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Heritage Impact Statement

Proposed Hotel Development at
253 Barnard Street and 144 & 152-156 Wattle Street, Bendigo

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Author Trethowan Heritage
Date 12 March 2026

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Trethowan Heritage acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which our studio and projects are located. We pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) accompanies a planning application for proposed works to the subject site, 253 Barnard Street and 144 & 152-156 Wattle Street, Bendigo.

This report provides an assessment of the heritage impacts of proposed works which include demolition of the building at 253 Barnard Street, retention / adaptive reuse of the building at 144 Wattle Street, and a new three storey hotel building.

1.2 Reference Documents

This assessment refers to the following documentation:

- Architectural Drawings prepared by Life Architecture and Urban Design, dated 30 January 2026
- *253 Barnard Street – Existing Building Structure Condition Assessment*, prepared by SCE Australia, dated 15 October 2025
- City of Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme
- *Eaglehawk & Bendigo Heritage Study – Significant Areas: Precincts 6.02, 6.04 & 6.05 Bendigo Residential*, prepared by Graeme Butler & Associates in 1993
- *Heritage Design Guidelines* published by the City of Greater Bendigo in September 2020
- *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter*, 2013

1.3 Limitations

A site visit was undertaken by Trethowan to inspect the subject site and surrounding context on 16th January 2025, as part of preliminary investigations and recommendations issued for the proposal. Observations were taken from the street only, as both the buildings at 253 Barnard Street and 144 Wattle Street were inaccessible.

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2 Site Details

2.1 Location

The subject site is located at the southeastern intersection of Barnard Street and Wattle Street. Its immediate context is characterised by a suburban setting with single and double-storey residential and small-scale commercial developments. The L-shaped site is largely open, with modest built structures facing both streets.



Figure 1: Aerial view of the site (indicated in red) with two extant buildings (in yellow). Source: Google Maps.

2.1.1 Traditional Owners information

The subject properties are located on the traditional land of the Dja Dja Wurrung People. Under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, the Registered Aboriginal Party for this land is the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation.

The subject properties are not located within an area of cultural heritage sensitivity.

2.2 Description & Condition

2.2.1 Streetscape

Barnard Street comprises a mix of Victorian era residential and commercial buildings, though the overall integrity of the heritage streetscape decreases west of View Street, with several instances of late 20th century and more contemporary infill buildings. The southern side of the Barnard Street streetscape, bound by Wattle Street and Forest Street, is characterised predominantly by single storey commercial buildings. The presence of verandahs / canopy structures as well as façade articulation of some of the newer buildings plays out in a vertical rhythm across the streetscape. A two-storey Victorian terrace building located at the corner of Forest Street and an early 20th century shopfront abutting the subject site at number 247-249 are the only remaining examples of early / original building fabric within the street (notwithstanding the subject property at number 253). The Victorian terrace remains largely intact; however, the shopfront appears to have a later verandah and has been overpainted grey.

Wattle Street is a residential streetscape, comprising predominantly Victorian era single storey houses. The overall street setting is low scale with moderate front setbacks and front garden setting. There are several examples of intact double-fronted Victorian houses in good condition along the street, including across the road from the subject site at 149 Wattle Street which is in an individual heritage overlay. Bluestone gutters are observed along Wattle Street.



Figure 2: Looking west down Barnard Street from the corner of Forest Street. Source: Google street view, 2024.



Figure 3: Eastern view up Barnard Street, part of the subject site visible to the right. Source: Trethowan, 2025.



Figure 4: Southern view down Wattle Street, subject property at 144 Wattle Street to the left. Source: Trethowan, 2025.



Figure 5: Residential streetscape along Wattle Street. Source: Trethowan, 2025.

2.2.2 Subject Site

152-156 Wattle Street is an open, vacant lot that has no buildings or significant vegetation. The land appears to be concave and inclines towards the centre. It is bound by a metal palisade fence.

144 Wattle Street is a single-storey, double-fronted Victorian cottage with a sheet metal mansard roof and a front verandah. It is constructed of painted white bricks and has timber sash windows. A small skillion-roofed brick structure with a bluestone base is attached to the back of the house. It is bound by a chainmail fence along the side boundary, and taller solid corrugated metal fence to the front. There is a large mature gum tree to the front of the site.

Externally, 144 Wattle Street is in fair condition, with noticeable signs of general age / wear & tear including rusted sheet metal roof, visible water staining to external walls, and rotten timber joinery to the verandah. The interior of the property has not been inspected as part of this report.

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Figure 6: Northern view of the vacant lot at 152-156 Wattle Street. Source: Trethowan, 2025.



Figure 7: Southern view of the vacant lot at 152-156 Wattle Street. Source: Trethowan, 2025.



Figure 8: Southwestern view of 144 Wattle Street. Source: Trethowan, 2025



Figure 9: Street view of 144 Wattle Street. Source: Trethowan, 2025.

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253 Barnard Street is a single-storey, gable-ended brick structure. Its front portion is set back from the street front with a parapet wall to the west and brick corbel detail to the east. The front section of the building is painted in cream and Brunswick green. The rear portion of the building is of bricks painted light blue, which is visibly peeling off. It has an external chimney breast, which is partially painted and rendered. A small brick shed with skillion roof is attached to its back. Openings to the front and side elevations are boarded up.

