme was presented and feedback sought on heritage issues associated with the project. This advice confirmed a level of comfort with the proposal, subject to the associated landscape design. These comments have been addressed in the application documentation as submitted.

2.0 STATUTORY HERITAGE CONTROLS AND LISTINGS

2.1 Victorian Heritage Register

The Dendy Street Beach amenities block is included in the VHR extent of registration for the Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach, designated as place number H2369. The extent of registration for the place is included at Figure 2 and described as follows:

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2369 encompassing part of Lot 2 on Title Plan 963646 and part of Crown Allotment 2048 Parish of Moorabbin bounded on the East by Esplanade between Keith Court and Gould Street, and on the West by Port Phillip Bay between the points with the co-ordinates 37.91726S, 144.98603E and 37.92238S, 144.98615E.¹

The VHR statement of significance is as follows:

The Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach are significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Dendy Street Beach Bathing Boxes are historically significant for their association with the development of beach culture in Victoria from the 1840s to the present day. This is demonstrated through their evolution from functional, rudimentary structures which allowed bathers to change and discreetly enter the water, to their present use and appearance as brightly decorated places which form focal points for casual and social interaction. [Criterion A]

The Brighton Bathing Boxes demonstrate the principal characteristics of Bathing Boxes through their small scale, gabled roofs, and rudimentary design using simple building materials such as weatherboard cladding and corrugated iron roof sheeting. [Criterion D]

The Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach are of aesthetic significance to the Victorian community in exhibiting the iconic colours and forms of Bathing Boxes of the Victorian coastline. The visual impact of the vibrant, brightly painted exterior walls of the Brighton Bathing Boxes are enhanced by their setting along the curve of the Dendy Street Beach in front of its vegetated sand dunes. Images of

¹ 'H2369 - The Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street', Victorian Heritage Register, statement of significance, Heritage Council Victoria, Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/13226#statement-significance>, accessed 26 July 2024.

the Brighton Bathing Boxes, in many cases with Melbourne's skyline featured in the background, are iconic to the State. [Criterion E]

The Dendy Street Beach Bathing Boxes are socially significant for their strong association with local, national and international visitors. They are renowned not only for their function, but for their landmark qualities as a backdrop to many celebrations and casual visits to the beach. They have been reported and recorded in multiple mediums including photography, painting, digital and film media, and used in promotional products. They are instantly recognisable as the predominant assemblage of Bathing Boxes retained in Victoria. [Criterion G]

The permit exemption policy for the Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach provides an overview of significance for the place. No reference is made to the amenities block in this overview:

The cultural heritage significance of the Dendy Street Beach Bathing Boxes lies in the external fabric of the individual Bathing Boxes, including weatherboard cladding, corrugated iron roofs, and their small scale, as well as the formation of the Bathing Boxes in a continued line at the rear of the beach.²

Of relevance to the current proposal, the amenities block is located within the Jim Willis Reserve, which is a one-kilometre stretch of indigenous coastal vegetation that runs from Green Point (in the south) to the Brighton Surf Life Saving Club (to the north).³ The permit policy notes in relation to this reserve as follows:

The eastern part of this place, which comprises part of the Dr Jim Willis Reserve, has natural and environmental values. It is being included in this registration to provide a setting for the Bathing Boxes. The intent is not to regulate the management of the Dr Jim Willis Reserve under the Act, but to allow ongoing landscape management in accordance with the requirements of the Bayside Planning Scheme.

The permit exemptions in place for the Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach include exemptions for the bathing boxes, the Surf Life Saving Club and landscape. There are no specific permit exemptions in place for the amenities block. The following exemption is in place for landscape works:

No permit is required for tree or vegetation works, removal or replanting under the *Heritage Act 2017* where it is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Bayside Planning Scheme.

² 'H2369 - The Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street', Victorian Heritage Register, statement of significance, Heritage Council Victoria, Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/13226#statement-significance>, accessed 26 July 2024.

³ Bayside City Council, Reserves and sanctuaries, <https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/services/trees-parks-and-beaches/reserves-and-sanctuaries> accessed 1 October 2024.

