

# ADVERTISED PLAN

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## HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Place: 519 Orrong Road, HO85, King David School - Magid Campus  
For: Jackson Clemente Burrows Architects  
Date: 22 December 2021

### Introduction

The heritage house "Larnook" constructed in 1881 and the mansions former grounds extending over the basket ball court and car park to the west are covered by the individual Heritage Overlay, HO85 that also includes the walkway connection to Orrong Road.

As is evident from the aerial photograph below the eastern side of the house has been subsumed in the later development and school buildings since acquisition in 1984. The frontage of the house with its symmetry around the diagonal axis is to the southwest, once looking onto gardens to the west. The area of the hockey oval to the south of the house was, in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century a part of the land of the mansion "Karbarook" which extended between Orrong Road and Stanwell Street and to Dandenong Road.



Figure 1 Aerial photograph from the JCB submission documents

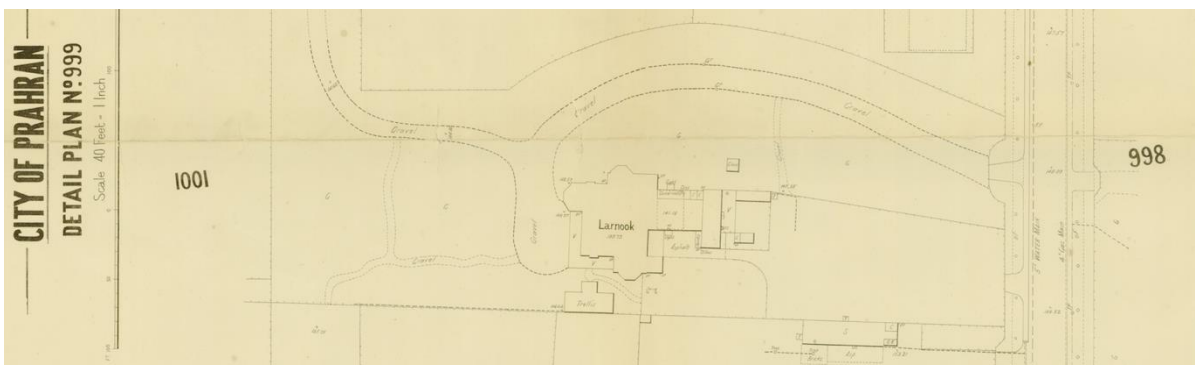


Figure 2 Extract of the MMBW map of 1901

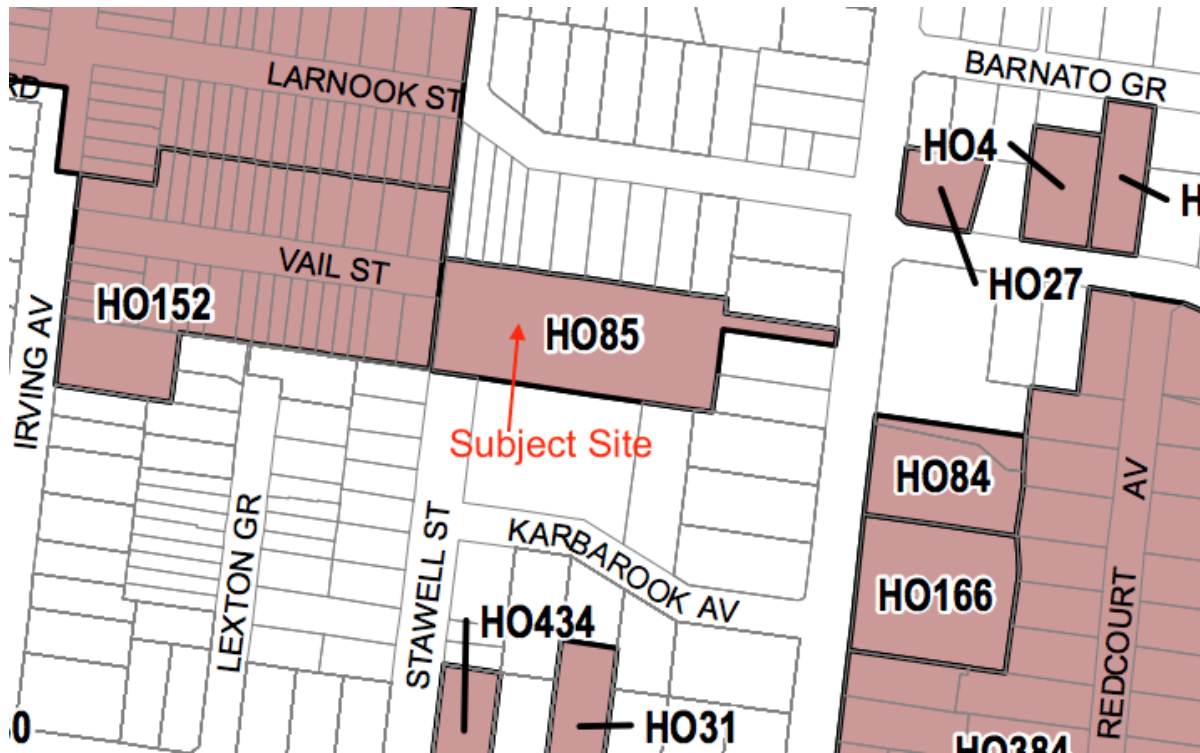


Figure 3 Extract of the City of Stonington Heritage Overlay Map

“Larnook” is without street presence to Orrong Road and as can be seen from the 1901 MMBW map had its approach from the north to arrival before the western verandah and had its service wings and out buildings to the east well away from the Orrong Road frontage.

The description of Larnook provided in the Property Citation for Stonington available on the Victorian Heritage Data base is as follows:

*The elegant Italianate mansion Larnook has a protruding polygonal bay and cast iron veranda, both of two storeys. Its veranda columns are paired and, together with fine lacework in the balustrade, valence and brackets, embellish the facade. Eaves are supported on closely spaced decorative consoles around the residence and the corners of the building are quoined. Windows at the upper level feature arched heads, those below exhibit a slight curve only. The northern end of the veranda has been infilled on both levels. The designer and architect are unknown*

### Significance

“Larnook” was Classified by the National Trust, 21/05/1964

