



Rockbank Precinct Structure Plan (PSP 1099)
Historical Cultural Heritage Assessment Report.

The background image shows a rural landscape with a large, overgrown field of dry grass in the foreground. In the middle ground, there is a dilapidated building with a rusted corrugated metal roof and stone walls. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The bottom of the page features a teal and green abstract graphic design with white curved lines.

Prepared for Growth Areas Authority

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- David Moloney (Heritage Consultant co-author Melton Heritage Study)
- Jeremy Smith, Brandi Burgh (Heritage Victoria)
- Nat Anson (Growth Areas Authority)

Abbreviations

AAV	Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (Heritage Services Branch)
AHC	Australian Heritage Commission
AMG	Australian Map Grid
BP	Before Present
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
CHP	Cultural Heritage Permit
SEWPAC Conservation	Department of Sustainability and Environment, Water, Planning and Conservation
DSE	Department of Sustainability and Environment (formerly DNRE)
DOI	Department of Infrastructure
DPCD	Department for Planning and Community Development
GAA	Growth Areas Authority
HO	Heritage Overlay
HV	Heritage Victoria (DSE)
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
LCC	Land Conservation Council
PSP	Precinct Structure Plan
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
RNE	Register of the National Estate
VAS	Victoria Archaeological Survey (now part of AAV and Heritage Victoria)

Contents

Summary	vii
1 Introduction	9
1.1 Project Background.....	9
1.2 Aims.....	9
1.2.1 Location and Description of the Study Area.....	10
1.3 Consultation	10
1.3.1 Consultation with Heritage Victoria.....	10
2 Background Information	12
2.1 Environmental Background	12
3 Historical Background.....	15
3.1 Exploration & survey	15
3.2 Squatters	15
3.3 Selectors & settlers	17
3.3.1 J S Kelly	21
3.3.2 William Pratt.....	22
3.3.3 Isaac and Henry Gidney	22
3.3.4 Missen Brothers.....	23
3.3.5 Mark Paine	24
3.3.6 Martin Batey	24
3.3.7 Edward Hall Pitson	25
3.3.8 Dry Stone Walls	25
3.3.9 Subdivision.....	26
3.4 Community & business.....	26
3.4.1 Rockbank Primary School.....	26
3.4.2 Rose and Crown Hotel.....	29
3.4.3 Post Office & General Store.....	30
3.4.4 Mechanics Institute Community Hall	31
3.5 Transport & industry	32
3.5.1 Roads.....	32
3.5.2 Railway and station	33
3.5.3 Local industry	35
3.5.4 Wireless communications.....	38
4 Previous assessments	41
4.1 Regional Surveys.....	41
4.2 Dry Stone Walls Studies	43

4.3	Previously Recorded heritage places	48
4.4	Site Prediction Model	49
5	Field Survey	50
5.1	Methodology	50
5.2	Limitations/constraints	50
5.3	Survey Results	50
5.3.1	Payne's Cottage.....	51
5.3.2	Rose & Crown Hotel	53
5.3.3	Mechanics Institute/Community Hall.....	54
5.3.4	Pitson House.....	55
5.3.5	Missen House	56
5.3.6	Rockbank General Store & Post Office	57
5.3.7	Rockbank Railway Station precinct.....	58
5.3.8	School site	61
5.3.9	Beam Radio Receiving Station	62
5.3.10	Dry Stone Walls	63
5.3.11	Serbian Church.....	67
6	Management Recommendations.....	71
6.1	Recommendation 1 Site recording.....	71
6.2	Recommendation 2 Heritage conservation	71
6.3	Recommendation 3 Permits and Consents	71
6.4	Recommendation 4 Further investigations.....	72
6.5	Report Lodgement.....	72
6.6	Independent Review of Reports.....	72
	Appendices	73
	Appendix 1 – Assessment of Heritage Significance.....	74
	Appendix 2 – Statutory Regulations	78
	Appendix 3 - Farming in the Melton District	81
	Bibliography	85

List of Figures

Figure 1:	Location of the study area.....	11
Figure 2:	Environment of the study area	13
Figure 3:	Geological Survey of Victoria, sheet 8 (surveyed 1856)	14
Figure 4:	Plan of the allotments Rockbank Estate c 1853.	17
Figure 5:	Plan of Crown Allotments, Parish of Kororoit (1892 County of Bourke Atlas State Library Vic)	18
Figure 6:	1945 Aerial Photograph of the study area (Melbourne Uni Library)	19

Figure 7: Kororoit Parish Plan, Imperial measure 2927	20
Figure 8: Pywheitjorrk Parish Plan, Imperial measure L7472.....	21
Figure 9: Rockbank School, No. 919, photo Charles Edward Boyles (1888-1971) SLVH2008.122/365	27
Figure 10: Rockbank school children in 1956 during an excursion.....	28
Figure 11: Rockbank school shortly before demolition c 2002 (Photo D Moloney via Melton council).....	29
Figure 12: Rockbank Post Office and store in the 1970s, National Library B5191	30
Figure 13: Rockbank Store c 2000.....	30
Figure 14: 1 inch to 1 mile Ordnance survey, Sunbury Sheet, 1938, showing extent of roads and some dry stone walls (thick black lines).....	33
Figure 15: Former Rockbank Station and signal box buildings,	34
Figure 16: Plan of Rockbank station and sidings 1914.....	34
Figure 17: Plan of proposed verandah additions to Rockbank Station VR drawing 1924.	35
Figure 18: Plan of Cockbill's quarry and chaff mill siding	35
Figure 19: Victorian Railways, Reaping & Binding Hay at Rockbank Dec. 1953 with hay stook, SLV H91.330/3422.....	36
Figure 20: Plan of Rockbank Station and Ward's Chaff Mill siding (VicTrack Sidings section).....	37
Figure 21: Siding plan at Cockbill's Rockbank Chaff Mill (VicTrack Sidings section).....	38
Figure 22: Australian Wireless Beam Station.	39
Figure 23: Rockbank Beam Wireless aerials.....	39
Figure 24: Transmission lines connecting aerials to receivers at Rockbank.	40
Figure 25: Greigs Road dry stone wall precinct (Moloney et al).....	44
Figure 26: Payne's cottage from the east (photo David Moloney)	51
Figure 27: Rase & Crown Hotel.....	53
Figure 28: Rockbank Mechanics Institute/Community Hall.....	54
Figure 29: Pitson House	55
Figure 30: Missen House	56
Figure 31: Rockbank General Store & Post Office.....	57
Figure 32: Rockbank Railway Station	58
Figure 33: Boxthorn marking chaff mill and house site (cistern immediately in front).....	59
Figure 34: looking across playing field to tennis court site (Serbian church on adjacent land).....	60
Figure 35: Aerial photo of Rockbank Station Ground with historical features superimposed	60
Figure 36: Rockbank school site – view showing remnant planting	61
Figure 37: Remains of painted game squares on concrete paths.....	61
Figure 38: Radio Receiving Station	62
Figure 39: Dry stone wall at Paynes Road west side.	63
Figure 40: Dry stone wall at Paynes Road east side	63
Figure 41: Dry stone wall at south side Greigs Road.....	64
Figure 42: Dry stone wall at south side Greigs Road.....	64
Figure 43: Dry stone wall at moderately intact wall on east side Leakes Road.....	64

Figure 44: Detail of dry stone wall on east side of Leakes Road.....	65
Figure 45: Detail of dry stone wall south side Greigs Road	66
Figure 46: Conserved dry stone wall near Hopkins Road (east of study area).....	66
Figure 47: Serbian Orthodox Church.....	67
Figure 48: Map of heritage places	70

List of Tables

Table 1: Dry stone walls sites within or near the study (Vines 1990b).	43
Table 2: Dry stone walls in Melton study (Moloney et al)).....	45
Table 3: Existing recorded heritage places in the study area.....	48
Table 4: Places outside the study area	48
Table 5: All recorded and additional heritage places in the study area.....	68

Summary

Little appreciated by the motorists driving past on the freeway, Rockbank is a distinctive place with its own history. While they might not be described as 'hidden jewels', Rockbank's historic places and heritage features convey the character of the place, the stories of its past and present residents, and social, environmental and economic factors which formed its development.

Biosis Pty Ltd was commissioned by the Growth Areas Authority (GAA) to undertake a heritage assessment of historic heritage values in the Rockbank Precinct Structure Plan (PSP 1099).

The aim of this assessment is to examine the historical cultural heritage of the study area and to develop recommendations to enable GAA to plan for future residential, commercial and infrastructure development in the Rockbank precinct.

The study has compiled a thematic history of the precinct, which covers an area between Ballarat Road and Greigs Road and from Paynes Road to just east of Troups Road.

In addition to the existing recorded places on the Melton Heritage Overlay, Heritage Inventory, and dry stone walls recorded in a previous study, a number of other places of historic interest were recorded as part of this assessment.

Management Recommendations

Recommendation 1 Site recording

A number of historical places were identified in the study. An update of the Heritage Inventory listing for the Rockbank Station Precinct should be made to include evidence of former building sites, and the chaff mill. Paynes Cottage, the Rose and Crown Hotel and the former Rockbank school site should also be assessed for inclusion on the Heritage Inventory.