It is understood that the building has been vacant for some time and has been subject to squatting, vandalism, and a recent fire. An inspection of the building, both internally and externally, has been undertaken by a structural engineer. The accompanying *Existing Building Structure Condition Assessment* identifies that the building has “fallen into a poor state of disrepair,” related to both the fire damage and the compromised subfloor structure / floor movement.¹ Defects include:

- Severe damage to existing timber roof rafters, timber ceiling joist, timber wall framing, and timber subfloor to rear two thirds of the building
- Subsided subfloor structure including deflected timber flooring to front third of building
- Significant mortar loss and cracks to external double masonry wall, indicating footing movement and ongoing mortar deterioration

It is the opinion of the structural engineer that the extent of works required to return the existing building to a suitable condition would require replacement and/or repair of a large majority of the existing structure.²

¹ 253 Barnard Street – *Existing Building Structure Condition Assessment*, prepared by SCE Australia, dated 15 October 2025

² Ibid.



Figure 10: North (front) façade of 253 Barnard Street.
Source: Trethowan Architecture, 2025.



Figure 11: West (side) façade of 253 Barnard Street. The rear portion of the building appears to be an earlier structure compared to the front.
Source: Trethowan Architecture, 2025.



Figure 12: Fire damage to rear part of the building.
Source: SCE Australia, 2025

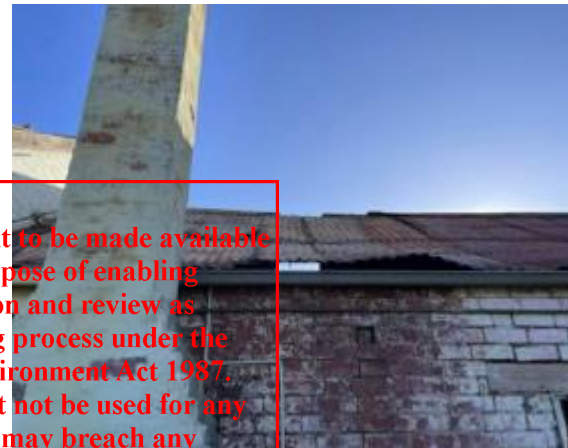


Figure 13: Mortar loss and cracking to masonry walls.
Source: SCE Australia, 2025.

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2.3 Historical Summary

The Traditional Owners of the land for the heritage place are the Dja Dja Wurrung People.

A parish plan associated with the subject site has been located. It was the eighteenth land parcel, Section 25B, and was purchased by A. Snowden from the Crown in 1854.

The exact date of construction of the building at 253 Barnard Street is unknown. However, it is recorded in the 1905 Sands & McDougall's directory as occupied by J.A. Stowell, a cabinet maker, upholsterer and the "oldest established venetian blind maker in Bendigo," which suggests the longevity of the business and potentially the building.³ A new occupant is recorded in the 1925 directory, and it is likely that the original cabinet maker business closed between 1920 and 1925.⁴

The currently vacant lot at 152-156 Wattle Street consisted of multiple buildings fronting both Barnard and Wattle Street, all of which have since been demolished. Referring to Sands & McDougall's directories between 1905 – 1965, the commercial buildings that fronted Barnard Street included a fruit shop, a grocery store and briefly a boot repairer, with periods of vacancy between occupants. From 1970, 255-63 was recorded as a used motor car yard, and it is likely the lot was cleared between 1965 and 1970.⁵

³ Sands & McDougall's Melbourne, suburban and country directory, 1910

⁴ Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria, 1925

⁵ Sands & McDougall's Directory of Victoria, 1965 & 1970

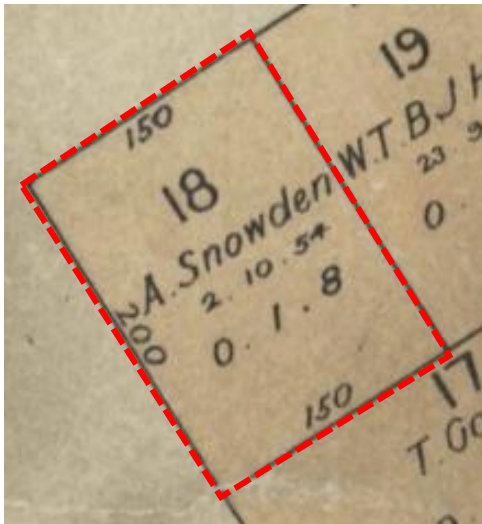


Figure 14: Parish plan showing the original purchaser of the subject site. Source: Public Records Office of Victoria