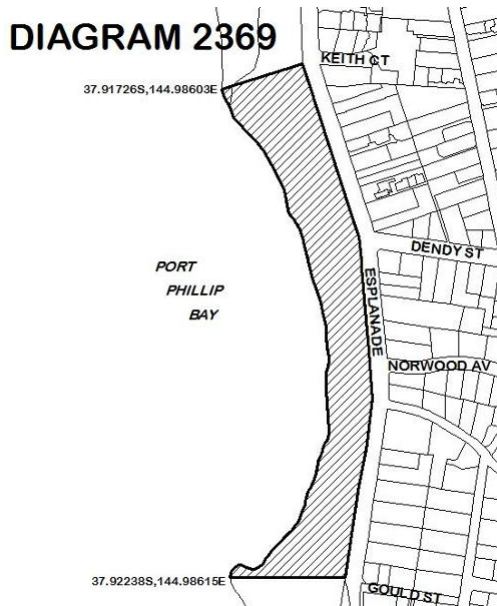


Figure 2 VHR extent of registration for Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach
Source: Victorian Heritage Database

2.2 Bayside Planning Scheme

The Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach are identified as HO143 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Bayside Planning Scheme (Figure 3). This overlay reflects the VHR extent of registration for the place.

In accordance with Clause 43.01 of the Bayside Planning Scheme, no permit is required under the Heritage Overlay to develop a heritage place which is included in the VHR (other than for subdivision).

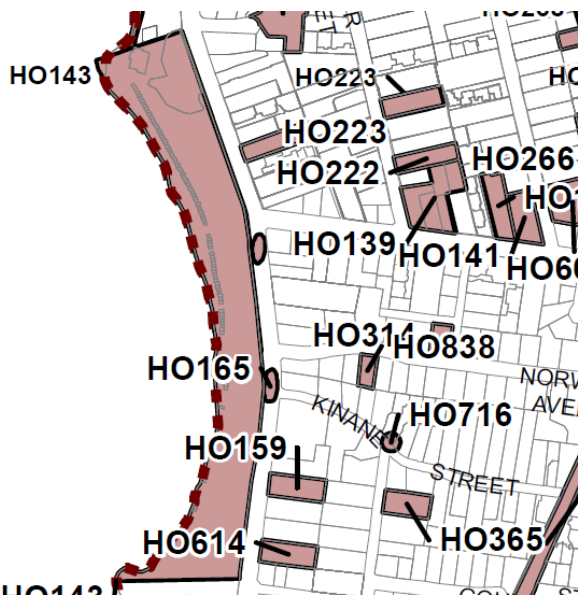


Figure 3 Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach, shown on the Heritage Overlay map in the Bayside Planning Scheme as HO143
Source: Heritage Overlay maps 1 and 2, Bayside Planning Scheme

3.0 BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

The amenities block is located in the Jim Wallis Reserve on the west side of the Brighton Esplanade, south of Dendy Street and north of Kinane Street (Figure 4). It is located on the upper embankment of the beach, with low lying coastal vegetation to the north, east and south (Figure 5).

The amenities block is a c. 1980s modest single-storey white roughcast brick building that adopts a rectilinear plan and has a flat roof clad with Klip-Lok steel (Figure 6). The amenities block currently has a men's and ladies toilet section, both of which are locked by an iron gate out of operating hours. Three metal bicycle racks are located to the north of the men's entrance. To the east between the amenities block and the Esplanade is wooden post and wire fencing. The amenities block is accessed by a concrete path from the Esplanade (Figure 7). From the beach, the amenities block is accessed via timber stairs located in a break in the line of the Dendy Street Bathing Boxes (Figure 8).

The building is set back from the Dendy Street Beach bathing boxes (Figure 9). Portable buildings are currently located in proximity (visible at Figure 8).

The amenities block appears to date from the early c. 1980s, with historical plans and aerial photographs showing that the site had been previously occupied by a kiosk, which by 1982 had been removed (Figure 10, Figure 11 and Figure 12).⁴ The cleared ground of this kiosk is still visible to the west of the amenities block (Figure 12).

