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## WEST CHANNEL PILE LIGHT



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### Location

PORT PHILLIP BAY, UNINCORPORATED

### Municipality

UNINCORPORATED

### Level of significance

Registered

### Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1518

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

### VHR Registration

August 20, 1982

## Amendment to Registration

May 23, 1998

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 21, 1999

### ***What is significant?***

The West Channel Pile Light was built in 1881 to a design by the Public Works Department. The building contractor was Robert Thornton. It is constructed of red gum with a concrete platform. The pile light replaced an earlier lightship that was installed in 1854 to mark the north-east end of the West Sand. It re-used the original lantern and upper tower of 1854 but relocated these to the present site. When the pile light was moved to a new substructure (sometime before the early 1980s) the superstructure was damaged, and most of the verandah and balustrade was lost. The walkway is also missing.

The West Channel Pile Light was installed to aid navigation along the West Channel through Port Phillip Bay, and formed a leading line along the West Channel. The South and the West Channels were the two major shipping channels for all vessels entering Port Phillip Bay on their way to Melbourne. The light continues to be used today.

The pile light was constructed with a substructure or framework of timber piles. Above this is a new concrete platform. Mounted on the platform is a two-storey octagonal timber structure that houses the light-keepers quarters and the lantern. This is accessed via an open Newell stair. The living quarters included a fireplace (no longer extant) and chimney. The light was manned until the interwar period when gas lamps were introduced.

### **How is it significant?**

The West Channel Pile Light is of historical, architectural and technological (maritime) significance to the State of Victoria.

### **Why is it significant?**

The West Channel Pile Light is historically and architecturally significant as a rare example of a surviving pile light. The West Channel Pile Light and the South Channel Pile Light are the only surviving pile lights (albeit in part) of the four manned pile lights that originally serviced Port Phillip Bay.

The West Channel Pile Light is historically and architecturally significant for its incorporation of light-keepers quarters, which demonstrates a now vanished way of life. It is one of only a few pile lights in Victoria designed with accommodation quarters.

The West Channel Pile Light is also of technological (maritime) significance for its incorporation of the lantern and upper tower of the earlier 1854 lightship. Channel lighting is rare in Victoria and this is an important example of surviving nineteenth-century light technology in Victoria. The West Channel and South Channel pile lights are the only ones of their type in Australia.

*[Online Data Upgrade Project - 2004]*

## 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 exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works 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 works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component.

General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan.

General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. Minor Works : Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works must submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

### **Exterior**

The following exemptions would apply to all areas of the exterior to the West Channel Pile Light and are directed at the maintenance and repair. All works must be undertaken in a manner which is consistent with the existing form and presentation of the external fabric.

\* Repair and replacement of damaged/broken glazing and damaged/defective joinery, including where replacement materials match the original and the work is consistent with the form and presentation of the existing original fabric.

\* Cleaning, including the removal of surface deposits, organic growths, plant growths or graffiti by use of low pressure water and natural detergents and mild brushing and scrubbing.

- \* Removal of existing services such as cabling, plumbing, wiring and fire services and replacement with those that use existing routes, conduits or voids, and does not involve damage to or the removal of significant fabric.
- \* Painting of previously painted walls and ceiling provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of the original painting or other decorative scheme.
- \* Minor repair and replacement to the exterior of the following elements where damaged/broken, providing these are undertaken using materials, colours and profiles which match the original: Lantern light tower roof including cast iron structure and copper cladding. Lantern light tower glazed enclosure including cast iron/bronze window frames and cast iron walkway. Lantern light tower base including cast iron wall panels and porthole recesses. Former keeper's quarters exterior walls including timber cladding. Substructure to main platform including timber piles.

## Interior

The following exemptions would apply to all areas of the interior and are directed at the general operational requirements of the pile light and the ongoing repair and maintenance of interior spaces.

- \* Minor repairs which utilise materials and techniques that match the original, including to walls, joinery and floor finishes.
- \* General cleaning of the interior, provided the preparation and cleaning does not remove evidence of the original paint or other decorative scheme.
- \* Repair and replacement of roofing materials and rainwater goods where damaged/broken to match existing materials, colours and profiles.
- \* Minor repair and replacement of interior fabric to the following elements if damaged/broken, providing these are undertaken using materials, colours and profiles which match the original: Lantern light tower including cast iron central column, staircase, cast iron walkway and porthole recesses. Former light keeper's quarters central room including, staircase, timber lining and timber framing to walls. Former light keeper's quarters outer room including timber lining and timber framing to walls and roof; and doors, timber lining and timber framing to corridor.

|                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Construction dates      | 1881,             |
| Heritage Act Categories | Registered place, |
| Hermes Number           | 932               |
| Property Number         |                   |

## History

**The draft statement of significance and the above history were produced as part of an Online Date Upgrade Project 2004. Sources were as follows:**

- Australian Heritage Commission. *Register of the National Estate*.
- Passing the West Channel Pile Light, 25 February 1882, SLV Pictoria.
- South Channel Pile Light: Conservation Plan, 1997.

A large (approx 1m high) copper alloy weather vane believed to be from the West Channel Pile Light was installed on the roof of the former Parks Victoria shed on Larkin Parade (north of the Queenscliff Maritime Museum) sometime in the 1960s. The building is now in the area subject to redevelopment by Queenscliff Harbor development and the roof was replaced in June 2007. The weather vane was removed and has been missing since that time. See J:Planning & Land/HV ALL Heritage/Heritage Heritage/OPERATIONS/MARITIME/MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT/Queenscliff Sites

## Extent of Registration

Amendment of Register of Government Buildings

Port Phillip Bay

West Channel Pile Light, at the western side of the northern entrance of Port Phillip West Channel, in latitude 38°11.7' (sic) south, longitude 144°45.5' east.

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. G39 12 October 1988 p.3093]

Transferred to the Victorian Heritage Register 23 May 1998 (2 years after the proclamation of the Heritage Act 1995 pursuant to the transitional provisions of the Act)

(Note: latitude should read 38 degrees)

*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/>*