

# HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

WESTERN YARD OF THE FORMER G DIVISION,  
HM PRISON PENTRIDGE, H1551

13 Urquhart Street, Coburg (Lot S39)

Prepared for  
**Future Estate**

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## LOVELL CHEN

ARCHITECTS & HERITAGE CONSULTANTS

LEVEL 5, 176 WELLINGTON PARADE

EAST MELBOURNE 3002

AUSTRALIA

TEL +61 (0)3 **9667 0800**

FAX +61 (0)3 9416 1818

[enquiry@lovellchen.com.au](mailto:enquiry@lovellchen.com.au)

[www.lovellchen.com.au](http://www.lovellchen.com.au)



## 1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared on behalf of Future Estate and accompanies a permit application to Heritage Victoria for the proposed development of land to the west of the former G Division at HM Prison Pentridge. The proposal is for the construction of an eight storey residential development with two levels of basement parking. The site is currently vacant. Vehicle access is proposed via an existing opening in the bluestone wall to the south boundary of the site, and pedestrian access is proposed through a new penetration in the south wall.

The street address of the subject site is 13 Urquhart Street. It is located on the north side of Urquhart Street in Coburg, at the south-west corner of the former prison grounds, and has a frontage of approximately 32m to Urquhart Street (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

In the preparation of this report, reference has been made to the following architectural drawings prepared by Rothe Lowman, revised 19 January 2016:

- TP00.01 Revision A
- TP00.02
- TP01.01
- TP01.02
- TP01.03 – 1.06 Revision A
- TP01.12 Revision A
- TP01.13
- TP01.20
- TP01.21
- TP02.01 – 2.04 Revision A
- TP03.01 Revision A
- TP03.02 Revision A
- TP03.03
- TP03.04

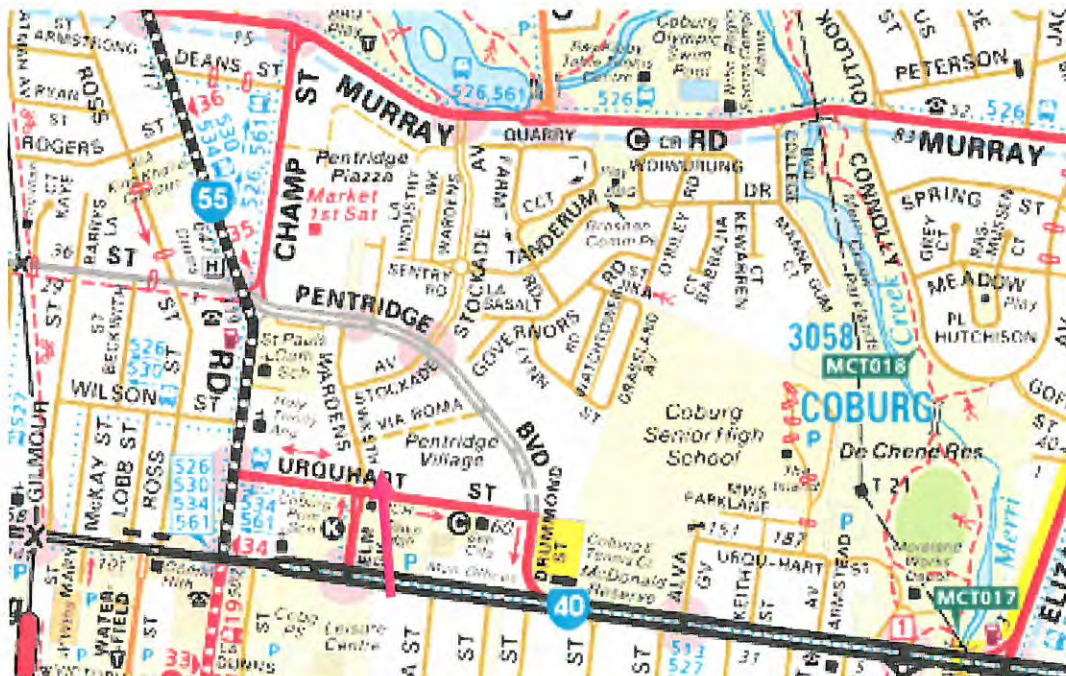


Figure 1 Location plan: the subject site is indicated (large pink arrow)  
Source: [www.melway.com.au](http://www.melway.com.au), accessed 9 November 2015





Figure 2 Aerial view of HM Prison Pentridge (part) with the subject site indicated (September 2015)  
Source: [www.nearmap.com](http://www.nearmap.com), accessed 27 October 2015

### 1.1 Site masterplan

HM Prison Pentridge is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (H1551) – see also Section 2.2.0. The registered area comprises two distinct sections, formerly known as ‘HM Prison Pentridge’ to the north, and ‘HM Metropolitan Prison’ to the south. The subject site forms part of the southern section of the registered area (Figure 3).

The prison has been subject to significant change and development since 1997, when it ceased to operate for its original purpose. A masterplan to guide future development in the southern section of the prison is being prepared by Rothe Lowman. An underpinning principle of this masterplan is to reveal and celebrate the heritage fabric. A draft of the masterplan was presented to Heritage Victoria on 20 October 2015.

### 1.2 Previous approval

Heritage Victoria issued permit P18031 for development at the subject site on 25 January 2012 (with later amendments). The permit was for:

Construction within the western yard of the former G Division complex of a multi-storey mixed-use building over 2 basement parking levels and a lower storage level.<sup>1</sup>

The current proposal has a high level of consistency with the previously approved scheme in terms of use, height, building envelope and impacts on the bluestone walls. Variations between the two are summarised at Table 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Heritage Victoria permit P18031 (as amended).

