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Cardinia Shire Council
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Dear Fiona

Response to GAA comments on revisions to Officer HO boundaries

This letter follows my advice for revisions to Heritage Overlay boundaries of places in the Officer PSP provided in my report 'Proposed revisions of HO boundaries in Officer township' of 11 October 2010. The comments below are written in response to an email dated 23 November 2010 from Mark Brennan of the Growth Areas Authority (GAA) requesting further changes to the proposed boundaries for some of the places. It should be noted that the GAA is in agreement with the recommendation in the above report to retain the existing HO boundary to Berwick Pottery (HO105), so it will not be addressed in this letter. For the remaining five places under contention, Mr Brennan's comments have been reproduced below in *italics*, followed by my response.

Firwood Park, HO103

The extent of the HO should be refined to include just the cottage and canopy of mature trees and not the lawn areas on the east and west sides.

As the line of mature trees along the front (south) boundary of this site are now part of the Princes Highway road reserve, it is likely that they will be removed (unfortunately) as part of future road widening. For this reason, only the mature trees within the title boundaries should be taken into consideration when specifying the revised HO boundaries. Apart from retaining these trees together with the historic cottage, it is also very important to retain views to the cottage from the public domain (i.e., from Princes Highway).

With these two restraints in mind, it would be possible to reduce the extent of the HO boundary on the west side of the property to the edge of the western-most tree canopy, but not the east as its extent is determined by the mature oak at the north-east corner of the proposed boundary. A hatchet-shaped overlay is not recommended as it would significantly reduce visibility to the cottage.

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Revised western HO boundary for Firwood Park shown in white, moved to the edge of the westernmost tree canopy. Note that the oak at the north-east corner determines the eastern extent of the HO boundary.

Primrose Park, HO102

We support coverage of the house, driveway and mature exotic trees by the HO. We recommend the heritage overlay boundary be adjusted to include all of canopy of Monterey Cypress in the NE corner if the title boundaries will allow - this will increase the level of protection offered by the HO as any development beneath the canopy would be covered by the overlay.

We do not however support retaining the Mature Monterey Cypress row on the southern boundary unless the trees themselves are of particular arboricultural significance.

The above recommendations are acceptable, as the row of Monterey Pines along the western boundary of the site are in fact of greater heritage significance than the Monterey Cypress, but cannot be retained due to plans for future road widening.

James Hicks Pottery, HO104

We acknowledge that this site is already covered by a HO but recommend the Berwick Pottery site on the opposite side of Princes Highway be protected by the HO as a better example of a pottery heritage site and that the HO protection be removed from the James Hicks Pottery site. The James Hicks Pottery site is a very large site made up primarily of a clay pit which is of limited representative value to retain. The Berwick pottery site offers a smaller clay pit and more extensive building complex which we feel is a better example to retain. There is also a question of how retention of the James Hicks Pottery clay pit would work with the proposed drainage scheme in this location.

I do not agree with this recommendation. The brickmaking industry in Officer was very important in its early history, so there is no reason for its not to be represented by more than

one site. As this site has already been approved by the Minister (and possibly a planning panel), its significance to Cardinia's history has already been accepted. Moreover, the clay pit is an important part of the history and significance of any pottery/brick-making site.

Officer Union Church and Officer Public Hall, recommended for HO

We support protection of the church and hall but not the pine windbreak unless the trees themselves are of particular arboricultural significance.

As the aerial photo overlaid with the title boundaries for this site indicate that the trees are on the adjoining allotment, and not part of the church and hall property, this recommendation is acceptable.

Greenslopes, recommended for HO

We support protecting the house, outbuildings, water tank/well and surrounding features - adjust the HO boundary to include the canopy of the mature oak. ... We don't however support protection of the clay pit and Monterey Pines, unless the trees themselves are of particular arboricultural significance.

This is the first claypit established in Officer, part of the very important local brickmaking industry. It should be protected by the HO. The Monterey Pines around it, however, are not an early feature of the site – they are visible as saplings in a 1956 aerial photo – so they do not have to be protected.

If you would like to discuss any of the above comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Natica Schmeder". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Ms Natica Schmeder
Senior Heritage Consultant