Conservation Management Plan
Moonee Valley Racecourse

Prepared for City of Moonee Valley
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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose
This Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Moonee Valley Racecourse (MVR) has been prepared for the Moonee Valley City Council (MVCC). The purpose of the CMP is to identify:

- The heritage significance of the MVR.
- The conservation policies or permit policies to be applied to protect that significance in the face of change.
- Guidelines for management, including retention (conservation), adaptation, relocation, demolition and interpretation of items.
- Specific planning permit exemptions and exemptions from third party notice.

This CMP has been prepared in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the Moonee Valley Racecourse Redevelopment Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee) as contained in their report dated 19 December 2013 (the Advisory Committee Report) (see sections 1.2 and 1.3).

1.2 Background
The following background is drawn from the Executive Summary on pp. i-ii of the Advisory Committee Report.

The Moonee Valley Racing Club (MVRC) is seeking to develop its facilities to allow for a realigned racetrack and a new grandstand complex to be located in the northwest corner of the site. This will result in surplus land to the west of the Racecourse (this is the area containing the existing grandstands, totes, horse stalls and other facilities), as well as a pocket in the north-east which the MVRC seeks to develop for primarily residential purposes with some commercial and retail uses.

MVCC and the local community opposed many aspects of this proposal and MVCC commissioned an independent heritage assessment to identify any potentially significant heritage buildings on the site. The Moonee Valley Racecourse Heritage Assessment Stage 2 (March 2012) (hereafter referred to as the Stage 2 Study), prepared by David Helms Heritage Planning, identified several buildings and features that should be included in the Heritage Overlay (HO).

To assist in moving the process forward, the Minister for Planning appointed an Advisory Committee to provide advice to the Moonee Valley City Council and himself on the best outcomes for the site, from both a development and a heritage perspective. The Advisory Committee directed that DTPLI place two amendments - C120 (introduction of the Activity Centre Zone) and C124 (application of a HO) - on exhibition. Following exhibition, public hearings were held to hear evidence and submissions.

The Advisory Committee Report was finalized in December 2013.

1.3 Advisory Committee findings and recommendations
The findings of the Advisory Committee are summarized on p.61 of their final report, as follows:
- The MVR meets the threshold of local significance at the local level.
The HO should be applied to the whole of the MVR.

The HO listing should be supported by an Incorporated Plan, which provides policy direction around the management of heritage items and includes a list of permit exemptions to ensure unnecessary permits are not triggered.

Management guidelines for all these elements should be included in a CMP and Incorporated Plan.

On the basis of these findings the Advisory Committee recommends:

- Include the whole of the MVR within the HO, with the exception of the proposed residential area (Wilson/Victoria Street area) to the northeast of the site.
- Prepare a Statement of Significance, based on the work undertaken through the ‘Helms Heritage Assessment’ (the Stage 2 Study), to include references to the Racetrack.
- Prepare a Conservation Management Plan and an Incorporated Document prior to the adoption of Amendment C124.
- Amend the Schedule to the HO with the following wording within the Tree Controls column: ‘Yes – the Cape Chestnut (Calodendron capense), the Peppercorn (Schinus molle) and the Elms (Ulmus species) in proximity to the horse stalls and the trees within the front and rear gardens of the Club Secretary’s House’.
- Amend the Schedule to the HO to apply external paint controls to the Club Secretary’s House only.
- Facilitate the adoption and approval of Amendment C124 to the Moonee Valley Planning Scheme through a Ministerial Amendment process, using section 20(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
- Retain the Moonee Valley Racecourse Redevelopment Advisory Committee to provide ongoing advice and/or mediation, until Amendment C124 is finalized to gazetted stage if required.

1.4 Approach and methodology
David Helms, heritage planner and Peter Barrett, architectural historian, jointly prepared the Stage 2 study. This CMP has been prepared by David Helms in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, 2013 and its guidelines and having regard to the findings and recommendations of the Advisory Committee report.

The CMP incorporates the history, description, assessment of significance, statement of significance and management guidelines from the Stage 2 Study, which have been revised and updated having regard to the submissions and evidence presented to the Advisory Committee, and the findings and recommendations in the Advisory Committee Report.

1.5 Study limitations
The Stage 2 Study assessed the post contact above-ground cultural heritage of the site. It does not include an assessment of potential archaeological significance. The Stage 2 Study also did not assess the potential pre or post-contact Aboriginal cultural heritage associated with the MVR.

The condition of buildings has not been assessed in detail.
1.6 Terminology
All terminology is consistent with the Burra Charter. The following specific terms and acronyms are used throughout this conservation policy:

- *Hermes* – this is the heritage database managed by Heritage Victoria. Information contained in this report has been used to create Hermes place records for the MVR, the former Club Secretary’s House and garden, and the S.R. Burston Stand.

- *Heritage assets* – Buildings and features at the MVR of Primary or Secondary significance as identified in section 4.4.

- HO – Heritage Overlay

- MVCC – Moonee Valley City Council

- MVR – Moonee Valley Racecourse

- MVRC – Moonee Valley Racing Club
Moonee Valley Racing Club Official Programme, Saturday 25th October 1890

[Source: Essendon Historical Society Collection]
2 Overview history

2.1 Introduction

Horse racing is an important and recurring theme in the history of the City of Moonee Valley. The *Moonee Valley Thematic Environmental History* (2012:176) notes that:

> It would be impossible to talk about leisure activities in Moonee Valley without mentioning horse racing. With three racecourses in the area at one time, horse racing has been a major contributor to the social life of the municipality.

MVR is one of three major suburban racing venues that have operated continuously since the nineteenth century, while Ascot (1893-1941) was another racecourse once located within the boundary of what is now the City of Moonee Valley. Just outside the boundary of City of Moonee Valley is Flemington, which is perhaps Australia’s most famous racecourse, and the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds, which was home of harness racing from the late 1940s to 1976.

There is, however, currently no definitive published history of MVR. In 1988 Frank Reilly produced an outline history of the course, including a section on harness racing, using ‘historic logs’ held by the MVRC. This overview history has drawn upon the Reilly history as well as available primary and secondary sources, which are listed in section 2.9.

The purpose of this overview history is to provide a context for the identification and assessment of potential heritage places by identifying historic phases of development of the MVRC and some of the key influences upon that development. The overview history is comprised of three historic development phases, which have been broadly defined as:

- Establishment – 1883-1916
- Development – 1917-1945
- Expansion – 1946-2010

This overview history is preceded by a brief contextual history of horse racing in Australia and Victoria. Specific histories are also provided for buildings and features at the MVR assessed by the Stage 2 Study to be of Contributory or Local significance, and there is a timeline in Appendix B, which provides further information. Unless otherwise specified the information in the timeline is drawn from the 1988 Reilly history.

2.2 Horse racing in Australia and Victoria

The first official horse race in Australia was held in October 1810 at Hyde Park, Sydney. However, ‘drunkenness and unruly behaviour’ marked the early race meetings and this led to a ban by Governor Macquarie, which remained until 1819. After briefly resuming, racing was banned again in 1821 and it was not until 1825 that the annual Hyde Park races were allowed to resume. On 18 March 1825, following the first successful day of racing, a meeting was held to form the Colony’s first racing club, the original Sydney Turf Club, which held its first meeting one year later. However, the growth of racing was hampered by substandard courses and it was only after a group of racing enthusiasts petitioned Governor Bourke in 1832 that 82 hectares of land was set aside for a course that would eventually become Royal Randwick (AHD).

Meanwhile in Victoria the first horse race was held in February 1837 on flats beside the site of the present Southern Cross Railway Station – this was just four weeks before the visit of Governor Bourke to officially name Melbourne. In January 1838 an informal club the ‘Melbourne Race Club’ was formed and held further meetings at the site in March of...
1838 and 1839. In 1840 the Club decided to move races to the river flats beside the ‘Saltwater’ (now Maribyrnong) River and what would become known as Flemington Racecourse was laid out just five years after the founding of Melbourne. The first race meeting was held at the site on 3 March 1840 (AHD, HV, Lemon).

In 1841 the Port Phillip Turf Club (PPTC) replaced the unofficial ‘Melbourne Race Club’. However, the PPTC was later disbanded and eventually replaced by two clubs: the Victoria Turf Club (VTC - established in 1852) and the Victoria Jockey Club (VJC - established in 1857 as a rival to the VTC) (AHD, HV, Lemon).

As Melbourne boomed in the wake of the gold rush racing became a major industry in Victoria by the late 1850s. In 1859 the Australian Championship Sweepstakes held at Flemington attracted a crowd of over 30,000 people and was the first time that the result of an Australian sporting event was reported by Electric telegraph. It is also said that this event ‘sparked interest in the establishment of an annual handicap race capable of attracting a quality inter-colonial field’. And so in 1861 the VTC voted to establish a handicap race to be known as the ‘Melbourne Cup’ to be run at the Club’s proposed October meeting. The first Cup, run on Thursday 7 November 1861, was won by Archer, who won again the following year (AHD, HV, Lemon).

By 1864 the Melbourne Cup was described as the ‘race par excellence of the Australian Colonies’, however, the lack of competent management and competition between the two rival racing clubs, and the rise of unethical practices led to the ‘degeneration of racing in general’. Consequently, the Victoria Racing Club (VRC) was born following the meeting a group of gentlemen in March 1864. The VRC took over the existing clubs including their financial liabilities and within two years the new club was ‘to provide the sport of racing with a new image’ (AHD).

The formation of the VRC had a profound and lasting impact upon the conduct of racing not only in Victoria but also Australia more generally. The formation of the club led to the passing of the 1871 VRC Act that enabled the VRC to introduce by-laws, to be approved by the Governor-in-Council, that would improve the conduct of racing in Melbourne and, indirectly, throughout Victoria. This enabled the VRC to ‘establish its control over the running of horse races throughout Victoria and influence the administration of racing in other colonies’ (AHD).

Racing continued to grow and the 1860s and 1870s saw a dramatic increase in the number of people involved and capital invested in the sport. Heritage Victoria notes that:

_Wealthy men such as the Fishers and the Chirnsides outlaid thousands of pounds on race horses. The mania for racing grew in Melbourne and the country._

By the late nineteenth century many new courses had been established in Melbourne. Other early courses included Caulfield, where the first race was held in 1859, and Williamstown, gazetted by 1865. In 1876 Caulfield was taken over by the Victorian Amateur Turf Club (VATC) and in 1879 the first Caulfield Cup was run, which became an ideal lead-in race to the Melbourne Cup (MRC). In 1874 William S. Cox opened his first course at Kensington before establishing the Moonee Valley Racecourse in 1883. The businessmen, John Wren, established a course at Ascot in 1893 and another at Richmond. Racing commenced at Sandown in 1888, but was abandoned in 1891 before recommencing in the early twentieth century (MRC).

After World War I, pressure from the State Government and the VRC forced private clubs to close or become non-proprietary (HV). Racing at Sandown ceased by 1931. Other metropolitan courses that had closed down by the 1940s were Ascot, Williamstown and Richmond. However, Sandown re-opened in 1965 and is now known as ‘Sportbet Park’ (MRC).
Today, there are four courses in the metropolitan area: Flemington (Managed by the VRC), Caulfield and Sandown/Sportbet Park (Melbourne Racing Club, formerly the VATC), and Moonee Valley.

2.3 Establishment - 1883-1916
This period includes the formative years of the club from the time of its creation by W.S. Cox in 1883 to just prior to when it was re-structured into a non-proprietary company in 1917, which heralded a new era of development.

Cox opened his first racecourse, Kensington Park, in October 1874. Sited near Kensington Railway Station, it was the second private racecourse to operate in Melbourne and its popularity was such that ‘Cox had little choice but to develop a much larger site’. In 1882 he negotiated a seven-year lease (with option to purchase) on a 98 acre site known as ‘Feehan’s Farm’, which had been purchased c.1847 by Richard Feehan. The first MVRC, a proprietary company, was formed at a meeting held in 1883 at Hosie’s Hotel in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. Kensington Park was closed that same year and Cox spent 9 months developing his new course (Williams 2001; Reilly, 1988i).

The first race meeting was held on 15 September 1883 and by 1888 MVR was referred to as the ‘pretty little course on the slope’. That same year, A.H. (Archie) Cox, the son of W.S. Cox was appointed as Club Secretary. After W.S. Cox died in 1895 the club was held in trusteeship by Archie, who became the manager, and Cox’s daughter, Alexandria (Williams, 2001).

Significant improvements were made to the course in the early 1900s under the direction of A.V. Hiskens who was appointed as Club Secretary in 1905 replacing Archie Cox who accepted a position with the VRC. A grandstand was moved to the site, the curves in the track were improved, a new saddling paddock created and facilities such as steward’s room and luncheon area were added. In 1909 further land was acquired allowing the track to be enlarged (Williams, 2001; EG, 6 May 1909). Figure 2.1 shows the layout of the public areas of the course in about 1908, as well as the house constructed c.1895 for the Cox family, later used as the Club Secretary’s residence, which Hiskens occupied until his death in 1935 (Lovell Chen 2013:22).

As the popularity of the course grew it became a venue for community celebrations. In 1890 when Essendon was proclaimed a Town a ‘children’s treat’ was held at MVR. When Essendon was made a City a sports meeting at MVR attended by over 10,000 people was held on Empire Day, 24 May 1909 (Reilly 1988i; EG 23 January 1890).

With the outbreak of World War I racing was curtailed throughout Victoria, but did not cease due to lobbying by the VRC and VATC. Nonetheless, a reduction in the number of meetings was enforced in 1915 with MVRC losing three dates (Williams, 2001).

2.4 Development – 1917-1945
Toward the end of World War I, pressure from the VRC and State Government against the operation of proprietary (i.e., private) clubs led to the restructuring of MVRC into a non-proprietary company, open to membership similar to the VRC and the VATC (Williams, 2001).

The first Committee meeting of the restructured MVRC was held on 26 March 1917 at Hosie’s Hotel when Alister Clark was appointed as Chairman. A.V. Hiskens was re-appointed as Club Secretary and another four men appointed to the Committee. It was also agreed that the Club would lease the racecourse from the Cox family’s operating company for a period of 21 years with an option to purchase. In 1929 it exercised its
option to purchase and became, at the time, one of only two leading clubs that owned its own course (Williams, 2001).

The MVRC experienced significant growth after its restructure: from 1917 to 1927 the sum of £80,000 was spent on improvements. Coursing and polo was revived, but trotting ceased. In 1922 the W.S. Cox Plate, which would become the Club’s most famous race, was introduced and by 1923 MVRC was described as one of the four leading racing clubs of Victoria. The new buildings constructed during the late 1920s and early 1930s included a luncheon room and administrative offices, a new Members’ Grandstand (1924-5) and the South Hill Stand (late 1920s), and what was the first Totalisator in Victoria (1931) (EG, 6 July 1922: The Argus 29 April 1922). Refer to Figure 2.2.

In June 1930 the American Aviatrix Amy Johnson landed her plane at the course and later that year the famous horse Phar Lap won the first of two consecutive W.S. Cox Plates (Reilly, 1988i).

A second phase of development was carried out in the late 1930s. In 1937 a new house was built for the Club Secretary, and in the following year a new main Totalisator was constructed to the west of the 1931 Tote and connected to it while the ‘birdcage’/horse stalls area was relocated and enlarged (refer Figure 2.3). The club also purchased five houses facing Wilson and Capulet streets and further developed the area known as the North Hill, which had opened as an independent reserve in 1927 (Reilly; The Argus, 19 October 1938). However, further development was stopped by the outbreak of World War II and racing was again curtailed for the duration of the war.
Figure 2.2
Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works Detail Plan No.2258 [Part] (1933)
This plan shows the Members’ Stand, constructed in 1925. The ‘birdcage’ area has been enlarged and extended. The original Club Secretary’s house is still extant below the ‘birdcage’ area.
The red arrow indicates horse stalls on a similar, but not identical, alignment to the present stalls.
The totalisator building, constructed by the end of 1931 does not appear to be shown.
[State Library of Victoria Collection, as reproduced in Lovell Chen 2011]

Figure 2.3
Undated plan of MVRC [Part]
This plan shows the ‘birdcage’ [named as such on this plan] relocated to the south-west corner adjacent to Dean Street. The Club Secretary’s house has been removed and the extended totalisator building is shown – this would appear to date the plan to after 1938 when these works were carried out.
The red arrow indicates the original alignment of McPherson Street through what is now the horse float area.
[PROV, as reproduced in Lovell Chen 2011]
2.5 Expansion – 1946-2011

After the end of World War II horse racing became more popular than ever and in 1948 a record crowd of 50,000 people attended the Labour Day meeting, which included the Alister Clark Stakes. As crowds increased it became apparent that many facilities were inadequate. Wartime restrictions, however, had curtailed building activities at MVR and funds were placed instead into a reserve maintenance fund, which was to be drawn upon once restrictions were lifted (Lovell Chen 2013:12).