Table 1 Summary of changes between the previous scheme for S39 and the current proposal

Previously approved scheme (2012)	Current proposal (2015)
New pedestrian entry in bluestone wall (Urquhart Street), 1.8m wide x 2.7m high	New pedestrian entry opening in bluestone wall (Urquhart Street), 2m wide x 2.7m high with architectural details in concrete
Existing wall opening maintained for vehicle access from Urquhart Street	Existing wall opening expanded by approximately 1.5m to accommodate vehicle access from Urquhart Street, and architectural details in concrete to the sawn edges
Ground floor setback 3m-5.5m from west boundary wall, with upper level setbacks of 4m-6.7m	Ground floor extends to the west boundary wall, with upper level setbacks of 3m-5.5m
Ground floor setback 3m-4.28m from the north boundary wall	Ground floor partly extends to the north property boundary, and partly set back 2.65m

## 2.0 Heritage listings and controls

### *Heritage Act 1995*

The western yard of the former G Division at HM Prison Pentridge is included within the wider HM Prison Pentridge site, which is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) pursuant to the *Heritage Act 1995* as place H1551.

Permits are required from Heritage Victoria for subdivision, new buildings and works, including internal works to A, B, D, F and H divisions. The permit policy for the site states that: 'Modification of walls to allow for access and new uses of the site should be allowed (subject to a permit) as long as this is done sensitively and with a minimum of disturbance commensurate with a viable use of the place'.

The extent of the registered area is indicated in Diagram H1551 (Figure 3) and described as:

1. All of the buildings known as:
  - B1 Main gate and Administration Building
  - B2 Former Chief Warders and Overseer of Works Residences
  - B3 Former Hospital (former E Division)
  - B4 B Division
  - B5 B Division Annexe
  - B6 Industry Buildings
  - B7 A Division
  - B8 H Division
  - B9 Walls, Gates and Lookout Towers
  - B10 G Division
  - B11 D Division including remnant exercise yard walls
  - B12 F Division
  - B13 Laundry
  - B14 South Gate
  
2. All of the land marked L1 and L2 on Diagram H1551 held by the Executive Director [Figure 3].



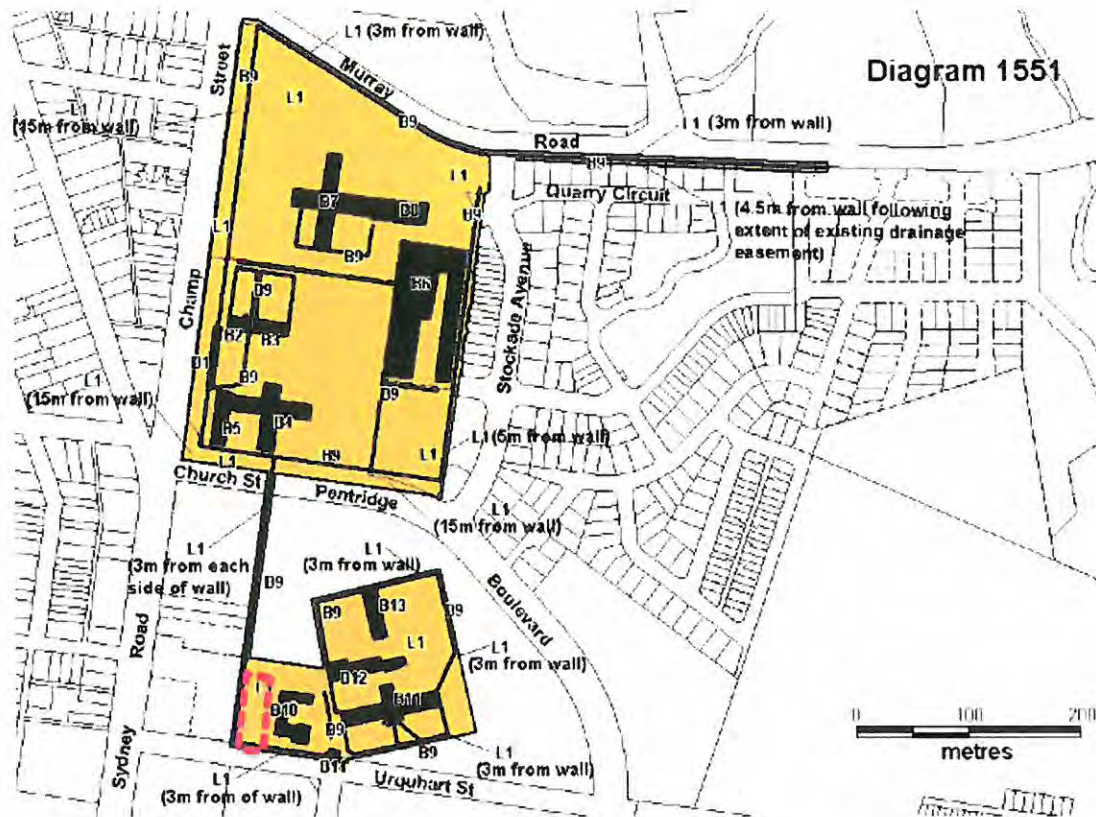


Figure 3 HM Prison Pentridge, Diagram H1551 (as amended July 2005): the subject site is indicated  
Source: Heritage Victoria

The statement of significance for the property is as follows:

*What is significant?*

The former HM Pentridge Prison was established in December 1850. The structures remaining from the prison consist of A Division, B Division, B Division Annexe (former kitchen), D Division including the exercise yards, the former hospital (Former E Division), F Division, G Division (Jika Reformatory for Girls), H Division, the main gate, Administration Building, the former Chief Warders and Overseer of Works Residences, the Industries Buildings, the laundry, the south gate to the Women's Prison, and remaining bluestone walls, gates and lookout towers.