Recommendation 2 Heritage conservation

Places included on the Heritage Overlay and Victorian Heritage Register, should as far as possible, be conserved and managed for their heritage values.

It is recommended that identified heritage places should be retained and conserved including Payne's Cottage, the Mechanics Institute, Missen House, Pitson House and the Rose and Crown Hotel.

Dry stone walls in the precinct have been re-evaluated, and while the conclusions of the Melton Dry Stone Walls study can be supported, the management of the walls in a changed land use context becomes problematic. It may not be possible to retain the proposed Greigs Road dry stone walls precinct as open pastoral landscape as recommended by Moloney et al, however, it may be possible to retain representative sections of walls, with an appropriate curtilage and compatible land uses such as conservation reserves or un-structured public open space.

As a reference point it is recommended that all dry stone walls are retained and conserved and that the design of the future development of the Rockbank Precinct should take into account the walls, and wherever possible provide compatible land uses such as unstructured open space, conservation reserves, wide adjoining road verges, or allow retention of walls on frontage property boundaries by providing alternative rear access.

Where walls cannot be retained, or planning and design requirements require the removal of walls, decision guidelines should be made on the basis of the assessment of significance of walls using the Melton Dry Stone walls study and the assessment in the present study as shown in Figure 48, as a guiding principle.

Recommendation 3 Permits and Consents

Statutory approval should be sought for any places on the HO or VHI which are likely to be impacted by future works.

A Consent to Disturb will be required for any works impacting on places listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

A Planning permit will be required for any works on places included in the Shire of Melton Heritage Overlay.

If or when the Melton Planning Scheme is amended to include the schedule of land covered by Clause 52.37, a permit will be required for the removal of any dry stone wall. Where a permit is issued, it is recommended that archival recording and documentation is carried out and authentic reconstruction of walls elsewhere is carried out, reusing the dismantled stone. Preference should be given to retaining walls according to the scaled assessment in the Melton Dry Stone Walls Study and as shown in this report in Figure 48.

Recommendation 4 Further investigations

While it is unlikely that any further significant historical places or historic archaeological remains are likely to be present in the study area, if evidence of such comes to light the place or object should be assessed by a suitably qualified professional and if required, statutory protection be provided. Further investigation of any of the listed heritage places should be carried out as part of any statutory approval or redevelopment process.

Individual conservation management plans should be developed for the places listed on the HO and VHI, and where disturbance of the site is proposed, detailed archaeological investigations should be undertaken to identify the nature, extent and significance of any archaeological remains, and provide management or mitigation for them.

Archaeological investigations should be undertaken of recorded historical and archaeological sites where further information can be obtained. This is especially so with the School Site, Paynes Cottage, the Rockbank Station Grounds and the Rose & Crown Hotel.

1 Introduction

Cultural heritage legislation protecting historical heritage places applies in Victoria (*Heritage Act 1995*). These places are an important part of our heritage; they represent evidence of the more recent period of settlement and contact with Aboriginal people.

Heritage places can provide us with important information about past lifestyles and cultural change. Preserving and enhancing these important and non-renewable resources is encouraged.

It is an offence under sections of legislation to damage or destroy heritage sites without a permit or consent from the appropriate body (see Appendix 2 for a complete discussion of relevant heritage legislation and constraints).

When a project or new development is proposed, it must be established if any cultural heritage places are in the area and how they might be affected by the project. Often it is possible to minimise the impact of development or find an alternative to damaging or destroying a heritage place. Therefore, preliminary research and survey to identify heritage places is a fundamental part of the background study for most developments.

The first stage of a study usually incorporates background research to collect information about the land relevant to the proposed development project (the study area). A second stage often involves a field inspection of this area.

Possibly the most important part of the study involves assessing the cultural heritage significance of heritage places in the study area. Understanding the significance of a heritage place is essential for formulating management recommendations and making decisions.

The subject matter of this report involves the use of a number of technical words and terms with which the reader may be unfamiliar. A glossary has been included at the end of the report and reference to this may be of assistance.

1.1 Project Background

Biosis Pty Ltd was commissioned by the Growth Areas Authority (GAA) to undertake a heritage assessment of historic heritage values in the Rockbank Precinct Structure Plan (PSP 1099).

The aim of this assessment is to examine the historical cultural heritage of the study area and to develop recommendations to enable GAA to plan for future residential, commercial and infrastructure development in the Rockbank precinct.

1.2 Aims

The following discussion is a summary of the major objectives. The major objectives are:

- Document previously recorded historical archaeological sites within the study areas;
- Predict the likelihood of archaeological sites as yet not recorded within the study areas;
- Comment on the likely heritage values of the recorded and predicted site/values; and
- Identify and comment on, with particular reference to the current project, relevant Commonwealth and State heritage legislation (existing and proposed) and other planning instruments.

1.2.1 Location and Description of the Study Area

The Rockbank PSP is located 29 kilometres west of Melbourne, south of the Rockbank township and Western Highway. The study area is bounded on the west by Paynes Road, south by Greigs Road, north by the Western Freeway and the residential subdivision of Rockbank township, and on the east the proposed Outer Metropolitan Ring Road alignment.

The study area is within the Parishes of Kororoit and Pywheitjorrk, County of Bourke in the City of Melton.

1.3 Consultation

1.3.1 Consultation with Heritage Victoria

Before undertaking surveys for historical heritage places there is a statutory requirement to notify Heritage Victoria – the State government agency responsible for historical cultural heritage places. The protection and management of Aboriginal archaeological places and sites is addressed under the provisions of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2009*

A 'Notice of intention to carry out an Archaeological Survey' was lodged with Heritage Victoria on 11/4/2013 in accordance with Section 131(1) of the *Heritage Act 1995*. Heritage Victoria assigned 4301 to the project).

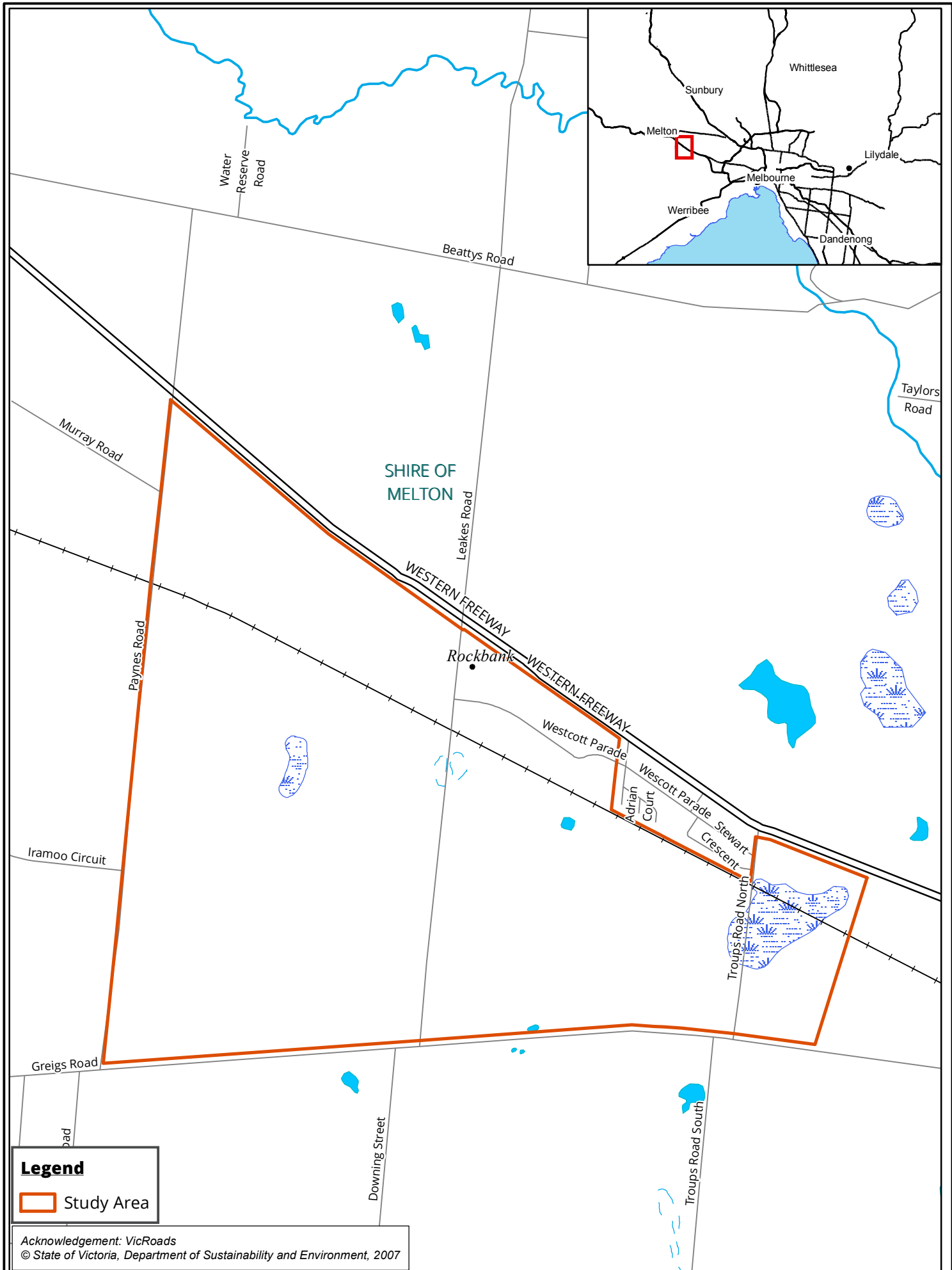


Figure 1: Location of the Activity Area - Rockbank, Victoria

2 Background Information

2.1 Environmental Background

The study area lies on a basalt plain created by lava flows in the late Quaternary Period, 2 to 5 million years ago. Nearby Mt Atkinson and Mt Cottrell are among a number of eruption points in the vicinity of the study area. From the eruption points, the lava flowed down river-valleys where it hardened into basalt, covering the Ordovician and Silurian sediments. The soils on the basalt plain are typically newer volcanic, with a heavy textured clay. This clay, 10 to 60 centimetres thick, lies on the impervious layer of basalt and its poor drainage has led to the formation of the swampy areas common to the volcanic grasslands. The study area lies entirely on the basalt plain.¹

