

NEWS

Respect our heritage

By NINO BUCCI

A REPORT into the future of Fortuna Villa has urged any potential developer to respect the rich heritage of the historic site.

The Defence Department's due diligence report into the 19th century property was presented to the City of Greater Bendigo and the State Government last week.

The report will form the basis of any decision by Bendigo council or the State Government to make a priority purchase of the villa.

The report also details the condition of the buildings and the danger posed by asbestos and arsenic found at the site.

"Any decisions regarding future use need to consider viable uses which are complementary to the heritage values and sustainable in the long-term," the report states.

The report urges consideration of the following:

- ensuring a future use is complementary to the heritage values of Fortuna;
- responding appropriately to the site's cultural landscape heritage values for future development related to a new use for the site;
- managing the heritage values of the cultural landscape and its elements within an appropriate setting;
- undertaking site investi-



AN ICON: A Defence report asks potential developers to respect Fortuna's heritage.

gation, research and documentation of Fortuna; and

● managing the archaeological resources of Fortuna in the future.

"In summary, the Heritage Management Plan provides policy and specific recommendations for the management and conservation of the heritage values of Fortuna prior to and following the disposal of the property by Defence," the report stated.

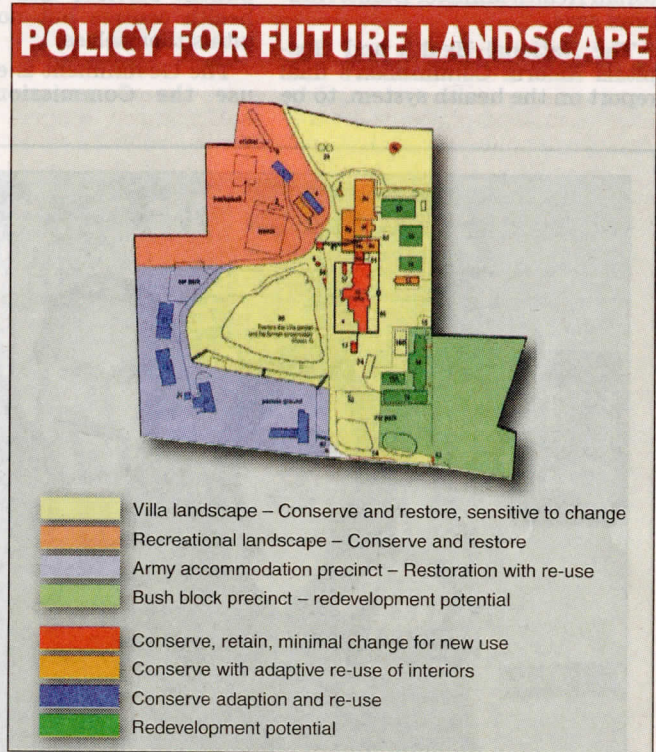
"Principally, the Plan will assist to facilitate the management of Fortuna in a manner consistent with the conservation of its official heritage values."

The report also states that

any future developer should consider the need for occasional public access to the site.

An investigation into the condition of the various buildings on the site found they were in good to very good condition.

"The assessment of all buildings and structures on



Picture: JULIAN PROWD

the site found all buildings inspected to be in good to very good condition with very little evidence of foundation movement or reduction in structural integrity," the report states.

Asbestos and lead paint was found in some buildings, while widespread elevated arsenic concentrations and

low levels of mercury were found in soil samples.

City of Greater Bendigo acting chief executive officer Stan Liacos said he would present an initial summary report regarding Fortuna Villa to council's forum next week and then officially present his report to the council the following week.