

City of Greater Geelong

PLACE NAME: Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Avenue of Honour

Place No.

ADDRESS: 241 Melbourne Road and 1-41 Swinburne Street, North Geelong

Assessment Date: October 2015 reviewed August 2016 (reviewed Dec 2016 Am C341 panel hearing)

Historic Themes:

Theme 8.5: Commemoration

Condition: Very Good/Excellent

Integrity: High

Photograph Date: December 2015 and August 2016



August 2016

CURRENT HERITAGE STATUS ON STATUTORY REGISTERS

Victorian Heritage Register: No

Victorian Heritage Inventory: No

Local Planning Scheme: No

CURRENT HERITAGE STATUS ON OTHER REGISTERS:

National Trust (Victoria) Register: No

RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Local Significance

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommended for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register: **No**

Recommended for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Inventory: **No**

Recommended for inclusion as a Heritage Overlay in the Planning Scheme: **Yes**

Schedule to the Heritage Overlay

External Paint Controls Should Apply?	Yes (War Memorial and roll of honour/poppy holder)
Internal Alteration Controls Should Apply?	No
Tree Controls Should Apply?	Yes – the Avenue of 146 <i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i> (Ironbark trees)
Fences &/or Outbuildings of Note?	No
Prohibited Uses May be Permitted?	No
Incorporated Document	No

Other Recommendations

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is Significant?

The Vietnam Veteran’s War Memorial located at 241 Melbourne Road and 1-41 Swinburne Street, North Geelong (north –east corner of Swinburne Street and Melbourne Road), has significance as the only memorial constructed in the City of Greater Geelong initially to commemorate the local soldiers who served, fought and died in the Vietnam War 1962-1975. The Avenue is one of three known roadside Vietnam Veteran’s Avenues of Honour in Victoria. The memorial was unveiled on 1st October 1995 by the Hon Con Scaccia then Federal Minister for Veteran’s Affairs and Cr Gerry Smith,

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then Mayor of the City of Greater Geelong, three years after the opening of the National Vietnam Veteran's memorial in 1992.

The Vietnam Veteran's Avenue of Honour was initially planted in 1995 to commemorate those who served and died in the Vietnam War 1962-1975. The original tree planting of 70 London Plane trees was carried out on the east side of the Melbourne Road. They were replaced in 1999/2000 as part of a redesign, with the new Avenue spanning both sides of the Melbourne Road generally between Swinburne Street and Mackay Street, North Geelong. Today the Avenue of Honour comprises 146 *Eucalyptus sideroxylon* (Ironbark) trees.

The planting also forms part of the broader Geelong Boulevard project that had commenced in 1991 and initiated by the former Shire of Corio and Geelong Regional Commission to address the landscape treatments of the various entrances to Geelong with the aim of beautifying and improving the aesthetic appearance of these entrances. The extent of the area to have designs produced was from Mercer Street to Hovell's Creek. The Avenue of Honour forms part of the broader streetscape beautification works known as the Geelong Boulevard project. The designs were produced by Mexted Rimmer Associates.

On the western side of Melbourne Road a section of the PTC railway reservation was transferred to VicRoads in the mid 1990's for landscaping purposes.

How is it significant?

The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Park that includes the war memorial, memorial walkway, roll of honour, poppy holder and the Avenue of Honour are historically, socially significant at a LOCAL level.

The Vietnam Veteran's War Memorial is aesthetically significant at a LOCAL level.

Why is it significant?

The Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Park that includes the War Memorial, memorial walkway roll of honour, poppy holder and Avenue of Honour, at 241 Melbourne Road and 1-41 Swinburne Street, North Geelong, have **historical significance** for their associations with the locals who fought and died in the Vietnam War 1962-75 (Criteria A & H). Although not erected and initially planted until 20 years after the end of the war in 1995, the completed memorial was the culmination of a joint effort between the Geelong and District Vietnam Veteran's Association and the City of Greater Geelong in formally recognising the sacrifices made by local Vietnam veterans. The initial avenue of London Plane trees was replanted in 1999 with 135 *Eucalyptus sideroxylon* (ironbark trees). The historic significance is embodied in the extent and form of the Avenue of Honour, roll of honour and the war memorial. The Avenue of Honour is also a rare example in its associations with the Vietnam War, being one of only three Avenues in Victoria that commemorates those who served in the Vietnam War.