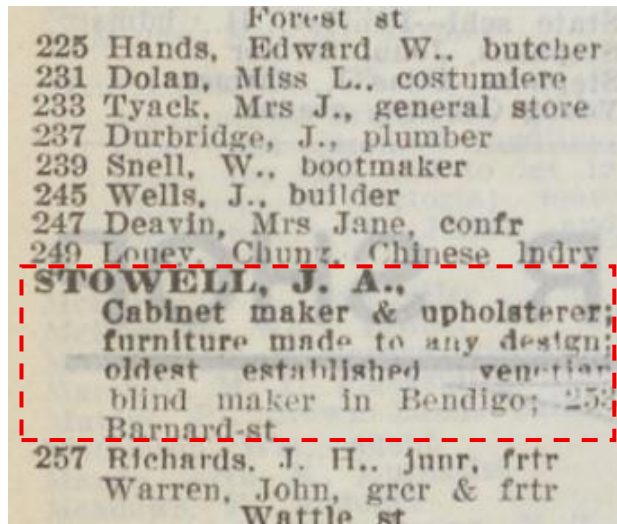


Figure 15: Extract from Sands & McDougall's 1910 directory, identifying the occupant at 253 Barnard Street. Note, Bendigo properties were given street address numbers from 1907. Source: State Library of Victoria

While the roof form of the building's front portion at 253 Barnard Street appears to match that of the existing, it was built to the northern boundary, aligning with the neighbouring property to the east. It also had a verandah matching that of the neighbouring property to the east. A smaller, flat-roofed portion is visible to the back of the existing rear portion and has since been removed. In the background of an undated photograph of George's Grocer at 247-249 Barnard Street (though likely taken between 1950-1970), a white picket fence can be seen at 253 Barnard Street which aligns to the adjoining property's front building wall, suggesting the façade had been altered / set back by this time and verandah removed. An opening is visible to the western side of the building which has since been infilled.

144 Wattle Street appears to be relatively intact, with no discernible changes to its roof form, except for the change of colours/patterns at the west facing verandah.



Figure 16: A 1934 aerial image of the subject properties. Source: Bendigo Mines Ltd Aerial Photography.



Figure 17: Section from a 1929 photograph, showing the western end of Barnard Street. Building at 253 Barnard Street indicated red arrow. Source: State Library of Victoria, Aispy photography collection.

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Figure 18: A c.1950-70 photograph showing George's Grocer 247-249 Barnard Street. The building at 253 Barnard Street can be seen to the right behind the low picket fence. Source: Doney Collection (National Trust).



Figure 19: Different brick texture suggests patch infill of former opening. Source: Trethowan, 2025.

According to Council records relating to 253 Barnard Street, building permits were for a brick WC attached to the laundry in 1960 and for an open carport in 1965.⁶ Planning applications for the conversion of the existing residence to an office was approved in 1982 and an extension to the existing car yard was approved in 1986, which suggests that the existing building was incorporated into the car yard sometime in the mid 1980s. A planning application was also approved in 1995 to construct a fence, pergola and illuminated pole.⁷ The car dealership closed around 2022, and the building and corner lot have been vacant since.

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Figure 20: 2018 view of the subject site showing its use as a car dealership carpark. The subject property 253 Barnard Street is indicated with a red arrow. Source: Google Street View, 2018.

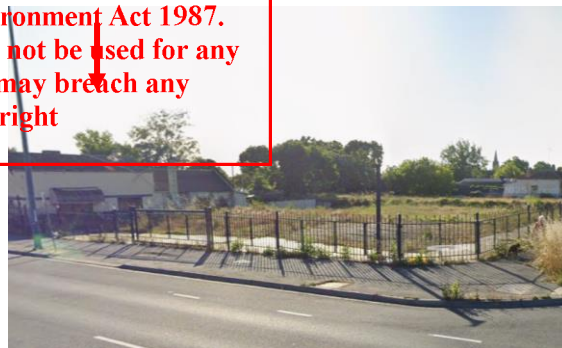


Figure 21: 2023 view of the subject site showing that it is largely vacant. Note demolition of two houses along Wattle Street. Google Street View, 2023.

More broadly, intersections of major streets along Barnard Street have a history of being occupied by pubs and/or hotels. An undated document sourced from the Bendigo Historical Society collection, reflecting on the history of the Garden Gully area, notes that that three hotels were at the intersection of Barnard and Wattle Street, including The Belvedere and Danaher's Hotel on the north corner and The Red Lion on the south corner.⁸ All these buildings have since been demolished. Other pubs, hotels and grocers along Barnard Street included the E.W. Hands Butcher on the corner of Forest Street (still existing but with new tenancy), the Five Lions Hotel on the south side of View Street (since demolished) and the Parkview Hotel on the north side (currently vacant and in poor condition).

⁶ City of Bendigo Building Register Index 1924-1969

⁷ Summary of Planning Application History provided by Bendigo City Council

⁸ 'Digging up the Past' document held by Bendigo Historical Society Inc.

