

La Trobe's Cottage

Development Proposal



National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

November 2010

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National Trust of Australia (Victoria)



NATIONAL TRUST

By:

Friends of La Trobe's Cottage



Friends of La Trobe's Cottage

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Executive Summary

Background

La Trobe's Cottage is the former home of Victoria's first governor, Charles Joseph La Trobe. He brought a prefabricated cottage with him from England in 1839 and erected it on the government paddock, now the Jolimont suburb east of the city of Melbourne. He extended the cottage during his 14½ years in Melbourne and the dining room and about a third of the prefabricated cottage survived at Jolimont until the 1960s, when the National Trust acquired the building and reconstructed it on the King's Domain. The Cottage was again moved in 1998 to its present site on the corner of Birdwood Avenue and Dallas Brooks Drive.

The present location of the Cottage is out of the public view and visitation has been poor resulting in the reduction of opening hours. The main income has been from joint tours with Government House, but this has not been sufficient to cover the costs of running the facility.

In 2009, the C J La Trobe Society formed a Friends of La Trobe's Cottage (FOLTC) group to reinvigorate the Cottage and develop a proposal for its long term future. The Cottage is now open most Sundays and events are arranged to bring life back into the Cottage. The National Trust obtained a grant to repair and repaint the Cottage.

There is a healthy market for house museums. A total of around 628,000 people a year visited Melbourne overnight who wished to visit historic or heritage buildings and another 523,000 day trip visitors to Melbourne were also interested in visiting historic buildings and sites. In addition, 380,000 school children in the Melbourne area need to study early Melbourne history and are potential school activity visitors. There are few other historic properties in the Melbourne area that can offer a comparable early Melbourne experience to that available at La Trobe's Cottage.

Development Proposals

Two development proposals are suggested – one for a volunteer managed facility and one for a professionally managed facility. If a significant investment is made with increased ongoing maintenance costs, it is important that the facility is professionally managed to ensure that the income stream is maintained at an adequate level to offset the expenses.

Volunteer Management. The proposal for a volunteer managed facility is designed to provide a solid foundation for volunteers to provide a quality historic building experience to visitors, but keeping the running costs of the Cottage at present levels. The proposal contains the following elements:

Signage – provide at key points and at the Cottage indicating its presence and open status.

Web site – maintain, providing history and information about facilities, openings and events.

Relationships with other properties – establish marketing and joint projects.

Publicity plan – establish partnership between the Trust and FOLTC to manage lead times and campaigns.

Education visits – develop in conjunction with other facilities.

Events – maintain current event program to increase awareness and provide additional income.

Talks – maintain capability, to increase awareness, income and provide gap fillers during the winter.

Exhibitions – arrange exhibitions in Domain House as crowd pullers providing increased awareness and income. This item would need significant National Trust support.

Interpretation – improve interpretation with more suitable lighting and furnishings.

Audio visual display – provide a flat screen in the servants' quarters with a quality audio visual presentation.

Garden – reconstruct La Trobe's garden within the current leased land and obtain additional land for the garden outside the lease.

Costumes – provide support to volunteers who wish to dress in period costumes.

Heritage walk – use the Bateman drawings in interpretive signs around the Cottage site as a temporary exhibition to increase activity at the site.

Fence – complete the replacement using a dowelled picket fence.

Lattice on verandas – add lattice to the outside of the front verandas.

Reception – establish a small reception and sales facility in servants' quarters with suitable furniture for reception and merchandise displays. Construct a door in the rear of the building to provide a main visitor entrance visible from Birdwood Avenue. Refurbish the staff kitchen and remove the toilet to a new building on the outside.

Sponsorship – maintain sponsorship by local business and source a major sponsor.

All these elements could be delivered within twelve months. Indicative costing would be \$35,000 for set-up with \$15,000 ongoing annual costs. With a well established facility, energetic volunteers and Trust support, the Cottage is capable of covering its operating expenses but may at times need financial support.

Professional Management. The following development proposal is considered appropriate for a professionally managed facility. The enhancements are chosen to provide a sustainable professional house museum. A larger facility would be required to provide the additional income to cover staff costs.

Signage – provide at key points and at the Cottage indicating its presence and open status.

Web site – improve the Cottage web pages on the National Trust site to provide history and information about facilities, openings and events. Maintain and expand the FOLTC web site.

Relationships with other properties – establish marketing and joint projects.

Publicity plan – establish a publicity plan to manage lead times and campaigns.

Education visits – develop a comprehensive education program.

Events – enhance the event program to increase awareness and provide additional income.

Talks – develop capability to increase awareness and income.

Exhibitions – arrange exhibitions in Domain House as crowd pullers providing increased awareness and income. This item would need significant National Trust support.

Interpretation – improve interpretation with more suitable lighting and furnishings.

Audio visual display – provide a flat screen with a quality audio visual presentation.

Garden – reconstruct La Trobe's garden within the current leased land and obtain additional land outside the lease to provide a significant garden attraction.

Costumes – obtain period costumes for staff and guides.

Heritage walk – use the Bateman drawings in interpretive signs around the Cottage site as a temporary exhibition to increase activity at the site.

Fence – complete the replacement using a dowelled picket fence.

Lattice on verandas – add lattice to the outside of the front verandas.

Visitor centre – obtain a lease on Domain House for use as the Cottage visitor centre. It should provide rooms for interpretive displays, collection displays, audio visual display, merchandise sales, exhibitions, education facilities, office space and store as well as reception and ticketing.

If the lease for Domain House was not obtained, a new building would need to be erected near the Cottage site. The reconstruction of another building from the Jolimont site such as the stables could provide space for the visitor centre.

Until a proper reception/visitor centre is established, the small reception in the servants' quarters should be improved with suitable furniture for reception and merchandise displays. Construct a door in the rear of the building to provide a main visitor entrance visible from Birdwood Avenue. The staff kitchen should be refurbished and the toilet removed to a new building on the outside.

Additional reconstructed buildings – Reconstruction of butler's pantry, nursery and hay house.

Opening times – open the Cottage to visitors six or seven days a week with opening times matching other facilities in the area.

Sponsorship – maintain sponsorship by local business and source a major sponsor.

All these elements could be delivered within 24 months. Indicative costing would be \$145,000 for set-up with \$140,000 ongoing annual costs. A professionally managed marketing strategy would need to aim for an average of 80 visitors a day at an average fee of \$5 to cover the running expenses. This would be supplemented by merchandise sales. Additional income opportunities could be developed such as contracting out a café facility, providing a function venue in the exhibition space and sponsorship.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – Develop a professionally managed house museum

The Friends of La Trobe's Cottage recommends that La Trobe's Cottage be developed as a professionally managed house museum with a visitor centre and enhanced facilities on site as detailed in 6.2. Until the professional management is established, the Cottage facilities should be enhanced as detailed in 6.1. This would enable early gains and provide a progressive implementation of the full professionally managed house museum.

Recommendation 2 – Develop a master plan

The Friends of La Trobe's Cottage recommends that a master plan for La Trobe's Cottage be drafted once the development program is agreed.

Recommendation 3 – Establish a trust fund for the ongoing maintenance of the buildings

The Friends of La Trobe's Cottage recommends that a trust fund be established for the ongoing maintenance of La Trobe's Cottage and that an appeal should be launched through the National Trust Foundation to raise the funds required.

Recommendation 4 – Raise funds for the development of La Trobe's Cottage

The Friends of La Trobe's Cottage recommends that an appeal be launched through the National Trust Foundation to raise the funds for the development of La Trobe's Cottage. Government grants should be applied for and a major sponsor sought.

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this development proposal is to set out a contemporary and relevant business strategy for the long term viability of La Trobe's Cottage as a public historic building, so that it can contribute to the National Trust outcomes by:

- Implementing best practice conservation, interpretation and property management;
- Creating effective stakeholder engagement programs;
- Creating opportunities for learning and education;
- Implementing business best practice;
- Developing commercial potential;
- Developing a sustainable business unit.

1.2. Report Structure

The report is divided into six sections. After the introduction, Section 2 provides the background with a history of the Cottage and what has been said about the management and development of the Cottage in the past.

Section 3 provides an audit of the site. It outlines La Trobe's Cottage physical opportunities and constraints and the key physical assets on site. It also provides a distilled list of opportunities and constraints. This work has been compiled from existing documentation, assessments of the site and discussions with stakeholders.

Section 4 profiles the context in which La Trobe's Cottage must be positioned. This includes an assessment of broader stakeholder plans, the product and positioning of Melbourne as a tourism centre, an analysis of the market, competitors and relevant case studies. Drawing from these, a SWOT analysis of La Trobe's Cottage positioning has been developed so that the development options, outlined in the subsequent section, are appropriately informed.

Section 5 describes and assesses the preliminary development options for La Trobe's Cottage, Section 6 provides development proposals and Section 7 makes recommendations.

2. Background

2.1. National Trust Mission & Objectives

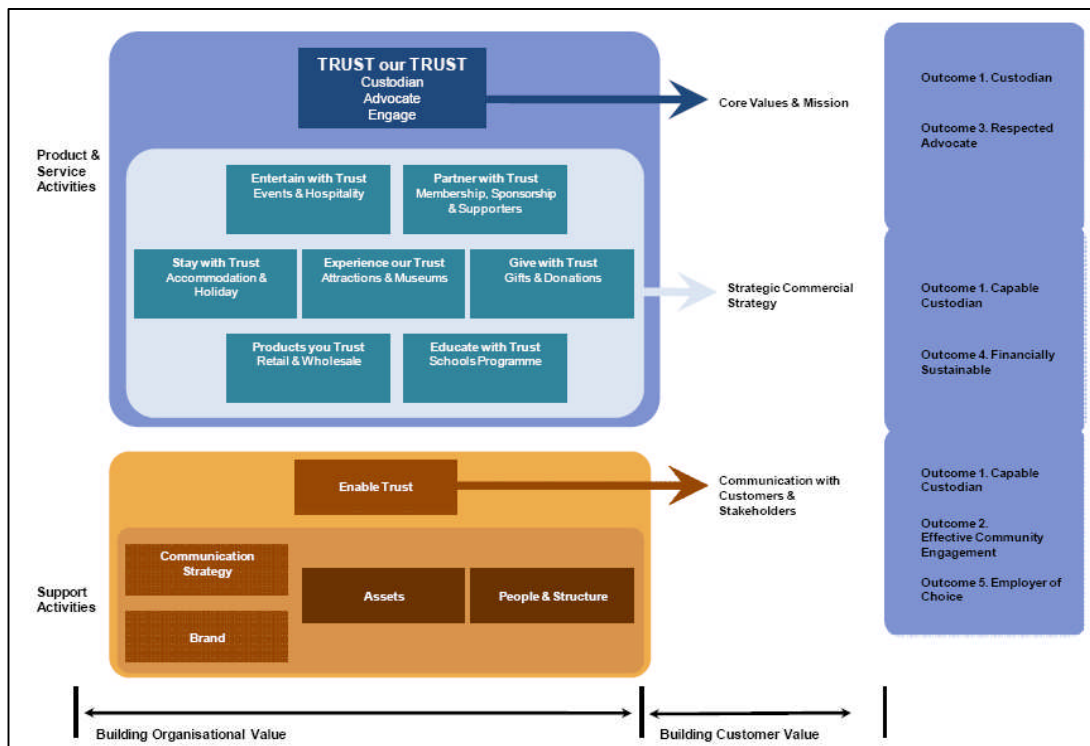
The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) was established in 1956 to conserve and protect heritage for future generations. The National Trust is an independent not for profit organisation and a major operator of museums and historic properties. The National Trust's mission is:

"To inspire the community to appreciate, conserve and celebrate its built, natural and cultural heritage". (National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Strategic Plan 2009 – 2013)

The National Trust has five key functional objectives:

- To engage and educate people to foster an appreciation of our diverse built, cultural and natural heritage;
- To respect, conserve and protect significant examples of creativity that lie at the core of the Australian identity;
- To demonstrate credibility and integrity in all of its activities to ensure community confidence in the National Trust's motives and ability to deliver on promises;
- To meet its commitments and fulfil its obligations;
- To seek better ways of achieving the best outcomes for its members and supporters while utilising scarce resources.

National Trust Activity Matrix



Source: National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

2.2. La Trobe's Cottage in Context

Charles Joseph La Trobe arrived in Melbourne in 1839 as superintendent of the Port Philip district of NSW. No accommodation was provided, so he brought with him a panelled cottage manufactured by H Manning of London. The Cottage was erected on the government paddock east of the city block and a locally built dining room, butler's pantry, nursery and a separate kitchen and servants block was built at much the same time. La Trobe bought 12½ acres of the block at auction in 1840, named it Jolimont and over the 14½ years of his service in Melbourne he continued to develop the site. By the time La Trobe left (as the first Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria) in 1854, he had added another five extensions to the Cottage, a stable block, a detached cottage

Jolimont July 1st 1842 – Sarah Bunbury



Source: Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

Development of the cottage – 1839-1851



The dining room (3) was built at the time of construction of the prefabricated cottage (4, 5, 13, 14) in 1839. The kitchen and servants' quarters (15-20), butler's pantry (12) and a nursery (8) had been added by March 1840. The back of the house was extended to provide butler's and servants' rooms (10, 11) by 1845. By that time, also, the first dressing room (9), laundry (21) and the extensive stables area (22 – 25) had been added. The library (2), front veranda (1) and a new dressing room (7) were created by 1847, and the detached cottage (26-29) was in place by 1849. The final addition, the greenhouse (6), was added only in the last few years of his residence there.

