

POINT NEPEAN RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FIELD STATION

**PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL (HERITAGE) IMPACTS**

Point Nepean Quarantine Station

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Prepared for

**UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE/MONASH
UNIVERSITY**

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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	1	Draft Assessment of Environmental Impacts	13/05/2022	KW
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Referencing

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared for the University of Melbourne and Monash University in relation to the proposed Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station which is to be located within the Quarantine Station in Point Nepean National Park. The project will introduce infrastructure to provide research, education and public engagement facilities in two new buildings, indoor and outdoor aquariums connected to the bay and the adaptive reuse of Badcoe Hall to provide research laboratories, accommodation, office/meeting rooms, back of house (BOH) services/storage and at grade car parking.

The purpose of this report is to provide a preliminary assessment of the potential for the project to have a significant effect on the environment as related to non-Indigenous cultural heritage. It has been prepared with reference to the *Ministerial Guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the Environment Effects Act 1978* (Seventh Edition, 2006).

This assessment does not include reference to Aboriginal cultural heritage or values.

Reference has been made to an overall site plan and floor plans for Badcoe Hall, the research lab and the BOH/store, prepared by Hassell, dated 2021. The proposed siting of the buildings is indicated on this documentation, and it is understood that the proposed new buildings will be single-storey in height, but no details with regard to the form or materiality of the buildings, or associated landscaping works have been reviewed.

Reference has also been made to the Coastal Processes and Marine Ecology Impact Assessment (prepared by BMT, 29 August 2022) for information on the proposed alignment of the subsurface seawater pipe connection to the research tanks. The methodology for the installation of the seawater intake and outfall will be by way of dual horizontal directional drilling, the depth of which will vary but is understood to be more than 10 metres below the natural ground level for the majority of the alignment of the pipes, with localised excavation within the project area only required to install the drilling equipment.

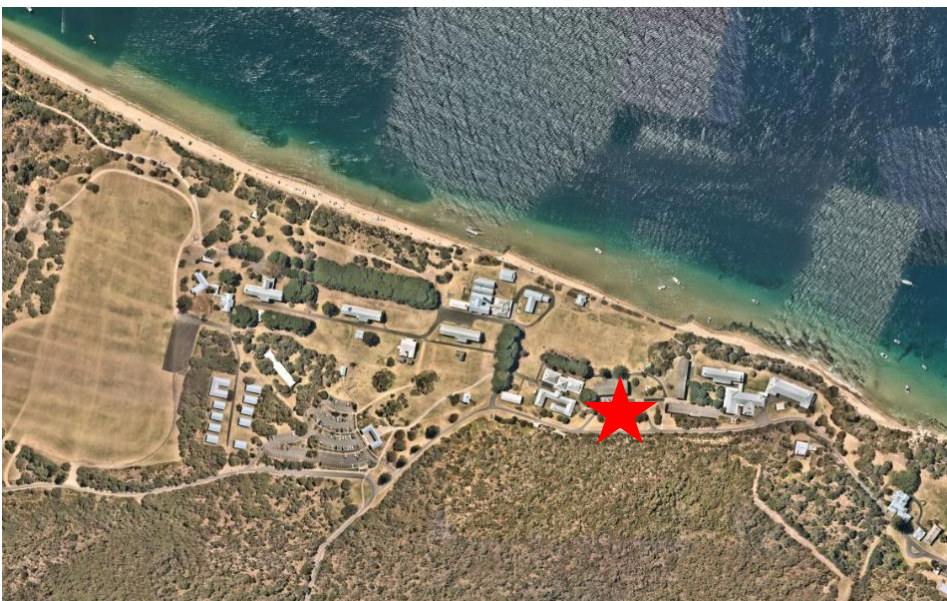


Figure 1 Aerial image of the Point Nepean Quarantine Station, with the project location approximately indicated by the star
Source: Nearmap, image date January 2022

2.0 REFERRAL CRITERIA

In accordance with the *Ministerial Guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the Environment Effects Act 1978*, the relevant referral criterion for this assessment is as follows:

Potential extensive or major effects on cultural heritage places listed on the Heritage Register or the Archaeological Inventory under the *Heritage Act 1995*.¹

The *Heritage Act 2017* (Vic) came into operation on 1 November 2017. It replaced the *Heritage Act 1995*. The Heritage Act sets out procedures to identify places of state heritage significance, and of historical archaeological value, and establishes the processes for obtaining approvals for changes to those places.²

The Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) is a register of places, objects and shipwrecks of significance to the State of Victoria.

The Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI) is the title of the list of known historical archaeological sites in Victoria.

3.0 HISTORICAL HERITAGE PLACES

The project intersects with the registered extent of one place included on the VHR and the mapped extent of two (2) sites listed on the VHI.

This assessment does not include consideration of the place as included in the National Heritage List. A separate assessment pursuant to the requirements of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) will be prepared to address the National heritage values of the place.