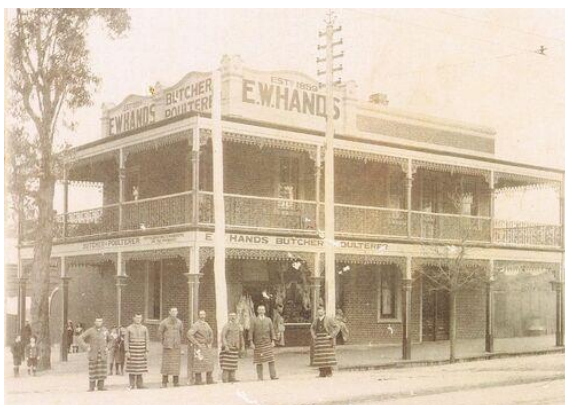


Figure 22: A 1910 photograph of E.W. Hands butcher on the corner of Barnard and Forest Street. The building still remains and is in good condition. Source: Bendigo Historical Society.



Figure 23: A 1950s / 60s photograph of the Five Lions Hotel on the corner of View and Barnard Street, which has since been demolished. Source: Bendigo Historical Society.



Figure 24: A c.1970 photograph of the Park View Hotel on the corner of View Street and Barnard Street. The building still exists however has been incorporated into a contemporary townhouse development. Source: Bendigo Historical Society.

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3 Heritage Controls

3.1 Statutory Controls

3.1.1 Victorian Heritage Register (VHR)

The subject site is not listed on the VHR.

3.1.2 Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme

The subject properties are located within the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme's Heritage Overlay HO1 Barnard Street Precinct. Solar energy system controls apply under the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay; no other controls apply. The planning scheme outlines the recommended heritage policies and controls required for the subject properties. Relevant heritage clauses include:

- 02.03-5 – Built Environment and Heritage
- 15.03 – Heritage
- 43.01 – Heritage Overlay

Statement of Significance

The Statement of Significance (SoS) was prepared by Graeme Butler & Associates in the 1993 *Eaglehawk & Bendigo Heritage Study – Significant Areas*. It is reproduced below:

Former Bendigo Residential Precinct (part 6.02)

This precinct contains some of the study area's most prestigious houses, dominantly of the 19th and early 20th century era. Persons associated with them include successful mining speculators, such as Mueller and Lansell, and this century's industrial leaders in the Leggo family, both categories reflecting Bendigo's economic base pre and post World War One. The siting of the mining figures, in particular, away from their mine complexes is a departure from early precedents made by Lazarus and Lansell, who lived next to their mines, and marks the creation of Bendigo's early middle-class residential enclaves. The study area's best designers (including Beebe and Vahland) were instrumental in the construction of many of these houses while the hillside siting of most of the major buildings in the precinct lends the visual diversity of viewpoint and individual building scale. Added to this are the distinctive curved street forms of Barkly Street and Terrace which echo the baroque plan of the commercial centre on the flat below. Close by but disconnected by intervening unrelated development are the two major benevolent institutions in the city, the hospital and the benevolent asylum and, further south is what was once Bendigo's most popular recreation centre, Rosalind Park and the Upper Reserve which was once an ornamental series of lakes and swimming baths but is now a series of sporting grounds. All of these adjacent historic sites lend context to the precinct.

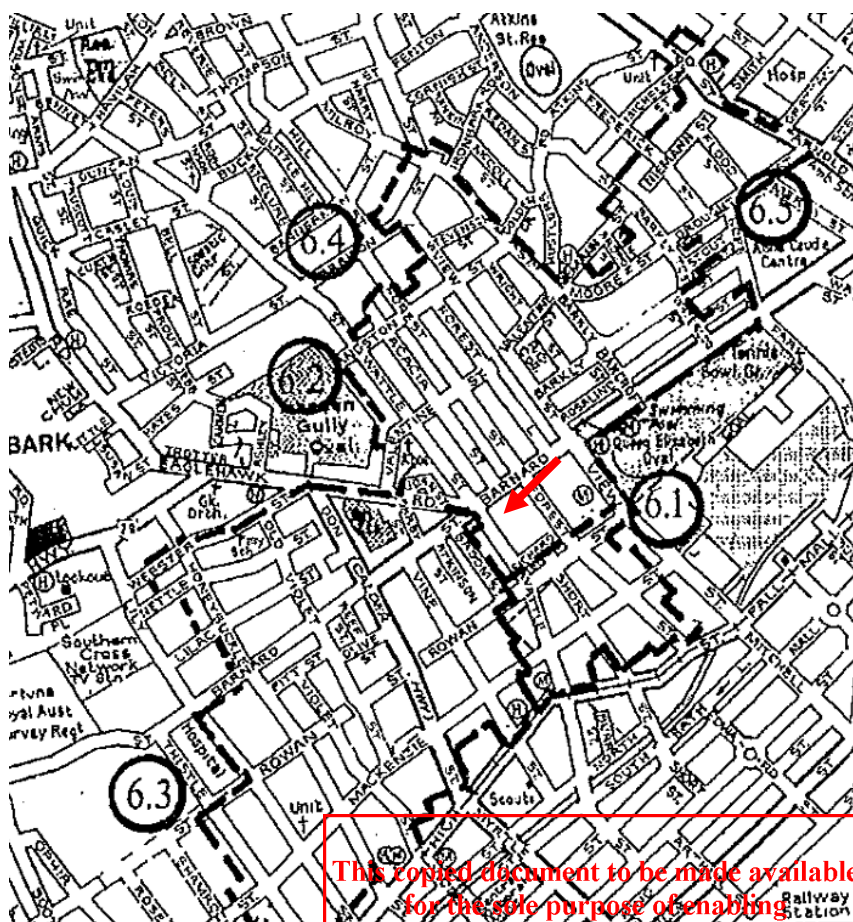
Former Bendigo Residential Precinct (parts 6.04 & 6.05)