Source: Botham, Helen, *La Trobe's Jolimont, a walk round my garden*, 2006.

and a separate cottage and outbuildings at Upper Jolimont, producing a substantial gentleman's estate.

After La Trobe departed, the Jolimont site was subdivided and sold in stages over the following seventeen years. A warehouse was built on the cottage site touching the front veranda, and the surrounding buildings were slowly demolished. By the 1950s only the dining room was left intact, attached to a remnant of the prefabricated Cottage. The then owners, Bedggoods & Sons, needing the area for a car park, negotiated with the National Trust for the Cottage to be removed and restored on another site.

Remaining cottage building in the 1950s



A site in the King's Domain on the south west of the Botanic Gardens was chosen for the new home of the Cottage. Care was taken to preserve all that remained of the original building and research was carried out to enable faithful reconstruction of the buildings as they would have appeared in 1840. In the final state, the dining room was largely original, attached to a few original panels of the Cottage. The remainder of the Cottage was built using the surviving panels and research evidence to enable reconstruction as close to the original design as possible. Donations by Victorians, whose forebears were known to have acquired La Trobe's furniture at an auction of his goods, enabled the Cottage to be furnished with many items originally owned by the La Trobes. Captain Charles La Trobe, grandson of La Trobe, donated original items of furniture, paintings and books. The Cottage was opened to the public on 2nd December 1964 by the then Governor, Sir Rohan Delacombe.

Source: Lewis, Miles.

The Royal Botanic Gardens requested that the National Trust move the Cottage, as they required the site for a children's garden. The Cottage was moved to a site across Birdwood Avenue to its present site on the corner of Birdwood Avenue and Dallas Brooks Drive in late 1998.

The cottage on its present site on Dallas Brooks Drive



2.3. Existing Insights from Previous Studies

There have been several studies conducted on the Cottage. These studies and their findings are summarised below:

2.3.1. La Trobe's Cottage – a Conservation Analysis – Miles Lewis (1994)

Miles Lewis completed a conservation analysis of the Cottage for the National Trust in 1994 when the Cottage was located next to the Royal Botanic Gardens. It is the definitive study on La Trobe's Cottage, providing a detailed analysis of the Cottage and its contents, and the statement of Heritage Significance at 3.3 is taken from this document.

The conservation analysis did not offer opinions on the future of the Cottage, but suggested that investigation of the structure of the dining room would be of scientific value.

2.3.2. Latrobe's Cottage Relocation & Interpretation – National Trust – (1996 & 1997)

There were several documents produced by the National Trust leading up to a decision on the relocation of La Trobe's Cottage from near the Botanic Gardens to a site on Dallas Brooks Drive. Notable documents were:

- Latrobe's Cottage Relocation – Notes Towards a Policy – Rohan Storey (1996);
- National Trust of Australia (Victoria) – Latrobe's Cottage Relocation & Interpretation Policy (2nd Draft) (1996);
- La Trobe's Cottage & the Museum of Early Melbourne Interpretive Centre (1996);
- La Trobe's Cottage Relocation – Rohan Storey, NT Conservation Officer (1997);
- Report to Conservation Standing Committee – RE: La Trobe's Cottage - Rohan Story, NT Conservation Officer (1997).

The key points in the documents were:

Cottage

The significance of the structure is as a partial relocation and partial reconstruction of the Cottage as undertaken by the Trust in the 1960s. There was no information on which to base a 'better' reconstruction.

Reconstruction of further historic structures should be avoided. The complex should therefore be relocated as is and interpretation continue to be based on the 1839-40 version. Rebuilding rather than relocation would be permissible for the outbuildings. The kitchen chimney should be reconstructed in the new location. The kitchenette and toilet in the storeroom/servants' quarters building need not be reconstructed. There are some inaccuracies in the 1960s reconstruction, but it was suggested that these be retained due to the significance of the reconstruction itself. The paint colours may be very wrong and, if so, should be changed. However, it would be nice to know exactly what is wrong, if anything. It was thought that the Trust should commission Miles Lewis to determine this in some detail as it is not exactly clear from the Conservation Analysis.

Garden

The paintings of the house at the reference period indicate a front garden with flower beds. The opportunity should be taken to recreate the garden on the new site, both to enhance the accuracy of the reconstruction and increase visitor appeal and interest. However, if it remains interpreted to 1839-40, the Cottage and grounds should somehow look raw and new.

Any garden should not be terribly extensive and should conform to the 1840 plan. However, it will be impossible to make a garden where all the plants remain as they might have been in 1839-40, i.e. one year old. Considerable research into appropriate layout and plants for the garden needs to be conducted.

Kitchen wing

Since the kitchen wing is 100% reconstructed, it could house further museum/interpretation areas.

Housing the Collection

The collection of La Trobe and associated artefacts is apparently quite extensive. There is little room in the Cottage itself and climate control would be necessary to house and display the drawings. The Trust must therefore consider the need for a separate museum/interpretation area to house the collections and interpret the buildings, which could include:

- La Trobe's extensive album of drawings and watercolours;
- some McCrae drawings and paintings;
- furniture from early Melbourne, including La Trobe furniture;
- an interpretation of life in early Melbourne.

Management and Security

The property should be developed to a level which can justify a full-time staff person. This has implications for the standard of the collection, the interest in the presentation and interpretation and the relationship to Government House tours. Current overnight security arrangements should be maintained.

Marketing

There appears to be general agreement about the product offered and the interpretation. Tours with Government House tours can easily be accommodated as an add-on, fitting in with the early Melbourne theme.

Site Requirements

The new site must have sufficient area to accommodate the existing buildings in their present arrangement, a front garden and a separate museum/visitors centre. This could be a new or existing building. The site and aspect should replicate the original topographic position of the Cottage as far as possible.

Entry Building

The addition of a small museum and/or entry building would provide a signpost wherever the building is located, enhancing presentation and presumably visitation. Such a building could face the road, be highly visible, and include obvious signage.

Domain House

It was strongly stated that the relocation of La Trobe's Cottage would only be worthwhile if Domain House became available to house various artefacts and displays that do not belong in the house itself. It was envisaged that Domain House and the Cottage (and perhaps the Depot sheds) would operate together, and would focus on La Trobe, the Cottage, and the early years of the settlement of Melbourne generally. It would be a new institution tentatively known as "The Museum of Early Melbourne".

A sketch was provided of a possible arrangement of Domain House and the Cottage. It showed the café at the rear of the building rather than in the Cottage section, because this would have elevated views of the park, as well as of the Cottage, rather than the road. With the removal of the side and rear fences of Domain House, and the dense bushes around it, it was believed that the whole area would be greatly opened up, increasing the sense of open space. The front and the courtyard side of Domain House would also become more visible, and become the main attractive focus for views from Birdwood Avenue.

Museum of Early Melbourne

The concept of a Museum of Early Melbourne was proposed with the following features:

- The new complex would comprise Domain House, the relocated La Trobe's Cottage and the MCC Garden Depot Site - cleared of all buildings except the historically important structures. The primary focus of the complex would be a Museum of Early Melbourne focusing on La Trobe and his circle, serviced by secondary facilities of a café and retail shop.
- La Trobe's Cottage would be fully furnished and presented to reflect the occupancy of the La Trobe family during the period 1839 and 1842. A working kitchen and associated outbuildings would also be included in the complex.
- Museum of Early Melbourne (based on Domain House) concentrating on the first 20 years of the settlement of Melbourne and Port Phillip District (1835 - 1860).
- Interpretative displays could include:
 - The development of Melbourne
 - Costumes of the 1840's & 50's - (National Trust Collection)
 - Lonsdale's silver presentation (on loan)
 - La Trobe's silver epergne (possibly loan from NGV)
 - La Trobe's portrait, sword and La Trobe memorabilia (National Trust Collection)
 - Background and history of the Victorian and NSW Governors
 - Hoddle's watercolours (National Trust Collection)
 - La Trobe drawings and watercolours (National Trust Collection)

- McCrae drawings and watercolours, family portraits (National Trust Collection)
 - Displays relating to La Trobe's travel writings
 - The Australian colonies in the 1840's
 - Aboriginal settlement in the Port Phillip District
 - The building of Melbourne urban design and history
 - La Trobe's scientific interests
 - The discovery of gold in Victoria
 - The separation of Victoria from NSW – 1851
 - Colonial furniture and art (Trust Collection & loans)
 - This building will also house an audio visual room, a small retail shop, a staff office and public toilets
 - The side paved courtyard will be a small rest area with tables and chairs
- One Ticket would be sold for the whole complex at the front entrance of the Museum (Domain House). Tours would be operated every half hour. The Museum display would not require a supervised tour. Entry to La Trobe's Cottage would be by tour only. The museum would be open to view freely.

2.3.3. Dallas Brooks Drive, Building Use Assessment, Melbourne City Council – Spiller Gibbins Swan (1999)

This study was commissioned by the Melbourne City Council to provide recommendations for the use of the buildings on the southern section of the King's Domain. The buildings included in the study were La Trobe's Cottage, Domain House, Outbuildings (the heritage stables and prefabricated building) and the Pavilion, but the key issues were a use for Domain House when the Australian Centre of Contemporary Art vacated the building in 2001 and funding the preservation of the heritage stables. A key objective of the City of Melbourne Parks Policy was – *Facilities and services will be provided to enhance the visitor's experience of the park.*

The study obtained input from key stakeholders including the National Trust, Royal Botanic Gardens, and the Melbourne City Council:

- The National Trust put forward its concept of a Museum of Early Melbourne, but had reservations due to the potential significant recurrent deficit that may be experienced.
- The Royal Botanic Gardens supported the arboretum concept in the Domain but raised the issue of confusion between the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Domain. The Royal Botanic Gardens expressed an interest in Domain House for running student classes, arts/craft activities or administrative office space.
- The Melbourne City Council offered a range of options such as gallery, museum and resident performing arts centre.

The study explored options for Domain House such as wedding reception centre, restaurant, commercial gallery, child care centre and park users centre. A retail plant nursery was considered for the outbuildings. A museum of early Melbourne and heritage garden museum were discussed.

The study recommended the concept of a Domain Heritage Precinct be adopted. The buildings would stay as they were with new uses adapted to them where required, with a call for expressions of interest for the community use of Domain House when it was vacated.

2.3.4. Dallas Brooks Drive Precinct Concept Plan – City of Melbourne (2000)

The City of Melbourne drafted a concept plan for the Domain Heritage Precinct. It proposed substantial upgrades of access, buildings and landscape within the precinct. A drawing of the proposal is at Appendix 1. The key features were:

- Retain Domain House for educational and interpretive use by the Royal Botanic Gardens and National Trust
- Remove the rear garden of Domain House and open it to parkland
- Improve pedestrian access to La Trobe's Cottage and improve the landscape setting and vista to the south-west
- Demolish the Pavilion and return it to parkland
- Remove inappropriate trees
- Provide new pedestrian access to facilities and recreate paths to Cottage and oval
- Narrow northern section of Dallas Brooks Drive and alter parking and footpaths
- Provide a new pedestrian crossing across Birdwood Avenue

In response to the draft Concept Plan, Heritage Victoria encouraged the construction of a path from the Observatory gate past La Trobe's Cottage, because it aligned with an early path on the Domain in that position.

2.3.5. Proposal for the Use of the House and Gallery Building, Dallas Brooks Drive – National Trust of Australia (Victoria) (2001)

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) submitted a proposal for the use of Domain House when it became available after the move of the Australian Centre of Contemporary Art at the end of 2001.

The proposed uses were:

- Visitor orientation and reception centre
- Display on the theme of La Trobe and early Melbourne

- Venue for activities and performances

2.3.6. Summary of Previous Studies

Three of the studies were commissioned by the National Trust and were specifically concerned with the Cottage prior to and soon after its relocation to Dallas Brooks Drive. They reaffirmed the heritage significance and suggested that the Cottage and garden should be interpreted to 1839/40. They also considered that the property needed development to enable it to be viable, with a separate building to house the museum collection and provide a reception. Domain House was considered an ideal facility for this purpose and the concept of a Museum of Early Melbourne was raised.

The other studies were sponsored by the City of Melbourne and were primarily concerned with resolving issues with other heritage buildings in the area of the Cottage. The concept of a Domain Heritage Precinct with improved landscaping and the community use of Domain House were proposed.

The outcome of all these studies and proposals has been the construction of a pedestrian crossing on Birdwood Avenue and the leasing of Domain House to the Royal Botanic Gardens. The Cottage remains underdeveloped and unviable.