Along the foreshore are the Dendy Street Bathing Boxes, a collection of largely uniform small, brightly painted and simply detailed timber buildings with gable roofs (Figure 13).

⁴ Iola Mathews, 'Happiness in Little Boxes', *The Age*, 23 February 1982, p. 21.

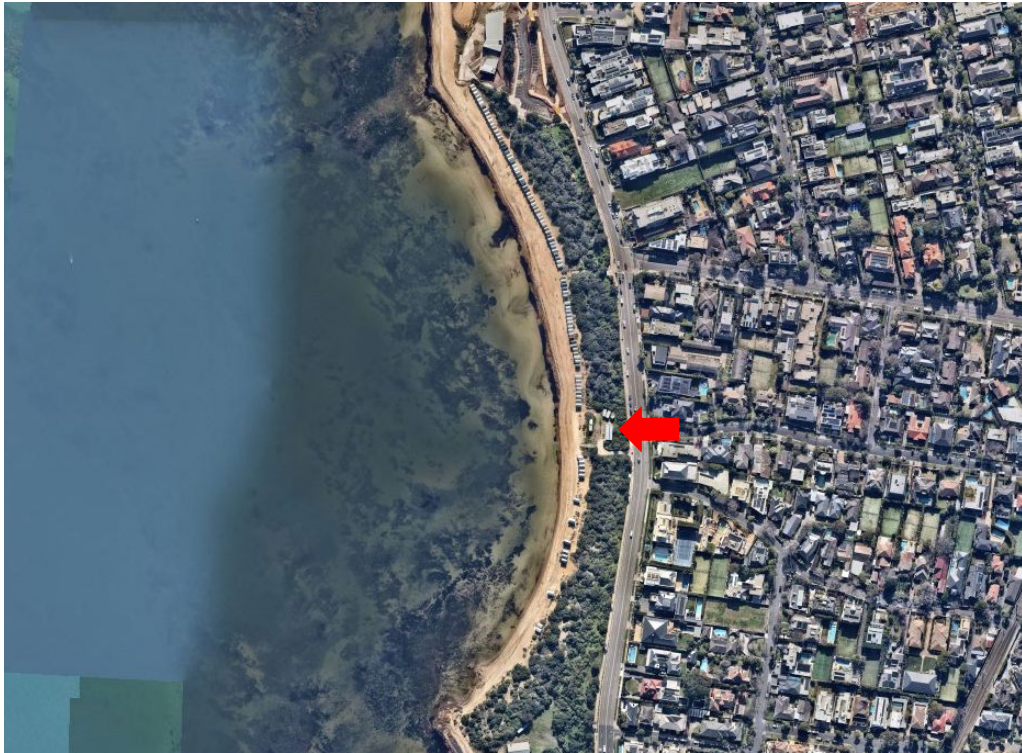


Figure 4 Recent aerial image of the bathing boxes and amenities building (indicated by the arrow)
Source: Nearmap, image date August 2024

