
Former Musk 10 Ton Fairbanks Road Weighbridge



B7070 Former 10 Ton
Fairbanks Rd Weighbridge

Location

Former Railway Goods Yard,, MUSK VIC 3461 - Property No B7070

Municipality

HEPBURN SHIRE

Level of significance

State

Heritage Listing

National Trust

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant? The 10 ton cart weighbridge in the former Musk station goods yard was erected in 1894 by the Victorian Railways using plans and a kit of metal parts from E & T Fairbanks Company in the USA and locally available timber and brick. The weatherboard cabin is a Victorian Railways design that predates 1887. In 1945 level concrete 'aprons' were placed on the approaches to the weighbridge platform to improve accuracy during end-and-end weighing of motor vehicles. The weighbridge was leased by the Victorian Railways to a private operator in 1958. It was last used about 1980.

How is it significant? The Musk weighbridge is significant for historic and scientific/technical reasons at the state level.

Why is it significant? The weighbridge is historically significant at the State level as the oldest intact weighbridge once owned and operated by the Victorian Railways to survive. It demonstrates (1); the Victorian Railways

nineteenth century policy of providing a cart weighbridge at any station that could justify its installation, and (2); the essential role the Victorian Railways played in the commercial trade in fresh farm produce and other commodities for Melbourne markets in the nineteenth century and before the development of an efficient road transport system.

It is probably the oldest intact weighbridge in Victoria designed and exported by the famous American company Thaddeus and Erastus Fairbanks, who in 1831 were the first to patent the basic features of the steelyard weighbridge. Both Henry Pooley and Son Ltd and W & T Avery in England entered into an agreement with Fairbanks and became major weighbridge and weighing machine manufacturers and exporters.

The weighbridge is historically significant at the local level because for nearly eighty years it played an important role in the commercial life of the Musk area weighing locally produced items such as hay, wood, wool and potatoes. When the Victorian Railways declared it redundant in 1958, it was leased by local interests and operated for about another 20 years. Records and items of interest associated with the weighbridge when operated by the Victorian Railways and when leased to a private operator have been preserved.

The Musk weighbridge is technically significant at the State level as it is believed to be the only intact weighbridge in Victoria that demonstrates pre-1900 cart weighbridge technology. Designed before 1882 for horse drawn vehicles with evenly distributed loads and before the advent of motorized road vehicles, it features an early light weight four lever system and a loose-weight steelyard with Imperial markings and slip weights. This type of design is distinct from the later, heavy cast-frame all-metal cart weighbridges which were introduced in the early twentieth century.

The weighbridge demonstrates the adaptation of 1880s technology for reliable end-and-end weighing of motorized vehicles in 1947 by the addition of concrete 'aprons' at each end of the weighbridge.

It is believed to be the last intact weighbridge in Victoria that demonstrates a popular type of 'export' weighbridge imported into Australia by at least two companies in the late nineteenth century; Fairbanks and Avery. The popularity of these weighbridges was due in part to the low overall cost of importing the small kit of metal parts and with the aid of plans supplied, completing most of the weighbridge with cheap, locally available materials. In 1917 the Victorian Railways had 43 Fairbanks 10 ton cart weighbridges, and 4 similar Avery 'Colonial' ten ton cart weighbridges. Many were also imported into Victoria by private operators.

The weatherboard cabin, constructed to a Victorian Railways design that predates 1887, is the oldest intact weighbridge cabin designed and constructed by the Victorian Railways to survive and may be the oldest weighbridge cabin of any weighbridge in Victoria. Although in a fragile condition, and in urgent need of conservation, there has been little interference with the original fabric.

The weighbridge is socially significant as rare surviving nineteenth infrastructure on the former railway from Carlshrue to Daylesford and its historical association with the railway infrastructure surviving today at the Musk station and along the museum railway operated by The Central Highlands Tourist Railway. The museum intends in the future to install either a restored or replica 10 ton Fairbanks weighbridge as operational infrastructure in one of the original 10 ton Fairbanks weighbridge pits at a station within the museum. The preservation on the Musk weighbridge is essential to provide the technical detail necessary for this project. It also provides potential to interpret the transport of farming produce, and the history of farming in this area.

Classified: 23/02/2009

Other Names Vic Rails Weighing Machine No.1176, Musk Creek weighbridge (Before about 1921),
Hermes Number 68576
Property Number

Extent of Registration

The weighbridge structure and adjacent cabin and associated land including:- the former cart track to the weighbridge including the two gate posts at the entrance, from the boundary of the private property on the south side to two metres on the north side of the track, and extending three metres past the eastern end of the weighbridge; and remnants of the timber platform edge and formation of the associated goods siding.

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/>