The Statement of Significance for Larnook provide by the National Trust as having local level of significance as follows:

*Larnook is historically important as one of five substantial mansions constructed between 1880 and 1889 for a group of prosperous Melbourne professional men.*

*Today only four of these mansions remain.*

*Of note in the interior is the coved ceiling over the stairs. Externally the paired verandah columns and the verandah itself are of note.*

The Statement of Significance provided for the City of Stonnington in 1983 and reviewed in 1993 as basis for the application of the Heritage Overlay is as follows:

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*Larnook has State significance for architectural reasons, as a good example of an 1885 mansion house of the pre-boom period' in Melbourne. It is typical of early mansion houses on large allotments on elevated sites built for affluent business and professional men and their families, which gave a distinctive character to residential areas in Toorak, parts of South Yarra and Armadale.*

Important in assessment of the present proposal is that whilst the large allotment is mentioned above there is no discussion of other elements or feature of the property that have been considered to contribute to the heritage significance of the place. Whilst once in a garden setting the original frontage of the house, once looking onto the gravel turning apron before the front verandah, now looks onto the institutional setting of mod grass and basketball court, with sheds and carpark to the west. It is to be noted that no heritage controls have been activated in the Schedule to Clause 43.01 to control trees, paint colour, outbuildings or the interiors of Larnook.

## Proposal

The proposed new building to be located to the west of the house on the location of the sheds basketball court and a portion of the synthetic lawn. The new building would accommodate a Sport and Wellness Facility with a semi-basement court and facilities served by a foyer accommodating a lift and stair to the northwest of the heritage house. A second court is to be located on the roof top with 'bleachers' that, rather than facing the court, face the frontage of the heritage house with some 10 metres of space between the bottom seat and the verandah front.

