
FORMER CENTRAL VICTORIAN LIVESTOCK EXCHANGE (BALLARAT SALE YARDS)

Location

1020 LA TROBE STREET DELACOMBE, BALLARAT CITY

Municipality

BALLARAT CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7622-0467

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 13, 2023

What is significant?

Historic archaeological deposits, within the former sale yards precinct, associated with the mid-19th century Hand and Band mine shaft and McMahan's House/Public Bar and previously unrecorded material related to the 1909 Federation era Administration building.

The Hand and Band mine shaft

Any 19th century archaeological remains associated with the Hand and Band mine shaft No. 4 that operated in the late 1860s and early 1870s would be Remains of the Hand and Band mine shaft would be of historical (Criterion A) and archaeological (Criterion C) significance for its association with the Victorian Gold Rush and the pivotal role 19th century mining played in the economic and social development of the state. The mine has no above ground expression but based on historical records and cartographic evidence it could survive as a capped, partially filled vertical shaft.

McMahan's House/Public Bar

Based on cartographic evidence and historic records the McMahan property was built on unsurveyed crown land on the fringes of Ballarat's municipal boundary and operated (licensed or unlicensed) as a public bar. The bar was cleared away before 1875 to allow for the expansion of the sale yards into the Western Allotment. Despite the superstructure being demolished sub-surface historic archaeological remains may survive in the form of footings, postholes or cesspits (Criterion C).

Administration building and associated material

Previously unrecorded historic archaeological material associated with the 1909 Federation era Administration building would be significant (Criterion C).

How is it significant?

Remains of the Hand and Band mine shaft would be of historical (Criterion A) and archaeological (Criterion C) significance for its association with the Victorian Gold Rush and the pivotal role 19th century mining played in the economic and social development of the state.

Remains of the McMahon's House and Bar would be of historical (Criterion A) and archaeological (Criterion C) at a local level.

The Administration Building at the former Livestock Exchange is architecturally significant (Criteria D & E) as a substantially intact example of Federation design associated with sale yards operations. The building is also one of the earliest, substantially built and most intact examples of sale yards Administration buildings in Victoria. Any archaeological deposits present within the place's footprint would be complementary to this significance and significant in their own right under (Criterion C).

Why is it significant?

Surviving evidence of the Hand and Band mine, abandoned since c.1875, would be significant for its association with Victoria's Gold Rush history, and of particular interest to the activities of the United Hand in Hand and Band of Hope Company. Archaeological remains associated with the mine shaft has the potential to yield information pertaining to Gold extraction unavailable from other sources. There may be buried features including building and machinery footings, mullock remains and associated artefacts and tools. Structural components of the mine shaft itself may yield information that could contribute to our understanding of the various engineering and construction techniques used in the establishment and operation of mines during the Gold Rush period.

Any archaeological remains associated with McMahon's House, a modest enterprise on the fringes of Ballarat, would have the potential to yield information on the social and recreational activities of the local mining population in a pivotal period of the Ballarat's development .

Previously unrecorded, sub-surface, archaeological features belonging to the administration building, as well as any associated archaeological evidence, dating to the early 20th century, would be archaeologically significant and have the potential to provide insight into the historical operation of the sale yards and the lives of the people living and working at the site.