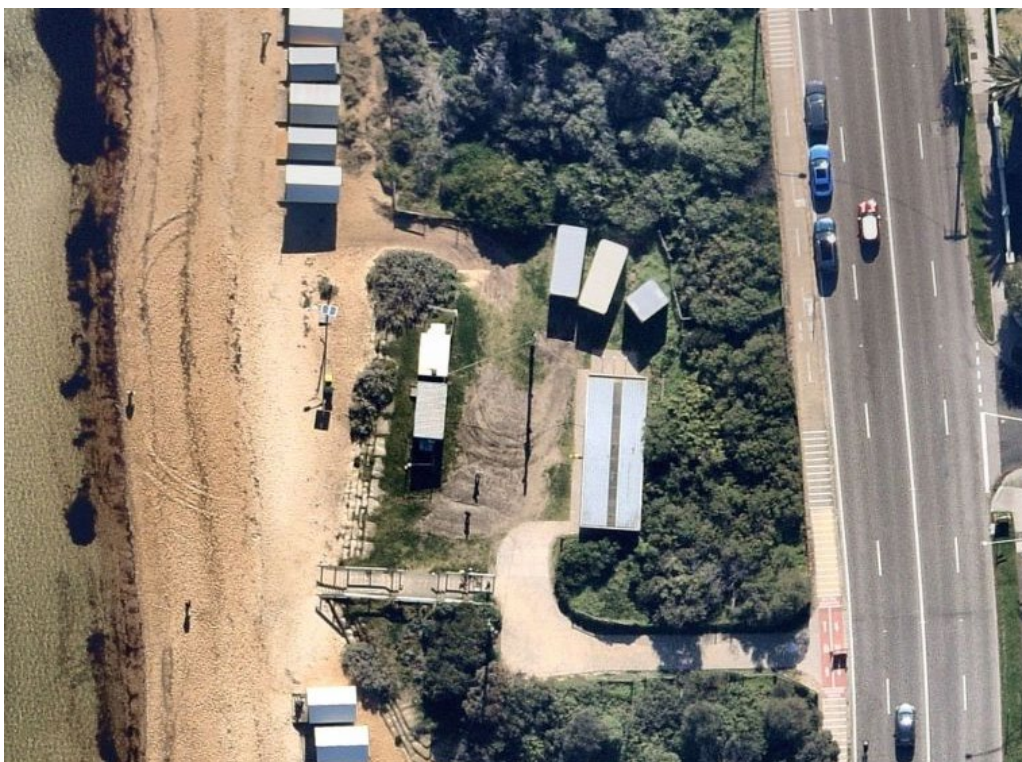


Figure 5 Detail of the above aerial showing the amenities block in proximity to the bathing boxes
Source: Nearmap, image date August 2024



Figure 6 View of the amenities block from the north-west



Figure 7 Asphalt path from Esplanade providing access to the amenities block



Figure 8 View of the set of wooden stairs providing access up to the beach embankment and amenities block



Figure 9 View north along the Dendy Street Beach from in front of the amenities block showing the line of bathing boxes

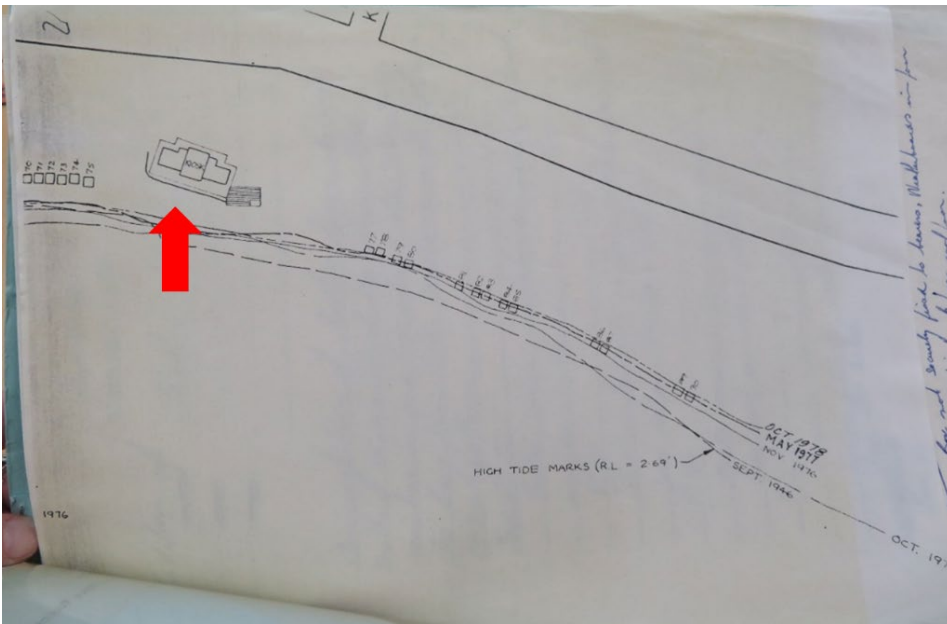


Figure 10 Plan of Dendy Street Beach Bathing Boxes showing the footprint and outline of the kiosk building, Kinane Street is visible at the top of the plan, 1976
Source: Public Record Office Victoria, VPRS 10430, P0001



Figure 11 Aerial photograph showing location of kiosk building indicated, 1977
Source: Historical Aerial Photography Collection, Landata, Secure Electronic Registries Victoria



Figure 12 View of the cleared ground and gravel area showing the former location of the kiosk building



Figure 13 View of the Dendy Street bathing boxes to the west of the amenities block

4.0 PROPOSED WORKS

The proposal is for the demolition of the existing Dendy Street Beach amenities block and replacement with a new amenities building in the same location. The proposal also includes landscaping works to the immediate environs of the building.

