
BARNET AND HOLMES' STOCKYARD

Location

OFF AXEDALE-GOORNONG ROAD AXEDALE, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7824-0114

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 14, 2023

What is significant?

The stockyard was within the W. Barnet and E. Holmes property, purchased before 1875. Both Barnet and Holmes were named consignees of 'goods by railway' in 1878. The archaeologist has detailed that the timber looks as though it has been reused from an earlier structure. The site has the potential to contain archaeological features, deposits or artefacts associated with the construction of the farm, or railway connections.

How is it significant?

The stockyard site is of local historical significance.

Why is it significant?

It is historically significant as for its association with the development of the Fosterville goldfield. The site will provide information about historical activities relating to the land-use of the area, early pastoralism in the goldfield and potential railway connections and industry in the area.

In the early to mid-19th century the land was primarily used for pastoral activities that included breeding cattle and sheep for their meat, as well as for their wool. During this time station workers were increasingly leaving for the goldfields. In the 1850s, after the discovery of gold, land use shifted to small scale mining. Potential association of the site with 19th century pastoral occupation or small-scale mining cannot be discounted. In the late 19th century, pastoral activities continued; however, there was a shift when broadacre wheat farming was established from the 1870s. The construction of the Melbourne-Murry River railway line brought significant change to this area, providing transport to markets for farming selectors. From the 1850s the influx of mining led to larger industrial scale mining. This increase in gold mining and population can be seen in social and historical events, such as sports team parties and registered gold mining companies being established. In the early 20th century, mining declined due to challenges with pumping water and the outbreak of World War I, leading to a decline in population within the township of Fosterville. It was during this decline that the races once used for the batteries were repurposed for dairying and agriculture for the farming region (Victorian Places, Fosterville n.d). Mid-20th century even with the closure of many of the larger mines, cyanide works and ore treatment plants continued to operate until 1939. In the late 20th century, gold mining was reestablished in Fosterville; however, this did not disturb the stockyard's location. Several mining evaporation ponds are near the site to the northwest and roads have been established to the northeast and west of the site. Modern agricultural and mining activities continue near the site, however, the property where the stockyard is located is an open and unused paddock. The site is the remains of a farming timber stock yard that was likely used in the early 20th century. The stock yard is rectangular, approximately 17m x 13.7m, with an internal partition approximately 8.9m, in the centre of the feature. The timber used for the stock yard has been reused from an earlier, unknown feature, which could be because timber during this period was difficult to access. This is evidenced by roughly hewn wood with hafted ends that have been repurposed and wired together. This site illustrates the progression of mining activities to farming when the gold mining declined in this area. The modern mining activities that occur near the site have not yet disturbed the Stockyards location. The site has low potential for subsurface archaeological remains associated with agricultural activities conducted in the vicinity throughout the 20th century.

Hermes
Number 209536

Property
Number

History

The majority of the place history information is drawn from Technical report A2: Historical Heritage Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project (Geiberras & Hocking, 2022) European settlement within the study area began in the late 1830s, the area attracted squatters who later settled due to the potential for farming. Sheep were bred for their wool during the 1830s-1840s, then in the 1850s sheep and cattle contributed more to the meat market in order to sustain the gold rush population increase (Ballinger 2020, p.14). The squatters who acquired large amounts of land during the 1840s relied upon native grasslands for the grazing of animals, this declined when broadacre wheat farming was established from the 1870s (Ballinger 2020, p. 34). The site was within the township of Axedale and near site 42 – Refuse dump (another site recorded for Technical Report A2 for which a separate site card was submitted) (Figure 5). The stockyard was within W Barnet and E Holmes property, purchased before 1875. Both Barnet and Holmes utilised the nearby railway as both of their names appear in the 'consignees of goods by railway' section of the Bendigo Advertiser (1878, p. 2). This is presumably for farming equipment, livestock and/or food. During the 1850s, one group's success from the Bendigo goldfields led to a large rush that extended the Bendigo Creek diggings to Epsom Flat and north Huntly, changing small alluvial mining operations to larger industrial scale mining (Ballinger 2020, p. 42). This area also had a gold boom from 1895 to 1906. This boom is recorded in both the social and historical events during this period (Marshall 1996, p. 3). Such as Fosterville football and cricket team parties and registered gold mining companies (Snoek 1988, p. 7). The challenges of pumping water from 1910 and during the outbreak of World War I led to a decline in mining

(Ballinger 2020, p. 45). Despite the decline of mining in the area, cyanide works, and ore treatment plants continued to operate until 1939 (Bannear n.d., p.197). After the decline in mining the land use returned to agricultural activities. There was a long run that was made up of 51,200 acres with approximately 16,000 sheep located within the study area that was owned by Henry Grey Bennett (Webb et al. 1985, p. 40). This run was subdivided in 1865 into Barsedown East and Barsedown West. The Barsedown Run was broken down into smaller estates and in the late 1890s, a portion of this former run was known as Adelaide Vale Estate. At that time, dairy cattle, 4,000 sheep, hundreds of pigs and dozens of rabbits were present on the estate (The Australasian, 1896), which consisted of 4,000 acres of land that was used for agricultural activities. The Melbourne-Murry River railway line near this area aided in the establishment of the surrounding townships, as it facilitated access to fruit and vegetables out of the markets in Melbourne from the 1860s (Ballinger 2020, p. 8). The railway line also transported crops and livestock for farmers to the north (Ballinger 2020, p. 8). Additionally, having cross country railways would be even more advantageous to the people in this area and would have assisted in helping solve the growing difficulty with the timber for mines (The Bendigo Advertiser, 1899). The Stockyard site was not identified during the survey for a 1989 Supplementary Heritage Report (Wright), associated with the Environmental Effects Statement for the Fosterville Gold Mine (at the time Bendigo Gold Limited). The stockyard was first identified during a site inspection by ALA for Technical report A2: Historical Heritage Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project (Geiberras and Hocking, 2022). The stockyard was likely used during the early 20th century and the timber that makes up the stockyard is from an earlier, unknown feature. This is evidenced by roughly hewn wood with hafted ends that have been repurposed and wired together (Figure 4).

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/>