
COASTAL GOVERNMENT JETTY SITE

Location

GRIFFITHS STREET PORT FAIRY, MOYNE SHIRE

Municipality

MOYNE SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7321-0060

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Interpretation of Site The site is not visible on land. The landward end of the site is located within a property where recent construction has cut down the local area.

The archaeological significance of the Coastal Government Jetty Site lies in the manner and materials used in its construction. It was noted by contemporary sources to have been poorly built. How does this jetty contrast in terms of quality and durability with other contemporary and similar structures in Port Fairy and the region in general? The cultural deposits associated with the jetty could provide valuable information about its use and the trade that passed over it.

Archaeological Significance It is likely that the remains of the jetty at the landward end would have been severely impacted by recent construction. North of where the jetty would have ended on shore there appears to be a remnant wall, which may be a possible wing wall associated with the jetty.

Remains of piles associated with the jetty are likely to be present and buried under the beach. They may be exposed at times of heavy seas. Remnant pile stumps may be slightly protruding from the seabed. Other structural timbers such as headstocks and planking may be buried within the vicinity of the jetty alignment as would be artefacts discarded from the structure as well as from vessels tied up alongside it.

Historical Significance The Coastal Government Jetty was a response to the silting-up of the Moyne River in an effort to maintain Port Fairy as a viable commercial port. This jetty ultimately failed, due in part to the relatively exposed nature of the harbour. This failure renewed focus on the suitability of the Moyne River for wharfage leading to the construction of the Training Walls.

Hermes Number 155115

Property Number

History

By the early 1850s, the need for improved shipping facilities at Port Fairy was becoming apparent. The size of vessels able to enter the Moyne River was restricted due to siltation of the river mouth. This siltation created a shifting sand bar, which caused difficulties for shipping. As the township developed and shipping traffic increased, public agitation grew and petitions were made for Government funding to provide adequate infrastructure.

In 1856, the Government called tenders for the construction of a timber ocean jetty to be built on the south-western shore of Lady Bay, and connected to the township via a bridge over the Moyne River. The contract was let and the jetty built. However, the project very swiftly proved to be an utter failure. The timber jetty was poorly constructed, and too short, ending in water too shallow to permit large vessels to berth. It was located in an exposed position offering no protection for moored vessels.

It appears that the bridge planned to connect this jetty to the township was never constructed and the jetty itself was abandoned, used only occasionally by small vessels and eventually was allowed to disintegrate.

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/>