In 1951 a new public entrance aligned with Alexandra Street (the route taken by most people arriving by public transport) was created, which resulted in the demolition and replacement of the existing ticket box and construction of new turnstile entrances. Once building restrictions were removed in 1953, the MVRC began a program of improvement works and the offices of H.G. Wagstaff and E.F. Billson designed most of the new buildings in the immediate postwar era (Lovell Chen 2013:12), however, the association of H.G. Wagstaff with MVRC appears to have ended by the late 1950s.

In September 1953 work began on a new dining area and cafeteria situated ‘above the birdcage gates’ (Lovell Chen 2013:12). The new cafeteria was designed by Edward F. Billson & Co, which later prepared plans for a new grandstand to accommodate 10,000 patrons. The opening of the S.R. Burston stand in 1958 was a significant milestone and marked the beginning of a period of major redevelopment that culminated in the construction of the new Members’ Stand (also design by Billson’s practice) by 1976.

Between 1972 and 1994 $14 million was spent on improvements: the Racecourse Development Fund provided just under half of this amount, with the balance from profits generated by racing activities (MVRC, 1988). In the mid-1970s automatic turnstiles were introduced, which resulted in the reduction of the number of gates from 12 to 8 at the main entrance (Lovell Chen 2013:15). Figure 2.4 shows the course layout in about 1976.

The club also raised prize money - steadily at first and then more dramatically by the end of the twentieth century. In 1953 the prize money for the W.S. Cox Plate was £4,000; by 1976 it had risen to $127,500 and twenty years later it reached $1 million.

The opening of the new Members’ Stand in 1976 coincided with the return of harness racing to MVR. As noted above, harness racing was conducted briefly at MVR in the 1890s but ended after World War I. In the 1930s trotting commenced at John Wren’s Ascot Racecourse after Wren’s other racecourse at Richmond was rezoned for residential use. The last meeting at Ascot was held in 1942 and trotting was later transferred to the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds, commencing after World War II (Aldous, 1988:142-4).

In 1976 trotting was moved from the Showgrounds to MVR, which became the centre of harness racing in Victoria. The construction of the new harness racing track resulted in the removal of buildings within the ‘flat’ in the centre of the course (Lovell Chen 2013:15). MVR hosted the Inter Dominion championship in 1978 and 1985 and it was said that ‘if you won a race at Moonee Valley you had a good horse’. Reilly (1988ii:3) notes that:

*With rich races such as the Winfield and Hunter Cups, the Australasian Pacing and Trotting Championships, the E.B. Cochrane and Lady Brooks Cups, Sires Produce Stakes and others, brought the cream of the Australasian Trotters and Pacers to the Valley.*

MVR remained the centre of harness racing in Victoria until 2010 when it was moved to Tabcorp Park at Melton.
Figure 2.4
Undated but c.1976 plan showing layout of MVR [Source: Essendon Historical Society collection]
2.6 Specific histories

Alister Clark Rose Garden and Manikato Garden

The Alister Clark Rose Garden was created in honour of Alister Clark who served as Club Chairman from 1917 until his death in January 1949 (refer to the Clark biography in section 2.7). The exact date of the garden is not known. It has been suggested that Clark himself was involved in the creation of this garden; however, this does not appear possible as the creation of a memorial garden was only initiated following his death: it appears the MVRC first called for donations in March 1949:

Moonee Valley Racing Club is appealing for funds to build a rose garden as a memorial to the late Mr Alister Clark. Tomorrow, the £5,000 Alister Clark Stakes, named in his honour, will be run. Collection boxes and sheets will be placed at different points throughout the Moonee Valley racecourse to receive donations to the appeal (The Argus, 25 March 1949).

The call for donations by the MVRC followed a meeting held in February 1949, which was attended by the MVRC, Melbourne City Council, the National Rose Society of Victoria and other horticultural organisations when it was agreed that ‘all should help finance and organise a memorial [to Alister Clark] as soon as possible’. More than £2,000 for the establishment of the memorial garden was subscribed, including a ‘very generous (but unspecified) sum’ from the MVRC (‘Two memorials under threat’, The Age, 16 August 1983, p.22).

Consequently, a number of municipal councils offered sites and the St Kilda City Gardens in Blessington Street was chosen. All the 2000-odd rose-bushes were donated by nurserymen in several states and the opening of the memorial garden at St Kilda took place in mid-1950 at a ceremony presided over by the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Edmund Herring, in the presence of Alister Clark’s widow and 200 guests. A further 700 roses had been planted by 1951 and rose pruning demonstrations were held annually at the garden throughout the 1950s (The Age, ibid).

It therefore appears that at least some (or perhaps all) of the monies raised by the MVRC immediately after Clark’s death were used to establish the Alister Clark Memorial Rose Garden at the St Kilda Botanical Gardens rather than at MVR. The current layout and fabric (brick retaining walls etc.) of the present Alister Clark rose garden at MVR, on the other hand, appears to be of more recent date (see Description) and it remains unknown when it was established and whether it replaced (if at all) an earlier garden in this location or somewhere else at MVR. A potential clue is provided by a c.1960s aerial photograph reproduced in Lovell Chen (2013:21) that shows no garden in this location, but does show what appears to be a formally-planned garden inside the track and opposite the S.R. Burston stand. This is in an area that would have been obliterated by the construction of the trotting track and other improvements in the 1970s-80s and does not exist today. The apparent formal layout suggests it could have been a rose garden.

The Manikato Garden was established after Manikato’s remains were interred in 1994. In all, Manikato won eight races at MVR including a record of five consecutive William Reid Stakes. In 1982 Manikato became only the second horse in Australian racing history to win $1 million in stake money. The memorial includes a painting of Manikato by Peter G. Barlow, a specialist in animal action paintings, who donated this work to the MVRC for display in the Manikato Garden. It shows Manikato in full flight winning the William Reid Stakes (Manikato Garden Information Board).
S.R. Burston Stand

The S.R. Burston Stand, designed by Edward F. Billson & Company, was constructed in 1957-8 and named in honour of the then MVRC chairman. The cost of construction was £250,000. The grandstand was built by the contractors E.A. Watts using pre-cast concrete supplied by the Brunswick firm of Bucklands Concrete Industries and steelwork made by Swanson Steel (Architecture & Arts). Figure 2.5 is a 1959 image by renowned photographer, Wolfgang Sievers, showing the ramp, and the striking Modernist western elevation of the stand.

Figure 2.5
Public area and grandstand (1959)
Wolfgang Sievers
[State Library of Victoria Picture Collection, H2001.40/165; LTAF 883]

The stand was described as the 'finest in Australia of its type to date' (Architecture & Arts) and the design and construction was innovative in several ways:

- It used new methods of prefabrication using pre-stressed concrete. As a result, the 'old concepts of hidden construction were completely abandoned and free expression of the structural elements were used in such a way as to form a major part of the décor' (Architecture & Arts).
- The three tiers were stepped back rather than placing them, as was usual, over one another and shelter was provided by a cantilever roof extending over the entire area. This enabled a feeling of openness and unobstructed views (Architecture & Arts).
- Access to the various levels was facilitated by a gradual ramp that led 'gracefully from the ground to upper levels, which is a pleasant alternative to stair-cases' (Architecture & Arts). In 1961 a small extension was made to the ramp (MVCC).
- The vertical angled panels, which were a distinctive feature of the western façade (refer Figure 2.1) were designed to protect the foyer from the western sun, whilst allowing direct views toward the betting ring and totalizator situated to the south-west of the stand (Architecture & Arts).

The roof of the stand incorporated a press box and radio box built into the front overlooking the course (PROV).

In 1972-73 an addition was made to the northern end of the stand (refer Figure 2.6). Designed by Edward F. Billson & Partners the $528,000 cost was partly financed by a $200,000 loan from the Racecourse Licensing Board. Improvements included five

David Helms
HERITAGE PLANNING + MANAGEMENT
Bookmakers’ Booths, the relocation of the Adelaide and Sydney Betting Rings and a new second-floor cafeteria with seating for 450 people, all easily accessible from the lawn and the rear of the building. A newspaper article noted that:

Race Goers at Moonee Valley will be able to wine and dine as they watch horses go by when present building extensions are completed next year. (The Age, 9 May 1972)

The roof of the 1958 stand was replaced when the Members’ Stand was constructed in 1975-6. In the 1980s major additions on the west side of the stand resulted in the removal of the ramp and obliterated the Modernist elevation shown in Figure 2.5. The office of Edward F. Billson & Associates designed all of these works.

Horse stalls (‘Birdcage’), saddling paddock/parade ground, gate & perimeter wall

As noted above, the position and size of the horse stalls or ‘birdcage’ (see Note) has changed over time. Trees including Oaks and Elms were planted in this area in the mid-1920s (The Advertiser, 29 October 1925 p.8) and it appears that the present perimeter walls and adjoining horse stalls along McPherson Street and Dean Street were constructed as part of major improvement works carried out in the late 1930s. The extension of the ‘birdcage’ into this area was made possible by the removal of the old Club Secretary’s House, which was replaced by a new dwelling in the north-west corner of the site (see below). A 1938 newspaper article advised that improvements effected by the club included the ‘... building of 122 new horse boxes and the enlargement of the bird cage’. To make room for construction of a new Tote building (see below) the ‘bird cage fence’ was ‘moved back about 15 yards, but has been enlarged by the taking in of the grounds of the house formerly occupied by the late A.V. Hiskens’ (The Argus, 19 October, 1938 p.22).

In March 1938 the MVRC awarded Builders Hansen and Yuncken the contract to construct the brick boundary fence or wall extending from ‘the public turnstiles to Dean Street’ (Lovell Chen 2013:11). This wall, and the adjoining horse stalls, can be seen in a 1945 aerial photograph (refer Figure 2.7) and a 1951 plan prepared by Club architect H.J. Wagstaff (Lovell Chen, 2011:12). In 1964 a third stables wing running perpendicular to Dean Street was added in between the two visible in 1945 (MVCC) (refer Figure 2.8).
The 1951 plan refers to the area to the west and north of the stalls as the ‘Saddling Paddock’. Some time later the Parade Ground was relocated to this area – it was formerly situated further to the east (Figure 2.7).

The fence in 1945 included a gate to allow access from the open area at the corner of McPherson and Dean streets. In 1990 a decorative roof with clock tower was constructed over this entrance. The design of the clock was described as a copy of a ‘National Trust classified clock tower located at Flemington Racecourse’ (MVCC).

**NOTE:** The term ‘Birdcage’ originated in England, where it was used for the saddling paddock at historic Newmarket racecourse in England (VRC website). The horse stalls at MVR are referred to as the ‘Birdcage’ on course plans and in newspaper articles at least until the 1950s although it does not appear to be used today. The horse stalls area at Flemington is also known as ‘The Birdcage’.
Club Secretary's house (Former) and garden

As previously noted, the former Cox family residence, constructed in 1895, was used as the Club Secretary's residence and occupied by A.V. Hiskens from 1905 to 1935 (Bourke 1996:38). After his death, his widow was allowed to remain until 1937 when the Club decided to redevelop the 'South Hill' area, which included enlarging the 'Birdcage', as noted above. The old dwelling was auctioned by the MVRC for removal in June 1938 (Lovell Chen 2013:22).

Meanwhile, the MVRC had resolved in February 1936 to call tenders for the new Club Secretary’s House and to appoint Edward Fielder Billson as architect. In April 1936 the tender of builder C.J. Totterdell of 4,200 pounds was accepted and construction commenced. Hisken’s successor, W.S. (Stanley) Cox and his family were permitted to live rent-free in the house, to be known as the ‘Lodge’, from 1 June 1937. In November 1938, it was decided to enclose the verandah to create a sunroom (Lovell Chen 2013:22-23).

From the 1970s onwards the MVRC Chief Executive Officer has occupied the house (Bourke 1996:37-8).

The garden was laid out to a design by renowned landscape architect, Edna Walling, who prepared two plans: A ‘tentative sketch’ and a more fully formed plan noted as being for ‘Mrs W.S. Cox, Mooney Valley, Essendon Victoria’ (refer Figure 2.9). Both plans are now held in the State Library of Victoria collection.

**Figure 2.9**
‘Garden Plan for Mrs. W.S. Cox, Mooney Valley’
Edna Walling

[State Library of Victoria collection, Accession No: H40496/1, Image No: mp003755]
Main Tote

The Victorian Totalizator Act was passed in 1930, enabling the introduction of automatic totalizers for the calculations of bets and dividends in Victoria, the last Australian state to do so. ‘Totes’ thereafter became compulsory at all metropolitan courses (HV).

The first Tote building at MVRC was erected at a cost of £60,000 in 1931 and had 27 selling and 18 paying windows. It was first used at the Yarra Glen and Lilydale Hunt Club meeting in August where it was reported that the ‘crowd deserted the bookmakers and went to the tote’ (Northern Standard, 21 August, 1931, p.5). The first tote has been described as a ‘controversial machine that would change the face of racing’ (Williams). MVRC was first club to legally operate a tote in metropolitan Melbourne - totes were operating at Flemington Racecourse by October 1931 (HV).

In 1938 a new ‘Main Totalisator’ was constructed to the west of the 1931 Tote and connected to it, which was completed by October. Reputedly, it was then the longest tote in Victoria at that time, being 196 feet in length and containing 40 selling and 41 paying windows (The Argus, 19 October 1938, p.22).

In 1965 a canopy was added along the west side to provide shelter for queues of race patrons. An extension was also made to the north end of the building (MVCC).

Further totes were added after World War II. The new S.R. Burston Stand, opened in 1958, incorporated totes and in 1963 a large building containing the ‘Interstate Tote’ was constructed on a site now occupied by part of the Members car park (this building has since been demolished). Other totes included:

- 1964 – plans were approved for a ‘tote and offices’ just to the north of main entrance on McPherson Street (MVCC).
- 1968 - a lady members’ tote was added under the north side of the public (South Hill) grandstand. A canopy was added in 1972 (MVCC).
- 1976 - when the new Members Stand was erected.

With the construction of additional totes the original tote building was, by 1974, referred to on plans as the ‘Main Tote’ (MVCC). The office of Edward F. Billson designed the various additions to the Main Tote and the various new totes constructed during the 1960s.

In 1986 the 1931 Tote was demolished to make way for the space frame structure that now extends between the 1938 Tote and the rear of the Members stand. In c.2010 the northern section of the 1938 Tote was demolished.