The first stage of the prison was the 1850 to 1857 Pentridge Stockade Complex, a relatively ad-hoc group of structures built by prison labour using predominantly local materials. None of these structures survive, although the boundary of the prison was established at this stage. The second phase undertaken in the late 1850s and early 1860s was the construction of Inspector General William Champ's model prison complex, based on the British Pentonville model and incorporating a relatively sophisticated system of prisoner classification and penal reform. These were all constructed of locally sourced bluestone. The prison was gradually expanded and developed in stages, reflecting both developments in design as well as broader Government policies relating to the operation of the prison system. Following the Stawell Royal Commission of 1870, an extensive work program for prisoners was introduced at Pentridge and a complex known as the 'Industries' was constructed. These included a timber yard, a woollen mill, carpenters and

blacksmiths workshops completed in 1879, and tailors and bootmakers workshops completed in 1886.

A women's prison was constructed on the site between 1860 and 1865, now known as A Division. This was superseded when a new female prison was constructed on the site between 1887 and 1894, in order to provide completely separate accommodation for women. This section is now known as D Division. Pentridge remained the main female prison in Victoria until it was replaced by the new women's prison, HM Prison Fairlea in 1956.

From the 1870s Pentridge was also the location of reformatories for girls and boys, established following the findings of the Stawell Royal Commission of 1870. The Jika Reformatory for Boys was accommodated in an existing building (F Division), between 1875 and 1879, while a purpose built reformatory was constructed for Protestant Girls (G Division), operating between 1875 and 1893.

In 1900 labour yards for A Division were completed. During the 1950s these yards were later converted to a high security block which became known as H Division. In 1924 Pentridge replaced the Melbourne Gaol as the main remand and reception prison for the metropolitan area. The bodies of approximately thirty-six prisoners executed at the Melbourne Gaol were exhumed and relocated to Pentridge, where they were reburied. Pentridge also became the venue for ten prisoner hangings, until the last Victorian prisoner to suffer the death penalty, Ronald Ryan, was executed in D Division in 1967. In 1960 during a term spent in Pentridge, the Aboriginal artist Ronald Bull painted a mural depicting a traditional tribal scene. The mural survives and is located at the east end of F Division. In April 1995 the Office of Corrections ordered that the six main towers at Pentridge be closed, since most of the high security prisoners from the gaol had been relocated to Barwon as part of the downgrading of Pentridge to a medium security prison. The prison was finally closed in 1997 and the land and buildings subsequently sold.

This site is on the traditional land of the Kulin Nation.

*How is it significant?*

The former HM Prison Pentridge is of historical, architectural, archaeological, scientific (technological) and aesthetic significance to the State of Victoria.

*Why is it significant?*

The former HM Prison Pentridge is of historical significance as the largest prison complex constructed in Victoria in the nineteenth century.

The former HM Prison Pentridge is of architectural and historical significance as a nineteenth century complex of buildings that demonstrates a number of phases in the development of the penal reform system. Most of these structures still survive, largely intact. The range of cell blocks, workshops and other buildings, the relatively dispersed layout of the buildings and the large scale of the site as a whole demonstrate the unique character of Pentridge as the principal establishment for long-term prisoners. The planning of A, B and D Divisions are representative examples of the overwhelming influence and continuing development of British planning models, from the 1830s until the end of the nineteenth century. F Division is a rare surviving example of early nineteenth century prison buildings. The former prison is of architectural significance due to its monumental size and the austere Classical style of the nineteenth century prison buildings. The complex of buildings and walls are important for their expression of the requirements of containment and order.



The former HM Prison Pentridge is of historical significance in the history of child welfare in Victoria. It was the location of reformatories for both girls and boys, established following the findings of the Stawell Royal Commission of 1870. The prison complex includes the purpose-built Jika Reformatory for Protestant Girls (G Division), which operated between 1875 and 1893.

The former HM Prison Pentridge is of archaeological significance for its archaeological features, deposits and relics that relate to the construction and use of the site. The burial area and industry refuse site adjacent to the east wall of the F Division includes the burial sites of all executed prisoners relocated from the Old Melbourne Gaol between 1929 and 1937, and the burials of nine prisoners executed at Pentridge between 1928 and 1951. The area adjacent to the east wall of D Division is significant as the former burial site of Ronald Ryan, and as the site where executed prisoner burial remains were reinterred in 2011.

The former HM Prison Pentridge is of scientific (technological) significance for its original ventilation systems in A, B and D Divisions, and the surviving original cisterns and other elements of the water supply system in B Division. The apparently intact thermo-ventilation system in B Division is of particular importance.

The former HM Prison Pentridge is of aesthetic significance due to its grim and imposing bluestone walls and towers which are important landmark features.

#### *Planning and Environment Act 1987 – Melbourne Planning Scheme*

The site is included within HO47 – Precinct, HM Prison Pentridge in the Moreland Planning Scheme (Figure 4). This HO mapping reflects the extent of the VHR registration. No permit is required under the HO provisions (Clause 43.01) for places included in the VHR.

The subject site abuts the Holy Trinity Anglican Church Complex to the west, which is included in the VHR (H959), and designated as HO166 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Moreland Planning Scheme.

