

## Submission # 24 - Additional Information

SJB Planning



Ms Angela Schirripa  
Senior Strategic Planner  
Moreland City Council

Submitted via email: [strategicplanning@moreland.vic.gov.au](mailto:strategicplanning@moreland.vic.gov.au)

Date: 22 February 2019

Re: **Submission to Exhibited Amendment C174 to the Moreland Planning Scheme  
Heritage Gap Study Implementation**

Dear Ms Schirripa,

We act on behalf of [REDACTED] the owners of land at [REDACTED]. It is noted that Mr and Mrs Massimino also own the adjoining land to the west at [REDACTED].

Our client's site is affected by proposed Amendment C174 (Heritage Gap Study Implementation) to the Moreland Planning Scheme. The Amendment proposes to apply Heritage Overlay – Schedule 540 (HO540) to the land on a permanent basis, as it has been identified as part of the Phoenix Estate of the Closer Settlement Scheme. The site is currently protected by HO540 on an interim basis – a control which expires at the end of 2019.

It is acknowledged in the Amendment documents that Council has not had the opportunity to inspect the property.

### THE SUBJECT SITE

The subject site is located on the northern side of [REDACTED] approximately 250 metres north of [REDACTED]. It is approximately 650 square metres in area. The site benefits of a secondary laneway access from the rear.

Currently, the subject site comprises two existing dwellings arranged one behind the other (refer to Figure 1 below). It is the dwelling on the rear portion of the site that is identified in Council's study as potentially being of heritage value. The view of this dwelling from [REDACTED] is almost entirely obscured by the second dwelling on the land, which is a single storey dwelling of later construction (1970s).

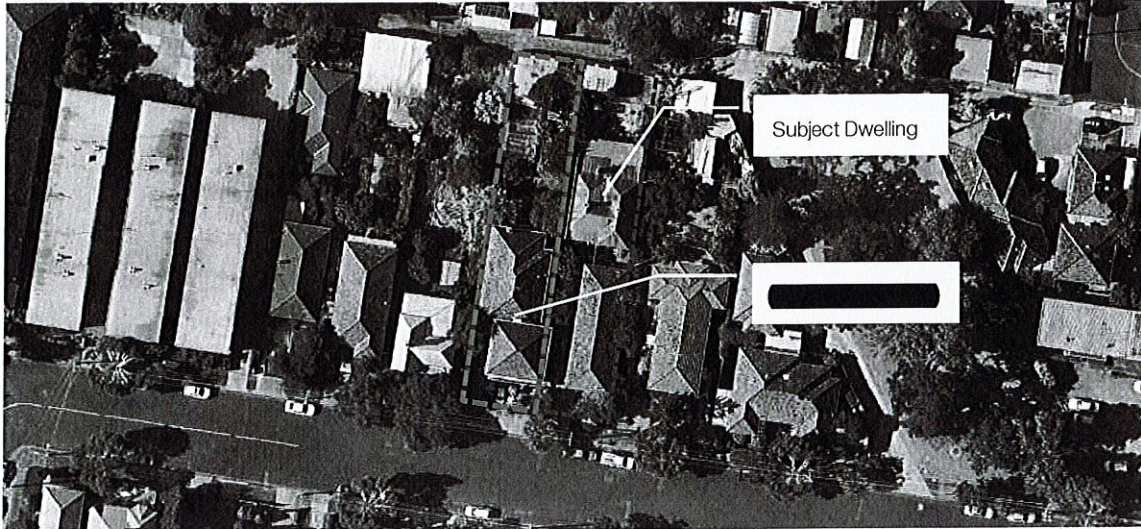


Figure 1: Aerial Photograph of the Subject Site and Surrounds (Nearmap)

## SUBMISSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Heritage Assessment

It is submitted that the permanent application of HO540 to the subject land is not warranted. Architectural Conservation Consultant, Peter Andrew Barrett, has been engaged by the property owners to provide advice in relation to the proposed Amendment, insofar as it affects their landholding.

Mr Barrett recently inspected the site and undertook an examination of the dwelling in question. He concludes that HO540 should not apply to [REDACTED] for the following reasons:

- There have been significant alterations/removal of the original fabric of the dwelling, including changes to window openings, remodelling of the interior, lowered ceilings and mid-twentieth century plaster mouldings fitted, and reconstruction of the east elevation in a different brick bond;
- Later subdivisions have distorted the original subdivision pattern of the estate – three houses are now built upon the original allotment; and
- Construction of a house in its front setback in 1971 and concealing the original dwelling from the public realm

As a result, the property provides no appreciable value in understanding the historical association of this portion of Brunswick West within the Closer Settlement Schemes. It is also noted that the extent of alterations are, in some instances, more significant than other properties that have been omitted from Amendment.