The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Park that includes the War Memorial, memorial walkway and roll of honour is **aesthetically significant** as a visual and commemorative landmark beside the major road entry into the City of Geelong (Criterion D), as defined by the late 20th c. brick and black granite design.

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The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Park that includes the War Memorial, memorial walkway, roll of honour and the Avenue of Honour, at 241 Melbourne Road and 1-41 Swinburne Street, North Geelong, are **socially significant** as a highly important markers that commemorate the contribution made by local men and women in the Vietnam War 1962-1975 (Criterion G). Although the original trees have been replaced with the existing trees the extent and layout of the Avenue is recognised and valued by the Vietnam Veterans' Association as a tangible commemoration of those locals and fought and died in the Vietnam War.

Heritage Overlay Map

It is recommended that the heritage overlay is applied to the iron bark trees located within the Avenue of Honour on both the east and west side of Melbourne Road generally between Mackay Street and Swinburne Streets, North Geelong and to the granite war memorial, Memorial Park memorial walkway, roll of Honour Panel, two timber seats, three flag poles and the paved forecourt surrounding the memorial at the north east corner of Swinburne Street and Melbourne Road, North Geelong. The extent of the heritage overlay, to reflect the extent of the Avenue of Honour, has developed in consultation with the Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia Inc, Geelong and District Sub-Branch.

The proposed heritage overlay (Figure 1) is shown as follows:

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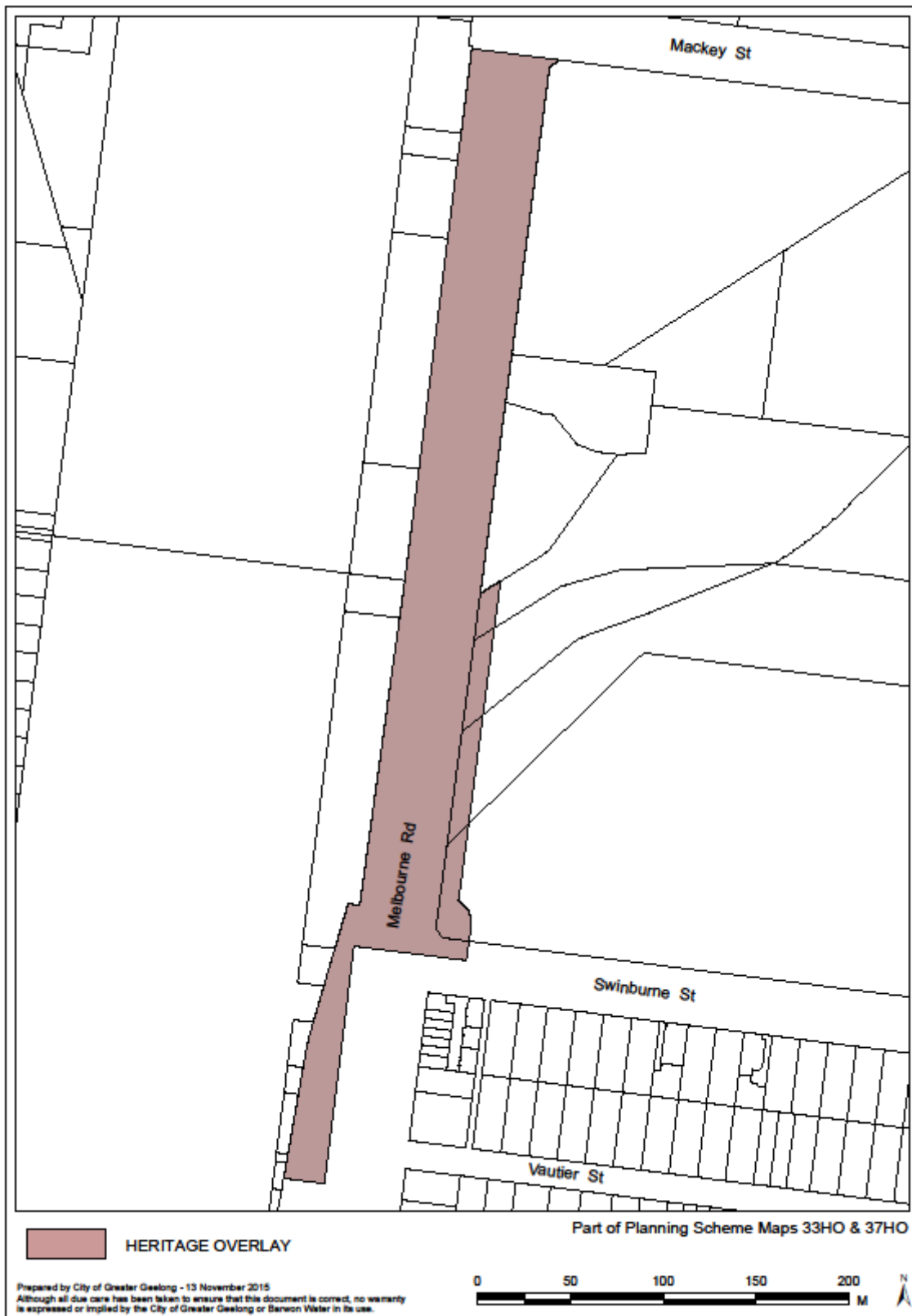


