

Expert Witness Statement by:  
Peter Andrew Barrett

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Level 31  
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For:

Planning Panels Victoria  
Hearing

With regard to a proposed heritage overlay  
to a site at 32 Mount Ararat South Road,  
Nar Nar Goon, as part of Amendment C234  
of the Cardinia Planning Scheme

Prepared for:  
Sorabh Dhanda (owner)

Instructions received from:  
Nick Robins (Taylors Development Strategists)

28 May 2018

## PREAMBLE

Sorabh Dhanda, the owner of the subject site, Carinya, 32 Mount Ararat South Road, Nar Nar Goon, commissioned this expert witness statement. This expert witness statement is in light of Amendment C234 to the *Cardinia Planning Scheme*, which proposes to implement a recommendation of the 'Post-Contact Heritage Assessment. Pakenham East Precinct. Final Report. Revised October 2017', prepared by Context Pty Ltd, to apply a site-specific heritage overlay to this site.

A heritage assessment undertaken as part of the 'Post-Contact Heritage Assessment. Pakenham East Precinct. Final Report. Revised October 2017', identified a house and shed on this site to be of local historical, architectural and aesthetic significance to the Shire of Cardinia.

The purpose of this expert witness statement is to assist the Panel in its assessment of this proposal to apply a site-specific heritage overlay to this site at 32 Mount Ararat South Road, Nar Nar Goon.

My qualifications and experience in the field of architectural history and heritage conservation are outlined on the following pages.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

This heritage assessment is prepared with regard to the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 2013*, which is the standard of heritage practice in Australia.

My assessment of this site and its house is prepared with regard to the document 'Applying the Heritage Overlay' prepared by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (Planning Practice Note 01. January 2018). Contained within that document are the HERCON criteria for the assessment of heritage value(s) of a heritage place.

My assessment is based, in part, on an inspection of the subject site and its environs inspected on 17 April 2018. The interior of the house and the shed were not inspected.

I have reviewed a citation prepared for the subject site in the 'Post-Contact Heritage Assessment. Pakenham East Precinct. Final Report. Revised October 2017', prepared by Context Pty Ltd.

I have reviewed a structural assessment of the house, prepared by Adams Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd. That report is titled '32 Mount Ararat South Road, Nar Nar Goon. Expert Structural Engineer Evidence', Issue 2, and is dated 28 May 2018.

I have also reviewed an assessment of a quince tree on the subject site undertaken by John Patrick Pty Ltd. That report is titled 'Significant Tree Assessment, Pakenham East Precinct', and was prepared in 2013.

During the course of preparing this expert witness statement I have undertaken research into the history of this site, its house, and its environs; using primary and secondary sources. Where primary and secondary sources are relied upon in this expert witness statement I have referenced them in footnotes.

## QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

I am a qualified architectural historian and conservation consultant. I have a Masters Degree in Architectural History and Conservation from the University of Melbourne. I also have architectural and other heritage related qualifications from the University of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT).

I am a member of Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), and I adhere to its *Burra Charter 2013*. I am a member of the Pacific Heritage Reference Group, whose purpose is to provide advice to the President and the Executive Committee of Australia ICOMOS on cultural heritage matters in the Pacific region. Other affiliations that I have are membership of the Australian Architecture Association, and the Society of Architectural Historians of Australia and New Zealand.

I have been involved in a range of heritage projects within Australia including heritage studies, conservation management plans, and heritage assessments of residential, commercial, industrial and public buildings. I have operated my own heritage practice for 21 years.

I have appeared as an expert witness on heritage matters at VCAT, Panel Hearings Victoria, and the Heritage Council of Victoria.

I have previously undertaken heritage assessments for Port Phillip, Glenelg, Wyndham, Hobsons Bay and Maroondah councils. I work in a heritage advisory capacity for Port Phillip, Kingston and Latrobe City councils.

I have worked on heritage projects in New South Wales and Tasmania. I have also worked on heritage projects overseas. In 2004, I received an exporter's grant from Austrade for the provision of heritage services to the United States. In 2011, I was invited to speak at the California Preservation Foundation conference in Santa Monica.

I have written published architectural histories for the Public Record Office Victoria, the City Museum and for the *Melbourne Design Guide*. I have also been commissioned to write histories of commercial and residential buildings in Melbourne. I am the author of an online architectural history and heritage blog.

The University of Melbourne, RMIT and other educational institutions have engaged me as a tutor and lecturer in architectural history and design. I have also been retained by RMIT to assess postgraduate-level architectural theses. Educational organizations, as well as heritage groups and the media, ask me to speak, or to comment, on architectural history and heritage matters.