3. Site Analysis

3.1. Physical Site Characteristics

La Trobe's Cottage faces south-west on land sloping gently to the west. It sits in a park setting with predominantly oak trees at the front (west) and eucalypts at the rear (east). There are some large trees close to the Cottage. To the south is Domain House, a single storey, brick Victorian villa with two heritage buildings beyond used as a garden depot for the park. On the east is Dallas Brooks Drive with more park beyond, and to the north on the other side of Birdwood Avenue is the Royal Botanic Gardens with its Observatory area containing a shop and café. To the north west is a circular public toilet and the Shrine of Remembrance beyond.

The Cottage is supported by a kitchen and servants' block at the rear and a small area around the buildings is enclosed by a dilapidated rustic fence. A small generic garden surrounds the Cottage. There is adequate access to all services.

The Cottage faces away from both adjacent roads and the small size of the

buildings and the many surrounding trees make it difficult to see. However, the views from the front of the Cottage through the trees are reminiscent of its original site, although the fence around the Domain House garden and the pavilion restrict the vista.

There is limited car parking, but good access to trams and tourist buses. The Tourist Shuttle bus stops close by, as would the proposed Melbourne Joyride tram in Domain Road. Pedestrian access is good, although there is limited disabled access to the Cottage interior.

La Trobe's Cottage Area



3.2. Key Assets on Site

The key assets of the La Trobe Cottage are as follows:

- Panelled Cottage – 90% reconstruction in the 1960s
- Dining room – mainly original 1839 building
- Kitchen – 100% reconstruction in the 1960s
- Servants' quarters – 100% reconstruction in the 1960s

- Museum collection – mainly housed in the Cottage and dining room complex, including many La Trobe artefacts
- Small generic garden around the buildings

3.3. Heritage Significance

The following is the National Trust statement of significance from the conservation analysis by Miles Lewis in January 1994.

La Trobe's Cottage is a conjectural reconstruction of the house of Superintendent La Trobe as in about 1839-40, containing within it a small proportion of authentic fabric, including one wall of the building originally prefabricated by Manning of London, as well as a substantial museum collection. The original building was La Trobe's private property, and was never the Government House of Victoria. The reconstruction on the present site is of historical significance both for its association with La Trobe and for the role which the project played in the early history of conservation in Victoria. It is also of scientific significance for the authentic fabric of 1839 which is contained within the dining room, one of the oldest surviving timber structures in Victoria, which is a potential future source of technical information.

Expansion:

La Trobe's Cottage consists of three distinct elements, each of different significance. The dining room, built for Superintendent C J La Trobe in 1839, has been carefully moved to the present site, and contains authentic building fabric of considerable potential interest. The balance of the house proper was originally a prefabricated structure bought by La Trobe from Manning of London, and as now rebuilt conforms essentially to Manning's panellised system, contains two of the original panels, and replicates the original external appearance as illustrated by contemporaries. Its dimensions and plan have been established on the basis of La Trobe's own sketches. The outbuildings are mock-ups of those built by 1840, based upon the approximate plan dimensions and upon illustrations principally of 1853.

The complex as a whole is of historical interest not merely for its association with an important colonial administrator, now enhanced by a museum collection containing a considerable quantity of authentic La Trobe material, but also, because of its relatively humble character, for the light it sheds upon the difficult circumstances of his administration. While this latter aspect has been obscured by the removal of the building from the original site, its present form illustrates its scale and its approximate character as described by Georgiana McCrae and others in La Trobe's time.

The dining room is of scientific importance for the authentic fabric it contains and for the light that, potentially, it may shed upon building practices in the first years of settlement, of which almost no other evidence survives in usable form. The original panelled wall between the dining room and the balance of the house survive, as (it is believed) do the original Gothic windows with T-section glazing bars. The rest of the house is a simulacrum, and only at this level does it illustrate the work of the leading prefabricator, Manning of London, which is better studied in more authentic examples in South Australia and elsewhere.

The whole complex has gained some social significance from its image as Victoria's first government house, but this is in part misleading, and is substantially the creation of the National Trust itself. Of more material importance is its crucial role in the early years of the National Trust movement. The preservation of the dining room is one of Victoria's pioneering exercises in authentic conservation by the leading practitioners of the day, John and Phyllis Murphy, while the recreation of the balance is a

monument to the naivety of conservation philosophy in the 1950s and 1960s, and the siting and landscape are the outcome of some of the earliest negotiations between the forces of conservation and government in Victoria, involving the state government and the Minister for Lands, the Melbourne City Council, the Governor, the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Museum of Victoria.

In these terms then, the dining room, including the panelled common wall, is the only physical element of substantial significance, and this is due to the authentic Manning components which it contains, as well as the locally assembled fabric of 1839. The balance of the panelled house is of some interest as a recreation with an adequate factual basis. The kitchen wing is no more than a broadly appropriate visual backdrop, and, although the furniture includes some items which are authentically connected with La Trobe, these do not date from the period adopted for the reconstruction, and have only associational relevance. The present siting and recreated elements are significant as the outcome of important developments in the cultural history of Victoria during the 1950s and 1960s.

3.4. Site Ownership

La Trobe's Cottage is owned by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria). The Cottage sits on Crown land owned by the State Government and administered by the Melbourne City Council through a Committee of Management. The National Trust has a 21 year lease on the site which will end in 2019.

3.5. Regulatory Considerations

The Domain is permanently reserved for Public Parks and Gardens. Any activity that does not accord with the reserve provisions requires an act of parliament to change the reserve.

The implication of the reserve is that commercial use is constrained. The test as to appropriateness is whether the use primarily serves park users.

The Domain Parklands Masterplan (1997) designates the area as an arboretum with a planting theme in the Cottage area focussing on oaks. The Masterplan was written before the Cottage was moved to the Domain, therefore it does not take into account the Cottage's existence on the site. The Masterplan expresses a desire to return the area around Domain House to open space.

The City of Melbourne plans to update the Domain Master Plan during 2011.

3.6. Current Operations

From 2005 until 2009, the Cottage was mainly opened for group tours in conjunction with Government House. Up to two tours a week were scheduled and since 2008 the bookings and guides are arranged by the Bookings Office at Old Melbourne Gaol. Also since 2008, a volunteer guide group manages the opening of the Cottage in addition to taking tours through the Cottage and Government House. Some Sunday and Australia Day openings of the Cottage were arranged in the summer months of 2007 and 2008 by volunteers, who also made their own marketing arrangements.

Through most of this time very little marketing was conducted by the Trust with groups mainly learning of the availability of tours by word of mouth.

There was no permanent manager for the Cottage, with a Trust employee taking responsibility in addition to their primary roles. The Trust has received some criticism from the press in the past over the state of the Cottage, particularly the fence.

Minimal maintenance was undertaken by the Trust, mainly consisting of cleaning and minor repairs. The garden areas were maintained to a minimal standard by the City of Melbourne garden contractor.

In 2009, the C J La Trobe Society formed a Friends of La Trobe's Cottage (FOLTC) group to reinvigorate the Cottage and develop a proposal for its long term future. The Cottage is now open on Sunday afternoons from spring through to autumn and on the last Sunday of the month in winter for walk-in visitors. The combined tours with Government House are still offered, but Government House has been closed for tours for most of 2010 due to storm damage. The FOLTC have organised events to increase awareness and activity and the National Trust have obtained a grant to repair and repaint the Cottage. The Cottage exterior has been refurbished and the garden is being transformed into a more appropriate garden of the La Trobe period by the FOLTC.

The following table provides details of the visitation, income and expenditure.

	2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	6 yr Av
Visitors (<i>estimated</i>)	(1118)	(524)	(934)	(861)	(798)	1176	(902)
Income	\$ 11,298	\$ 5,514	\$ 9,468	\$ 10,061	\$ 7,984	\$ 6,591	\$ 8,486
Expenses	\$ 15,251	\$ 8,367	\$ 13,392	\$ 13,745	\$ 15,032	\$ 17,365	\$ 13,858
Operating profit/loss	-\$ 3,953	-\$ 2,853	-\$ 3,924	-\$ 3,685	-\$ 7,048	-\$ 10,774	-\$ 5,372

The FOLTC commenced operations for the 2009-10 financial year and as a result casual visitor numbers increased considerably due to Sunday openings and events. However the lack of availability of Government House has impacted on the income which is well down on previous years. Also, lack of a printed brochure for La Trobe's Cottage acted as a constraint in marketing the new Sunday openings. The increase in expenses for 2009-10 was mainly caused by event activity, the chief of which was the 170th anniversary re-enactment of La Trobe's arrival on 3 October 2009.

The current pricing for activities:

Group tour of Government House and Cottage	Adult	\$15
	Concession	\$10
Group tour of Cottage	Adult	\$10
	Concession	\$8
	Child	\$5
Casual tour of Cottage	Adult	\$5
	Concession	\$3
	Family	\$10
	Members	Free

3.7. Site Opportunities and Constraints

This section outlines the main opportunities for and constraints on development of the site.

3.7.1. Opportunities

- The site is close to other tourist sites such as the Royal Botanic Gardens and Shrine of Remembrance.
- There is good access to public transport and pedestrian access. There are public toilets nearby.
- It is in a picturesque setting, in an arboretum and with a similar aspect to the original site.
- There is space around the site for possible expansion.
- There is a suitable building next to the site with the potential for use as a visitor centre.

3.7.2. Constraints

- La Trobe's Cottage is a historic building and limited development of the building itself would be appropriate. Much of the building was reconstructed in the 1960s when heritage conservation was in its infancy, and as such the reconstruction itself has become worth preserving as an example of that period.
- The site is within the Domain master plan area administered by the City of Melbourne and is designated as an oak arboretum.
- The land on which the Cottage and its garden stands is leased to the National Trust by the City of Melbourne.
- Domain House, adjacent to the site, is leased to the Royal Botanic Gardens by the City of Melbourne.
- Parking for visitors in the area is often limited due to the popularity of the area.

4. Development Context

This section profiles the wider area in which La Trobe's Cottage must be positioned. It includes an assessment of broader stakeholder plans, the product and positioning of Melbourne as a tourism centre, an analysis of local competitors and relevant case studies. From these, a SWOT analysis of La Trobe's Cottage's positioning is developed so that the options outlined in the subsequent section are appropriately informed.

4.1. Broader Development Stakeholders

4.1.1. National Trust of Australia (Victoria)

For background to the National Trust position on La Trobe's Cottage see paragraph 2.1.

The National Trust is keen to see improvements to the Cottage site. It has suggested the following initiatives:

- Opening times linked to the opening times of other facilities in the locality
- A reception facility with an opening at the back of the servants' block facing Birdwood Avenue
- A heritage walk with interpretive signs in the park around the Cottage as a temporary exhibition
- The establishment of a trust fund to provide income to support the Cottage and its management as a tourism facility
- Improvements in the way responsibility for the Cottage fits into the Trust's management structure

4.1.2. Friends of La Trobe's Cottage (FOLTC)

The Friends of La Trobe's Cottage is an association of enthusiasts under the auspices of the C J La Trobe Society Inc. They wish to see La Trobe's Cottage prosper and they bring together a range of skills to assist the National Trust in developing the site. Many members of the FOLTC are also Trust volunteers who act as guides for La Trobe's Cottage and Government House.

This document is prepared by the FOLTC and reflects the views of its Committee.

4.1.3. City of Melbourne

The City of Melbourne has responsibility for the Domain Parklands. The parks policy requires that the City of Melbourne will ensure that:

- Melbourne's parkland areas will be maintained with no net reduction in area and new opportunities for parkland will be explored and developed where appropriate;
- A lead advocacy role is taken in park management;

- Parks and gardens will be managed to excellent standards;
- The planning of the parks and gardens will acknowledge Council's capital city role, taking into account the national significance of the city's parks and the needs of local users;
- The broad community will be consulted regarding matters of significance to parks;
- Adequate resources will be provided for an ongoing replacement program;
- The overall network will be developed to provide excellent facilities for residents, city workers and visitors including provision of recreation and leisure opportunities;
- Facilities and services will be provided to enhance the visitor's experience of the park;
- No permanent advertising shall be displayed in the parks and gardens;
- Park management practice will be environmentally sensitive;
- Parks will be accessible to all groups in the community;
- Car parking in parkland will be reduced as alternatives become available.

The City of Melbourne would like to improve the area of the Domain where the Cottage is located. At present the area has a sports facility (oval and pavilion), a park maintenance depot, an exhibition building (Domain House), a historic house museum and an oak arboretum in a small triangle of park bounded by three roads and the Shrine.

The City of Melbourne is keen to work with stakeholders to improve the area. They have suggested that combining Domain House and the Cottage into a single facility would help to reduce the diversity of uses. The City of Melbourne is planning to develop a new masterplan for the King's Domain South in the near future and will consult La Trobe Cottage stakeholders in the development of the plan.

4.1.4. Heritage Victoria

Heritage Victoria is a State Government agency tasked with identifying and recommending heritage places to be classified and included in the State Heritage Register. It has developed a Heritage Strategy for Victoria - *Victoria's Heritage: Strengthening our Communities*.