VHR place

The whole of the project area is included within the VHR extent of registration for the Point Nepean Defence and Quarantine Station, designated as place number H2030.

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.

VHI sites

The project area intersects the mapped extent of two VHI sites as follows:

- Limestone Cottage, Point Nepean (H7821-0054)

The VHI site card describes this site as a one roomed limestone cottage with underground cellar. Archaeological remains include step access to the cellar entry and cellar with fireplace, dated to c. 1848.³

¹ *Ministerial Guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the Environment Effects Act 1978*, p. 7.

² Heritage Victoria, Legislation and Regulations, <https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/about-us/legislation-and-regulations> accessed 13 May 2022.

³ Historic Site Recording System Site Register Sheet, Limestone Cottage, H7821-0054, dated March 1997.

- Point Nepean Limestone Quarry (H7821-0122)

The Heritage Inventory description for the site is as follows: Sandstone and limestone cliff-face with evidence of past quarrying activities.⁴

4.0 POTENTIAL EFFECTS ON HISTORICAL HERITAGE PLACES

The following response has been prepared based on the project information provided to date. It has had regard for the significance of the place and sites as outlined in the VHR and VHI documentation, and the conservation policy and management guidelines identified in the *Former Quarantine Station, Point Nepean Conservation Management Plan* (CMP) prepared by Lovell Chen in 2008.

‘Significant effect’ is not defined in the *Ministerial Guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the Environment Effects Act 1978*, however the relevant factors for a significant effect provided in these guidelines include consideration of the character and values of the environmental asset, and the magnitude, extent and duration of effects.

In considering the potential impact on the identified values of the VHR place, the project will result in visible new development within the former quarantine site. The continued and long-term use of the project site for this purpose is anticipated. Operationally, the Research and Education Field Station will include seawater pipes and tanks, and permanent built form for accommodation, research and education purposes. The potential for impacts on heritage values relates to the introduction of new built form and infrastructure within the VHR extent of registration.

In considering the potential for the project to result in a significant effect on a place of State cultural heritage significance, the project presents as a considered response to the significant heritage values of the former Quarantine Station. The proposal has been developed with due regard to the known values and relevant CMP policies for the registered place, principally as related to the siting and scale of new development, noting particularly the historical pattern of development within the former Quarantine Station. The location of the proposed built form to the rear of and beside the existing two-storey Badcoe Hall building will help to conceal the new development in views from the north. The siting and single-storey scale of the proposed new buildings has been considered in the context of the surrounding quarantine buildings and will ensure that, where visible, built form associated with the Research and Education Field Station will not present as overly prominent in views to these buildings.

The project would activate the site with an appropriate new use, and the identified siting for the project would not impact on the form or presentation of the significant/registered buildings or on the visual relationships/viewlines between these buildings. The siting of the proposed new building will not interrupt the historical pattern of development, or on an understanding of the former quarantine site in the context of the surrounding bush landscape and the Bay.

The proposal will not result in the loss or visual impact on the buildings which contribute to the architectural significance of the place, including the planning and presentation of the buildings which demonstrate and provide evidence of the historic function and use of the place overall. As a non-registered building, the adaptive reuse of Badcoe Hall will not impact on any buildings identified as contributing to the significance of the place (refer Appendix A). The equipment and fabric which

⁴ Victorian Heritage Database, Point Nepean Limestone Quarry, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/27416> accessed 13 May 2022.

demonstrates scientific significance and processes in the control and management of infectious diseases in Australia will also be retained within the site.

In considering the potential for a significant effect on the VHI sites, the proposed new buildings and tanks are not located in an identified area of high or moderate historical archaeological potential as identified in the CMP or as reflecting in the VHI listings. The proposed installation methodology for the seawater pipeline (i.e. horizontal directional drilling more than 10 metres below the natural ground level for the majority of the alignment of the pipes) will ensure the avoidance (at this depth) of disturbance of historical archaeological remains where these exist in the area of the proposed pipeline alignment. Where localised excavation will be required to facilitate the horizontal directional drilling or where shallower drilling may be required, the potential impacts on archaeological remains related to the VHI sites or the identified VHR archaeological significance can be managed by way of careful siting with reference to identified areas of archaeological potential and appropriate management protocols.

A comprehensive assessment of the proposed Point Nepean Research and Education Field Station project will be prepared when the project and design details are finalised, and approval for the project will be sought under the requirements of the *Heritage Act 2017* for the VHR and VHI sites. The potential for impacts from the project will be mitigated and heritage values protected through compliance with any required heritage permit and the related conditions or consent under the *Heritage Act 2017*. Therefore, any extensive or major effect on cultural heritage places listed on the Victorian Heritage Register or the Archaeological Inventory (VHI) is not expected.

The conclusion of this preliminary assessment is that the potential impacts of the project are unlikely to be extensive or major, and accordingly the referral criteria is unlikely to be met.