Precincts 6.4 & 6.5 adjoin 6.2 on the north and north-east and hence act as a buffer to this important area. Nevertheless, they do contain some locally interesting streetscapes, individually significant buildings and groups of well-preserved housing from Bendigo's golden era. In the case of precinct 6.5, the terrain enhances views to structures and offers elevated sites for unusual complexes such as 14 Anderson Street with its notable garden wall enclosing the hilltop.

A number of 'key sites' were identified as part of this citation. The subject properties are not included.

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Figure 25: Map of the precinct – the subject site is located within Part 6.02 (indicated by red arrow). Source: City of Greater Bendigo.

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Building Grading

The three lots which comprise the subject site are graded as contributory. A *contributory place* as defined in the Greater Bendigo Heritage Incorporated Plan is one that “contributes to the significance of a heritage precinct.”⁹

However, the limitations of the 1993 Eaglehawk and Bendigo Heritage Study means that all buildings located within a heritage precinct in this study which were constructed prior to 1960 are graded as contributory.¹⁰ Noting this blanket rule, the following section comments on the subject properties perceived significance based on historical research, site visit observations, and good heritage practice.

Comment on Significance and Grading

Subject Site

At 253 Barnard Street, the front portion of the house appears to have been modified where its front façade was set back and altered, and verandah removed, causing it to have poor integrity. The rear portion of the house appears to be relatively intact apart from the small brick addition to its rear. However, it would not have been visible from the public domain if the adjacent lot were not vacant. It therefore should not be considered as part of the heritage streetscape. Considering the front portion’s streetscape appearance, this property has *little or no significance* to HO1.

The property at 144 Wattle Street is a typical double-fronted Victorian brick cottage which appears intact, having undergone minimal modifications. Though it is associated with Bendigo’s development in the Victorian era and contributes to Wattle Street’s heritage streetscape, it is not of any architectural merit when viewed independently. It should therefore be considered as having *contributory significance* to HO1.

⁹ Greater Bendigo Heritage Incorporated Plan, City of Greater Bendigo, September 2020

¹⁰ Ibid

The property at 152-156 Wattle Street is a vacant lot with no heritage fabric or significant vegetation. It retains no evidence that contributes to the significance of the precinct and should be considered as having *little or no significance* to HO1.

Streetscape

The SoS has been prepared for a very large heritage precinct, however the key takeaways are that much of the significance of the precinct is related to groups of “prestigious houses” of Bendigo’s golden era (i.e. 19th century and early 20th century) as well as middle-class residential enclaves which are located away from mining sites.

The western end of Barnard Street, between Forest Street and Wattle Street, is predominantly commercial in character, particularly along the southern side where the subject site is located. Much of the early building fabric has been demolished and replaced with late 20th-century commercial development, which has had an impact on the overall integrity of the streetscape. A two-storey terrace at the corner of Barnard and Forest Streets, together with the adjoining residence and shopfront at 247–249 Barnard Street, are the only remaining original buildings along the street and are considered contributory elements to both the streetscape and the precinct. The remainder of the street, however, has limited architectural or historical merit.

In contrast, the streetscape of Wattle Street remains fairly intact with many examples of Victorian houses which range from fair to good condition. As such, it is more representative of the heritage significance of the precinct. The contributory elements of “Bendigo Boom” Victorian houses can be found detailed in the Greater Bendigo Heritage Design Guidelines, noting features such as corrugated galvanised iron roofs, polychrome brick, original double hung sash windows with decorative hoods, and cast-iron valances are observed across the street. Notably, the Victorian double-fronted cottage southwest to the site at 47-53 Wattle Street (under HO292), is predominantly intact and demonstrative of these key elements.

3.2 Non-Statutory Controls

The subject properties are not subject to non-statutory heritage controls as they are not listed on the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Heritage Register. Such listings have no formal or legal weight in the planning scheme but are customarily considered when making planning decisions and are representative of heritage values in the community.

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4 Proposed Works

4.1 Demolition

It is proposed to demolish the existing building at 253 Barnard Street. It is also proposed to remove existing services / easements at the vacant lot and fences bounding the site.

It is proposed to retain the existing building at 144 Wattle Street, though internal walls will be removed to facilitate the reuse of the building.

4.2 Reuse of 144 Wattle Street

The existing house at 144 Wattle Street is to be retained and adaptively reused as accommodation related to the hotel development. It is understood that there will be no change to the exterior of the existing building.

4.3 New Work

It is proposed to redevelop the subject site into a new hotel complex. The new hotel building is massed in a C-shape to the northwestern corner of the site, around an east facing courtyard. A consistent building height of three storeys is proposed along the boundary line, which tapers down to two storeys at the southern end of the Wattle Street interface. It is partially set back from the boundary line at the southern and eastern ends of the building.