Please refer to the enclosed assessment prepared by Peter Andrew Barrett for a more detailed heritage analysis.

### Future Development Potential

The subject site and its neighbour at no. [REDACTED] are both located within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 1 (NRZ1) and are affected by Development Contributions Plan Overlay – Schedule 1 (DCP1). The NRZ1 control has the effect of limiting future development on the land to two (2) levels and requires a minimum garden area allocation in any future development proposal.

However, the land benefits from the following attributes which, in the absence of a Heritage Overlay, identify it as suitable for future multi-dwelling residential redevelopment:

- The subject land and the adjoining land at [REDACTED] are in contiguous ownership and are able to be readily consolidated into a single landholding with a site area in the order of 1,400sqm;
- It has a laneway frontage to the rear that could be relied upon for vehicular access; and
- The established built form character of the immediately surrounding context is diverse, and includes many examples of multi-unit residential development, including a number of two storey apartment buildings.

The application of HO540, as proposed under the Amendment, would significantly restrict the capacity for a future multi-unit development to be realised on the land, thereby diminishing its value.

It is submitted on behalf of our clients, and having regard to the unambiguous conclusions drawn in Mr Barrett's heritage assessment, that the imposition of permanent heritage protection for [REDACTED] is entirely unwarranted.

If the Amendment were to proceed as currently proposed, we say that the broader objectives of the Moreland Planning Scheme with respect to promoting housing diversity and affordability in appropriately located, well serviced areas, would be unnecessarily undermined.

## CONCLUSION

On the basis of the submissions above, and those made in the accompanying heritage assessment, our clients respectfully request that the subject site at [REDACTED] be omitted from Amendment C174, as permanent heritage protection of the property is not warranted.

We look forward to your review and consideration of the matters raised. Should you have any additional information or wish to discuss any of the above concerns in further detail, please do not hesitate to contact me at 8648 3500.

Yours sincerely,



Anna Thang  
Senior Planner  
[athang@sjbplanning.com.au](mailto:athang@sjbplanning.com.au)

15 February 2019

Angela Schirripa  
Senior Strategic Planner  
Moreland City Council  
90 Bell Street  
Coburg Victoria 3058

**Peter Andrew Barrett**

Architectural Conservation  
Consultant

Melbourne  
San Francisco

Level 31  
120 Collins Street  
Melbourne  
Victoria 3000  
Australia

T: 61 3 9639 2646  
E: [info@pabarrett.com](mailto:info@pabarrett.com)  
W: [www.pabarrett.com](http://www.pabarrett.com)

Dear Angela,

**Re: Amendment C174 to the Moreland Planning Scheme  
Proposed inclusion of a house at 32 Passfield Street,  
Brunswick West in a Serial Heritage Overlay**

I have been asked by Mr & Mrs Massimino and their family, the owners of this site, to assess the inclusion of their house in a proposed heritage overlay. I understand that as part of Amendment C174 of the *Moreland Planning Scheme*, Council proposes to include this house within a proposed serial listing of houses built within the Phoenix Estate of the Closer Settlement Scheme. This proposed Serial Listing is in light of a recommendation in the Context Pty Ltd, 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study. Stage 2 (draft) version 2, 27 November 2017' (hereon referred to as the 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017').

I inspected the subject site and the house (internally and externally) on 14 February 2019. I have also reviewed the 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017' and its recommendation for the proposed inclusion of this house in this serial listing. From this, and from some additional enquiries that I have made, I have come to the conclusion that there is no merit in placing such a heritage control on this site. The basis for my conclusion is outlined below:

*Closer Settlement Schemes and Other Government Housing Initiatives*

The 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017' has focussed on two government initiatives of the early twentieth century for the provision of housing (home ownership) for people of limited means – this being the Closer Settlement Schemes and the War Service Homes Commission. Discussion of these schemes should not be looked at in isolation, rather they should be assessed in the context of other government initiatives to provide affordable housing.

**Peter Andrew Barrett**

I note that the 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017' identifies the establishment in 1913 of a branch of the State Savings Bank of Victoria at Brunswick (page 27). The importance of this branch goes beyond its architectural qualities discussed in the heritage study, as it is part of a broader historical narrative of the provision of affordable housing for the working classes in the early years of the twentieth century.

