

Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

Name: Actor's Studio House
Address: Rear, 22 Shiel Street, North Melbourne
Local Government Authority: Melbourne City
Provisional VHR No. PROV H2420



May 2022, Actor's Studio House

Executive Director recommendation

Under Part 3, Division 3 of the *Heritage Act 2017* ('the Act') I recommend to the Heritage Council of Victoria that the Actor's Studio House, Rear, 22 Shiel Street, North Melbourne, should be included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) in the category of registered place.

STEVEN AVERY
Executive Director, Heritage Victoria
DATE OF RECOMMENDATION: 18 May 2022



Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

Executive Director recommendation to the Heritage Council of Victoria

The Executive Director, Heritage Victoria ('Executive Director'), recommends that the Heritage Council include the Actor's Studio House, Rear, 22 Shiel Street, North Melbourne, in the VHR in accordance with section 49 of the Act by determining:

- That the Actor's Studio House is of State-level cultural heritage significance and should be included in the VHR in the category of registered place in accordance with section 49(1)(a) of the Act.
- That the proposed categories of works or activities which may be carried out in relation to the Actor's Studio House for which a permit under the Act is not required will not harm the cultural heritage significance of the place under section 49(3) of the Act.

Site Visit Photography

The owner of the Actor's Studio House requested that no interior photos be made available to the public. A confidential supplementary document of interior photos has been provided to the Heritage Council for the purposes of decision making. The Executive Director thanks the owner for their assistance in this regard.



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The process from here

1. The Heritage Council publishes the Executive Director's recommendation (section 41).

The Heritage Council will publish the Executive Director's recommendation on its website for a period of 60 days.

2. Making a submission to the Heritage Council (sections 44 and 45)

Within the 60 day publication period, any person or body with a real and substantial interest in the place or object can make a submission to the Heritage Council. This submission can support the recommendation, or object to the recommendation and a hearing can be requested in relation to the submission. Information about making a submission and submission forms are available on the Heritage Council of Victoria's website:

<https://heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/registrations-reviews/executive-director-recommendations/>

3. Heritage Council determination (sections 46 and 49)

The Heritage Council is an independent statutory body. It is responsible for making the final determination to include or not include the place or object in the VHR, or amend a place or object already in the VHR.

If no submissions are received the Heritage Council must make a determination within 40 days of the publication closing date.

If submissions are received, the Heritage Council may decide to hold a hearing in relation to the submission. If a hearing does take place, the Heritage Council must make a determination within 90 days after the completion of the hearing.

4. Obligations of owners of places and objects (sections 42 and 43)

The owner of a place or object which is the subject of a recommendation to the Heritage Council has certain obligations under the *Heritage Act 2017*. These relate to advising the Executive Director in writing of any works or activities that are being carried out, proposed or planned for the place or object.

The owner also has an obligation to provide a copy of this statement of recommendation to any potential purchasers of the place or object before entering into a contract.

5. Further information

The relevant sections of the Act are provided at Appendix 1.

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Description

The following is a description of the Actor's Studio House at the time of the site inspection by Heritage Victoria in March 2022.

The Actor's Studio House is a small two-storey building composed of corrugated iron forms within concrete blocks and Western Red Cedar timber framing. The most prominent corrugated iron form is a tall cylinder in which the compact internal staircase is located. The main entry point is on the west side from the backyard of 22 Shiel Street which opens onto a spacious ground floor living area with a mezzanine level forming a balcony on the northern side. Inbuilt shelves line the southern wall and there is floor to ceiling glazing on the east and west sides, including an additional access door to the east. A pot belly stove sits to the west of the living area and a recycled sewer pipe acts as its flue, protruding upwards to the mezzanine floor, then horizontally above the living area then vertically through the roof. To the west there is a dining area with a curved wall which leads to a compact kitchen with inbuilt shelves. The flooring is cork tiles on a concrete slab. A tight circular internal staircase is accessed from the dining room and leads to the accommodation area consisting of a small bedroom to the west, a bathroom and a laundry over the dining space. Some small gauge corrugated iron is used around the wet areas. The private accommodation area opens onto the mezzanine study area which has the feeling of a stage overlooking the living area.



2022, Actor's Studio House

Southwestern elevation looking from garden of 22 Shiel Street

Source: Heritage Victoria



2022, Actor's Studio House

Southern elevation showing door, internal circular staircase enclosure and view of kitchen shelves.

Source: Heritage Victoria

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2022, Actor's Studio House
Southern elevation
Source: Heritage Victoria



2022, Actor's Studio House
Back door (northeastern elevation) looking into living space
Source: Heritage Victoria



2022, Actor's Studio House
Northeastern elevation view from Kerrs Lane (original entrance point)
Source: Heritage Victoria

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2022, Actor's Studio House
Front door looking from garden (southwestern elevation) looking into living space
Source: Heritage Victoria



2022, Prefabricated Garden Shed (c.2000) at the Actor's Studio House
Not of cultural heritage significance.
Source: Heritage Victoria



RAIA Victorian Chapter Plaque 1980
Source: Heritage Victoria
Note: The builder was Dirk van Meurs (not Dirk Muir).

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History

Suzanne Dance

Judith Suzanne (Su) Dance was born in Melbourne in 1942 and studied at the University of Melbourne, graduating in 1965. In that year, 5% of registered architects in Victoria were women (55 out of 1,171). After working for a number of local firms (including Mockridge, Stahle & Mitchell) and the NSW Government Architect's Office, she began her own practice in 1971. Her early work and concerns ran in parallel to the issues that would increasingly come to command the attention of the architectural community. These included challenging government policies of slum clearance, particularly in Fitzroy, pursuing protection of heritage places through the new *Historic Buildings Act 1974* and fostering interests in history, conservation, and the value of neighbourhood communities, which are reflected in her design approaches. In the early 1980s, Dance was a member of the Historic Buildings Council of Victoria.