Figure 2.10
[Part of] East elevation of Tote and former betting ring shelter, both demolished 1986.
[MVCC planning file]
Track

According to Lemon (2013) W.S. Cox selected this site for a racecourse for both ‘topographical and locational reasons’:

_He chose a location a place with a steep expansive viewing hill for spectators with an aspect over the broad river flats of the ‘Moonee Moonee Ponds’, large enough for a full scale racecourse, but small enough to be conducted by small management. This … elevated viewing of the whole track even from ground level and closeness of the racing action including the special drama of a short home straight created the very ingredients that made Moonee Valley popular._

The layout of the track at MVR has changed over time. The first major change came in 1900 when it was completely re-organized on ‘scientific principles by a ‘Mr Tuxen’:

_The new course may be described as an irregular square, with fine sweeping turns, all of which have as large a radius as any at Flemington, thus ensuring safety to both horses and riders. It is exactly a mile in circumference, and 68ft wide all round. The hilly part of the course just past the judge’s box has been cut down considerably and the run in front of the home turn to the winning post is straight and nearly level … The course is sloped in, from the centre towards the inner rails, thus affording perfect drainage and assisting the horses in galloping round the turns._ (The Argus, 24 March 1900, p.15)

The steeplechase course was altered and regraded at the same time that the new track was laid out. Further known changes to the track include:

- 1909: 6 acres of land is purchased on the northern side of MVR to enable enlargement of the track to nearly 1¼ miles at a cost of between £3,000 and £4,000.
- 1930: A new six-furlong track or chute constructed, cutting diagonally across the course to the top of the straight (Lemon 2013).
- 1968: Construction of Tullamarine Freeway leads to changes to the layout of the course along the eastern boundary. Six-furlong chute altered (Lemon 2013).
- 1976: Trotting track constructed within racecourse.

2.7 Biographies

The scope of this project did not allow for the preparation of detailed biographies of all people associated with the historic development of the MVRC. The following summaries are based on available secondary sources.

**E.F. Billson**

Edward Fielder Billson Senior (1892-1986) was in 1915 the first person to receive a Diploma in Architecture from Melbourne University. Soon after graduating he became the first Australian employee of the Chicago architect, Walter Burley Griffin who in 1916 with his wife Marion Mahoney established an office in Melbourne after winning the international competition for the design of Australia’s proposed national capital city Canberra (Lewis 1998; Peterson 2009).

Billson’s early works were mostly residential commissions and he, in conjunction with others in the office such as J.F.W. Ballantyne and Eric Nichols, as well as Griffin himself, are credited with establishing the ‘Prairie School’ architectural style in Melbourne (Lewis, 1998). In 1918 whilst in Griffin’s office, Billson designed a house at 28 Clendon Road, Toorak for his father George F. Billson, a St Kilda city councillor. In the next year Billson
designed his second house, for Margaret Armstrong in Caulfield and at 12 Rowan Street, Bendigo and in 1920, at 9 Toorak Avenue, Toorak.

In 1920 Billson became an associate in Griffin’s firm. Soon after, he designed a house for Marguerita and James Cragg at 18 Findon Street, Kew (demolished 1979) and Revell, 9 Toorak Avenue, Toorak, which is considered to be one of the most important ‘Prairie School’ houses in Melbourne (Peterson 2009).

Also in 1920, Billson joined with a fellow Griffin employee, Roy Lippincott, to enter the competition for the design of Auckland University’s proposed Arts Building. When Billson and Lippincott won the competition, Lippincott left for Auckland to supervise construction of their design and remained in Auckland for eighteen years (Peterson 2009).

Billson worked in partnership with Lippincott before forming his own practice in the late 1920s after which he is said to have put Griffin’s influence aside to become one of Melbourne’s foremost exponents of the modern modes of architecture (Lewis, 1998). He continued his residential work, which included a number of flat developments in South Yarra including Maritimo (c.1930) and Montalto (1934), both in Marne Street and Grange Lynn (1933) in Grange Road.

In the late 1930s Billson designed what are widely regarded as ‘his masterpieces’, the remarkable Modernist Sanitarium Health Food Co factory (1936-39) for which he received the RVA Street Architecture Medal in 1940 (the first time it had been awarded to a building outside the metropolitan area) and the nearby printing office of Signs Publishing (1936-39). Sanitarium was a pioneer of the health foods industry in Australia and the ‘rational clean design’ and rural setting of the buildings are said to express ‘the health and fitness philosophy of the client, the Seventh Day Adventist Church’ (Peterson 2009).

It appears that Billson’s association with MVRC began in 1936 when the MVRC Committee appointed him as architect for the new Club Secretary’s house (Lovell Chen 2013:22 cites the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee of the Moonee Valley Racing Club of 17 February 1936). However, other sources suggest that H.J. Wagstaff (who also designed a number of buildings for MVRC) was the architect (see below).

By the early 1950s Billson’s firm, by then Edward F. Billson & Company, was the architect for MVRC, an association that continued for over 40 years (for a time during the early 1950s it appears that both Billson and Wagstaff provided architectural services to MVRC, however, it appears that Wagstaff’s association had ended by the late 1950s). It appears the first commission was a new cafeteria in 1953-4 (Billson may have designed the Club Secretary’s House). The next major commission was the striking S.R. Burston Stand, constructed in 1957-8, which again demonstrated Billson’s skill as a Modernist architect. His firm (which was later managed by his son, Edward Jnr, and renamed as Edward F. Billson & Partners and then Edward F. Billson & Associates) went on to design the 1972-3 additions to the Burston Stand, the new Members’ Stand in 1975-6 as well as numerous other buildings and additions to buildings at MVR. In the early 1970s the firm also prepared a masterplan for Flemington Racecourse (HV).

Alister Clark
Alister Clark (1864-1949) had a long association with MVRC serving as its chairman from the time it was reconstituted as a non-proprietary club in 1917 until his death in 1949. A fine horseman, Clark served as master of Oaklands Hunt Club in 1901-08 (ADB). In 1938 the Quality Stakes were renamed the Alister Clark Stakes in his honour and a memorial rose garden was created at MVR after his death. His entry in the Australian Dictionary of Biography also notes that:

Clark was best known as a rosarian. He was a foundation member of the National Rose Society of Victoria in 1900 and served as its president. He put great effort and skill into developing new varieties, and his 'Lorraine Lee', 'Black Boy', 'Sunny South', 'Nancy Hayward' and many others were grown throughout Australia; they were highly regarded in the United States of America. He supplied his new varieties without charge to State rose societies for propagation and sale. He won many awards but his greatest triumph was the 1936 Dean Hole Memorial Medal of the National Rose Society (England). His rose garden survives at Glenara and a selection of his roses grows in a memorial garden in Blessington Street, St Kilda.

Clark contributed also to the development of new species of daffodils. In 1948 he received the Peter Barr Memorial Cup from the Royal Horticultural Society (England), of which he was a fellow, and vice-president in 1944-48. He believed his pink daffodil to be the world’s first.

W.S. Cox family
The W.S. Cox family was inducted to the Racing Victoria Hall of Fame in 2006. The citation is as follows:

The Cox family was associated with the administration of racing in Australia for close to 120 years. William Samuel Cox (1831-95) opened his first venture, Kensington Park Racecourse, in 1874, and it operated with considerable success until 1882. Cox took pains to ensure that the racing was honest and to offer sufficient prizemoney to attract a good class of horse. He also had a flair for timing, and he secured an October meeting on the Saturday before the VRC Derby, which remains today as the meeting at which the Cox Plate and Moonee Valley Cup are run.

Looking for a larger property Cox bought land at nearby Moonee Valley, and opened his new racecourse there in 1883. When Samuel Cox died in 1895, his son A.H. Cox, one of the first VRC stipendiary stewards and an acknowledged expert on racing, took over as Secretary of the private Moonee Valley Racing Club. Another of Samuel Cox’s sons, W.S. Cox Junior, was a successful amateur jockey and trainer. He rode the great jumper, Redleap, in many of his wins and trained Realm to win the 1893 Sydney Cup.

A.H. Cox was succeeded as Secretary by his brother-in-law A.V. Hiskens, during whose term in office (1929) the Club was bought from the Cox family. In 1935, Hiskens was succeeded as MVRC Secretary by William Stanley (‘Bill’) Cox, grandson of the founder. In 1966, his son W.M. (‘Murray’) Cox was appointed Secretary. Three years later Murray Cox left Moonee Valley to take up the position of Secretary of the VRC, where he remained until his retirement in 1986, bringing to an end an era of racing administration by the family.

A.V. Hiskens
Upon his death in August 1935, aged 68, Arthur Vaughan Hiskens was described as a ‘well known identity in racing circles’. He was for 30 years Secretary of the MVRC and since 1930 had been secretary of the Victorian Amateur Turf Club. Described as an ‘astute businessman’, as Secretary of the MVRC he was credited with making the MVRC
‘one of the most popular horse-racing venues in Melbourne’. He was actively involved with the sport of Polo, serving the Moonee Valley and the Victorian Polo Clubs as Treasurer. He was also a member of the Royal Agricultural Society and a Life Member of the Victorian Racing Club. He bred horses with the late Mr. W. Kennedy (Essendon Gazette, 22 August 1935).

**H.J. Wagstaff**

H.J. Wagstaff (1886–1962) commenced his architectural career in 1913 as an assistant to prominent Melbourne architect Charles D’Ebro. Within three years he was elevated to full partnership and then in 1919 Wagstaff established his own architectural practice. While maintaining his own office he also acted as Victorian agent for the Sydney-based architectural firm of Robertson & Marks (Built Heritage).

While Wagstaff undertook a variety of work during his career he described as being best known for his ‘enduring association with Victoria’s horseracing community, which would sustain his career over three decades’ (Built Heritage). In his capacity as official architect to the VRC he designed several structures at Flemington including a totalisator (1931 – also attributed to Robertson & Marks), a grandstand (1936) and a new winning post (Built Heritage).

From the late 1930s to the early 1950s he also was the architect for MVRC and is known to have designed additions to the grandstand (1946 - camera and judge’s box) and alterations to the entrance building (1951) (Built Heritage). The design of the Club Secretary’s House is also attributed to Wagstaff; however, MVRC records, which identify E.F. Billson as the architect, do not support this.

**Edna Walling**

Edna Walling (1895–1973) was one of Australia’s most important garden designers. Educated at the School of Horticulture, Burnley she began work as a ‘jobbing gardener’ around Melbourne. After being asked by an architect to plan a garden more commissions followed and by the early 1920s she had built a flourishing practice in garden design (ADB). Her entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* notes that:

> She developed a sophisticated style, which attracted an equally sophisticated clientele, and rapidly became the leading exponent of the art in Victoria. Soon her reputation spread to other States. Her regular gardening columns (1926–46) in Australian Home Beautiful enhanced her reputation and extended her influence. She also contributed articles to other magazines.

By the 1940s Walling’s was a household name and she capitalized on her popularity by publishing four successful books: Gardens in Australia (1943); Cottage and Garden in Australia (1947); A Gardener’s Log (1948); and The Australian Roadside (1952). A further monograph, *On the Trail of Australian Wildflowers*, appeared posthumously in 1984. Several more manuscripts were unpublished. Her influence on twentieth century gardening in Australia was enormous. The visual impact of the hundreds of gardens she created, her extensive writing, and the respect she commanded from those with whom she worked, including Glen Wilson, Ellis Stones and Eric Hammond, had a considerable effect on the next generation. In the 1980s and 1990s she was to become almost a cult figure for many Australian gardeners and a number of books were published about her work.
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Figure 3.1: Moonee Valley Race Course aerial view looking west

[Wikipedia]
3 Description

3.1 Moonee Valley Racecourse setting

Moonee Valley Racecourse is situated on a relatively large site bounded by the Tullamarine Freeway, and Dean, McPherson, Thomas and Wilson streets in Moonee Ponds. Contained within this site is a complex of buildings and features that are commonly associated with a racecourse and illustrate the development of the course since the early twentieth century. These include the racetrack itself, a complex of grandstands and ancillary structures, a brick boundary wall and adjacent horse stalls, Tote buildings, Administrative offices and mature trees and landscaping. A residence and mature garden are situated at south-east corner of Thomas and McPherson street (refer Figure 3.1).

The majority of the buildings at MVR are situated to the west of the site, between the racetrack and the McPherson Street boundary as shown in the plan in Appendix A. They include:

- The Main Tote, constructed in 1938.
- The horse stalls (‘Birdcage’) and brick perimeter wall, saddling paddock/parade ground and mature trees in the south-west corner of the site (established c.1920s and 1930s).
- The S.R. Burston Stand, constructed in 1957-8, and extended in 1972-73.
- The former Club Secretary’s house, constructed in 1937, and garden.
- The Alister Clarke Rose Garden and Manikato Memorial Garden.

Other buildings and features within this area include the South Hill Stand (c.1926), the entrance turnstiles (1951 and altered c.1975), the former Cafeteria (1953), the Members Stand (1976), the North Hill Reserve complex, MVRC administrative offices, mature trees and open areas used for car parking.

3.2 Main Tote (1938)

![View of relatively intact east elevation showing betting windows](image1)

![View looking north showing later flat-roofed additions on west side](image2)

[David Helms, 2011]
The Main Tote, constructed in 1938, is a single-storey brick Inter-war pavilion situated between the rear of the grandstands and the McPherson Street boundary. It has a hip and gable roof that is clad in unglazed terracotta tiles, and the eastern elevation has narrow double-hung windows (each numbered in gilt on the upper pane) with a projecting timber counter, which are a distinctive element of the design and demonstrate its use. Originally, the selling windows faced to the east and the paying windows to the west.

The original form and the freestanding character of the building has been compromised by accretions on the east and west side. The most intrusive of these is a steel space frame built between the east side of the pavilion and the grandstand. This canopy covers what was the forecourt to the building. The western elevation is obscured by later additions containing public toilets. The northern section of the building has also been demolished. Despite these changes the surviving eastern elevation retains a relatively high degree of integrity.

3.3 Horse stalls (‘Birdcage’), saddling paddock/parade ground and mature trees

A series of 143 horse stalls (also referred as the ‘birdcage’) is situated at the southwest corner of the site. The rear brick wall of the horse stalls forms part of the perimeter brick...
wall on the McPherson Street and Dean Street boundaries. The wall, which is constructed of red bricks laid in English and stretcher bond patterns, is divided into sections with indented panels. The stalls have a skillion roof. Timber posts and low timber board dividing walls form the stalls. The floor of each stall is surfaced in asphalt. Some office accommodation (e.g., Farrier’s office) is incorporated into the stalls. Metal plaques indicate notable horses (e.g., winners of the W.S. Cox Plate) associated with many stalls.

The horse stalls complex is relatively utilitarian in character. However, with the nearby saddling paddock/parade ground, and various landscaping elements, including a number of large mature trees, the stalls form a part of the complex that is evocative of a racecourse environment.

The significant mature trees in this area include:

- A Cape Chestnut (*Calodendron capense*)
- Several mature Elms (*Ulmus species*), which appear to be the remnants of a line of trees visible in the 1945 aerial photo.
- A large Peppercorn (*Schinus molle*), also visible in the 1945 aerial photo, which may be associated with the former Cox family house, demolished c.1938.

### 3.4 S.R. Burston Stand

A substantial Post-war Modernist concrete and steel grandstand, built in 1957-8 to the design of architect Edward F. Billson (snr), with an addition in 1972-3 by the same firm of architects under the direction of Edward F. Billson Jnr. The stand has three tiers of seating, set back so that the upper tiers are not directly above the lower tiers, covered by a large projecting canopy, which is a later replacement.

The grandstand is built of a sophisticated construction method using U-shaped prefabricated pre-stressed concrete beams. These beams are inverted to form the stepped concrete platforms of the stand and are supported on their undersides by steel beams. Other elements of note in the stand are the concrete stairs and their steel balustrades. The seating in the stand is moulded plastic and is of recent origin.
At the time of the completion of the S.R. Burston Stand, the rear of the building was less utilitarian in character than it is today. It was designed in a distinct uncompromisingly Modernist style, and consisted of a series of angled bays with a ramp extending across much of its front. This expressive ramp element is reminiscent of the work of Victor Gruen and other overseas architects, and some local architects, of the 1950s and 60s, who incorporated ramps, whether for vehicular or pedestrian use, as distinct elements of an architectural composition. The building was also notable for its bold use of colour - for example, each of the angled bays contained vertical windows of chartreuse glazing and white window frames.

Unfortunately, alterations and additions to the rear of the grandstand in 1980s have altered and/or obliterated its original design. In contrast, the 1972-3 additions to the grandstand are sympathetic and a seamless addition that has not detracted from the character of the original part of the grandstand.