The Savings Bank Act No 2280, passed by State Government of Victoria in 1910, shifted the bank from being merely a savings bank, to allowing it to lend on dwellings to be erected or purchased. These were to mainly finance suburban properties, and these were initially termed 'cottage loans'. (Murray & White, *A Bank for the People: A History of the State Savings Bank of Victoria*, page 170-172). In this regard, the discussion of the Closer Settlement Scheme in the 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017' cannot be made in isolation from this, the formative years of what became the State's largest home lender.

In addition to the State Savings Bank of Victoria, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia was established in 1911. In addition to being the nation's Central Bank, one of its roles was to provide housing finance. Other government initiatives for housing include the Housing Commission of Victoria established, later, in 1937. Brunswick Council was one of the few Council's in Victoria that developed sites with the Housing Commission of Victoria for people of limited means.

Without any analysis of the Closer Settlement Schemes in Brunswick with other State and Commonwealth Government housing initiatives, the success and significance to Moreland of the Closer Settlement Schemes have not been established.

At Brunswick, the Closer Settlement Scheme of the Phoenix Estate provided land and housing for working people (employed men); and not for farming, as is claimed in parts of the 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017'. This is obvious from the size of the estate's allotments, which being a little larger than a standard suburban block would be unable to support farming activity of any appreciable level. In my view, the 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017' has not made a clear distinction between the rural and suburban Closer Settlement Schemes.

On this basis, the Theme 5.3 Farming in the Twentieth Century: Village farming schemes in Brunswick is recommended to be removed from the citation.

### *Phoenix Estate*

The Phoenix Estate at Brunswick West is one of four Closer Settlement Schemes identified in the 'Moreland Gap Study 2017'. Later development of the estate in the Post-war years has diminished any visible understanding of this part of Brunswick West being a Closer Settlement estate. Later subdivision of the allotments has distorted the original subdivision pattern of the estate – and in the case of 32 Passfield Street, three houses are now built upon the original allotment. The original housing, now dispersed amongst mostly Post-war flats and units, provides no interpretative value of its origins with the Closer Settlement Scheme; as the scale, materials, massing and detailing is that commonly found on housing throughout Brunswick.

Apart from the street layout of the Phoenix Estate, little physical evidence remains of this estate and its early character. In its current condition, the Phoenix Estate does not demonstrate Closer Settlement Schemes in Brunswick. In my view, it does not demonstrate in its remaining fabric to any appreciable level the theme, Theme 6.4 Building houses in the twentieth century, Settlement schemes. For this reason, it does not meet the benchmark for inclusion in a serial heritage overlay.

### *32 Passfield Street*

It is acknowledged that Council's consultant has not had the opportunity to inspect this house. On inspection, it is evident that the house has undergone change, which has altered and/or removed fabric. The level of change is equal, and in some cases more, than other houses in the Phoenix Estate that were omitted from the proposed serial heritage overlay because of change to their fabric. Two examples are 3 Balfe Crescent and 36 Passfield Street, which, despite being quite visible from the street, and retaining their original form, are omitted because their verandah has been changed and/or windows altered.

The changes that have been made to 3 Balfe Crescent and 36 Passfield Street are in my view cosmetic changes that are easily reversed. The change that has occurred to the subject house, however, goes beyond cosmetic change. Unlike the two other houses cited, the Massimino's house has had its context altered quite significantly by the construction of a house in its front setback in 1971. This Post-war house just about conceals the original house from view from the public realm, limiting its contribution to Passfield Street and to an understanding of its association with the Phoenix Estate. I note in the 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017', that assessment of housing is based upon visible elevations from the street (pages 32 & 33).

Apart from the change to its context, a significant amount of change has occurred to the fabric of the Massimino's house. The middle portion of the east elevation has been rebuilt in a different brick bond (English Bond) to the remainder of the brick walls of the house (Stretcher Bond). The change to the window openings goes beyond replacing window frames. Rather, window openings on the house have been enlarged, and in places industrial style concrete lintels have been fitted to support the walls above the widened wall openings. Many windows are aluminium frame; and one is a mid-twentieth century timber frame window, which is also not consistent with this style of house. Change to the verandah includes a new wall opening at one end, and a new plaster soffit on the verandah. The interior of the house has been remodelled, with ceilings lowered and mid-twentieth century plaster mouldings fitted.