Dance was a foundation member of the Fitzroy Housing Repair Advisory Service (FHRAS) which was established in 1975 by Dance, Peter Lovell and Peter Elliott. FHRAS was a community service providing free information, advice and referral on housing repair and building issues for those who could otherwise not afford it, while conserving at-risk housing stock in the ageing fabric of Fitzroy. At a time of significant social optimism and political participation, the FHRAS was a local response to a global movement of architectural activism and community empowerment. Dance was also Secretary of the Urban Conservation Advisory Committee of the Fitzroy Council (1977-83) and a member of the Fitzroy History Society. Her skills were acknowledged in 1981 when she was awarded a scholarship to attend the ICCROM Architectural Conservation Course in Rome. After her return to Melbourne a year later, she became a consultant in architectural history and conservation, and taught at RMIT University during the 1980s.

Australian Architecture in the 1970s

Between the 1950s and 1970s multiple architectural streams emerged which reflected the diversity and innovation of design philosophies, aesthetics and approaches to building materials. The leading figures in 1950s architecture in Victoria continued their impact through the 1960s and 1970s and were joined by the next generation of architecture graduates, such as Daryl Jackson and Maggie Edmond. Influences on domestic architecture diversified. Organic architecture, New Brutalism, as well as movements in design from Japan, Scandinavia and the West Coast of the United States, all increasingly found expression in the architect designed residences and holiday homes of metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

In the 1970s a number of architects working in Australia were inspired by the landscape and their designs reflected environmental concerns. Ideas around sustainability prompted the use of low-cost, rustic and recycled materials and natural colours and textures which created a feeling of familiarity and closeness. In this school, buildings were reconceptualised as psychologically nurturing spaces for human activity, and designers experimented with smaller scale homes, and vernacular materials such as corrugated iron. During this era, the fusion of indoors and outdoors and distinctive spatial composition became accepted as a primary mode of architectural expression. These principles were also seen in larger scale commissions by Neil Clerehan, Guilford Bell, McGlashan & Everist and Kevin Borland.

Actor's Studio House 1975

The Actor's Studio House was designed by Suzanne Dance for actor Max Gillies to be the first resident. It was built on land owned by Bill and Lorna Hannan. All four moved in socially progressive creative circles in inner Melbourne during the 1970s. Dance and Gillies worked together to ensure that the space suited Gillies' creative and residential needs. Dance's inspiration for corrugated iron forms came from the higgledy-piggledy corridor of sheds, lean-tos, and fences of this material encountered along the walk from Dryburgh Street to the end of Kerrs Lane (where the original separate entrance at the rear of 22 Shiel Street was located). The Studio was constructed by

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Dirk van Meurs, a skilled Melbourne builder Dance closely worked with to create specific forms, details and finishes.

The Actor's Studio House is typical of Dance's work. It reflects her interests in the inner city, a restrained and resourceful approach to design, and commitment to working closely with clients to produce finely crafted results on a budget. The Studio borrows the lush, treed backyard of 22 Shiel Street and has the feeling of an intimate creative sanctuary. The positioning of a new building in relationship to a Victorian terrace speaks to Dance's interest in additions and alterations to heritage buildings, for which she is renowned. The 1970s saw the beginnings of urban renewal, a trend towards conversions of disused industrial and commercial buildings to residential spaces, and sensitive additions to historic residences. From the 1970s onwards, Dance was a key and sought-after exponent of this approach in Melbourne.

1970s corrugated iron revival

Composed of corrugated iron forms, the Actor's Studio House is part of a discernible 'corrugated iron revival' or 'corrugated iron aesthetic' that emerged in Australia during the 1970s. Corrugated iron is a lightweight, strong and durable material invented in Britain in 1829. It weathers relatively well and has been a recognisable element in Australian architecture since the mid-nineteenth century. Some of the first corrugated iron structures in Australia were portable prefabricated buildings shipped to Australia from Britain in the 1850s. Since then, corrugated iron sheeting has been commonly used in farming and industrial buildings, most commonly on roofs.

In the early 1900s, steel began to replace iron in the manufacturing process, but the terms 'corrugated iron' and 'galvanised iron' have persisted to this day. During the 1970s, corrugated iron underwent a revival and became part of designs reminiscent of early Australian bush homes and rural shearing sheds. Glenn Murcutt was one of the chief exponents of the corrugated iron aesthetic first demonstrated at his large Marie Short House at Kempsey, NSW (1975). Murcutt's innovative residential use of corrugated iron at Kempsey was acclaimed and he continued to explore the material throughout his distinguished career. Suzanne Dance's Actor's Studio House is a similarly early example of this aesthetic (1975) although more modest in scale. Dance used new corrugated iron, rather than recycled, because it was more easily bent into arched shapes.¹

Australian Institute of Architects Award 1980

The professional body that has become known as the Australian Institute of Architects (Victorian Chapter) awarded its first medal for architectural excellence in 1929. From that time, women undoubtedly played a role in the creation of critically recognised and awarded buildings in the state. The first woman named in an RAIA (Victoria) award was Renate Block who was commended along with Gerd Block for the Siemens Australasia Headquarters in Richmond in 1964. But it was not until the Actor's Studio House was awarded the Medal for New Housing in 1980 that an award was given by the RAIA (Vic) to a work designed by a woman architect in her own right. That year, the number of registered woman architects in Victoria was 5% (166 out of 2,348).

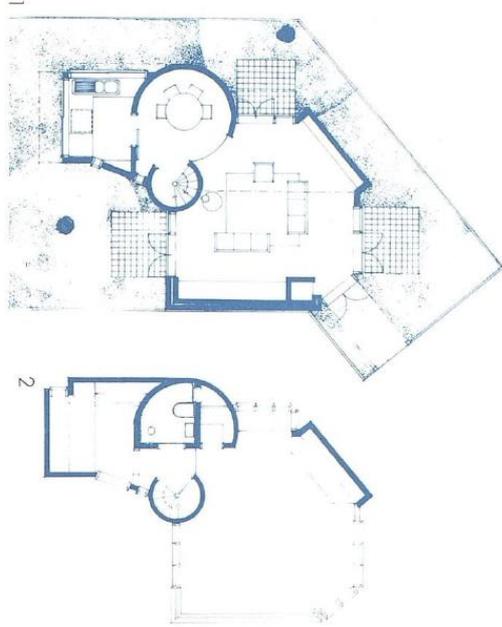
The Actor's Studio House was critically acclaimed and widely published in Australia and internationally. Critic Peter Davey wrote in the UK *Architectural Review* in December 1985:

... Dance has used the material [corrugated iron] in whatever mode (upwards, downwards or sideways) that seemed appropriate for that moment. The result is a remarkably changeful building. It hangs together with a cheerful insouciance, totally different from Glenn Murcutt's perfectionist exercises... It is a new house yet has the feeling of an old one which has been repaired and added to over a long period of time... it reflects and celebrates the muddledness and variety of ordinary life.²

¹ Interview with Suzanne Dance, 29 March 2022.

