

# FORT GELLIBRAND



FORT GELLIBRAND SOHE  
2008



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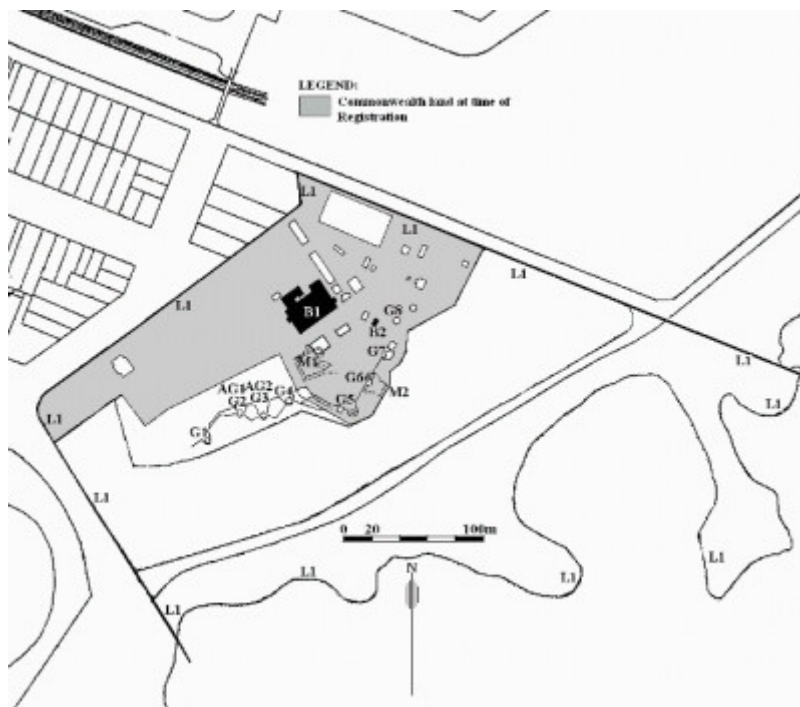
1 fort gellibrand point  
gellibrand williamstown gun  
emplacements pm2 july1999



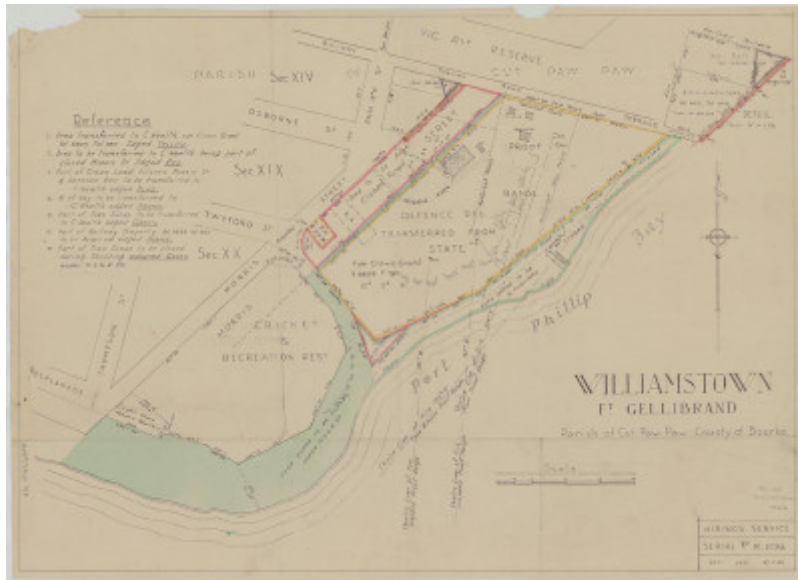
The-Williamstown-Jetty-and-  
Lighthouse-circa-1853-  
317x400.jpg



A-1869-Sir-William-  
Armstrong-rifled-muzzle-  
loading-fortress-gun



fort gellibrand plan



fort Gellibrand land transfer map

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## Location

BATTERY ROAD WILLIAMSTOWN, HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H1811

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO205

## VHR Registration

August 26, 1999

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 21, 1999

What is significant?

From the 1850s to the turn of the century a series of coastal defensive works were built in the Colony of Victoria in response to a perceived threat of attack from hostile warships. The battery in front of the Lighthouse had been constructed in 1855. In the early 1860s the strategy for the defence of the port of Melbourne was based on a number of shore batteries inside Port Phillip Bay. The area known as Fort Gellibrand is dominated by the earthworks and gun emplacements of the only remaining battery from four nineteenth century batteries at Point Gellibrand. These batteries were in turn part of a system of shore defences which stretched from the Point across Hobsons Bay and along the foreshore to Point Ormond. New batteries were built at the Cricket Ground, at the end of Breakwater Pier, and at the Fort. The small stone building once designated as an 'artillery store' at the fort dates from this period.

