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# COLAC POLICE RESERVE

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## Location

40-46 QUEEN STREET COLAC, COLAC OTWAY SHIRE

## Municipality

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7621-0035

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 27, 2022

### What is significant?

A Government Gazette from 1861 shows £450 was granted to build the bluestone police lock-up and other associated structures. These were likely to be a residence and station with associated outbuildings. In 1869 the buildings are described as being in a “delapidate state” due to flooding, repairs were undertaken in the 1870s with more development occurring on the site. Several additions, alterations and repairs are listed as public works throughout the nineteenth century. From these tenders, several buildings are listed on the site. These include:

- 1861 Police lock-up
- 1860s-1870 Police residence
- 1870s-1880 Police Station
- 1880 Police Stables
- 1880-1890 Police Court House

A photograph from the c.1890s shows three prominent buildings fronting Queen Street. Additional substantial buildings can be seen to the rear of the police lock-up and courthouse. A c.1905 photograph shows the police court from the rear while the Barongarook Creek water level was high. The slope from the rear fence is depicted as steep moving down towards the creek.

The 1927 aerial photograph shows a developed block with a number of buildings to the rear of the courthouse and a c.1950 aerial photograph shows outbuildings to the rear of the police lock-up and courthouse. A Scout Hall was constructed in the 1940s on the public reserve by the Barongarook Creek. The 1889 Courthouse was demolished in the 1970s to make way for modern facilities. The only nineteenth century building remaining on site is the bluestone police lock-up in the centre of the site. Photographs showing the construction of the c.1920 police station on the corner of Queen and Dennis Street display an amount of fill underlying the newly constructed building.

The site currently comprises a modern police station fronting Queen Street, Colac. Over half the site comprises buildings constructed within the last 10 years. The c.1861 bluestone police lock-up is located to the rear of these buildings with a concrete carpark to the east. To the rear of the police station is an undeveloped grass area. The 1940s scout reserve is between the creek and the open grassed area. Therefore, the site has moderate potential to contain significant archaeological deposits, features and/ artefacts associated with the nineteenth century occupation of the site.

The Colac Police Reserve is of local historical significance as it displays the development of the township and may provide archaeological evidence on regional police reserves, which is currently underrepresented in the Heritage Inventory.

Updated 27 May 2022

**How is it significant?**

**Why is it significant?**

Interpretation  
of Site

The site has two historical uses. Hugh Murray was an early pastoralist in the Lake Colac region. The land on which the police reserve sits is within a fenced paddock marked as part of his pastoral run. It is likely that the fence contained an orchard or had some form of agricultural use. The land is within a swamp area of the Barongarook Creek. The creek has historical flood events which may have preserved the early pastoral landscape and original creek bed. From 1861 the site has been used as a police reserve. As the site was prone to flooding it was subjected to many additions and alterations over the years. The nineteenth century police station may have been demolished in the 1920s to make way for the new police station. The remaining nineteenth century buildings were demolished in the c.1970s. A modern facility has been recently constructed over approximately half the site.

## Historical Significance

The site is west of Barongarook Creek and initially mapped as part of a swamp area of the creek. In 1849 the site was mapped to show a small, fenced paddock. The use of this paddock has yet to be identified, however it is likely that it contained an orchard and is associated with Hugh Murray's pastoral station. A Government Gazette from 1861 shows £450 was granted to build the bluestone police lock-up and other associated structures. These were likely to be a residence and station with associated outbuildings. In 1869 the buildings are described as being in a "delipitate state" due to flooding, repairs were undertaken in the 1870s with more development occurring on the site. Several additions, alterations and repairs are listed as public works throughout the nineteenth century. From these tenders, several buildings are listed on the site. These include; 1861 Police lock-up 1860s-1870 Police residence 1870s-1880 Police Station 1880 Police Stables 1880-1890 Police Court House A photograph from the c.1890s shows three prominent buildings fronting Queen Street (see below). Additional substantial buildings can be seen to the rear of the police lock-up and courthouse. A c.1905 photograph shows the police court from the rear while the Barongarook Creek water level was high. The slope from the rear fence is depicted as steep moving down towards the creek. The 1927 Pratt aerial photograph shows a developed block with a number of buildings to the rear of the courthouse and a c.1950 aerial photograph shows outbuildings to the rear of the police lock-up and courthouse. A Scout Hall was constructed in the 1940s on the public reserve by the Barongarook Creek. The 1889 Courthouse was demolished in the 1970s to make way for modern facilities. The only nineteenth century building remaining on site is the bluestone police lock-up in the center of the site. Photographs showing the construction of the c.1920 police station on the corner of Queen and Dennis Street display an amount of fill underlying the newly constructed building.

Hermes Number 208869

Property Number

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## History

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*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/>*