

# HAROLD HOLT MEMORIAL SWIMMING CENTRE



HAROLD HOLT SWIM CENTRE SOHE 2008



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h00069 harold holt swim centre plan

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## Location

1409-1413 HIGH STREET GLEN IRIS, STONNINGTON CITY

## Municipality

STONNINGTON CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0069

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO364

## VHR Registration

August 31, 2006

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 8, 2006

## What is Significant?

The Harold Holt Swim Centre is a complex of indoor and outdoor public swimming pools and facilities. It was built in 1969 on the site of the original Malvern Swimming Baths. The then Malvern City Council decided to name the Centre in memory of Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt following his disappearance and presumed drowning at Portsea.

The swimming complex was designed by local architects Kevin Borland and Daryl Jackson and is one of the earliest buildings in Victoria of the *Brutalist* style.

The Harold Holt Swim Centre originally consisted of two indoor pools and, outdoors, an Olympic-sized pool, diving pool with dive tower, wading pool and changing rooms. The indoor centre is a glass and concrete structure distinguished by its unpainted concrete block and off-form concrete construction in which the patterns created by the timber form-work are clearly seen. The principal components of the building's functional and structural system are emphasised as positive elements of the building's form, in particular the circulation elements including concrete pedestrian ramps and semi-circular stair. There is a transparency through the entire site and natural light is maximised by glass walls on the indoor pool complex, enabling a clear line of sight from the diving pool on the northern boundary through the pool complex to High Street on the southern boundary.

In response to changing needs and continued functioning of the Centre, there have been several alterations to the original design. In 1988 multifunction rooms, offices and spa were added, the enclosure of part of the mezzanine concrete access ramp and the addition of an indoor therapeutic pool. In 1998 the original laminated timber truss members and ceiling of the indoor complex were replaced by painted steel decking and a small light tower was added to the main chamber. In 1999 the plant room was enlarged and painted. Alterations to the building have generally been sympathetic, although the addition of offices on the mezzanine level has restricted access around the indoor centre, interrupting the intended pattern of movement. There has been some loss of original texture, colour scheme, and transparency through the building due to alterations to the ceiling and plant room. These changes have to some extent compromised the original design of the building, however the intention of the design is still easily read in the external concrete forms and internal spaces. Unlike many *Brutalist* buildings, much of the off-form concrete remains unpainted leaving the imprint of the form-work clearly visible in the finished concrete

Kevin Borland is noted for his co-design of the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Pool, and the inventive Clyde Cameron College (1977). Daryl Jackson is considered an important proponent of *Brutalism* in Victoria. The Harold Holt Swim Centre is the earliest of Jackson's *Brutalist* designs and pre-dates other early *Brutalist* buildings in Victoria, notably the important Plumber and Gasfitters Union Building designed by Graeme Gunn (1970). Jackson continued his use of massed off-form concrete forms with function dictating design in such structures as the Princes Hill Secondary College (1972) and the M.L.C. Resources Building, Kew (1973).

The garden setting for the pool complex retains a number of plantings from the earlier Malvern Swimming Pool gardens, including Bhutan Cypress (*Cupressus torulosa*), Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) and Canadian Poplar (*Populus canescens*).

The Harold Holt Swim Centre was awarded a Citation, Recreation Category, Victorian Chapter of the R.A.I.A. Architectural Awards in 1969.

## How is it Significant?

The Harold Hold Swim Centre is of architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

## Why is it Significant?

The Harold Hold Swim Centre is architecturally significant, being amongst the most notable, expressive, early and intact examples of the *Brutalist* movement that emerged in Victoria in the late-1960s. It represents the aesthetic, as well as ethical imperatives of the *Brutalist* style. The bold articulation of forms in textured off-form concrete and concrete blocks and glass, provides a sculptural imagery which is fundamental to *Brutalist* architecture. The heavy forms are balanced with focused transparency through the site, achieved by extensive use of natural lighting and the careful planning of the interior spaces.

*Brutalism's* ethical concern with social responsiveness is expressed through the expression of the construction materials as finished surfaces and the centrality of the user in the design of the building. This is clearly evident in

the emphasis on circulation elements (the use of expressed ramps and stairs) and the articulation of the functional systems (ramps, skylights, service ducts, mezzanine observation deck and in the overall clarity and integration of the building, pools and gardens).

The Harold Hold Swim Centre is architecturally significant as the work of two important Victorian architects, Kevin Borland and Daryl Jackson. The design of the Centre reflects the development of architecture in Victoria through the 1970s, including the purposeful arrangement of masses and voids; the expression of the materials of construction as finished surfaces; the expression of structural form; and transparency for the user through directional internal planning.

The Harold Holt Swim Centre is of some historical and social significance as a memorial to the local member and then incumbent Australian Prime Minister, Harold Holt who disappeared, presumed drowned at Cheviot beach near Portsea, prior to the opening of the complex.