There are no major river-valleys in the study area, although the archaeologically significant Kororoit Creek is approximately one kilometre to the northeast, at its closest point, and areas of former and remnant swamplands occur south of Ballarat Road straddling Troupes Road and at the eastern edge of the study area (note only the larger Troupes Road swamp is shown in the early geological map above).

Outcrops of silcrete have been recorded on waterways in the region, including on the nearby Kororoit Creek. It is almost certain that these sources of stone were utilised for artefact manufacture and possibly as trade goods.

Moderately hot summers, with relatively brief dry periods, and cool, wet winters with few frosts are characteristic of the western plains. Average temperatures range from a winter minimum of 5° to a summer maximum of 24°. Rainfall peaks in winter, with a yearly average rainfall of more than 700mm.²

Before European settlement the dominant vegetation on the basalt plain would have been Kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra Australis*), with a number of other herbs and grasses, such as *Poa labillardieri* and *Danthonia spp*, also present, particularly in the low-lying areas.³ The growth of these grasslands may have been encouraged by the Aboriginal practice of systematic burning to open up the land for hunting. Certainly, the local grassy plains and open woodlands were also an important food source. Various edible leaves, fruits, and roots - including the staple root Myrrnong (*Microsis scapigera*) - were all present on the plains. However, due to long term cropping and pastoral activities, and more recently to the western movement of urban development, grassland environments have been seriously degraded. Much of the study area is now covered with introduced grasses and blackberry.

Riparian woodland and scrub would have been the predominant creek-side vegetation. Waterways would have been thinly wooded with River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camendulensis*), River Bottlebrush (*Callistemon paludosa*) with rushes and reeds (*Phragmites Australis*) occupying the saturated ground and creek-edges.⁴

¹ Rosengren 1986:12

² LCC 1991: 59-60).

³ McDougall 1987: 14).

⁴ McDougall 1987



Legend

- Activity Area
- Cadastre
- 50cm Contours
- Wetlands/swamps

Vegetation

- 104 Lignum Swamp
- 125 Plains Grassy Wetland
- 132 Plains Grassland
- 649 Stony Knoll Shrubland
- 653 Aquatic Herbland
- 654 Creekline Tussock Grassland
- 68 Creekline Grassy Woodland
- 895 Escarpment Shrubland

Figure 2: Environment of the study area

0 150 300 450 600 750
 Metres
 Scale: 1:15,000 @ A3
 Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55

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The basalt plains, and the Kororoit Creek, would have contained a wide range of fauna species hunted by the Aboriginal people. Larger species, such as kangaroos, possum, wallaby, and emu were common, although there may have been some seasonal variation, with higher numbers in summer. Other species recorded at the time of European settlement, which have since largely or wholly disappeared, included quolls, pademelons, and potoroos.⁵ The Kororoit Creek would have been a particularly important resource for Aboriginal people, with freshwater mussels (*Vesunia Ambigua*), fish, eels, waterbirds, lizards (such as the fat-tailed Dunnart), and small marsupials, a reliable food source throughout most of the year.



Figure 3: Geological Survey of Victoria, sheet 8 (surveyed 1856)

⁵ LCC 1991:107).

3 Historical Background

3.1 Exploration & survey

Hume and Hovell were probably the first to observe the basalt plains country north and west of the future site of Melbourne in 1824, although Charles Grimes had mapped the coast of Port Phillip Bay and ventured up the navigable sections of the Maribyrnong and Yarra Rivers in 1803. The first white settlers in this area may have been John Batman's group of settlers. John Batman parcelled out the land around Port Phillip Bay to the members of the Port Phillip Association. Two of these people, Anthony Cottrell and Mr. Collicot, were allotted strips of land adjacent to the study area which extended from the Maribyrnong River to the western edge of the basalt plains. Cottrell gave his name to the nearby Mount Cottrell. While these settlers were not accorded legal title to the land which Batman claimed to have purchased from the Aborigines, several of them stayed on, including Joseph Solomon, Cottrell, Pinkerton and Robertson, who obtained squatting licences in Melbourne's West with the eventual consent of the colonial Government.

The squatters who had an interest in land in the present study area, even if only for a few years, were William Cross Yuille, James Pinkerton who occupied Kororoit Creek or "Chain of Ponds" for a few years before moving to the Werribee River under pressure from Clarke's Grass Right, James Robertson, who kept a foothold on Jacksons Creek, Hyde and Desailly

William J T Clarke obtained a Special Survey of 140 square miles with a right to depasture stock on an equivalent area of Crown Land in 1852.

The initial survey's were conducted by Wedge and Darke in about 1838, defining the country into a regular grid of 640 acre blocks (one mile by 1 mile), except where provision had to be made for natural features and existing travelling routes. Natural features are rare in this district, Kororoit Creek providing the only relief, and the previous route identified on the early plans as a track 'from Upper Werriby (sic) and Pentland Hills to Melbourne' ran roughly parallel to the existing highway, but about a kilometre to the north.⁶

When the Crown Survey was undertaken, two roads were reserved to Ballarat, branching at Hopkins Rd. One became the present highway through Melton while the other went south along Greigs Road through Exford and on to the Bacchus Marsh. This Greigs Road route appears to have been the main route in the 1860s, and its exceptional width of about 60 m or three chains, was intended to accommodate droving livestock.

3.2 Squatters

Much of the land in the Melton-Rockbank area was sold at auction between June and December 1854. The rather dry nature of the country between Melton and Werribee appears to have delayed settlement considerably and most of the land in the Parishes in the vicinity (Pywheatjorrk, Maribyrnong, Kororoit and Derrimut) became part of the large pastoral estates of W.J.T. Clarke and Simon Staughton. Staughton was Melton's second permanent settler, arriving in Melbourne in 1841 and taking over Dr. John Watton's pastoral lease on the Werribee River (then known as the Exe) in June 1842. He built his homestead at the junction of the Werribee River and Toolern

⁶ Parish of Kororoit, Central Plans Office

Creek calling it Exford and accumulated large tracts of land in the Western Region as well as on the Darling River in NSW.

W.J.T. Clarke obtained vast areas of the basalt plains through squatting licences, purchase at auction and his special survey of 1850 in which he bought 31,375 acres stretching from Sunbury to the Macedon Ranges. In addition to this he was able to claim 60,000 acres under a grass right system for a short time before much of the remaining Crown land in the region was auctioned off. In these auctions of the early 1850s Clarke purchased the largest proportion of the land in the Rockbank area. Many blocks purchased by other farmers or speculators also became part of Clarke's empire when they were resold. He had his mansion "Rupertswood" in Sunbury, but owned land as far south as Werribee including the "Rockbank" and "Deanside" pastoral estates at Rockbank. These estates were managed for grazing sheep and so beyond construction of fencing, and the homestead and shearing shed blocks, little in the way of building of improvements was carried out.

In the north east part of the study area, William Taylor was lord of the manor at his Overnewton Estate. He arrived in Port Phillip in 1840 and had interests in other squatting runs before purchasing the Overnewton lease in 1849. He also bought land in New South Wales and was active in public affairs serving terms on the Victorian Legislative Assembly. Like the other successful local squatters, he converted most of his leasehold to freehold at auction in the 1850s. Clarke, Staughton and Taylor all would have grazed stock over the Rockbank area, prior to official alienation in the 1850s as the boundaries of their grazing leases were poorly defined.