² Davey, Peter 'Suzanne Dance: House, Melbourne', *Architectural Review* (UK), 1 December 1985.

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Floorplan, Artist's Studio

Source: Peter Davey, 'Suzanne Dance: House, Melbourne', *Architectural Review*, 1 December 1985.

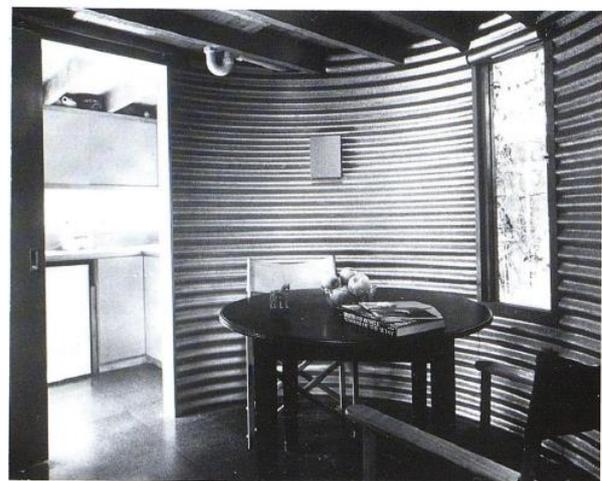


Photo (undated, likely 1980s)

Source: Richard Apperley et al *Identifying Australian Architecture Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1989.



Interior of the Artist's Studio (looking southwest toward the garden of the Shiel Street house) Source: Peter Davey, 'Suzanne Dance: House, Melbourne', *Architectural Review*, 1 December 1985.



Interior of the Artist's Studio (dining room looking to kitchen) Source: Peter Davey, 'Suzanne Dance: House, Melbourne', *Architectural Review*, 1 December 1985.

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Selected bibliography

Burns, Karen 'Su Dance' in Goad, Philip & Willis, Julie (eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2012.

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Davey, Peter 'Suzanne Dance: House, Melbourne', *Architectural Review*, 1 December 1985.

Goad, Philip 'Former Gillies House/Studio', *Melbourne Architecture*, Watermark Press, Boorowa, 2009, p. 206.

Van Schaik, Leon, 'Suzanne Dance', *Transition: Discourse on Architecture*, no.31, 1990, p.38-47.

Willis, Julie *A Statistical Survey of Registered Women Architects in Australia*, Faculty of Art, Architecture & Design, University of South Australia, 1997.

Wixted, D, S. Zahra and S. Reeves 'Studio (flat)', *Survey of Post-War Built Heritage in Victoria*, Oct 2008, p. 209.

Further information

Heritage Overlay	City Of Melbourne HO3, North & West Melbourne Precinct
Other Overlays	Design And Development Overlay (DDO)
Other Listings	NA
Other Names	Studio (flat); Actor's Studio House; Gillies Studio
Date of construction	1975
Architect	Suzanne Dance
Architectural style	Late Twentieth Century

Traditional Owner Information

The Actor's Studio House is located on the traditional land of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung. Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, the Registered Aboriginal Party for this land is the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register

The Actor's Studio House is not included in the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register.

Integrity

The integrity of the place is high. The cultural heritage values can be easily read in the fabric. (March 2022).

Intactness

The intactness of the place is high. (March 2022).

Condition

The condition of the place is excellent. (March 2022).

Note: The condition of a place or object does not influence the assessment of its cultural heritage significance. A place/object/object integral may be in very poor condition and still be of very high cultural heritage significance. Or a place/object/object integral may be in excellent condition but be of low cultural heritage significance.

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Statutory requirements under section 40.

Terms of the recommendation (section 40 (3)(a))

The Executive Director recommends that the Actor's Studio House is included in the VHR in the category of Registered Place

Information to identify the place or object (section 40(3)(b))

Name: Actor's Studio House

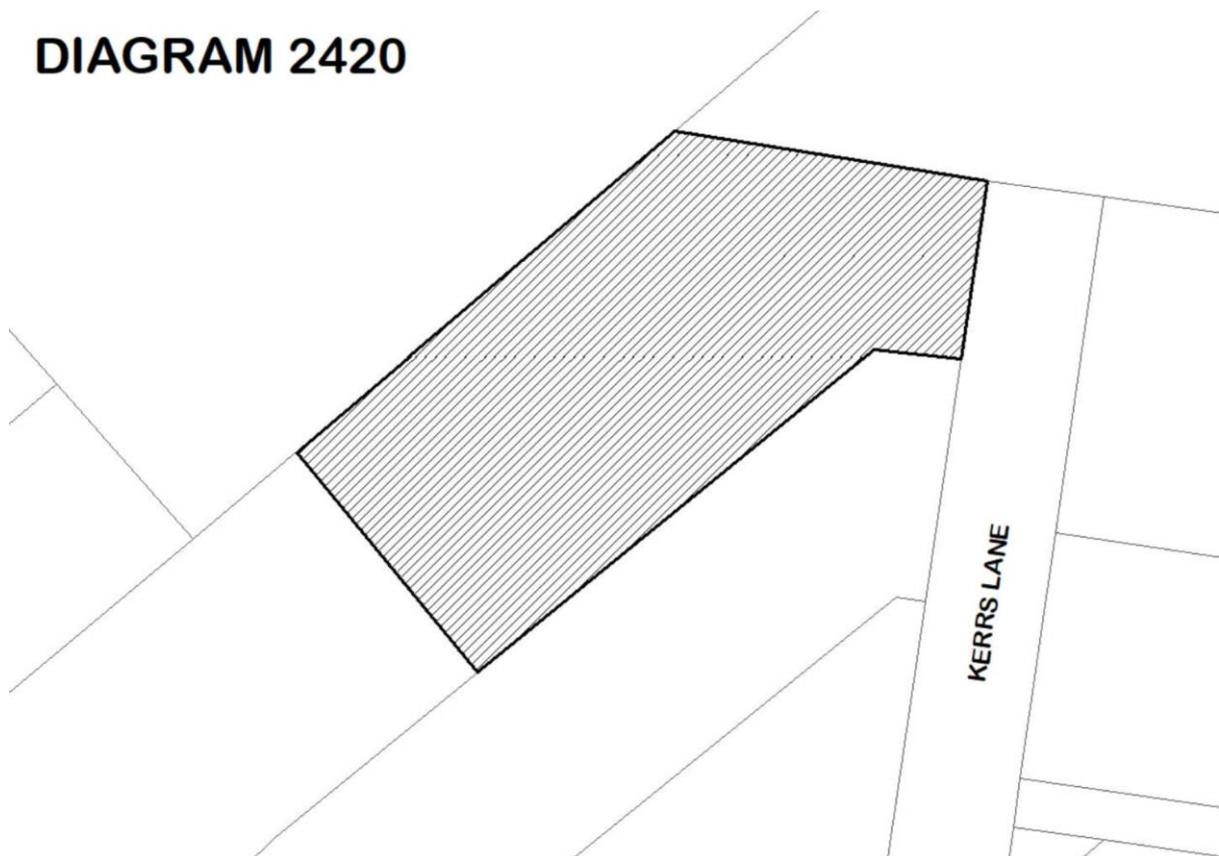
Address: Rear, 22 Shiel Street, North Melbourne

