

# FRAMLINGHAM ABORIGINAL MISSION



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### **Location**

101 WARRUMYEA ROAD FRAMLINGHAM, MOYNE SHIRE

### **Municipality**

MOYNE SHIRE

### **Level of significance**

Heritage Inventory Site

### **Heritage Inventory (HI) Number**

H7421-0001

### **Heritage Listing**

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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### **Statement of Significance**

Last updated on -

## **What is significant?**

The potential archaeological remains associated with the original early settlement at Framlingham Aboriginal Mission. In addition to potential archaeological remains, remaining features such as the church, cemetery and trees are also significant.

## **How is it significant?**

The site is of historical, scientific (archaeological) and social significance.

# Why is it significant?

Framlingham Aboriginal Mission has a high historic and social value as it is associated with important, albeit tragic, events to Aboriginal people and a dark period of the establishment and development of Australia. The history and development of Framlingham Mission Station is also well documented. The location of Framlingham Mission Station was initially established in the early 1860s with the establishment of the Board for the Protection of Aborigines. Prominent citizens of the district petitioned the Board to establish a reserve where Aboriginal people could settle and receive food and medical care. In 1861, an area of 3,500 acres was established on the Hopkins River as a temporary reservation for the use of Aborigines (Barwick, 1979, p. 4). The reserve was reported to be heavily timbered with poor soil. However, the people of the station worked to cultivate the land and establish buildings (ibid). Over time, many of the original buildings and hut sites were demolished and/or altered and extended, and several more modern houses were constructed in more recent times.

Scientifically, the history and development of Framlingham Aboriginal Mission is well documented, such as by Barwick (1979), Critchett (1992), du Cros and Associates (1993) and du Cros and Associates (1994), within the historical record. Further excavation across the wider extent of the former mission could reveal more information relating to the past of residents of the mission, many of which still have family living at the mission site.

Framlingham Aboriginal Mission has strong cultural and historical associations for past and present people of the mission. The ongoing use of the land by Traditional Owners has resulted in traditional practices being passed down from generation to generation, including traditional food procurement practices are still be used in the form of eel traps on the Hopkins River and scarring of trees.

Interpretation of Site

A number of early built features were constructed once the Framlingham Mission Station was established. This included weatherboard houses, cottages, and traditional bark mia-mias being built on the site (du Cros and Associates, 1993). The du Cros and Associates' (1993) report documents that some more recent features at the Framlingham Mission Station were constructed over the mia-mias. However, they do not record their locations. By 1938, the local government had been experiencing growing pressure to build new housing for the Framlingham community. However, they did not construct enough for all the families who were living on the site at the time, nor did the families have official control over their homes and the wider landscape (Barwick, 1979; du Cros and Associates, 1993). Following the Framlingham Aboriginal Trust's management of the grounds, additional buildings and infrastructure, such as Kirrae Avenue, have been constructed within the Framlingham site. These upgrades have been located within the footprints of preceding facilities or have incorporated the existing historical structures into the redevelopments. du Cros and Associates (1993) document that the current land use during the 1990s incorporated a mixture of tourism, education, farming, and residential uses for the wider Framlingham Mission Station. Along the Hopkins River, traditional practices, such as the use of eel and fish traps, were still being used by the Framlingham Aboriginal Trust. The site is currently occupied by residential properties inhabited by the Traditional Owners of the area. This includes community facilities and infrastructure, along with facilities for cattle grazing and other agricultural activities. Many of the early structures at Framlingham have been demolished and replaced with more modern structures.

Hermes  
Number 6771

Property  
Number

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## History

Europeans first settled in the Framlingham area in c. 1840. The area was primarily used by Europeans as farmland, with early maps noting that the wider region was swampy with the occasional stony rise. By 1856, the land that became the Framlingham Aboriginal Mission was part of the Nelson run held by John Mooney and Richard Harney. The run was held by the Colonial Bank of Australasia in 1861, Michael Curtain in 1863, Andrew Tobin and Co. in 1866 and was forfeited in 1870 (Spreadborough & Anderson, 1983). In 1861 3,500 acres were reserved for Aboriginal people on the Hopkins River, gazetted as a temporary reservation for the use of Aborigines (Barwick, 1979). In 1865, the Church of England Mission Committee hired Daniel Clarke to undertake mission work on the reserve. The reserve was handed back to the Central Board for Protection of Aborigines the following year (Barwick, 1979). In 1867, the Board decided to close Framlingham Mission Station and prepared to move the 73 residents to the Lake Condah Mission (Barwick, 1979). The Kirra and Gunditjmarra members residing at Framlingham documented that they had an inherited right to occupy the Framlingham reserve as it was adjacent to the Gunditjmarra boundary but would have no claim to the land at the Lake Condah Mission (Barwick, 1979). As a result, the Board reopened the Warrnambool rations station, but rejected a petition to allow the Framlingham Aboriginal people to re-establish a station (Barwick, 1979). In 1869, a local newspaper publicised an Aboriginal deputation to the Chief Secretary, the result of which forced the Board to explain the removal of residents to Lake Condah Mission (Barwick, 1979). The Board reluctantly agreed to establish an Aboriginal station for an annual sum of £100. This began the early stages of the Framlingham Mission Station (Barwick, 1979). Early reports of the Mission document that the reserve consisted of heavily timbered stringybark ridges that were too wet for cultivation. Approximately one third of the land was considered to be good grazing land. Over the years, the Framlingham Mission Station was threatened with closure on a number of occasions. In 1890 the Agricultural Department applied for the entirety of the reserve. Chief Secretary Deakin had gazetted the Reserve to the Council of Agricultural Education on 12 September 1890 (The Advocate, 1890; The Colac Herald, 1890; Barwick, 1979). The next day the Chief Secretary ordered the Lands Department to gazette an area as an Aboriginal reserve. On 2 January 1891, a permanent reservation of 3,679 acres was gazetted as an endowment for agricultural colleges (Figure 3) (The Australasian, 1891; Barwick, 1979). A temporary reservation of 548 acres was gazetted in 1892 (Barwick, 1979). This temporary reservation was gazetted as a permanent reservation in 1967 (Barwick, 1979). In the Aboriginals Land Act (1970), the government returned the land around the Framlingham Mission Station, known as the Framlingham Reserve, to the Framlingham Aboriginal Trust. The Framlingham Aboriginal Trust manages the grounds and has constructed additional buildings and infrastructure. These upgrades have been located within the footprints of preceding facilities or have incorporated the existing historical structures into the redevelopments. In 1987, the Framlingham Forrest was also repatriated to the Framlingham Aboriginal Trust.

*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/>*