By 1880 the Overnewton Estate comprised 10,351 acres. The majority of the estate was purchased by the Victorian Government for Closer Settlement farms established from c1905.⁷

William Cross Yuille was born in Scotland in 1819 and came to Port Phillip via Hobart in 1836. His brothers William and Archibald Buchannan Yuille, established the Ballarat Run in 1838 while W. C. travelled to New Zealand. He returned to Port Phillip in 1841 and established the Rockbank Run in partnership with James Oliphant Denny, whose daughter he later married. Denny left the partnership in 1846, selling his share to W.J.T. Clarke who later purchased the adjacent Rockbank Run. Yuille was prominent in racing in the 1850s and 60s.⁸

The Rockbank grazing lease covered 11,361 acres in 1851. This included Sections 3,4,19,24, part of Sections 8,23,25 & 26 and 422 acres of Portion 5,6,18 & 29 Parish of Kororoit, and Section 22 and Part of Sections 23 and 1, Parish of Maribyrnong. His homestead was on CA 5A.⁹

Yuille purchased the pre-emptive right in 1853, but sold the property for £640 to the Melbourne wine merchants Stewart & Brown on 15.4.1853 who erected the bluestone Rockbank Inn. Yuille's homestead appears on a map dated 23.3.1852 as 2 buildings beside Kororoit Creek. John Atkinson, a Port Fairy stone mason, died nearby in June 1852, and may have been working on the construction of the Rockbank Inn. The Inn was probably designed by Charles Laing who is listed as having worked on additions to the Inn in 1855 for the owner John Gray. Charles Beattie (Beatty) rented the Rockbank Inn and 20 acres in 1863 and also farmed the area into the early

⁷ Peel:131; St. Albans 100 Committee 1998:9,45

⁸ Starr J. *Melton Plains of Promise* Melton Shire Council, n.d :15-20

⁹ Edith Popp *Glimpses of Early Sunshine*, 1979:30

20th century, leasing some land from Clarke. He and his family held about 400 acres in the area which was later sold to the Trethowans.¹⁰

3.3 Selectors & settlers

The 1860s Selection Acts were designed to open up of more Crown land for small farmers and settlers. It subsequently led to development of communities. In the 1860s and '70s, Rockbank had a general store, hotel, school, post office and other services, and then the railway station in the 1880s which formed the nucleolus of a small but relatively stable community.

Section VIII was originally gazetted as a Village reserve, as it straddled the creek on a major track to the Western District. Part was also a Limestone Reserve.

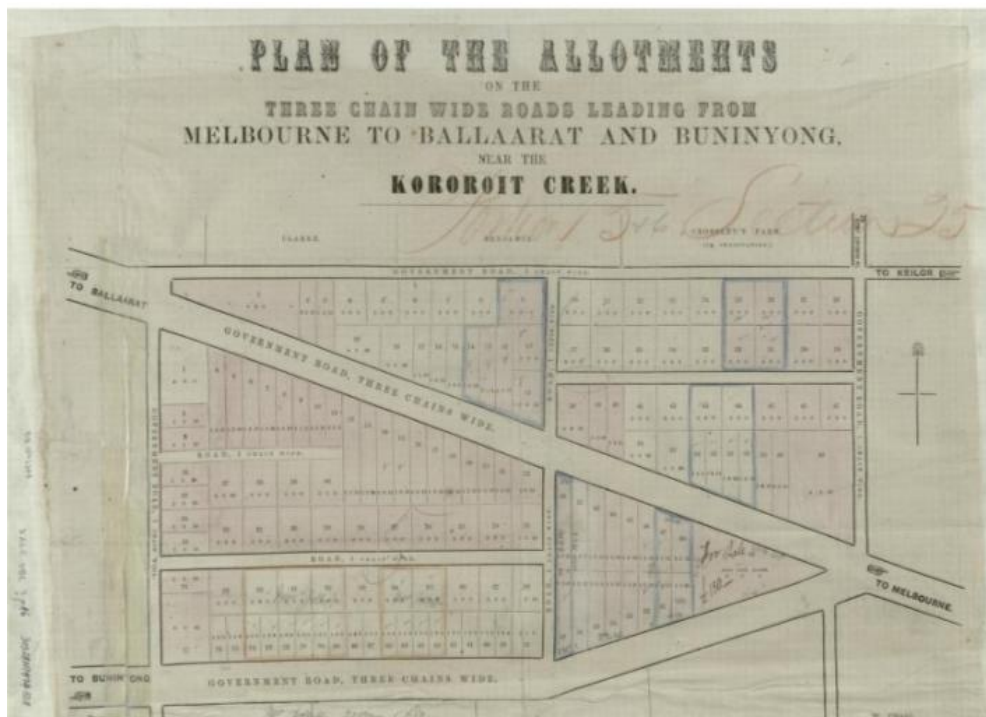


Figure 4: Plan of the allotments Rockbank Estate c 1853.¹¹

Some of the slightly more arable land along Kororoit Creek and in what was known as 'the Melton Agricultural Area', was reserved from sale in these early auctions, but leased and sold later under the closer settlement schemes aimed at getting more farmers on the land. Prior to this few people lived in the area, with occasional outstations of the big estates (such as Deanside) and roadside inns and blacksmiths serving travellers. The most significant settlement in the area prior to the late 1860s was the Rockbank Inn on Beatty's Road.

By 1892, Clarke and Taylor had consolidated their holdings by buying up many of the other small private blocks.

¹⁰ Paul McGuire, *Inns of Australia*, William Kelly, 1854, referred to in Starr J. *Melton Plains of Promise* Melton Shire Council, n.d p.15, National Trust File; Miles Lewis Architect Index, University of Melbourne; Shire of Braybrook Rate Books, 1891-2, 1897-7, 1906-7

¹¹ Plan of the allotments "on the three chains wide roads leading from Melbourne to Ballaarat (Ballarat) and Buninyong near the Koroit creek". 1853 or 1854 Note added in pencil: "Portion 5 + 6 Section 25" (of the parish of Derrimut). : Series: Vale collection : <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/160103>

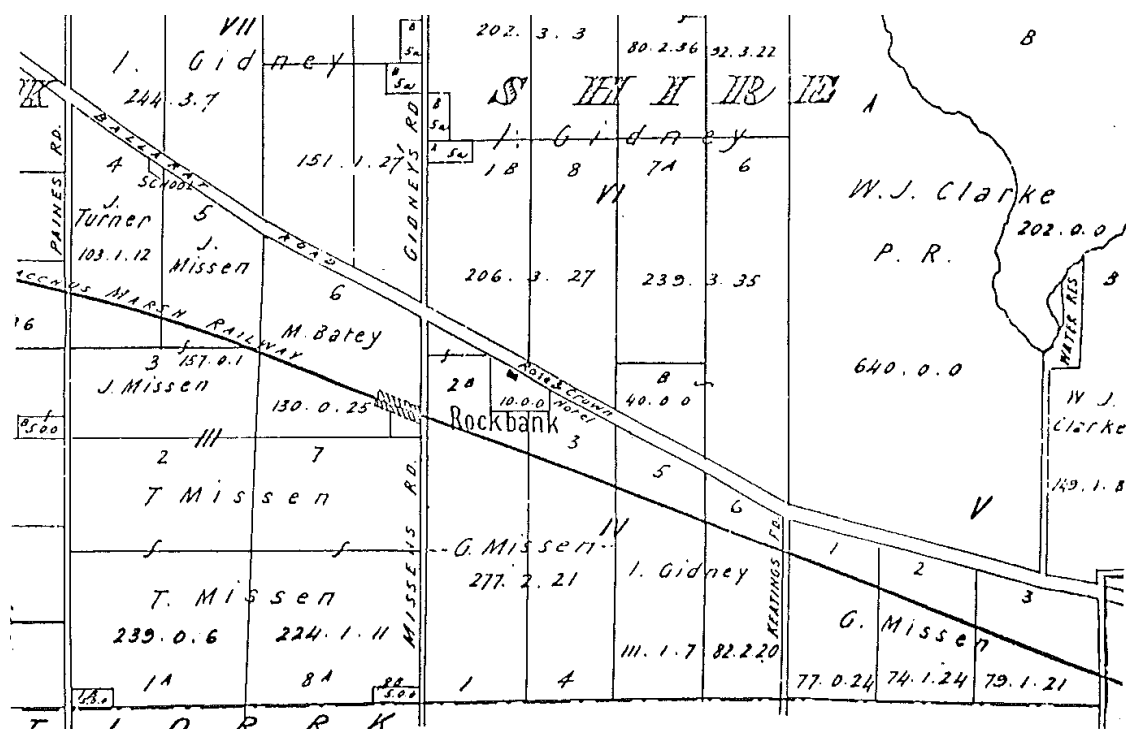


Figure 5: Plan of Crown Allotments, Parish of Kororoit (1892 County of Bourke Atlas State Library Vic)

