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# STONY CREEK CONCRETE SHEET PILING



Stony Creek Concrete Sheet Piling Maribyrnong March 2003 001



Stony Creek Concrete Sheet Piling Maribyrnong March 2003 002



Stony Creek Concrete Sheet Piling Maribyrnong March 2003 003



Stony Creek Concrete Sheet Piling Maribyrnong March 2003 004

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## Location

HYDE STREET SPOTSWOOD, HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-0425

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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The sheet piling is part of the extensive harbour redevelopments of the Yarra River undertaken in 1894, and is one of only three remaining extant sections made of concrete.

Interpretation of Site Nominated for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register as Part of the Stony Creek Heritage Precinct for its significance as one of the only remaining archaeological examples of the development of a port area. The area exhibits a palimpsest of waterfront development from various industries.

Other Names WEST GATE BRIDGE ASSOC. LAND,

Hermes Number 13782

Property Number

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## History

The Stony Creek Backwash is a shallow wetland and mangrove stand, situated at the confluence of Stony Creek and the Yarra River at Yarraville/Spotswood. It includes the West Gate Memorial Park and the Stony Creek Backwash Park, which is managed by Parks Victoria. The backwash lies partially beneath the West Gate Bridge.

From 1878 the backwash area came under the control of the Melbourne Harbor Trust. The Trust began to reclaim portions of the backwash in the 1890s. A Melbourne Harbor Trust Plan of the port two years later indicates sheet piling extended along the length of the mouth of the backwash, apart from a narrow opening into the creek, effectively separating the backwash from the Yarra. Two lines of what could be piles led from the opening of the backwash, following the course of the creek, to the causeway in line with Hyde Street. The sheet piling suggests that there was an intention to reclaim the area covered by the backwater (MHT General Plan showing River and Port Improvements, 1892). By this time the Coode Canal had been completed to alter the course of the Yarra. A MMBW plan indicates that a narrow strip of land on the east side of the backwash had been reclaimed by 1894, as had an area on the north east edge of the backwash (MMBW Plan 8, 160 feet to one inch, 1894, Map Collection, State Library of Victoria).

There is little evidence that the reclamation of the Stony Creek Backwash was carried out continuously during the first two decades of the twentieth century. In 1923, however, the Harbor Trust Commissioners announced plans to reclaim 'approximately twenty-six acres [10.52 hectares] at the mouth of the Stony Creek and on the north side of same' (MHT Commissioners' Report, 1923, p.20). To begin this reclamation, a contract was let for the construction of 1,100 feet of reinforced concrete sheet piling, while the Trust would supply timber piles (MHT Commissioners' Report, 1923, p.20). Dredged material was to be deposited behind the proposed structure. A year later it was reported that this work was progressing slowly as there was difficulty obtaining supplies of material and in driving the piles into soft ground. Yet by 1926 twenty acres had been reclaimed (*Argus* 13 Feb 1926 p.35). Remnant concrete sheet piling at the entrance to the backwash (HI 7822-0425) presumably dates from this period. The sheet piling is in line with the southernmost of two rows of piles erected in line with the course of the Stony Creek (HI7822-0422) in the 1920s, linking the cement sheet piling to this row of piles as a reclamation measure.

*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/>*