



Heritage Victoria Public Submission Form

Section 95 Heritage Act 2017

Heritage Victoria Public Submission Form

Section 95 Heritage Act 2017

Use this form to lodge a submission to Heritage Victoria in response to the public notice of a heritage permit under Section 95 of the *Heritage Act 2017*.

In considering a permit application the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, considers matters set out under Section 101 of the *Heritage Act 2017* (the Act), which includes all submissions received during the public notice period. Submissions received should relate to the cultural heritage significance of the place or object. Planning matters including amenity, overshadowing of non-heritage properties, noise, traffic and car parking are not matters considered in determining a permit under the Act.

Submit the completed form to Heritage Victoria before midnight on the last date of the public notice period via email at heritage.permits@delwp.vic.gov.au.

Please note:

Submissions received will be treated as a public document and may be provided to persons with an interest in the heritage place or object, including the applicant. This will include your name and contact details.

The advertised permit will not be determined during the notice period.

All submitters will be notified when the permit application is determined and if any future permit amendment applications are received. Please note that where petitions are received only the submitter will be contacted.

1. Application Details

Place or object name:	Robur Tea House
Address or GPS location:	28 Clarendon Street, Southbank
Victorian Heritage Register number:	HO526
Permit Application Number:	P33108

2. Personal Details

Heritage Victoria Public Submission Form

Section 95 Heritage Act 2017

First name:	Charles
Surname:	Sowerwine
Business or organisation name:	Royal Historical Society of Victoria
Position title:	Chair, Heritage Committee
Address (optional):	249 A'Beckett Street, Melbourne 3000
Email address:	c.sowerwine@gmail.com
Telephone:	0414 250-046

3. Submission Details

Please outline your views about the permit application:

Re: Heritage Victoria Permit Application P33108, 28 Clarendon Street, Southbank. Demolition and construction of multi-level buildings

The Royal Historical Society of Victoria's Heritage Committee strongly opposes the above application and urges the Executive Director to reject the application outright.

The Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV) is the peak body representing 340 community historical societies throughout Victoria. It has been active on history and heritage issues since its formation in 1909. The Heritage Committee is accountable to the RHSV Council and has specific responsibility for working with local historical societies to support the preservation of heritage buildings and sites.

The Robur Tea Building is listed on the Victoria Heritage Register (H0526) as significant to the state of Victoria on scientific, architectural and historical grounds. The lengthy citation on the register is evidence of the building's importance. Built between 1887 and 1888, the Robur Tea Building is important scientifically for 'several innovative techniques employed in its construction', namely a system of ironbark piles and concrete rafts to support the construction of a six-storey building on swampy ground. There are no comparable contemporary buildings of this kind because 'such difficult foundations were not tackled again until after WWI'.

Architecturally, the Tea House is significant example of the work of Nahum Barnet, prominent in Melbourne's architectural history for forty years. It is one of the finest examples of a 19th-century warehouse in Melbourne and, indeed, Australia. Further, the Tea House is of seminal historical importance as 'one of the few remaining traces of the industrial and warehousing establishments that until the 1970s and 1980s dominated the south bank of the Yarra', now swamped by luxury apartment developments.

The site is also sensitive and covered by a series of overlays including a Heritage Overlay (HO765), a Design and Development Overlay Schedule 1, a Design and Development Overlay Schedule 60, and a Parking Overlay Schedule 1.

The proposed development consists of seven office, retail and residential buildings, with the main structure a 25 level tower containing 154 hotel rooms and 20 apartments. The proposed Tea House Hotel would be in excess of 100 metres tall and dwarf the six storey (27 metres tall). Construction of this very tall and intrusive tower would destroy the Tea House's unique landmark status in this area and effectively relegate it to being a façade for retail spaces and food and drinks operations. The proposal 'to create a connection to the new development at every level of the Tea House' would further diminish its landmark standing.

Heritage Victoria Public Submission Form

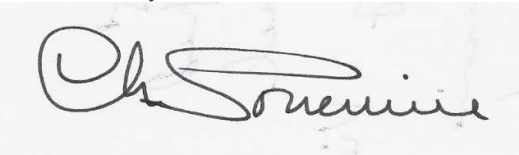
Section 95 Heritage Act 2017

The Heritage Committee finds it particularly disappointing to have to object to a proposal similar to one that was rejected just four years ago. In December 2018, Heritage Victoria rejected a plan to 'adaptively reuse' the Robur Tea House including by building a 24 storey hotel. An ongoing issue is that the Heritage Act does not sufficiently cover issues of curtilage, and the local heritage controls that apply in Southbank, being the same as those for the CBD, are grossly inadequate. This means there is little consideration of the dominating effects of new imposing developments on adjacent heritage buildings.

The Heritage Committee strongly supports the need to 'be respectful of the heritage place' in terms of 'character and appearance, scale, materials, style and architectural expression', and 'Not [to] dominate or visually disrupt the appreciation of the building as it presents to the streetscape'.

We strongly urge that these principles be applied in the case of the Tea House, which should maintain its dominance in this area if its heritage value is to be preserved. We thus urge the Executive Director to reject this application.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ch Sowerwine', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

(Professor) Charles Sowerwine,
Chair, Heritage Committee,
Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

Thank you for making a submission to Heritage Victoria. Please note that submissions received outside the advertised period will not be considered as a formal submission but may be considered under section 101(3)(b) of *the Act* - 'any other relevant matter.'

To obtain a copy of your own lodged submission please contact Heritage Victoria on (03) 7022 6373 or at heritage.permits@delwp.vic.gov.au.