Proposed extent of registration

The Executive Director recommends that the extent of registration for the Actor's Studio House be gazetted as:

All of the place shown outlined on Diagram 2420 encompassing part of Plan of Consolidation 366711 to the northern, southern and eastern lot boundaries, and extending 6 metres from the south western eaves of the building.

DIAGRAM 2420



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Aerial photo of the place (proposed extent of registration is outlined in red at the rear of 22 Shiel Street)

Note: This aerial view provides a visual representation of the place. It is not a precise representation of the recommended extent of registration. Due to distortions associated with aerial photography some elements of the place may appear as though they are outside the extent of registration.

Rationale for the extent of registration

The recommended extent of registration includes all of the Actor's Studio House extending as far as the north, south and eastern lot boundaries, and extending 6 metres from the southwestern eaves of the building into the garden of 22 Shiel Street. The Actor's Studio was designed to be a separate dwelling from the terrace house at 22 Shiel Street and has different cultural heritage values. The proposed extent includes sufficient land for the protection, conservation and understanding of the place. It should be noted that the proposed extent of registration includes all the land, all hard landscape features and Actor's Studio House building (interior and exterior structures and fixtures). A permit or permit exemption from Heritage Victoria would be required for any works within the proposed extent of registration, apart from those identified in the categories of works or activities in this recommendation.

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Reasons for the recommendation, including an assessment of the State-level cultural heritage significance of place/object/object integral (section 40(3)(c))

Following is the Executive Director's assessment of the Actor's Studio House against the tests set out in *The Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Thresholds Guidelines*. A place or object must be found by the Heritage Council to meet Step 2 of at least one criterion to meet the State level threshold for inclusion in the VHR.

CRITERION A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Step 1: Test for satisfying Criterion A

The place/object has a *CLEAR ASSOCIATION* with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life in Victoria's cultural history *plus*
The association of the place/object to the event, phase, etc *IS EVIDENT* in the physical fabric of the place/object and/or in documentary resources or oral history.
plus
The *EVENT, PHASE, etc* is of *HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE*, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria.

Executive Director's Response

The Actor's Studio House has a clear association with the entry of women in the architectural profession during the twentieth century. This association is evident in documentary resources. The entry of women to the architectural profession during the twentieth century has made a strong and influential contribution to Victoria by increasing the quantum of design talent in the profession.

Step 1 of Criterion A is likely to be satisfied.

Step 2: Test for satisfying Criterion A at the State Level

The place/object allows the clear association with the event, phase etc. of historical importance to be *UNDERSTOOD BETTER THAN MOST OTHER PLACES OR OBJECTS IN VICTORIA WITH SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME ASSOCIATION.*

Executive Director's Response

The Actor's Studio House allows the entry and growth in numbers of women in the architectural profession during the twentieth century to be understood better than most other places and objects in Victoria with substantially the same association.

- The place was the first building solely designed by a woman architect to be awarded a Royal Australian Institute of Australia (Victorian Chapter) medal.
- Although buildings designed by teams including women architects had been awarded medals and commendations from 1929, it was not until Suzanne Dance received the New Housing medal for the Actor's Studio House in 1980 that a woman architect was awarded a medal for a design in her own right.

Criterion A is likely to be satisfied at the State level.

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CRITERION B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

Step 1: Test for Satisfying Criterion B

The place/object has a *clear ASSOCIATION* with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, custom or way of life of importance in Victoria's cultural history.

plus

The association of the place/object to the event, phase, etc *IS EVIDENT* in the physical fabric of the place/object and/or in documentary resources or oral history.

plus

The place/object is *RARE OR UNCOMMON*, being one of a small number of places/objects remaining that demonstrates the important event, phase etc.

or

The place/object is *RARE OR UNCOMMON*, containing unusual features of note that were not widely replicated

or

The existence of the *class* of place/object that demonstrates the important event, phase etc is *ENDANGERED* to the point of rarity due to threats and pressures on such places/objects.

Executive Director's Response

The Actor's Studio House has a clear association with the corrugated iron revival in Australia from the 1970s. The association of the place is evident in the physical fabric and documentary resources.

- The place is not rare or uncommon there being many remaining places that demonstrates the corrugated iron revival from the 1970s.
- The place does contain unusual features of note that were not widely replicated. The forms and features of the design create an unusual composition. But they are not rare elements of note in their own right.
- Buildings demonstrating the corrugated iron revival of the 1970s are not endangered.

Step 1 of Criterion B is not likely to be satisfied.