Some importance is placed in the heritage study on this house being built of brick, which is considered rare with these Closer Settlement houses in Brunswick. However, within the environs of the subject house, at least one other Closer Settlement house is built with brick (10 Allard Street), and this is noted in the study (page 104). This is described as having a brick wing, but an MMBW detail plan of 1917, shows that a larger part of the house is brick construction.

In my view, the 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017' places too much weight on whether housing is built of brick or timber. It is inconsequential in determining their heritage value, as both materials are commonly found on housing in Moreland. Rather, if a material was rare, used in an unusual manner, or demonstrates innovation, this would be cause for that material to be assessed as important in an understanding of a heritage place. An example of this is noted within the study (page 22), as the house at 9 Waxman Parade is an early example of reinforced concrete construction on a residential building in Brunswick.

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### *Serial Heritage Listings*

The Practice Note 1, Applying the Heritage Overlay (2018), discussed the use of serial listings, noting:

*Places that share a common history and/or significance, but which do not adjoin each other or form a geographical grouping **may** (bold my emphasis) be considered for treatment as a single heritage place.*

Practice Note 1 cites two examples, Chicory Kilns on Phillip Island, and the former Rosella factory complex at Richmond. These two examples, unlike the proposed Closer Settlement houses, are clearly industrial buildings/objects, have a consistent character, and consequently are easily able to be interpreted as sharing a common historic theme.

Similarly, the Beaufort Houses in Pascoe Vale (page 35), subject to a serial listing in the *Moreland Planning Scheme*, are of a relatively uniform prefabricated design of mid-twentieth century origin, and easily interpreted as sharing common characteristics and forming a dispersed group of similar buildings. The housing types of the Closer Settlement Schemes are on the other hand representative of early twentieth century housing typically found throughout Brunswick, and provide no evidence in their fabric to distinguish them apart from this other housing.

In this respect, this proposed serial, or group, listing is in conflict with the view expressed by the Planning Panel in Amendment C149 of the *Moreland Planning Scheme*, which is reproduced in the 'Moreland Heritage Gap Study 2017' (page 35):

*However given the buildings in a serial listing are not proximate and do not create a recognisable place in the same way as occurs with a precinct, **they must have very well defined characteristics to be able to be recognised as a group.** (bold my emphasis)*

In my view, the claim that the houses are older than many others in the street, is not a sufficient reason to say that they have characteristics that convey that they are houses of a Closer Settlement Scheme.

#### *Conclusion*

The 'Moreland Gap Study 2017' has identified this part of Brunswick West to be one of four Closer Settlement Schemes in Brunswick. In identifying the Closer Settlement Schemes in Brunswick, the study has not assessed this with other government initiatives in the twentieth century for the provision of low cost housing. In the absence of any real analysis, it cannot be determined whether the Closer Settlement Schemes of Brunswick were particularly successful and/or significant in the provision of low cost housing in Moreland.

Little remains in the fabric of this part of West Brunswick that provides interpretative value in an understanding that this was the Phoenix Estate. Apart from the layout of the streets, little remains of the original subdivisional pattern of the estate, as allotments over time have been subdivided and no longer have a consistent subdivision pattern. Many of the houses of the estate have been demolished, others altered, and in the case of the Massimino's house, it has been concealed from view from the public realm by Post-war housing. The remaining housing of the early years of the estate is of no particular importance in term of its scale, materials, massing and detailing. Rather, it has the characteristics of housing commonly found in Brunswick built in the early years of the twentieth century, providing no evidence of its Closer Settlement Scheme associations.

Given the change that has occurred, this area is of local interest in terms of its Closer Settlement Scheme origins. However, its remaining fabric does not hold sufficient heritage value to support the serial heritage overlay proposed. It cannot be considered to meet any of the HERCON criteria.

Should the proposed serial listing of housing associated with the Phoenix Estate proceed, I recommend that the Massimino's house (32 Passfield Street) is omitted from the heritage overlay. Inspection of the house by Council's consultant will reveal that a significant level of change to the house and its context has occurred. The house is mostly concealed from view from the public realm, and added with change that has occurred to its fabric, it has rendered the house well below the benchmark of housing marked for inclusion in the proposed heritage overlay.

In its changed setting, and its altered condition, the subject house has no appreciable value in understanding the historical association of this portion of Brunswick West with the Closer Settlement Schemes. It is on this basis that I recommend that the inclusion of this house in the heritage overlay does not proceed.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance with this matter.

Yours sincerely



Peter Barrett  
Master of Architectural  
History & Conservation (Melb.)