The Strategy outlines seven initiative areas:

- Providing grants for the conservation, management and interpretation of heritage places;
- Financial assistance for places and objects at risk;
- Best practice advice for heritage management;
- Capacity building;

- HeritageCare volunteer program (not funded for 2010/11);
- Supporting community collections;
- Supporting innovative conservation practices provided these are delivered within a sustainable framework.

La Trobe's Cottage is listed on the Victorian Heritage database as a place of architectural, cultural and historical significance to Victoria.

Heritage Victoria is responsible for the heritage oversight of the Cottage site. They are concerned over the lack of sustainability and utilisation of the site at present and have offered to assist in facilitating improvements to the site. With the loss of the City Museum, they suggested that the city needed an Early Melbourne museum.

4.1.5. Tourism Victoria

Tourism Victoria is a Victorian State Government statutory authority, established by the *Tourism Victoria Act 1992* as the vehicle through which the State Government participates in the tourism and travel industries. The Act sets out Tourism Victoria's objectives as follows:

- to market Victoria as a tourist destination for interstate and international travellers
- to increase:
 - the number of travellers to Victoria
 - travellers' or tourists' length of stay at destinations in Victoria
 - the use of tourist facilities in Victoria
- to increase the amount of travel within Victoria and the use of tourist facilities by Victorians
- to improve and develop tourist facilities in Victoria
- to support and coordinate the provision of tourist facilities in Victoria
- to provide more efficient and effective utilisation of investment in travel and tourism in Victoria

As well, their overarching objective is to implement current State Government policies as they relate to tourism development in Victoria and contribute to whole-of-government programs and policy implementation.

Over the last decade, Victoria has established itself as Australia's leading cultural destination and has enjoyed increasing visitation from domestic and international tourists participating in signature cultural activities such as attending arts and cultural events, going to the theatre, as well as visiting heritage buildings, museums and art galleries.

Tourism Victoria has developed initiatives to enhance cultural heritage tourism and it supports any organisation wishing to develop its cultural heritage tourist potential.

Tourism Victoria will provide development and marketing advice, and will assist in facilitating the development of La Trobe's Cottage as a heritage museum facility.

4.1.6. Royal Botanic Gardens

The Royal Botanic Gardens is a Victorian Government body established under the *Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991*. The objectives of the organisation are:

- To conserve, protect and improve the botanic gardens and managed land and their collections of living plants;
- To conserve and enhance the State Botanical Collection and National Herbarium of Victoria;
- To provide for the use of the State Botanical Collection of plants or plant specimens at the botanic gardens or managed land for scientific or reference purposes, consistent with accepted international practice;
- To increase public knowledge and awareness of plants and plant communities;
- To provide for the use of the botanic gardens for education, public enjoyment and tourism;
- To provide for the carrying out of and contribution to research into biodiversity and the conservation of biodiversity.

As part of its actions to increase public knowledge, education and enjoyment, the Royal Botanic Gardens leases Domain House to provide space for exhibitions.

A close working relationship between the Gardens and the Cottage would benefit both parties by providing wider visitor experience facilities, thus potentially increasing visitation to both sites.

The Royal Botanic Gardens would encourage increased opening of the Cottage and would then provide display space for brochures in its visitor centre. It would also support the development of a heritage garden at the Cottage site and would provide advice on the garden plan together with advice on sustainable water management.

4.1.7. Shrine of Remembrance

The Victorian Government *Shrine of Remembrance Act 1978* establishes the Shrine of Remembrance Trustees with the responsibility for the care, management, maintenance and preservation of the Shrine and its Reserve on behalf of the people of Victoria. The Act empowers the Trustees to develop, promote, facilitate and organise educational activities and exhibitions within the Shrine of Remembrance or elsewhere on the reserved land in relation to the service of Australians in conflicts and in peacekeeping operations.

The Shrine of Remembrance is located close to La Trobe's Cottage and its reception provides safe custody for the Cottage key, and it allows Cottage guides to use their staff car parking facility.

A close working relationship between the Shrine and the Cottage would benefit both parties by providing wider visitor experience facilities, thus potentially increasing visitation to both sites.

The Shrine of Remembrance would encourage increased opening of the Cottage. They are happy to continue supporting the Cottage and would take measures to increase their guides' awareness of the Cottage and would consider cooperation with education programs. They suggested that the Cottage should market to tour operators.

4.1.8. Government House

The Governor of Victoria is supported by the Office of the Governor which is an Administrative office created in relation to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet by the *Public Sector Management Act and Employment Act 1998*. The Official Secretary of the Office of the Governor acts as its Department Head managing the Office and its administrative and service staff of about thirty.

During the period of office the Governor resides in Government House. It is a priceless asset of outstanding grace and utility, and is used for public functions. Recognising that it belongs to the community, the public are invited through the House on the annual Open Day and in small groups on Mondays and Wednesdays (previously also on Saturdays) throughout the year. The National Trust provides the guides for these tours and they are usually undertaken after a tour of La Trobe's Cottage.

Government House management is happy with the National Trust providing guides in conjunction with La Trobe's Cottage, but it may consider providing its own guides in the future. Government House is keen to encourage more school visits to the House.

Although Government House is not able to promote other organisations, it will consider improving reference to Government House tours on its web site.

4.1.9. Old Melbourne Gaol

The Old Melbourne Gaol provides the National Trust tour booking facility for a range of National Trust attractions, including group tours of La Trobe's Cottage and Government House. The cost of providing the booking service is charged to the tour provider.

The Old Melbourne Gaol would encourage the development of other group tours such as talks and walks related to La Trobe and Government House. They also suggested developing links with tour operators and education tours.

4.1.10. Summary of Stakeholder Views

Stakeholders support improvement in the facility at La Trobe's Cottage. Most have offered to help in appropriate areas and some have offered suggestions such as increasing opening hours.

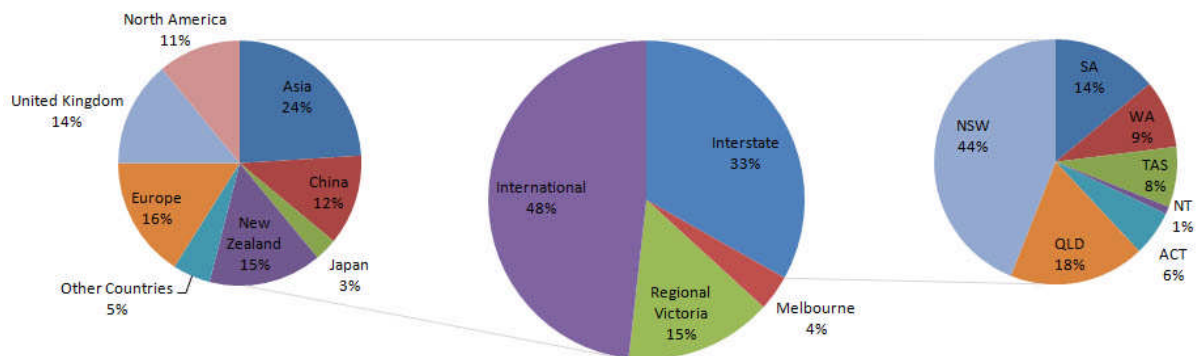
4.2. Melbourne Market Context

4.2.1. Overnight Tourism

Melbourne received 7.9 million overnight visitors in 2008. Of these 6.5 million were domestic visitors, a 39% market share of all domestic visitors to Victoria. Most overnight visitors were domestic travellers (83%) and of these 64% were from interstate with the largest proportion from NSW (44%).

Many of these visitors were cultural tourists, those interested in cultural activities such as performing arts, festivals, museum, art galleries, history and heritage. Those interested in visiting historic buildings and sites accounted for around 303,000 (22%) of the international tourists and 325,000 (5%) of the domestic tourists to Melbourne.

Overnight visitors to Melbourne interested in visiting historic buildings and sites.



The age profile of international cultural tourists to Victoria indicated that 42% are 25-44 years and 32% are 45-64 years. They are also likely to be on holiday (55%) or visiting friends of relatives (21%). The majority stayed for 1-9 nights (61%) with some staying up to 39 nights (26%). They tended to rent accommodation (36%) or stay with friends or relatives (26%).

The domestic cultural tourists tended to be a little older with 32% 25-44 years and 38% 45-64 years. Again they were in Victoria for holidays or leisure (65%) and visiting friends and relatives (23%). They were more likely to be on a short stay of 1-3 nights (61%) or 4-7 nights (29%). They stayed in motel type accommodation (33%) or with friends or relatives (34%). January and April were popular months (14% each) but there was little seasonal variation with autumn 30% the most popular and winter 21% the least.

These statistics translate to a total of around 628,000 people a year visiting Melbourne overnight who visit historic or heritage buildings, spending a total of \$803 million during their stay.

The visitor would most likely be aged 45-64, on holiday from NSW or regional Victoria staying for up to 3 nights with friends or relatives.

Data from: Tourism Victoria, Melbourne Market Profile 2008

4.2.2. Day Tourism

In 2008, around 523,000 day trip visitors to Melbourne were interested in visiting historic buildings and sites. This is a large group that is relatively easy to market to, as groups such as Probus clubs are actively seeking suitable places to visit and casual visitors can be alerted by the local media etc.

There are 582 Probus clubs in Victoria with some 51,000 members providing an ideal market for tours to the Cottage. Other organisations have branches in Victoria, such as National Seniors Australia with 35 branches and VIEW clubs with 34 branches.

4.2.3. Education

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) sets out the guidelines for the teaching of the Humanities 'domain' to school students throughout their schooling. VCAA outlines (among other things) various 'focus statements' in what are called the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). Humanities includes the History strand, which is the one most relevant to educational experiences that can be offered in La Trobe's Cottage.

VELS for Year 3 & 4 relevant to La Trobe's Cottage

Historical knowledge and understanding

This dimension focuses on particular concepts and contexts of history. Students learn the concept of time: chronology and sequencing; change and continuity; past, present and future in a range of historical contexts. Through studying the past they learn about change and its impact on people's lives and the significance of continuity - how aspects of past societies have been preserved. They learn about cause and effect, the relationship between events and people's actions and intentions. They learn about identity, personal, cultural, and national and the contributions of people past and present to that identity. They learn about evidence and the range of sources of information about the past.

Students gain a balanced coverage of historical content, including knowledge about Australian history, to provide a sense of chronology and to help them understand their present and shape their future.

The Historical reasoning and interpretation

This dimension focuses on the nature of historical thinking. Students learn to frame questions in the light of their own knowledge and experiences and to develop research and inquiry skills. These include gathering and documenting evidence from a variety of sources, including artefacts, documents and graphics, and interpreting evidence.

Students develop skills in making judgments about sources of evidence, including the ideas and voices expressed, the culture and values represented and the literal and symbolic meanings expressed. They learn that there are multiple, conflicting and often partial interpretations of events.

Students learn the language of history, including using terms such as primary and secondary sources and terms relevant to particular periods of history such as medieval and revolution. They communicate their understanding of history using the

conventions of a range of forms of representation such as timelines, media reports, multimedia presentations, oral presentations, posters, photographic and written essays.

VELS for Year 5 & 6 relevant to La Trobe's Cottage:

Historical knowledge and understanding

European settlement, the development of the colonies, the development of the wool industry, the 1850s gold rushes. They demonstrate an understanding of the histories of some cultural groups which make up Australia today. They make links and appropriate comparisons with contemporary Australia.

Historical reasoning and interpretation

Students use a range of primary and secondary sources to investigate the past. With support, they frame research questions and plan their own inquiries. They comprehend and question sources and make judgments about the views being expressed, the completeness of the evidence, and the values represented. They use appropriate historical language and concepts to develop historical explanations. They present their understandings in a range of forms.

VELS for Year 9 relevant to La Trobe's Cottage:

Historical knowledge and understanding

European colonisation, the growth of the colonies, self-government, the gold rushes

Historical reasoning and interpretation

Students frame research questions and locate relevant resources, including contemporary media and online resources. They identify, comprehend and evaluate a range of primary and secondary sources, including visual sources and use historical conventions such as footnotes and bibliographies to document sources. They critically evaluate sources of evidence for context, information, reliability, completeness, objectivity and bias. They recognise that in history there are multiple perspectives and partial explanations. They use appropriate historical language and concepts in historical explanations. They use evidence to support arguments and select and use appropriate written and oral forms to develop and communicate historical explanations in a variety of oral, written and electronic forms.

The VELS for Year 12 relevant to La Trobe's Cottage:

VCE Unit 3, Area of Study 1: A new land: Port Phillip District 1830-1860.

On completion of this unit the student should be able to explain the motives and hopes underlying the settlement of the Port Phillip District (later the colony of Victoria) up to 1860 and the impact on the Indigenous population.

Key knowledge includes:

- ideas underpinning the settlement of and migration to the Port Phillip District, including ideas about European expansion in the new world and land ownership, and the motivations of some individuals and groups;

- the impact of European settlement on the Aboriginal communities of Port Phillip and their responses to it;
- the impact of the gold rushes and the way gold changed people's visions of the future of the colony.

