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# LOCHTON FLOUR MILL

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## Location

145 GREEN STREET BULLA, HUME CITY

## Municipality

HUME CITY

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-2306

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO22

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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### Interpretation of Site

The Lochlan Flour Mill ;s an excellent example of architectural achievement and industry following the boom of the 1850s gold rush. The extant features include the mill building and vestiges of three buildings. These additional features include foundations and an accumulation of bluestone to the east of the mill building (likely the collapsed chimney). The locations of the adjacent buildings are all evident on the ground and can also be seen in a photograph dating from the 1860s. This photograph shows the mill at the time of operation (or shortly after its closure) and depicts a tall chimney at the east of the building, which has since collapsed. It also shows the mill and adjacent buildings to have occupied (perhaps artificially) a levelled area at the meander of the creek with a track leading up to the spur toward Lochton Homestead.

Archaeological Significance The site is judged to have high archaeological significance. The assessment of archaeological significance is based on the short~ use life of the site (c.1856 to c.1861) and the apparent abandonment of the site following the mill closure in c.1861. Archaeological deposits here are likely to have been little disturbed after the early 1860s. The site's isolation and inaccessibility raise the potential for undisturbed archaeological deposits.

Historical Significance The site has high historical significance. The mill building is likely an example of the work of local mason Donald Ross and is linked to the financial boom of the 1850s gold rush. The short-use life of the site was intimately linked to the fortunes of local farming and the wider economy. Opened at the height of the boom, when wheat yields were increased to meet demand fuelled by population growth, the downfall of the mill is attributed to over-cultivation, infestations, drought and increased competition.

Hermes Number 185971

Property Number

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## History

Lochlan Flour Mill was built c.1856 and closed c.1861. Owned by squatter William Morrison Hunter (Moloney & Johnson 1998:88 129-1), the building exhibits excellent masonry work, which is thought to be the work of mason Donald Ross, who is linked to several buildings in Bulla (including churches and the Shire Office; Moloney 1998:100). The miller at Lochton was George Straughn, who ran the mill during its short history (c.1856 to c.1861). The short-use life of the mill is linked with fluctuations in the fortunes of local farming and in turn, with the wider economy. The mill is linked particularly with the boom of the gold rush in the 1850s (Moloney 1998:100). The mill was opened at the height of the boom when there was a vast increase in the amount of land under crop and the growth in population fuelled demand. Wheat yields peaked in 1859 and later slumped, due to over-cultivation of poor soils, infestation, drought and price slumps (Moloney 1998:100). Technological changes and the expanded transport system (creating increased competition) were also detrimental (Moloney 1998:100). It is thought that at the closure of Lochton Mill in c.1861 the miller Straughn may have moved to work at John Eadie's mill in Sunbury (Moloney 1998:102).

The mill was steam powered and therefore situated at Deep Creek to utilise the water resource.

The owner of the property, William Morrison Hunter, also built the Lochton Homestead on the same landholding, which is dated to c.1850s (Moloney & Johnson 1998:BB/29-1). The homestead is still standing, although highly modified.

*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/>