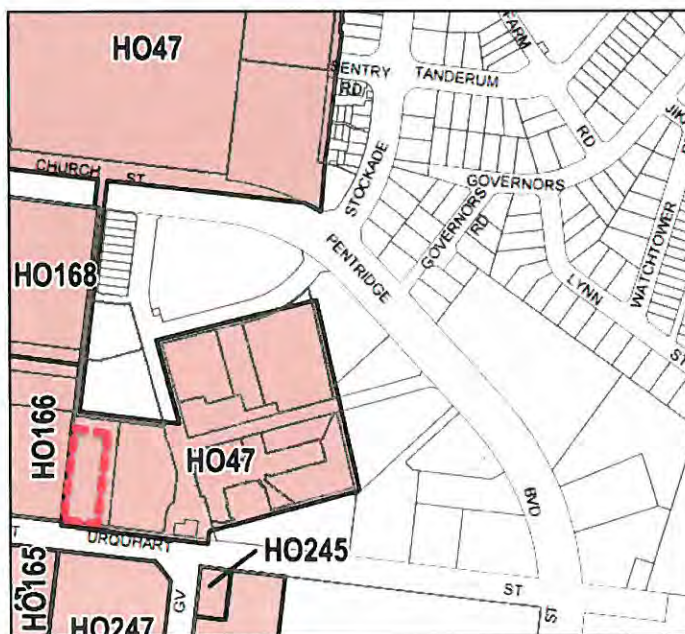


Figure 4 Map 12 HO, showing part of HO47: the subject site is indicated  
Source: Moreland Planning Scheme



### 3.0 Summary history of the subject site

The subject site is located to the south-west of the former Pentridge Prison, which was originally established as a stockade in December 1850.<sup>2</sup> The stockade was a relatively *ad hoc* group of structures, constructed of local materials.<sup>3</sup> From the late 1850s, a building campaign commenced which saw the development of the stockade to a full-scale prison complex.<sup>4</sup> The existing bluestone structures, including A, B, D, E and F divisions, the main gate and administration building date to this phase of development.

Prior to 1875, the subject site was vacant, although walls (likely to have been bluestone) to the west and south boundaries had been introduced by 1870 (Figure 5). The Jika Reformatory for Girls, which constituted the former G Division area of HM Prison Pentridge, was constructed in 1875 (Figure 6 and Figure 7). The subject site was an open yard area to the rear of G Division.

The source for the following historical information about this section of the prison complex is the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the site prepared by Allom Lovell & Associates (1996):

G Division was constructed in 1875 as the Jika Reformatory for Girls. The original building contained Matron's quarters in the south-east pavilion, an office and store rooms in the north-east pavilion, a school and mess room in the centre wing with dormitories on each side, and cells in the north wing. A separate laundry and kitchen wing was linked to the rear of the main building. The Reformatory was separated from the remainder of the prison site by bluestone walls, with gates facing the main avenue on the east side. The Matron's quarters were extended in 1892 ...

Following completion of D Division in 1894, the reformatory building became the Coburg Division of the new Female Prison, providing a women's hospital in the north wing, quarters for the Governor and Sub-matron of the Female Prison and the hospital nurse, and a laundry in the centre wing [Figure 7]. Prisoners were accommodated in dormitories in the south wing. This use essentially continued until the 1950s. Toilet wings were added on the north and west sides in 1924. In 1950, extensive alterations were carried out, including construction of a new hospital wing to the north, conversion of part of the centre wing to form a kitchen and construction of a verandah and other alterations to the east wing. A small wing at the north-east corner, providing additional accommodation for the Matron and Sub-matron was constructed in 1955.

A cell block forming the Psychiatric Section was built in 1956-8 on the south and west sides of the original building, and the former hospital area was converted for use by short-term vagrants [Figure 8]. In the following year, all medical and psychiatric services for the prison were grouped in G Division. In 1987, a drug and alcohol treatment unit was constructed on the south side of the original building.<sup>5</sup>

The Psychiatric Section, completed in 1958, was constructed to the west and south of the yard space. The new development was set close to the boundary walls, but did not abut them (Figure 8).

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2 HM Prison Pentridge, Victorian Heritage Register Report, p.3.

3 HM Prison Pentridge, Victorian Heritage Register Report, p.3.

4 HM Prison Pentridge and HM Metropolitan Prison, Conservation Management Plan, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1996, p.21.

5 HM Prison Pentridge and HM Metropolitan Prison, Conservation Management Plan, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1996, pp. 156-158.

A 1961 site plan indicates that the bluestone wall had been penetrated at a number of locations by this time, including openings to the north and west boundaries (Figure 8).

A 1983 photograph appears to indicate that the psychiatric cells were built as a secure unit within the former yard of the Jika Reformatory for Girls, with tall walls presenting to the north and east (Figure 9).

All built form at the subject site has been demolished. The date of these works has not been established.