CRITERION C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

Step 1: Test for Satisfying Criterion C

The:

- visible physical fabric; &/or documentary evidence; &/or oral history, relating to the place/object indicates a likelihood that the place/object contains *PHYSICAL EVIDENCE* of *historical interest* that is *NOT CURRENTLY VISIBLE OR UNDERSTOOD*. *Plus* From what we know of the place/object, the physical evidence is likely to be of an *INTEGRITY* and/or *CONDITION* that it *COULD YIELD INFORMATION* through detailed investigation.

Executive Director's Response

This place is unlikely to contain physical evidence of historical interest that is not currently visible or understood. Its design, construction and use are evident in its physical fabric, and it is well documented.

Step 1 of Criterion C is not likely to be satisfied.

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CRITERION D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

Step 1: Test for Satisfying Criterion D

The place/object is one of a *CLASS* of places/objects that has a *clear ASSOCIATION* with an event, phase, period, process, function, movement, important person(s), custom or way of life in Victoria's history.

plus

The *EVENT, PHASE, etc* is of *HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE*, having made a strong or influential contribution to Victoria.

plus

The principal characteristics of the class are *EVIDENT* in the physical fabric of the place/object.

Executive Director's Response

- The Actor's Studio House is in the class of corrugated iron revival buildings of the 1970s.
- Corrugated iron revival buildings of the 1970s are of historical importance, having made a strong and influential contribution to Victoria's design history and infusing architecture with a sense of Australian identity and bush nostalgia during this era.
- The principal characteristics are evident in the physical fabric of the Actor's Studio House, as it is predominantly composed of corrugated iron forms.

Step 1 of Criterion D is likely to be satisfied.

Step 2: State Level Significance Test Criterion D

The place/object is a *NOTABLE EXAMPLE* of the class in Victoria (refer to Reference Tool D).

Executive Director's Response

The Actor's Studio House is notable in the class of corrugated iron revival buildings of the 1970s. It is architecturally significant as a fine, early and highly intact exploration of the corrugated iron aesthetic in Victoria. This building was acknowledged as outstanding for its architectural design by the RAIA (Victorian Chapter) in 1980 and acclaimed by architectural critics.

Appearing as a tightly positioned collection of corrugated iron forms hidden in the garden, it is an exceptional example of small-scale design, responding sensitively to an irregularly shaped inner-city backyard. The interior is both spacious and intimate, with each space given its own differentiated form, volume and detailing. The considered and resolved design conveys a sense of resourcefulness, and the building functions well as a creative studio and residence.

Criterion D is likely to be satisfied at the State level.

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CRITERION E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Step 1: Test for Satisfying Criterion E

The *PHYSICAL FABRIC* of the place/object clearly exhibits particular aesthetic characteristics.

Executive Director's Response

The Actor's Studio House demonstrates particular aesthetic characteristics of corrugated iron revival buildings of the 1970s.

Step 1 of Criterion E is likely to be satisfied.

Step 2: State Level Significance Test for Criterion E

The aesthetic characteristics are *APPRECIATED OR VALUED* by the wider community or an appropriately-related discipline as evidenced, for example, by:

- *critical recognition* of the aesthetic characteristics of the place/object within a relevant art, design, architectural or related discipline as an outstanding example within Victoria; or
- wide public *acknowledgement of exceptional merit* in Victoria in medium such as songs, poetry, literature, painting, sculpture, publications, print media etc.

Executive Director's Response

The Actor's Studio House has received critical recognition for its design qualities. It is the view of the Executive Director that the design qualities are better assessed under Criterion D (architectural significance).

CRITERION F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

Step 1: A Test for Satisfying Criterion F

The place/object contains *PHYSICAL EVIDENCE* that clearly demonstrates creative or technical *ACHIEVEMENT* for the time in which it was created.

plus

The physical evidence demonstrates a *HIGH DEGREE OF INTEGRITY*.

Executive Director's Response

The Actor's Studio House is an architecturally significant building. However, it cannot be considered a creative or technical achievement for the time it was created. It does not exhibit any 'break through' qualities of design, engineering, building technologies or materials. Corrugated iron was a well-established building material in the 1970s.

Step 1 of Criterion F is not likely to be satisfied.

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CRITERION G: Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Step 1: Test for Satisfying Criterion G

Evidence exists of a community or cultural group.
Plus
Evidence exists of a strong attachment between the COMMUNITY OR CULTURAL GROUP and the place/object in the present-day context.
Plus
Evidence exists of a time depth to that attachment.

Executive Director's Response

There is no evidence of the existence of a community or cultural group with a strong attachment to the Actor's Studio House in the present-day context.

Step 1 of Criterion G is not likely to be satisfied.

CRITERION H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

Step 1: Test for Satisfying Criterion H

The place/object has a *DIRECT ASSOCIATION* with a person or group of persons who have made a strong or influential *CONTRIBUTION* to the course of Victoria's history.
plus
The *ASSOCIATION* of the place/object to the person(s) *IS EVIDENT* in the physical fabric of the place/object and/or in documentary resources and/or oral history.
plus
The *ASSOCIATION*:

- directly relates to *ACHIEVEMENTS* of the person(s) at, or relating to, the place/object; or
- relates to an *enduring* and/or *close INTERACTION* between the person(s) and the place/object.

Executive Director's Response

The Actor's Studio House is associated with:

- 1) The architect Suzanne Dance. Dance has made a strong and influential contribution to the disciplines of architecture, urban conservation and heritage in Victoria.
- 2) The actor and satirist Max Gilles. Gilles has made a strong and influential contribution to the performing arts in Victoria.

The Executive Director is of the view that Suzanne Dance's strong and influential contribution to the disciplines of architecture, urban conservation and heritage is better assessed under Criteria A and D.

The Executive Director notes that Max Gilles AM became a member of the Order of Australia on New Year's Day 1990 for his services to the performing arts.

Step 1 of Criterion H is not likely to be satisfied.

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Comparisons

The Actor's Studio House is usefully compared places in the VHR as follows: 1) 1970s residences 2) Prefabricated iron buildings 3) Buildings featuring corrugated iron forms 4) Artists' studios.

