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# ROYAL GEELONG YACHT CLUB ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRECINCT

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## Location

25 EASTERN BEACH GEELONG, GREATER GEELONG CITY

## Municipality

GREATER GEELONG CITY

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7721-0203

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 3, 2004

The area of the Royal Geelong Yacht Club has high social significance as one of the earliest Yacht Clubs in Geelong, and the only extant Yacht club in the area. It has a long history with recreational sailing and has been used for mooring yachts since at least 1893. The area includes the Former Geelong Morgue site, the Former Anglers Club, the timber Harbour Trust Slipway and the Eastern Beach Tide Gauge. These are all significant sites as components of the Geelong Harbour Trust landscape.

Eastern Beach Tide Gauge: The site may lie under the extensive land reclamation that has been undertaken in this area. Further investigation is required to determine the construction details and specifications of the facility.

Royal Geelong Yacht Club: The site has been altered almost continuously since its inception. Remains of the 1930s seawall are still evident on the eastern side of the site, at the slipway, and have been found also during excavations of the boat hard. The original section of the Bellarine Pier is likely to still be extant under land reclamation, as are a number of the earlier slipways. It is an important part of the recreational landscape of Geelong.

Interpretation of Site

Former Harbour Master/Customs Boat Shed: The earlier boat shed sites are likely to have been buried under landfill used for reclamation. The slipway is still extant and it has been used for the foundations for the yacht club. The slipway is almost totally intact for at least half its former length at the shoreward end, with the leeway, pile supports, cross members/braces and secondary pile supports still standing under the current clubhouse. The slip stands about 1.5m high and is accessed through the refrigeration storeroom. The piles are about 0.5m square, and are spaced about 5m apart in sets of three piles, and the bracing planks stand almost 75cm high.

Former Anglers Club: The site now lies under the Royal Geelong Yacht Club. It is not clear if the building site was excavated (and hence removed most of the archaeological deposit) when the Harbour Trust slipway was installed, and/or when the Yacht Club expanded sometime between 1927 -1937 (G347, G389). If excavation did not occur, traces of the structure and archaeological deposits may still exist under the landfill to the south of the clubrooms, in similar states of preservation to the Geelong Harbour Trust Slipway.

Former Geelong Morgue: The site would now lie under the current concrete boat yard/hard of the Royal Geelong Yacht Club. Given that the structure existed prior to the reclamation of land in this area for the Geelong Yacht Club, it is probable that foundations of the structure may still exist below the hard.

Other Names EASTERN BEACH TIDE GAUGE, ROYAL GEELONG YACHT CLUB, GEELONG HARBOUR TRUST SLIPWAY, FORMER HARBOUR MASTER/CUSTOMS BOAT SHED, FORMER ANGLERS CLUB, FORMER GEELONG MORGUE,

Hermes Number 111637

Property Number

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## History

Royal Geelong Yacht Club: The Geelong Yacht Club was formed in 1859. Although interest in the club waned in the following years until it gave up its existence as a separate entity and became a branch of the Victorian Yacht Club (Brownhill, 1990:543, Champs, 1989: 69). By 1880, the Geelong Sailing Club was established, which later became the Geelong Yacht Club in 1881 (Champ, 1989:72). A yacht club is first shown on plans of the site in 1893 (Downes). The club has had a succession of clubhouses, the first of which was constructed by the 1890s. Yachts are known to have moored in this area as early as 1893 (Downes). The second clubhouse was built in 1928, and is still located on the grounds, though further south of its original waterfront location. Boat pens, a pier (Bellarine Pier) and a clubhouse existed on the site from the 1920s (F81). The Bellarine Pier was extended after storm damage, and an L shaped cross pier added (Champs, 1989:218) By 1937, land had been reclaimed out to the Eastern Beach seawall, burying the half of the former jetty (Bellarine Pier), which was extended and a slipway installed (G389). Further land reclamation occurred around 1966, where the boat hard was extended beyond the seawall on the eastern side of the pier, and a lawn area was provided in front of the new clubhouse. Rejected piles from the construction of the new Alcoa pier at Point Henry were used to construct the new reclamation

seawall. Piles were driven vertically along the edge of the proposed reclamation, a layer of horizontal piles were laid behind them, and finally further piles were driven at an angle and tensioned back to the vertical piles. Landfill was then laid behind this structure. Two concrete ramps were added at this time to the north eastern extremity (Champs, 1989: 208-209). A pier, boat pens and breakwater were constructed at the extremity of the Bellarine St Pier when it was severely damaged by a storm 1981 (Champs, 1989: 218).

Former Geelong Morgue: Three sheds were known in this area as early as 1854 (G80), and may be associated with either the Harbour Master or Customs Service, or may be one of the early rowing club sheds. The morgue is shown in this area between 1912 (Loney, 1981:48) and c1920s (F81), but could have been present outside these dates.

Former Anglers Club: Three sheds were shown in this area as early as 1854 (G80), and may be associated with either the Harbour Master or Customs Service, or possibly one of the early rowing club sheds. The club is not shown on a detailed plan of the area in 1920s, so probably dates to after that time (F81).

Former Harbour Master/Customs Boat Shed: Three sheds were shown in this area as early as 1854 (G80), and may have been associated with either the Harbour Master or Customs Service, or one of the early rowing club sheds. The site was shown as the Harbour Boat Shed in 1880 (PRO RFCL 1640) and 1893 (Downes, 1893), and as the Customs Boat Shed in 1897 (G288). A slipway was added to the site by 1898 (G387), and the site was again referred to as the Harbour Trust Boat Shed in the 1920s (F81). A substantial slipway had been added by 1937 for the Geelong Harbour Trust, which extended past the extremity of Eastern Pier (G389). The site was later taken over by the Royal Geelong Yacht Club in 1959 after the GHT vacated the site (Champ, 1989:203). The foundations for the new yacht club rooms were built upon the extant slipway in 1959, who structural piles support the base.

Eastern Beach Tide Gauge: Shown in Downes 1893 plan and again in 1898 (G387). Not shown again after this date.

*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/>*