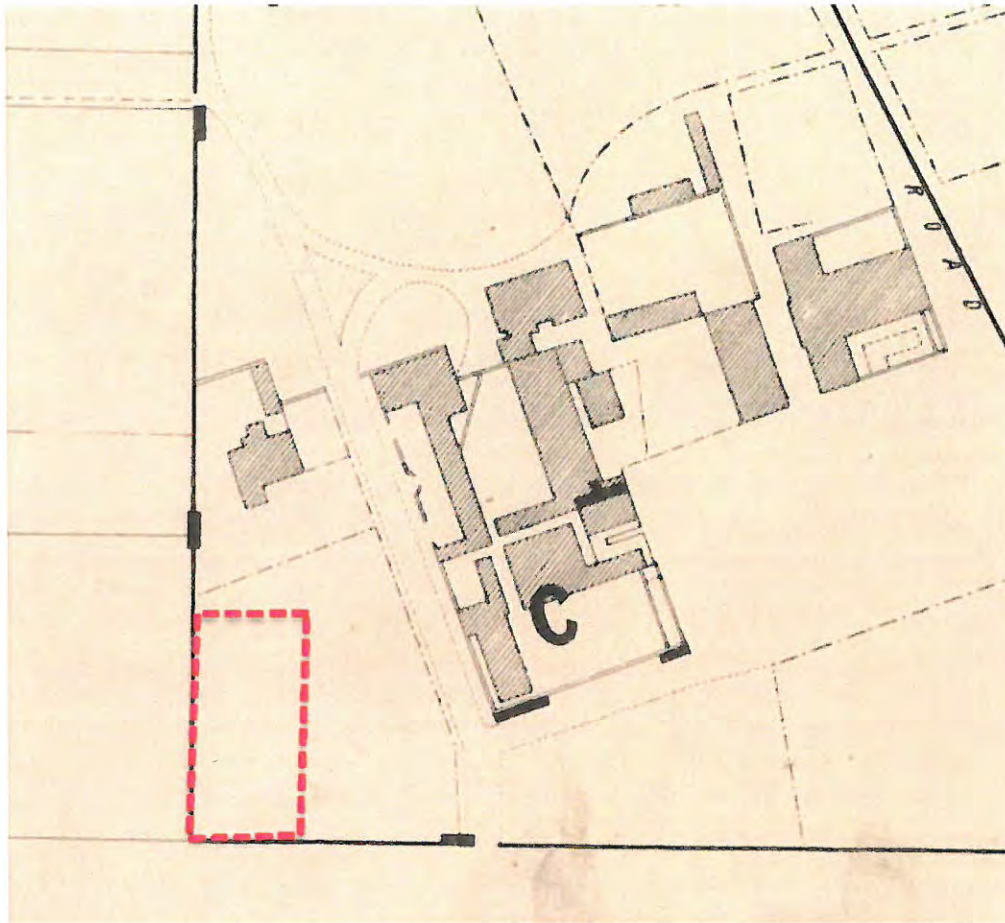


Figure 5 Plan of Pentridge Prison, 1870, approximate location of the subject property indicated  
Source: State Library of Victoria

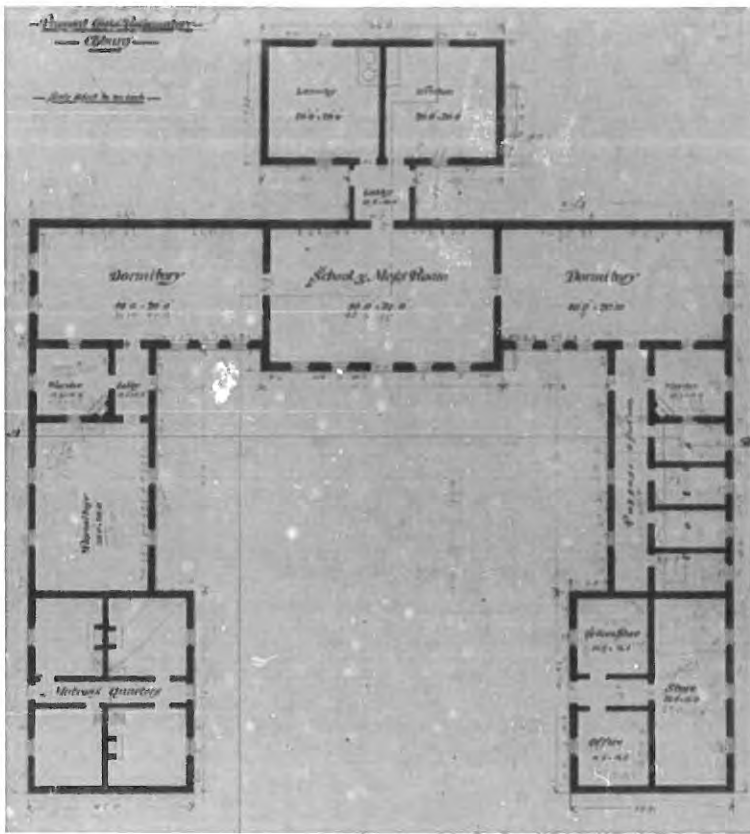


Figure 6 Proposed girls' reformatory, 1875: north is at right  
 Source: Building Services Agency Plans, Public Record Office Victoria

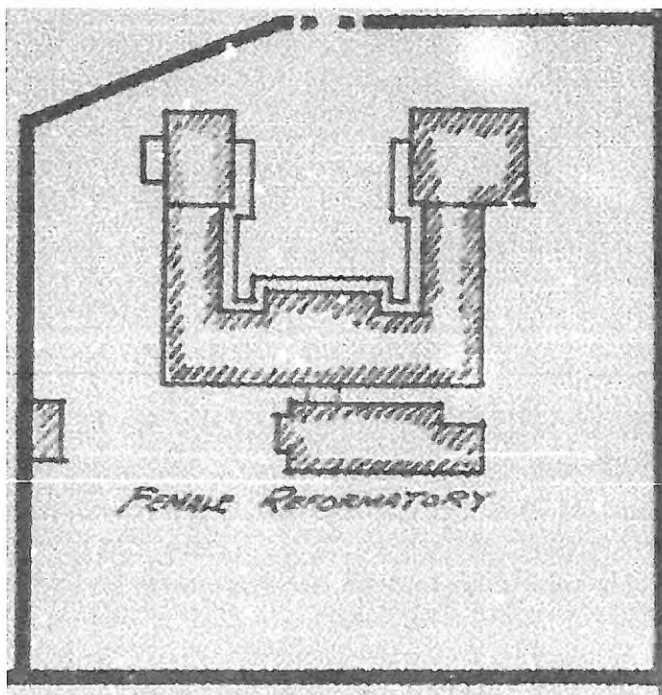


Figure 7 Girls' reformatory, 1922: north is at left  
 Source: Building Services Agency Plans, Public Record Office Victoria



