
PLOVER PLAINS HOMESTEAD RUINS

Location

350 KONAGADERRA ROAD OAKLANDS JUNCTION, HUME CITY

Municipality

HUME CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-0310

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO267

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 30, 2010

Data has been updated as a result of the Outer Western Metro Project, Context, March 2010.

Interpretation of Site

The site is a sheltered position near the base of the valley of the Konagaderra Creek, about 1.3 kilometres from its junction with Deep Creek. It consists of the ruinous remnants and footings of buildings which were probably huts and outbuildings associated with the occupation by Lewis Clarke and his family, and possibly with an earlier settler who had built a slab and bark cottage on the site during the 1830s. There is a rich alluvial flat between the site and Konagaderra Creek.

There is a ford downstream from the site. This may be one of the three fords identified in this area in an 1839 survey.

Nearest Konagaderra Creek is a stone building platform, roughly 7.5 by 4.5 metres, divided into two sections. At one end, presumably the gable end, there are the footings of a chimney, c.2.5 by 1.0 metres. About ten metres to the south west, but on the same alignment, are the remains of a similar, but slightly smaller building. This also has evidence of two attached rooms, c.3.0 by 2.0 metres, and c.2.3 by 2.0 metres, at the opposite end of the building from the chimney.

About 9.0 metres to the west of this second building, and again on the same alignment, are a few courses of stone. These are about 1.8 metres long, with a few courses turning in at the ends, in the manner of a fireplace. It has the appearance of the footings of a hearth and might represent the remains of the original slab hut. Scatters of rocks to the west may be the remnants of outbuildings.

Archaeological Significance

To the south of the second building is a terraced area, and to the south of this is a depression representing a spring which is likely to have been a source of water. The owner has found a piece of a stoneware bottle between the remains of the buildings and this spring.

The site has been subject to heavy weathering and damage through grazing in the c.100 years since it was probably abandoned. However, it will still retain subsurface deposits which may include archaeological evidence dating to the 1830s.

Further investigation and research of the place has the potential to provide information that would contribute to a greater understanding of the history of the post-contact occupation of the immediate area. Investigation indicates that some 1830s building fabric or artefacts remain, the site is likely to be of State level heritage significance.

Historical Significance

The remains of the former Plover Plains homestead and outbuildings on Konagaderra Creek, likely dating back to the 1840s, and possibly to the 1830s, are highly significant for their association with the first land rush to the Port Phillip District, as the home station site of one of the earliest squatting runs in the District and as possibly the earliest remaining evidence of European settlement in the area.

Other Names

MR MURRAY'S SHEEP STATION, PLOVER PLAINS CLARKE'S STATION, OLD HOME STATION FARM,

Hermes Number 12287

Property Number

History

Settlement on this area of land dates back to well before the Crown sold it in May 1852 to William John Turner Clarke, later known as 'Big' Clarke. From 1841 Clarke had occupied the adjacent Bank Vale run, but noticing the vacant parcel immediately to the west, with a vacant cottage on the Konagaderra Creek which had been built and later abandoned by an earlier squatter, he arranged for his brother Lewis to settle there in that the same year. The surveyor Crawford Mollison's 1841 map of the site labels the land as 'Plover Plains Clarke's Station; Mr Murray's Sheep Station'. Thus, by the time Clarke took over the property, it had been in the possession of a Mr Murray, and had been named Plover Plains.

Lewis Clarke and his wife are said to have extended the original 'slab-and-bark hut ... into a comfortable dwelling' (Moloney 2003), but, following 'Big' Clarke's application in the early 1850s for ownership of a massive stretch of land in the adjacent Parishes of Buttlejorrk, Kerrie, Havelock and Bollinda, Lewis moved from the site to the old Bollinda homestead. It is possible that the Plover Plains homestead was then used by Clarke employees such as shepherds, boundary riders or managers.

In late 1911, the land owned by the Clarke family in the Parish of Bollinda was surveyed, divided into over 60 allotments and sold over the following years. The land on which the Plover Plains homestead is located was owned by Mr Frank Buckley by 1916. Buckley, who had also bought much of the other land, then began to sell the farms referring to the Plover Plains site as the 'Old Home Station Farm' suggesting that the structures of Clarke's Station were already ruinous by that time.

Little has been ascertained of the subsequent owners of this area of land. While much of the surrounding land was resumed for Soldier Settlement, the land on which the ruins are located remained in private ownership.

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/>