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# 1350 SOMERTON ROAD CIRCULAR CISTERN

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## Location

1350 SOMERTON ROAD, OAKLANDS JUNCTION

## Municipality

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7822-2416

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - November 3, 2022

### What is significant?

The archaeological remains relating to the former farmhouse and occupation, and the ruin of the brick cistern.

### How is it significant?

The site is of local historical significance and archaeological significance.

### Why is it significant?

The site has the archaeological potential to provide information early occupation in Bulla, and common water storage practices in Bulla.

## Interpretation of Site

The site was first purchased in 1848/1850 by Anne Green (one of the original owners of the Woodlands estate) and was subsequently subdivided. It does not appear to have been occupied in the 1850s-1870s, although it may have been cleared and used for farming/grazing. The first confirmation of a building and cistern at the site is the 1916 Sunbury map where both are shown in the south-eastern corner of the site (Figure 6). Both features are also shown on the 1938 Sunbury map (Figure 7). It appears that the building was most likely a farmhouse given its location close to the road and the presence of a water source or storage feature close by (the circular cistern). This type of cistern was part of an early type of domestic water supply practice used in rural areas around Melbourne from the 1860s to the early 20th century. It represents a type of water management no longer in use and that was common in the Bulla and greater Melbourne rural areas. The circular cistern usually had a domed cover and was connected to downpipes to collect water run-off from roofs of houses and other outbuildings on rural properties. There was most likely a pump attached to the cistern to draw the water out when needed. (Moloney, Rowe and Jellie, 2006) The building was demolished by at least 1968 (Figure 3). The property has continued in use as a farming land, since that time. There was a driveway from the gate on Somerton Road that angled diagonally from south-east to north-west through the paddock, passing very close to the well-cistern (Figure 4).

Hermes Number 209300

Property Number

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## History

The circular cistern was recorded in the south-eastern corner of the property at 1350 Somerton Road. In the 1850 land sales, the original Allotment 4 was brought by Anne Greene (Figure 5). The site appears to have been part of the post-Gold Rush settlement of Oaklands Junction when this area saw the subdivision of the original allotment at the north-eastern corner of Oaklands and Somerton roads into smaller allotments. The cistern with an accompanying building is shown on the 1916 Sunbury map of the area (Figure 6), reappearing on the 1938 Sunbury map (Figure 7). By 1968, aerial photograph of the site shows that the house/building is no longer present, but a dark circle indicates that the cistern/well was present at that time (Figure 3). This suggests that the building was demolished at some point between 1938 and 1968.

*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/>*