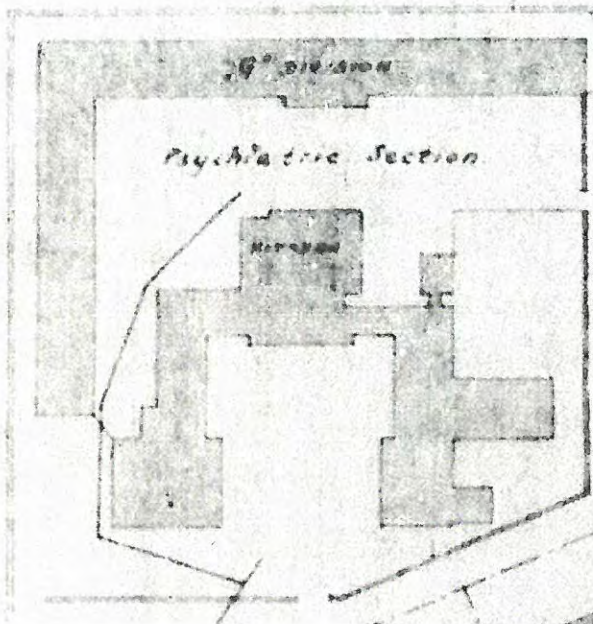


Figure 8 G Division converted into the psychiatric section, 1961: north is at right  
Source: Building Services Agency Plans, Public Record Office Victoria



Figure 9 Oblique aerial view of Pentridge, 1983: the Psychiatric Section (indicated) was located on part of the subject site  
Source: Peter Lynn and George Armstrong, *From Pentonville to Pentridge*, 1996

## 4.0 Description

### 4.1 Subject site

The subject site is located at the south-west of the area that is subject to controls under the *Heritage Act, 1995*. It is a vacant block, which is bounded by bluestone walls to the north, south and west. At least part of the west boundary wall is enclosed with reinforced concrete. The typical height of the boundary walls is 3.5m. Historic development on the subject site has included the laundry and kitchen of the former Jika Reformatory for Girls, and the 1958 Psychiatric Section, which was located to the west and south of the site.

#### *South wall*

This section of the prison's boundary wall was identified in the CMP (1996) as being of primary significance. It is likely to have been part of the expansion of Pentridge undertaken by Inspector-General William Champ in the 1860s.<sup>6</sup>

The wall is of random-coursed, rock-faced bluestone construction, terminated by a curved bluestone coping (Figure 10). It is stepped, following the fall of the ground down to the east, and some of the original/early pointing survives. The CMP suggests that the upper courses of bluestone may be later additions. An opening towards the south-west corner was introduced between 1996 and 2012. The opening was created by a saw cut, revealing the construction of the wall (Figure 11).

#### *West wall*

The west wall is identified as being of no individual significance in the CMP, although it is acknowledged that its alignment delineates the boundary of the south-west corner of the prison site.<sup>7</sup> It is possible that this designation reflects an understanding that the west wall at this location was entirely reconstructed. Research for this Heritage Impact Statement suggests that this may not be the case, as discussed below.

A section of the west wall extending approximately 30m north from Urquhart Street appears to be in its original, c. 1860s, form (Figure 12). To the north of this section, the east face of the wall has been enclosed in reinforced concrete with engaged concrete piers located at regular intervals (Figure 13). It is probable that these works were contemporary with the construction of the Psychiatric Section in 1958. The west face of the wall appears to be expressed bluestone along its full length, although only part of the wall is visible from the public realm.

#### *North wall*

The CMP dates the north wall to 1875, when the Jika Girls' Reformatory was established. It is identified as being substantially intact and of primary significance due to its association with the establishment of the Reformatory.<sup>8</sup>

The north wall is constructed of random, rock-faced bluestone construction, terminated by a curved bluestone coping (Figure 14). Documentary and physical evidence indicates that the wall has been modified over time, including an extension (to the west) and a punched opening (now filled) at its approximate mid-point.

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<sup>6</sup> HM Prison Pentridge and HM Metropolitan Prison, Conservation Management Plan, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1996, p.259.

<sup>7</sup> HM Prison Pentridge and HM Metropolitan Prison, Conservation Management Plan, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1996, p. 258.

<sup>8</sup> HM Prison Pentridge and HM Metropolitan Prison, Conservation Management Plan, Allom Lovell & Associates, 1996, p.262.





Figure 10 The subject site: view looking south



Figure 11 The existing opening at Urquhart Street





Figure 12 South-west corner of site: view from Urquhart Street



Figure 13 The subject site: view of the west wall, part of which is enclosed in reinforced concrete



Figure 14 The subject site: view looking north from Urquhart Street – note new residential development to the north of the bluestone wall

## 4.2 Local context

The area to the south and west of the former prison has a strong community and civic character. Moreland Civic Centre and Coburg Primary School are located on the south side of Urquhart Street, and the former G Division building (within the registered area) is being adapted as a childcare centre.