Key skills include the ability to:

- explain the historical issues covered in the key knowledge;
- apply historical concepts related to the period (1830–1860);
- analyse and evaluate written and visual historical evidence;
- synthesise material and evidence to draw conclusions;
- analyse the way that the experience of the period (1830–1860) has been interpreted and understood over time by historians and other commentators;
- express knowledge and ideas in writing, presenting material using historical conventions such as quotations, acknowledgement of sources, and a bibliography.

It should be noted that there is also opportunity for students visiting La Trobe's Cottage to develop skills in the Civics and Citizenship domain and in Humanities domain generally.

The numbers of students in Victoria's schools in 2009:

- Year 3 & 4: 129,246
- Year 5 & 6: 130,299
- Year 9: 67,401
- Year 12: 52,751

Data from: National Schools Statistics Collection

Organisations offering historic buildings activities for Humanities Domain - History Strand students:

National Trust properties

- Old Melbourne Gaol
- Polly Woodside (currently closed for renovations)
- Rippon Lea Mansion
- Como Historic House and Garden
- Barwon Grange
- Gulf Station (currently closed for renovations)
- Labassa
- Portable Iron Houses

- McCrae Homestead
- Mulberry Hill

All these properties, apart from Labassa and the Portable Iron Houses, are listed on the Trust's Education website. A request was made for La Trobe's Cottage to be added to the website and it now appears there in an abbreviated form.

The National Trust provided education activities for over 36,000 students in year 2008-9.

Other Properties

- Koori Heritage Museum
- Museum Victoria
- National Gallery of Victoria
- Old Treasury Building – including Gold vaults
- Royal Historical Society Victoria
- State Library of Victoria
- Werribee Park

4.3. Branding and Overall Offer

Victoria has a diverse landscape, attractions, history and culture, making it naturally rich in tourism appeal. The State also has a supportive industry, quality infrastructure and impressive air and road access.

Tourism employs 159,000 Victorians and is worth \$10.9 billion to the State's economy. Growth is forecast to see the industry contribute as much as \$18 billion to the economy by 2016. This ambitious vision was set in 2006 when the Government launched its landmark *10 Year Tourism and Events Industry Strategy*. This strategy is a major step towards achieving a high quality, high yield and sustainable tourism sector.

Tourism Victoria strategies for improving the branding and marketing of Victoria included the following actions for marketing Melbourne:

- Implement the *'It's Easy to Lose Yourself in Melbourne'* marketing campaign in key interstate markets and New Zealand to highlight the unique offerings of Melbourne.
- Continue to support Destination Melbourne Limited to grow private sector support for the Melbourne campaign and promote Melbourne throughout regional Victoria.
- Develop and launch a new Melbourne marketing campaign to maintain desirability and increase visitor expenditure through the promotion of premium products and experiences.

And the following actions in the international market:

- Focus on mature markets such as New Zealand, United Kingdom, Europe, United States of America and Japan with efforts directed towards cooperative marketing with trade partners, public relations and online channels.

- Explore opportunities with non-traditional partners that have Victorian connections, eg. chefs/designers or wine brands that are active in the UK market.
- Undertake a marketing campaign to grow Victoria's market share of international backpackers.
- Develop and implement Brand Victoria campaign activity in key international markets.

4.4. Competitor Analysis

4.4.1. Historic Building Visits

There are 27 historic buildings offering heritage interpretation within 80km of Melbourne. They vary from large mansions offering a range of activities to small cottages with limited interpretation.

Within 20km of Melbourne:

Building	Operator	Period	Interpretation
Black Rock House	Bayside City Council	1856	Early holiday residence
Box Cottage	Glen Eira Council		Early cottage
Cooks' Cottage	Melbourne City Council	1755	Early English cottage
Como House	NT	1847-1920s	Period mansion
Government House	Tours by the NT	1876-	State rooms
Labassa	NT	1890	Period mansion
La Trobe's Cottage	NT	1839	First Governor's residence
Miner's Cottage Ringwood	Maroondah Council	1860s	Reconstruction of miner's cottage
Old Melbourne Gaol	NT	1842-1929	Early colonial gaol
Portable Iron Houses	NT	1853-	Early portable homes
Rippon Lea	NT	1868-1938	Period mansion
Villa Alba	Villa Alba Museum	1884	Period mansion
Woodlands Homestead	Living Legends (Parks Victoria)	1843-1978	Prefabricated homestead

From 20km to 80km of Melbourne:

Building	Operator	Period	Interpretation
Ballam Park Homestead	Frankston Historical Society (Frankston Council)	1855	Period homestead
Barwon Grange Homestead	NT	1855-1856	Suburban villa
Barwon Park	NT	1871-	Period mansion
Beleura	The Tallis Foundation	1864-1996	Period home
Blacksmith Shop Bacchus Marsh	Bacchus Marsh Council	1871	Pioneer Cottage Museum
Gulf station	NT	1850s	Period homestead

Le Page Homestead, South Morang	Parks Victoria	1850s	Early homestead & art gallery
McCrae Homestead	NT	1844	Early homestead
Mont De Lancey Historic Homestead & Museum	Wandin & District Historical Museum Society	1880s	Early homestead
Mulberry Hill	NT	1925	American colonial style house with collection
The Briars	Mornington Peninsula Council	1840s	Period homestead & Napoleon collection
The Heights	NT	1850-1975	Victorian home
Watts Cottage	Shire of Flinders	1870	Pioneer cottage
Werribee Park	Parks Victoria	1877-1922	Period mansion

Of the 26 competitors to La Trobe's Cottage, around 16 offer visitors an experience of a similar or better quality than La Trobe's Cottage. However, few offer an early Melbourne experience.

4.4.2. Education Visits

There are 10 locations offering educational visit activities for schools for History Strand students in the Melbourne area:

- Como Historic House and Garden
- Immigration Museum
- Koori Heritage Cultural Centre
- Melbourne Museum
- Old Melbourne Gaol
- Old Treasury Building - including Gold vaults
- Polly Woodside (currently closed for renovations)
- Rippon Lea Estate
- Shrine of Remembrance
- State Library of Victoria

Again, there is little offered to match the Cottage's early Melbourne history.

The National Trust provided education activities for over 36,000 students in year 2008-9.

4.5. Case Studies

The following case studies provide examples of historic attractions in Victoria and elsewhere in Australia. The case study of the Old Melbourne Gaol has been included to also provide an example of a successful and best practice heritage attraction that is managed by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).

4.5.1. Black Rock House

Black Rock House at Black Rock on the bay 20km south of Melbourne was built for Charles Ebdon, Victorian squatter, parliamentarian and leading citizen in 1856 as a seaside residence. Sir Henry Barkly, Governor of Victoria from 1857 to 1863, rented it for six months, making it the first country house occupied by any Victorian Governor. It remained in the Ebdon family until 1910. Black Rock House consists of two buildings linked by a walkway. The family living quarters were in a T-shaped single storey house in a simple colonial vernacular style, with a veranda paved with Scottish stone around three sides. The house is joined by means of a covered walkway to a rectangular stable and service block. This is surrounded by a high castellated stone wall with massive timber gates.



The house is owned and operated by Bayside City Council. The Friends of Black Rock House conduct tours and arrange events at the house. It is open to the public for tours every Sunday afternoon from 2 to 4pm and group tours during the week by appointment; for these tours the guides wear period costume. No charge is made for entry, but donations are encouraged. Morning/afternoon tea is available on request and wedding events can also be booked.

Special events are arranged such as carols on the lawns, funded festival to celebrate federation, a tribute to a local writer, market days and theatre productions.

Approximately 800 people visited the house in 2009. Local and broader communities are the main target audience and schools are showing and interest in visiting. New marketing activities include setting up a web site and launching a new logo.

The house is funded by the Bayside City Council. It costs approximately \$8000 a year for maintenance and services with additional payments required for repairs and refurbishment, such as damp proofing and replacing the wallpaper in 2007/8. The Friends gain additional income from membership subscriptions (\$5 single, \$7.50 family), donations, events and sale of refreshments.

The Friends consist of just over 150 financial members - including around 50 active members in roles of committee (12), Tour Guides and Administrators.

Black Rock House is located in a residential area and has little capacity for expansion. The Council has attempted to seek commercial interest in the property in the past to help reduce the budget outlay and the establishment of a professional museum facility has been considered. No commercial interest was forthcoming and the Council considered that the

cost and doubtful success of a formal museum ruled it out. The Friends of Black Rock House's vibrant and energetic committee plan to continue with their innovative program of events to maintain this important heritage property.

4.5.2. Churchill Island Heritage Farm

Churchill Island Heritage Farm is a working farm and homestead dating from 1872. The Farm contains historic buildings, heritage gardens and a working farm with animal nursery. A visitor centre, café, farm shop and walking tracks also complement this attraction.



The Farm is located on Churchill Island, a 57 ha island in Western Port Bay and connected by a bridge to Phillip Island. The Island itself is listed on the National Heritage Register and under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the RAMSAR Convention), containing significant roosting and feeding sites for migratory waders.

The Farm is managed by Phillip Island Nature Park (PINP), a not-for-profit body created by the State Government in 1996, and is the only Nature Park in Victoria. The body is led by a Board of Management appointed by the Minister responsible for the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. The Nature Park consists of a number of parcels of Crown land spread across Phillip Island – including Churchill Island. Other key attractions within the Park include:

- Penguin Parade - fairy penguin viewing
- Koala Conservation Centre - conservation centre and treetop boardwalks
- The Nobbies Centre - interactive displays and cameras that view the offshore seal colony at Seal Rocks

The Nature Park is self-funding from revenue from its four main visitor attractions. All profits generated are reinvested into research, conservation, environmental and educational initiatives. The Park also receives funding support from the Victorian and Federal Governments on a project by project basis for selected programs and capital works. Local community groups, other supporting organisations and volunteers are also vital in its operation.

In 2007 the Nature Park reported 708,000 paying visitors, of which approximately 60,000 visited Churchill Island's heritage facility. In addition to this, the Churchill Island Café, which is accessible free of charge, has between 2 to 3 times more visitors than the heritage facility.

PINP employs 2 full-time staff to maintain Churchill Island and manage its animals. The café which is privately operated employs 2-3 people.

Pricing for activities/facilities

	Site Admission	3 Park Pass	Picnic Deal
Adult	\$10.00	\$34.00	\$52.50

Family (2 Adults, 2 Children)	\$25.00	\$85.00	
Child (4-15 years)	\$5.00	\$17.00	\$29.75
Pensioner (ID Required)	\$7.00	\$24.00	

4.5.3. Cooks' Cottage

Cooks' Cottage is located in Fitzroy Gardens, East Melbourne and is owned and operated by the City of Melbourne.

Originally built in 1755 in the village of Great Ayton in Yorkshire, England, this cottage was the 'dream home' of James and Grace Cook, the parents of Captain James Cook.



In 1933, the owner of the cottage put the cottage up for sale and it was suggested that it would make an ideal focus piece for Victoria's centenary in 1934. The prominent Melbourne Russell Grimwade purchased, dismantled, and shipped the cottage to Melbourne in 253 packing cases, arriving April, 1934. The Australian assemblers reconstructed the cottage as accurately as research and guess work would permit to its mid 18th century appearance.

The Cottage has undergone two restorations. The first was undertaken in the late 1950s and the most recent in 1978, when a thorough effort was made to investigate and restore the building, furnish it with material appropriate to the period, and surround it with a garden of eighteenth century character.

The Cottage offers self guided tours and guided group tours of the small house and garden with a theme of Captain Cook's explorations, early English life and the move of the cottage to Melbourne. The staff and volunteers wear period costume.

The City of Melbourne employs a manager and three staff to run the cottage, supplemented by volunteers.

There is strong marketing to tour groups resulting in around 100,000 visitors a year. The use of the Cook name is very powerful marketing tool. A school program and a variety of group tours are available.

	Site Admission	Group tours			
		self guided	guided	Cottage & conservatory	Fitzroy gardens heritage
Adult	\$4.50	\$3.15	\$4.50	\$6.00	\$8.00
Family	\$12.00				
Child	\$2.20	\$1.55	\$3.50	\$4.50	\$6.00
Concession	\$2.70				

4.5.4. Elizabeth Farm

Elizabeth Farm contains Australia's oldest surviving homestead built in 1793, and is surrounded by a recreated 1830s garden. The Farm is located approximately 30 minutes drive from the centre of Sydney.

It is owned and operated by Historic Houses Trust (HHT). The HHT is a statutory authority within the NSW Department of Arts Sports and Recreation. HHT was established in July 1980 and since this time has grown to manage a total of 14 historic properties. HHT is governed by a group of nine trustees appointed by the Governor of New South Wales. They are generally appointed for a term of three years and can serve three terms.



