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# BARONGAROOK WATER TANK AND ASSOCIATED BOILER ASH HEAPS

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## Location

OLD BEECHY RAIL TRAIL BARONGAROOK, COLAC OTWAY SHIRE

## Municipality

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7621-0028

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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### Interpretation of Site

Site is part of the former Colac-Beech Forest-Crowes railway line. Closure of the line during the 1960s led to the abandonment of the line and the removal of the railway and associated infrastructure. The original Barongarook water tank was moved to this location, at the bottom of the bank, during the 1920s, because the gradient was more favorable (see Houghton 2003:133). The only other water tank is located at Dinmont, and it still remains standing. The ash heap is associated with the Barongarook water tank. Locomotives that would have regularly stopped for water at the Barongarook water tank and cleared ash whilst filling water.

### Archaeological Significance

Low potential to contain archaeological deposits.

Historical Significance      The remains of the Barongarook water tank and the boiler ash heaps are of historical significance for their association with the development of the Colac-Beech Forest- Crowes railway line and the opening up of the Otway region.

Hermes Number      194685

Property Number

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## History

**A series of land acts were passed in the 1860s in an attempt to create small farm holdings, whilst at the same time recognising the pioneering efforts of the squatters.** Under the first land act, the 1860 Land Sales Act, three million acres were surveyed into allotments of between 80 to 640 acres. No person could select more than 640 acres annually, and the land had to be paid for outright, or half paid and half leased. Subsequently more land was made available for selection under the Land Act (1862) and the 1865 Amendment Act. Then in 1869, most land - including unsurveyed land - became available for selection under the Land Act. (Sheehan, 2003: 19) **The Otway Ranges, in south west Victoria, were first opened to agricultural selection in 1884, under the Land Act 1884, when allotments were selected from pre survey maps prepared by the Lands Department (Minchinton 2011:2). Within ten years more than 200 allotments had been taken up (Houghton 2005: 1). Yet it wasn't until the arrival of the railway, during the 1870s, that Victoria's isolated south western region was considered penetrable. Until this time, the Otway Ranges were virtually impassable and as such, were of little economic value. The introduction of the railway provided the first all weather, fast and reliable transport service into the area, which as Houghton noted was 'characterised by dense timber and high rainfall'**

*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/>*