

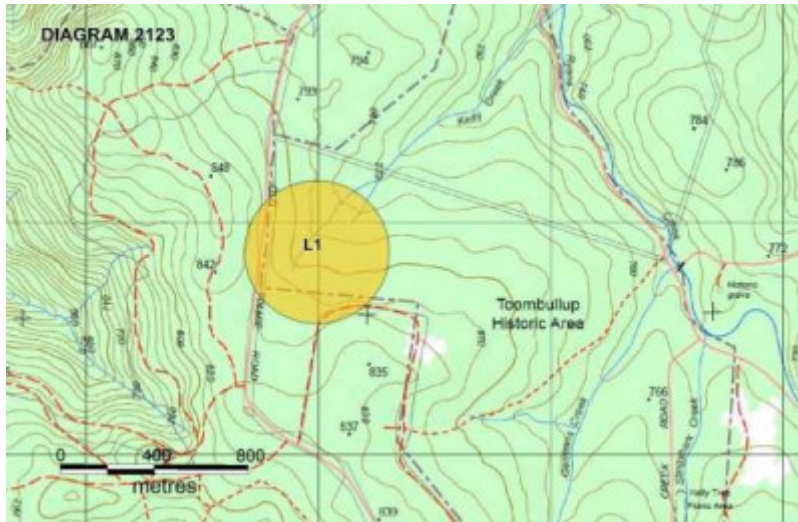
# KELLY GANG CAMP SITE



Kelly Camp site H2123 IMG  
0804



H2123 1884 Surveyors Plan



kelly camp site plan (small)

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## Location

OLD TOLMIE ROAD ARCHERTON, BENALLA RURAL CITY

## Municipality

BENALLA RURAL CITY

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2123

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO67

## VHR Registration

September 10, 2009

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The camp at Kelly Creek (formerly Bullock Creek) was used by various Kelly Gang members as a remote bush hideaway from late 1876 until October 1878. The Kellys regularly made use of the site, where they occupied, rebuilt and fortified a derelict log hut, cleared the nearby bush for use as horse paddocks, panned and sluiced for gold in the creek and constructed a whisky still.

A number of historical documents exist which provide evidence for the location of the Kelly Gang camp site, on a small creek in the heart of the Wombat Ranges. The site location is shown on an 1884 surveyor's plan, marked "Kelly's Hut", and a Land Act file from 1885.

The site is located in a closed, steep-sided ravine that provided protection for the gang members. A small creek runs through the ravine and joins Ryans Creek to the northeast. Trees and scrub were cleared from around the hut to prevent any unnoticed approaches to the camp. Targets were drawn onto the trunks of gum trees for target practice.

A saw mill was constructed at the site around 1930 and it is likely that the hut and many of the site features may have been disturbed by the works associated with the mill, or covered beneath sawdust mounds. It is possible that some remnants from the camp are buried beneath the mounds that now cover the site.

One tree, known as the Kelly Target Tree, was not felled by the saw-millers and remained standing until approximately 1950. It is believed that this was one of the trees used by the gang for target practice. Part of this tree was removed from the site for storage by DSE in January 2004.

How is it significant?

The Kelly Gang camp site is of historical and archaeological significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The Kelly Camp site is historically significant as the remote bush location where the Kelly Gang avoided capture in the late 1870s. On the morning of Saturday 26 October 1878, the Kelly Gang travelled from the camp to Stringybark Creek, where three police officers were shot and killed by Ned Kelly.

The landscape and setting of the place is significant because it explains why the site was chosen. The site is located in a closed, steep-sided ravine that provided protection and seclusion for the gang members.

The Kelly Camp site is archaeologically significant for its potential to contain archaeological artefacts and deposits that relate to the occupation and activities of the Kelly Gang members.

## Permit Exemptions

### General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

### **Specific Exemptions:**

#### Regular Site Maintenance

The following site maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the *Heritage Act 1995*,

a) Regular site maintenance provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits;

#### Fire Suppression Duties

The following fire suppression duties are permit exempt under section 66 of the *Heritage Act 1995*,

a) Fire suppression and fire fighting duties provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits;