Figure 1: Source of base Map, City of Greater Geelong 2015

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DESCRIPTION:

The Vietnam War Memorial consists of a brick and granite structure, Memorial Park memorial walkway and roll of Honour Panel at one end of the Avenue of Honour. The structure is a freestanding memorial is located in Osborne Park near the north-east corner of Swinburne Street and Melbourne Road. It consists of a rectangular unpainted brick planter box about 600mm high, with a rectangular wall projecting vertically from the centre of it. The wall is also constructed of bricks but clad on both of the large flat sides in black polished granite. The word VIETNAM is in very large print while the words 'TOGETHER THEN TOGETHER AGAIN' is considerably smaller but both are in a contrasting colour to the black background. Below these words are two plaques which are a similar tone to the background and therefore difficult to see until one is close to them¹. A paved walkway comprising exposed granite and sponsor donors on the outer edge that identifies this area as a sacred place for Vietnam Veterans and the roll of Honour Panel with the words Australian Vietnam Forces on one side and the names of all service men and women that made the supreme sacrifice in Vietnam for their Country and this Community on the other side².

The Avenue of Honour comprises 146 *Eucalyptus sideroxylon* (ironbark trees) which extend northwards, along both sides of Melbourne road generally between Swinburne Street and Mackay Street, North Geelong (a double and single row of trees on the eastern side of Melbourne Road and a double row of trees on the western side). A 3500mm wide concrete footpath dissects the double row of trees on the west side.

A tree planting plan prepared by the City of Greater Geelong that includes the extent of planting from 1999/2000 to 2016 (marked RED), is shown in Figure 3.

These trees are maintained by the City of Greater Geelong.

Two seats and three flag poles stand at the eastern end of the memorial.

¹ Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage 2000 prepared by Authentic Heritage Services P/L for the City of Greater Geelong

² Geelong & District Vietnam Veterans Association Inc Official Opening & Blessing of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park 27 May 2016

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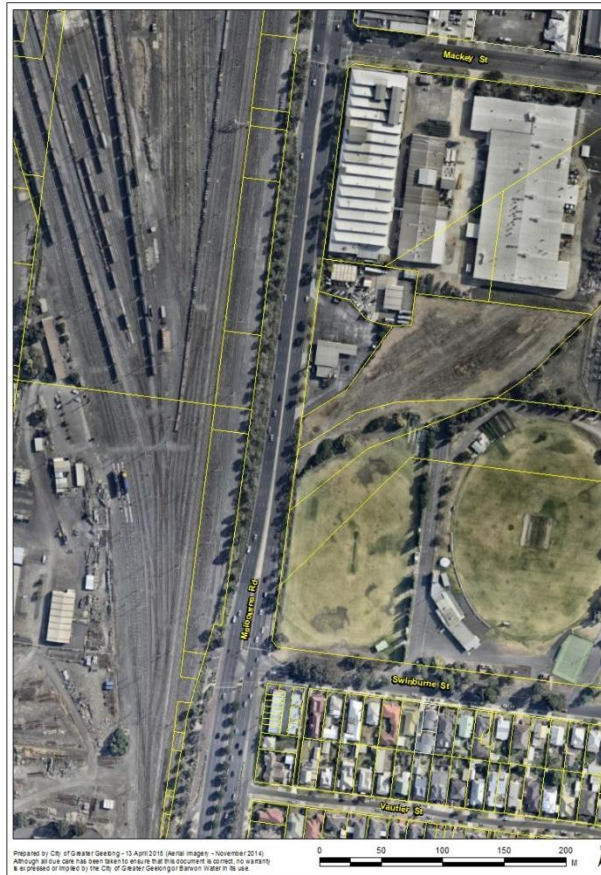