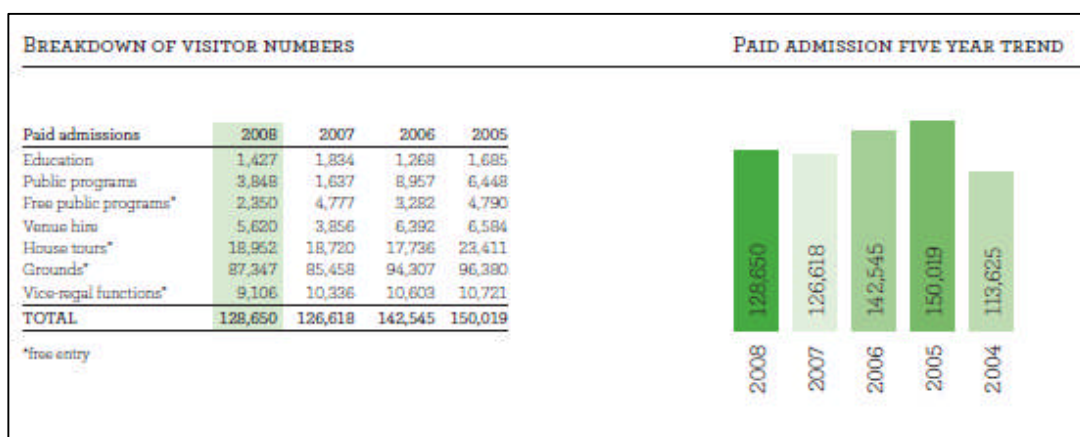
Elizabeth Farm operates 3 days a week (Friday to Sunday) and is available to groups (Monday to Friday). The site offers guided tours, education programs, exhibitions and commercial venue hire.

Pricing for activities/facilities

	Site Admission
Adults	\$8.00
Child/Concession	\$4.00
Family	\$17.00

The site caters to individuals, groups and educational institutions.

Visitor numbers



Source: HHT annual report (2007-8)

Latest figures to hand show that 128,650 people visited the site in 2008, 10,895 of which were paying visitors. Visitor numbers over time show that since 2005, the total number of paying visitors to the site has been in general decline, with some fluctuation driven primarily by the number of visitors through public programs.

Elizabeth Farm has pursued the following opportunities which could be considered for La Trobe's Cottage:

- Holding public exhibitions
- Developing an education program

4.5.5. McCrae Homestead

Built in 1844 by Andrew and Georgiana McCrae, McCrae Homestead is one of Victoria's oldest homesteads and is a physical reminder of the early pioneering life, using locally available materials and primitive construction techniques. The homestead is owned by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and is located on the eastern shore of Port Phillip Bay, some 85km south of Melbourne.



Georgiana was an accomplished artist, musician and diarist. Her beautiful sketches are housed in the museum beside the original homestead, which contains the rare collection of 19th Century family heirlooms and artworks.

The McCrae Homestead Visitor Centre has been extended to house two exciting new galleries that showcase the history of the Mornington Peninsula.

The new McCrae Gallery tells the story of Georgiana McCrae and her family. It contains original sketches and drawings by Georgiana McCrae, artefacts and costumes about the early settlers' lives and Georgiana's extraordinary life story.

The new Burrell Twycross Gallery tells the story of the Burrell family, who lived at the Homestead for seventy years. The Gallery contains video presentations, original artefacts and furnishings.

The "Visions of Port Phillip' exhibition displays many outstanding photographs by John Twycross of Port Phillip Bay and the Mornington Peninsula in the early 20th Century.

The National Trust employs a part time manager supported by a vibrant group of volunteers, who make and wear period costumes during the openings on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, and Wednesday afternoons in the summer. Special events are arranged and group and school visits are encouraged. Over 2000 people visited the Homestead in 2009.

Pricing for tours:

	Tour
Adults	\$6.00
Child/Concession	\$5.00
Family	\$12.00

4.5.6. Old Melbourne Gaol

Old Melbourne Gaol is the most commercially successful visitor attraction operated by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria). The Gaol attracted 160,000 visitors in 2007-8, had an operating turnover of more than \$2 million and generated an operating surplus of \$665,000. The Old Melbourne Gaol Crime & Justice Experience won the Best Heritage and Cultural Tourism Award at the 2008 Australian Tourism Awards. Old Melbourne Gaol is managed as a business unit within the National Trust, and has been given some autonomy to make decisions relating to day-to-day operations, marketing and staff hiring.



The Old Melbourne Gaol is divided into three components. In the Courthouse, re-enactments of historic and contemporary trials take place four times daily. The Watch House experience runs every thirty minutes and visitors experience the process of being arrested and detained in what was Melbourne's central police watch house until 1994. The Old Melbourne Gaol itself is open to unguided walk-through visitors. For general visitors, the three components are included in one overall admission fee. For group bookings, the components can be purchased separately.

The Senior Team Leader at the site sees the strength of Old Melbourne Gaol in the offer of 'real' experiences enhanced with fully costumed guides who are experienced paid actors performing an interactive watch house or court house drama. The stories told are of high public interest – Ned Kelly was hanged in the Gaol, and many of the underworld figures who were the subject of the recent *Underbelly* television drama series were tried in the court house or held in the watch house. The court house drama developed as a public program and has been converted into an education program for school groups by a professional script writer.

A number of operational lessons have been learned at Old Melbourne Gaol. The business has decreased its reliance on volunteer labour since 2007. Volunteers are no longer employed in operational roles such as ticketing, retail sales or as key actors. Volunteers are employed as minor actors to provide an enhanced visitor experience. The development of a café will be essential to the continued growth of the business. While unlikely to provide a significant direct return on investment, food and beverage is expected to increase general admission.

Education groups are a significant repeat market. School bookings are likely to follow a two year return cycle. The development of a user friendly booking mechanism has increased the appeal of the gaol to school staff responsible for making excursion bookings. This booking mechanism in place at the Gaol is available across National Trust properties.

4.5.7. Woodlands Homestead

Woodlands Homestead is a rare example of a prefabricated building designed in Britain, probably for export to India. It was constructed in the now Woodlands Historic Park for William Pomeroy Greene, a former Royal Navy officer, who emigrated from Ireland with his family to seek a healthier climate. Its association with early pioneering families makes it significant to the early settlement of the Port Phillip District.



Woodlands Historic Park was first established as a public park in 1980 and contains many physical links to the landscape of the settlers in the 1840s, including the restored Woodlands Homestead. The homestead is surrounded by gardens that have now been restored, and includes magnolias which are the oldest recorded garden plants in Victoria. Woodlands Homestead and its outbuildings and gardens were extensively restored in 1983 and 1984. The park also contains the ruins of two other 19th century homesteads, Cumberland and Dundonald.

The Woodlands Historic Park contains scarred trees and surface scatters, evidence of the Woiworung Aboriginal people, who lived in the area before Europeans arrived. The descendants of the Woiworung still retain a close identity with the land around Melbourne.

The vegetation and wildlife typical of the 1840s is being researched and progressively restored to the landscape. The section of the park known as the Back Paddock is fenced to help manage and restore the 1840s character.

The park and homestead is managed by Living Legends, an organisation providing care of older horses and who supports equine research, education and training to benefit horses of all ages and breeds. The land is leased from Parks Victoria and Living Legends is required to maintain the homestead and open it to the public.

The homestead is open to the public on Wednesdays, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, from 10:00am to 4:00pm. Tour groups and functions may be arranged at other times.

A coffee cart for teas and coffees is provided for visitors and full catering is available for functions through outside caterers. Weddings, birthdays, seminars, meeting rooms and other functions are offered as well as an Artroom for "kids" or young at heart of all ages.

Marketing is aimed at Victorian, Australian and selected international audiences. Although the primary focus is on the horses, the heritage homestead, historic gardens and surrounding parklands attract different audiences, as do the spectacular view of aeroplanes arriving and departing from Melbourne Airport.

The operating budget of approximately \$250,000 per year is funded through donations, events, functions and appearance fees of the horses. Entry to the homestead is free.

Approximately 20 volunteers assist with the running of the facility and there are also people working on the 'work for dole' and community service schemes.

Future strategies include developing more strategic alliances and partnerships with local venues and businesses to promote the region and day trips taking in several venues. A major schools program is planned.

4.5.8. Case Study Lessons

Operating an historic attraction is challenging and few have made it a business success. The Old Melbourne Gaol demonstrates that providing a 'real' experience for visitors is a successful formula and having a well-known name is a great asset, like Ned Kelly and Captain Cook. Having a good story to tell as in McCrae Homestead and Elizabeth Farm is also an important asset. The employment of a professional manager is also a necessity for a successful business. However, dedicated and energetic volunteers can and do make a big difference. Many of the historic attractions benefit from being owned and managed by large organisations who can support the costs of running the facility.

4.6. SWOT Analysis – La Trobe's Cottage

4.6.1. Strengths

- Supportive stakeholders
- Ideally located to be a major tourist destination being close to the city and other tourist sites such as the Royal Botanic Gardens and Shrine of Remembrance
- This is the only site close to the city, offering a unique early Melbourne experience
- Picturesque setting in an arboretum with a similar aspect and feel to the original site
- A unique building from the earliest days of Melbourne associated with its first governor
- An interesting story to tell about La Trobe, his family and early Melbourne life
- Space to expand facilities at the site
- A large market for visitors interested in heritage buildings
- A Friends of La Trobe's Cottage group composed of C J La Trobe Society members, NT volunteers, Australian Garden History Society members and others interested in the Cottage. They bring the following attributes to the project:
 - The C J La Trobe Society has proven project management and fund raising skills demonstrated in such projects as the La Trobe statue at the State Library of Victoria.
 - The La Trobe Society has extensive knowledge of La Trobe and the Cottage, its members having authored several books and journal articles on the subjects.

- The Australian Garden History Society has proven garden research and restoration skills demonstrated in such projects as the Bishopscourt garden.
- One of the heritage architects involved in the restoration of the Cottage in the 1960s and the heritage architect who produced a conservation analysis of the Cottage in the 1990s prior to its removal to the present site, have extensive knowledge of the architectural heritage of the Cottage.
- A large group of dedicated volunteers with the variety of skills needed to carry out the project.

4.6.2. Weaknesses

- Small site with little space within the buildings
- Facing away from normal public view
- Little general awareness of the La Trobe heritage

4.6.3. Opportunities

- There is a large market for education activities and the Cottage would fit well into the history curriculum
- Building marketing relationships with other tourist sites in the area
- Scope for period re-enactments and events
- Increasing the facilities on the site by reconstructing buildings present in La Trobe's time would create a major tourist attraction allowing visitors to experience a unique complex of the Colonial Period in a semi-rural atmosphere and easily accessible from the city
- Fund raising potential through grants and benefactors interested in Melbourne's cultural heritage

4.6.4. Threats

- Land use may be limited by designation of the area as a park and arboretum
- There is limited control of the land within the Cottage boundary and no control of the land outside the boundary
- Low visitor numbers could cause financial difficulties
- Building and site maintenance could cause financial difficulties
- The withdrawal of key supporters could seriously affect the outcome of the project

5. Development Options

This section looks at options available for the development of La Trobe's Cottage.

5.1. Potential Elements of Future Development

5.1.1. Visitor Experience

Improved interpretation

The Cottage interior is small and filled with genuine La Trobe artefacts mixed with other pieces of varying ages. The lighting is neither representative of the period nor appropriate to a modern museum setting. The little interpretation material inside the Cottage is dated and inadequate to tell the story of La Trobe and early Melbourne.



A review of the collection and interpretation of the interior could be undertaken to provide a better interpretation of each room, with more suitable lighting and furnishings.

Heritage walk

There is excellent material available showing scenes of the exterior of the Cottage that could be used to provide interpretive signs, located at positions relative to the Cottage where the artist drew them. This would enable visitor to imagine what the Cottage was like in La Trobe's time and text could tell the story of La Trobe and early Melbourne as visitors moved from sign to sign.



As the Cottage opening times are limited, many visitors to the site have little of interest to see other than a shuttered Cottage and outbuildings. The interpretive signs would provide an amenity to the public and enable the La Trobe message to be delivered every day of the week. It is believed that they would also encourage people to come back during opening hours to view the interior.

Three signs have been installed close to the Cottage and tell part of the story. However, the City of Melbourne did not permit the full set of signs to be installed. A temporary exhibition could be arranged to complete the heritage walk. This would provide publicity for the Cottage and demonstrate the benefit of the heritage walk.

Reception

There is limited space in the Cottage buildings for ticketing and sales activities. The FOLTC have set up a desk and displays of merchandise in the servants' quarters in an attempt to provide a reception space, but this is makeshift and there is little room for the reception and sales activities. However, it is an improvement on the previous facility in the Cottage entrance hall. There is also little space for interpretive displays inside the buildings - at present there is a series of posters in the servants' quarters, some of which require factual revision.



There is an urgent need for improvements to the reception area. The visitor flow would be enhanced by making an entrance in the back of the servants' quarters improving visibility from Birdwood Avenue. Tours would then flow from the reception, via the front of the Cottage and end back in the reception area at the end of the tour.

Refurbishment of the existing staff kitchen and toilet facility is also urgently required, as it is not acceptable to locate a toilet in the same room as the kitchen. An outside toilet building could be provided replicating one of the small buildings that La Trobe built on the side of the servants' quarters.

