

BEECH FOREST WATER RACE AND COLLECTION WEIR

Location

5 BEECH FOREST-LAVERS HILL ROAD BEECH FOREST, COLAC OTWAY SHIRE

Municipality

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7620-0018

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Interpretation of Site	Site is part of the former Colac-Beech Forest-Crowes railway line, with the mile stone indicating the distance from Melbourne. Closure of the line during the 1960s lead to the abandonment of the line and the removal of the railway and associated infrastructure. The servicing of the locomotives and the line meant that fixtures and other infrastructure were developed long its length, these included water points, coal storage, signals, distance markers, stopping places and a telephone line. Water points were located at Barongarook, Gellibrand, Wimba, Dinmont, Beech Forest, Kincaid and Crowes, and these comprised weirs or pumps, concrete reservoirs, piping and elevated banks.
Archaeological Significance	Low potential to contain archaeological deposits.
Hermes Number	194682

History

A series of land acts were passed in the 1860s in an attempt to create small farm holdings, whilst at the same time recognising the pioneering efforts of the squatters. Under the first land act, the 1860 Land Sales Act, three million acres were surveyed into allotments of between 80 to 640 acres. No person could select more than 640 acres annually, and the land had to be paid for outright, or half paid and half leased. Subsequently more land was made available for selection under the Land Act (1862) and the 1865 Amendment Act. Then in 1869, most land - including unsurveyed land - became available for selection under the Land Act. (Sheehan, 2003: 19) The Otway Ranges, in south west Victoria, were first opened to agricultural selection in 1884, under the *Land Act* J 884, when allotments were selected from pre survey maps prepared by the Lands Department (Minchinton 2011: 2). Within ten years more than 200 allotments had been taken up (Houghton 2005: 1). Yet it wasn't until the arrival of the railway, during the 1870s, that Victoria's isolated south western region was considered penetrable. Until this time, the Otway

Ranges were virtually impassable and as such, were of little economic value. The introduction of the railway provided the first all weather, fast and reliable transport service into the area, which as Houghton noted was 'characterised by dense timber and high rainfall'

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/>