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# SIMMONS REEF GOLD MINING PRECINCT

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## Location

SIMMONS REEF ROAD BLACKWOOD, MOORABOOL SHIRE

## Municipality

MOORABOOL SHIRE

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7723-1229

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

SiteCard data copied on 04/07/2024:

## What is significant?

This landscape has never been surveyed due to thick vegetation and dangerous mine openings. Given this it is difficult to know whether they are hut sites and archaeological deposits , or mining machinery foundations.

## How is it significant?

The site has significance because of its:

Condition: undisturbed landscape so there may be retained fabric in a condition that can be understood and interpreted

# Why is it significant?

The landscape will certainly contain more historic mining features than currently known.

**Interpretation of Site** The site dates to between 1855-1880, representing a variety of gold mining activities associated with alluvial and reef mining undertaken along Simmons Reef. This area may contain evidence of early alluvial mining undertaken by individuals and later large scale reef mining undertaken by numerous companies. These features also relate to larger more intact registered historical sites within the immediate area, attesting to the intense use to the area for gold mining.

SiteCard data copied on 04/07/2024: A gold mining landscape that has dense vegetation. It will contain adits, shafts, stopes and water races. Not possible to survey. The land is managed as a State Forest

**Archaeological Significance** Archaeological remains associated with mining structures such as batteries, poppet heads, boilers and possible habitation sites may occur, although the research value of archaeological remains is considered low due to the widespread occurrence of this site type within Victoria.

**Hermes Number** 165682

**Property Number**

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## History

Simmons Reef was discovered in 1855 and intensively mined for gold until the 1870s. The area contained a series of mines, including the Imperial Co., Simmons Reef Quartz Mine Co. , Crown Co., Cornish Co., Williams Co., Kohinoor Shaft, and numerous unnamed shafts along the western side of Simmons Reef Road (Hitchcock 2007:5-9). These mining companies operated using a variety of methods including open cuts, shafts, adits, and processed the excavated material using steam powered batteries, a series of water races and waterwheels. Water races extended from the open cut at the top of the hill (close to St. Erth) north to the Crown dam and Simmons Reef reservoir along the Lerderberg River (Hitchcock 2007:23, 41 , Blackwood Race Map). Many inexperienced miners attempted quartz mining where ever a blow of quartz was discovered. Parties were formed and a paddock sunk, but as a general rule no gold was found and many miners lost valuable time and money. Many early mines were abandoned due to lack of capital (Buckingham 1970:17). More experienced quartz miners with capital were able to dig deeper to reach the gold at Simmons Reef at 250 ft (Buckingham 1970:17).

SiteCard data copied on 04/07/2024: Simmons Reef was discovered in 1855 and in this area was prospected for gold until the 1870s. Many inexperienced miners attempted quartz mining where ever signs of quartz were discovered. Parties were formed and a shaft sunk or adit driven but as a general rule no gold was found and many miners lost valuable time and money. The area which is very overgrown was recorded as having a series of small pits/adits. It is likely that the miners lived in the town.

*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/>