3.5 Club Secretary’s House (Former) and garden

This house is situated at the southeast corner of Thomas and McPherson street. The dwelling has quite a recessive character in relation to both the racecourse and neighbouring streets, as it is concealed on all sides by a high brick fence and a mature garden.

The house is a substantial brick dwelling built in 1937 to the design of the architect, E.F. Billson. The two-storey brick house is designed in a hybrid style of Moderne (Art Deco) and Modern detailing, which is not uncommon in the mid-late 1930s, a transitory period of Australian Architecture. However, due to its deep eaves and its recessive low-pitched hip roof, from many vantage points it appears to have a flat roof. This characteristic, combined with its cubic massing and strips of steel frame windows on the ground floor, make the Modernist influence more dominant in the design. Also of note is that the west (street-facing) elevation is more restrained in detailing than the east elevation, which is orientated to the racecourse.

Internally, the planning of the house is relatively formal, however there are some free-flowing spaces in living areas. The interior contains some original features including a stair that retains its original balustrade (which includes what is believed to be a ‘Caslake’
wrought iron handrail), and sliding doors that are recessed into wall cavities. The original fireplace in the lounge is believed to be extant, but is currently concealed by a panel.

The setting of the house is enhanced by the mature garden, which is attributed to the eminent landscape designer, Edna Walling. The garden is semi-formal in layout and comparison with plans prepared by Walling (see History) show that several key features were implemented, as follows:

- The pathway leading from the gateway in the east fence to house.
- The ‘sunken lawn’, enclosed by a dwarf stone fence on the north and east sides.
- Plantings including some ‘blossom trees’ (Crab Apples, *Malus sp.*) along the south boundary, ‘evergreens’ (Lilly Pilly, *Acmena smithii* or *Syzygium lehmannii*) along the west boundary, and two large Liquidambers (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) on the east lawn.
- Other stone fences and pathways.

A high brick wall encloses the garden. There is an arched entrance gateway with a wrought iron gate in the McPherson Street elevation. Adjacent to the entrance are the words ‘Moonee Valley’ in wrought iron script. Part of the wall along the McPherson Street boundary has been reconstructed (possibly as the result of tree damage) and the wall along the north boundary and the splayed corner is also not original, though of similar detailing to the original wall.

### 3.6 Alister Clarke Rose Garden and Manikato Memorial Garden

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<tr>
<th>Manikato Garden</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alister Clark Rose Garden</td>
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The Alister Clark Rose Garden and the Manikato Memorial Garden are situated almost directly opposite one another between the Main Tote and the MVRC administrative offices.

The Alister Clarke Rose Garden comprises small triangular shaped raised garden bed, bordered by terracotta bricks, which contains a selection of bush, standard and climbing roses bred by Alister Clark (or released in his name) including ‘Fairlie Red’, ‘Glenara’, ‘Daydream’, ‘Mrs Albert Nash’, ‘Sunny South’ and ‘Marjory Palmer’. There is a small information board.
The Manikato Memorial Garden comprises a raised circular brick-paved area accessed by brick steps, which are flanked by metal posts surmounted by a horse’s head in the manner of a hitching post. A metal shelter has information boards, a video screen and a painting of *Manikato* by Peter G. Barlow. There are also two plaques for Lance Baul (1934-1995) and Lea Baul (1944-2007), whose ashes were scattered at the winning post ‘in accordance with tradition’ (Lovell, 2013:6).

### 3.7 Other buildings and features

Other buildings and features at the MVR include:

- **The racetrack (c.1900s to present day).** While the location of the track in the eastern half of the course has remained the same since the establishment of the course the layout has changed several times over the years. The present fabric of the track including its surface and the fencing appears to date from c.1995 when the present Strath Ayr Turf system was re-laid.

- **The former South Hill Stand (c.1926).** This stand has been altered and extended several times in the post-war period. It is constructed of rendered brick and originally comprised open tiered seating. Today, it has been converted to provide private function and dining spaces, with the seating to the main floor removed and terraced providing a stepped floor for table settings, and is enclosed by a glazed wall. The original metal fascia survives, as does the gabled roof form. A number of alterations and additions have been made at the rear of the stand.

- **The MVRC administrative offices (1938, 1976).** This two-storey brick building adjacent to the McPherson Street boundary, just south of the vehicle entrance, incorporates a single storey building constructed in 1938 that originally contained men’s public toilets. In 1976 the building was extended and the first floor added to provide administrative facilities for MVRC. Further additions have since been made.

- **The entrance turnstiles facing Dean Street, opposite Alexandra Avenue (1951 and altered c.1975).** This is a long building with several pedestrian entrances and metal deck roof. The original turnstiles have been replaced.

- **The former cafeteria (1953, 1956, later alterations/additions).** The building, at the rear (west side of) the Members Stand, is constructed of concrete and metal panels mounted on concrete supports and is set over an earlier interwar brick building at the east end. As originally constructed the side walls were glazed, but now have been overpainted or infilled.

- **The Members Stand (1976).** Designed by Edward F. Billson & Associates in a style similar to the adjacent S.R. Burston Stand with two levels of seating with an enclosed undercroft to the trackside. Glazed screens at the ends of the stand provide weather protection. As noted above, it is connected to the 1953 former cafeteria building.

- **The North Hill Reserve (1992).** This comprises a complex of brick buildings with hipped tile roof.

- **Open lawned areas used for car parking, which contain a number of mature trees including a two Stone Pines (*Pinus pinea*) adjacent to the S.R. Burston stand, and a row of Planes (*Plantanus sp.*) to the north of these, as well as a Poplar (*Populus x canadensis*), Willow (*Salix babylonica*), and a Moreton Bay or Port Jackson Fig (*Ficus sp.*).**
4 Significance assessment

4.1 Existing heritage listings
The MVR is not currently included on any statutory heritage list. This includes the Heritage Overlay (HO), Victorian Heritage Register and the National Heritage List.

The following trees at MVR were recently included in Schedule 2 to the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2) by Amendment C130:
- The Stone Pines, Poplar, and Willow in the car parking area.
- The Pepper and Cape Chestnut within the horse stalls/birdcage area.

4.2 Comparative analysis
As noted in Chapter 3 horse racing has a long history in Victoria, with meetings conducted from almost the beginning of post-contact settlement. In the late nineteenth century a boom in horse racing led to the opening of many racecourses in metropolitan Melbourne, but of these only four remain: Flemington, Caulfield, Moonee Valley and Sandown.

In the City of Moonee Valley, Moonee Valley Racecourse was once one of two racing venues within the boundaries of what is now the City of Moonee Valley – the other, Ascot, was closed in the 1940s and the site redeveloped by the Housing Commission of Victoria as a housing estate. (Flemington, and the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds home of trotting from the 1940s to the 1970s are both within the City of Melbourne)

Of the four remaining metropolitan courses MVR compares with both Flemington and Caulfield as a racecourse that has operated continuously since the nineteenth century. Flemington Racecourse is included on the Victorian Heritage Register and the most significant features at the course include the main race course, the 1924 Members’ Stand, remains of nineteenth century buildings and structures, landscaping including mature trees and rose gardens, inter-war tote buildings and other facilities as well as more recent features such as statues and murals in the Hill Stand.

Like Flemington, MVR has a collection of built structures and landscape features that demonstrate development of the course over time. While there are no known nineteenth century buildings at MVR, it does contain a selection of inter-war era landscape elements, buildings and structures. The South Hill Grandstand, although altered, is the only surviving building associated with the major phase of redevelopment in the 1920s. The horse stalls or ‘birdcage’ area at MVR date from the late inter-war period, whereas the Flemington Birdcage area was recently redeveloped. While parts of the Main Tote at MVR have been demolished the surviving section is reasonably intact and, notably, it is still used for its original purpose. The inter-war totes at Flemington, on the other hand, have been significantly altered and adapted for other purposes.

The former Club Secretary’s House is the only known residential work of Billson in the City of Moonee Valley and the most intact of the known buildings he designed for MVRC. An architect-designed house is uncommon in this part of Melbourne, and more akin to the housing designed for the wealthy in Toorak and South Yarra in the Inter-war period by architects such as Marcus Martin. The associated garden by Walling is also notable as the only known example of her work in the City of Moonee Valley. The semi-formal garden with defined ‘rooms’ and features such as the stone pathways, steps and low
garden walls, plantings including some ‘blossom trees’ (Crab Apples, *Malus sp.*) along the south boundary, ‘evergreens’ (Lilly Pilly, *Acmena smithii* or *Syzygium leuhmannii*) along the west boundary, and two large Liquidambars (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) on the east lawn all enclosed by a high brick wall is characteristic of Walling’s work.

The S.R. Burston Stand, constructed in 1957-58, was one of three major sporting grandstands built in Melbourne in the decade after World War II. The others were:

- The Northern, later Olympic stand, at the MCG - 1955-56. This was much larger, but has since been demolished.
- The Hill Stand at Flemington – 1955, designs by Leith and Barlett architects. It appears that this stand has also been demolished or significantly altered.

Despite its alterations, the S.R. Burston Stand still retains some of the key features that were considered innovative at the time including the stepped back tier arrangement and the expression of the structural elements as a visible part of the design.

### 4.3 Assessment against criteria

This section describes how the MVR (and individual buildings and features within it) meet the Hercon criteria at the local level.

**Criterion A:**
Importance to the course, or pattern, of our cultural or natural history.

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is considered to meet Criterion A as one of three metropolitan courses to have operated continuously since the nineteenth century. The racecourse was established in 1883, and by the 1920s had become one of the four major metropolitan racecourses. It is known throughout Australia for its races including the W S Cox Plate, which is the richest weight-for-age horse race in Australia and forms an integral part of Melbourne’s Spring Racing Carnival. Many famous horses including Phar Lap have raced at Moonee Valley and the course is particularly associated with Manikato, which won five consecutive William Reid Stakes at Moonee Valley and is now buried at the course.

The South Hill Stand is now the oldest building at the course and is associated with a major phase of improvements made after the Club was restructured in 1917, which culminated with the new Club Secretary’s House, enlarged ‘birdcage’ and new Main Tote by 1938. The structures dating from 1951, when a new entrance was created to McPherson Street, to 1976, when the new Members’ Stand was completed, demonstrate the second major expansion of facilities following World War Two.

The MVRC also has a reputation for innovation and introducing ideas to improve racing both for the industry as well as for spectators. This reputation is attributed to the entrepreneurial vision of W.S. Cox. Among the many ‘firsts’ to take place at MVR are the opening of the first on-course tote in 1931, the introduction of on-course broadcasting in 1933, the use of starting stalls in 1947, the recording of the first photo-finish dead heat in 1948, Sunday Racing and Night Racing. MVRC was also the first course to end segregation of the sexes, which had been in place since the 1940s, a policy that was continued by rival clubs until they too were forced to abolish it some years later.

**Criterion B:**
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.

The Moonee Valley Racecourse does not meet this Criterion.
**Criterion C:**
Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history.

The Moonee Valley Racecourse may meet this Criterion. Further assessment of potential archaeological remains is required.

**Criterion D:**
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments.

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is considered to meet Criterion D as a place that contains grandstands, buildings and structures associated with the development of racecourses in the twentieth century. The horse stalls and the totaliser demonstrate key processes of horseracing and betting. The high perimeter fence, a typical feature of metropolitan racetracks, is one of the earliest elements on this site. The significance of the horse stalls, formed in part by the high perimeter wall, is further enhanced by the nameplates of notable horses that have been stabled in each stall. The totaliser, one of the earliest surviving examples of this type of facility, demonstrates the change to on-course betting in Victoria in the 1930s.

The former Club Secretary’s House is considered to meet Criterion D as a purpose-built Club Secretary’s House, built as one of a number of works to modernise the racecourse during the Inter-war period. The Club Secretary’s House is notable as the most intact of these works. It’s of historical significance for its association with the Cox family, and for its use as the Club Secretary’s House. Although it is situated away from the main complex of buildings, its connection with the racecourse is demonstrated by the orientation of its primary (east) façade towards the course, with its racing-themed details and its balconies.

**Criterion E:**
Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is considered to meet Criterion E as a place with distinctive aesthetic qualities. The Inter-war elements, including the brick perimeter wall and adjacent horse stalls, mature trees including a line of Elms, a Cape Chestnut and a Peppercorn, and a totaliser building are evocative of a mid twentieth century metropolitan racecourse facility.

The former Club Secretary’s House is considered to meet Criterion E as a fine example of an inter-war house. The house is an example of the transitory character of design by the mid 1930s, where buildings are influenced by the arrival of Modernism in Australia only a few years before. However, this Modern-style is diluted with styles, forms and detailing that are more traditional in the Australian context. In this instance, due to the deep eaves of the house and its recessive low-pitched hip roof, from many vantage points it appears to have a flat roof. This characteristic, combined with its cubic massing and strips of steel frame windows on the ground floor, make the Modernist influence more dominant in the design.

The garden designed by Edna Walling is considered to meet Criterion E as a fine example of an inter-war garden with distinctive built and landscape elements that are typical of the work of Walling. The semi-formal layout with defined ‘rooms’ and features such as the stone pathways, steps and low garden walls, plantings including some
‘blossom trees’ (Crab Apples, *Malus sp.*) along the south boundary, ‘evergreens’ (Lilly Pilly, *Acmena smithii* or *Syzygium leuhmannii*) along the west boundary, and two large Liquidambars (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) on the east lawn all enclosed by a high brick wall is characteristic of Walling’s work.

A house and garden of this quality is uncommon in this part of Melbourne, and more akin to the housing designed for the wealthy in Toorak and South Yarra in the Inter-war period.

**Criterion F:**

*Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.*

The S.R. Burston stand, constructed in 1958, is considered to meet Criterion F for the innovative elements of its design and construction, which includes the stepped back tier arrangement, the use of prefabricated pre-stressed concrete, and the expression of the structural elements as a visible part of the design.

**Criterion G:**

*Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.*

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is considered to meet Criterion G as a facility that is known, and has been used and valued by both racegoers and the local community for over a century. Apart from its primary use it has also been used by other sporting and community associations and as a venue for major community celebrations.

**Criterion H:**

*Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.*

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is considered to meet Criterion H for its associations with various people who played an important role in the historic development of horse racing in Victoria. These include: the Cox family - W.S. Cox established the course in 1883, and the Cox family played an influential role in horseracing in Victoria over the next 100 years; Alister Clark who is honoured by a memorial garden and the Alister Clark Stakes; and, A.V. Hiskens, among others.

The former Club Secretary’s House is considered to meet Criterion H as an example of the work of the architect E.F. Billson. Billson had a prolific career, and in addition to Club Secretary’s House and other structures built at Moonee Valley, he designed a range of commercial and residential buildings in Victoria, many in the Moderne or Modernist style. The associated garden is also considered to meet Criterion H as an example of the work of the landscape architect Edna Walling (1896-1973). Walling had a prolific career throughout Victoria, and this is the only known example of her work in the City of Moonee Valley.

The S.R. Burston stand is considered to meet Criterion H as an example of the work of architect Edward F. Billson. As architects for the MVRC from the 1950s to the 1980s Billson’s practice played an important role in the post-war redevelopment of MVR.
4.4 Significance of Moonee Valley Racecourse

The Stage 2 Study found the MVR to be ‘at least of local significance to the City of Moonee Valley for its historic, aesthetic, architectural, technical and social heritage values’. The review carried out for this CMP has confirmed this assessment, and has added several buildings and features to the list of heritage assets that contribute to the significance of the place.

Primary or Secondary significance

For the purposes of this CMP the heritage assets at the MVR are defined as being of Primary or Secondary significance. Heritage assets of Primary significance (see Table 4.1) contribute in a fundamental way to an understanding of the cultural significance of the MVR. They are generally buildings, structures or trees that are predominantly intact or have a high degree of integrity and are related to key development periods, particularly during the inter-war and immediate postwar eras, and/or have important associations with people, horses or events with strong associations with the MVR.

The heritage assets of Primary significance include two items that have individual significance. That is, in addition to contributing to the significance of the MVR they have cultural values that are independent of their associations with the MVR. They are the S.R. Burston Stand and the Club Secretary’s House and garden.