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Peter Andrew Barrett

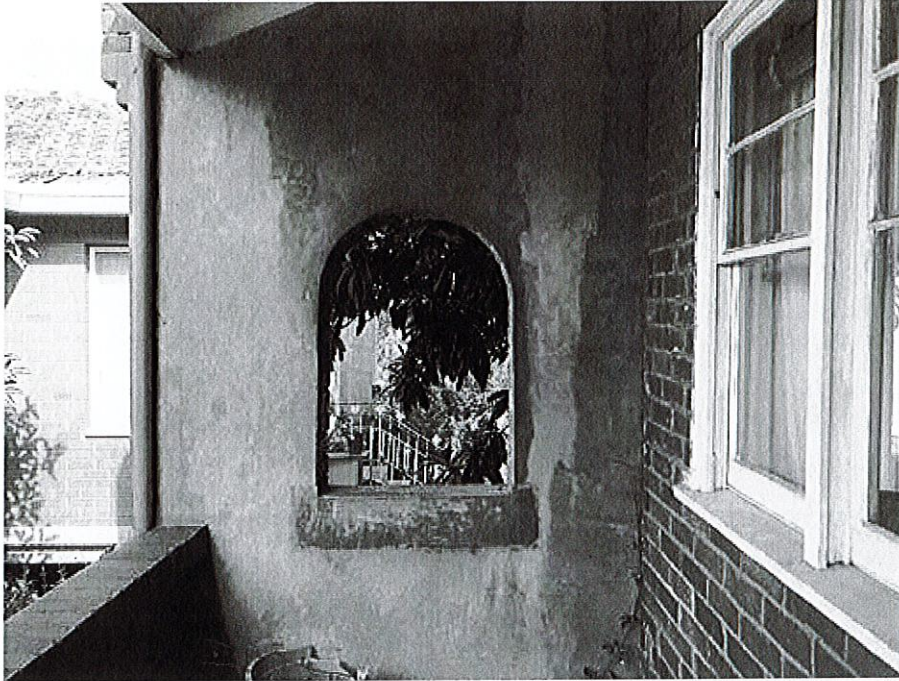


*House is concealed by Post-war dwellings when the site is viewed from the street.*

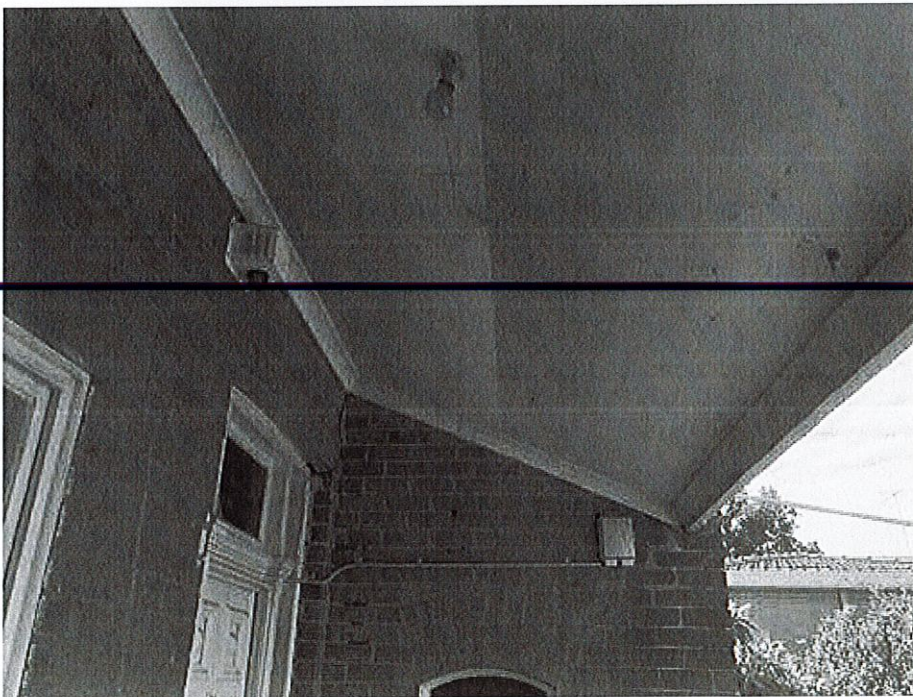


Peter Andrew Barrett

*Front of the house, viewed from on the site*



*Alterations to front verandah*



Peter Andrew Barrett

*New soffit on front verandah*



*Middle portion of the east elevation rebuilt in an English brick bond.*