Generally, the building is vertically broken up into sections, achieved by protruding portal frame canopies to the ground floor / street level. The sectioning is further expressed at upper levels through material changes and facade arrangements that alternate narrow floor-ceiling windows / precast panels and metal vertical cladding. The proposed external materials feature contemporary finishes in light / terracotta toned palette, including light grey masonry walls, terracotta pre-cast concrete and bronze metal details.

The ground floor street-facing facade, punctuated by canopies, is partially setback from the boundary to provide landscaped planters. A large garden area is proposed to the southwestern portion of the site around the existing cottage.

A hard-surfaced carpark is provided to the northern portion of the site, accessed off Barnard Street via a driveway that extends along the northeastern boundary. Levels 1 and 2 of the building projects over the carparking area along the street and to the south of the courtyard, providing an undercroft to the driveway and drop-off zone. Planting buffers are proposed along the driveway, abutting the neighbouring building, and vegetation including canopy trees are proposed within the carpark area.

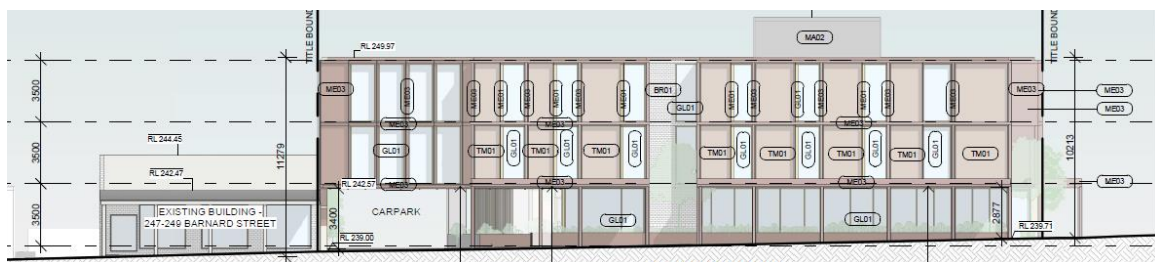


Figure 26: Barnard Street elevation. Source: Life Architecture, 2026.

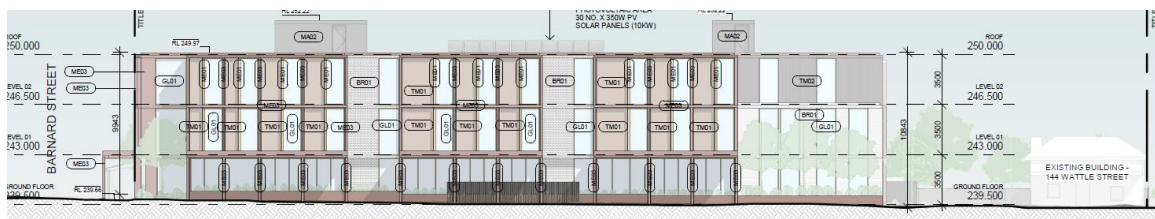


Figure 27: Wattle Street elevation. Retained building at 144 Wattle Street visible to right. Source: Life Architecture, 2026.

5 Assessment

5.1 Demolition

As outlined in Section 3, although the building at 253 Barnard Street is graded as contributory, it is considered to hold little significance within the heritage precinct. Alterations to the front portion of the dwelling have resulted in poor integrity and a diminished contribution to the streetscape. Furthermore, the building is in very poor condition, particularly the rear two-thirds, which was significantly affected by a recent fire. In the absence of specific local policy direction relating to buildings in poor structural condition, the Heritage Design Guidelines advise that the retention of significant or contributory heritage buildings or places is encouraged unless they are structurally unsound and beyond reasonable repair. In the opinion of the structural engineer, the building would require extensive works to restore it to a suitable condition. This would undermine the building's integrity, as a substantial amount of the original fabric would need to be repaired or replaced.

While the demolition of contributory buildings is generally discouraged, there are several circumstances in this instance that justify its removal. The building's deteriorated condition – resulting from recent fire damage, structural subfloor failure, and prolonged vacancy – combined with the alterations to the front section of the dwelling, which now makes only a limited contribution to the streetscape, provides reasonable justification for demolition. Additionally, as discussed in the streetscape assessment in Section 3, the western end of Barnard Street between Forest Street and Wattle Street is predominantly commercial in character, and much of the original building fabric has been replaced by late 20th-century commercial development. In this context, 253 Barnard Street makes only a limited contribution to an already compromised streetscape, and its demolition is therefore considered acceptable.

There is no concern with the removal of existing fencing and ground coverings across the broader site, as no elements of heritage significance have been identified.

Internal demolition works associated with the adaptive reuse of the house at 144 Wattle Street are supported in principle, as no internal heritage controls apply. These works will not affect the building's structural integrity or alter important external features such as the chimney, original windows, and doors, which are to be retained.

5.2 Reuse of 144 Wattle Street

The proposed retention of the existing house at 144 Wattle Street, and integration into the hotel development scheme, is supported as a good heritage outcome as it allows for opportunities to reactivate the building and ensure its ongoing conservation and maintenance into the future. As such, conservation works are recommended to be undertaken to maintain and enhance the condition of the house. It is recommended that a full schedule of conservation works be provided as a condition to the planning permit.