4.1 Demolition

Proposed demolition of the amenities block will include removal of the building, the bike racks to the north, the portable construction company office units, two telegraph poles (with redundant lighting), an overhead electrical service and a solar light pole, and demolition of the asphalt paving around the building. The timber fencing, timber stairs to the foreshore and the surrounding vegetation will be retained.

4.2 New amenities building

The proposed design for the replacement Dendy Street Beach amenities building includes a replacement building in the same location. The proposed new building adopts a slightly larger footprint and plan to the existing amenities block, with the design including an emphasis on providing undercover shelter by way of a curved canopy that extends over the west side of the building. The proposed building will be of predominately grey Adbri masonry brick construction with a canopy screen of Danpal sheeting and galvanised steel framing, vertical spotted gum timber battens and a skillion roof clad with Colorbond Surfsmist.

The proposed building provides the public with five gender neutral bathrooms, two wheelchair and ambulant toilets, one accessible RH/WC toilet and services enclosed within the masonry façade on the east side of the building. Four hand wash sinks are proposed beneath the canopy outside the cubicles. Two outdoor shower pillars are proposed to the north of the proposed amenities building and a water fountain is proposed to the south. Three bike rack hoops are proposed to the south-west of the building, extending from the paved walkway. The hardscaping to the proposed amenities building is to be of exposed aggregate concrete, with a continuation of the existing paved concrete path as a reinforced lawn pathway to the foreshore.

Other hardscaping elements that are proposed include four timber benches to the west of the proposed amenities building. Two of these benches are concrete faced with Adbri masonry brick with timber lining and are to be located on the exposed aggregate concrete path immediately west of the amenities building. Two additional timber benches are proposed on the grassy embankment to the west separating the foreshore from the amenities building. Two new light poles are proposed in the grass embankment to the west of the amenities building. The landscaping to the north and west of the proposed amenities building will adopt a mixture of low lying indigenous coastal plantings, open lawn areas and local toppings. The species contemplated as part of the landscaping works are shown in the Master Planting Schedule attached to this application.

It is possible that there may be other minor works required for services/utility tie-ins, with details to be provided under a permit condition.

5.0 REASON FOR THE WORKS

The proposal is required to provide safe and accessible public amenities for beach users. The current amenities block is inadequate by contemporary standards, including that there are no ambulant toilets. The closest public toilets to this location are provided in the Lifesaving Club hundreds of metres away.

In terms of safety, current access to the toilet block is from the side and rear of the building. The proposal will provide upgraded facilities with entry facing the foreshore for improved safety and access. The provision of accessible facilities, including ambulant toilets and lowered sinks with hard paving will ensure the facilities are available for use by all members of the public. The provision of seating and water fountains is required to provide appropriate and required public amenities. The proposed works will also provide improved accessibility to the beach.

The Bayside City Council are also anticipating that the proposed new amenities building is likely to be the most heavily used public toilet along the Dendy Street Beach and will have to cater for visiting tourist coaches. Accordingly, the amenities building needs to be upgraded to meet contemporary standards and requirements of a public amenities building.

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACTS

The following assessment provides a response to the considerations at sections 101(2)(a) (impact on cultural heritage significance) and 101(2)(b) (impact on reasonable or economic use) of the *Heritage Act 2017*.

6.1 The extent to which the application, if approved, would affect the cultural heritage significance of the registered place or registered object

6.1.1 Significance

The VHR statement of significance for the Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach states that the place is of historical, aesthetic, scientific (horticultural) and social significance. This significance is derived from the historical association of the bathing boxes with the development of beach culture in Victoria, and the presentation, principal characteristics and landmark qualities of the bathing boxes enhanced by their setting along the curve of the Dendy Street Beach.