1970s residences

Winter Park Cluster Housing, Doncaster, (VHR H1345)

Winter Park is of architectural, historical and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria. In 1975 it received a citation in the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (Victorian Chapter) Housing Awards. The design consists of twenty detached houses and was constructed in two stages between 1970 and 1974. It is architecturally important as a prototype cluster housing project - an experimental attempt to present an alternative to the quarter acre block. It is of aesthetic significance for its outstanding landscape and architectural design qualities where low-profile houses of recycled bricks, stained timber joinery with tea-tree fences integrated into the grassy woodland with indigenous trees. Winter Park is historically important for its association with Merchant Builders, one of the most influential building companies in Victoria in the postwar era.



Solar House, Templestowe (VHR H1312)

The Solar House is of historic, technical and architectural importance to the State of Victoria. Built 1978-79, it is technically and architecturally significant as the first commercially available solar energy project house in Australia. It is important for its innovative energy conservation design characteristics. It is a refined and elegant example of the residential work of Cocks and Carmichael, architects. It is historically significant as a manifestation of the growing concern in the 1970s that dependence on fossil fuels was not sustainable, and that alternative sources of energy, such as the sun, could be commercially viable for heating residential buildings.



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Buildings featuring corrugated iron forms

Loren, Gippsland Heritage Park, Moe, (VHR H1283)

Loren is architecturally and scientifically significant as one of the few remaining prefabricated iron buildings in Victoria and for its use of corrugated iron in a rare two-storey form. It is important for its associations with the galvanising process and the use of grooved rollers. The corrugated iron roof has an unusual concave form, and the windows, floors and doors are of moulded softwood. Loren is of historical significance as a rare building which, in its form and method of construction, is expressive of the critically important Gold Rush period in Victoria's history when pre-fabricated buildings were imported to meet the extraordinary demand for housing.



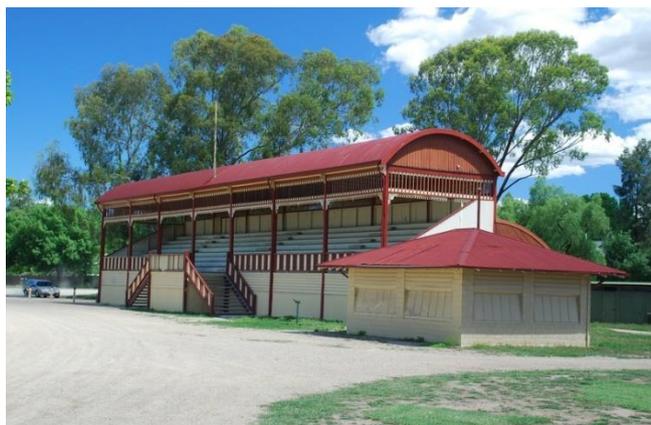
Kingston Grandstand, Kingston (VHR H1300)

The Kingston Grandstand (1902) is of architectural significance for its unusual vernacular design and the high degree of physical intactness of its fabric. The grandstand is a timber building with a corrugated iron roof partly barrel vaulted and partly skillion.



Benalla Grandstand, Benalla (VHR H0976)

The Benalla Grandstand (1913) is architecturally important as a rare example of a surviving timber-framed grandstand. It has a distinguished cast iron barrel roof and a half-curved roof over the clubrooms at the rear. This timber-framed grandstand is divided into seven bays formed by chamfered timber posts and queen post trusses. Each bay has shingled and corrugated iron panels with a timber and cast iron lace frieze.



Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

Artists' studios

Southernwood, Eltham (VHR H2235)

Southernwood is of historical and architectural significance. It was the home and studio of the artist Walter Withers one of the most important Australian painters of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was a leader of the Heidelberg School, the first major local artistic movement in Australia, which had a great influence on the history of Australian art, particularly landscape painting. Southernwood is of architectural significance for its fine and intact early twentieth century artist's studio with an Arts and Crafts influenced interior.



Waller House and Collection, Ivanhoe (VHR H0617)

The Waller House and Collection is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. Built c.1922, it was the residence and workplace of renowned artists Napier and Christian Waller where many artworks of State and national significance were designed and executed. These include mosaics, stained-glass windows, painted murals, ceramics, prints and books. The place is significant for its association with artists Napier and Christian Waller. Mervyn Napier Waller CMG OBE and Christian Marjory Waller. It is architecturally significant for its architecture, interiors, furnishings and garden design.



Summary of Comparisons

The Actor's Studio House is an early and fine example of a corrugated iron revival building of the 1970s. There are few comparable examples in this class in the VHR. The prefabricated portable iron buildings of the nineteenth century tend to be predominantly composed of flat corrugated iron sheeting, which assisted in the 'flat pack' transportation process. The corrugated iron grandstands of the early 1900s demonstrate that the manipulation of this material into curved forms is not new. The Actor's Studio House inventively deploys this 'shaping' technique in a modest urban context, using multiple circular/curved forms to create a feeling that one is inside a small ship or cabin.



Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

The houses in the Winter Park Housing Cluster and the Solar House reflect concerns about environmentalism, sustainable design, a modest scale and the value of a suburban 'bush' setting, which are also evident at the Actor's Studio. Although adopting different design vocabularies, they all speak to the social concerns of the 1970s.

As a class, artists' studios are diverse in scale and design. Some are pre-existing buildings inhabited and worked in by the artist (Southernwood) and other have the 'hand' of the artists in the design and build (Waller House). The Shiel Street Actor's Studio offers a creative space and residence, in this case for the performing arts rather than the visual arts. To this end the mezzanine in the Actor's Studio provides a stage overlooking the 'audience' area downstairs.



Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

Summary of cultural heritage significance (section 40(4)(a))

The ED recommends that the Actor's Studio House be included in the VHR as a Registered Place.

Statement of significance

What is significant?

The Actor's Studio House is a two-storey corrugated iron building designed by architect Suzanne Dance in 1975 for actor Max Gillies as its first resident, located in the rear garden of an inner-city terrace house.

How is it significant?

The Actor's Studio House is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criteria for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion D

Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places/objects.

Why is it significant?