Figure 2. aerial map of Melbourne Road between Mackay Street and Swinburne Street, supplied by the City of Greater Geelong

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Figure 3. aerial map of tree planting within the extent of the Heritage Overlay supplied by the City of Greater Geelong, dated 12 December 2016.

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Photo 1: Vietnam Veterans memorial in Osborne Park, North Geelong Dec 2015



Photo 2: inscription on memorial Vietnam Veterans memorial in Osborne Park, North Geelong Dec 2015

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Photo 3: Avenue of Honour, looking north along Melbourne Road, North Geelong Dec 2015



Photo 4: roll of honour panel looking north/west in Osborne Park, Aug 2016

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Photo 5: roll of honour panel and poppy holder, looking south, Aug 2016



Photo 6: memorial wall, roll of honour panel, Osborne Park, North Geelong Aug 2016

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Photo 7; memorial walkway and seating
looking north west in Osborne Park
Aug 2016

HISTORY:

Broad History of Vietnam War

The Vietnam War was the longest twentieth century conflict in which Australians participated ; it involved some 60,000 personnel and grew from a limited initial commitment of 30 military advisers in 1962 to include a battalion in 1965 and finally, in 1966, a task force. Each of the three services was involved, but the dominant role was played by the Army. After the cessation of combat operations in 1972, a limited number of Australian personnel remained in Vietnam, and elements of the RAAF returned in 1975, carrying out evacuations and assisting refugees almost until the moment of South Vietnam's surrender.

In the early years Australia's participation in the war was not widely opposed. But as the commitment grew, as conscripts began to make up a large percentage of those being deployed and killed, and as the public increasingly came to believe that the war was being lost, opposition grew until, in the early 1970s, more than 200,000 people marched in the streets of Australia's major cities in protest.

By this time the United States Government had embarked on a policy of 'Vietnamisation' - withdrawing its own troops from the country while passing responsibility for the prosecution and conduct of the war to South Vietnamese forces. Australia too was winding down its commitment and the last combat troops came home in March 1972. The RAAF, however, sent personnel back to Vietnam in 1975 to assist in evacuations and humanitarian work during the war's final days. Involvement in the war cost more than 500 Australian servicemen their lives, while some 3,000 were

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wounded, otherwise injured or were victims of illness. For Australia the Vietnam War was the cause of the greatest social and political dissent since the conscription referenda of the First World War³.

History of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and Avenue of Honour

The first spark for a Geelong and District Vietnam Veteran's Memorial and Avenue of Honour was ignited following the opening of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Canberra on 1 October 1992. Shortly after the national event, discussion took place with the City of Greater Geelong who agreed to the installation of the Avenue of Honour adjacent to Pilkington's (glass factory) and Osborne Park. Council initially supplied and planted Plane trees for the Avenue of Honour.

The Geelong and District Vietnam Veterans' Association (G.D.V.V.A) approached the Council in 1994 requesting it City consider the possibility of developing a Vietnam Veterans Avenue of Honour on a major arterial road within the region in conjunction with G.D.V.V.A 20th Anniversary to be held in October 1995. Subsequently the City suggested the Avenue be located on the Princes Highway between Mackay and Swinburne Streets as part of the Boulevard Project. The planting of an initial 70 London Plane trees was carried out by JobSkills staff in September prior to the official opening of the Avenue by the Minister of Veterans Affairs Hon. Con Sciacca and Cr Gerry Smith, Mayor⁴.

At the same time discussion took place with the Council to erect a historic marker to signify the Avenue of Honour at the entrance to Osborne Park. With the generosity of many in the Geelong community the engraved granite face was installed on the northern wall, along with two commemorative plaques.

