
MT WILLS PROPRIETARY BATTERY SITE

Location

ONE MILE SPUR TRACK MITTA MITTA, EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Municipality

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8424-0018

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 11074

Property Number

History

Heritage Inventory History of Site:

The battery of the Mt Wills Proprietary Co. was the first known to have been erected on the Mt Wills field. It was christened in March 1892, after two years' construction. The battery was situated about two miles from the mine, on Gills Creek which it was hoped would provide a plentiful supply of water. The distance between mine and battery necessitated a series of self-acting and level tramways for the conveyance of stone. The machinery initially consisted of a stone breaker, a 20-head stamper battery, and a series of classifiers and concentrators, all driven by a double-cupped Pelton wheel, 8 ft in diameter.

The first eight months of operation were disastrous, the failures indicating the difficulty of managing so extensive an undertaking in such difficult terrain. In July it was reported that the mine had not been sufficiently developed to provide enough ore to keep the battery busy. In the summer the plant ran short of water and the tramroad required re-grading to minimize the number of men engaged in haulage. Worst of all, though, the plant proved

incapable of saving tin: from 800 tons of stone treated during this period only 1½ tons of oxide were recovered; the rest was swept away into the creek with the tailings. Extensive alterations were made to the plant in 1893 (apparently including the addition of a steam engine and boiler), but no improvement resulted. From that point, the company's operations were almost solely confined to prospecting and the machinery lay idle. The Mt Wills Proprietary Co. had spent £30,000 on its mine and machinery.

In about 1898, 10 heads of stampers, boiler and steam engine were removed to the Samaritan battery site in Four Brothers Gully. In 1907, the remaining 10 heads and Pelton wheel were removed to the Mulhausen battery site on Merrimac Creek.

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/>