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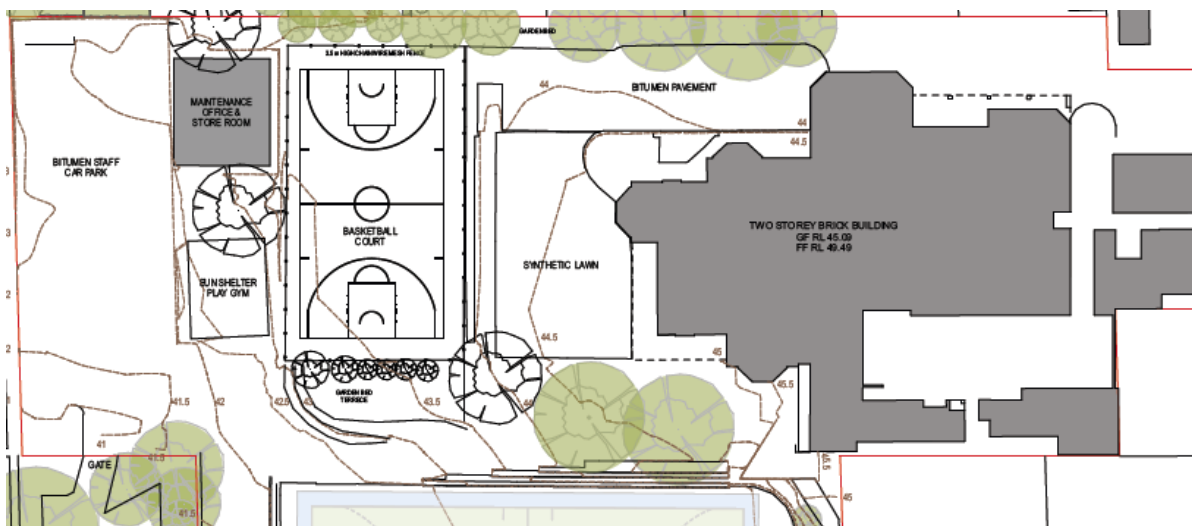