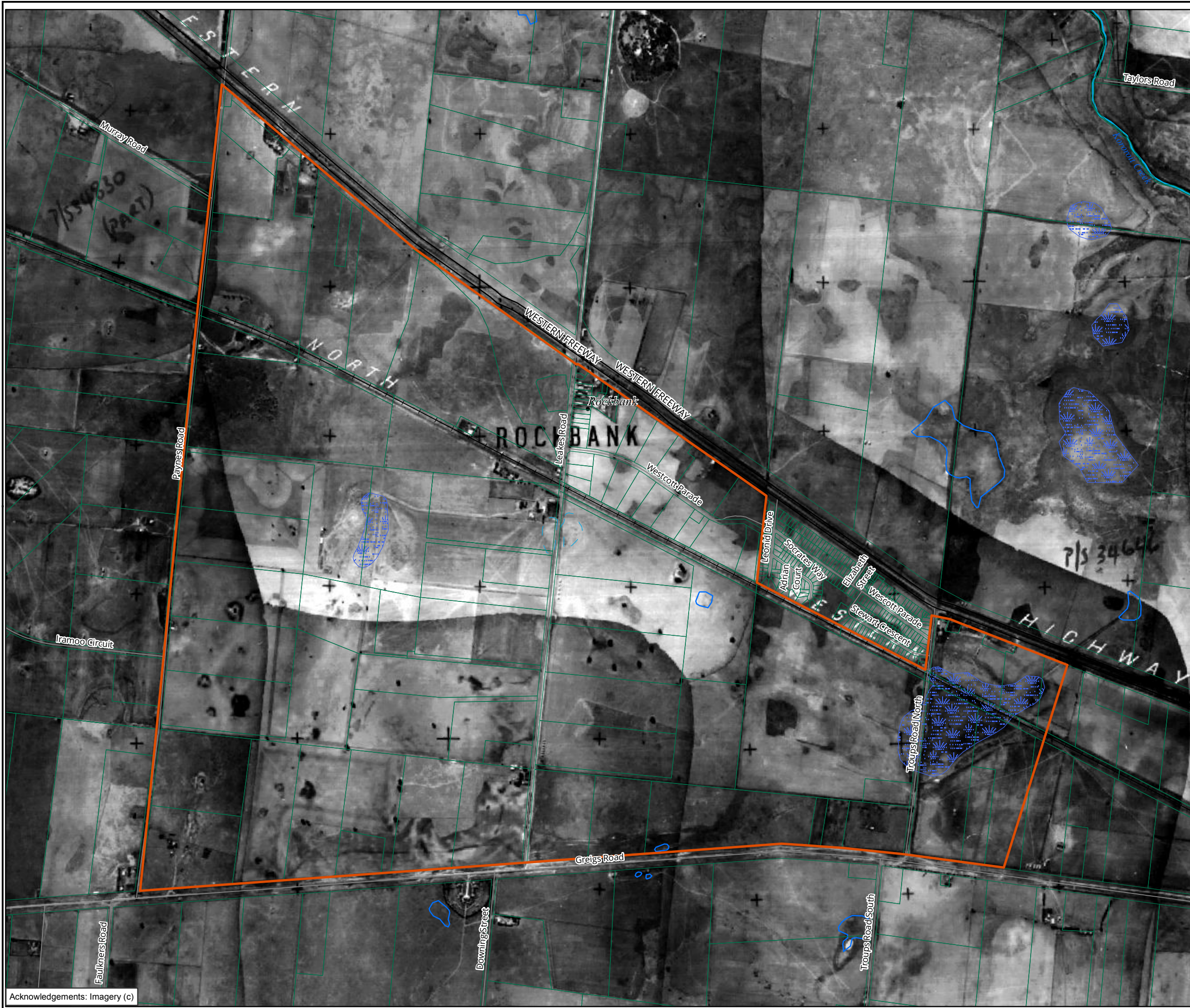
The ruins of the former Rockbank pastoral homestead and outbuildings, which also served as the Rockbank Inn, are located on west bank of Kororoit Creek south of Rockbank Middle Road, north of the present study area. The remains of the Rockbank Inn and homestead are classified by the National Trust and are listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory.

Henry Beattie (Beatty) was former manager for John Aitken and leased 1,600 acres from Kaye and Butchart who conducted a business in exporting sheep to New Zealand between 1860 and 1864.¹²

Rockbank village or township was a small nuclear community surrounded by farms, which in turn formed an island of agriculture amidst the vast pastoral holdings of the Clarkes and Staughtons. The ability of the land to support agriculture must have been recognised by the initial surveyor of the district, possibly because the low lying swampy land near Kororoit Creek had allowed soil to form on the otherwise bare rocky plains. Land was withheld from the first crown land sales in sections 2-4, 6-8 and part of 5 and 18 in the Parish of Kororoit. When sold, the allotments were an average of about 100 acres compared with the square mile lots (c.640 acres) of the pastoral holdings. Sections 4 & 5 in Rockbank Parish and Sections 17 and 18 in Pywheitjorrk, make up the present study area.

As the granting of land under the 1860s Land Acts was based on a progressive lease, the final transfer did not occur for many years, so the dates of purchase recorded on parish plans are generally a decade or so after the property was first settled, Land sales in Pywheitjorrk were sold at earlier crown land auctions in the 1850s. Purchasers in the present study area are summarised in the following table.

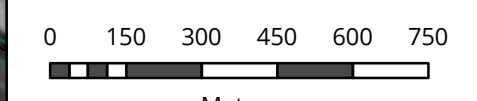
¹² Priestly 1984:60



Legend

Study Area

Figure 6: Detailed plan of Activity area showing historical features



Metres
 Scale: 1:15,000 @ A3
 Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55



Ballarat, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne,
 Sydney, Wangaratta & Wollongong

Table 2. First landowners in the study area.

Purchaser	Section	Lot	Sale date
<i>Kororoit Parish</i>			
R Smith	VII	4	16.3.70
Martin Batey	III	6	27.8.75
George Missen	IV	1 2a 3 4	4.4.73
George Missen Jnr	IV	2b	14.11.74
George Missen	III	3 5	18.8.76
George Missen	III	7 8a	23.5.76
C McNamara	IV	5 6	?
W Pratt	V	1-3	11.3.74
J S Kelly	III	1A, 2	10.10.71
<i>Pywhaitjorrk Parish</i>			
J Mackintosh & JS Durie	XVIII	1	7.7.54
W J T Clarke	XVIII	2	7.7.54
J Clarke	XVIII	3	24.2.54
John O'Grady	XVII	1	7.7.54
J O'Grady & w Craig	XVI	1	19.8.54