The study area's development history indicate there are five main phases of occupation and use. Of most relevance to the study area's archaeological potential are phases 2, 3 and to a lesser extent 4 Phase 0: Pre 1837 – Pre-contact Aboriginal occupation and use Phase 1: Informal use, pastoral run (1835-1851) There is no information suggesting the study area was used formally during this initial pastoral phase. Activity in this area was likely short term and transitory limited to open camp herding and moving stock to water sources. Potential archaeological remains would include stray finds and evidence of land clearance. Isolated artefacts, if recovered, would likely not meet the required heritage threshold to be considered of significance. Phase 2: Gold Rush(1850s-1863) Following the discovery of gold on Yuill's Ballarat Station in 1851 the wider area was quickly flooded with prospectors initially panning and puddling for alluvial gold and later sinking shafts to access subterranean gold reefs on the hills and gullies either side of the Yarrowee River. Tent villages and access tracks were quickly developed to service the diggings that in later years gave way to formally surveyed blocks and allotments emanating from central Sturt Street. Based on early cartographic sources the study area, south of Victoria Park, was originally just outside the municipal boundary drawn up in 1855. An 1861 map entitled 'Ballarat gold field no.1' described the local topography as a mix of open forest land and undulating basalt plains. Despite the gazetting of Victoria Park in 1861 as a public recreational facility eight different mining companies retained interests in the park and its immediate surrounds. The nearest operation to the study area was no. 4 shaft owned by the Hand and Band Company. This enterprise evolved from a number of amalgamations, it was originally the Hand in Hand Company founded in 1856, that later joined with the other companies including the Band of Hope company active in the present-day Victoria Park area to form The United Hand in Hand and Band of Hope Company (c.1872), commonly referred to as the Hand and Band Company. The company had four shafts no.1 is at the southern end of Victoria Park, opposite the Sutton and Winter streets intersection. No. 2 is in the south-east corner of Victoria Park, No. 3 probably sited in the western section of Victoria Park and no. 4 was just beyond the south-west corner of Victoria Park, under a parking area in the saleyards. This location is confirmed in the Bagizawe Map of 1867 that marks the presence of the shaft and a nearby house known as McMahons. In an article in the Ballarat Courier from February 1873 the manager of the Hand and Band Company reviewing recent activities including sinking No. 4 shaft and putting in pumps and constructing reef drives and 'her 'works to get at the ground before the Winter Freehold got it' . An update on progress in the shaft from the following year notes the company has ' 25 men employed in the top level, from whom we are to receive one-half the gold they may obtain, the company paying for firewood and engine-drivers. The water cylinder referred to in previous report, recommended by your mining manager and engineer for pumping the water at the blind shaft in the 425-foot level, has since been erected, and, notwithstanding having had a large influx of water in that shaft, we have been enabled to sink it to the required depth, namely, to the 500-foot level, and have now three parties extending this level; two from the blind shaft, and one from main shaft, which will enable us to reach the main gutter in a very short time . The final mention of the shaft from the local press is dated March of 1875 when under pressure from the Bank and with difficulty raising capital from shareholders the Hand in Band Company faces a sale of its claim, plant and machinery. The No. 4 Shaft is described as unprofitable and although the writer concedes that there are are prospects to reach gold deposits the investment required may outweigh the potential returns . The gloomy future predicted in this article must have been realized for based on the surveyor's map of December 1875 the shaft is described as abandoned. Regarding the nearby McMahons site a file from the Board of Works, dated 1868, notes that McMahon's public house 'would interfere with the planned development of the sale yards'. The inference is clear and on later maps the house/bar is no longer extent. Surviving archaeological evidence from this phase could include domestic waste from temporary camps or tenements, foundations/cess pit for McMahon's public house and material culture relating to mining activity – shaft entrance, foundations of associated structures, wash deposits etc. Given the level of subsequent development including the yards, the road the railway easement and ancillary services the potential for archaeological remains from this phase was assessed as low. Phase 3: 19th century Development of sale yard (1863-1876) In 1863 Thomas Baird the Town Surveyor, acting for the Council, laid out the sale yards on a 15 acre reservation complete with fenced off drafting and selling pens connected by interlinked gravelled lanes. The yard was situated to the southwest of the town, a quarter of a mile from the No. 1 shaft of Band of Hope Gold Mining Co. and was supplied by piped water pumped by a windmill from Wendouree Swamp. In 1875 the yards were extended into the adjacent 17-acre western allotment formerly known as 'Cardigan Square'. A map drawn up in 1867 by E.W. Bagsizawe prior to the acquisition shows this allotment as unsurveyed Crown lands containing the aforementioned 'Band of Hand' Shaft and McMahon's Public House. Both these sites were cleared to accommodate Gilles Street and to

