
BEACH LIGHTHOUSE SITE

Location

SURFSIDE HOLIDAY PARK, OFF PERTOBE ROAD WARRNAMBOOL, WARRNAMBOOL CITY

Municipality

WARRNAMBOOL CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7321-0061

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Interpretation of Site	The site of the timber lighthouse, shed for the lifeboat and windmill appear to have been located on either side of the boardwalk that runs parallel to the beach on the middle slope of the backing dune. From photos and drawings of the beach in the 19th century it would appear that the backing dune was much lower than it is today. The remains of these structures could be buried under metres of sand. The remains of the 'quarters' could also be further located towards the northern edge of the dune - again under metres of sand - or possibly in the levelled ground adjacent to the dune where there are currently spaces arranged for caravans.
Archaeological Significance	The remains of the foundations of the timber lighthouse could provide information on the construction techniques employed for these common structures located in an uncommon location. The underfloorand refuse deposits associated with the quarters could contribute information to the lifestyle and conditions of the occupants who tended the light.
Historical Significance	The historical significance of the timber lighthouse lies in the unusual positioning of such a structure on a beach. The lighthouse and the lifeboat shed represent the variety of measures taken at Warrnambool over the second half of the 19th century to make the port a safe and efficient place for shipping.

Hermes
Number 149837

Property
Number

History

In 1857, a Select Committee recommended the construction of two lighthouses; one on Middle Island and one on the northern shore of Lady Bay. In February 1858, a sum of 4000 pounds was passed by the Victorian legislature for the construction of the two lighthouses and associated keeper's dwellings.

The lighthouse at Middle Island was to be the main light at the head of the harbour, and that complex was constructed over the course of the following year. The lighthouse on the northern shore of Lady Bay - soon named the "beach lighthouse" was constructed in 1859-1860 to provide a red leading light, situated in line with two white obelisks on the hills above, guiding ships into the harbour. The light was predicted to be seen in ordinary weather "three miles to seaward...illuminating an arc of 10 degrees". The lighthouse was constructed of timber and erected on piles driven into the beach just above the high water mark. Two timber keepers' cottages and associated facilities, including a lifeboat, were built on the dunes behind the lighthouse.

By the late 1860s, it had become apparent that the location of the beach lighthouse was highly problematic. The lighthouse structure was too short, with the leading light often obscured by sea spray. Additionally, due to its close positioning to the water's edge, it was frequently undermined by wave activity and sand movement.

In 1869, the operation of the leading light was discontinued. The light itself was subsequently installed on the lower obelisk on Flagstaff Hill; the timber structure housing the light was apparently sold.

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/>