The former G Division is a single-storey building with a U-shaped plan form and north and south side wings enclosing what was once a garden area. This building, which is oriented to the east, is constructed of tuck-pointed brick on a bluestone ashlar plinth. The roof areas are hipped, except for gables at the north and south ends of the main wing, and clad in corrugated sheet steel. The west elevation of the former G Division, facing the subject site, has been altered with the bricking-in of windows and new openings introduced (possibly as part of its adaptation to a child care centre). This elevation is plain, compared to the eastern elevation, which includes cream brick and bluestone detailing at corners and around windows, as befits a front entrance.

To the west of the subject site is Holy Trinity Anglican Church complex (VHR H959), which includes a single-storey brick residence to the immediate west of the bluestone wall, the former Parish Hall and Trinity School fronting Sydney Road and the church itself. The church dates from 1848 with later additions and alterations.<sup>9</sup> The church is constructed primarily of bluestone, with a sandstone spire and pinnacles. The single-storey residence adjacent to the subject site is of post-World War II face brick construction with hipped roofs clad in tiles. The former Parish Hall, fronting Sydney Road, is of brick construction and is symmetrically composed with a gable-roofed hall fronted by a portico. The roof of the hall is clad in terracotta tiles and topped with a cross, while the entrance portico is constructed of buttressed clinker brick piers and a timber and roughcast gable end. The Trinity School to the north of the Hall is a simple single-storey bluestone building, built in 1857, which is included within the extent of registration for H959.

The former prison itself has been the subject of extensive development over the past c. 15 years, since its closure as a penitentiary. Works at the southern section of the former prison complex include new residential development, much of it in close proximity to extant heritage buildings (Figure 15). However, the development and adaptation of HM Prison Pentridge has proved challenging. The regeneration of the southern section of the registered area is incomplete. A number of historic buildings and areas are unused, and some of the recent buildings have been abandoned in a state of partial completion.

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<sup>9</sup> Heritage Victoria, Holy Trinity Anglican Church Complex citation





Figure 15 Recent residential development to the east of the former laundry building at Pentridge

## 5.0 Proposal

The proposal is for the construction of an eight storey residential building and roof garden with two levels of basement car parking. Some car parking is also accommodated at the ground level.

The new building rises to a height of 23.6m above ground, to the parapet of the seventh floor, with lift overrun and plant set back into the site at the roof level. At the ground level, the development extends to the west boundary wall. A substation, switch room and rainwater filtration pump are located in the south-west corner. Development is also built out to the north wall in the north-west corner to accommodate a bicycle store. The front (south) elevation is set back at varying distances from the property boundary, ranging from 3m to 8m, due to its irregular form. The minimum setback from the adjacent former G Division (being adapted as a child care centre) is approximately 2.8m. A new fence is proposed to define the boundary between the two sites.

At the second level, the building is set back from the western wall to accommodate a terrace at the first level which extends the length of the western elevation and wraps around the new building at the rear. The terrace is directly adjacent to the western bluestone wall, while the building setbacks at this level range from approximately 4.2m to 5.9m (from the site boundary). From Levels 2 to 7 the setback at the south, east and west elevations is generally uniform, with balconies projecting forward at the front elevation. The roof garden will be landscaped, enclosed by a glass balustrade and covered by a black metal clad pergola that rises to a height of 3m above the roof level. The lift overrun rises approximately 1.8m above the pergola.

In order to accommodate the new residential use of the site, the existing full height opening in the south bluestone wall will be widened by approximately 1.5m to provide vehicle access to the car parks. The reveals will be decorated with concrete pilasters in an abstract geometric form that is sympathetic to the architectural design of the proposed residential building (discussed below). On the east side of the opening, a narrow slit has been introduced at approximately 1.5m above ground, to reveal the internal construction of the wall. A new penetration to the south wall is proposed to provide pedestrian access to the development. This opening will be 2m wide by 2.7m high, and will also be finished with concrete decorations in a geometric arrangement. A concrete name plate extends to the west of the opening



(‘One Coburg Quarter’). To accommodate the lintel structure and concrete uprights, the material to be removed will be slightly more than 2m wide.

The proposed development has an irregular footprint, with walls avoiding more typical planar arrangements of surfaces. In terms of articulation, the building is distinguished by dramatic horizontal concrete banding that curves around the building corners in an irregular arrangement. The facades are generally fragmented with intermittent openings, balcony areas and window arrangements. The building adopts a muted materials palette including areas of concrete, laser cut silver aluminium, black metal cladding, and dark grey and clear glazing.

## **6.0 Assessment of heritage impacts**

In assessing the proposed development to the western yard of the former G Division at HM Prison Pentridge, the key references have been the Victorian Heritage Register entry for the property, and the CMP prepared by Allom Lovell & Associates (1996).

Considering the Heritage Victoria registration for HM Prison Pentridge, and the provisions of the *Heritage Act 1995* the key heritage issues associated with the proposed development are considered to be:

- the impact of the proposal on the cultural heritage values of HM Prison Pentridge; and
- the impact of the proposal on the presentation of HM Prison Pentridge

### **6.1 Permit policy**

The VHR permit policy for HM Prison Pentridge states that:

The main importance of the specified buildings and walls at the former HM Prison Pentridge is their layout, form and relationship to each other and the external environment, demonstrating the form and function of the 19<sup>th</sup> century prison.

The permit policy notes that the walls specified in the extent of registration are important for their demarcation of the various spaces and functions within the prison, with the external walls being of critical importance, ‘for their symbolic and landmark value ... any proposed development which compromises these values should be avoided’.

The permit policy also notes that:

Modification of walls to allow for access and new uses of the site should be allowed (subject to a permit) as long as this is done sensitively and with a minimum number of disturbance commensurate with a viable use of the place.

