
HARRINGTON'S HILL STONE WALL

Location

MCCORMICK'S ROAD FOSTERVILLE, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7824-0113

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - April 14, 2023

What is significant?

The use and function of the stone feature is unknown. Archaeological deposits, features or artefacts will provide information about its use, alignment and function.

How is it significant?

The stone wall site is of local historical significance.

Why is it significant?

The feature and surrounding site area may be historically significant for its associations with mining activities, or for its associations with the Harrington's Hill farm.

Interpretation of Site	<p>Pre- 19th Century: Traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung people. Early 19th Century: Agricultural lands occupied by European squatters farming sheep, cattle, pigs and rabbits and growing rape. Mid-19th Century: Gold discovered in 1850s and private prospecting and alluvial mining commences on a small scale. Late 19th Century: Industrial deep lead and open-cut mining begins throughout Fosterville. The Fosterville township is formalized in 1894 and large-scale mining begins in 1896. Early 20th Century: Mining begins to rapidly decline, and Fosterville Gold Mining Co. stops work between 1897-1902. By 1903, the township of Fosterville also began to decline, and the mines began to close in 1906. Races and batteries in the area were repurposed for farming industries. Smaller estates are utilised for farming and the soldier settlement scheme. Late 20th -Present: Interest in Fosterville is renewed, and an Environmental Effects Statement (EES) was commissioned in 1996 to assess a gold mining venture utilising open-cut mining methods. Current underground mining operations commenced in 2005. The history of the area demonstrates both industrial and domestic European occupation from the early 19th continuing into the present day. Agricultural estates were present in the early 19th century with private and industrial mining occurring throughout Fosterville in the late 19th century. A return to agricultural practices in the area occurs in the late 20th century. The stone wall site itself has been inspected at least twice to date, in 1989 and 2022. The site was not identified during Snoek's 1988 inspection of the area which listed 41 potential sites. The results of the 1989 site inspection describe the site merely as an "isolated, deteriorated site" with no recommendations presented (Wright 1989, p. 11). The 2022 inspection described the site as an in situ deteriorated drystone wall. The wall was measured and photographed, and a newer star picket fence was noted as being in alignment with the stone wall (Geiberras & Hocking 2022, p. 91). No other features or surface artefacts were noted to be related to the stone wall during this inspection. It is likely that this stone wall is agricultural in function due to the agricultural nature of the wider area during the early 19th century and again in the late 20th century. The 1943 Ellesmere County map shows the wall as being in line with the property boundary that is likely related to agriculture (Figure 5).</p>
Other Names	Site 45 – Stone Wall,
Hermes Number	209521
Property Number	

History

The below history is drawn from Geiberras and Hocking's 2022, Technical Report A2: Historical Heritage Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Projects, written on behalf of The Fosterville Gold Mine Sustained Operations Project. The stone wall is located on the lands traditionally occupied by the Dja Dja Wurrung people who were displaced from their lands when European settlers arrived in the late 1830s. The land had great farming potential and attracted squatters who bred sheep for hides, meat, and wool (Ballinger 2020, p.14). Squatters and their workers built huts, outstations, yards, hurdles, shearing sheds, fences and sheep dips throughout the area. The largest run in Fosterville, then known as Ellesmere, was owned by Henry Grey Bennett and consisted of 51,200 acres with approximately 16,000 sheep (Webb et al. 1985, p. 40). The location of the run is demonstrated on the 1851, Ham's squatting map of Victoria (Figure 3). This run was later divided into Barnedown East and Barnedown West, both owned by John Harney from 1865 until 1870 (Spreadborough and Anderson, 1983). The Barnedown run was further divided into smaller estates, a portion of which, known as the Adelaide Vale Estate in the late 1890s, was owned by the O'Keefe family that helped construct the Great Southern Railway. The Adelaide Vale Estate consisted of 4,000 acres of agricultural land with an area of scrub land in the south-eastern corner of the property that held a battery for mining works. At this time the estate was planned to be cleared, ploughed and cultivated with the intention of growing rape (The Australasian, 1896). During this time, dairy cattle, 4,000 sheep, hundreds of pigs and dozens of rabbits were present on the estate (The Australasian, 1896). By 1921, the estate consisted of 3,100 acres that had been subdivided again into eight smaller farms that were being sold at auction (The Argus 1921, p.22). By 1923, the estate had been allotted as part of the soldier settlement. Gold was first discovered in Fosterville in the early 1850's; however, Fosterville

remained a farming community until the 1890s (Marshall 1996, p. 3). A local school was opened in 1898, and Anglican and Bible Christian church services were held (Falvey and Dolling 2021, p. 21). Between the 1850s and 1890s, mining in Fosterville intensified. The reefs were opened in 1894, the township of Fosterville had been formalised and large-scale mining operations began across the gold fields (Ballinger 2020, p.44). By 1903, the township of Fosterville began to decline, and the mines began to close in 1906 (Marshall 1996, p. 3). It was during this decline that the races once used for batteries were repurposed for dairying and agriculture for the farming region (Victorian Places, Fosterville, 2015). In 1937, Fosterville was listed as a closed mine that was to be subject of a shaft filling scheme (Bannear n.d., p.196). Commencing in 1935, this scheme involved the filling and securing of dangerous open shafts and was funded by grants to create jobs during the depression (Bannear n.d., p.196). Although mining had ceased in the area, the cyanide works and ore treatment plants continued to operate until 1939 (Bannear n.d., p. 197). The approximate location of the stone wall can be seen in Figure 4 where it appears to be a part of the boundary of P.J. Owen and P. Deehan's property in 1943. This property is likely to have been agricultural at this time. Interest in Fosterville was renewed by the late 20th century and in 1996 an Environmental Effects Statement (EES) was commissioned to assess a gold mining venture utilising open-cut mining methods at Fosterville. By 1998, the mine was producing approximately 40,000 ounces of gold a year from oxide mineralization with the prospect of further gold from sulfide mineralization (Victorian Places, Fosterville, 2015). The current underground mining operations commenced in 2005 and focused on near-surface, low grade mineralization. Between 2015 and 2017, high grade visible gold mineralization was intersected at depth leading to underground expansion doubling the underground mineral reserves. The mine is currently the largest gold producer in Victoria.

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/>