The Actor's Studio House is historically significant because it was the first building solely designed by a woman architect to be awarded a Royal Australian Institute of Architects (Victorian Chapter) medal. Although buildings designed by teams including women architects had been awarded medals and commendations from the 1950s, it was not until Suzanne Dance received the New Housing medal for the Actor's Studio House in 1980 that a woman architect was awarded a medal for a design in her own right. [Criterion A]

The Actor's Studio House is architecturally significant as a notable example of a fine and early exploration of the corrugated iron revival movement in Victoria. Appearing as a tightly positioned collection of corrugated iron forms hidden in the garden, it is an exceptional example of small-scale design, responding sensitively to an irregularly shaped inner-city backyard. The interior is both spacious and intimate, with each space given its own differentiated shape, volume and detailing. The considered and resolved design conveys a sense of resourcefulness, and the building functions well as a creative studio and residence. This building was acknowledged as outstanding for its architectural design by the RAIA (Victorian Chapter) in 1980. [Criterion D]



Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

Categories of works or activities (permit exemptions) recommended under section 38 (section 40(4)(b))

Introduction

The purpose of this information is to assist owners and other interested parties when considering or making decisions regarding works to a registered place. It is recommended that any proposed works be discussed with an officer of Heritage Victoria prior to making a permit application. Discussing proposed works will assist in answering questions the owner may have and aid any decisions regarding works to the place.

It is acknowledged that alterations and other works may be required to keep places and objects in good repair and adapt them for use into the future. However, under the Act a person must not knowingly, recklessly or negligently remove, relocate or demolish, damage or despoil, develop or alter or excavate all or any part of any part of a registered place without approval. It should be noted that the definition of 'develop' in the Act includes any works on, over or under the place.

If a person wishes to undertake works or activities in relation to a registered place or registered object, they must apply to the Executive Director for a permit. The purpose of a permit is to enable appropriate change to a place and to effectively manage adverse impacts on the cultural heritage significance of a place as a consequence of change. If an owner is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that Heritage Victoria be contacted.

Permits are required for anything which alters the place or object, unless a permit exemption is granted. Permit exemptions usually cover routine maintenance and upkeep issues faced by owners as well as minor works or works to the elements of the place or object that are not significant. They may include appropriate works that are specified in a conservation management plan. Permit exemptions can be granted at the time of registration (under section 38 of the Act) or after registration (under section 92 of the Act). It should be noted that the addition of new buildings to the registered place, as well as alterations to the interior and exterior of existing buildings requires a permit, unless a specific permit exemption is granted.

Disrepair of registered place or registered object

Under section 152 of the Act, the owner of a registered place or registered object must not allow that place or object to fall into disrepair.

Failure to maintain registered place or registered object

Under section 153 of the Act, the owner of a registered place or registered object must not fail to maintain that place or object to the extent that its conservation is threatened.

Conservation management plans

It is recommended that a Conservation Management Plan is developed to manage the place in a manner which respects its cultural heritage significance.

Archaeology

There is no identified archaeology of State-level significance at the place. However, any works that may affect historical archaeological features, deposits or artefacts at the place is likely to require a permit, permit exemption or consent. Advice should be sought from the Archaeology Team at Heritage Victoria.



Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

Aboriginal cultural heritage

To establish whether this place is registered under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* please contact First Peoples – State Relations in the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The *Heritage Act 2017* and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* are separate pieces of legislation. Please be aware that both Acts are required to be satisfied and satisfying the requirements of one Act may not satisfy the requirements of the other.

If any Aboriginal cultural heritage is discovered or exposed at any time it is necessary to immediately contact First Peoples – State Relations in the Department of Premier and Cabinet to ascertain requirements under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. If works are proposed which have the potential to disturb or have an impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage it is necessary to contact First Peoples – State Relations in the Department of Premier and Cabinet to ascertain any requirements under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

Other approvals

Please be aware that approval from other authorities (such as local government) may be required to undertake works.

Notes

- All works should ideally be informed by a Conservation Management Plan prepared for the place. The Executive Director is not bound by any Conservation Management Plan and permits still must be obtained for works suggested in any Conservation Management Plan.
- Nothing in this determination prevents the Heritage Council from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.
- Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits where applicable.

General Conditions

- All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place.
- Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place are revealed which relate to the significance of the place, then the exemption covering such works must cease and Heritage Victoria must be notified as soon as possible.

Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

Permit Exemptions

The following permit exemptions are not considered to cause harm to the cultural heritage significance of the Actor's Studio House.

General

- Minor repairs and maintenance which replaces like with like. Repairs and maintenance must maximise protection and retention of existing fabric and include the conservation of existing details or elements. Any repairs and maintenance must not exacerbate the decay of fabric due to chemical incompatibility of new materials, obscure fabric or limit access to such fabric for future maintenance.
- Maintenance, repair and replacement of existing external services such as plumbing, electrical cabling, surveillance systems, pipes or fire services which does not involve changes in location or scale, or additional trenching.
- Repair to, or removal of items such as antennae; aerials; and air conditioners and associated pipe work, ducting and wiring.
- Works or activities, including emergency stabilisation, necessary to secure safety in an emergency where a structure or part of a structure has been irreparably damaged or destabilised and poses a safety risk to its users or the public. The Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, must be notified within seven days of the commencement of these works or activities.
- Painting of previously painted external and internal surfaces in the same colour, finish and product type provided that preparation or painting does not remove all evidence of earlier paint finishes or schemes.
- Application of timber oil and varnish to currently oiled or varnished timber surfaces.
- Cleaning including the removal of surface deposits by the use of low-pressure water (to maximum of 300 psi at the surface being cleaned) and neutral detergents and mild brushing and scrubbing with plastic (not wire) brushes.

Interiors

- Removal or replacement of existing hooks, brackets and the like for hanging wall mounted artworks.
- Installation, removal or replacement of existing electrical wiring. If wiring is currently exposed, it should remain exposed. If it is fully concealed it should remain fully concealed.
- Removal or replacement of smoke and fire detectors, alarms and the like, of the same size and in existing locations.
- Repair, removal or replacement of existing air-conditioning units provided that the central exterior unit is concealed, and that the work is done in a manner which does not alter building fabric.

Garden

- The processes of gardening including mowing, pruning, mulching, fertilising, planting and the removal of plants, trees and weeds.



Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

Landscape and outdoor areas

- Removal, replacement or installation of subsurface watering and drainage systems. Existing lawns, gardens and hard landscaping, including paving, paths and roadways are to be returned to the original configuration and appearance on completion of works.
- Like for like repair and maintenance of existing hard landscaping including paving and footpaths where the materials, scale, form and design is unchanged.
- Installation of physical barriers or traps to enable vegetation protection and management of vermin such as rats, mice and possums.

