

PIPEMAKERS PARK COMPLEX



2024. Building 1, northernmost point of the site.



2024. Northern elevation of Building 2.



2024. Fenced off area between Building 2 (left) and Building 1 (right).



2024. Southern facade of Building 2.



2024. Western elevation of Building 2.



2024. Remains of chimney stack (4) between Building 2 and Building 3.



2024. Eastern elevation of Building 2.



2024. Non-bluestone addition to Building 3.



2024. Northern and western elevations of Building 3



2024. Entrance to the History Garden, in the footprint of the Bottom Factory (5).



2024. History Garden in the footprint of the Bottom Factory (5). Extant tramways repurposed from the original bottom factory.



2024. Modern pipe sculpture in the space between top and bottom factories.



2024. Top Factory (6).



2024. Top Factory interior (6). To the left is a concrete steam chamber that is collapsing. Tramways to the floor.



2024. Top Factory (6) middle section where pipes were loaded into steam chambers.



2024. Top Factory (6) back area of the building showing the relationship between timber platform and steam chambers.



2024. Western elevation of Top Factory (6).



Aerial extent of registration



PIPE MAKERS PARK COMPLEX SOHE 2008



PIPE MAKERS PARK COMPLEX SOHE 2008



1 former melbourne meat preserving company building van ness ave maidstone end view dec1981



former melbourne meat preserving company buildings van ness ave maidstone side elevation dec1981

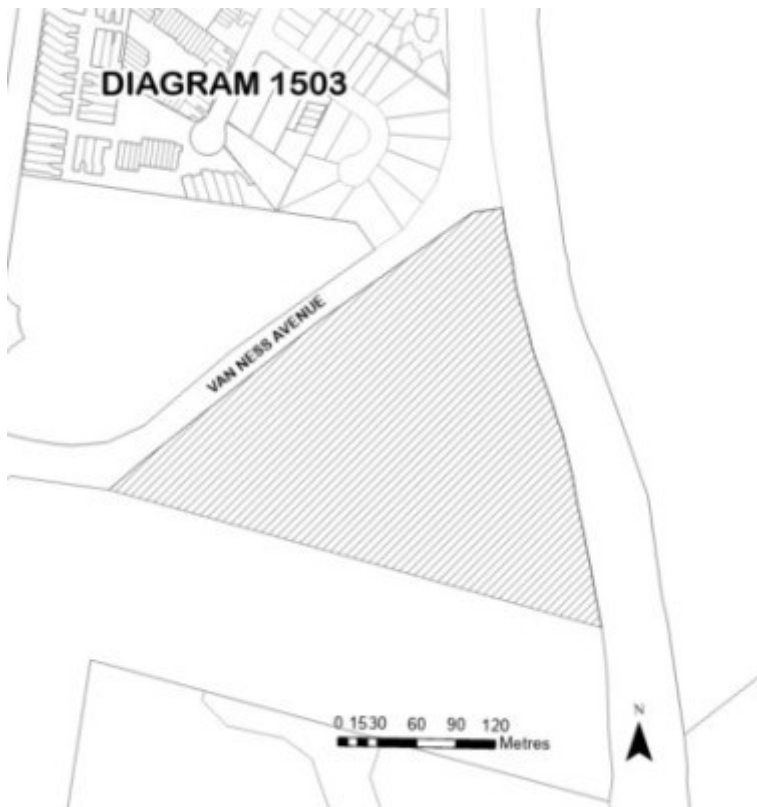


Diagram 1503 new scalebar

Location

2 VAN NESS AVENUE MARIBYRNONG, MARIBYRNONG CITY

Municipality

MARIBYRNONG CITY

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1503

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO64

VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

Amendment to Registration

January 23, 2025

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 23, 2025

Pipemakers Park is located on Wurundjeri Country.

What is significant?

Pipemakers Park Complex, including the three historic bluestone buildings used as factories, and the former Humes Top Pipe Factory. The site demonstrates four different phases of industrial use commencing with Raleigh's Boiling Down Works (1848-c.1853), followed by the Melbourne Meat Preserving Company (1868-86), the Australian Frozen Meat Export Company (1880-82), and the Hume Pipe Company (1912-78) which manufactured concrete pipes.

How is it significant?

The Pipemakers Park Complex is of historical, archaeological and architectural significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

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

Criterion C

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

Criterion D

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

Why is it significant?