Other Names	Ballarat Sale Yards,
Hermes Number	209466
Property Number	

History

European settlement at the former Central Livestock Exchange (Ballarat Sale Yards) at 1020 Latrobe Street, Delacombe dates from March 1838 when Scottish Pastoralists Archibald Buchanan Yuille and his cousin William Cross Yuille family established a 10,000 acre sheep run, on traditional Wadawurrung land, near present day Lake Wendouree. The run corresponds to the now inner suburbs of Ballarat, extending south as far as Sebastopol. Following the discovery of gold between the Yarrowee River and the Sovereign Hill Park in 1851, the first Gold miners into the area, searching along creeks and waterways, would have utilised bullock tracks laid down by the Yuille's. As a booming gold rush town Ballarat quickly became one of the most populous inland towns in Australia becoming a municipality in 1855, a borough in 1863 and a city in 1870. In 1862, in response to demands from local stockmen, the municipal council temporarily set aside 15 acres of land of an allotment at Delacombe fronting onto La Trobe Street (the eastern allotment) for the development of a livestock sale yards. The yards, laid out to a design by Mr. Baird the Town Surveyor were formally opened in 1864. Based on a plan of 1867, the allotment to the west of the cattle yards, comprising a large rectangular plot of unsurveyed crown lands, was the site of two marked features; a Mine shaft operated by the Hand and Band Company near present day Gilles Street South and McMahon's House/ Public Bar located opposite the south west corner of the Royal Park (Victoria Park). The mine shaft was one of four operated locally by the United Hand in-Hand and Band of Hope Company (Hand and Band Co.) to explore the Inkerman Lead Gutter. Shaft no. 4 operated from 1866 until 1875 at which point the shareholders decided that the investment required to continue prospecting outweighed the potential returns. McMahon's property is referenced in 1868 by an Officer of the Board of Land and Works describing it as a public house that would interfere with the workings of the sheep yards. In 1875, with an increase in trading, the council extended the sale yards into the eastern half of the Western Allotment then known as Cardigan Square. This extension comprising a 2 acre sheep pen is shown on a map dated December of that year. A handwritten annotation on the map describes the Hand and Band mine shaft as abandoned. The McMahon house is not depicted, likely cleared away in advance of the Gilles Street South Road extension. In the 1880s, under the stewardship of the newly appointed Cattle Yard Inspector Mr. William Brazenor, the Saleyards underwent a major redevelopment to increase capacity. Improvements involved redesigning the stock pens and constructing a dedicated railway branch line. Throughout the pre-war period, the local authority continued to invest in the facility erecting timber sheds and installing ramps and water troughs. In 1909 a new Federation style Administration Building was added fronting onto La Trobe Street opposite the junction of Stonepark Road. This attractive red brick building, divided into inner and outer offices, was designed by Arthur Ferrai, the City Surveyor, and provided long overdue facilities to manage the increasing volume of transactions. The still extant building is a free standing, single story red brick, five bay office topped with a hipped roof mounted by a lantern light with symmetrical corner chimneys. Internally the building is arranged around a cruciform passage with four groups of offices. During the war years, a portion of the western allotment, was set aside for a railway easement to service the Commonwealth Government's Guncotton Factory located to the south. Post war this infrastructure continued to be used by the Imperial Chemical Industry Co. until the licence was revoked in 1971. In 1963 of a new pig sales pavilion was built at the corner of Gilles St. South and La Trobe Street. Internally the pavilion housed an octagonal sales ring surrounded by tiered timber seating. Other additions to the western allotment included a truck wash and an extension to the truck unloading areas. Sustained capital investment throughout the 70's and 80's resulted in general improvements to the yards infrastructure that continued to increase sales. By 1981 the pig pavilion alone was processing 2000 head a week with equally impressive numbers for cattle and sheep. By the late 1980s the saleyard was largely becoming a self-governing operation that resulted in a rebrand to the Ballarat Livestock Selling Centre and later in 2010 the Central Victorian Livestock Exchange following the yards' sale to Palisade Investments. In October 2018, after over one hundred and fifty years of continuous operation the Sale yards moved to a new 70,000 sqm undercover facility at Miners Rest.

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/>