The technology of artillery was developing rapidly in this period and the batteries were changed to accept, and protect from, new types of guns. Improvements were made to the Point Gellibrand batteries in 1871. Convicts from the hulks moored offshore were employed on these works and accommodated in an old military barracks at the Fort. The buried central magazine at the Fort dates from this period. The most expansive period of building of shore defensive works in the State was the late 1880s and early 1890s. By this stage the primary defences of Port Phillip were located at the heads, but Fort Gellibrand batteries were also upgraded in this phase. Most of the nineteenth century fabric that survives at the Fort today dates from this period, including the gun emplacements, earthworks, front magazine and drill hall and attached residential wing. The batteries have retained up to the present their original commanding view over low level clear open space to the Bay.

The importance of the Fort batteries declined from the 1890s, but they were used for practice up until the 1920s. Commonwealth activity resumed from the 1930s to the late 1940s with the adaptation and use of the site for use as an artillery proof range. A number of buildings were added to the area around the Drill Hall during this period.

The Fort Gellibrand site also contains historic fabric from the period when convict hulks were moored off Point Gellibrand. From 1854 five prison hulks were moored just offshore. Treatment of prisoners on the hulks was harsh. In Inspector General of Penal Establishments in Victoria John Price was attacked at Point Gellibrand by convicts from a working party and died of his injuries. The brutality of the hulk system was given as a reason for the attack in subsequent Government inquiries. Some of the convicts from the hulks were employed in quarrying and building activity in a number of bluestone quarries along the shoreline, producing both mass stone and finished stone for government projects within the reserve and buildings in the town of Williamstown. A convict barracks was located in the area of the later Fort. One obvious area of shallow quarrying remains visible to the south west of the Fort. The current road along the shore is thought to follow the line of the tramway built by the convicts to facilitate movement of stone. Convict quarries elsewhere along the shore in front of the Fort and elsewhere at the Point, have since been filled in.

How is it significant?

Fort Gellibrand is of historical, educative and illustrative significance to the State of Victoria

Why is it significant?

Fort Gellibrand is of historical importance to the State of Victoria for its association with the development of defence strategies for the colony in the nineteenth century and for its association with the convict hulk period of the penal system in the colony. The Point Gellibrand shore batteries were first developed as part of an immediate defensive system for the city and port of Melbourne, prior to the establishment of batteries at the Port Phillip heads. The fort site contains the only remaining visible physical evidence of the system of four battery positions at Point Gellibrand from this period. The batteries at the fort were upgraded in the 1870s and 1880s, and the fort remained an integral part of the defensive system for Port Phillip up until the late 1880s and 1890s. The Fort's commanding outlook over open coastal landscape to the bay has been retained to the present. An open area of stepped shallow quarrying is visible evidence of the convict hulk system which operated from the 1850s to the 1870s. Convict working parties from the hulks were employed in quarrying and associated building activities at Point Gellibrand, and specifically in the Fort area, during this period.

Fort Gellibrand is important because it has educative and illustrative potential for demonstrating the extent and operations of defensive artillery works at Port Phillip in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Fort retains a range of batteries, guns, magazines, earthworks, and military buildings from that period and also retains a clear relationship to the target area in the Bay.

## 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.
2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of alterations 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 alteration shall cease and the Executive Director shall be notified as soon as possible.
3. If there is a conservation policy and plan approved by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it.
4. Nothing in this declaration prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions.

Nothing in this declaration exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authority where applicable.

Exterior:

\* Minor repairs and maintenance which replace like with like.

\* In the event that the area currently owned by the Commonwealth becomes State owned land: Internal alterations to buildings other than the 1880s Drill Hall and attached residential wing (B1), and 1860s Stone Store (B2).

Construction dates	1860,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place,
Other Names	CENTRAL BATTERY,
Hermes Number	4861

Property Number

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## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 1811 in the category described as a Heritage place:

Fort Gellibrand, Point Gellibrand, Williamstown, City of Hobsons Bay.

#### EXTENT:

1. Gun emplacements and interconnecting structures and earthworks marked G1-4 on Diagram 1811, held by the Executive Director. In addition, in the event of transfer of the land out of Commonwealth ownership, the buildings, magazines, gun emplacements and interconnecting earthworks and structures, known as Fort Gellibrand, marked B1-2, M1-2 and G5-8 on Diagram 1811, held by the Executive Director.
2. The two Armstrong guns in gun emplacements G2&3 marked AG1&2 on Diagram 1811, held by the Executive Director.
3. All of the land, apart from the land designated as Commonwealth land, inside the line marked L1 on Diagram 1811, held by the Executive Director. In addition, in the event of transfer of the land out of Commonwealth ownership, all of the land inside the line marked L1 on Diagram 1811, held by the Executive Director.

Dated 20 August 1999.

RAY TONKIN

Executive Director

[*Victoria Government Gazette* G 34 26 August 1999 pp.1984-1985]

*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/>*