On this basis, Section 4.5 contains the statement of significance for Moonee Valley Racecourse, as well as separate statements of significance for the S.R. Burston Stand and Club Secretary’s House and garden.

Heritage assets of Secondary significance (see Table 4.2) contribute to an understanding of the cultural significance of the MVR. They are generally less intact with lower integrity.

A plan showing the location of the heritage assets at the MVR is provided in Appendix A.

Table 4.1 – Primary significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building or feature</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S.R. Burston Stand, constructed 1957-8 and 1972-3</td>
<td>Historic, social, technical, architectural</td>
<td>Stage 2 assessment confirmed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club Secretary’s house (former), perimeter brick fence and garden</td>
<td>Historic, aesthetic, architectural</td>
<td>Stage 2 assessment confirmed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alister Clark rose garden and Manikato Garden</td>
<td>Historic, social</td>
<td>Stage 2 assessment confirmed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Tote, constructed in 1938</td>
<td>Historic, social</td>
<td>Stage 2 assessment confirmed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse stalls/Birdcage and perimeter brick fence in Dean and McPherson streets, saddling paddock/parade ground and mature trees (Pepper, Elms, Cape Chestnut) in south-west corner</td>
<td>Historic, social, aesthetic</td>
<td>Stage 2 assessment confirmed. Cape Chestnut added to list of Significant trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track</td>
<td>Historic, social</td>
<td>Added to the list of heritage assets following further research and analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Limited or no significance
Buildings, trees and features of limited or no significance at the MVR include:

- Buildings of more recent date and/or with low integrity/intactness such as the North Hill Reserve complex, c.1980s additions to the S.R. Burston Stand and Member Stand, the Administrative Offices, and the maintenance buildings in the northeast corner. All signage.
- Mature trees within the car parking area such as the Stone Pines, Poplar, Planes, Fig and Willow that have amenity rather than heritage value, and other landscaping.

4.5 Statements of significance

Moonee Valley Racecourse

What is significant?
The Moonee Valley Racecourse, established in 1883 by W.S. Cox, is significant. The heritage assets of Primary significance within the course are the brick perimeter wall generally along McPherson Street to the south of the main entrance and returning along Dean Street to the entrance from that street, the adjacent horse stalls, mature Elms (*Ulmus sp.*), a Cape Chestnut (*Calodendron capense*) and a Peppercorn (*Schinus molle*) surrounding the saddling paddock/parade ground, the 1938 totalisator building, the Alister Clark Rose Garden and the Manikato Garden, the S.R. Burston Stand (1958) and the Club Secretary’s House (Former) and garden (1937), and the racetrack itself. Of these, the S.R. Burston Stand and the Club Secretary’s House (Former) and garden are of individual significance and each has their own statement of significance.

The heritage assets of Secondary significance are the former South Hill Stand (c.1926), the turnstiles entrance facing McPherson Street (1951), the former Cafeteria (1953) and the Members Stand (1976).

The other buildings, structures and trees at Moonee Valley Racecourse are not significant.

How is it significant?
The Moonee Valley Racecourse is of historic, architectural, aesthetic, and social significance to the City of Moonee Valley.
Why is it significant?

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is significant as one of three metropolitan courses to have operated continuously since the nineteenth century. The racecourse was established in 1883, and by the 1920s had become one of the four major metropolitan racecourses. It is known throughout Australia for its races including the W.S. Cox Plate, which is the richest weight-for-age horse race in Australia and forms an integral part of Melbourne’s Spring Racing Carnival. Many famous horses including Phar Lap have raced at Moonee Valley and the course is particularly associated with Manikato, which won five consecutive William Reid Stakes at Moonee Valley and is now buried at the course. The South Hill Stand is now the oldest building at the course and is associated with a major phase of improvements made after the Club was restructured in 1917, which culminated with the new Club Secretary’s House, enlarged ‘birdcage’ and new Main Tote by 1938. The structures dating from 1951, when a new entrance was created to McPherson Street, to 1976, when the new Members’ Stand was completed, demonstrate the second major expansion of facilities following World War Two. (Criterion A)

It is also significant as a Club known for its innovation and for introducing ideas to improve racing both for the industry as well as for spectators. This reputation is attributed to the entrepreneurial vision of W.S. Cox. Among the many ‘firsts’ to take place at Moonee Valley Racecourse are the opening of the first on-course tote in 1931, the introduction of on-course broadcasting in 1933, the use of starting stalls in 1947, the recording of the first photo-finish dead heat in 1948, Sunday Racing and Night Racing. It was also the first racing club in Victoria to end segregation of the sexes, which had been in place since the 1940s, a policy that was continued by rival clubs until they too were forced to abolish it some years later. (Criterion A)

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is significant for its collection of grandstands and other buildings and features associated with racing in Victoria in the twentieth century. The high perimeter fence, a typical feature of metropolitan racecourses, is one of the earliest elements at the course and forms part of the horse stalls, which face toward the parade ground and saddling paddock. The significance of the horse stalls, formed in part by the high perimeter wall, is further enhanced by the nameplates of notable horses that have been stabled in each stall. The totalisator, one of the earliest surviving examples of this type of facility, demonstrates the change to on-course betting in Victoria in the 1930s. (Criterion D)

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is significant as a place with distinctive aesthetic qualities. The Inter-war elements, including the brick perimeter wall and adjacent horse stalls, mature trees surrounding the parade ground, and a totalisator building are of evocative of a mid twentieth century metropolitan racecourse facility. (Criterion E)

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is significant as a facility that is known, and has been used and valued by both racegoers and the local community for over a century. Apart from its primary use it has also been used by other sporting and community associations and as a venue for major community celebrations and gatherings. (Criterion G)

The Moonee Valley Racecourse is significant for its associations with various people who played an important role in the development of horse racing in Victoria. These include the founder of the course - W.S. Cox - and his family, which played an influential role in horse racing in Victoria over the next 100 years; the long-time Chairman Alister Clark who is honoured by a memorial garden and the Alister Clark Stakes; and, A.V. Hiskens, among others. (Criterion H)
S.R. Burston Stand
What is significant?
The S.R. Burston Stand, designed by Edward F. Billson & Company and constructed by E.A. Watts to the extent of the surviving 1958 fabric, and the 1972-3 addition designed by Edward F. Billson & Partners is significant.
Later additions and alterations including the roof and additions on the west side are not significant.

How is it significant?
The S.R. Burston Stand is of historic, architectural and technical significance to the City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?
The S.R. Burston Stand is historically significant as evidence of the first of the major new stands constructed at Moonee Valley Racecourse to accommodate vastly increased attendances in the post-war era. (Criterion A)
The S.R. Burston Stand is of architectural and technical significance for the innovative elements of its design and construction, which includes the stepped back tier arrangement, the use of prefabricated pre-stressed concrete, and the expression of the structural elements as a visible part of the design. (Criterion F)
The S.R. Burston stand is historically and architecturally significant as an example of the work of architect Edward F. Billson. As architects for the Moonee Valley Racing Club from the 1950s to the 1980s Billson’s practice played an important role in the post-war redevelopment of Moonee Valley Racecourse. (Criterion H)

Club Secretary’s house (former) and garden
What is significant?
The former Club Secretary’s House, situated at the northwest corner of the Moonee Valley Racecourse, adjacent to the corner of Thomas and McPherson Streets, designed by the architect, E.F. Billson, and built in 1937 is significant. The two-storey brick house is designed in a hybrid style of Moderne (Art Deco) and Modern detailing. The mature garden setting, generally laid out in accordance with a plan by eminent garden designer Edna Walling, and the perimeter brick wall, are also significant.

How is it significant?
The former Club Secretary’s House and its garden and perimeter brick wall are of aesthetic, architectural and historic significance to City of Moonee Valley.

Why is it significant?
The former Club Secretary’s House is historically and architecturally significant as a residence purpose-built for racecourse officials, built as one of a number of works to modernise the racecourse during the Inter-war period. The Club Secretary’s House is notable as the most intact of these works. It is of historical significance for its association with the Cox family, and for its use as the Club Secretary’s House. Although it is situated away from the main complex of buildings, its connection with the racecourse is demonstrated by the orientation of its primary (east) facade towards the course, with its racing-themed details and its balconies. (Criteria A, D & H)
The former Club Secretary’s House and garden is aesthetically significant as a fine example of an inter-war house and garden. The house is an example of the transitory
character of design by the mid 1930s, where buildings were influenced by the arrival of Modernism in Australia only a few years before. However, this Modern-style is diluted with styles, forms and detailing that are more traditional in the Australian context. In this instance, due to the deep eaves of the house and its recessive low-pitched hip roof, from many vantage points it appears to have a flat roof. This characteristic, combined with its cubic massing and strips of steel frame windows on the ground floor, make the Modernist influence more dominant in the design. The garden designed by Edna Walling is notable for the distinctive built and landscape elements that are typical of the work of Walling. The semi-formal layout with defined ‘rooms’ and features such as the stone pathways, steps and low gardens walls, plantings including some ‘blossom trees’ (Crab Apples, *Malus sp.*) along the south boundary, ‘evergreens’ (Lilly Pilly, *Acmena smithii* or *Syzygium leuhmannii*) along the west boundary, and two large Liquidambars (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) on the east lawn all enclosed by a high brick wall is characteristic of Walling’s work. An inter-war house and garden of this quality is uncommon in this part of Melbourne, and more akin to the house and gardens designed for the wealthy in Toorak and South Yarra. (Criterion E)

The former Club Secretary’s House is historically significant as an example of the work of the architect E.F. Billson. Billson had a prolific career, and in addition to Club Secretary’s House and other structures built at Moonee Valley, he is recognized as one of the foremost exponents of Moderne architecture in Melbourne. The associated garden is historically significant as an example of the work of the important garden designer Edna Walling (1896–1973). Walling had a prolific career throughout Victoria, and this is the only known example of her work in the City of Moonee Valley. (Criterion H)
Above: Nameplate for Glenara, one of the roses in the Alister Clark Garden, released after his death and named in honour of Clark’s home and garden at Bulla. [David Helms, 2011]

Right: Staircase, north end of 1972-3 S.R. Burston Stand extension [David Helms, 2011]

View of McPherson Street boundary wall [David Helms, 2011]

Manikato Painting by Peter G. Barlow [David Helms, 2011]
5 Conservation policy

5.1 Introduction

Purpose

ICOMOS provides the following definition of Conservation Policy:

*The conservation policy should identify the most appropriate way of caring for the fabric and setting of the place arising out of the statement of significance and other constraints.*

This conservation policy includes:

- Objectives
- Policies for managing change (includes demolition)
- Policies for fabric and setting
- Policies for use
- Policies for interpretation
- Policies for control of intervention in the fabric
- Policies for constraints on investigation

The conservation policies set out in this chapter apply to the whole of the MVR and, more specifically, to the heritage assets of Primary or Secondary significance listed in section 4.4. On the basis of the conservation policies, Chapter 6 provides conservation guidelines for each heritage asset within the MVR.

Policy basis

A key consideration in the preparation of this CMP is the planned redevelopment of the MVR and the recommended application of the HO to the whole of the site. Conservation by use is an important objective and if the heritage assets associated with the MVR are to be conserved then changes may be required to enable adaptive re-use. Consequently, while it is desirable, wherever possible, to conserve significant fabric there may be situations where there will need to be unavoidable interventions that require the alteration, demolition, relocation or removal of significant fabric.

In this regard, the Advisory Committee made the following comments in its final report:

*In terms of future management of the site, the Committee finds that there is opportunity to retain and adapt the heritage items (including the horse stalls and perimeter) in the south-west area of the site, as well as the Club Secretary’s house and to relocate and re-interpret the Alister Clark rose garden and Manikato Garden. With regard to the S.R. Burston Stand, given the degree of changes already made to the building, its limited adaptation potential and the need for a new Grandstand in a different location, there is no heritage impediment to the demolition of the S.R. Burston stand. However, documentation and interpretation of this item is warranted.*

The conservation of cultural heritage should also be recognised as part of an integrated approach to ecologically sustainable development. The conservation and, where appropriate, adaptive re-use of heritage assets has major benefits in terms of promoting the wise use of resources and achieving energy savings.
Accordingly, this policy will include conservation as a primary objective whilst allowing other actions that may result in the alteration, demolition or removal of significant fabric in certain circumstances having regard to the planned redevelopment of the MVR. It will specify methods of minimising or mitigating impacts upon the place and loss of significance, and strategies for ensuring the retention of information that enables the place to be understood and interpreted.

It also identifies constraints on investigation and where further investigation may be required.

5.2 Conservation management objectives
This conservation policy is based upon the achievement of the following overall conservation management objectives:

- To conserve the significance of the MVR as an example of a major metropolitan racecourse.
- To conserve and enhance the buildings and features, which demonstrate key phases in the historic development of the MVR.
- To ensure that the story of the MVR and its heritage significance is communicated effectively to the wider community.

Specific objectives are provided for each policy.

5.3 Conservation Policy 1: Managing change

**Managing change objective**
To manage the heritage assets of the Moonee Valley Racecourse in a manner that conserves or reveals heritage significance.

**Policy basis**
Conservation is an integral part of good management of places of cultural significance. Management decisions for heritage assets should be based on a prior understanding of heritage significance and balanced against other management considerations. The impact of proposed changes on the heritage significance of a heritage asset should be analysed with reference to the statement of significance.

1.0 MANAGING CHANGE

1.1 Use and review

*It is policy to:*

1.1.1 Use this Conservation Management Plan (CMP) as the basis for the future management, use and development of the heritage assets at the MVR.

1.1.2 Review this CMP when necessary.

1.2 Using heritage significance to guide changes

*The consideration of significance is integral to ensuring that the heritage values of the MVR will be conserved in future. It is policy to:*

1.2.1 Consider the heritage significance of the MVR as an integral part of the future redevelopment.

1.2.2 Manage the heritage assets of the MVR in accordance with the relevant policies in this CMP.

1.2.3 Confirm or review the significance of any heritage asset prior to undertaking any decisions in relation to future management, and take into account the conclusions of any review in decision making for the asset.
### 1.0 MANAGING CHANGE

### 1.3 Managing change

Change is undesirable where it reduces heritage significance, however, it can be beneficial if it assists in revealing the significance of a place or in its future conservation. It is policy to:

1.3.1 Ensure the amount of change to heritage assets of the MVR is guided by:
   - The heritage significance of the asset,
   - The relevant heritage management policies,
   - The opportunities for appropriate interpretation.

1.3.2 Minimise, to the greatest extent prudent or feasible, the impact on the significance of a heritage asset when required to comply with current standards and statutory regulations.

1.3.3 Prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) where it is proposed to alter, damage or demolish significant fabric that will, as appropriate, consider a range of options, which should include the option of making no changes to the place.

A preferred option should be chosen after considering the significance of the heritage asset and balancing this against technical, cost, safety and management issues in accordance with this conservation policy. The HIA will also identify appropriate ways of mitigating potential impacts by, as appropriate:
   - The recording of fabric, use and associations,
   - Storing and conserving remnant fabric as artefacts,
   - Interpretation to ensure that the significance of the place can still be understood,
   - Monitoring of works during construction.

Refer also to Policy 2.0 – Fabric & setting.

1.3.4 Ensure that the heritage significance of the MVR is not compromised by short-term decisions that allow inappropriate development, use, maintenance or refurbishment.

### 1.4 Keeping records

Keeping records of changes is an important step in heritage conservation, as it will assist in making future decisions about the place. It is policy to:

1.4.1 Ensure that all changes to heritage assets are documented. This information should be entered on the Hermes heritage database.

1.4.2 Make an archival-quality photographic recording of a heritage asset prior to any alteration, addition, demolition, removal or relocation of that asset. This should be carried out in accordance with the Heritage Victoria Technical Note: Photographic recording for heritage places and objects. This would not be required for permit-exempt works (except as specified in Policy 6.1.1) or minor works that do not impact upon significance.