The amenities block is not identified as an element contributing to the significance of the place in the VHR statement of significance.

As outlined above, the permit exemption policy for the Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach provides emphasises that the significance of the place lies in the external fabric of the individual bathing boxes, including weatherboard cladding, corrugated iron roofs, and their small scale, as well as the formation of the bathing boxes in a continued line at the rear of the beach.⁵ This overview of the significance of the place does not make reference to the amenities block.

6.1.2 Demolition

The demolition of the Dendy Street Beach amenities building would not result in an adverse impact on the cultural heritage significance of the Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street Beach. This amenities block is a standard utilitarian building of no heritage significance. As outlined above, the building does not contribute to an understanding of the heritage significance of the place, which principally relates to

⁵ 'H2369 - The Brighton Bathing Boxes and Dendy Street', Victorian Heritage Register, statement of significance, Heritage Council Victoria, Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/13226#statement-significance>, accessed 26 July 2024.

the aesthetic, historical and social significance of the bathing boxes and view lines to these along the coastline.

There are similarly no heritage issues associated with the removal of the associated elements; light poles, bike racks and the like.

6.1.3 New works

The new amenities building is proposed in the same location as the existing amenities block. Accordingly, the project will see a continued but improved use of this part of the registered place for public amenities.

The proposed works associated with amenities building will not have any physical impact on the bathing boxes to the west or foreshore outside of the proposed project area. No part of the proposal would require or result in any change to the fabric, presentation or arrangement of the bathing boxes along the foreshore.

In terms of potential for visual impacts, the proposed new building is not substantially taller than the existing amenities block and will maintain the existing setback from the beach. As with the current arrangement, the proposed new building will have a level of visibility from the beach, but it adopts a simple form and will present as a contemporary insertion in this location (refer Figure 14 and Figure 15). The proposed new building will also be set within a landscaping scheme which will help to soften the presentation of the new buildings in views from the foreshore. The proposed landscaping works will provide an integrated landscape approach which will continue the coastal vegetation from the embankment along the north side of the building and will not change the existing vegetation to the east and south. To the west of the building, the proposed additional landscaping will set the building visually within a context of coastal plantings similar to those along the Jim Willis Reserve. The proposed plantings and species selected for the landscape works have considered the existing vegetation within this Reserve, which is a one-kilometre stretch of indigenous coastal vegetation. The proposed amenities building includes new outdoor showers, water stations and bike racks. All of these works are in keeping with the current and proposed use of this area of the Dendy Street Beach as a place of amenities for those visiting the beach, and will not result in an adverse visual impact in this location.



Figure 14 Render view (north) of the proposed amenities building set back from the bathing boxes
Source: Cohen Leigh Architects



Figure 15 Render view (south) of the proposed amenities building set back from the bathing boxes
Source: Cohen Leigh Architects

6.2 Extent to which a refusal would affect the reasonable or economic use of the registered place or registered object [s. 101(2)(b)]

Having regard to Heritage Victoria's policy for *Reasonable or economic use* (June 2021), the use of part of the registered place for the provision of public amenities is considered to be a reasonable use in considering the historic and current uses of the place. Pre-application comments received from Heritage Victoria confirm this assessment.

Also of relevance and as noted above, the current facilities are inadequate in a number of areas and require substantial upgrading and renewal to meet current requirements and expectations. The proposed works have all been designed to meet the functional requirements for a high-quality contemporary beach amenities building.

No information is being provided in relation to economic use consideration.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The proposal for demolition of the existing Dendy Street Beach amenities block and replacement with a new amenities building represents a positive outcome for the public and users of the registered place. The proposal has been developed having appropriate regard for the sensitive interfaces and the need for careful understated design within the heritage place which respect viewlines of the bathing boxes along the coastline. The proposal also improves general accessibility to the heritage place and the amenities building and supports the historical uses of this part of Dendy Street Beach. There will be no adverse impact on the heritage significance of the registered place from the proposed works.