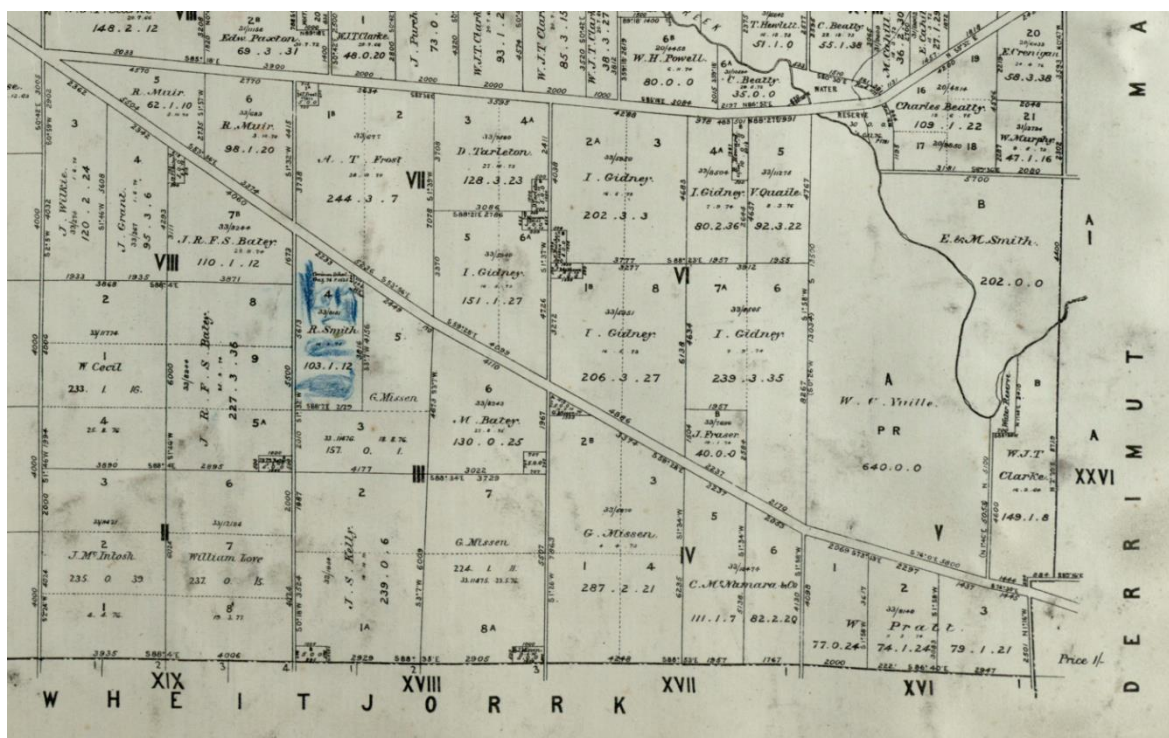


Figure 7: Kororoit Parish Plan, Imperial measure 2927

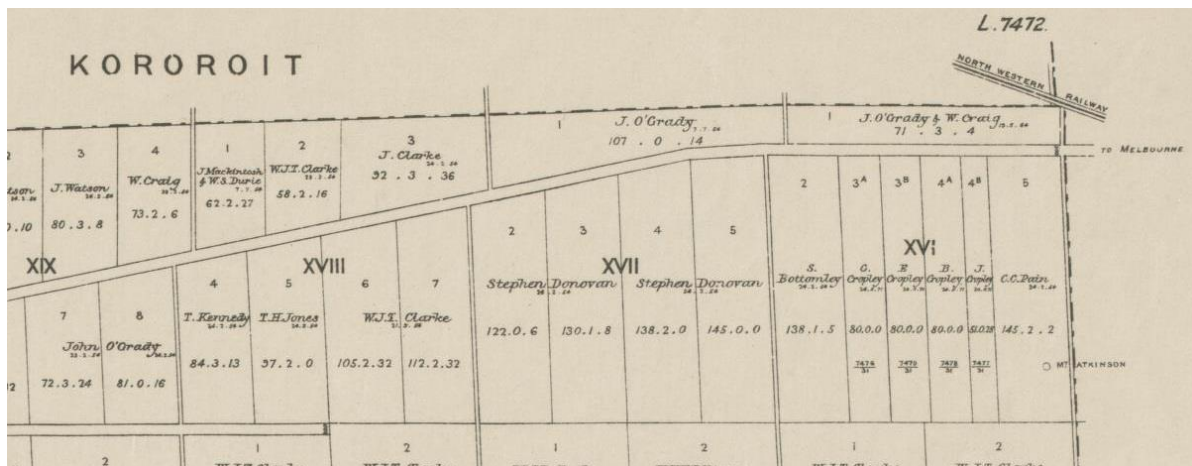


Figure 8: Pywhetjorrk Parish Plan, Imperial measure L7472

By the 1880s a substantial community had developed at Rockbank, served by a hotel (the Rose and Crown run by George Missen), school Blacksmith (Vere Quaile), post office and railway station.

In 1892, Isaac Gidney held almost all the land on the north side of Ballarat Road at Rockbank, while the Missen brothers had most of the land on the south. Leakes Road was then known as Gidney's Road north of Ballarat Road and Missen's Road south of Ballarat Road. The Rose and Crown Hotel was on a separate 10 acre block, the blacksmith and post office in the south east corner of the intersection, Martin Batey farmed the block on the south west and the school continued on the corner of Turner's Lot 4 Section III.

3.3.1 J S Kelly

J. S. Kelly was granted Crown Allotments 1-3 Section V on 11.3.74. There are few references to him and he appears to have resided in Bacchus Marsh, having in 1903, taken over the business of Mr. C. Weston's boot shop, Bacchus Marsh,¹³ He is recorded in a number of Bacchus Marsh stories with involvement at the Methodist church and was involved in cycle racing, so it seems clear his land ownership in Rockbank was probably speculative.¹⁴ Kelly ultimately moved to Ballarat in 1904.¹⁵ A Master Kelly is recorded at the Rockbank school in 1906¹⁶ and a Mr Kelly had a saddle and bridle stolen from his Rockbank property in 1901,¹⁷ so it is possible some of the family resided in the district.

¹³ *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 7 Feb 1903: 2. Web. 3 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90582295>>.

¹⁴ "SATURDAY, 21st February." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 21 Feb 1903: 2. Web. 3 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90580435>>.

¹⁵ *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 13 Feb 1904: 2. Web. 3 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90582200>>.

¹⁶ "MELTON." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 6 Jan 1906: 2. Web. 22 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90165898>>.

¹⁷ "MELTON." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 16 Nov 1901: 3. Web. 22 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article88352367>>.

3.3.2 William Pratt

William Pratt obtained several blocks south of the Ballarat Road east of Troup's Road naming his property "Hilton Farm"..¹⁸

However, a William Pratt is recorded as having sold up and left the district in 1888.¹⁹ The auction manifesto gives some clues to the nature of his farm and the activities he undertook, which might be considered typical of the area.

*... William Pratt to SELL, on Monday, 20th June, at twelve o'clock, at Hilton Farm, Rockbank,
The whole of his stock &c.
Comprising 20 cows, milking 15 springers
1 Alderney bull
8 draught horses
2 Spring carts, 1 hay-dray
Stone dray, 2 ploughs, 2 sets harrows, chaff cutter,
grubber, roller, hay rake, harness, 8 tanks, building materials, 100 young fowls, large quantity dairy
utensils, sundries & co.
Luncheon provided.
No reserve.
The whole to be sold, In consequence of the sales of the property.
Sales by Auction. TUESDAY, JUNE 20
At Twelve O'clock.*²⁰

His grandson W. Drain, however, stayed in the district, and took over the blacksmith and coachbuilder in Melton in 1911, previously run for 20 years by J. N. Byrnes,²¹

Probably a different person, a William Pratt was one of 238 convicts transported to Sydney on the *Lord Petre*, in 1843, but it cannot be confirmed if this is the William Pratt of Rockbank, although the dates would allow so.²²

3.3.3 Isaac and Henry Gidney

Isaac Gidney's property was one of the larger holdings in the Rockbank area in the late nineteenth century located off Ballarat Road. However, no evidence of the original homestead is visible. The Gidney dam and farm sites are recorded north of the Western Highway (H7822/0297 & 0300). Much of this property became the Defence Department's Royal Australian Signals radio communication station north of Ballarat Road. Isaac and Henry Gidney also had several small blocks in Rockbank, north of Ballarat Road. These comprised most of Sections VI and Lots 5 and 6 Section VII, as well as a scatter of other blocks near Kororoit Creek, which were probably used for watering stock. They also leased land from other farmers. The total extent of their freehold property was about 1000 acres. This land was selected under the Closer Settlement Act which allowed for selection of Crown Land and payment over time, so that the brothers were not actually granted title until 1873-4.

¹⁸ There may have been another William Pratt, as a William Pratt is recorded as having died at Hawthorn in 1880 - William PRATT, b. 1816, Durham, Durham, England , d. 3 Nov 1880, Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia <http://wintoncameronfamily.dyndns.org/getperson.php?personID=I3284&tree=1>

¹⁹ MELTON. (1888, June 30). *The Bacchus Marsh Express* p. 3. Retrieved May 3, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article89684436>

²⁰ "Advertising." *The Argus* 23 Jun 1888: 2. Web. 3 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article6135002>>.

²¹ MELTON., *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 23 December, 1911 p. 2. Retrieved May 3, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90577853>

²² Convict Records, <http://www.convictrecords.com.au/convicts/pratt/william/96245>

Charles Gidney, Isaac's son, for a time leased land south of Ballarat Road, and also inherited the family farm known as Rockbank Estate or Spring Farm, on his father's death in June 1894.²³ Charles was shortly after sued for breach of promise of marriage by Eliza Jane Alp, who won £1,000 damages from him.²⁴

3.3.4 Missen Brothers

The Missen brothers (George and Thomas) farmed land in the Rockbank area during much of the second half of the nineteenth century and early 20th century (the family is still in the Melton area). George and Mary Missen arrived in Victoria in 1867 and selected 150 acres. In 1871 George Missen Snr. owned 229 acres in the Parish of Kororoit (Sec III lot 7 & 8) which included his farmhouse. By the late 1870s George had been granted about 700 acres south of the Ballarat Road. This included three smaller 5 acre blocks evidently subdivided from the main holding to provide home sites for members of his family. This appears to have been reasonably common around Rockbank with about a dozen such blocks, and was probably part of a Government program of encouraging closer settlement in the area.

In later years he leased adjacent land from Martin Beatty including the lot with the old Rockbank Hotel (Sec 4 lot 3). George lived at the old Rose & Crown Hotel (HO 121) on the Ballarat Road in Rockbank until his death in 1883. His widow then moved into the house of her son (also George) which was extended to accommodate the extra family.

The original bullock track to Melton and Ballarat used to pass through the farm near Mt. Cottrell, the tracks of which were still visible in the late nineteenth century. By 1906 the farm had grown a little. A descendent, Bert Missen, farmed and grazed sheep in the Truganina district in later years.²⁵

George Missen jnr, owned the land where the house at 1957-1963 Western Hwy was built by the 1890s.²⁶ This had previously been granted to William Pratt in the initial land sales. From 1895-96, the property is listed as including a 'house', and was leased out to Charles Gidney, of Rockbank, as part of several thousand acres of property he owned or leased in Rockbank at this time. Gidney continued leasing the property (it is doubtful that he lived in the house) until it was again in the possession of George Missen by 1899. In 1901 the property was valued at £107.²⁷ The property had been subdivided by 1915-16 with a 'House and 109 acres' valued at £50, owned by a Miss V Block and occupied by 'Thomas George Missen', and then owned by a Mrs M Malteira(?) in 1929, then once again TG Missen in 1933.²⁸ The Missen House (HO 120) is reputed to have been:

'...where Frank and Reg Missen's father lived; he farmed it and was a very keen race horse follower'.²⁹ He was a '...keen sportsman and lifetime owner, trainer, and driver of trotting horses'. The 'grand old

²³ "WILLS AND ESTATES." *The Argus* 12 Jun 1894: 6. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article8676003>>.

²⁴ "A. BREACH OF PROMISE CASE." *The Argus* 14 Jun 1894: 5. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article8676537>>.