#### *Comment*

The perimeter walls are intrinsic to an understanding of the prison complex as a controlled environment and place of incarceration. There are no other significant features or buildings within the subject site.

### **6.2 Demolition**

#### *Proposed works*

Demolition associated with the proposed development is limited and includes a new penetration (pedestrian entry) to the south bluestone wall, and an extension of the existing opening to the south bluestone wall. The new opening is approximately 2m wide by 2.7m high in the c. 3.5m-high wall, though some extra material will require removal to accommodate the lintel structure and concrete uprights. The existing full height opening will be widened by approximately 1.5m. In both cases, it is proposed to decorate the openings with abstract geometric details in unpainted concrete (this is discussed further below, ‘New works’).

### *Significance*

The bluestone boundary walls at the subject site are significant elements and contribute in a fundamental way to an understanding of the cultural significance of HM Prison Pentridge. The south boundary wall forms part of the external presentation of the prison, and is believed to date to the 1860s. It is identified in the VHR entry (B9, part), and is assessed as an element of primary significance in the CMP.

### *Comment*

The introduction of a new opening in the south boundary wall and the widening of the existing opening is required to provide points of access (pedestrian and vehicular) to the proposed residential development. The works are consistent with the approach previously approved for the site (permit P18031).

The interventions have been kept to the minimum required to support the viable use of the place. The new opening is not full height, and the south boundary wall will remain a powerful linear element in the street. This approach is in keeping with the permit policy (see Section 6.1).

## **6.3 New works**

### *Proposed works*

The proposed new development comprises an eight storey residential building with two levels of basement car parking. The development is setback from the south boundary to varying degrees due to its undulating form. The maximum setback is 6m at Level 1, above this the minimum setback is 4.6m. The setback from the east boundary is 3.1m. At ground level the development is built to the north and west bluestone walls. The development is distinguished by horizontal concrete bands that curve around the building corners in an irregular arrangement. The facades are generally fragmented with intermittent openings, balcony areas and window arrangements. Muted materials and colour palettes have been adopted.

The two openings to the south boundary wall are proposed to be finished with concrete architectural details. The stepped arrangement makes reference to the architectural language of the proposed new building detail. The narrow slit on the east side of the existing (vehicle) opening, which will reveal the internal construction of the wall, has been introduced to maintain the existing interpretive gesture.

### *Significance*

The subject site, flanked on three sides by bluestone walls, is significant as part of the Pentridge Prison complex since at least the 1860s. As noted in the permit policy, 'The registered land is considered integral to the understanding of the relationships between the registered structures and the way they relate to the external environment ...'

There is some archaeological potential at the site, relating to previous uses and development, including the rear wing of G Division and the Psychiatric Section. This potential is, however, considered to be at a relatively low level. It is also noted that neither the laundry/kitchen of G Division nor the Psychiatric Section were elements of core significance: the Psychiatric Section (1958) was identified as a contributory element in the CMP, and the laundry/kitchen was an outbuilding that had previously been modified. In the event that subsoil artefacts are located during the development, Heritage Victoria will be notified.

### *Comment*

The proposed residential development will be a prominent element in the streetscape. It will present as a vertical counterpoint to the strong horizontal boundary wall. Key considerations from a heritage perspective are whether the new works will impact on the identified values of the place (HM Prison Pentridge), or an understanding of the relationship between the bluestone perimeter walls and the balance of the prison complex.

The scale and monumental presence of the south boundary wall, extending along Urquhart Street, is such that the new development will not detract from an understanding of HM Prison Pentridge as a place of containment and incarceration. In the more immediate confines of the subject site, it is considered that the varying setbacks between 4.6m and 6m from the south boundary will provide an appropriate level of separation between the wall and the new works. The roof garden will be setback 3m from the building front and 7.7m from the site boundary. This will provide an appropriate setback to ensure that the roof garden is largely concealed in views from the street.

While the proposal will be taller than the former G Division, the interface between the new works is with the modified rear elevation of the historic building. This elevation has been the subject of a number of changes and modifications over time, and lacks the presence, architectural integrity and significance of the front (east) elevation.

The key views of G Division are from the east, within the prison complex. In these views the new development will read as a recessive and demonstrably contemporary introduction. It will not diminish an understanding of the building's historic and functional relationship with the balance of the prison complex, or its architectural values. The height of the bluestone wall to Urquhart Street is such that there are no direct views of G Division from the street.

The introduction of abstract geometric concrete details to the two openings in the south wall forms part of the identity and presentation of the new development. The works are localised and discretely scaled. It is considered that the impacts arising from their introduction are commensurate with the viable use of the place.

#### **6.4 Concluding comments**

HM Prison Pentridge is a heritage place where physical change has been accepted since the closure of the prison in 1997 in order to accommodate new uses. Such change has included demolition, adaptive re-use of historic buildings and new development. As noted, the redevelopment of the southern section of the registered area is incomplete, with a number of historic buildings and areas unused, and some of the new buildings abandoned in a state of partial completion. Further change and development, including the present proposal, will be required to deliver a viable and sustainable future use for the site. However, from a heritage perspective there are limits to acceptable change.

The proposed development to the west of G Division will result in minimal impacts on significant fabric, and will not obscure key relationships between significant buildings within the site. The works will result in the introduction of a new taller element within the site, but the development will not give rise to substantive impact on the site's historical, architectural/aesthetic or scientific (technological) values. Critically, the bluestone wall will continue to read as a powerful linear element in the street. It is considered that the works proposed are within the limits of acceptable change.