### 1.5 Undertaking regular maintenance

Undertaking regular maintenance will avoid the need for expensive 'catch-up' works and major repairs, which may impact upon significance. It is policy to:

1.5.1 Ensure that maintenance is planned and executed so that the significance of heritage assets is conserved. Wherever practical, existing components should be conserved (i.e., repaired or restored) rather than replaced.

Refer also to Policy 2.1 – Undertaking repairs and maintenance.

### 1.6 Demolition or irreversible changes

Demolition or making irreversible changes will impact upon the significance of the MVR and should only be carried out in exceptional circumstances. It is policy to:
1.0 **MANAGING CHANGE**

1.6.1 Avoid complete demolition of heritage assets of Primary significance, or a substantial portion of that asset, except in exceptional circumstances, and only after establishing there is no prudent or feasible alternative to demolition. This option should be considered as the last resort. The following management options for heritage assets should be considered and demonstrated not to be viable prior to a decision to demolish a heritage asset:

- continue use of the asset in its present role;
- adaptive re-use;
- transfer of the asset to a new owner;
- use or custodianship by a community group;
- stabilisation and mothballing for future use or conservation;
- stabilisation of a building, structure, or other feature in a safe condition as an artefact.

This assessment of alternatives should be included in project feasibility, assessment and approval documentation.

*Heritage assets of Primary significance are listed in section 4.5. Refer also to Policy 1.4 – Keeping records and Policy 3.0 - Use*

1.6.2 Avoid complete demolition of heritage assets of Secondary significance, or a substantial portion of that asset while the existing use continues. Demolition of a heritage asset of Secondary significance may be considered once redevelopment of the MVR commences and the asset becomes redundant.

*Refer also to Policy 1.4 – Keeping records.*

1.7 **Movable heritage assets**

Movable heritage items are a tangible link to the history and use of a place. As such, they are an important element of a site’s history and a direct link to past lives, uses and customs. They form an important part of the physical record of the MVR. It is policy to:

1.7.1 Retain fixtures and objects that contribute to the cultural significance and interpretation of a heritage asset and to the history of the MVR at that heritage asset. Their removal to another place should be avoided unless it is:

- the sole means of ensuring their security and conservation, or
- on a temporary basis for treatment or exhibition, or for protection when works are being carried out, or
- to comply with health and safety or other statutory regulations, or
- to conserve or protect the heritage asset.

Such contents, fixtures and objects should be returned where circumstances permit. Thorough documentation should be undertaken to assist in establishing the provenance, context, and associations to people and to place. It will also aid later reinstatement. Heritage specialists should be involved in the recording of movable heritage items.

1.7.2 Ensure that movable objects associated with a demolished or relocated heritage asset are identified, recorded (including a location plan), assessed, housed and curated in an appropriate location. In all cases, the provenance, age, use and historical associations of items should be recorded to assist with the retention and understanding of significance.

*Refer also to Policy 1.4 - Keeping records*

1.8 **Managing transfer or disposal of heritage assets**

The transfer of ownership or control of heritage assets needs to be carefully planned and executed so as to conserve the item’s significance. It is policy to:

1.8.1 Include a condition in the contract of sale for any heritage asset that requires the purchaser, as appropriate to:

- comply with the relevant requirements of this CMP, or
1.0 MANAGING CHANGE

- prepare a new CMP for the heritage asset and submit it to MVCC for endorsement within a reasonable timeframe after the sale, and preferably prior to any development application.

1.9 Archaeology

Archaeological sites may be present within the MVR and are especially vulnerable to damage, inadvertent or otherwise. It is policy to:

1.9.1 Assess the archaeological potential prior to the preparation of design options and design development, where development or use may impact on the archaeological resource.

1.9.2 Development should be sited to have regard to the archaeological resource. Impacts to the archaeological resource must be considered in the planning stages.

Refer also to Policy 2.14 – Archaeological monitoring

5.4 Conservation Policy 2: Fabric and setting

Fabric and setting objectives

To ensure that all works are planned and undertaken in a manner that:

- conserves or reveals significance, and/or
- minimises the impact upon the significance of MVR.

Policy basis

As the setting of the heritage assets at MVR will undergo radical change it is important that this change is carefully managed to minimise the impacts upon significance. Alterations to a heritage asset (including adaptation or extensions) should be planned and carried out in a manner that aims to minimise impacts on its heritage significance. Conservation works, including repairs and maintenance, should follow the Burra Charter principle: ‘do as much as necessary, but as little as possible’, using best practice conservation techniques.

2.0 FABRIC AND SETTING

2.1 Undertaking repairs and maintenance

Undertaking regular repairs and maintenance will assist with protection of heritage values as well as supporting optimal use of funding to carry out works by reducing the need for major repairs. It is policy to:

2.1.1 Minimise changes to significant fabric repairs and maintenance should be carried out on the basis of the replacement of ‘like’ with ‘like’. Works that change the type of material are considered to be alterations and are dealt with in policy 2.2.1.

2.1.2 Monitor, maintain, repair and/or protect heritage assets so as to retard or prevent deterioration due to the effects of fire, vandalism, theft or weather.

2.1.3 Employ professional and trade skills appropriate to the site or building’s fabric and significance when carrying out repairs and maintenance.

2.1.4 Use best practice conservation techniques when repairing heritage assets to ensure further damage does not occur to the asset as a result of the repairs.

2.1.5 Use care and due diligence so as not to destroy related features such as archaeological relics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.0</th>
<th><strong>Fabric and Setting</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or significant vegetation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2.1.6 | Employ traditional materials and techniques wherever appropriate, when undertaking repairs to heritage assets. Replacement components should match existing components as closely as possible but should, on close inspection, be identifiable as new. Modern materials and techniques should only be used where there is scientific evidence that supports their use over the long term. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.2</th>
<th><strong>Altering, adapting or extending heritage assets</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1</td>
<td>Ensure changes to significant fabric are minimised and are only permitted if it can be demonstrated that, as appropriate:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- It will enable the heritage asset to be adapted for a compatible new use.
- The option of undertaking no changes is not feasible due to technical, safety, or other management constraints as part of the redevelopment of the MVR.
- Any changes are sympathetic to the original fabric. |

| 2.2.2 | Allow changes to non-significant fabric. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.3</th>
<th><strong>New development</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1</td>
<td>Ensure that new development including additions to heritage assets, or new buildings, structures or other built features in the vicinity of heritage assets is identifiable as having been designed and built in the present. New development should relate and be complementary in form, scale and materials to the heritage assets, but be clearly contemporary in design.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2.3.2 | Ensure the siting and design of new development does not overwhelm the historic setting of the heritage assets by becoming a dominant element or by interfering with key views to and from the asset. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.4</th>
<th><strong>Reversibility of works</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1</td>
<td>Ensure that alterations or extensions that do not contribute to the conservation of a heritage asset are reversible wherever practical.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.5</th>
<th><strong>Demolition</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1</td>
<td>Discourage the demolition or removal of significant fabric unless the demolition or removal is only of part of the heritage asset and it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the responsible authority that, as appropriate:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The removal will not adversely affect the significance of the asset, and
- It will assist in the long term conservation of the asset, and
- It will facilitate the adaptive re-use of the asset. |

| 2.5.2 | Record the asset prior to commencing demolition – see Policy 1.4.2. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.6</th>
<th><strong>Restoration</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.6.1</td>
<td>Undertake restoration only if there is sufficient evidence of an earlier state of the fabric.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.7</th>
<th><strong>Reconstruction</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.7.1</td>
<td>This technique involves making changes to existing historic fabric to return it to a known earlier state and can assist in revealing significance. It is policy to:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Undertake restoration only if there is sufficient evidence of an earlier state of the fabric. |
2.0 FABRIC AND SETTING

2.7.1 Undertake reconstruction only where a heritage asset is incomplete through damage or alteration, and only where there is sufficient evidence to reproduce an earlier state of the fabric. Reconstruction should be identifiable on close inspection or through additional interpretation and, in most cases, should only be applied to a small portion of a heritage asset.

2.8 Setting of a heritage asset
The setting of a heritage asset (sometimes referred to as its ‘context’) often contributes to its significance and should be considered as part of its management. It is policy to:

2.8.1 Retain an appropriate visual setting, as well as other relationships, such as views and vistas, that contribute to the heritage significance of the heritage asset. New construction, demolition, intrusions or other changes that would adversely affect the setting are not appropriate.

2.8.2 Consider the context of the heritage asset in terms of its contribution to the cultural landscape of MVR. Where there is a complex of buildings and other elements (such as trees) the aim should be to conserve or reveal the historic visual relationship between the buildings and other elements in order to demonstrate the historical use and layout of the place.

2.8.3 Ensure that an appropriate curtilage (or land area) is maintained around a heritage asset. The curtilage should be sufficient to ensure that, as appropriate:
  - Related buildings and features (e.g. the horse stalls, parade ground and trees) are, as far as possible, contained within a single curtilage, and
  - There is sufficient land to extend the building in future, if required, to enable a feasible adaptive use, and
  - Significant elevations will face toward a street or public space and remain visible, and
  - There is sufficient land to provide an appropriate root protection zone for significant trees identified in the statement of significance.

Refer also to Policy 2.12 Significant trees.

2.9 Maintaining a heritage asset in its location
The physical location of a heritage asset is part of its heritage significance. It is policy to:

2.9.1 Retain the heritage asset in its historical location where practicable. Relocation is generally unacceptable unless this is the sole practical means of ensuring its conservation, or as part of an interpretation plan.

2.9.2 Consider the following criteria when selecting a new site where relocation of a heritage asset is considered appropriate:
  - The site will be publicly accessible or associated with the use of the land as a racecourse into the future, and
  - All significant fabric associated with the asset can be located within the same area, and
  - There is an opportunity for interpretation, and
  - The site is unlikely to be required for future expansion or development that would require relocation again within the foreseeable future.

2.10 Removal of intrusive elements
It is policy to:

2.10.1 Wherever practical, elements identified as being ‘intrusive’ to the heritage significance of a heritage asset should be removed.
## 2.0 FABRIC AND SETTING

### 2.11 Removed fabric

*It is policy to:*

- 2.11.1 Ensure that significant fabric that has been removed from a heritage asset, including contents, fixtures and objects, is catalogued and protected in accordance with its heritage significance. Where possible, and culturally appropriate, removed significant fabric should be kept at the heritage asset.

- 2.11.2 Maintain a record of all relevant documents, decisions and works undertaken for each heritage asset in the relevant place record of the Hermes heritage database.

*Refer also to Policy 1.4 – Keeping records.*

### 2.12 Significant trees

*This policy applies only to the trees within the Birdcage area (Elms, Cape Chestnut and a Peppercorn) and the mature trees within the former Club Secretary’s House garden. It is policy to:*

- 2.12.1 Provide proper care and maintenance to significant trees to ensure that the trees survive in good condition according to their normally expected lifespan. This should include:
  - strategies for major cyclical replacement when the trees become senescent as well as incidental replacement of individual dead, dying or dangerous specimens. When trees are replaced the process should be documented (photographs and written record before, during & after) for future record.
  - regular maintenance regimes for monitoring condition, pruning, and pest disease and weed management

- 2.12.2 Replace trees with ‘like with like’ species to maintain the significance and integrity of the vegetation fabric.

- 2.12.3 Manage surrounding vegetation to maintain the integrity and condition of the tree/s. Remove weed vegetation species.

- 2.12.4 Ensure that any future development, or changes in immediate environmental conditions, adjacent to the tree/s does not have a detrimental impact upon the integrity and condition of the tree/s. Investigate ways in which adjacent development could include or coordinate with recovery and improvement of the tree/s integrity and condition.

### 2.13 Services

*It is policy to:*

- 2.13.1 Install services such as air-conditioning, lighting and information technology in heritage assets in ways that minimise negative impacts on heritage significance. Use of existing areas of intervention and installation to enable reversibility should occur wherever possible.

### 2.14 Archaeological monitoring

*Works including services trenches, excavation and the like have the potential to impact upon archaeological remains and all future physical intervention should take this into account. It is policy to:*

- 2.14.1 Carry out archaeological monitoring in association with any works within the Moonee Valley Racecourse, unless it is considered that:
  - The works are minor and unlikely to have an impact.
  - The archaeological potential within the area of works is low (e.g. due to recent ground disturbance or lack of historic or physical evidence).

- 2.14.2 Ensure that archaeological monitoring includes:
  - Historic research, which includes a predictive analysis of the areas of potential sensitivity.
  - A physical survey, as required, to identify and record key features prior to disturbance.
2.0 FABRIC AND SETTING

- Monitoring during disturbance
- The preparation of a report in a format to the satisfaction of Heritage Victoria that sets out the key findings of the investigation.

Heritage Victoria is to be notified of any material found so as to determine the need for appropriate interpretation. Material should remain in-situ except in accordance with policy 1.7.

5.5 Conservation Policy 3: Use

Use objectives

- To ensure that each heritage asset has a use compatible with its heritage significance.
- To ensure that new uses do not compromise the identified cultural significance of the place.

Policy basis

One of the most effective strategies for conservation of heritage assets is to ensure that they remain in use, preferably for the purpose that they were designed and built for. However, as the racecourse use will be relocated to another part of this site, the historic use of most of the heritage assets will not continue and suitable new uses must be found. While some heritage assets have potential for adaptive re-use, some purpose-built structures such as the S.R. Burston Stand do not readily lend themselves to adaptive re-use.

3.0 USE

3.1 Supporting historic use

The continued use of an operational asset is an integral part of conserving its heritage significance. It is policy to:

3.1.1 Maintain the historic use of all heritage assets for as long as practicable. This includes allowing changes to the historic fabric where this would support the on-going viability of the use in accordance with Policy 2.2.

3.1.2 Where supporting the continuation of an historic use would result in the significant loss of historic fabric, consider the option of de-commissioning the heritage asset in accordance with Policy 3.3.

3.2 Change of use - adaptive re-use

It is policy to:

3.2.1 Encourage adaptive re-use of heritage assets no longer required for their historic use.

3.2.2 In considering adaptive re-use options, preference should be given to uses that:

- enable the conservation of culturally significant fabric, and cause the minimum degree of change to it. This should consider the significance of all the components of the building and its related site (and their interaction) and not just the individual building, for example, landscape, setting, views and vistas;
- will require the minimum amount of change to the significant fabric. This analysis should consider the rarity of the heritage asset; that is, the number of similar assets of the same type to determine the cumulative impact of change; and, the intactness of the heritage asset and whether this intactness is rare and contributes to its
3.0 **USE**

- significance.
  - ensure that the building is continually occupied, or has a continuity of occupation that will ensure its security and maintenance.
  - provide an economic return that will subsidise the on-going maintenance of the building.
  - provides an opportunity for interpretation.

3.2.3 Also consider:

- the interest of the community in the asset;
- means for harnessing community interest; and
- potential community use of the asset.

3.2.4 In the event that a new use cannot be readily found, consider ‘mothballing’ a building while a strategy to find a new use is developed and implemented. This entails the building being secured, weatherproofed and regularly monitored. Prior to this being done, the building and any movable objects associated with it should be fully documented. Measures should be put in place to protect and conserve these heritage assets. ‘Mothballing’, however, should be considered as a last resort.

3.3 **Change of use - no use**

3.3.1 For heritage assets that may not be suitable for re-use, then the option should be to decommission the asset and treat it as an artefact. This entails leaving the asset in-situ (i.e., where it is located) wherever possible, making it secure and taking whatever steps are necessary to prevent deterioration. Removal or relocation of the asset should not be allowed except in accordance with Policy 2.9.

5.6 **Conservation Policy 4: Interpretation**

**Interpretation objective**
- To ensure that interpretation of the Moonee Valley Racecourse assists in conserving or revealing its significance.

**Policy basis**

*Interpretation strengthens and sustains the relationships between the community and its heritage…* (NSW Heritage Office, 2005:4)

The development and implementation of interpretive programmes is an integral part of the overall management and planning process for a cultural heritage place.

The aim of this interpretation policy is to conserve the significant values of MVR. It is an integral part of this CMP and provides a firm foundation on which to develop a detailed interpretation plan for MVR and its component parts.