The adaptive reuse of the house at 144 Wattle Street is supported in principle, as no internal heritage controls apply. It is understood that any internal alterations associated with the reuse of the existing house will not have impact on external appearance of the house (e.g. no new openings introduced, or existing openings impacted with new walls). The reuse of the cottage is therefore supported from a heritage perspective.

The proposal also benefits from the inclusion of a generous garden area that provides a buffer between the cottage and the new development. The landscape design clearly integrates the existing house into the broader site layout, including pathways that connect original doorways to the new building and car parking areas

5.3 New Work

The size of the site and extent of open space provide ample opportunity for new development. Generally, policy per Clause 15.03-1L "support(s) new buildings that do not adversely affect the significance, character or appearance of the heritage precinct and are visually recessive." While the construction of a new three-storey hotel would alter the streetscape character of the prominent

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Barnard and Wattle Streets intersection, the proposal to construct a hotel at the vacant lot is principally supported as the site is currently underutilised and will benefit from new use.

Generally, the proposal is well-designed and responsive to characteristics of the precinct and is a supportable outcome from a heritage perspective, as further outlined below.

5.3.1 Scale, Height, Form and Massing

The objectives of Policy at Clause 15.03-1L are to ensure that the “design of new buildings respond to the context of the heritage precinct and nearby contributory buildings,” including their scale, height and massing. Generally, the C-shaped massing of the new hotel positions the bulk of the building away from the low-scale development to the southeast and southwest. While the dominant character of the precinct is one to two storey development, the commercial streetscape along Barnard Street has greater scope to accommodate the proposed three-storey form, as there is historic and contextual precedent of prominent buildings occupying corner sites along Barnard Street.

The Heritage Design Guidelines advise that the “overall shape and volume and the arrangement of the parts of any new development should not dominate the Contributory buildings within the heritage precinct,” particularly for new buildings on corner sites when viewed from the footpath directly opposite in both streets. Impacts of the proposed three-storey form adjoining 247–249 Barnard Street is reduced by setting this portion of the building behind the existing parapet and incorporating an under-croft treatment, which lightens the ground plane and allows views through to the existing building. A two-storey transitional element is provided toward the single-storey house at 144 Wattle Street, further reducing the impact on the cottage and the surrounding residential streetscape.

Additionally, other strategies relating to setback, design articulation, and the selection of materials and finishes have been employed to minimise impacts of scale relative to the surrounding context – detailed further in the following sections.



Figure 28: Tiered massing approaching 144 Wattle Street.
Source: Life Architecture, 2026.



Figure 29: Setback massing behind 247-249 Barnard Street. Source: Life Architecture, 2026.

5.3.2 Setbacks, Rhythm and Orientation to the street

Construction along the Barnard Street boundary is acceptable as it is generally consistent with the siting of neighbouring properties in the streetscape. The hotel is set behind the curved return parapet wall of the existing building at 247-249 Barnard Street (similar to the siting of the current building at 253 Barnard Street), ensuring the adjoining principal façade / important architectural elements that contribute to the building's significance remain legible from the streetscape.

As outlined in Section 5.3.1, there is strong contextual support for the new building to ‘wrap’ around the corner to Wattle Street, with additional setback and siting strategies proposed to reduce impact on the significance and heritage character of the residential streetscape. The new building is set back approximately 2.1 m as it approaches the existing house at 144 Wattle Street. While this varies

from the Heritage Design Guidelines, which advise that setbacks should be consistent with adjoining contributory elements, additional strategies such as the proposed separation and transition in scale provides a buffer and ensures the existing building is not dominated by the new development.

The staggered setback toward the houses relieves views from Barnard Street across Wattle Street, which responds to the policy objective at Clause 15.03-1L that “views to adjoining heritage places or precincts from the public realm should not be obscured by new development.” On balance, the proposed siting of the hotel development and staggered setback is acceptable from a heritage perspective.

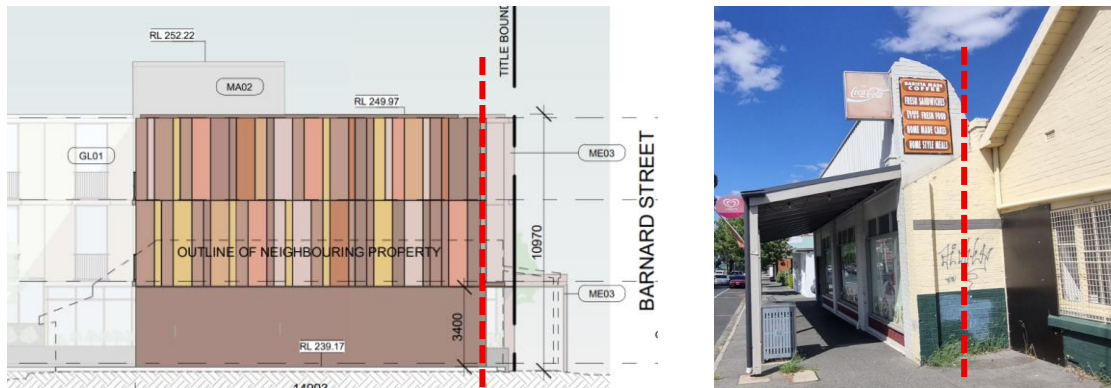


Figure 30: Eastern section of the building set back behind the verandah and portion of curved parapet of the existing building at 247-249 Barnard Street (indicated with red line), which is similar to the siting of the existing building. Source: Life Architecture annotated by Trethowan Heritage.