The Pipemakers Park Complex is historically significant as an outstanding example of a nineteenth century industrial site that represents four historic industries of great importance to Victoria. Raleigh's Boiling Down Works (1848-c.1853) was the first large scale meat processing works in Victoria. This was followed by the establishment of the Melbourne Meat Preserving Company (1868-86), the largest and most successful meat canning enterprise in Australia, instigating the formation of other meat preserving companies at Footscray, Colac, Warrnambool, Echuca, and Ballarat. The Australian Frozen Meat Export Company (1880-82) was the first commercial frozen meat export factory in Australia. The final phase of industry at the site, the Hume Pipe Company (later Humes Ltd., 1912-78), was one of the first two factories manufacturing centrifugally spun reinforced concrete pipes in Australia. The extant built forms provide a chronology of industrial development in the western suburbs of Melbourne, highlighting significant exports of both Australian-made products and

technologies.
(Criterion A)

The Pipemakers Park Complex is archaeologically significant for the evidence the complex contains about the various stages of use of the site. With most of the industrial buildings demolished, these archaeological remains provide important evidence of the scale and activity of the various factories which operated on site. For example, proven and significant archaeological evidence has been found of the original boiler house, Humes testing lab, and tramways.
(Criterion C)

The Pipemakers Park is significant as a notable example of a nineteenth century factory complex. The collection of bluestone buildings is one of the largest mid to late nineteenth century industrial complexes in Victoria, and one of only a handful of bluestone factories reflecting the locational availability of the local stone. The open plan factory is split level in the main building, with segmented arches and columns. The iron truss roof in the 1874 building could be original. It is an interesting adaptation of English industrial design, notable for its use of fire-proof construction technology. The monumental bluestone buildings of the Melbourne Meat Preserving Company provide a stark contrast to the functional architectural considerations of the later Humes Pipeworks Buildings.
(Criterion D)

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:

1. Repair and maintenance of mosaics, fencing and pergolas in the History Garden.
2. Maintenance, planting and removal of all vegetation where works do not include extensive subsurface disturbance and new trees are located no closer than twenty metres to any historic building or structure. All works must cease (and Heritage Victoria contacted immediately) if historical archaeological remains are uncovered during works.
3. All pruning of trees.
4. Repairs, maintenance and removal of freestanding buildings constructed after 1979, provided that ground disturbance associated with the removal is not likely to disturb historical archaeological remains. All works

must cease (and Heritage Victoria contacted immediately) if historical archaeological remains are uncovered during works.

5. Installation of wayfinding signage more than five metres from heritage buildings, provided that ground disturbance associated with the installation is not likely to disturb historical archaeological remains. All works must cease (and Heritage Victoria contacted immediately) if historical archaeological remains are uncovered during works.
6. Removal of modern toilet facilities and construction of new facilities within the same footprint, provided that ground disturbance associated with the removal and construction is not likely to disturb historical archaeological remains. All works must cease (and Heritage Victoria contacted immediately) if historical archaeological remains are uncovered during works.

Theme

5. Building Victoria's industries and workforce

Construction dates	1850,
Architect/Designer	Purchas, Albert,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place, Registered archaeological place, Registered object integral to a registered place,
Other Names	HUMES PIPE WORKS, FORMER MELBOURNE MEAT PRESERVING CO BUILDINGS, LIVING MUSEUM OF THE WEST, PIPE MAKERS PARK,
Hermes Number	670
Property Number	

History

Pipemakers Park is located in the City of Maribyrnong, on the west bank of the Maribyrnong River (from the Wurundjeri word Mirring-gnay-bir-nong). In the early days of colonisation, it was known as the Saltwater River. Prior to European colonisation, this land was occupied by the Wurundjeri people, which was part of a larger grouping in central Victoria known as the Kulin. The Kulin Nation is an association of people from five language groups, who shared mutual economic and social relationships. There is evidence of Wurundjeri occupation in the Maribyrnong area for at least 17,000 years prior to colonisation.

The Maribyrnong River valley was once an environmentally rich area with a diversity of flora and fauna, which made it an important resource for the Wurundjeri people. For this same reason, the nutrient rich soils of the Maribyrnong River were favoured by Europeans for grazing purposes and in the economic downturn of the 1840s, for the killing and boiling down of livestock. The effects of 150 years of industrial development on the Maribyrnong River were devastating. The cumulative effects of pollution from sheep grazing and the processing of meat, wool, and bones transformed the river from its once pristine environment.

The present-day park was created on a former industrial site. It contains some of the oldest intact early industrial structures in Victoria. Its location on the Maribyrnong River provided water transport for goods.

Raleigh's Boiling Down Works (c.1848-c.1853)

Established by Joseph Raleigh on the banks of the Maribyrnong River. These works boiled down sheep and cattle carcasses, converting fat into tallow. Tallow could be used to make soap and candles, and could be easily exported across Australia and the world. Raleigh's boiling down works were one of the largest in Victoria. The works closed around 1853, following the death of Joseph Raleigh and the start of the Gold Rush, which increased the cost of labour and reduced the profitability of boiling-down.