The redevelopment of MVR will mean that the significance of the place will not be immediately apparent. Finding ways in which to communicate its heritage significance including tangible and intangible values, natural and cultural setting, social context and physical fabric and raise public awareness will be integral to the conservation of MVR when it is redeveloped.
4.0 **INTERPRETATION**

4.1 **Interpretation plan**

*It is vital that an interpretation plan is prepared prior to any redevelopment commencing. It is policy to:*

4.1.1 Prepare an interpretation plan for MV in accordance with policies 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5. This may include an overall interpretation plan for the whole of MVR as well as specific action plans for particular areas as they are redeveloped.

4.2 **Interpretation should be based on significance**

*Understanding significance will determine the themes for interpretation. It is policy to:*

4.2.1 Base all interpretation of the MVR on significance, both of the complete course and of its individual elements.

4.3 **The role of interpretation in conservation**

*As integral to the conservation process, interpretation assists in protecting and sustaining heritage values by communicating significance. It is policy to:*

4.3.1 Ensure that interpretation of the MVR will contribute to the conservation of heritage values by:

- Communicating the significance of MVR, its evolution over time and its role in the wider cultural concerns of its period of development;
- Enhancing the enjoyment and experience of people using areas both in the redeveloped areas and the new racecourse complex;
- Promoting public appreciation of, and care for, the extant heritage assets;
- Providing information which is available pre-visit, on-site and post-visit.

4.4 **Location of interpretation**

*It is policy to.*

4.4.1 Provide interpretation in a range of locations across MVR including both the areas to be redeveloped and those to form part of the future racecourse complex.

4.4.2 Ensure that the siting of interpretation is carefully considered as part of an interpretation plan and is suited to the place where it is sited and purpose for which it is needed.

4.4.3 Avoid interpretation infrastructure that is overly intrusive.

4.4.4 Ensure that interpretation infrastructure is consistent across MVR.

4.5 **Providing opportunity for both on and off site interpretation**

*Some areas of the system are not accessible to the public; some people will be unable to visit publicly accessible places because of, for example, disability.*

4.5.1 Interpretive information about the Moonee Valley Racecourse should be available for pre-visit, on-site and post-visit uses.

4.6 **Maintaining and reviewing interpretation**

*Maintaining and updating the interpretation of MVR so that it remains in good condition will contribute to the reputation of MVRC as a good custodian of the course.*

4.6.1 The interpretation content and infrastructure should be maintained as part of the conservation management plan.

4.6.2 The interpretation plan for MVR should be reviewed at the same time that this conservation management plan is reviewed (i.e., every 5 years) or when new research or information becomes available.
5.7 Conservation Policy 5: Constraints on investigation

**Constraints on investigation objective**
- To ensure that the heritage values of the components are fully understood prior to making decisions that would result in significant changes to significant fabric.

**Policy basis**

The scope of this project placed some constraints upon investigation, as follows:
- There is no definitive published history of the Moonee Valley Racecourse and club. While the history prepared by Reilly in 1988 provides a good overview it is incomplete and not widely available. It also lacks images and maps.
- The assessment of the physical condition and integrity of places are based on a brief visual inspection of each place. A detailed assessment of the condition of built features has not been carried out.
- The assessment of trees and vegetation is based on historic research and visual inspection. A detailed survey of all trees to confirm their species and assess their condition has not been carried out.
- Some questions remain about how and when certain heritage assets were constructed or established – e.g. the Alister Clark Rose Garden.

While the conservation policies set out above are appropriate to guide future management of MVR it may be necessary to undertake further historic and physical investigations when redevelopment occurs.

### 5.0 CONSTRAINTS ON INVESTIGATION

#### 5.1 Detailed investigation required

5.1.1 Prior to undertaking major works that would impact upon significant fabric, the need for additional detailed investigation of the place should be considered. Detailed investigation should be carried out, unless it is considered that:
- The works are Permit exempt or minor works and unlikely to have an impact in accordance with policies 6.1 or 6.2.
- The existing information about the place is sufficient and the existing conservation policy provides adequate guidance.

5.1.2 The detailed investigation may include, as appropriate:
- Historic research.
- Community consultation.
- A detailed physical survey of all features affected by the proposed works.

#### 5.2 Review of policy

5.2.1 Once the detailed research for the place is carried out, the relevant conservation policies should be reviewed and a detailed conservation policy developed for the place, as appropriate.

### 5.8 Conservation Policy 6: Permit exemptions

**Permit exemptions objective**
- To provide guidance as to the types of minor works that may be carried out without the need for a planning permit.
**Policy basis**

As it is proposed to apply the HO to whole of MVR it is appropriate to enable permit exemptions for buildings and works that will not impact upon significance. This policy provides guidelines for the types of minor buildings and works activities that can be carried out without the need for a planning permit in accordance with Clause 43.01-2 of the Moonee Valley Planning Scheme. The exemptions include those that are predominantly associated with specific activities such as day-to-day maintenance as well as actions that will result in minimal intervention or impacts upon significant fabric.

In accordance with the Advisory Committee recommendations Policy 6.1.1 will be included in the *Moonee Valley Racecourse Incorporated Plan – Conservation Policy and Permit Exemptions*.

### 6.0 PERMIT EXEMPTIONS

#### 6.1 Permit exempt activities

*It is policy to:*

6.1.1 Exempt the following buildings and works from a planning permit in accordance with Clause 43.01-2 of the Planning Scheme:

- Construct a building or fence, construct or display a sign provided that it is not less than:
  - 10 metres from the boundary fence surrounding the Club Secretary’s House.
  - 10 metres from the Main Tote Building.
  - 15 metres from the canopy edge of the significant trees within the horse stalls area.
  - 5 metres from the brick boundary fence or horse stalls.

- To construct or carry out works including landscaping, provided that it does not require the demolition, removal or alteration of a heritage asset of Primary significance.

- To alter, extend, demolish (complete or part) a heritage asset of Secondary significance, provided that a photographic record of the asset is submitted to Moonee Valley Council in accordance with Policy 1.4.2.

- For buildings and structures that are not heritage assets:
  - Complete or part demolition.
  - Alterations or additions to, or repairs or routine maintenance that would change the appearance of that building.
  - Externally painting a previously unpainted surface.

- Removal of trees other than the Elms, Cape Chestnut, and Peppercorn within the Birdcage/Horse stalls area and the mature trees within the former Club Secretary’s garden.

- Management of trees in accordance with Australian Standard; Pruning of Amenity Trees AS 4373.

- Any works done in accordance with a Heritage Impact Statement endorsed by Moonee Valley City Council.

- Any works done in accordance with an Interpretation Plan endorsed by Moonee Valley City Council.

- Any works to the racetrack to facilitate racing including realignment of the track and its layout.

- Any buildings or works that are considered ‘minor works’ (refer to Policy 6.2.1) and will not impact upon the significance of the MVR or its heritage assets to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
6.0 PERMIT EXEMPTIONS

6.2 Minor works activities

It is policy to:

6.2.1 Take the following matters into account when deciding whether an activity may be considered to be ‘minor works’ and therefore permit exempt in accordance with Policy 6.1.1:

- The works are to a non-significant building or feature and are unlikely to have an impact upon significant fabric.
- The works are required to meet statutory or regulatory requirements.
- The works are consistent with the conservation policies in this CMP.
- A Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared, which includes recommendations to mitigate any impact in accordance with Policy 1.6.1.

6.3 Review of policy

It is policy to:

6.3.1 Review the Permit Exemptions policy and include additional permit exempt activities if it can be demonstrated that:

- The activity is necessary to support the adaptive re-use of the heritage asset.
- The activity or action has been chosen after considering a variety of options in accordance with Policy 1.6.1.
- The carrying out of the action will have minimal impact upon the significance when considered either individually or cumulatively.
6 Conservation guidelines

6.1 Introduction
This chapter provides the preferred conservation guidelines that apply to the heritage assets of MVR in accordance with the conservation policies in Chapter 5. Specific guidelines are provided for the heritage assets of Primary significance, as follows:

- Main Tote
- Horse stalls (‘Birdcage’) including perimeter fence on Dean and McPherson streets, saddling paddock/parade ground and mature trees
- S.R. Burston Stand
- Club Secretary’s House and garden, including the perimeter brick fence
- Alister Clark Garden and Manikato Garden
- The racetrack

Section 6.11 provides the preferred conservation guidelines for places of Secondary significance.

These guidelines provide some options for conserving or revealing the cultural significance of the MVR. Alternative approaches may be considered in accordance with a heritage impact assessment, which incorporates a detailed heritage management and interpretation strategy to minimise potential impacts upon the cultural heritage significance of the heritage asset and the MVR (refer to sections 6.2 and 6.3).

Figure 6.1 is a copy of the ‘Indicative plan’ included in the Advisory Committee report that demonstrates how ‘its key findings and recommendations could fit together’ and integrates the key findings of the Committee with its recommendations about retention of key features that have social and cultural value, including the significant trees on the surplus land (Advisory Committee Report, p.138). This plan shows how some of the heritage assets of Primary significance may be retained and incorporated into the new development in accordance with these guidelines.

6.2 Heritage impact assessment
In accordance with Conservation Policy 1.3 a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) should be prepared prior to undertaking alterations, additions, demolition, removal or relocation of the heritage assets of Primary significance, except for permit exempt or minor works in accordance with conservation policies 6.1 and 6.2.

A HIA is not required for any other building or feature at the MVR.

6.3 Interpretation plan
In accordance with Conservation Policy 4.0 an Interpretation plan should be prepared for the whole of the MVR prior to undertaking alterations, additions, demolition, removal or relocation of the heritage assets of Primary significance, except for Permit Exempt or minor works in accordance with conservation policies 6.1 and 6.2. Specific interpretation plans may also be prepared for the heritage assets of Primary significance.
6.4 Main Tote
This building is historically and architecturally significant as one of the earliest surviving totes in Victoria. It has adaptive re-use potential.

Guidelines
- Prepare an interpretation plan in accordance with Conservation Policy 4.0.
- Conservation of this building is recommended. In particular, original features of the east elevation including the betting windows, timber shelves and the painted numbers thereon should be conserved.
- Identify a suitable adaptive re-use in accordance with Conservation Policy 3.2.
- Remove non-original fabric such as the flat-roofed additions at the rear in accordance with Conservation Policy 2.10.
- Consider restoring or reconstructing missing features, such as the betting windows to the west elevation, where possible in accordance with Conservation Policy 2.6 and Policy 2.7.
- Provide an appropriate curtilage for the building (refer to Figure 6.1) in accordance with Conservation Policy 2.8, which should ensure that the significant east façade with its rows of betting windows faces towards a street or public space and is visible.
- Prior to any alteration or addition, or demolition, removal or relocation an archival-quality photographic recording should be made of the heritage asset in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.4.

6.5 Horse stalls ('Birdcage') area
This area includes the horse stalls, the adjacent brick boundary fence to Dean and McPherson streets, the layout of the parade ground and the associated mature trees, which are among the oldest surviving elements at the MVR and are associated with a major phase of redevelopment in the late 1930s. As a group, they form an evocative cultural landscape.

Guidelines
- Prepare an interpretation plan in accordance with Conservation Policy 4.0.
- The conservation of this area and its incorporation into open space or community facilities as part of any future redevelopment is recommended.
- The plaques that identify former occupants of some of the stables provide an excellent opportunity for interpretation. If, however, it is not possible to retain them in situ then they may be removed and stored in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.7.
- Ideally, the whole of the horse stalls and perimeter brick wall should be conserved. If this is not possible then conserve as much as possible in accordance with conservation policies 1.0 and 2.0.
- Provide an appropriate curtilage for the complex in accordance with Conservation Policy 2.8, which should ensure that all the related features are contained within a contiguous allotment, which allows for public visibility of key features including the exterior of the perimeter walls, the horse stalls and the layout of the parade ground. Refer to Figure 6.1, which provides one option.
- Identify a suitable adaptive re-use of the stables in accordance with Conservation Policy 3.2.
Prior to any alteration or addition, or demolition, removal or relocation an archival-quality photographic recording should be made of the heritage asset in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.4.

6.6 S.R. Burston Stand
This building is of architectural and technical significance for the innovative aspects of its open tiered design and construction technique. However, it has been considerably altered and has limited adaptive re-use potential. If new grandstands are built as proposed in another part of the course then this building will become redundant.

Guidelines
- Prepare an interpretation plan in accordance with Conservation Policy 4.0.
- While the conservation of this building is encouraged, given the degree of changes already made to the building and its limited adaptation potential the S.R. Burston Stand may be demolished in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.6.1.
- Prior to any alteration or addition, or demolition, removal or relocation an archival-quality photographic recording should be made of the heritage asset in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.4.

6.7 Club Secretary’s house and garden
An outstanding example of an inter-war house and garden designed by E.F. Billson and Edna Walling respectively. Both the house and garden are in good condition and have a high degree of integrity. The brick fence also contributes to the significance of the place.

Guidelines
- Prepare an interpretation plan in accordance with Conservation Policy 4.0.
- Conservation and interpretation of the whole of house and garden including the perimeter brick wall is recommended in accordance with the relevant Conservation Policies.
- The curtilage of the house should remain as existing, defined by the existing brick boundary wall, and should not be reduced.
- To ensure that the setting of the house is maintained and is not overwhelmed by new development, apply a height limit of three storeys in the immediate vicinity along McPherson Street, and separate the house from higher development in Thomas Street by an internal roadway. Refer to Figure 6.1.
- Prior to any alteration or addition, or demolition, removal or relocation an archival-quality photographic recording should be made of the heritage asset in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.4.

6.8 Alister Clarke Rose Garden
This place is historically and socially significant as a memorial to Alister Clark, who is remembered both as a long-term chairman of the MVRC and as a Rosarian. The species of the roses are important, as they are roses bred by Clark or released in his name.

The garden is significant for its historical and social associations. However, the location, fabric and layout of the garden beds are not integral to the significance of the garden, which appears to be of relatively recent construction.
Guidelines
- Prepare an interpretation plan in accordance with Conservation Policy 4.0.
- Option 1: Conserve and incorporate into new development as part of open space. Ensure an appropriate setting is maintained in accordance with Conservation Policy 2.0.
- Option 2: Relocate to become part of the new MVR complex in accordance with Conservation Policy 2.9.2.
- Ensure that the rose species that are used (or continue to be used) in accordance with either option are those bred by Clark or closely associated with him.
- Prior to any alteration or addition, or demolition, removal or relocation an archival-quality photographic recording should be made of the heritage asset in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.4.

6.9 Manikato Memorial Garden
This garden is historically and socially significant for its associations with Manikato, the famous racehorse known for a series of wins at Moonee Valley. However, the fabric (i.e. landscaping, shelter and information boards etc.) while of interpretive value is not, of itself, significant.

It is not clear, however, whether the remains of Manikato are actually buried at this site or somewhere else within MVR. Further investigation is required.

Guidelines
- Prepare an interpretation plan in accordance with Conservation Policy 4.0.
- Option 1: Conserve and incorporate into new development as part of open space. Ensure an appropriate setting is maintained in accordance with Conservation Policy 2.0.
- Option 2: Relocate to become part of the new MVR complex in accordance with Conservation Policy 2.9.2.
- As noted above, further investigation is required to determine the exact location of the remains of Manikato in accordance with Conservation Policy 5.1.
- Prior to any alteration or addition, or demolition, removal or relocation an archival-quality photographic recording should be made of the heritage asset in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.4.

6.10 The racetrack
The racetrack has historic and social significance as an integral part of the MVR since its creation. While the position of the racetrack has remained the same the layout and fabric associated with it has been changed several times, with the existing racetrack dating from c.1995.

Guidelines
- Prepare an interpretation plan in accordance with Conservation Policy 4.0.
- The position of the racetrack should remain generally as existing, but changes to construction, alignment and layout of the track may be permitted in accordance with Conservation Policy 2.2, as they are not original.
Prior to any alteration or addition, or demolition, removal or relocation an archival-quality photographic recording should be made of the heritage asset in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.4.