²⁵ Shire of Braybrook Ratebooks 1871-2, - 1906-7; Starr J. *Melton Plains of Promise* Melton Shire Council, n.d. 132-3 quoting Mary Missen's Diary; Albert Evans, Notes on Truganina LMW.

²⁶ SLV Shire Map Series: 821A (1892)

²⁷ Moloney 2006 citing Shire of Braybrook Ratebooks,

²⁸ Moloney 2006 citing Shire of Braybrook Ratebooks,

²⁹ Moloney 2006, citing Albert Evans, 'From the early settlers to the 1969 fires' (manuscript) site 114

man' drove sulkies until in his late 70s, and continued his interest in the horses right up to his death in the Footscray Hospital.³⁰

In 1891, Robert Missen leased land on Ballarat Road Rockbank (crown allotment 4, Section 3, 2341-2421 Western Highway, Rockbank).³¹ The Missen Dam is recorded on this property (H7822-029). At the same time Joseph Missen occupied the adjacent property which was farmed by Walter Missen (senior) who owned most of the balance of this Section.³² John Turner had previously owned the property, but there was no house on the site. This had been part of a crown grant of about 103 acres under the Selection Act to an R. Smith, in February 1874.³³ This later became the long term residence of the Pitson family (HO 122) see below).

3.3.5 Mark Paine

Mark Paine³⁴ arrived from Buckinghamshire England with his wife in 1859³⁵ and in 1863 purchased two allotments of land on the south side of Greigs Road on the corner of Greigs and Paynes Roads where he erected a bluestone cottage (HO 113). By 1871 he owned 62 acres with a stone cottage, selected 237 acres, and leased 223 acres.

Paine ran sheep, had a team of bullocks, carted goods and contracted for road work to the Melton Roads Board.³⁶ He had also obtained a slaughtering licence.³⁷

Paine was a long standing member of the Braybrook council for the Rockbank Riding and was known by locals as 'the King of Mount Cotterell'.³⁸ He died in 1896.³⁹

The Paine's Rockbank property eventually passed to a grandson, William Collins who married Mary Nixon, daughter of Charles and Sarah Nixon of *Mowbray*, formerly the Sports Paddock, now the Melton Golf Course. The Rockbank cottage had few amenities, a timber detached kitchen was destroyed by fire. The building remained vacant for many years. Vandals removed windows and doors and wrecked the building which was burnt in the 1965 fire.⁴⁰

The current owner has repaired and reroofed part of the building.

3.3.6 Martin Batey

Martin Batey was a member of a prominent local family which had land interests across the region from Melton to Sunbury. From 1846 to 1874 Martin Batey had a substantial grazing property stemming from a squatting licence at Sunbury known as Redstone Hill, which he ran in

³⁰ Tarr J. Melton Plains of Promise Melton Shire Council, n.d , J, p.118

³¹ Parish Plan, Parish of Kororoit. (It is possible that some of this land was selected by a son George).

³² Moloney 2006, Citing Shire of Braybrook Ratebooks and SLV Shire Map Series, 821A (1892)

³³ Bob Macdonald, 'History of Melton', typescript, October 1969, p.6

³⁴ Note the spelling of Paine and Payne seems to be quite variable in local records, although Moloney (2006) has identified that in the Rockbank area, they refer to the same family and the spelling seems interchangeable in various records. The Spelling 'Paine' has been employed here for the 19th century family, as this is more common, despite the road having the Payne spelling. Payne's Cottage has been retained for the house built by Mark Paine, as this is the one used in the Melton Heritage Study.

³⁵ Olwen Ford, 'Voices From Below: Family, School and Community on the Braybrook Plains 1854-1892', M.Ed. Thesis, University of Melbourne, 1993, p.248

³⁶ Alex Cameron, 'Melton Memoirs' (M&DHS), p.22, and introduction.

³⁷ Ford, 1993.

³⁸ *The Melton Express*, 1/9/1896

³⁹ *Melton Express*, 1/9/1896

⁴⁰ Moloney 2006

partnership with Frederick Nevison Flintoff. He purchased CA VII 6 west of Rockbank village, in 1875 under the closer settlement act. By the mid nineteenth century the property was in the hands of Isaac Batey. Another member of the family (J.R.F.S. Batey) had 110 acres up the road towards Melton.

Several smaller blocks of about 5 acres, were subdivided from these, evidently to accommodate family members wishing to build their own houses on the family farm. Blocks north of the present study area along Leakes Road were selected by D. Tarleton, J. Mawson, E. Butcher, J. Matthews and G Missen, while within the Rockbank precinct study area, there were small blocks at the corner of Leakes Rd and Ballarat Road, and the corners of lots 1a and 8a in Section III (Kelly and Missen respectively).⁴¹

3.3.7 Edward Hall Pitson

In 1894 Edward Hall Pitson, described as a 'farmer' of 'Mt Cottrell', owned land on the south side of Ballarat Road Rockbank, (crown allotment 4, Section 3, now 2341-2421 Western Highway which was leased to Robert Missen .⁴² There does not appear to be any dwelling on the site until 1897-98, when a 'hut' is recorded. Pitson moved to the property by 1898-99 which was referred to in the rate books as 'Rockbank' which lists a 'house' on the site for the first time (HO 122). Pitson continues to be listed as occupant until at least 1934.⁴³ Edward was a councillor for Rockbank Riding around 1916.⁴⁴ He died on 27 November 1936, his executors being Sarah Helen Harris and James Alfred Pitson, probably his children, then living in Thornbury and Scoresby respectively.⁴⁵

Little more is known of Edward Hall Pitson, although other members of the family get brief mentions, including a young man, J Pitson, in a photograph of a Rockbank picnic,⁴⁶ and ratebook references to William Pitson, and Mary Pitson ('home duties, and was probably his wife), who had land on the Exford Estate in the early twentieth century.⁴⁷

3.3.8 Dry Stone Walls

Fencing was probably the first European construction on the Keilor- Werribee Plains. A settlement founded by graziers ensured that the security of their livestock as a priority. The Fencing Act and regulations governing land selection mandated the location and standard of fencing, requiring all property boundaries to be fenced.

Stone was the most popular material where there was volcanic fieldstone scattered across the ground, and few trees, although timber post and rail, hedges, post and wider and combinations of all these were used. Dry stone walls answered the need to clear the fields of rocks, particularly where agriculture was envisaged, or to improve grass cover, and fence. In areas with fewer stones, or near forests, early fences were more likely to have been timber post-and-rail, or post-and-wire. With split timber from Mt Macedon and the Black forest being used by the 1860s.

⁴¹ Parish of Kororoit County of Bourke, Plan L5284, Department of Lands and Survey Melbourne 10.5.1873 (with later annotations) State Library Victoria.

⁴² Parish Plan, Parish of Kororoit. (It is possible that some of this land was selected by a son George).

⁴³ Moloney citing Shire of Melton Ratebook, 1933-34

⁴⁴ MELTON. (1916, December 16). *The Bacchus Marsh Express* p. 2. Retrieved May 22, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article74271000>

⁴⁵ Advertising. (1937, February 25). *The Argus* p. 1. Retrieved May 22, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article11972918>

⁴⁶ Starr J. Melton Plains of Promise Melton Shire Council, n.d., p.120

⁴⁷ Moloney citing Shire of Melton Ratebook, 1933-34

However, the periodic fires across the grasslands were more likely to destroy post and rail fencing, although stone walls were noted from early on as sometimes-effective fire breaks, and so were purposely constructed around homesteads and livestock paddocks for protection.⁴⁸ Therefore few early timber fences survive.

The main period of construction of dry-stone walls in Melbourne's west was in the period 1850-1880, after which improvements made wire considerably more economical than stone walling. However, stone walls were still repaired, and a few new ones built, into the twentieth century.⁴⁹

Wire fencing was introduced in the 1850s and was cheaper than either stone or post-and-rail fencing, but did not really become popular, or an alternative for walling in very rocky areas, until higher tensile steel and barbed wires were readily available from the 1870s or 80s.

Moloney notes that 45% of the dry stone walls remaining in Melton shire were erected as part of the Clarke Rockbank pastoral estate, while three of the larger farmers built a further 21.5% of walls between them - namely the Beattys on Blackhills Road (8.5%), Hopkins & Farragher on Hopkins Road (7.4%), and the Moylans on Mount Kororoit Road (5.6%). A further third of the walls were built mainly by smaller farmers and selectors, with the Missens of Rockbank (3.3%), Payne of Rockbank (3.2%), Campbell of Toolern Vale (1.6%), and Gidney of Rockbank (1.4%) the next most prolific wall builders. With the spread of urbanization, many walls, especially along roads and major property boundaries, have been replaced with wire fencing.⁵⁰

3.3.9 Subdivision

In the early 1960s a large subdivision of about 140 allotments was carried out by a company known as Rockbank Estates Pty Ltd. Most of the buyers appear to have been from the inner western suburbs such as Newport and Sunshine looking for a small block, and many may have been European migrants looking for larger blocks of land to build on. Moloney suggests they were the vanguard of hobby farms and rural residential subdivision.⁵¹

A service station was constructed facing Ballarat Road in the middle of the subdivision, and a service road provided. However, the service station was demolished about 10 years ago as access to the residential parts of Rockbank was closed off from the main road.

