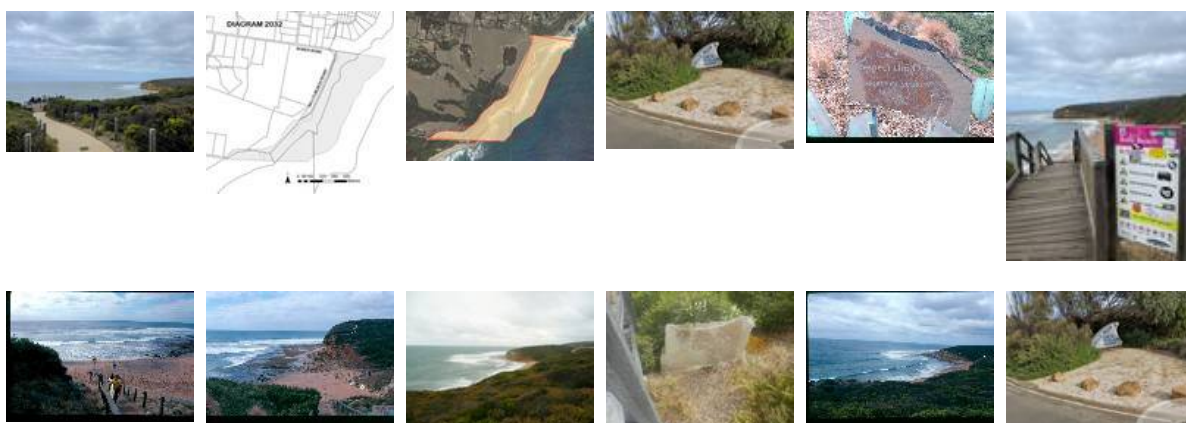


# Victorian Heritage Database Report

## DJARRAK (BELLS BEACH)



**Location:**  
COASTAL RESERVE BELLS BEACH, SURF COAST SHIRE

**Heritage Status / Level of Significance:**  
Registered

**Heritage Inventory (HI) Number:**

**Listing Authority: HI**

**Heritage Overlay Number: HO88**

**Statement of Significance:**

Djarrak (Bells Beach) comprises land and waters of the Wadawurrung people.

What is significant? Djarrak (Bells Beach) is a 2-kilometre stretch of coastline of 112 hectares to the south-west of Torquay and Jan Juc, comprising 38 hectares of coastal heathland and beach; three Spirit of Surfing sandstone markers, the Wave sign; and 74 hectares of sea. How is it significant? Djarrak (Bells Beach) is of historical and social significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A

Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion G

Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. Why is it significant? Djarrak (Bells Beach) is historically significant as the location of the world's longest running competitive surfing event and the first beach internationally to be designated as a surfing reserve in 1973. Its environmental qualities contribute to its significance as a surfing location. 'Bells' became popular with surfers during the 1950s, and in 1962 the Bells Beach Easter Rally was held. By 1973 this annual event had been included on the World Competitive Tour and a large Wave Sign had been installed. The beach is now the location of the 'Rip Curl Pro', one of the most prestigious and iconic surfing events globally, commonly referred to as the 'Wimbledon of surfing'. The place is also significant for its associations with the development of Victoria's surfboard and wetsuit industries from the 1960s, as a location where innovative designs and materials were tested by local companies, some of which, including Rip Curl and Quiksilver, have become global brands. (Criterion A) Djarrak (Bells Beach) is socially significant for its strong and enduring connection with Victoria's surfing communities. Sometimes described as a 'Mecca' or 'spiritual home' of surfing, this place continues to draw surfers from around Victoria and beyond to enjoy the landscape and waves. For generations, Bells Beach has offered one of Australia's most awe-inspiring surf breaks, due to its exposure to Southern Ocean swells and seabed topography creating powerful waves which can exceed six metres. The three Spirit of Surfing markers (2002) are reminders of the traditions of free surfing, respect for the ocean, the land and Wadawurrung culture, as well as a harmonious relationship with the natural environment. The beach is valued nationally and internationally as part of Australia's surfing culture. (Criterion G)

Heritage Study / Consultant	
Construction Date Range	1961 -
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	SURF COAST SHIRE
Other names	
Hermes number	12711
Property number	

*This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to [Planning Schemes Online](#)*