
Mount Alfred Battery Site



B5307 Mount Alfred Battery Site

Location

GLEN VALLEY VIC 3898 - Property No B5307

Municipality

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Level of significance

Local

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 18, 2005

Description: The site is a roughly triangular and level area about 15 metres by 10 metres at the southern end of river flats on the east bank of the Big River. For some distance up the steep hillside behind the site there is a shallow depression. At a height of some 5 metres above the battery site this depression intersects two level benches cut into the hillside. To the left facing up the hill, the bench is about 1 metre wide and runs along the contour in a generally northerly direction. This was the race line which brought water from Wills Creek for working the plant. To the right, but some distance further uphill, there is another bench about 2 metres wide. This is a tram track which tends, initially, in a southerly direction and then swings easterly to run into a nearby creek valley.

Function: The site was used to process stone trucked down from the mine. This was situated to the east of the site and on the ridge above Wallaby Creek. The shallow depression in the hillside behind the site marks the position of a stone chute by which means the ore was shot into the battery hoppers from the terminus of the tram track above. From all accounts it did not work all that well.

History: In the summer of 1887/8 Collins and party discovered a quartz reef in rugged country on Wallaby Creek

about two miles from the Big River. This was the first discovery of reef gold in the area and it yielded the prospect of stone at one ounce to the ton. By 25 May 1888 the Mount Alfred Gold Mining Company, had secured lease No 1138; one of three leases a mile north of the junction of Wallaby Creek and Big River. In February of the following year crushing machinery had been hauled in by bullock teams; a track being cut into the area at the same time. In the middle of July 1889 crushing commenced using a Pelton wheel driven Huntington mill, amalgam plates and blanket tables. The operation was not a success. There were claims that the reef had been "salted" and all machinery was offered for sale in October that year. By the beginning of 1890 it had all been removed to a site up Wills Creek where the Mount Wills South Company was prospecting for tin. The site gradually fell into disuse.

Statement of Significance: This was the first operation to use machinery on any scale on what was to become the Mount Wills gold field. The promoters faced enormous difficulties in getting their machinery to site in the first place and then erecting and running it in a region entirely devoid of any services. That they were not successful should not detract from their pioneering effort which showed others, on payable stone, what was possible.

Condition: The machinery was removed in its entirety in 1890 and the site is now thoroughly overgrown with blackberries. Traces of the tram track, stone chute and race line are visible above the battery site.

Classified 22/3/83

Hermes Number 67954

Property Number

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/>