
ROSS CREEK ROAD HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

Location

ROSS CREEK ROAD, BONSHAW VIC 3352

Municipality

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7622-0471

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - August 4, 2023

What is significant?

The historical objects recovered include metal fragments (nails), glass fragments, brick fragments, and ceramic fragments. Some fragments of ceramic pieces contain patterns that may be able to provide an estimate of date of the site. Makers Mark has been identified on any of the fragments recovered. Further investigation is required to ascertain the relative dates of the deposit.

How is it significant?

Two primary factors have been considered in this evaluation: the extent of disturbance of the deposit in which the material has been identified, and the second being that the deposit is likely a result of operations of a known mining site, which has been well documented previously. No additional information, other than the extent of sludge redistribution, has been garnished because of the identification of the deposit. However, further research is likely required to better understand the assemblage and confirm age ranges of the material recovered.

Why is it significant?

Despite the quantity of material, the site is considered to be of local historical significance and has archaeological value.

Interpretation of Site	<p>Include phases in the development of the site, functions and activities represented, as well as current place use: The archaeological site is located within the historical gold mining areas of Ballarat. No mining activities are currently known to have occurred over the area in which the deposits have been identified. However, two historical mining shafts are located approximately 250m east of the place; The Prince Imperial Mine and The Albion Consols Mine. Ross Creek is located immediately south of the place and dissects the northernmost property. No former homestead is known to have existed at the site. Although no records indicate that the pastoral runs within the activity area were ever residentially occupied in the nineteenth century, contextual information suggests that archaeologically sensitive deposits are associated with 'sludge' from adjacent gold mines. As Ross Creek flood waters breached its banks, sludge deposits and associated discard (i.e., porcelain fragments) would have been deposited in secondary contexts within the alluvial flood silts. Further, as outlined in Section 2, landowner Jock Winters raised disputes with the Prince of Wales Mine for intentionally pumping sludge onto his property, which surrounded place. It is likely that the place would have been affected by similar matters. It is also possible that unrecorded site occupations, such as squatting and vagrant activity, contributed to the assemblage identified today. In addition, the area has been repeatedly ploughed, which has likely further disturbed the artefact-bearing contexts relating to this investigation.</p>
Hermes Number	209795
Property Number	

History

Before European contact, the area was inhabited by the Clans of the Wadawurrung, who managed and cared for the land for many generations. During European contact, William Yuille initially settled west and southwest Ballarat, around modern-day Sebastopol, as early as 1838, and later established the Bonshaw Pastoral Run within the Parish of Cardigan (Withers 1887, p.04) on previously unleased rural Crown Land. The Pastoral Run extended and encompassed east and west Sebastopol, which comprise the activity area's northern and western boundaries. George Russell and Henry Anderson acquired the run from William Yuille, renaming the pastoral run to 'Waverley'. In 1849, the pastoral run was again sold to Jock Winter, who reverted the run name back to Bonshaw after his wife's hometown in Scotland (Withers 1887, p.04). Winter's land purchase would later deem financially beneficial, as the discovery of gold in Ballarat afforded him the means to establish a thriving agricultural business. The Gippsland Times recounts his operations in the area, citing that he "owned some 20,000 sheep and turned an honest penny selling mutton to diggers and butchers" (Gippsland Times 1875 p.4). Cartographic material from 1860 demonstrates the relationship between Winter's titles and the CHMP 19337 activity area. Winter would later go on to sell 640 acres of his property southeast of the activity area and establish Winters Freehold Mining Company (Gippsland Times 1875 p.4). Ballarat continued to flourish throughout the gold rush in the 1850s and 1860s, seeing as many as 25,000 residents as of 1853 (Victorian Places 2015). Occupation rapidly sprawled into satellite mining communities on the outskirts of Ballarat, including contemporary towns such as Sebastopol and Bonshaw. By 1871, the population had doubled from its figure two decades prior, which put significant pressure on authorities to upgrade infrastructure. Consequentially, a railway was constructed connecting the major town of Geelong to Ballarat (Victorian Places 2015). In the 1860s, in the midst of Ballarat's gold rush, The Prince of Wales Mine (also referred to as the Prince Imperial) was established approximately 600 m southeast of the CHMP 19337 activity area (Mindat 2018). The mine was managed by Alexander Dempster and F.W. Tatham. Records indicate that Jock Winters, owner of Bonshaw Company and the land surrounding the CHMP 19337 activity area in the mid-1800s, took umbrage with the Prince of Wales Mine for their repeated pumping of mining sludge onto his property (Mindat 2018). Despite the dispute, the parent company leased 180 acres of land from Winters for mining operations before eventually closing in 1900 (Mindat 2018). Gold mining within the Ballarat region would continue up until 1918 when the region experienced a mining depression. Focus shifted from that of mining to local industry, with foundries, and ironmongery becoming prevalent within the region. The uneven and hilly terrain of Ballarat West was suitable for livestock grazing expansion, with several woollen mills in operation (Victorian Places 2015). Following the Second World War,

Ballarat was subject to a second wave of industrialisation and immigrant population, with several hundred hectares of regional farmland west and southwest of Lake Wendouree subdivided and re-zoned for a Housing Commission estate. Below exhibits minor amounts of residential living occurring northeast of the activity area. However, the activity area retained its property boundaries and rural characteristics. Following the Second World War, Ballarat was subject to a second wave of industrialisation and immigrant population, with several hundred hectares of regional farmland west and southwest of Lake Wendouree subdivided and re-zoned for a Housing Commission estate. Below exhibits minor amounts of residential living occurring northeast of the Activity Area. However, the activity area retained its property boundaries and the rural characteristics exhibited above. Post-1980, the activity area has remained untouched by high-density living. The land use of the properties has remained as pastoral grazing with a single rural residential dwelling within the northern property.

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/>