

15 January 2018

Hi,

State of the State and State of the Nation: St Kilda Road and Environs – Status update January 2018

Here is an update, for your information.

To date two Permits have been issued by Heritage Victoria that impact on St Kilda Road and Environs (see copies attached):

A. HERITAGE VICTORIA: Permits

1. **HV Permit No. P25649 to MMRA, 27 April 2017: Early Works - St Kilda Road.**
This is the Permit issued for the MMRA Application, December 2016.
 - a. After an MMRA **Application for the removal of 103 trees** (“removal of 52 Elms, 50 Plane Trees and 1 Grey Poplar (refer to Appendix A”), a Permit was issued for **13 trees** only – however **12 trees in total were removed** and one was trimmed.
 - b. The Senior manager in charge at Heritage Victoria advised that **no further trees can be removed under this Permit.**
 - c. Note: the financial value of the trees is estimated in the Heritage Victoria Permits as \$10,000 each. i.e. The MMRA Application was for the removal of 103 trees (estimated value \$1,030,000) but only 13 trees were permitted and 12 were actually removed (and the other saved). \$120,000 of heritage trees in St Kilda Road were removed for these service and tram locations, even though the plans and designs as not yet decided.
 - d. The Early Works Permit involves financial penalties/bank guarantee deposits by the parties/contractors, e.g. \$215,000 for one, Yarra Trams \$105,000...

 2. **HV Permit No. P26851 to Beon Energy Solutions, 1 September 2017:**
This is the Permit issued for the Application by Beon Energy Solutions P/L, June 2017, to construct a temporary electrical substation on the Edmund Herring Oval.
 - a. **No trees were permitted for removal in this Permit.**
 - b. Note that Heritage Vic. has put in place financial penalties for the contractors involved with work permitted, with bank deposits/guarantee of \$200,000 by Beon Energy for these Domain Parkland/Edmund Herring Commemorative Oval works, requiring them to dismantle the electrical substation and re-instate Edmund Herring Commemorative Oval at the end, by a certain, specified date.

 3. Additionally, MMRA/Cross Yarra Partnership (CYP) have exemptions to prune trees

 4. Sadly, the South African Soldiers Memorial (Boer War Memorial) has been dismantled.
 - a. It is undergoing conservation. It can still be re-instated; it is stated it will be.
-

B. Re: (MMRA/) CYP Heritage Victoria Applications currently in process:

These were in two parts and constitute 5 Permit requests by CYP; we made our submissions to these in December 2017. HV said there were a lot of good submissions made in December and they are under consideration. Thanks to all of you who made submissions.

two lots of Heritage Victoria Applications for St Kilda Road and Environs precinct, which involve 5 Permit requests from the Applicant Cross Yarra Partnership.

As the National Trust (Vic.) submission stated:

“We understand that the proposed works include “road and tramline realignment, and establishment of a construction site associated with the Melbourne Metro Main Works and the proposed Domain Station” (page 2 Trethowan Heritage Impact Statement) and that the physical impact on the place includes removal of kerb and guttering, excavation of the road, tree removal, and the installation of temporary structures. We note that the works are proposed over two stages, with Stage 2 not at a final stage at the time of this application.

We submit that the scale of the proposed tree removals at St Kilda Road will have an adverse impact the recognised significance of the place, which is characterised by largely consistent and continuous boulevard tree planting.”

And:

“The National Trust urges caution against any proposal which represents the worst-case scenario of tree removal over the entire construction footprint of the Project and in every case expect detailed design processes and arborist consultation to see more trees retained. As such we strongly support Heritage Victoria in working closely with CYP to further refine the proposal to see more trees retained.”

1. Re: Permit application numbers P27820 Domain Parklands and P27834 Shrine of Remembrance

Establishment of a temporary construction site at Edmund Herring Oval associated with the **Melbourne Metro Main Works and the proposed Domain Station.**

There has been much objection to proposed removal of the mature elm tree, EH001 from the Shrine of Remembrance reserve gardens by Domain Road, and to the removal of any mature elm tree in these heritage areas. (see p.13 HIS) This is stated as requested for the purpose of temporary work sites and that does not justify the loss. It, and any mature elm tree, can be preserved and that should be a priority, at any cost. It has been requested that Heritage Victoria make this part of the Permit conditions.

Submissions have been made for tree reinstatement like-for-like, with progressive reinstatement during works and with careful monitoring and nurturing of the replaced or re-planted trees following planting to be part of any Permit issued, and that a mandatory plan for protection of other trees around, on or near the boundaries and in areas adjacent to these work sites or the paths of construction or works vehicles of trucks to protect them, including from dust, dirt, shade etc... during and after works, be put in place.

Submissions to HV expressed serious concern that these Permit Applications are *‘putting the cart before the horse’*, and there is the real risk and possibility that these proposals may involve heritage tree removals for temporary worksites and the inappropriateness of

that, and that these tree removals and bluestone paving removals proposed may not be necessary when the Metro tunnel and station plans are actually done, and would ultimately be avoidable if MMRA/CYP would wait to make Permit Applications after Plans are finalised. At this point in time the tree removals for temporary worksites are for envisaged details and plans, guesses or guesstimates, and this is highly questionable and far from desirable or appropriate in such revered, highly significant, iconic heritage places and landscapes. These are proposed, not yet defined, not final plans. Mistakes and ultimately unnecessary tree removals and destructive impacts on these highly significant heritage places may occur if permitted now, when, in future, with the re-done draft plans and designs, they may be saved and may not be necessary

2. Re: Permit applications P27831 St Kilda Road, P27837 Shrine of Remembrance and P27832 South African Soldiers Memorial

the scale and amount of the proposed tree removals at and by St Kilda Road **will have an adverse impact the recognised significance of the place**, which is characterised by largely consistent and continuous boulevard tree planting.

- a. With a 60 day HV decision requirement (including Public Holidays etc...) and the clock stopping for questions and information, HV **decisions on these current 5 Permits will likely be made in February 2018, possibly by mid-February 2018.**

Bea McNicholas

Director, Walk in St Kilda Road and Environs, Planet Ark National Tree Day
World Heritage submission to Federal Government for St Kilda Road and Environs
Cultural historian