5.3.3 Design Articulation

Overall, the architectural detailing of the proposed development is well considered in response to the heritage precinct. The strong vertical expression helps break down the building's volume and provides a sympathetic response to the rhythm of the streetscape. The street canopies further assist in visually segmenting the building and act as an activation element for the public realm, while also offering a contemporary interpretation of the historic canopies and verandahs characteristic of Barnard Street.

The scale and proportions of openings are appropriate for the precinct, with projecting horizontal and vertical elements that introduce depth to the façades. As the building transitions toward the existing cottage at 144 Wattle Street, the use of narrower glazing and increased masonry creates a finer grain that aligns with the residential character of this part of the precinct.

Additional architectural strategies add visual interest while ensuring the new building remains sympathetic without directly replicating heritage detailing. The inset corner treatment and the limitation of projecting canopies to the ground floor (rather than forming upper-level balcony structures) allow the upper storeys and overall form to remain more subdued and non-dominant when compared with the Victorian terrace at the corner of Barnard and Forest Street. Landscaping along the ground-floor street frontages further softens the building edges and establishes a horizontal 'base' that visually grounds the building, similar to the bluestone plinths commonly observed across the precinct.

Collectively, these strategies contribute to a supportable heritage outcome. They demonstrate a contemporary architectural response that avoids mimicry while respecting the scale, character, and visual hierarchy of the precinct, consistent with the policy direction at Clause 15.03-1L.

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Figure 31: Design articulation and detailing referencing two-storey Victorian terrace on the other corner. Source: Life Architecture (left) and Google Streetview (right).

5.3.4 Materials and Finishes

The proposed material palette of the new work is overall restrained, neutral, and drawn from the precinct character. Specifically, the use of terracotta palette and textured masonry elements across the primary facades is an interpretation of the red face brick materiality of Victorian era buildings and provides continuity across the precinct.

A lighter palette is introduced at key transition points, such as the setback tiered forms adjoining existing building interfaces, which reinforces the transitional nature of these elements. This shift in palette helps these sections appear more visually recessive and reduces their prominence in the broader streetscape, which is a good heritage outcome.

5.3.5 New Carpark and Landscaping

Policy at Clause 15.03-1L supports “car parking, car accommodation and associated accessways that do not dominate or affect the significance of a heritage place.” The proposed carpark is acceptable as a reasonable amenity proposed for a hotel. It is appropriately concealed from the Wattle Street and Barnard Street frontages which minimises visual impacts to the wider heritage precinct. Additionally, there is precedence of the location being used as a car dealership since the 1970s. Hard paving associated with the carpark is discreetly positioned behind the massing of the hotel, and where the driveway is visible from Barnard Street, the extent of paving has been minimised to limit its impact on the streetscape character.

The landscaping strategy aligns with the Heritage Design Guidelines, which encourage the use of planting to soften and integrate new development within heritage settings. The proposed planters contribute to this outcome and provide continuity with the landscaped setting around the cottage at 144 Wattle Street, helping to visually unify the two buildings within a single development scheme. The landscaping surrounding the existing cottage also ensures that an appropriate heritage setting is maintained.

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6 Conclusion

The proposed development achieves an appropriate balance between facilitating new use of the currently vacant lot and unoccupied buildings at the subject site and respecting the established character of the heritage precinct.

The retention and adaptive reuse of the cottage at 144 Wattle Street is supported as a positive heritage outcome, ensuring its ongoing conservation and maintenance within a streetscape that is representative of the precinct's 'golden era' residential character. By contrast, the demolition of 253 Barnard Street is justified based on its poor structural condition, which in the opinion of the structural engineer is beyond repair, and limited contribution to the streetscape. This is particularly relevant given the western end of Barnard Street has undergone substantial change and is now predominantly commercial in character, with much of the original building fabric replaced by late 20th-century development. In this context, the proposed demolition is considered acceptable and is further supported by the high-quality design of the replacement building.

The design of the new hotel demonstrates a considered response to the heritage precinct. Various design strategies have been employed to ease the boundaries between new and existing buildings; for example, setting the new form back, tiered massing at interfaces with adjoining contributory buildings, taking design cues from adjacent heritage buildings and historic precedents, and selecting contemporary materials and finishes that are sympathetic and complementary to the precinct.

In conclusion, the proposed new development is well-designed, visually recessive, and sympathetic to the HO1's prevailing heritage character. It appropriately responds to the policy at Clause 15.03 of the Bendigo Planning Scheme and is therefore supported from a heritage perspective.

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