
WATSONS BATHS

Location

BEACH STREET PORT MELBOURNE, PORT PHILLIP CITY

Municipality

PORT PHILLIP CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-0472

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Interpretation of Site

Taylor (pers comms) maintains that during underwater work to lay a concrete seawall, the grab dredge raised various quantities of lead lighting, bottles and various other artefacts (from his description probably dating to the late 1880s). This could be from the torpedo depot, but the leadlight is more likely to have originated from Watson's Baths to the east, which is shown with a dome in 1890 (Messum), which could possibly have been lead lighted. Deposits may be encountered further offshore from the concrete seawall, as its construction only proceeded approximately 10 m out from its current location.

The baths were the first of their kind in the Port Melbourne area, and have social and archaeological significance as part of the recreational landscape of Melbourne.

Other Names WATSON'S BATHS,

Hermes Number 13830

Property
Number

History

Bathing had always been on this beach, and from 1860 special trains brought patrons to the Watson's Baths, also called the Hobson's Bay Bathing Company Baths. The baths fell into disrepair in 1906 when Melbourne Harbour Trust refused a licence renewal, predominantly due to plans to resurrect the Straight Canal construction project. The structure was demolished sometime after the construction of Princes Pier in 1912, and open sea bathing was permitted in the area.

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/>