I have been associated with a number of architectural exhibitions. In 2008, I was the curator of an exhibition at the City Museum in Melbourne called *The Impermanent City*. Other exhibitions that I have been involved with are *Re Built Environment* (2006), at the City Museum, and *Jet Age Melbourne* at the Town Hall Gallery (2015).

I am a mentor in the Australia ICOMOS Mentoring Program for students and early career heritage professionals.

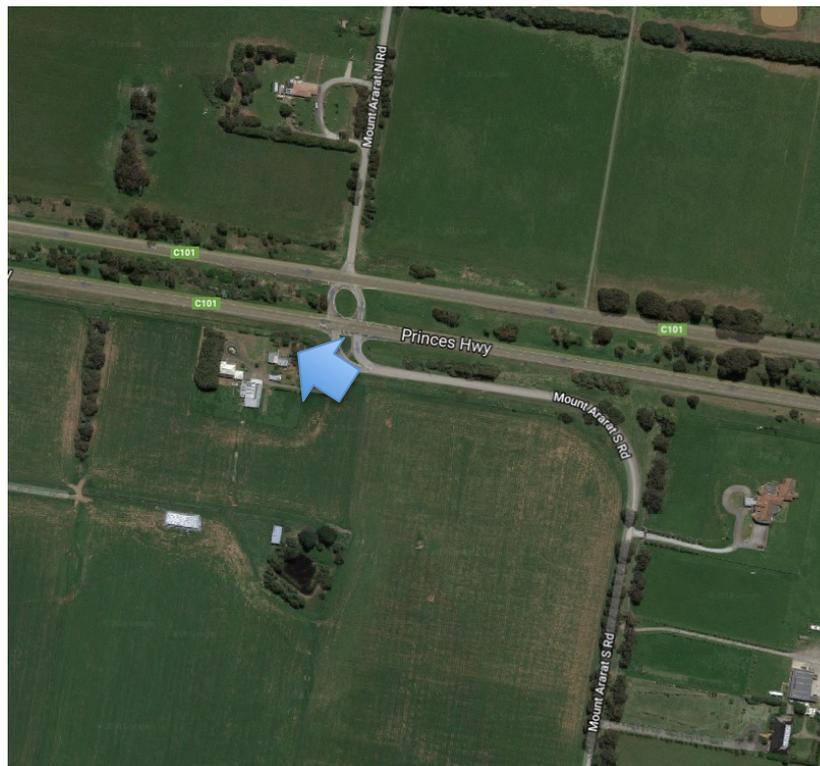
In 2014 my heritage practice, Peter Andrew Barrett, was a recipient of a bronze commendation from the Lord Mayor of Melbourne for its contribution to the 'vitality' of the City of Melbourne.

## SITE & ENVIRONS

The subject site is situated on the south side of the Princes Highway (State Route C101) Nar Nar Goon, to the west of its intersection with Mount Ararat South Road. The completion of the Princes Freeway (National Route 1) in recent decades, has meant that the adjacent Princes Highway is decommissioned as the main route between Melbourne and Gippsland.

Nar Nar Goon is situated approximately 60kms southeast of Melbourne in the Shire of Cardinia. As with much of the remainder of the land to the north of the Koo Wee Rup swamp, the area developed in the mid-nineteenth century as a pastoral and timber milling district.<sup>1</sup> The Mount Ararat Creek Pre-Emptive Right, a cattle run with origins to the 1840s, is situated to the northeast of this site.<sup>2</sup> The opening of a railway station on the Melbourne to Gippsland railway line at Nar Nar Goon in 1881, further stimulated settlement of the township and the surrounding district.<sup>3</sup>

*Aerial view of the subject site and its environs. The house, Carinya, is indicated with the blue arrow (Source of image: Google Maps. Date of map 2018).*



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- 1 Jenny Keating, 'Nar Nar Goon' in Andrew Brown-May et al, *The Encyclopedia of Melbourne*, p 501.
  - 2 Parish Plan, titled 'Parish of Nar Nar Goon, County of Mornington', Parish Series 1978, held by the State Library of Victoria.
  - 3 'Nar Nar Goon Estate' map of small farm and township allotments, c1880, held by the State Library of Victoria.

The subject site is part of a Crown grant of 70 hectares to F Jackson in 1874.<sup>4</sup> Later the land was owned by the Dore family. John Dore arrived at Nar Nar Goon in 1843, and, with Michael Hennessy, established the previously mentioned Mount Ararat cattle run. The Dore family later purchased this site and adjacent allotments on the south side of the Princes Highway.<sup>5</sup> The land on this Crown allotment (allotment 62), and adjacent allotments, is noted in an 1859 map as having 'good agricultural soil', and a band of tea tree is shown extending through this site.<sup>6</sup>

