

25 January 2024

Heritage Victoria

To [REDACTED]

Re: Permit application P38864 - St Vincent Place Precinct, 60 St Vincent Place North, Albert Park, Port Phillip City (H1291).

This letter has been prepared on behalf of the owner of the subject site at 60 St Vincent Place North, Albert Park, following the application to Heritage Victoria and the subsequent Request for Information (RFI), that was issued on 28th December 2023.

The first item of the RFI sought the following.

- *Renders of the proposed new additions to clearly demonstrate their visibility and presentation. The HIS provides photographs and describes the visual impacts and the officer has undertaken a site inspection, however the southern elevation as shown on dwg H16 does not adequately demonstrate the resulting streetscape view.*

Renders of the proposed scheme have been produced (and are attached to this submission), which give a clearer understanding of the degree of visibility that the double storey addition will have from St Vincent Place. Image One, taken from the street directly opposite the main entrance (at eye level), shows the retained southern double storey wall, with the pitched roof replaced by a flat roof. Most of the silhouette of the addition is concealed behind the pitched main roof form of the retained single-storey Victorian residence. It is noted that the double storey addition to the neighbouring property at 62 St Vincent Place North is visible and is of greater height.

The second item in the RFI is reproduced below:

- *Further justification for the proposed new flat roof form of the double storey addition. The HIS has outlined through historical research that the double storey form to the rear of the front single storey dwelling is an early part, if not original part of the site. After consideration, there is a level of comfort with its demolition as proposed. Nevertheless, the pitched roof form, which is visible from the street, does acquire a greater significance than originally attributed and its replacement with a flat roof form requires greater interrogation. It is acknowledged that there is precedent for flat roof, contemporary forms to the rear of original dwellings within the precinct. However, each proposal is considered on its own merits and this site is unusual for the existence of an early double storey pitched roof rear wing.*

The existing configuration on the subject site comprises the single storey main residence, with a partially visible double-storey rear wing, which may have been a late nineteenth century addition. The double-storey scale of the rear wing relative to the single-storey front house is atypical. The more usual typology would be for a single storey dwelling to have a single storey rear wing, a double storey residence a double storey rear wing (usually with lower ceiling heights than the front), or, less frequently, a double storey main residence with a single storey wing behind.

It is unclear why a double-storey rear wing was constructed in this case. The double-storey wing was extended westward in the twentieth century, with the roof form to the extension concealed in views from St Vincent Place behind the roof of the front portion of the Victorian dwelling.

The 9.5 metre setback of the residence from St Vincent Place is greater than that of most adjacent houses on the block between Merton Street to the west and Montague Street to the east, which typically have a setback of approximately 3-5 metres. This results in the roof of the existing double-storey wing having a greater degree of visibility in views from the street than might otherwise be the case.

It is not considered warranted, nor appropriate, for the new double-storey addition to incorporate a pitched roof form referencing that of the existing wing. The single-storey 1870s dwelling is the key structure on the site that contributes to the significance of the wider precinct, with the rear wing a secondary, background element. The wing does not form part of a unified architectural composition with the main house in views from the street and is likely a later accretion. As a backdrop to the east side of the roof to the house it is relatively dominant, given it projects above the ridgeline. It also reduces the legibility of the chimneys.

The proposed compact flat roof to the addition will be largely concealed behind the pitched slate roof of the Victorian dwelling in views from the street. Its silhouette will be lower in height than the roof of the existing rear wing, and it will consequently be less visually dominant, resulting in greater visual emphasis on the front heritage envelope. The chimneys on the east side of the house will become more legible and prominent. In practice, the rear addition will be seen from only a narrow range of viewlines at the east and west sides of the property frontage. From further to the east and west it will be concealed from view by the adjacent buildings.

It is considered that a pitched roof form to the addition would be more visually dominating and have greater negative heritage impacts. Given the relatively unusual circumstance for a single-storey Victorian dwelling to have a double-storey rear addition, it will not be obvious to the viewer that an interpretive pitched roof to an otherwise contemporary style addition references an historic element that previously existed on the site.

60 St Vincent Place North is already viewed in the context of a flat-roofed double-storey rear addition to the adjacent double-storey terrace to the west. The roofline of this addition is higher than that proposed on the subject site and is more visually dominant. A flat roof form to the addition will provide a point of differentiation between the old and new building envelopes.

In conclusion, the proposed flat roof form to the rear addition is an acceptable and appropriate design outcome for the site. It will minimise the visibility of the new envelope and result in greater emphasis on the 1870s Victorian dwelling in views from St Vincent Place. The rear wing that is to be removed constitutes a secondary element, and it is not considered necessary to interpret its pitched roof form in the new addition.

Please contact this office if there are any queries in relation to the above.

Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd