

# BALLARAT HIGH SCHOOL



BALLARAT HIGH SCHOOL  
SOHE 2008



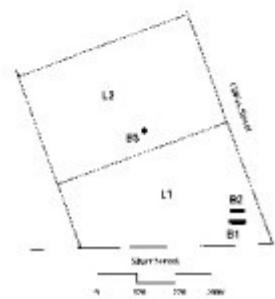
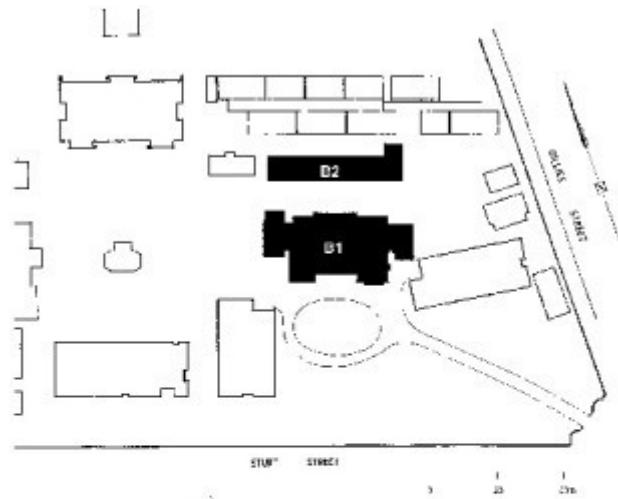
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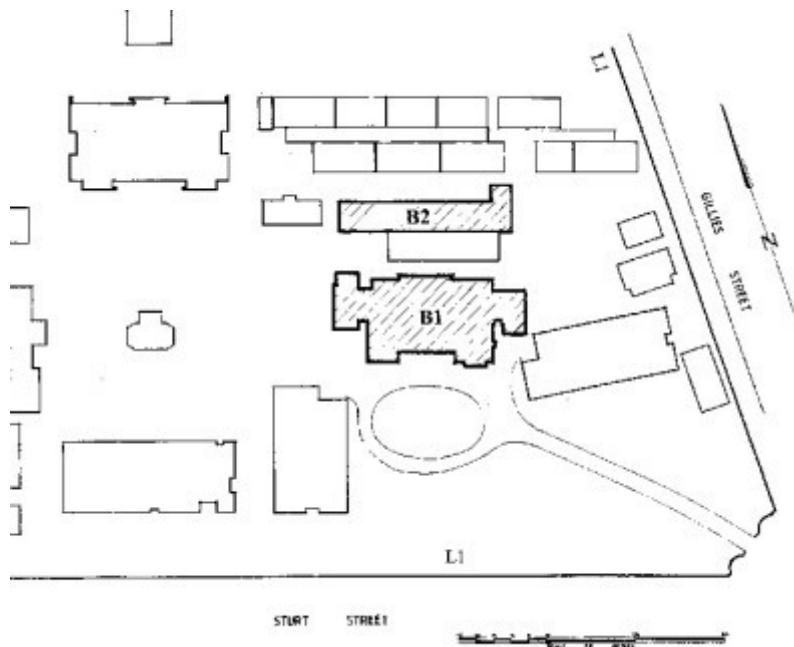
1 ballarat high school sturt  
street west ballarat front view  
apr1987



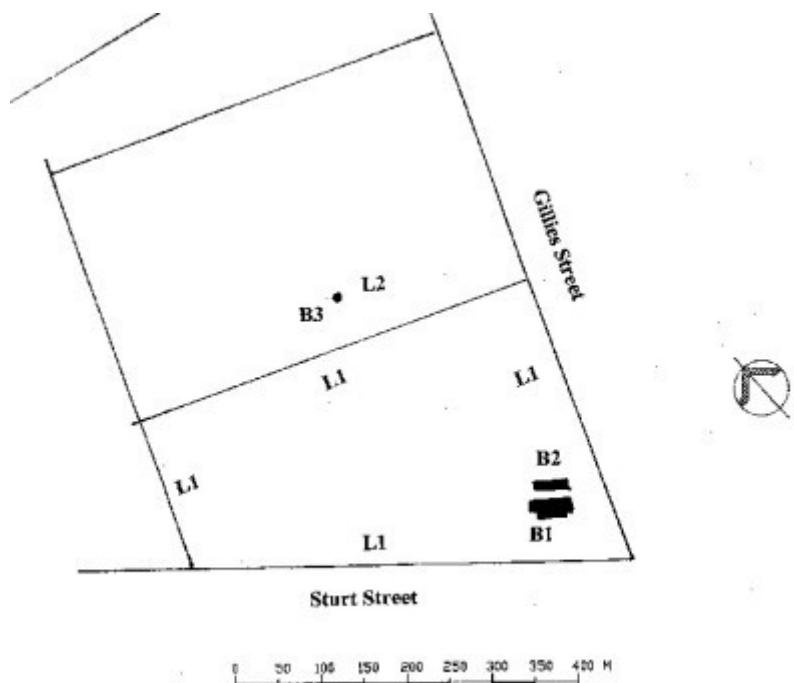
ballarat high school sturt  
street west ballarat silo



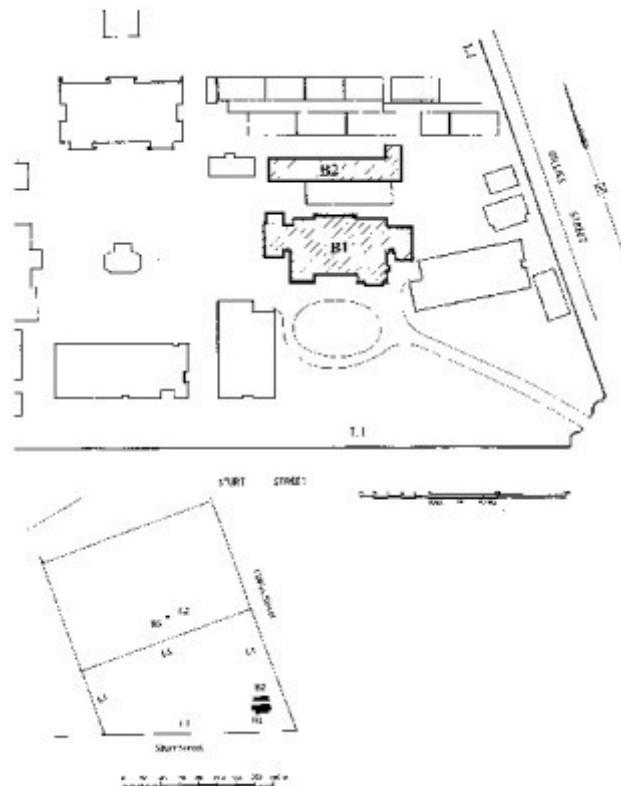
h01797 ballarat high school plan



Ballarat high school plan1



ballarat high school plan2



h01797 ballarat high school plan3

## Location

25 GILLIES STREET NORTH AND CNR STURT STREET WEST LAKE GARDENS, BALLARAT CITY

## Municipality

BALLARAT CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1797

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO161

## VHR Registration

May 27, 1999

## Heritage Listing

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 10, 1999

### What is significant?

Ballarat High School main building was constructed in 1909-10 as the Ballarat Agricultural High School building, one of the first agricultural high schools to be opened in Victoria. The site was provided by Ballarat Council and included an eighty acre farm to the north of the school for training purposes. The school building was designed by Public Works Department architect John Hudson Marsden in the Federation style. The building was gutted by fire in 1915 and the interior was rebuilt in 1916 to the design of Public Works Department architect HJ Kerr. A feature of the new building was an assembly hall known as Peacock Hall after Sir Alexander Peacock the local member of parliament. Peacock Hall features timber panelling, leadlight windows and a war memorial mosaic mural by George Dancey. The timber locker rooms behind the main building were originally constructed by the staff and students in 1910 as part of the agriculture course and have undergone considerable alteration over the years. The concrete silo (B3) was constructed around 1913 as part of the farm buildings and is no longer part of the school grounds being located on Ballarat Council land west of the Ballarat Aquatic Centre.

### How is it significant?

The Ballarat High School is historically and architecturally important to the State of Victoria.

### Why is it significant?

The Ballarat High School is important in the history of secondary education in Victoria as one of the first government secondary schools in the State. Founded as a continuation school for the training of teachers, Ballarat High School became one of the first purpose-built agricultural high schools. The Peacock Hall is historically important both for its associations with Sir Alexander Peacock and as a memorial to those who served in World War I and II, demonstrating the involvement and experience of schoolchildren in the war effort. The Ballarat High School is historically important as an early agricultural high school whose foundation in 1907 reflected the importance of the agricultural sector in the early twentieth century. The silo is historically important as the only intact structure remaining from the period 1910-1927 when the school farm operated. The locker rooms, although no longer intact, contribute to the significance as the earliest building on the site constructed by staff and students.

The Ballarat High School, designed by the Public Works Department architects JH Marsden and HJ Kerr in Federation style exhibits an unusual integration of features in its main building and especially its assembly hall, which is decorated with timber panelling and leadlight windows.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

**Places of worship:** In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must notify the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

**Subdivision/consolidation:** Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### **Specific Exemptions:**

#### General Conditions:

1. All alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.
2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of alterations that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible.
3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it.
4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.
5. Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

#### Exterior

- \* Repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.
- \* Demolition, removal or alteration of buildings not specified in the extent of registration.
- \* Removal of extraneous items such as air conditioners, pipe work, ducting, wiring, antennae, aerials etc, and making good.
- \* Installation or repair of damp-proofing by either injection method or grouted pocket method.
- \* Painting of previously painted surfaces provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of the original paint or other decorative scheme.
- \* Landscaping and gardening works.

#### Interior

- \* Painting of previously painted walls and ceilings provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of the original paint or other decorative scheme.
- \* Removal of paint from originally unpainted or oiled joinery, doors, architraves, skirtings and decorative strapping.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of carpets and/or flexible floor coverings, curtain track, rods, blinds and other window dressings, hooks, nails and other devices for the hanging of mirrors, paintings and other wall mounted artworks.
- \* Refurbishment of bathrooms, toilets and kitchens including removal, installation or replacement of sanitary fixtures and associated piping, mirrors, wall and floor coverings, kitchen benches and fixtures including sinks, stoves, ovens, refrigerators, dishwashers etc and associated plumbing and wiring.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of ducted, hydronic or concealed radiant type heating provided that the installation does not damage existing skirtings and architraves and provided that the location of the heating unit is concealed from view.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring provided that all new wiring is fully concealed and any original light switches, pull cords, push buttons or power outlets are retained in-situ.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of bulk insulation in the roof space.
- \* Installation, removal or replacement of smoke detectors.

Architect/Designer	Marsden, John Hudson,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	PEACOCK HALL, SILO,
Hermes Number	4518
Property Number	

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## History

### Contextual History:

At the turn of the century, Ballarat was Australia's largest inland town and Victoria's second largest city with a population of 46,000. Although mining had waned, the town had increased as a manufacturing centre, with foundries and metal works producing transport, agricultural, mining and industrial equipment. A meatworks, a tannery a bone-mill, a soap-works, several coachbuilders, and two breweries provided employment for 2965 workers in 1901.

Ballarat had always been strong as an educational centre, with flourishing private schools as well as government primary schools. Ballarat, surrounded by prosperous farming communities and linked to other centres to the north and west by rail, was very suitable as a centre both for teacher training and for agricultural education.

The history of secondary education in Victoria is largely a development of the twentieth century. Primary education for all was the first aim of the Victorian government education system. From the passing of the Education Act of 1872, the provision of 'free, compulsory and secular' education for Victorian children took precedence over higher levels of study. By the early years of the twentieth century, however, the Victorian government was preparing to extend education to students past the primary years.

Their objective was not at first to provide secondary education for all. The two areas of post-primary education at first considered were technical and teacher training. The opening of the Melbourne Continuation School in the old Model School building in Spring Street in 1905 marked the beginning of state secondary education in Victoria. It was designed as a training college for pupil-teachers, but also accepted a small number of scholarship holders who were prepared for university entrance. Continuation Schools were intended to bridge the gap between primary schools and technical schools for those pupils who were being prepared for work in the manual trades.

### Agricultural High Schools

The establishment of agricultural high schools was an initiative of the Director of Education, Frank Tate. The first of these at Warrnambool and Sale were opened in April 1907. The syllabus directed that students spend one third of their time on cultural subjects, one third on the study of science and mathematics and one third on the school farm. However, by 1912 it was recognised that there was no public demand for agricultural education and no schools other than the ten already established were to be set up. The ten were Sale, Warrnambool, Ballarat, Leongatha, Colac, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warragul and Mansfield. These gradually became standard district high schools.

### District High Schools

The curriculum of the district high schools were at first limited to the training of teachers, the study of agriculture and the bridging of the gap between the primary school and the technical college. The Education Act of 1910 authorised the Governor in Council to establish higher elementary schools and district high schools; continuation classes; and preparatory trade classes, trade schools and technical schools. High schools charged fees and students were required to pay additional sums for uniforms and books. Scholarships were available to the most brilliant of the working class but the fees excluded most working class children. The working classes were not given access to secondary education, but encouraged to participate in technical education.

In Victoria, the independent schools who prepared students for the public examinations were the main providers of secondary education. The expansion of the public sector into secondary education was seen as a threat to private enterprise and was strongly resisted. Once high schools became more accessible, many middle class families used a combination of state and private education, moving their children to the private school system for the final two or four years of secondary schooling. More affluent families continued to use private schools for the whole of their children's education. In the absence of a high school, particularly in country areas, non-Catholic children were frequently sent to the local Catholic school. The Catholic schools did charge fees but these were generally very low compared with other independent schools.

The state secondary system aimed only at filling the gaps in secondary school provision left by the independent school system. As Janet McCalman points out, it was assumed that the poor and clever could win scholarships to government or private schools. The government itself offered some scholarships which could be taken up at registered i.e. independent schools or at a few high schools which prepared students for entrance to the University of Melbourne.

It was not until the middle of the twentieth century that the state began to provide secondary education across the state.

In Ballarat, the first government post primary school was opened on Tuesday 16 April 1907 as a Continuation School in premises at 208 Sturt Street. The Warrnambool and Sale Agricultural High Schools began on 15 April and the Bendigo Continuation School on 27 May 1907. Prospective students at Ballarat had to have completed the Merit Certificate or to convince the headmaster and the District Inspectors that they were suitable candidates for teaching. By 1909 about half the students came from country areas either close to Ballarat such as Clarendon, Buninyong and Creswick or further away such as Horsham, Murtoa and Warracknabeal. Those from distant areas took lodgings in Ballarat.

The Continuation School moved to Dana Street Primary School in a building facing Doveton Street in September 1907.

#### History of Place:

There had been pressure from Ballarat residents for an agricultural high school as early as 1894. After much deliberation, Ballarat Council in 1907 agreed to supply to the Education Department land from the Prince of Wales Park two miles west of central Ballarat at Alfredton as well as a financial contribution to the cost of the building. The contribution of the Council was the land and £3000 while the State government promised £7000. This was a substantial sum and far greater than the £3000-4000 spent of other agricultural high schools at that time. Ballarat was to be the model for agricultural high schools in the state. The Director of Education, Mr Frank Tate stated that ?it was the intention of the Education Department to develop it as the leading high school in the State. The curriculum was to include three types of courses? agricultural education for boys, domestic arts for girls and primary teacher training courses for boys and girls.

Tenders were called for the building in December 1908 and the foundation stone laid on 17 March 1909. The building was ready for occupation in April 1910. It consisted of an assembly hall, five classrooms, a sloyd room and laboratories for chemistry, physics as well as art, cookery and dining rooms.

The building was destroyed by fire on 29 July 1915, leaving only the brick walls still standing. A larger building was planned to replace it and tenders were let in February 1916. The new building was completed by the beginning of the 1917 school year and contained 30 rooms. The exterior shell was retained but the interior had to be re-constructed and two side wings were added, set back from the original facade.

#### The Architect

The architect for the original building was John Hudson Marsden. Born in 1844, Marsden joined the Public Works Department in 1872. He was the architect in charge of the western district of the state and was responsible for a number of important public buildings such as the Maryborough Court House and Post Office, the Castlemaine Court House (1877), the Carlton Post Office (1883) and the Terang Post Office (1903). The design of the Ballarat Agricultural High School was one of his last works before he retired in 1909.

The architect responsible for the 1916 re-building was H. J. Kerr, son of Peter Kerr, one of the architects for Parliament House, Melbourne. H. J. Kerr worked in the Department from 1878 and assisted on the Houses of

Parliament. Many of the drawings for the superstructure of the west facade of Parliament House were signed by H. J. Kerr, who also executed the drawings for the south-east wing in 1891-94.

#### Peacock Hall

The assembly hall was relocated on the first floor in the new building. It was panelled in Australian hardwoods and was decorated with many Art Nouveau features, including stained glass windows. The hall was named Peacock Hall after the current Premier of Victoria and local member of Parliament, Sir Alexander Peacock, who opened the new school building on 4 April 1917. Built during World War I, the hall is particularly associated with the School's strong military tradition. The school had a cadet corps from 1907. In the conscription campaign of 1917, it was believed that support for conscription within the school was 20 to 1. Peacock Hall contains memorials to honour both academic achievements and military service by former students. One polished timber Honour Board listed those who died during World War I. A memorial mosaic mural tablet by well-known Melbourne artist George Dancey. The theme of the mural was the triumph of good over evil. Two World War II Honour Boards were unveiled on 14 November 1947. One contained the names of 57 servicemen and one nursing sister who died during World War II: the other listed 632 returned service men and women. In both wars, patriotic activity was encouraged and students were involved in war relief work, fund raising and collecting waste materials.

#### Silo (c.1913)

The concrete silo constructed c. 1913 is the only remaining structure of the Ballarat Agricultural High School farm which was conducted from 1910 to 1927. It predates the re-building of the main building (1916) and is the earliest intact structure remaining on the farm site. A photograph taken in 1913 shows two silos and a large shed north of the school buildings. Only one concrete silo (c.1913) remains on land now returned to the Ballarat City Council for recreational purposes. Although this has been separated from the school grounds since the reversion of the farm land to the Council, it is a remnant which demonstrates directly the Agricultural School period (1910-27) and as such is historically significant at a State level.

#### Locker Rooms (1910)

This building directly behind the Administration Building is a long low timber building with gabled roof clad in galvanised iron. Its dimensions were 120 feet by 24 feet. It now contains locker rooms, canteen and music room. The building was constructed by staff and students in 1910 as bicycle and shelter sheds and locker rooms. The 1910 agricultural class consisted of 22 male students, less than one tenth of the school population. During the mornings these boys studied with the rest of the school but in the afternoons they worked on the farm or in constructing the farm buildings. Their two-year course included woodwork, building construction, sheetmetal work and blacksmithing. Presumably the practical building skills learnt on the construction of the shelter shed building in 1910 were then used in the construction of the farm buildings in 1911.

The locker rooms have undergone considerable alteration. The canteen is in the central section and a glass-roofed assembly hall attached to the south. The original form of the building is however still obvious and internally some detail is intact such as the timber lined walls and ceilings and stable half-doors to the remaining locker rooms. This building is the earliest on the site but has undergone much alteration..

#### Bristol Classroom

In the 1950s a prefabricated Bristol classroom to house eighty students was brought on site. Postwar shortages of building materials and labour and huge increases in the school-age population partly from natural increase and partly from migration led to a severe shortage of school buildings in Victoria. After the Second World War, the Bristol Aircraft Company diverted their capacity for aluminium production to produce sheet aluminium and other products. These aluminium units were prefabricated by the Bristol Aircraft Company in England and imported for the Education Department to alleviate overcrowding in schools.

The Bristol classroom at Ballarat is a prefabricated aluminium building with aluminium doors and windows to the east of the main building. It has been added to and is currently used as an art room,

#### Gates and Garden

Memorial gates were constructed from funds donated by the students in 1939. These are of contributory

significance.

Associated People: Sir Alexander Peacock

## **Assessment Against Criteria**

### **Criterion A**

The historical importance, association with or relationship to Victoria's history of the place or object.

The Ballarat High School is important in the history of secondary education in Victoria as one of the first government secondary schools in the State. Founded as a continuation school for the training of teachers, Ballarat High School became one of the first purpose-built agricultural high schools. The Peacock Hall is historically important as a memorial to those who served in World War I and II, demonstrating the involvement and experience of schoolchildren in the war effort. The Ballarat High School is historically important as an early agricultural high school whose foundation in 1907 reflected the importance of the agricultural sector in the early twentieth century.

### **Criterion B**

The importance of a place or object in demonstrating rarity or uniqueness.

### **Criterion C**

The place or object's potential to educate, illustrate or provide further scientific investigation in relation to Victoria's cultural heritage.

### **Criterion D**

The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as part of a class or type of places or objects.

The Ballarat High School, designed by the Public Works Department architect John Hudson Marsden in Edwardian style exhibits an unusual integration of features in its main building and especially its assembly hall, which is decorated with timber panelling and leadlight windows.

### **Criterion E**

The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.

### **Criterion F**

The importance of the place or object in demonstrating or being associated with scientific or technical innovations or achievements.

### **Criterion G**

The importance of the place or object in demonstrating social or cultural associations.

### **Criterion H**

Any other matter which the Council considers relevant to the determination of cultural heritage significance

## **Extent of Registration**

### **NOTICE OF REGISTRATION**

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 1797 in the category described as a Heritage Place:

Ballarat High School, Sturt Street West, Ballarat, City of Ballarat.

### **EXTENT:**

1. All of the buildings marked B 1 (Main Building), B 2 (Locker Rooms) and B 3 (Silo approximately 200 metres west of Gillies Street) on Diagram 606982 held by the Executive Director.

2. All of the land marked L 1 on Diagram 606982 held by the Executive Director being part of Crown Allotment 6C and L 2 being a 3 metre curtilage measured from the base of the silo (B 3) and being part of Crown Allotment 6B.

Dated 6 May 1999.

RAY TONKIN

Executive Director

[*Victoria Government Gazette G 21 27 May 1999 p.1218*]

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*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*