
BEECHWORTH HISTORIC GOLD MINING LANDSCAPE

Location

OFF BEECHWORTH-STANLEY ROAD, BEECHWORTH VIC 3747

Municipality

INDIGO SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8225-0154

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - September 1, 2020

The Beechworth historic mining landscape is significant for the extensive remains of gold-mining sites and features within it which represent nineteenth century methods of both alluvial mining and reef mining. The area is associated with an important era in the history of north-eastern Victoria and it reflects the industry which supported Beechworth, Yackandandah and other towns in the region for a substantial part of the second half of the last century. The way in which the mining sites blend in with a rugged creek valley heavily clad with native timber gives the place aesthetically important landscape qualities. The Beechworth historic gold mining landscape is of historic, archaeological, and scientific significance. The Beechworth historic mining landscape is historically and scientifically significant as a preserved example of a landscape shaped through a range of mining practices. Gold mining sites are pivotal to understanding the role gold mining played in Victoria's history. Water diversions, sluicing, tailraces, sludge piles, pebbles dumps are significant ingredients in understanding both the technology of gold-mining and the impact mining had on the natural environment. The Beechworth historic mining landscape is archaeologically important for its potential to yield artefacts and evidence which should provide significant information about the cultural history of gold-mining in the Beechworth district and the gold miners themselves.

Interpretation of Site	Gold workings, huts and gardens were marked on the Beechworth to Nine Mile Creek Diggings, 1857 which may have left a signature in buried deposits. However, the subsequent activity of gold mining sluicing that occurred in this area has left a clear mark on the landform. This later activity is likely to have removed any evidence of the earlier activity. Any accumulation of occupation deposits or features associated with the huts and gardens marked on the 1857 plan was probably removed with the metres of topsoils sluiced away and washed down stream. Features associated with gold mining sluicing and quartz mining activity remain. Their presence was verified during the survey; the sluiced edges of the creek valley, the sludge and gravel mounds, the water races cut into rock, soil embankments and terraces. It is possible there are archaeological deposits and artefacts buried in the soils associated with this activity within the site extent. The site extent is defined as the area within Crown land corresponding in part with the RNE listing for Beechworth Historic Park and according to the attached plan.
Hermes Number	206919
Property Number	

History

The discovery of gold transformed north-eastern Victoria. Payable gold was discovered on Spring Creek in 1852 on David Reid's pastoral run at May Day Hills. The first gold deposits were found in loose nugget and powder forms in gold bearing soils. A township on Spring Creek was surveyed in 1853 and named Beechworth after the surveyor's birthplace in England. Gold was discovered eight kilometres south-east of Beechworth in the vicinity of present-day Stanley. The locality was named Nine Mile Creek as it was nine miles from Beechworth. In 1854 the population stood at 650 (Freeman 2002: 39). There were two diggings at Nine Mile – the Upper and the Lower Nine Mile. Gold was discovered soon after in Yackandandah, and nearby Snake Creek (Stanley) and Wooregee in 1853. The initial discoveries of gold were to see an influx of miners and small settlements spring up along creek beds. The gold fields plan of 1857, the 'Road from Beechworth to Nine Mile Diggings', shows the diggings along the road at Hurdles Flat, Deep Creek, Europa Gully, Silver Creek as well as the largest settlement of Nine Mile diggings (Figure 4). The Ovens Directory for 1857 lists no less than seven pubs along the route. Butchers, bakers, storekeepers, blacksmiths and boot suppliers all plied their trade along this road in 1857 (Ovens Directory: 1857). The Chinese population was 1000 in 1860, they used dry sinking rather than sluicing and worked the tailings discarded by Europeans. The site card for the VHI site 'Chinaman's Flat Alluvial Workings' (H8225-0041) references their presence on the gold diggings.

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/>