



## Municipality

GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

## Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO157

## Heritage Listing

Golden Plains Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 28, 2009

What is Significant?

Leighburn, 1567 Bannockburn-Shelford Road, Shelford is located on rising ground on the eastern approach to the Leigh River valley at Shelford. The land on which Leighburn was created in 1902 was part of the very early squatting run, Golfhill, the focus of George Russell's vast holdings on behalf of the Clyde Company. Russell bought Golfhill for himself in 1858 and embarked on a program of purchasing more land. By the time Leighburn was created, Golf Hill as it came to be known was owned by his youngest daughter, Janet Biddlecombe who was prepared to sell some land. Along with Golf Hill to the north and the continuing Presbyterian manse on the opposite west side, the three places help to define the cultural landscape of the valley. The land was purchased by Hugh, John and Alexander Munro and a conventional, modest house was probably built for John Munro, a laborer-farmer. In 1915/16 his name is replaced in the Shire of Leigh rate books by James McKenzie, grazier. In the 1940s the property was purchased by Charles Matthew Burns, wool merchant, an absentee proprietor but still active in the district. The house was modernized in the late 1960s. McKenzie owned the property until the 1980s. It has since been much altered and extended but is still used for pastoral and mixed agricultural purposes. Although the intactness of Leighburn has been compromised and it retains only a low degree of integrity, the various alterations and additions over the years should be seen as a typical sequence of development for such a place. Leighburn is in very good condition. Its immediate surrounds, including the now mature plantings of *Pinus radiata* (Monterey Pines) of the former drive and the early garden plantings are significant as well as its broader context in the Leigh River valley including its relationship with Golf Hill and the Presbyterian Manse opposite.

How is it Significant?

Leighburn is of historical and architectural significance to the Golden Plains Shire.

Why is it Significant?

Leighburn is of historical significance for its subdivision off the very significant Golf Hill estate demonstrating a change in land holding policy from the time of George Russell. It has historical associations with the Munro, McKenzie and Burns families, all directly connected with and representative of pastoralism, the district's principal industry. Leighburn, although only ever a traditional house and garden, has special architectural interest because of its setting in and contribution to the broader cultural landscape of the Leigh River valley and Shelford.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Golden Plains - Golden Plains Shire Heritage Study Phase 2, Heritage Matters P/L, 2009;
Hermes Number	31710
Property Number	

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## Physical Description 1

The homestead Leighburn, Shelford is situated on high ground to the south-east of the township. It is set within hundreds of acres of land amongst many mature conifers and some other trees but only the land and trees immediately around the house and drive are considered to be of heritage significance. The property incorporates the Leigh River on the western side and the river forms part of the southern boundary.

Leighburn is now a substantial single-storey asymmetrical weatherboard house painted white. It has been added to substantially at different times. The original plan appears to have been symmetrical about a central front door and passage, probably comprising four main rooms with service wing at the rear and, possibly, a projecting gabled wing on the west side. Remnants of the original verandah, which may have been L-shaped terminating at the projecting wing, survive. Earliest additions may have included bathrooms and porches, since demolished. The first main additions were the extension at the front of the house on the north-west corner which appears to date from the 1960s, based on the fenestration and use of web trusses to support the pergola. The more recent additions have carefully replicated the gable of the projecting wing. Three brick chimneys, now painted white survive and the whole of the roof is mid-grey Colorbond. The interiors are now much altered.

The house is sited within the broader landscape but some distance from the main road to maximise the topography and views to and from it. The park-like setting is important and allows a visual link to the north-west with the township, the State School and the Presbyterian Church located below on the highway. The setting is emphasized by the various plantings of pines and other trees around the house including those on the west side and behind the house. Most of the pines are *Pinus radiata* (Radiata or Monterey Pines) particularly along the angled former driveway from the Bannockburn-Rokewood Road. Other than a pair of fully mature *Cupressus torulosa* (Bhutan Cypress) situated at its north-east corner, there are no surviving garden plantings from pre-1940s. The Cypresses almost certainly mark a former gateway. The various modern outbuildings at the rear of the house are not significant.

Leighburn can be compared for its siting with the earlier Presbyterian Manse at Shelford which is located across the valley of the Leigh River on the western approach to the township. Otherwise, it is typical of the residences built throughout the Shire in the very early twentieth century.

Although the intactness of Leighburn has been compromised and it retains only a low degree of integrity, the various alterations and additions over the years should be seen as a typical sequence of development for such a place. Leighburn is in very good condition.

## Historical Australian Themes

The Australian Heritage Commission devised the Australian Historic Themes in 2001. The following themes have influenced the historical development of Leighburn:

3 Developing Local, Regional And National Economies

3.5 Developing primary production

3.5.1 Grazing stock

3.5.2 Breeding animals

5 Working

5.8 Working on the land

8 Developing Australia's Cultural Life

8.14 Living in the county and rural settlements

## **Integrity**

Leighburn now has only limited integrity from the period of its construction. Leighburn now has only limited intactness from the period of its construction but the various alteration and additions should be seen as a sequence of development rather than a compromise of its original style, forms, details and materials. The retention of the mature plantings around the house are important for supporting the overall character and significance of the place.

## **Physical Description 2**

Extent of Registration: Leighburn, 1567 Bannockburn-Shelford Road, Shelford, to the extent of the exterior of the house and its curtilage including the drive and its plantings of *Pinus radiata* (Monterey Pines), the front garden including the pair of *Cupressus torulosa* (Bhutan Cypress) and the grove of *Pinus radiata* (Monterey Pines) to the west of the house and all of the land described in the polygon.

## **Extent of Registration**

Leighburn, 1567 Bannockburn-Shelford Road, Shelford and its curtilage.

*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/>*