At the local level, the site is important for the provision of aquatic recreation for the people of the south-eastern suburbs from the construction of the original Malvern Baths in 1926 to the present. The place retains the planted banks of the earlier pool, as well as the square of parkland fronting High Street.

## 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 the Executive Director 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 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 approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by Heritage Victoria 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 declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. Regular Site Maintenance : The following site maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the Heritage Act 1995, a) regular site maintenance provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features b) the maintenance of an item to retain its conditions or operation without the removal of or damage to the existing fabric or the introduction of new materials; c) cleaning including the removal of surface deposits, organic growths, or graffiti by the use of low pressure water and natural detergents and mild brushing and scrubbing; d) repairs, conservation and maintenance to plaques, memorials, roads and paths, fences and gates and drainage and irrigation. e) the replacement of existing services such as cabling, plumbing, wiring and fire services that uses existing routes, conduits or voids, and does not involve damage to or the removal of significant fabric. *Note: Any new materials used for repair must not exacerbate the decay of existing fabric due to chemical incompatibility, obscure existing fabric or limit access to existing fabric for future maintenance. Repair must maximise protection and retention of fabric and include the conservation of existing details or elements.* Landscape Maintenance :

The process of gardening and maintenance, mowing, hedge clipping, bedding displays, removal of dead plants, disease and weed control, emergency and safety works to care for existing plants and planting themes.

Removal of vegetation that is not significant to maintain fire safety and to conserve significant buildings and structures.

The replanting of plant species to conserve the landscape character and plant collections and themes.

Repairs, conservation and maintenance to hard landscape elements, buildings, structures, ornaments, roads and paths, drainage and irrigation system.

Management of trees in accordance with Australian Standard; Pruning of amenity trees AS4373.

Removal of plants listed as noxious weeds in the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.

Installation, removal or replacement of garden watering and drainage systems.

Non-structural works that occur at a distance greater than 5 metres from the canopy edge of a significant tree, plant or hedge, (structural works may require a permit if still on the registered land).

Non-commercial signage, lighting, security fire safety and other safety requirements, provided no structural building occurs.

Plant labelling and interpretative signage.

Resurfacing of existing paths and driveways.

Maintenance and replacement of play equipment to meet Australian Standards: Playground equipment for parks, schools and domestic use AS1924; Playgrounds û Guide to siting and to installation and maintenance of equipment AS2155; and Playground surfacing û Specifications, requirements and test method AS4422

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 may 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.

Special exemptions: Repairs to pool surface and signs including painting and tile maintenance

Ongoing maintenance of associated equipment such as pumps, filters, PH tester, pipes, backwash valve and repairs to cracks.

Painting of change room floors with non-slip surface.

Installation of fish Sculpture:

Installation of a Fish Sculpture from the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games. The Fish will be attached to a small metal frame fixed to the concrete balcony (facing east) over-looking the current learner's pool. At the completion of the proposed redevelopment of the centre (scheduled in 2008) it is proposed the fish would be relocated to the concrete balcony over-looking the proposed new leisure pool facing north ( current hydro pool)

A structural engineer to design the fixing details for both locations

In accordance with the letter and annotated photos from Mr L Ponton dated 28 July 2006

#### CONDITIONS:

1. Exempt classes of works or activities are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the registered place / object. However, if other previously hidden original or inaccessible details of the object or place are uncovered, any works that may affect such items shall immediately cease. The Executive Director shall be notified of the details immediately to enable Heritage Victoria representatives to inspect and record the items, and for discussion to take place on the possible retention of the items, or the issue of a modified approval.
2. If there is a Conservation Policy and Plan approved by the Heritage Council or Executive Director, all works and activities shall be carried out in accordance with that Policy and Plan.
3. Nothing in this Declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exempt alterations provided work has not commenced on the alteration.

Construction dates 1969,

Heritage Act Categories Registered place,

Other Names HAROLD HOLT POOL, HAROLD HOLT SWIMMING POOL,

Hermes Number 12051

Property Number

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## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 1995**, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 69 in the categories described as a Heritage Place:

Harold Holt Swim Centre, 1409-1413 High Street, Malvern, Stonnington City Council.

#### EXTENT:

General: The landscape setting and original plantings including Bhutan Cyprus *Cupressus torulosa*), Canadian poplar (*Populus canescens*) and Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*).

1. All of the buildings and features marked as follows on Diagram 0069 held by the Executive Director:

B1 Indoor Pool Centre (including three pools, change rooms, offices)

B2 Outdoor change room - men's

B3 Outdoor change room - women's

F1 Wading Pool

F2 Olympic Pool

F3 Spectator seating

F4 Diving pool

F5 Dive tower

2. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 0069 held by the Executive Director.

Dated 25 July 2006

RAY TONKIN  
Executive Director

[Victoria Government Gazette G 31 3 August 2006 1632-1633]

*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/>*