
SASSAFRAS AND SALTPETRE CREEK ALLUVIAL WORKINGS

Location

BENAMBRA-CORRYONG ROAD NARIEL VALLEY, TOWONG SHIRE

Municipality

TOWONG SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8424-0013

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 11071

Property Number

History

Heritage Inventory History of Site:

Alluvial mining was in progress on Saltpetre Creek as early as 1866-7, when terraces on the spurs above Hatter's Creek were worked. In 1868, Saltpetre and Sassafras creeks were rushed by about 150 diggers. A rush to Sassafras Creek ten years later caused a track to be cut from Omeo by the Mines Department. That, in turn, led to an influx of miners to Saltpetre Creek and other creeks to the north: there were 300 diggers in the area by September 1879. The discovery of reefs in the district soon after saw the the alluvial diggings eclipsed. Just a handful of sluicers were at work on the creeks in the mid-1880s, using sluice boxes and small water wheels. Prospecting on the Gibbo River, some 10 miles to the south, in 1887, Foster observed sluicing of the terraces on either side of the river. Miners wheeled and carried washdirt from the terraces to the river for washing, there

being no water race in operation. But 'even this primitive mode of working pays wages'. It is to be supposed that the same 'primitive' style of washing was used by terrace sluicers on Sassafras and Saltpetre creeks at that, or an earlier, period. The tailraces evident on the site today show that washing was later carried out on the spot.

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/>