Figure 4 Existing conditions plan by Jackson Clements Burrows Pty Ltd Architects

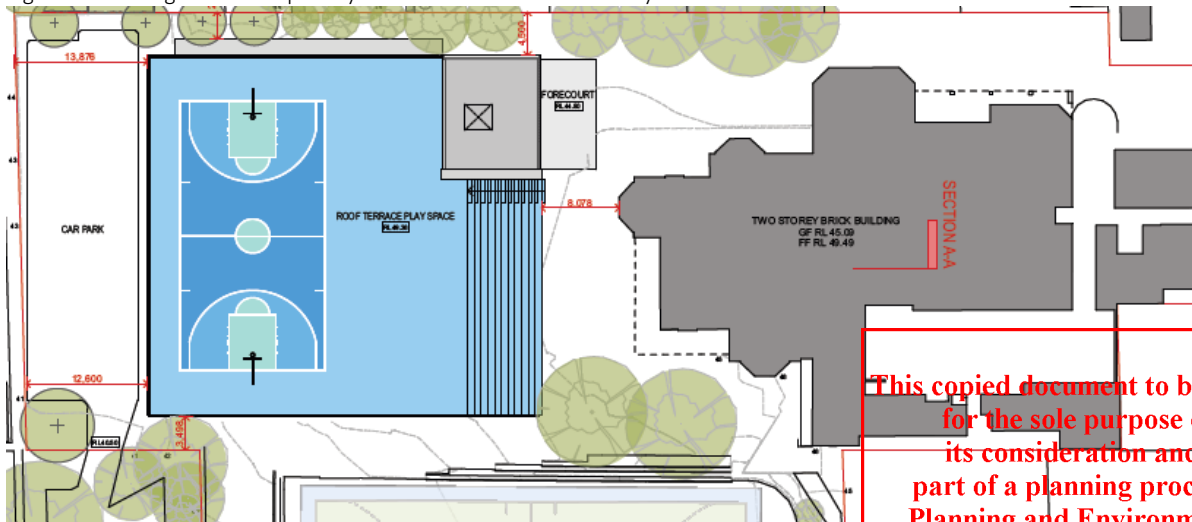


Figure 5 Proposed plan by Jackson Clements Burrows Pty Ltd Architects

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The roof top court is to be enclosed with fencing that will double as climbing frame for plants and, to the north of the tiered seating, the enclosure to a plant room over the foyer would provide simple forms to the same height as the fence with some visual permeability to the screened enclosure.



Figure 6 View from the south of “Larnook” mansion to the proposed Sports and Wellness Facility provide by JCB



Figure 7 View from the bleachers to the “Larnook” frontage provide by JCB

### Assessment

The proposed new building will substantially alter the setting of the former mansion. The existing setting is however not one that can be considered to contribute to the appreciation of the heritage house in any particular fashion currently having the flat open plane to the west, presenting a character that is disparate from that of the heritage building.

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Stonnington's Heritage Policy is of limited assistance given the isolated and particular setting of the former mansion without a streetscape or other context contributory or complementary to the character of Larnook. At Clause 22.04-4.5 New buildings, general policy is:

- *Ensure that new buildings:*
  - *Are readily identifiable as new buildings while respecting and having minimal impact on the significance of the heritage place.*
  - *Retain vistas and viewlines to significant places.*
- *Ensure that new buildings complement adjacent significant or contributory places and the prevailing character of the precinct with regard to:*
  - *Height, street wall height, scale, mass, setbacks, orientation, roof forms, fenestration and general form.*
  - *Relationships between solids and voids and the form and arrangement of window and door openings.*
  - *Materials, detailing, finishes and colour schemes.*
- *Discourage new built form in front of the primary building volume of significant or contributory places.*

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The volume of the proposed sports facility will alter views to the west frontage of Larnook that are currently available from the Basketball courts. The location of the tiered seating that will provide a gathering place for students will however provide a compelling view of the heritage building. The arrangement of the tiered seating opposite the columned verandahs and with the apron between is reminiscent of a Classical Greek Theatre although without the semicircular seating. The effect of the proposed new building will be to focus attention onto the heritage host and create an enhanced sense of place once the arrival to the Larnook Mansion.

Whilst there will be evident change to the setting of the heritage building it is reasonable to conclude the dialogue between the new and old will be respectful of the heritage value and focus attention upon the former mansion as the 'Proscenion' (colonnade) faced by the 'Theatron' (watching place) with the enlivened 'Orchestra' (dancing place) between.

Given the strength of presence and independent character of Larnook there is no value in seeking to emulate any characteristic of that primary presence. It is a place where calm counterpoint with visual bulk softened by the use of the screens and simple planar and rectangular forms, supporting climbing plants, can be expected to form a quite dialogue with the primacy of the former mansion. I am confident that whilst the new sports structure will itself be a presence, it will be seen as deferring to, and providing vantage for appreciation of the heritage building.

Although the policy above discourages building in front of the primary building volume that enjoiner is directed to the typical streetscape context where the new building would obstruct the view to the heritage host. In this case by the new building so clearly addressing the host attention and regard for the heritage building is conveyed by the new building.

The Stonnington Heritage Design Guidelines are also directed to the more typical streetscape presentation of heritage buildings rather than addressing the distinctive circumstance of Larnook.

The semi-basement configuration of the dual level sports courts limits the potential physical bulk and establishing the new building as a useful gathering space having focus upon the heritage building is a clear complement to heritage retaining the primacy and visual prominence of the heritage mansion.

## Conclusion

In my assessment the proposed new sports and wellness facility will present no adverse impact upon either the understanding of Larnook or upon the visual appreciation of the heritage mansion. The proposed design is responsive to the heritage context providing enhanced opportunity for

appreciation of Larnook rather than being likely to be perceived as having any adversely impact upon heritage significance.



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