Robertson, Martin and Smith's Victoria Iron Works (1854-55)

For a brief time, Robertson, Martin and Smith Iron Works operated on the site. This is significant as, during this period, the company built the first railway locomotive in Australia.

In 1854 Australia's first steam railway was opened, the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway. After locomotives ordered from England were delayed, the firm of Robertson, Martin & Smith was chosen to build the first steam locomotive to use the tracks. It is believed that the locomotive was primarily constructed in Melbourne. However, it is possible that parts were constructed at the place.

The Melbourne Meat Preserving Company (1868-86)

Managed by S.S. Ritchie, the Melbourne Meat Preserving Company was established on the site in 1868. The company was vast, with offices, stables, storerooms, stock pens, a slaughterhouse, tinsmiths' shop, boning room, kitchen, preserving department, cooling room, testing rooms, packing department, boiling-down department, stores, bone mill, and machine shop. Tramways connected the departments and wharves were built to assist with water transport. Close to the site, Ritchie established a garden to grow herbs and vegetables for canned soups and stews. As the works continued to grow, it also included a private schoolhouse for workers' children, a boarding house for temporary employees and a manager's residence.

During this time the works were described as "one of the largest factories of its kind in Australia," (Argus, 26 February 1870, p.7) and even in the world (Argus, 6 October 1874, p6). Australian canned meat provided around half of all imported tinned meat to London.

In December 1873 a fire destroyed much of the factory buildings and equipment. Within a year the company had repaired and improved the works. However, competition began to increase, with meat canning growing as an industry in New Zealand, South America, and North America. By 1886 the works were running at a loss and it was decided that the company would be wound up.

The Australian Frozen Meat Export Company (1880-82)

Briefly operating alongside the Melbourne Meat Preserving Company was a frozen meat export business, the first in Australia. The Australian Frozen Meat Export Company developed the Victorian export trade in frozen meat and was, for a time the largest exporter of frozen meat in Australia. In 1882 it was decided that the works would be relocated to Newport. The company went into liquidation in 1886.

Hume Pipes (1912-79)

The Hume brothers, Walter and Edward, pioneered the process of manufacturing centrifugally spun steel-reinforced concrete pipes. Employee Tom McIntyre was able to make machines that allowed the process to be undertaken on a commercial basis. By 1912-13 Hume Bros. Cement Iron Works was established on the site.

A new company, named the Hume Pipe Company (Australia) Ltd was incorporated in 1920. Though the company owned factories across Victoria and Australia, the Maribyrnong remained the centre of production. The patent for Humes' revolutionary pipes, as well as the machinery to construct the pipes, was sold around the world.

During the 1940s some buildings, including the slaughterhouse, were demolished and new buildings, like the Top Factory were built. The main part of the Top Factory was used to construct six-foot pipes, while the southern end was for four-foot 'specials'. Moulding, reinforcement making, steam curing, stripping, and assembling all took place in the same building.

Now called Humes Limited, by 1979 the company decided to wind down its operations in Maribyrnong and the last remaining workers were transferred to Laverton.

Public space

The land was purchased by the former Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works in 1979 for use as parkland. The site was cleaned up, with stabilisation and preservation works undertaken, and one of the buildings refurbished and leased to the Living Museum of the West. The site is currently operated by Maribyrnong City Council.

Three historic bluestone buildings, once factory buildings, were used by the Living Museum of the West until recently. The Humes Top Factory has also survived.

The Bottom Factory was turned into an interpretative garden called the History of the Land Discovery Trail between 1993-95. It occupies the footprint of the original factory and retains some features including tramways, concrete chutes, repurposed Humes Pipe Company Pipes, and parts of the original concrete slab.

Selected bibliography

Ford, Olwen and Vines, Gary. *Pipemakers Park Maribyrnong Conservation Analysis*. Prepared for Melbourne Parks and Waterways by Melbourne's Living Museum of the West Inc. 1996.

Biosis Research. *Maribyrnong Aboriginal Heritage Study*. Prepared for City of Maribyrnong. 1999.

Extent of Registration

Heritage Act 2017

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 2017**, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by modifying a place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H1503

Category: Registered Place, Registered Objects Integral to a Registered Place; Registered Archaeological Place

Place: Pipemakers Park Complex

Location: 2 Van Ness Avenue, Maribyrnong City

Municipality: Maribyrnong City

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 1503 encompassing part of Allotment 8A Section 21 Parish of Cut Paw-Paw with the southern boundary being a straight line parallel to the lot boundary by a distance of 130 metres, and the registered objects integral to the place being the:

1. pipe testing machine;
2. Tattsлото incident board.

23 January 2025

STEVEN AVERY

Executive Director

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/>