Freestanding garden shed to the southwest of the Actor's Studio (c.2000)

- All works within the footprint of the shed which do not change the size or exterior colour pallet of the shed.
- Removal of the shed.

Title boundary fences

- Removal and replacement of title boundary fences to the same scale with like for like materials.

Statement of recommendation from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, to the Heritage Council of Victoria

Appendix 1

Heritage Council of Victoria determination (section 41)

The Heritage Council of Victoria is an independent statutory body that will make a determination on this recommendation under section 49 of the Act. It will consider the recommendation after a period of 60 days from the date the notice of recommendation is published on its website under section 41.

Making a submission to the Heritage Council (section 44)

Within the period of 60 days, any person or body with a real and substantial interest in the place or object may make a submission to the Heritage Council regarding the recommendation and request a hearing in relation to that submission. Information about making a submission and submission forms are available on the Heritage Council's website.

Consideration of submissions to the Heritage Council (section 46)

- (1) The Heritage Council must consider—
 - (a) any written submission made to it under section 44; and
 - (b) any further information provided to the Heritage Council in response to a request under section 45.
- (2) The Heritage Council must conduct a hearing in relation to a submission if—
 - (a) the submission includes a request for a hearing before the Heritage Council; and
 - (b) the submission is made by a person or body with a real or substantial interest in the place or object that is the subject of the submission.
- (3) Despite subsection (2), the Heritage Council may conduct a hearing in relation to a submission in any other circumstances the Heritage Council considers appropriate.

Determinations of the Heritage Council (section 49)

- (1) After considering a recommendation that a place or object should or should not be included in the Heritage Register and any submissions in respect of the recommendation and conducting any hearing into the submissions, the Heritage Council may—
 - (a) determine that the place or part of the place, or object, is of State-level cultural heritage significance and is to be included in the Heritage Register; or
 - (b) determine that the place or part of the place, or object, is not of State-level cultural heritage significance and is not to be included in the Heritage Register; or
 - (c) in the case of a recommendation in respect of a place, determine that the place is not to be included in the Heritage Register but—
 - (i) refer the recommendation and any submissions to the relevant planning authority for consideration for an amendment to a planning scheme; or
 - (ii) determine that it is more appropriate for steps to be taken under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 or by any other means to protect or conserve the place; or
 - (d) in the case of a recommendation in respect of additional land which has been nominated to be included in the Heritage Register as part of a registered place in accordance with section 32, determine that the land be included in the Heritage Register if—

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- (i) the State-level cultural heritage significance of the place would be substantially less if the land or any part of the land which is or has been used in conjunction with the place were developed; or
 - (ii) the land surrounding the place is important to the protection or conservation of the place or contributes to the understanding of the place; or
 - (e) determine that the object is integral to understanding the cultural heritage significance of a registered place or a place the Heritage Council has determined to be included in the Heritage Register.
- (2) The Heritage Council must make a determination under subsection (1)—
- (a) within 40 days after the date on which written submissions may be made under section 44; or
 - (b) if any hearing is conducted into the written submissions, within 90 days after the completion of the hearing.
- (3) A determination that a place or part of a place, or object, should be included in the Heritage Register may include categories of works or activities which may be carried out in relation to the place or object for which a permit under this Act is not required, if the Heritage Council considers that the works or activities would not harm the cultural heritage significance of the place or object.
- (4) If the Heritage Council determines to include a place in the Heritage Register, with the consent of the owner of the place, the Heritage Council may determine to include in the Heritage Register additional land of the owner that is ancillary to the place.
- (5) If a member of the Heritage Council makes a submission under section 44 in respect of a recommendation, the member must not take part in the consideration or determination of the Heritage Council.
- (6) The Heritage Council must notify the Executive Director of any determination under this section as soon as practicable after the determination.

Obligations of owners of places and objects (section 42)

- (1) The owner of a place or object to whom a statement of recommendation has been given must advise the Executive Director in writing of—
- (a) any works or activities that are being carried out in relation to the place or object at the time the statement is given; and
 - (b) any application for a planning permit or a building permit, or for an amendment to that permit, that has been made in relation to the place but not determined at the time the statement is given; and
 - (c) any works or activities that are proposed to be carried out in relation to the place or object at the time the statement is given.
- (2) An advice under subsection (1) must be given within 10 days after the statement of recommendation is given under section 40.
- (3) The owner of a place to whom a statement of recommendation has been given must advise the Executive Director in writing of an application, permit or amendment if, before a determination under section 49 or 52 in respect of a place—
- (a) an application for a planning permit or a building permit or for an amendment to that permit in relation to the place is made; or
 - (b) a planning permit or building permit or an amendment to that permit in relation to the place is granted.

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- (4) An advice under subsection (3) must be given within 10 days after the making of the application or the grant of the permit or amendment.
- (5) The owner of a place or object to whom a statement of recommendation has been given must advise the Executive Director in writing of the following activities or proposals if, before a determination is made under section 49 or 52 in respect of a place or object—
 - (a) any activities are carried out in relation to the place or object that could harm the place or object;
 - (b) any activities are proposed to be carried out in relation to the place or object that could harm the place or object.
- (6) An advice under subsection (5) must be given within 10 days after the owner becomes aware of the activity or the proposal, as the case requires.
- (7) If, before a determination is made under section 49 or 52 in respect of a place or object, a proposal is made to dispose of the whole or any part of the place or object, the owner of the place or object must advise the Executive Director in writing of that proposal.
- (8) An advice under subsection (7) must be given at least 10 days before entering into the contract for the disposal of the place or object.
- (9) The owner of a place or object who proposes to dispose of the whole or any part of the place or object before a determination is made under section 49 or 52 in respect of the place or object must, before entering into a contract for that disposal, give a copy of the statement of proposed contract, is to acquire the place or object or part of the place or object.

Owners of places and objects must comply with obligations (section 43)

An owner of a place or object to whom section 42 applies must comply with that section.

Penalty: In the case of a natural person, 120 penalty units;
In the case of a body corporate, 240 penalty units.