Francis Peter Dore, grandson of pioneer John Dore, married Annie Rose Kennedy in 1915, and around this time the couple became the owners of this farm.<sup>7</sup> The weatherboard house on the subject site seems to have been built around the time Francis and Annie Dore settled on this site. Ill-health forced Dore to retire from farming in 1946. He leased the farm to an unknown farmer(s) until 1952, when his daughter Mary and her husband, Dominic Cochrane, became the owners of the farm. They operated a dairy from the farm until 1976.<sup>8</sup>

*The front (north) elevation of Carinya, showing the partially demolished verandah (Photo: April 2018).*



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- 4 Parish Plan, titled 'Parish of Nar Nar Goon, County of Mornington', and Sheet 2 of a Schedule of Allotments, Parish Series 1978, held by the State Library of Victoria.
  - 5 Parish Plan, titled 'Parish of Nar Nar Goon, County of Mornington', 1967, held by the State Library of Victoria.
  - 6 Map titled 'Country Lots. Parishes of Pakenham and Nar Nar Goon. County of Mornington', dated 1859, held by the State Library of Victoria.
  - 7 Mary Cochrane, 'Clounleharde Ireland to Mt Ararat Gippsland (A History of the Dore Family) 1841-1982', p 13.
  - 8 Ibid.

*A side (west) elevation of the house. Weatherboards have been removed showing that the internal wall linings are asbestos/cement sheet (Photo: April 2018).*



*A skillion at the rear of the house, built in two stages, has been demolished (Photo April 2018).*



*A large shed to the southwest of the house, identified in the citation as the former milking shed/dairy (Photo April 2018).*



*Quince tree to the rear of the house that is identified in the citation (Photo April 2018).*



*Circular brick well to the east of the house (Photo April 2018).*



*Rear of the c1980 brick house to the west of Carinya (Photo: April 2018).*



## ANALYSIS

It is proposed to apply to the subject site a site-specific heritage overlay in the *Cardinia Planning Scheme*. A purpose of the heritage overlay, as defined by Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay of the *Cardinia Planning Scheme*, is to conserve heritage places of cultural significance to the Shire of Cardinia, and to ensure that works to, or adjacent to, a heritage place do not adversely affect that place.

Measures to put in place heritage controls to protect places of recognised cultural heritage value to the Shire of Cardinia are to be encouraged, as the conservation of places of cultural significance at a local level enable a community to understand its origins and identity.

In putting in place heritage controls on buildings and elements there should be a sound basis for their implementation, based upon a clear understanding of the site, its buildings and their history, and that the site meets the required thresholds for Local Significance.

The citation prepared identifies the site at 32 Mount Ararat South Road, Nar Nar Goon to have an association with the Dores, one of the pioneering European families of Post-Contact settlement of this district. The citation identifies the existing house on the site, Carinya, to be of heritage value, and a shed to its rear is also identified in the citation as contributing to the significance of this site.

The house is of early-twentieth century origin, and was built when, or soon after, Francis and Annie Dore inherited this farm in c1915. The house is noted in the citation as comparing well in intactness and architectural detailing to other houses of this typology, however its condition is noted as lower than comparable examples.

Since the site was visited by Context Pty Ltd in December 2012, the condition of the house has deteriorated,<sup>9</sup> and detailing noted in the citation, such as the verandah and the corbelled brick chimneys, have been obliterated.

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9 The citation describes the house's condition as 'fair'.

A report prepared on 28 May 2018, by Adams Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd, has concluded that damage to the house has affected its structural integrity. The timber frame of the main (hip roof) portion of the house is damaged, and the Adams' report concludes:

*Inspection of structural elements of the main building shows deteriorating effects resulting from age, termite infestation and moisture. The damaged, rusted roof has caused water leaking into the structure and resulted in collapse and rotting of some wall members. Termite (sic) has also caused damage to stud walls, flooring and joists beyond repair in several areas. It can be concluded that main (sic) building's structural elements will not be performing structurally as intended and as a result they may be replaced.*

In many cases, structural problems, as described by Adams Consulting Engineers Pty Ltd, can be addressed. However, care must be taken when considering these works as to what effects that these actions will have on the heritage value of the building.

The extent of structural problems to this house is extensive. The amount of fabric required to be replaced to remedy these structural problems would, essentially, require rebuilding much of the timber frame of the house. Added to this, the replacement of cladding, finishes and detailing already removed or damaged; very little of the original house will remain. In my view, this level of rectification works will be counterproductive, as the heritage value of the house will be further compromised by the extent of early fabric that is to be replaced. From a heritage perspective, it is my view that retention of the front portion of the house is not viable.

The two sections of the rear skillion (south side of the house), now partially demolished, can be removed without impacting upon the heritage value of this site to any appreciable level. Accretions to the west of the house can be removed, as they are of no heritage value, are of later origin.

