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# STONY CREEK PIER PILES (PAIRED ROW OF PILES IN STONY CREEK BACKWASH)



Stony Creek Pier Piles  
Maribyrnong March 2003 001



Stony Creek Pier Piles  
Maribyrnong March 2003 002



Stony Creek Pier Piles  
Maribyrnong March 2003 003

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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

H7822-0421

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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Interpretation of Site	<p>The piles may be associated with the former Victorian Meat Preserving Company Pier (H7822-0420), as the northern extremity appears to originate from the locality of that site. It is possible that this pier was constructed when the western extension arm of Stony Creek (built to for the oil wharves railway connection/ bridge) may have caused siltation in the backwater, necessitating jetty access to deeper water. These piles are visible in a photo tentatively dated from 1910-1920. The piles are small gauge, indicating a jetty construction, and appear to be of earlier construction than the other wharf structures in this area.</p> <p>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.</p>
Other Names	PAIRED PILES IN STONY CREEK BACKWASH, WEST GATE BRIDGE ASSOC. LAND,
Hermes Number	13777
Property Number	

## History

The history of the site is unknown, but the piles could be associated with the Victorian Meat Preserving Company site, and are visible in a photo tentatively dated from 1910-1920 (PRO, 83571/P1 see above). The piles are small gauge, indicating a pier construction, and appear to be of earlier construction than the other wharf structures in this area.

[These piles were not evident during a site inspection in 2009]

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. Stony Creek was used from the 1850s to the late nineteenth century by ballastmen who carried basalt quarried in the environs of Stony Creek to wharves located on the Yarra River, using shallow vessels. In the late 1860s the Victorian Meat Preserving Company established its meat preserving works on the north side of the backwater and built a pier projecting into the backwater.

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 1880s. A Melbourne Harbor Trust Plan of the port in 1892 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 (MHT General Plan showing River and Port Improvements, 1892). 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).

In 1923 the Harbor Trust Commissioners announced their intention to reclaim most of the area covered by the backwash, installing

timber piles and awarding a contract for cement sheet piling (MHT Commissioners' Report 1923, p.20). By 1926 twenty acres had been reclaimed (*Argus* 13 Feb 1926 p.35).

In 1925 the Trust announced the construction of a timber oil wharf for the use of the Vacuum Oil Company, which established an oil terminal to the north of the site in that year.. The company would go on to occupy much of the land reclaimed on the north side of the backwash, including that which had been occupied by the Victorian Meat Preserving Company's pier.

It is possible that a paired row of piles identified in the MIAP Stage One Report was installed at this time as part of the reclamation process, though it is not evident on any plans or photographs of the Stony Creek Backwash.

The paired row of remnant piles (H7822-0421) appears to follow the same course across the backwash as the Stony Creek sewerage main indicated on an 1894 MMBW plan of the area and may have been associated with the installation of the main.

*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/>*