6.11 Places of Secondary significance

Conservation of heritage assets of Secondary significance is encouraged as long as these buildings are required for their current use prior to redevelopment of the MVR commencing.

Given the degree of changes already made to the buildings and/or their limited adaptation potential these heritage assets may be demolished in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.6.2, once redevelopment commences and they are made redundant.

Prior to any alteration or addition, or demolition, removal or relocation an archival-quality photographic recording should be made of the heritage asset in accordance with Conservation Policy 1.4.

Figure 6.1 ‘Indicative Plan’
[Advisory Committee Report, p.140]
APPENDIX A – Heritage assets

Heritage assets of Primary significance:
1. Club Secretary’s house (former), perimeter fence and garden
2. S.R. Burston Stand
3. Main Tote
4. Alister Clark Rose Garden and Manikato Memorial Garden
5. Horse stalls, saddling paddock/parade ground, perimeter brick fence and mature trees
6. Track (shown in part)

Heritage assets of Secondary significance:
7. South Hill Stand
8. Former Cafeteria
9. Member’s Stand
10. Turnstiles
## APPENDIX B – TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Historic notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>The first race meeting is held on 15 September 1883.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1888 | *Essendon Gazette* refers to MVR as the ‘pretty little course on the slope’.  
A.H. (Archie) Cox (Son of W.S. Cox) appointed as Club Secretary. |
| c.1889 | The first all-trotting meeting is held on the grass track. |
| 1890 | Essendon municipality is proclaimed a town in January. As part of the celebrations a ‘Children’s Treat’ is held at MVR. vi |
| 1891 | W.S. Cox opens a second course at Maribyrnong.  
The first annual Essendon Dog and Poultry show opens in June at the Essendon Town Hall. Sheep dog trials are held at MVR. v |
| 1895 | W.S. Cox dies in October at the age of 64. The MVRC is held in trusteeship by Archie, who becomes course manager and daughter Alexandra. Cox’s will stated that the racecourse was to continue to operate as a business under this trusteeship for the benefit of the entire Cox family for the next ten years. vii |
| 1896 | A three heat harness race series called the ‘Inter Colonial Free for All’ is held at the course. It is described as the ‘greatest exhibition of trotting ever seen in the southern hemisphere’. However, it is the last trotting event held at the racecourse for nearly 80 years. |
| 1900 | Improvements costing £150 are made to the course, which includes a new course layout. Curves in the track are improved and four straights introduced, making the course 66 feet wide and exactly one mile in circumference. The steeplechase course is altered and regraded at the same time. viii |
| 1905 | Archie Cox accepts a position with the Victoria Racing Club (VRC) as Stipendiary Steward. To avoid conflict of interest he must forego any official position at MVRC, so A.V. Hiskins (his brother-in-law, married to Alexandra Cox) is appointed as Club Secretary.  
Following rationalisation of metropolitan race meetings by the VRC the Maribyrnong Racecourse is closed and the grandstand from that site is moved to MVR. ix  
Over the next decade Hiskins initiates many improvements at MVR including extension to the lawn area, a new steward’s room and luncheon areas, the cutting down of part of the hill and a new saddling paddock. ix |
| 1906 | Moonee Ponds Baseball Club granted use of MVR by Archie Cox. x |
| 1909 | Essendon is proclaimed a City on 19 April. Official celebrations held on Empire Day, 24 May, include a sports meeting at MVR attended by 10,000 people.  
From March to May, 6 acres of land is purchased on the northern side of MVR to enable enlargement of the track to nearly 1½ miles at a cost of between £3,000 and £4,000. xi |
<p>| 1914 | Outbreak of World War I. In August MVR is the venue for the presentation of the King’s and Regimental Colours, designed by Cr. Goldsworthy, to the 58th Battalion by the Governor General, Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson. 1,500 people attend the ceremony. xii |
| 1915 | World War I leads to a reduction in the number of race meetings at MVR and other racecourses throughout Victoria. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Historic notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>MVRC restructured as non-proprietary company and Mr Alister Clark is elected Chairman. A.V. Hiskens is re-appointed as Club Secretary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>First official meeting by the restructured MVRC is held. Although hunt clubs were permitted to continue their meetings at MVR the Committee thereafter refused the use of the course for greyhound and harness meetings. xiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>In May a gymkhana, conducted by the MVRC in conjunction with the Melbourne and Oaklands Hunt Clubs and other sporting bodies is held at the MVR to raise funds for the improvement of the Essendon Recreation Reserve - over 4,000 people attend. That same month the Prince of Wales pays a private visit to the course. xiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Introduction of W.S. Cox plate, named in honour of founder. In April the MVRC announces a scheme of improvements to the course and grounds. The first stage, scheduled for completion in August 1922, includes new administrative offices and member’s accommodation. The second stage includes the construction of a new Member’s grandstand. The total cost is estimated at £32,000.xv The MVRC revives the playing of coursing and polo – the secretary, Mr A.V. Hiskens having gone to ‘no end of trouble’ to get the ground ready for the tournament. xvi September – the new weighing room and mounting yard are in use for the first time. The old member’s reserve is enlarged and former Jockey’s room dismantled. xvii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>MVRC is described as one of the four leading race clubs of Victoria. The others are the V.R.C. (which operated Flemington Racecourse), V.A.T.C. (Caulfield Racecourse) and Williamstown.xviii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Limited portion of the new Member’s Grandstand available for use at meeting held on Saturday 25 October. xix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>New Members Grandstand opened. Introduction of William Reid Stakes, a weight for age race. Essendon Cricket Club given permission to use an area of MVRC as a second ground. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>St Pauls Football Club granted use of new oval at MVRC for its home games. xxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>North Hill opened as an independent reserve on 22 October.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Mr A.H. Cox dies. Introduction of racing chronometer to time races (Remains in use until 1960). No. 8 District Scout Association Sports meeting held at MVRC in October. The meetings continued annually until at least 1940. xxii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>In February the MVRC purchases the course from the executors of the late W.S. Cox for the sum of £160,000. In November a Military Tattoo and Athletics meeting attended by thousands of residents is held at the MVRC under the auspices of the Essendon Citizens’ Military Association. xxiii Commencement of five furlong races on 14 December.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>American aviatix, Amy Johnson, lands her plane at the course on 16 June. Commencement of 9½ furlong races on 27 September. Phar Lap wins the first of two successive W.S. Cox Plate victories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Construction of ‘first totalisator machine … in Victoria’ commences in January. Expected to be in use by middle of August. xxiv (See specific history – Main Tote) Aerial pageant held at Moonee Valley. Polo abandoned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Historic notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>William Stanley Cox appointed as Treasurer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Polo recommences and is still ‘going strong’ in 1938. On-course broadcasting of inter-state races commences. xxv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Prize money for the W.S. Cox Plate is raised to £1,000 and the Moonee Valley Cup to £3,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Death of Club Secretary, A.V. Hiskins. W. Stanley Cox appointed in his place. Last payment made by Club to the estate of W.S. Cox for purchase of racecourse. xxvi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Moonee Valley Steeple was renamed the A.V. Hiskins with stake money of £1,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>A new house for the Club Secretary, W.St. Cox, is built at the south-east corner of Wilson and McPherson streets (See specific history – Club Secretary’s house).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Conditions of Wm. Reid Stakes changed to encourage bigger fields. The club purchases five houses facing Wilson and Capulet streets and carries out extensions to the North Hill. This includes construction of a Tote and Betting area. A new Main Tote is opened in October (See specific history) and £57,999 is handled in one day. The ‘birdcage’ (i.e., the area containing the horse stalls) is remodelled and size increased to 134 stalls (See specific history – Horse stalls). The extension of the birdcage takes in the grounds formerly occupied by the old Cox family house, most recently occupied by the late A.V. Hiskens. xxvii The Quality Stakes are renamed the Alister Clark Stakes in honour of the Club Chairman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Construction of a footbridge over the motor traffic at the corner of McNae and Dean streets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-45</td>
<td>During World War II, the number of races is reduced and Saturday racing is abolished entirely for one year from October 1942 to September 1943. Many other racecourses are closed (e.g., Caulfield and Williamstown, which were each taken over by the Army) and MVR and Werribee are among the few (only?) courses to continue racing. In 1943 the W.S. Cox Plate was increased in distance to 1¼ miles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>‘Magic Eye’ Camera is successfully tested in July. Betting Boards first used in September in the Paddock Ring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Wooden divisional stalls introduced in April for the Epping handicap. First time used in Victoria. Prize money for Alister Clark Stakes increased to £5,000 making it the richest mile race in Victoria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Photo finish camera used for the first time during a January meeting. It was mounted in a tower on top of the main grandstand and recorded the first photo-finish dead heat in May. xxviii A record crowd of 50,000 attends on Labour Day, the last time that the Alister Clark Stakes are held on that day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Alister Clarke dies on 20 January 1949. Mr. J.S. Feehan (Son of Richard Feehan, original owner of the land where the course is situated) is appointed as the new Chairman, however, he dies less than six months later on 14 June. He is replaced by F.C. Taylor. In March the MVRC began appealing for funds to build a rose garden as a memorial to the late Alister Clark, who was a noted rosarian. Collection boxes were placed at various points throughout the course during the meeting hosting the Alister Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Historic notes</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>In December the centre of the course is used for the first time as a car park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1951</td>
<td>A new public entrance, designed by architect H.J. Wagstaff, which faces directly toward Alexandra Street (the route of most patrons arriving by public transport), is created.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Chairman F.C. Taylor dies in September. He is succeeded by (Sir) Samuel Burston.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Prize money for the W.S. Cox Plate is increased by £2,000 to £4,000 and becomes the richest weight for age race in Australia. A casualty centre for jockeys is opened on the ground floor of a two-storied house on the north-west corner of the motor park (possibly the Club Secretary’s house).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>New cafeteria opened in August. This was designed by the firm of E.F. Billson &amp; Company, which would go on to design almost all of the major new buildings at the course in the post-war era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Doubles Tote opened on Moonee Valley Cup Day. ‘Peel’ type starting stalls used for flat races.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Prize money for W.S. Cox Plate increased from £4,200 to £5,000 and a £250 trophy. A gale force wind blew the roof off the pay-out tote building on the South Hill. Iron landed into nearby houses in Dean Street and the brick wall collapsed on to the roadway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>In February tenders are called for a new three-tiered stand to replace the old stand moved to the track in 1905. Designed by E.F. Billson &amp; Company, this would become known as the S.R. Burston Stand (See specific history – S.R. Burston Stand).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Move by Essendon Council for the Housing Commission of Victoria to take over the racecourse for housing is rejected by the State Government. Two meetings in 1960 are cancelled due to heavy rain. More than 6,150 cars are parked on Club properties on Moonee Valley Cup Day, and a record crowd of 50,670 come to see Tulloch win the W.S. Cox Plate. During 1960 a full time staff of 40 plus an additional 1,200 people were employed on race days. Sir Samuel Burston dies in August and is succeeded as Chairman by Mr A.J. Moir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>First of four Gymkhanas in successive years staged by the Mayor of Essendon held at the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>W. St. Cox dies in April and W.M. (Murray) Cox appointed Club Secretary in May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Construction of Tullamarine Freeway leads to changes to the layout of the course along the eastern boundary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Murray Cox resigns to take up position of Secretary to the Victoria Racing Club. Mr I. McEwan takes his place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Work commences on $500,000 extension to the S.R. Burston Stand, which is completed by the following April.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>I. McDonald becomes Chairman of MVRC. The North Hill area is redeveloped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Negotiations between MVRC and Trotting Control Board result in decision to move harness racing from the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds to MVR. Automatic turnstiles installed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Historic notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>In February demolition of the old Members’ Grandstand commences to enable construction of a new four-tiered stand designed by Club architect Edward F. Billson &amp; Associates. A new subway is excavated from the grandstands to the centre car park and buildings situated in the centre of the course are relocated to the north-west corner to create workshops, staff amenities and a truck shelter. Prize money for W.S. Cox Plate is $127,500. New trotting track ready for use by late October and night harness racing commences. Segregation of the sexes by white line barriers ends following construction of the new trotting track.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>MVRC closes its office at the Racing Centre in St Kilda Road and relocates staff to new administrative offices constructed above a men’s toilet block adjacent to the McPherson Street boundary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Inter Dominion championship first held at MVR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Manikato wins the first of two Freeway Stakes, as well as the first of five successive Wm. Reid Stakes. Attendances during 1978/79 reach one million and MVR is reputedly one of the busiest in Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>The first of Kingston Town’s three successive wins in the W.S. Cox Plate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Manikato is euthanized in February and buried in a memorial garden at MVR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Inter Dominion championship held during Victoria’s 150th birthday celebrations attracts a crowd of 50,000. Major additions to the S.R. Burston stand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>W.S. Cox Plate prize money increased to $750,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>W.S. Cox Plate prize money increased to $1,000,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Additions are made to the offices adjoining McPherson Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>MVRC pioneers the use of Natural All Weather Turf on a 200 metre section of the 800 metre Steeple Chase track. The new turf, comprising several layers of sand mixed with mesh and covered by washed turf, was considered safer for horses because of its greater flexibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>MVR is closed for almost a year to allow for the installation of a new track, which was first used 19 August 1995 for Manikato Stakes Day. The cost of the works was $6.3 million. Excess soil from the track was donated to Essendon Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>The ‘long and loyal service’ of Mr Ian McEwen, who was the Chief Executive Officer of the Moonee Valley Racing Club for 21 years (1970-91) and was at the time Chairman of Harness Racing Victoria, is acknowledged by the running of the inaugural ‘Ian McEwen Trophy’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>First night thoroughbred race meeting at MVR (and the first in Australia) held on 26 January attracted a near capacity crowd of 32,000 punters. MVRC planned to hold six night meetings between February and April.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Camel racing makes its debut at MVR. The event, a six race meeting, organised by the Australian Camel Racing Association, offered a main prize of $10,000. The W.S. Cox Plate becomes the only race in the southern hemisphere to be included in the Emirates World Series, described as a ‘prestigious event akin to the Motor Racing Grand Prix, spanning both hemispheres and four continents’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Harness racing moved from MVR to Tabcorp Park at Melton.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
APPENDIX C – HERCON criteria

In assessing the heritage significance of these places, the common criteria which were adopted at the 1998 Conference on Heritage (HERCON) and which are based on the longstanding, and much used, Australian Heritage Commission criteria for the Register of the National Estate have been used.

**Criterion A:**
Importance to the course, or pattern, of our cultural or natural history.

**Criterion B:**
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history.

**Criterion C:**
Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history.

**Criterion D:**
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments.

**Criterion E:**
Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

**Criterion F:**
Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

**Criterion G:**
Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

**Criterion H:**
Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.
Endnotes

According to Peter Lovell, the architect of the Club Secretary’s residence may have been H.J. Wagstaff, however, the architectural drawings (now held by the Essendon Historical Society) ‘do not conclusively confirm this’.

The heritage assessment of the MVR prepared in May 2012 by Lovell Chen provides further information about these buildings and features and other buildings and features at the MVR.

ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) is an international non-governmental organisation of professionals dedicated to the conservation of the world’s historic monuments and sites.

Essendon Gazette, 23 January 1890 (cited in Annals of Essendon)

Essendon Gazette, 3 May 1906 (cited in Annals of Essendon)

Essendon Gazette, 3 December 1925 (cited in Annals of Essendon)

The Argus, 17 January, 1931, p.21

The Argus, 22 October, 1949, p.3

The Argus, 25 March, 1949, p.15

Reilly, p.20; The Argus, 16 December 1950, p.9

Built Heritage

The Age, 9 May 1972

MVCC

MVCC

MVRC, c.1980

MVCC

Essendon Gazette, 18 September 1991, (as cited in Annals of Essendon)

ibid, 13 March 1995

Community & Real Estate News, 17 September 1996 (as cited in Annals of Essendon)

Essendon Gazette, 19 January & 2 February 1998 (as cited in Annals of Essendon)
Moonee Valley Gazette, 25 October 1999 (as cited in Annals of Essendon)
MVRC website