The citation notes that the large shed to the southwest of the rear of the house to be of contributory value. This contributory value is derived from the shed's possible origin as a milking shed and/or dairy. This shed has been built in a number of stages, which is evident from its seven different roof forms (see image below). An inspection of the exterior of the shed provided no evidence of its claimed origin as a milking shed or dairy, which is believed to have been located somewhere to the rear of the house.

An aerial view of the large shed to the rear of Carinya, shows several different roof forms indicating the building has evolved over a number of phases of development (Photo: Google Images, 2018).



Physical evidence indicates uses of this shed other than milking. The west portion was used as a fowl shed and yard. In its current condition, as an amalgam of building elements and materials, and in the absence of milking/dairy paraphernalia, the shed has little interpretative value, and, consequently, little contributory value in understanding the history of this site as part of a dairy farm. This shed, and other sheds, can be removed, altered or retained as required without impacting upon the heritage value of this site.

The c1980 brick house to the west of the site is of no apparent heritage value, and can be retained, altered and/or removed as required.

The citation identifies a quince tree (*Cydonia oblonga*) to be an early planting on the site. The tree is most probably of later origin, as the lifespan of these trees is about 50 years.<sup>10</sup> I also note that the John Patrick assessment of 2013 indicates that the tree has a life expectancy of another 10-20 years.<sup>11</sup> In this respect, I agree with the assessment and recommendation of John Patrick that:

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10 *Weekly Times*, 9 July 2014, article 'Victoria is quince heaven'.  
11 John Patrick, 'Pakenham East Precinct Significant Tree Assessment', p 11.

*The Quince (Cydonia oblonga) located to the south of the heritage dwelling is of limited viability and not worthy of specific controls or retention as part of (potential) site development.<sup>12</sup>*

The tree can be retained, pruned, or removed as required.

The submission by the Victorian Planning Authority notes that this part of the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan area is to be developed in the future for residential use.<sup>13</sup> The 'Post-Contact Heritage Assessment. Pakenham East Precinct. Final Report. Revised October 2017' includes a number of prescriptive policies as to how this residential development should proceed.<sup>14</sup> However, without any clear development proposal in place, and the long-term retention of the existing house in question, as well as doubt as to the perceived heritage value of the large shed, these conservation policies should be removed from the citation.

Should the Panel decide to proceed with the proposed heritage overlay, rather than the prescriptive policies proposed, any future development should be guided by the decision guidelines contained within Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay, and the policies of other clauses of the *Cardinia Planning Scheme* pertaining to heritage. Site-specific conservation policy can be developed later, when a clearer vision of the development of the environs of the site is known.

The weatherboard house, Carinya, has a modest level of historical value to Cardinia Shire for its association with the Dore family. The house cannot be considered to meet the HERCON criteria as having 'importance' in understanding the course or pattern of Cardinia's cultural history (Criterion A). Its association with the lives of a family of importance in this district (Criterion H) is limited to it being a later house (c1915) of the Dore family, who had settled in the district seventy years earlier.

In its current derelict condition, the house cannot be considered to have architectural and/or aesthetic values. (Criteria D & E).

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- 12 John Patrick, 'Pakenham East Precinct Significant Tree Assessment', p 4.
- 13 Victorian Planning Authority, 'PSP 1210 Pakenham East. Part A Submission. Amendment C234 to the Cardinia Planning Scheme', May 2018, Figure 7, p 18.
- 14 'Post-Contact Heritage Assessment. Pakenham East Precinct. Final Report. Revised October 2017', pp 32-33.

## CONCLUSION

Damage to the house, Carinya, has compromised its modest heritage value. A recent structural assessment of the house has established that to return the house to a habitable state, a significant amount of its remaining early fabric, in particular its timber framing, will need to be replaced. Given that much of the house's early cladding, finishes and detailing have already been removed or damaged, the level of further change required to the house in replacing fabric will render its heritage value negligible. On this basis, I recommend that the house is not included in a heritage overlay.

There is no physical evidence remaining that the large shed to the rear of the house was the former milking shed and dairy of Carinya. In its current condition, as an amalgam of building elements and fabric, it retains little interpretative value in understanding any earlier use. Consequently, I am of the view that the shed can be removed or altered as required.

Other elements that are on the site, including a 1980s brick house, other sheds and outbuildings, fencing, gates and a circular brick well, can be retained, removed or altered as required.

Should the Panel decide to proceed with the proposed heritage overlay, it is also recommended that the conservation policies for future development of the site are removed from the citation, and conservation policies for the site be developed when a clearer vision of future residential development of this part of the Pakenham East Structure Plan area is known.

On this basis, I recommend that the proposed heritage overlay for this site does not proceed.

## DECLARATION

I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate, and that no matters of significance that I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from my evidence.



Peter Barrett  
Master of Architectural  
History & Conservation (Melb).