Visitor centre

The Cottage site needs a larger visitor centre to provide the following facilities:

- Reception and ticketing
- Audio visual display
- Interpretive displays and artefacts covering topics including:
 - Early Melbourne development
 - La Trobe's background
 - La Trobe's time in Melbourne
 - The early development of Melbourne's parks
 - The Cottage and the Jolimont site
 - Portable buildings
 - Victorian gardens
 - The gold rush
 - Government in early Melbourne
 - La Trobe's life after Melbourne
- Temporary exhibition space

- Office and storage space
- Toilets
- Staff kitchen

Domain House would make an excellent visitor centre being located next to the Cottage and with sufficient space to contain all the facilities required. The lease for Domain House is not likely to be available until 2013, but might be acquired earlier by negotiation. The main exhibition hall could still be made available for use by the Royal Botanic Gardens for their periodic exhibitions if the house is utilised as a visitor centre for La Trobe's Cottage.



Although the acquisition of Domain House would likely be at no cost, its setting up as a visitor centre would need considerable investment and its ongoing maintenance would be a significant financial burden on the Cottage account.

If the lease for Domain House was not obtained, a new building would need to be erected on the Cottage site. The reconstruction of another building from the Jolimont site such as the stables could provide space for the visitor centre. This would involve additional construction costs as well as ongoing maintenance costs.

Audio visual display

There is a wealth of material available for the interpretation of the Cottage and an audio visual presentation would greatly enhance that presented on guided tours and static displays. In the short term a small flat screen in the servants' quarters could provide an adequate audio visual facility. There would be space for a larger screen in Domain House.

Fence

The fence around the Cottage is a rustic picket fence in very poor condition. The alignment of the fence is not in accordance with evidence available of the original site and although the style may be representative of that built in 1840, it was later replaced by a more attractive doweled picket fence.

A grant is being used to finance the replacement of the western fence by a dowelled picket fence. Funds may be needed to complete the replacement of the eastern fence. A period fence would add much needed quality to the site.

Detail from *Kitchen and store in interior courtyard* – Edward La Trobe Bateman



Source: Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

Lattice on verandas

The Cottage had lattice fixed to the outside of the verandas, as depicted in the G. A. Gilbert painting of 1843-1844. This was not included in the refurbishment undertaken in the 1960s.

Lattice around the steps at the front door would enhance safety as a fall off the steps could cause serious injury and lattice around the front of the dining room veranda would also improve the visual security. The addition of the lattice would enhance the appearance of the Cottage and improve its authenticity.

Additional reconstructed buildings

The visual impact could be improved by adding more buildings on the site. The period of reconstruction to the date of 1840 should include the butler's pantry and the nursery. These small additions would give a better indication of how the site looked in 1840. They would also add to the substance of the site, improving visitor experience. Although not strictly from the 1840 period, construction of the hay house would also add much impact as it was an unusual building and would provide a visual attraction easily seen from Birdwood Avenue. However, this building would be outside the footprint of the current Cottage site so more land would need to be leased.

The addition of the Butler's Pantry and Nursery would provide a more realistic appreciation of the Cottage as it stood for most of the 14½ years that La Trobe lived there - they were added by La Trobe at the same time or soon after he erected the Cottage in 1839. The addition of the nursery on the eastern end of the Cottage (i.e. adjoining the bedroom) would form more of La Trobe's courtyard as depicted in the Bateman pictures and later photographs.

The Hay House would provide an attractive 'crowd puller' on Birdwood Avenue, and a meeting point for visitors. The building could be used as an Entry Point, possible ticketing if required and for some displays and information.

Consideration could be given to the reconstruction most of the buildings in the central group of the estate as shown on the plan on page 11. This would provide greater interpretation opportunities and expand the education activities that could be offered to school groups.

It is noted that the reconstruction of parts of the Cottage in the 1960s received much criticism in the 1990s – paragraph 2.3.2 "Reconstruction of further historic structures should

Detail from *View of Jolimont, Melbourne, Port Phillip 1843-44* – George Alexander Gilbert



Source: Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

Detail from *Stables and Hay House at Jolimont* – Edward La Trobe Bateman



Source: Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

be avoided". Careful consideration of these views would be needed before deciding whether to attempt any new reconstruction.

Garden

The present garden at the Cottage does not reflect how the garden looked at Jolimont at any stage in La Trobe's time. It has low maintenance plantings in a typical municipal style.

A reconstruction of La Trobe's garden would improve the impact of the site and provide a better indication of how the Cottage looked when La Trobe lived there. This was supported in the reviews in the 1990s – see paragraph 2.3.2.

An attractive garden would be a draw card in its own right and would add greatly to the substance of the site and to the visitor's experience. It would draw people in. The garden needs to be able to raise its own funds to help support itself – it could be hired out for events and plants could be propagated from the garden for sale.

The garden also has education potential, teaching children about early gardens and waterwise gardens, as well as having potential for horticulture and landscape students to study the process required to create an authentic garden.

The garden would need its own water supply. The water from the large roof on Domain House could be stored in an underground tank ready for use on the garden.

To make the most of the garden's attributes, a garden master plan needs to be developed.

The paintings of the house in the 1840s indicate a front garden with flower beds. To provide a garden of this period, the grounds would need to look raw and new and it would be difficult to maintain plants as they might have been in 1840 – one year old. A later period might be more suitable as La Trobe used more native plants and the garden was overgrown due to a shortage of gardeners. There has already been considerable research into appropriate layout and plants for the garden.

A garden of the early Melbourne period would provide a unique experience for visitors and would be a useful lesson on low maintenance and drought tolerant planting. Garden tours could become a feature of the Cottage and add considerably to the experience offered to visitors.

The FOLTC have commenced turning the garden into a more appropriate one. Apple trees have been planted in front of the kitchen and servants' block and will be espaliered as in drawings from 1853. Heritage roses have been planted, as have several plants named after La Trobe. This work will continue until all the present garden beds

Detail from *View of Jolimont, Melbourne, Port Phillip 1843-44* – George Alexander Gilbert



Source: Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

Front View of Jolimont – Edward La Trobe Bateman



Source: Pictures Collection, State Library of Victoria

have been transformed.

However, to provide a garden that appears like that in La Trobe's time, more land would need to be leased from the Domain's Committee of Management.

Costumes

Guides and receptionists at the Cottage dress in smart modern clothes. Visitor experience would be enhanced considerably if guides and receptionists dressed in costumes appropriate to La Trobe's time. Characters of the time could also be



recreated providing an opportunity to tell the story through their eyes. Some in the present volunteer group have recently appeared in costume for Sunday openings, and the benefits of this have been apparent. However, the majority of guides and receptionists prefer to dress in smart modern outfits. Several events have been arranged where characters such as La Trobe, his wife Sophie and Captain Lonsdale have very successfully dressed in period costumes.

Museum of Early Melbourne

In the 1990s a Museum of Early Melbourne was proposed – see paragraph 2.3.2.

At the time, the stakeholders were put off by the high set-up costs and risks involved. The same argument stands today. However, in the future if the concept was considered viable, special funding could be sought and/or the concept could be developed over time by a gradual adding of facilities, thus reducing the initial costs and risk.

5.1.2. Additional Activities

Education visits

Education activities are a large potential market for La Trobe's Cottage. At present the Cottage has limited facilities for school visits, but activities could be developed initially in conjunction with other facilities such as Government House (building on existing arrangements), the Shrine, the Old Treasury Building, Royal Botanic Gardens and other Trust properties. The FOLTC have developed an incursion program for schools as a precursor for an excursion to the Cottage. The site could be developed to provide sufficient activities on its own to attract school visits.

Events

Arranging events, such as the anniversary re-enactment of La Trobe's arrival in Melbourne in October 2009, and repeated in October 2010, provides increased awareness of the Cottage and an additional income stream. The events program could be increased, providing fund raising and publicity activities.

Talks

As part of the anniversary celebrations in 2009, the FOLTC arranged talks on La Trobe related topics. The FOLTC also provides talks for groups such as Probus. Again they increase awareness, provide additional funds and can be useful marketing tools for the Cottage. They are also useful in filling gaps in the program during the winter.

Exhibitions

There is a wealth of material available on La Trobe's time in Melbourne which would make excellent exhibitions. This would again increase awareness of the Cottage and provide additional income. The Bateman drawings along with other paintings of the Cottage would be one potential exhibition and La Trobe's landscapes and sketches another. Professional assistance would be required to curate the exhibitions and additional expense may be incurred in providing a suitable environment.

Café

Refreshments are provided by the FOLTC for organised events at the Cottage and there is a café in the Royal Botanic Gardens Observatory area that serves the need for refreshments for visitors. In time, if the site was developed to provide more activities, a café could be considered. It would bring more visitation and provide an additional income stream.

5.1.3. Marketing

Signage

The Cottage is on a small site containing two small buildings, surrounded by trees and relatively isolated from other local visitor attractions such as the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Shrine of Remembrance. The Cottage is poorly signed and receives little publicity in tourist literature, partly due to its lack of availability.

Improved signage at key points near locations frequented by visitors to the park and other amenities, in particular the Royal Botanic Gardens, and better signage at the Cottage indicating its presence and open status would greatly enhance visitor numbers. Signs with movement such as flags and banners would help to catch the eye when the Cottage is open.

Web site

The Cottage has limited presence on the web. It has a page on the Trust's web site and appears in some tourist web sites. The FOLTC have initiated a program to correct the many inaccurate references to La Trobe and the Cottage on a variety of web sites.

The FOLTC have set up a web site for the Cottage as part of the C J La Trobe Society web site (www.foltc.latrobesociety.org.au). It now has 13 pages of information and intends to be the definitive source of information about the Cottage. The web is a powerful marketing tool and the Cottage web site needs to be maintained and enhanced.

Relationships with other properties

A close working relationship with the organisations such as the Shrine and Royal Botanic Gardens would be a marketing advantage for the Cottage and, in time, for all parties. Relationships with other historic properties in the Melbourne area would also assist with marketing and could provide benefits in joint projects. The already close working relationship with Government House could also be extended to more education and other group visits.

Publicity

Current publicity activities are ad hoc and often too late to be fully effective. The National Trust requires all publicity to go through their publicity division which can overload the office. The resulting lack of publicity brochures and cumbersome handling of media publicity leads to reduced visitor numbers at events and openings. The Trust needs to work in partnership with the FOLTC to provide an effective publicity plan.

Marketing

The current reliance on the availability of Government House for joint tours is a high risk strategy as has been demonstrated during 2009 and 2010. Marketing needs to diversify to other high value sources of visitors.

An effective marketing strategy could be to build relationships with tour operators. They presently offload busloads of tourists at the Shrine and Royal Botanic Gardens. They may welcome an additional option for their customers.

The current opening times of Sunday afternoons and group tours on Mondays and Wednesdays limit marketing opportunities. Tour groups and general tourism publicity material require better availability. Any serious expansion of the Cottage would need to consider increasing opening times to match that of others in the area.

Sponsorship

The FOLTC have obtained sponsorship from local businesses to support the Cottage and events. This should continue, but a substantial sponsor could be sourced to provide funds for development of the site and ongoing operating expenses.

5.1.4. Maintenance

There is no Conservation Management Plan for La Trobe's Cottage and ongoing maintenance of the buildings is at present financed by the National Trust and through government grants. This situation can lead to late and inappropriate maintenance being carried out with little preventative maintenance. The shingle roof is in a poor state of repair and the FOLTC have launched an appeal in conjunction with the National Trust to raise funds for the replacement of the roof shingles on the Cottage.

The FOLTC have obtained the assistance of Lovell Chen Architects & Heritage Consultants, who have agreed to prepare a Conservation Management Plan.

To enable the Conservation Management Plan to be implemented, it would be beneficial for a Trust Fund to be established and funds raised to meet all the expected costs of maintaining the Cottage buildings.

5.2. Volunteer versus Professional

The first major decision required for the development of the Cottage is whether it should be a volunteer managed or a professionally managed facility. If a significant investment is made with increased ongoing maintenance costs, it is important that the facility is professionally managed to ensure that the income stream is maintained at an adequate level to offset the expenses. The need to employ a manager will in itself require a significant investment in order to attract sufficient visitors to pay for the costs of employment.

6. Development Proposals

This section provides development proposals to suit both volunteer and professionally managed facilities.

6.1. Volunteer Cottage Management - Development Proposal

The following development proposal is considered appropriate for a volunteer managed facility. The enhancements are chosen to keep costs under control and therefore minimise the risk. The enhancements are designed to provide a solid foundation for volunteers to provide a quality historic building experience to visitors, but the running costs of the Cottage are kept to present levels.

These development elements could be initiated with minimum cost. Many are already being introduced.

Signage – provide at key points and at the Cottage indicating its presence and open status.

Web site – maintain, providing history and information about facilities, openings and events.

Relationships with other properties – establish marketing and joint projects.

Publicity plan – establish partnership between the Trust and FOLTC to manage lead times and campaigns.

Education visits – develop in conjunction with other facilities.

Events – maintain current event program to increase awareness and provide additional income.

Talks – maintain capability, to increase awareness, income and provide gaps fillers during the winter.

Exhibitions – arrange exhibitions in Domain House as crowd pullers providing increased awareness and income. This item would need significant National Trust support.

Interpretation – improve interpretation with more suitable lighting and furnishings.

Audio visual display – provide a flat screen in the servants' quarters with a quality audio visual presentation.