The official opening of the memorial and Avenue of Honour by Hon Con Scaccia then Minister for Veteran's Affairs and Cr Gerry Smith, then Mayor of the City of Greater Geelong. this took place on 1 October 1995 to coincide with the anniversary of the opening of the National Vietnam veteran's memorial in 1992. The memorials recognised the service and sacrifice of many hundreds of servicemen and women from Greater Geelong and the surrounding region who served in the Vietnam War.

Twelve of these trees were later removed in 1997 as a result of the summer drought and soil condition⁵.

In 1999 Council began work on the Melbourne end of streetscape beautification of the Melbourne Road, known as, the Boulevard project. In July of that year, agreement was reached on a proposed re-design of the Avenue of Honour and it was also agreed that the Boulevard project was in a position to fund the installation of the Black African Granite to the south face and the sides of the memorial. Some of the funding was received from the "Their Service-Our Heritage" project.

³ <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/vietnam-war/index.php>

⁴ Report to Council City of Greater Geelong 19 Dec 1995 Item No 2 page 7 titled "Geelong Boulevard Project Princes Highway North Landscape Designs"

⁵ Geelong Advertiser 4th July 1997 page 2

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Following consultation with the Geelong and Districts Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia in August 1999 and with their agreement the Plane Trees were removed in 1999/2000 to compliment the trees within the Boulevard project ⁶.

On 7 March 2000 a formal ceremony took place where the VVAA President Peter Sullivan and then Mayor Cr Ken Jarvis planted a tree to commemorate the beginning of the new Avenue of Honour.

On 27 May 2016 the Official Opening & Blessing of the Vietnam Veterans memorial walkway and roll of honour panel was held. The official blessing was made by Fr. Kevin Dillon AM and cutting of the walkway ribbon by the Hon. John Eren MP and Ms. Sarah Henderson MP Member for Corangamite. Geelong Branch President, Rieny Nieuwenhof officially welcomed all attendees and the concluding remarks were made by Vice President, Ken Baker.

A 3500mm wide concrete footpath that dissects the double row of trees on the west side was constructed in May 2016 in consultation with the Vietnam Veteran's Geelong Branch and Bike safe.

A tree plan dated 12 December 2016, showing the location of all 146 has been prepared by the City of Greater Geelong and is shown in Figure 3.⁷

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Other Vietnam War-Related Avenue of Honour and Memorial in the State

The Vietnam Veteran's Avenue of Honour in North Geelong is one of three known Avenues of Honour associated with the Vietnam War in the State of Victoria.

In regards to the other Avenue of Honour associated with the Vietnam War, a Vietnam Memorial Avenue of trees is located at Murray Valley, east of Wodonga, (off) Murray River Highway, Bandiana Army Base. The third is located in Tongala, Henderson Road and Mangan Street, this is a Armoured Corps Avenue of Honour (2004) comprising red ironbark (*Eucalyptus tricarpa*) that commemorates the Royal Australian Armoured Corps who died in Vietnam War⁸.

Overall, the war memorial and Avenue of Honour at North Geelong is the only memorial constructed in the City of Greater Geelong to commemorate the local soldiers who fought and died in the Vietnam War.

Bibliography

- 1) Report Prepared by Tree Management Unit City of Greater Geelong Oct 2015 titled "Vietnam Veterans Avenue of Honour Tree Report". Includes tree plan dated 12 December 2016.
- 2) Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage 2000 prepared by Authentic Heritage Services P/L for the City of Greater Geelong

⁶ letter from Geelong and Districts Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia August 1999.

⁷ tree plan of all 146 trees including their location dated 12 December 2016, prepared by City of Greater Geelong

⁸ Vietnam Veterans memorial Avenue of Honour prepared by Dr Iain Stuart, heritage chat 26 March 2015.

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3) Order of Service Official opening and blessing of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Park memorial walkway and roll of Honour Panel located at the corner of Swinburne Street and Melbourne Road, North Geelong held on 27 May 2016

5) Report to Council City of Greater Geelong 19 Dec 1995 Item No 2 page 7 titled "Geelong Boulevard Project Princes Highway North Landscape Designs

6) <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/vietnam-war/index.php>

7) Geelong Advertiser 4th July 1997 page 2

8) heritage chat - Vietnam Veterans memorial Avenue of Honour prepared by Dr Iain Stuart, posted 26 March 2015.

9) Garden History Society - Avenue of Honour/Memorial Avenues list June 2016