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# LINDSAY'S SLIPWAY, JETTY, AND FORMER PICKERSGILL BATHING SHIP SITE



Lindsay's Slipway  
Williamstown Aug 2003

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## Location

NELSON PLACE WILLIAMSTOWN, HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Municipality

HOBSONS BAY CITY

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-0392

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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Peter Taylor (MAAV) has indicated that prior research pointed to a slipway formerly existed in this area, and that its foundations were laid upon the remains of a ship used to stabilise the seabed, and that he has located timbers in this same area. During a conversation with John Ericson (Hobson's Bay Yacht Club) he stated that according to local traditions, this area was formerly used by ballast boat operators to load ships ballast from quarries nearby. He stated that this area had an 'artificial reef' made of quarried bluestone that was '10 inches below the water at low tide'. He also said that these operators had made bluestone artificial reefs at the end of Ferguson St Pier, and that this reef had been excavated through during recent extensions/ improvements to the pier (bluestone rocks were coming up during excavations at the end of the pier, and that a large machinery cog was found underneath these rocks).

#### Interpretation of Site

Inspection of the site revealed a pile of bluestone rocks approx 20m square 1 m high lying in 0.5- 1.5m of water, surrounded by mud and weed. The central area of the stone mound revealed several sections of semi dressed/ flat stone that formed a relatively flat surface (though not smooth) that sloped upwards towards the shore. The area inshore of the stone pile sloped slowly towards shore and probing by hand revealed a solid level stone base overlaid with mud and seagrass. It was unclear whether this stone was natural formation or part of the former slipway base, but could be some of the stone ballast referred to when the site was offered for sale. The shoreline in this area is strewn with rough cut rocky debris, possibly associated with this former structure. A change in seawall construction is evident in front of the same area, and has been rebuilt, although it is unclear if this is associated with the current drain in that location or an earlier feature. Subsequent examination of aerial photographs revealed a rectangular dark shape in the same area.

Further investigation of the area in better visibility conditions is required to determine the exact shape and size of the deposit, and excavation of a small section of the sloping rocky area behind inshore of the mound should be conducted to investigate if it is a cultural construct.

This site is one of the earliest bathing facilities in the Williamstown business district and was one of only three examples of bathing ship locations identified in the study area (and the only one in Williamstown). Lindsay's Slipway was one of the earliest boatbuilding facilities in Williamstown, and formed part of a chain of boatbuilders and maintenance facilities in the area. This was one of the few early built remaining slipway sites in the Williamstown Area

Other Names PICKERSGILLS BATHING SHIP,

Hermes Number 13673

Property Number

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## History

In 1862, Alexander Lindsay Shipbuilders applied to the Board of Land and Works for a licence to occupy public foreshore land near the former site of Crocker's Hotel which granted the application on 21/11/1862. The slipway was based on a sunken vessel which had a wharf alongside it and this is shown in an 1864 plan. It is unclear if Lindsay set up the slip himself, as it is possible that this ship was a bathing ship and jetty, that were advertised for sale in this area by Pickersgill in 1857. The slip is again mentioned in 1869 when it repaired the steamer Clyde, and Lindsay applied for an extension on the lease (Alexander, 1869), which was granted that same year. By 1877, the jetty had been lengthened, but the slipway facilities were offered for sale when Lindsay died in 1877, and included the staging, hulk, stone ballast, rails and a lot of iron and the remains of what was Lindsay's Slip. A 1922 newspaper claims that Lindsay's Slipway lay between the Ferguson and Stevedore St Piers, opposite the Charles Hotham Hotel.

*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/>*