LAL LAL WATERWORKS ASSOCIATION

Location

WEST OF COAL MINE ROAD, MOUNT DORAN STATE FOREST LAL LAL, MOORABOOL SHIRE

Municipality

MOORABOOL SHIRE

Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H7722-0086

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 17, 2024

What is significant?
The site is associated with the Lal Lal Waterworks Association and includes a small section of the scheme that lies within the Mt Doran State Forest. Intact archaeological features on the site include water races, 2 dams with burrowing pits excavated the embankment of the smaller dam, and a puddling machine. There is a high likelihood of further archaeological features and subsurface deposits associated with the operation of the Lal Lal Waterworks.
How is it significant?
The site is archaeologically significant because it retains key aspects of the water distribution scheme and has a high level of intactness.
Intactness: retains evidence of the key aspects of the Lal Lal Waterworks Association Scheme – distribution dam, race connecting this dam to a smaller one, and a puddling machine site.
Integrity: the puddling machine site has a compact arrangement of relics which demonstrates the basic outlay of this type of mining operation.
Condition: retained fabric in a condition that can be understood and interpreted
Why is it significant?

The site is historically significant for its association with the Lal Lal Waterworks Association, which was a significant entity formed in 1858 in response for the demand for water on the Victorian Goldfields. The Association secured the first water right licence issued in Victoria and developed a large scale enterprise to attempt to meet this demand.

Interpretation of Site	The site is associated with the Lal Lal Waterworks Association and includes a small section of the scheme that lies within the Mt Doran State Forest. Further work in the future will add further sections to complete the picture. Puddling machines: These machines were being used as early as 1853. These machines could be used after gold rush diggings had been deemed to be worked-out. A puddling machine comprised a circular wood-lined trough, one metre in width and usually 6.7 metres in diameter. On the central mound formed by the trough stood a wooden pivot post to which was attached a horizontal wooden pole, with a horse harnessed at the other end. The horse trudged repeatedly around the outer edge of the trough, dragging the iron rakes, which hung from the pole, through the washdirt in the trough, breaking it up and loosening the gold. Water was fed to the puddling machine from a dam, sometimes via a water race. Water race: These features are linear earth-cut channels constructed to divert water from streams and, by force of gravity, convey it to the site of gold mining operations. The earth banks of water races can be retained by dry stone, especially if the terrain is sloping. Many water race survive today. Most surviving water races are degraded and their courses disjointed; yet they can still be traced. In an isolated bush setting, a water race is a trail of crumbs to an historic mining landscape. Water races are unlikely to contain artefact-bearing occupation deposits. In rare instances, a race may have been constructed through land previously used for gold mining and habitation.
Hermes Number	212336
Property Number	

History

Alluvial gold mining in the 19th century demanded large volumes of water to separate gold from the washdirt. Miners excavated extensive networks of races and dams to bring water from where it was available to where it was needed. Entrepreneurs saw the ..SiteCard data copied on 17/07/2024:Alluvial gold mining in the 19th century demanded large volumes of water to separate gold from the washdirt. Miners excavated extensive networks of races and dams to bring water from where it was available to where it was needed. Entrepreneurs saw the opportunity to capture and monopolise water supply and sell the water to miners at a profit. The Lal Lal Waterworks Association was created in 1858 and secured the first water right licence issued in Victoria, to deliver water to miners on the Moorabool goldfield south of Ballarat. The system included six dams and almost 100 km of races but ultimately it failed to deliver as promised. Examination and mapping of the extensive archaeological remains indicate the scale and ambition of the enterprise and reveal some practical reasons why it was unsuccessful. For further information see Pioneers of goldfields water management: the Lal Lal Waterworks Association, Peter Davies and Susan Lawrence, Australasian Historical Archaeology, 36, 2018. Part of the scheme lies within the Mt Doran State Forest including distribution dams and a network of water races which enable miners to work auriferous gullies.
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/