
KINYPANIEL WEIR

Location

BOORT-WEDDLERBURN ROAD, BROOT

Municipality

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7625-0029

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 10, 2023

What is significant?

The Kinypaniel Weir consists of substantial in situ timber elements preserved in the bed and banks of the Loddon River; intact concrete culverts and lifting screws at the head of Kinypaniel Creek; a cutting between Kinypaniel Creek and the Loddon River; and in situ timber posts from the temporary weir constructed in 1883.

How is it significant?

The Kinypaniel Weir is of archaeological and historical significance.

Why is it significant?

The Kinypaniel Weir is archaeologically significant for its potential to provide important information on the design, engineering, construction and materials used to store and manage water supplies in rivers, creeks, channels, lakes and floodplains in northern Victoria. The preserved materials of the weir reveal the building stages of the weir complex from the 1850s to the 1940s. The archaeological remains represent one of the earliest known National works in Victoria.

The Kinypaniel Weir is historically significant as an early example of a timber weir constructed to divert water for stock and domestic supply on the northern plains of Victoria. It was one of numerous works constructed on the Loddon River to manage water supplies in the region, and it became a National work under the Irrigation Act 1886.

Interpretation of Site	The Kinypaniel Weir was built to raise the level of the Loddon River to divert water down Kinypaniel Creek to Lake Boort and beyond. Archaeological remains at the Kinypaniel Weir represent the main phases of the site's history: 1-Blackfellows Cutting between the Loddon and Kinypaniel Creek was constructed in 1851 by the pastoral squatters at Boort Station (Henry and Frederic Godfrey) and Fernihurst Station (John Hunter Kerr). The cutting was enlarged in 1883 to accommodate flow devices. 2-The temporary weir on the Loddon was completed in June 1883. 3-The permanent weir was built about 200 metres downstream and was completed by October 1884. 4-The timber sluice-gate at Blackfellows Cutting was replaced with a concrete installation in 1911. 5-Kinypaniel Weir became obsolete by the 1940s and fell into ruin. The site of the Kinypaniel Weir today is part of the Loddon River Water Frontage Reserve.
Hermes Number	209694
Property Number	

History

Dry conditions in the late 1870s prompted calls to build a weir across the Loddon River at Fernihurst to raise the water level and divert water down Kinypaniel Creek to Lake Boort. As drought conditions worsened in the early 1880s, the Loddon United Waterworks Trust was established (in July 1882) to develop water supplies in the district. The Trust let a contract to deepen a channel between the Loddon and Kinypaniel Creek that had originally been excavated by the pastoral tenants in 1851 and known as 'Blackfellows Cutting'. Concurrent construction began in 1883 of both a temporary sandbag weir and, 200 metres downstream, a permanent timber weir across the bed of the Loddon River below the junction with Kinypaniel Creek. The temporary weir consisted of six heavy tree trunks placed across the river between two huge trees on the banks, with stakes driven in front of the logs and 2000 sandbags laid in front. The river had backed up 6 km and was 4 m deep in front of the weir when the weir failed and burst on 30 April 1883, flooding the permanent works lower down the river (The Argus 1 May 1883:6c). The temporary weir was soon repaired and on Sunday morning, 3 June 1883, water began running into Kinypaniel Creek on its way down to Lake Boort (The Argus 4 June 1883:4b). Construction of the permanent weir was completed by October 1884. The timber structure was 66 feet (20 m) wide at the main crest and 15 feet (4.5 m) above the riverbed, with water passing down by three steps to the level of the river. Protective timbers rose vertically 6 feet (1.8 m) each side of the main crest. A sluice-gate was placed in the Kinypaniel cutting to regulate the flow of water down the creek to the north and west. It consisted originally of a timber-lined pipe fitted with two iron gates in wooden frames with lifting screws. The trapezoidal profile of the weir on both the upstream and downstream faces was a common feature of weirs at the time, which served to protect adjacent riverbanks from scouring by floodwater. The weir backed up the Loddon River for c.15 km and sent water down Kinypaniel Creek to Lake Boort, Woolshed Lake, Lake Lyndger, Lake Yando and Lake Leaghur, converting an intermittent natural supply into a permanent managed supply. The Kinypaniel Weir became a 'National work' under the Irrigation Act 1886, as it commanded such a large area of country that it came under the authority of Parliament and the direct control of the Board of Land and Works. In 1911 the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission replaced the timber sluice-gate with a concrete structure, which remains in situ. The Kinypaniel Weir had begun to fail by 1928. A channel was constructed, 5 km in length, from the Western Waranga Channel to deliver water into Kinypaniel Creek below the weir. Construction of another channel in 1947 rendered the Kinypaniel Weir obsolete.

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/>