**Weed and Vermin Control :** The following weed and vermin control activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the *Heritage Act 1995*, a) Weed and vermin control activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; **Note:** Particular care must be taken with weed and vermin control works where such activities may have a detrimental affect on the significant fabric of a place. Such works may include the removal of ivy, moss or lichen from an historic structure or feature, or the removal of burrows from a site that has archaeological values. **Landscape Maintenance :** The following landscape maintenance works are permit exempt under section 66 of the *Heritage Act 1995*, a) landscape maintenance works provided the activities do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground features or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; **Public Safety and Security :** The following public safety and security activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the *Heritage Act 1995*, a) public safety and security activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground structures or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; **Signage and Site Interpretation :** The following Signage and Site Interpretation activities are permit exempt under section 66 of the *Heritage Act 1995*, a) signage and site interpretation activities provided the works do not involve the removal or destruction of any significant above-ground structures or sub-surface archaeological artefacts or deposits; b) the erection of non-illuminated signage for the purpose of ensuring public safety or to assist in the interpretation of the heritage significance of the place or object and which will not adversely affect significant fabric including landscape or archaeological features of the place or obstruct significant views of and from heritage values or items; c) signage and site interpretation products must be located and be of a suitable size so as not to obscure or damage significant fabric of the place; d) signage and site interpretation products must be able to be later removed without causing damage to the significant fabric of the place; **Note:** The development of signage and site interpretation products must be consistent in the use of format, text, logos, themes and other display materials. **Note:** Where possible, the signage and interpretation material should be consistent with other schemes developed on similar or associated sites. It may be necessary to consult with land managers and other stakeholders concerning existing schemes and strategies for signage and site interpretation. **Minor Works :** **Note:** Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the *Heritage Act*. A person proposing to undertake minor works may submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

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|-------------------------|--|
| Construction dates      | 1876,  |
| Heritage Act Categories | Registered place, Registered archaeological place, |
| Other Names             | KELLY GANG, KELLY CAMP,                            |
| Hermes Number           | 104595   |
| Property Number         |  |

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## History

### HISTORY:

#### CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

The events at Stringybark Creek and ultimately at Glenrowan were the culmination of pressures that developed between the police, the Kellys and their associates throughout the 1870s. From late 1876 onwards, Ned, Dan and their friends frequently headed to the camp in the Wombat Ranges to lie low and avoid the attention of the police.

As well as being a hidden bush retreat, the camp was a source of income for the Kellys and their friends. The camp was used for gold panning and sluicing, growing crops and distilling whisky.

Following the wounding of Constable Fitzpatrick at the Kelly homestead on 15 April 1878, warrants were issued for the arrest of Ned, Dan, Ellen Kelly and others for Attempted Murder. By mid October, Ned and Dan together with Joe Byrne and Steve Hart were in hiding at the camp when word came that police search parties were being prepared. Three police parties set off from different locations late in October, with the party from Mansfield reaching Stringybark Creek, approximately 2km southeast of the Kelly camp, on Friday 25 October.

#### HISTORY OF PLACE

It is likely that the log hut was first constructed by gold prospectors during a rush to the area in the 1860s. Ned may have discovered the site when travelling through the area with bushranger Harry Power in 1869. The site was used by the Kelly Gang intermittently between 1876 until the events at Stringybark Creek in October 1878.

A saw mill was constructed on the site around 1930, which operated until the mid 20th century.

## Assessment Against Criteria

### ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

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

The Kelly Gang Camp site is important to Victoria's cultural history as the place where the gang members retreated to avoid the attention of police, particularly following the issuing of warrants for Attempted Murder in April 1878. The Kelly Gang travelled from the camp to Stringybark Creek on 26 October 1878.

#### b. Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

N/A

#### c. Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria's cultural history.

The Kelly Gang Camp site has the potential to contain historical archaeological deposits and artefacts that relate to the occupation and activities of the Kelly Gang members.

d. Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or environments.

N/A

e. Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

N/A

f. Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

N/A

g. Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

N/A

h. Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history.

The Kelly Gang Camp site is strongly associated with the members of the Kelly Gang (Ned Kelly, Dan Kelly, Joe Byrne and Steve Hart) who lived at the site at various times from late 1876 onwards.

## Plaque Citation

This area was used by the members of the Kelly Gang as a remote bush camp and hideaway. The Gang travelled from this site to nearby Stringybark Creek on the morning of 26 October 1878.

## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 1995**, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by including the Heritage Register Number 2123 in the categories described as Heritage Place and Archaeological Place.

Kelly Gang Camp Site  
Old Tolmie Road and Tatong-Tolmie Road  
Archerton  
Benalla Rural City

### EXTENT

1. All of the land marked L1 on Diagram 2123 held by the Executive Director being a circle of 300 metres radius around a point with the coordinates 146.1811 degrees east and 36.8644 degrees south and comprising parts of Crown Allotments 38A, 4K and 4L, Parish of Toombullup, and part of the road reserve of Old Tolmie Road.

Dated 7 September 2009

Jim Gardner Acting  
Executive Director

[Victoria Government Gazette G 37 10 September 2009 2398-2399]

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*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*