Garden – reconstruct La Trobe's garden within the current leased land and obtain additional land for the garden outside the lease.

Costumes – provide support to volunteers who wish to dress in period costumes.

Heritage walk – use the Bateman drawings in interpretive signs around the Cottage site as a temporary exhibition to increase activity at the site.

Fence – complete the replacement using a dowelled picket fence.

Lattice on verandas – add lattice to the outside of the front verandas.

Reception – establish a small reception and sales facility in the servants' quarters with suitable furniture for reception and merchandise displays. Construct a door in the rear of the building to provide a main visitor entrance visible from Birdwood Avenue. Refurbish the staff kitchen and remove the toilet to a new building on the outside.

Sponsorship – maintain sponsorship by local business and source a major sponsor.

Expenses – All these elements could be delivered within twelve months. Indicative costing would be as follows:

Element	Estimated Set-up Cost	Ongoing Yearly Cost
Signage	\$ 1,000	\$ 0
Web site	\$ 0	\$ 0
Relationships with other properties	\$ 0	\$ 0
Publicity plan	\$ 0	\$ 0
Education visits	\$ 0	Income covering costs
Events	\$ 0	Income covering costs
Talks	\$ 0	Income covering costs
Exhibitions	\$ 5,000	Income covering costs
Interpretation	\$ 1,000	\$ 0
Audio visual display	\$ 1,000	\$ 0
Garden	\$ 1,000	\$ 0
Heritage walk	\$ 5,000	\$ 0
Completion of fence	\$ 10,000	\$ 0
Lattice	\$ 1,000	\$ 0
Reception area	\$ 10,000	\$ 0
Existing Cottage expenses		\$ 15,000
Total expenses	\$ 35,000	\$ 15,000

Income – With a well established facility, energetic volunteers and Trust support, the Cottage is capable of covering its operating expenses but may at times need financial support.

6.2. Professional Cottage Management – Development Proposal

The following development proposal is considered appropriate for a professionally managed facility. The enhancements are chosen to provide a sustainable professional house museum. A larger facility would be required to provide the additional income to cover staff costs. Professional management would be required to ensure an adequate income stream to cover ongoing costs.

These development elements could be initiated to provide a substantial house museum facility.

Signage – provide at key points and at the Cottage indicating its presence and open status.

Web site – improve the Cottage web pages on the National Trust site to provide history and information about facilities, openings and events. Maintain and expand the FOLTC web site.

Relationships with other properties – establish marketing and joint projects.

Publicity plan – establish a publicity plan to manage lead times and campaigns.

Education visits – develop a comprehensive education program.

Events – enhance the event program to increase awareness and provide additional income.

Talks – develop capability to increase awareness and income.

Exhibitions – arrange exhibitions in Domain House as crowd pullers providing increased awareness and income. This item would need significant National Trust support.

Interpretation – improve interpretation with more suitable lighting and furnishings.

Audio visual display – provide a flat screen with a quality audio visual presentation.

Garden – reconstruct La Trobe's garden within the current leased land and obtain additional land outside the lease to provide a significant garden attraction.

Costumes – obtain period costumes for staff and guides.

Heritage walk – use the Bateman drawings in interpretive signs around the Cottage site as a temporary exhibition to increase activity at the site.

Fence – complete the replacement using a dowelled picket fence.

Lattice on verandas – add lattice to the outside of the front verandas.

Visitor centre – obtain a lease on Domain House for use as the Cottage visitor centre. It should provide rooms for interpretive displays, collection displays, audio visual display, merchandise sales, exhibitions, education facilities, office space and store as well as reception and ticketing.

If the lease for Domain House was not obtained, a new building would need to be erected near the Cottage site. The reconstruction of another building from the Jolimont site such as the stables could provide space for the visitor centre.

Until a proper reception/visitor centre is established, the small reception in the servants' quarters should be improved with suitable furniture for reception and merchandise displays. Construct a door in the rear of the building to provide a main visitor entrance visible from Birdwood Avenue. The staff kitchen should be refurbished and the toilet removed to a new building on the outside if the acquisition of Domain House is delayed.

Once Domain House is available, the staff kitchen should be removed from the servants' quarters and the space interpreted as a servant's room.

Additional reconstructed buildings – Reconstruction of butler's pantry, nursery and hay house in the short term, with additional buildings being added in the long term as illustrated in the development of the Cottage 1839-1854 shown in 2.2, page 11.

Opening times – open the Cottage to visitors six or seven days a week with opening times matching other facilities in the area.

Sponsorship – maintain sponsorship by local business and source a major sponsor.

Expenses – All these elements could be delivered within 24 months. The approximate costing would be as follows:

Element	Estimated Set-up Cost	Ongoing Yearly Cost
Signage	\$ 1,000	\$ 500
Web site	\$ 0	\$ 0
Relationships with other properties	\$ 0	\$ 0
Publicity plan	\$ 0	\$ 0
Education visits	\$ 0	Income covering costs
Events	\$ 0	Income covering costs
Talks	\$ 0	Income covering costs
Exhibitions	\$ 5000	Income covering costs
Interpretation	\$ 1000	\$ 500
Audio visual display	\$ 1000	\$ 0
Garden	\$ 1000	\$ 500
Costumes	\$ 1000	\$ 500
Heritage walk	\$ 5000	\$ 0
Fence	\$ 10,000	\$ 0
Lattice	\$ 1000	\$ 0
Temporary reception	\$ 10,000	\$ 0
Domain House	\$ 10,000	\$ 18,000
Butler's pantry	\$ 10,000	\$ 0
Nursery	\$ 50,000	\$ 0
Hay House	\$ 40,000	\$ 0
Additional opening times expenses		\$ 5,000
Existing Cottage expenses		\$ 15,000
Staff costs		\$ 100,000
Total expenses	\$ 145,000	\$ 140,000

Income – A professionally managed marketing strategy would need to aim for an average of 80 visitors a day at an average fee of \$5 to cover the running expenses. This would be supplemented by merchandise sales. Additional income opportunities could be developed such as contracting out a café facility, providing a function venue in the exhibition space and sponsorship.

7. Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – Develop a professionally managed house museum

The Friends of La Trobe's Cottage recommends that La Trobe's Cottage be developed as a professionally managed house museum with a visitor centre and enhanced facilities on site as detailed in 6.2. Until the professional management is established, the Cottage facilities should be enhanced as detailed in 6.1. This would enable early gains and provide a progressive implementation of the full professionally managed house museum.

Recommendation 2 – Develop a master plan

The Friends of La Trobe's Cottage recommends that a master plan for La Trobe's Cottage be drafted once the development program is agreed.

Recommendation 3 – Establish a trust fund for the ongoing maintenance of the buildings

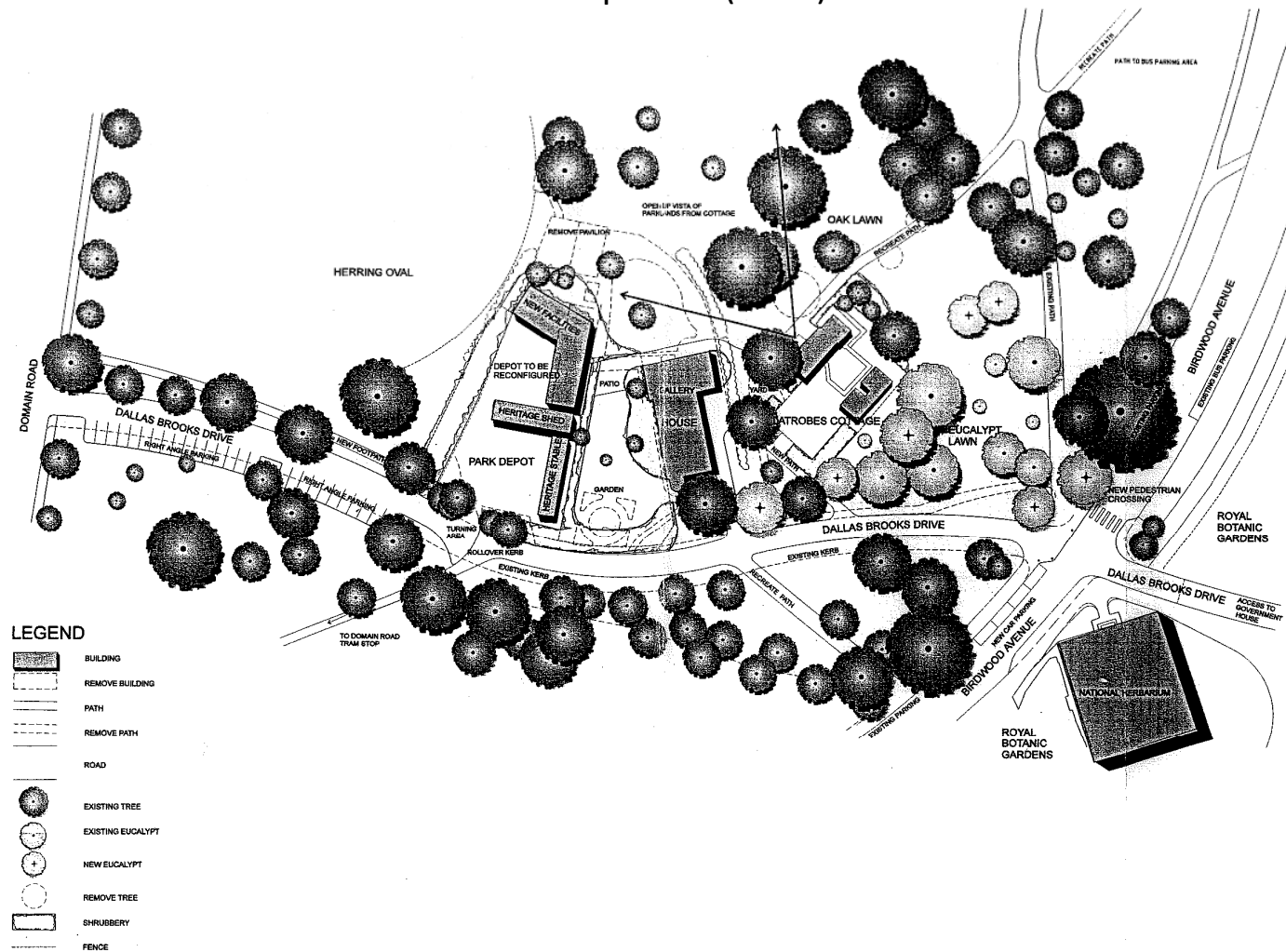
The Friends of La Trobe's Cottage recommends that a trust fund be established for the ongoing maintenance of La Trobe's Cottage and that an appeal should be launched through the National Trust Foundation to raise the funds required.

Recommendation 4 – Raise funds for the development of La Trobe's Cottage

The Friends of La Trobe's Cottage recommends that an appeal be launched through the National Trust Foundation to raise the funds for the development of La Trobe's Cottage. Government grants should be applied for and a major sponsor sought.



Appendix – Dallas Brooks Drive Precinct Concept Plan (2000)



LEGEND

- BUILDING
- REMOVE BUILDING
- PATH
- REMOVE PATH
- ROAD
- EXISTING TREE
- EXISTING EUCALYPT
- NEW EUCALYPT
- REMOVE TREE
- SHRUBBERY
- FENCE

DO NOT SCALE - USE WRITTEN DIMENSIONS ONLY

PROPOSALS

- GENERAL**
- Substantial upgrade of access, buildings and landscape within precinct
- DEPOT**
- Restore heritage stables and shed
 - Provide new shade & amenities to rear area and reconfigure depot to meet depot rehabilitation requirements
- HOUSE & GALLERY**
- Retain house for educational and interpretive use by RBG and National Trust
 - Remove rear garden and open to parkland
- LATROBE'S COTTAGE**
- Improve pedestrian access
 - Improve landscape setting
 - Open vista to south-west across park
- PAVILION**
- Demolish and convert to parkland
 - Open up vista from cottage
- LANDSCAPE**
- Remove inappropriate trees to enhance eucalypt and oak lawn areas
 - Open up park vista from cottage
- PEDESTRIAN ACCESS**
- Provide new pedestrian access to facilities via Dallas Brooks Drive
 - Recreate paths to cottage and adjacent to oval
- DALLAS BROOKS DRIVE**
- Narrow northern section for pedestrian and authorised and emergency vehicles
 - Maintain southern section for public and depot access
 - Provide right angle parking to south section to compensate loss of parking
 - Retain west side kerb and channel, relocate east side kerb and channel
 - Upgrade directional and traffic signage
- BIRDWOOD AVENUE**
- Provide new pedestrian crossing and footpath widenings
 - Provide additional parking spaces

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PROJECT: **DALLAS BROOKS DRIVE PRECINCT
 DOMAIN PARKLANDS**

DRAWING: **CONCEPT PLAN**

STATUS: **PRELIMINARY**

PASSED REVIEWS	APPROVED / AUTH. FOR USE
 NORTH POINT	DESIGN ASPECT PH ASPECT AT 1:500 AT 1:1000 DATE PLOTTED: NOVEMBER 2000
PROJ. NO. 901284	DRAW. NO. 901284/2

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