3.4 Community & business

3.4.1 Rockbank Primary School

A Common School was built on the south side of Ballarat Road in 1868 to accommodate the new families who were moving in to the area after land sales and establishment of farms.

Some dispute arose 6 years later when the site became swampy and sanitation deteriorated and it was perceived to be distant from the main centre of population. A number of local residents, including a Vere Quaille, who was prominent on the school committee petitioned for the school to be moved and the newspapers reported that "An endeavor is being made by some persons to

⁴⁸ Moloney, 2006, notes that many early farmers such as Chandler lost timber fences in the Black Monday fire

⁴⁹ Vines 1995, Built to Last, Dry Stone Walls in Melbourne's Western Region.

⁵⁰ Moloney Shire of Melton Heritage Study Stage Two, 2006: Environmental History.

⁵¹ Moloney Shire of Melton Heritage Study Stage Two, 2006: Environmental History. P.71

get the New Cambridge School shifted from its present site to one nearer the Kororoit Creek."⁵² However, the Education Department seems to have been intractable.⁵³



Figure 9: Rockbank School, No. 919, photo Charles Edward Boyles (1888-1971) SLVH2008.122/365

The land was gazetted in 1874 and the school became known as New Cambridge, eventually coming under the Education Department as State School No 919.⁵⁴ Local resident R. Smith, had donated a one acre site, while Mary Missen recalled its early days:

*'The old school was built of stone carted by the local people. It was called 'New Cambridge' Number 919. There were a lot of children going then...There were a lot of houses about then and large families, and that was the only school near them.'*⁵⁵

Mr. Saddler was the first teacher at the school, replaced by George Foster in 1871, who moved on in 1876.⁵⁶ New Cambridge operated half-time with Keilor Road Station school (No.1641) from 1884 to 1886 when Keilor Road was closed. Complaints as the unsanitary conditions continued,

⁵² "MELTON." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 28 Jun 1873: 3. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93142663>>.

⁵³ "CORRESPONDENCE." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 26 Jul 1873: 3. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93142256>>.

⁵⁴ Ford, O. *Voices from Below, School and Community on the Braybrook Plains, 1854 to 1892*. M. Ed. Thesis, University of Melbourne 1993, pp.235ff.

⁵⁵ Starr, J, *Melton: Plains of Promise* (Melton Shire Council, nd), p.117.

⁵⁶ *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 4 Feb 1871: 3. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article89701836>>. (Vic. : 1866 - 1918)

for example from Missen and W. Murphy in 1885 complaining the school was not whitewashed,⁵⁷ and again by W. Murphy in 1886.⁵⁸

A description of the school during Arbor Day described the site of the school as:

"...bleak and exposed, whilst the ground (as its name implies) was full of rocks and boulders. The arrangements of the head teacher (Mr. E. J. Lyttle) were perfect, and the neighbouring residents had willingly lent a hand. Forty two sizeable holes were sunk for the reception of the trees (!!) with incredible difficulty to try and keep same in any sort of a line, owing to the rocks."⁵⁹

In 1906 the name of the school changed to Rockbank and a teacher's residence was erected in 1934.⁶⁰



Figure 10: Rockbank school children in 1956 during an excursion⁶¹

⁵⁷ "The Council then sat as the." *Independent* 7 Mar 1885: 3. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article73246883>>.

⁵⁸ "ANNUAL MEETING." *Independent* 11 Dec 1886: 4. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article73767470>>.

⁵⁹ "ROCKBANK SCHOOL." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 9 Jul 1904: 3. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90581244>>.

⁶⁰ Blake, pp.50-51, 72; Starr, . p.180

⁶¹ <http://www.friendsreunited.co.uk/this-pic-was-taken-at-our-annual-sports-day-1956/Memory/25b5432b-ad07-442e-9033-f5148ca3c08a>



Figure 11: Rockbank school shortly before demolition c 2002 (Photo D Moloney via Melton council)

In October 1998 the school celebrated its 130th Anniversary, with long needed maintenance having been undertaken decades early.⁶²

In 2009 the school moved with the old building on the Western Highway site being demolished and a new school erected in Westcott Parade.

3.4.2 Rose and Crown Hotel

In April 1875 Thomas Missen obtained the licence for the Rose and Crown Hotel (HO 121) which the family then ran as an adjunct to their farm. The hotel had eight rooms, in addition to accommodation for the owners.⁶³ George Junior ran the hotel up to 1885, after which it was taken on by T. Derham of Braybrook, followed by A Coplestone in 1890-91, E. Keating in December 1893, a Mrs O'Brien around 1898, and then William Derham. By 1911, the hotel was 'closed by order' of the License Reduction Board with 'Compensation of £320'.⁶⁴ And a clearing sale held as part of the change-over to new uses.⁶⁵

The hotel was thereafter used as a residence by various Missen family members, followed by the Harrison family and several others. In 1959 Mr and Mrs F Proud commenced operation of a 20 bay caravan park at the property incorporating an laundry and toilet pavilion and reticulation of bore water to numerous taps, while trees were planted.⁶⁶

⁶²Public Records Office Victoria, VPRS 8796/P0001/Unit17, Capital Expenditure Works Files: Primary Schools, School No.919: Rockbank Primary School, 1961-1978

⁶³ *The Melton Express*, 28/10/1987 *The Bacchus Marsh Express*, 10/4/1875, 27/11/1875

⁶⁴ Moloney 2006 citing *Melton Express*

⁶⁵ "COMING AUCTION SALES." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 23 Dec 1911: 3. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90577870>>.

⁶⁶ *The Melton Express*, 3/7/1959.

3.4.3 Post Office & General Store

Rockbank Post Office opened on 1 January 1862.⁶⁷ This office was staffed in the first instance, by Mr. James Fraser and situated close to the camping ground, six miles from Melton, between the Rose and Crown and Mr. Pratt's Half-way house.⁶⁸

Possible another general store is recorded as serving the Rockbank area from about 1861, run by the Cropley family. While the Cropleys left to settle in Gippsland in the 1870s, other services came into the area to serve the community.⁶⁹



Figure 12: Rockbank Post Office and store in the 1970s, National Library B5191



Figure 13: Rockbank Store c 2000.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Premier Postal History Post Office List <https://www.premierpostal.com/cgi-bin/wsProd.sh/Viewpocdwrapper.p?SortBy=VIC&country=>

⁶⁸ CORRESPONDENCE. (1872, January 13). *The Bacchus Marsh Express* p. 3. Retrieved May 3, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article89700818>

⁶⁹ Moloney Shire of Melton Heritage Study Stage Two, 2006: Environmental History citing Starr , p.132

⁷⁰ Royce Millar \$4bn plan to bust city's green corridor *The Age*, October 22, 2005, web - <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/4bn-plan-to-bust-citys-green-corridor/2005/10/21/1129775961987.html>

The post office did not appear to last for long, as in about 1871 a Mr Quale (who operated a smithy in Rockbank), and some of the other residents were trying to get a post office.⁷¹ Mr. Sarre (or Sarra) erected a new store on Station Road (now old Leakes Road) in 1909. It was described as being "24 x 20, with 11ft walls, and big enough to do plenty of business,"⁷² He before when he sold to new proprietors in 1911, when a Mr. H. Neilson took charge.⁷³ The store was run by a Mr. J. G. Orgill, in 1914 who was given permission to erect a branch store at the Exford weir. The first telephone in Rockbank was also installed around this time, with "Mr. Charles Holden, son of the Chairman of the Melbourne Harbor Trust, ...the first in the district to have the 'phone on'."⁷⁴

While the general store still operates on the same site, the building was extensively altered and reconstructed about 10 years ago.

3.4.4 Mechanics Institute Community Hall

Rockbank gained a Mechanics Institute (HO 115) around 1920 as part of a movement which flourished in Victoria from 1839 to 1950, having developed Institutes in Scotland and England from the 1820s. Such institutions were intended to educate and enlighten the working classes, with facilities including a reading room, a library and a lecture room. Although enjoying mixed success in Britain, they made a substantial contribution to the development of public education and library services in Victoria.⁷⁵

When the Rockbank Mechanics' Institute was established the focus had changed from adult education to community recreation or entertainment and the halls were used more for social functions and by community groups. The reserves gazetted for Mechanics' Institutes between 1900 and 1930 were increasingly being called 'public halls'. Rockbank Mechanics' Institute however, still incorporated a library.⁷⁶

Rockbank township, was not a Government surveyed township, and so land had not been reserved for public purposes. The land was most probably either donated (perhaps by the locally prominent George Missen family, who had previously owned the or purchased by public subscription.⁷⁷

The hall gained ancillary facilities, including a foyer, supper room and toilets, in more recent decades. A Mr. Fogarty was the Secretary of the Institute for many years.⁷⁸ The Hall was purchased by the Shire of Melton in the 1980s from the Rockbank Mechanics' Institute and a committee of management formed.⁷⁹

⁷¹ Moloney 2006 citing Macdonald, p.9

⁷² "MELTON." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 14 Aug 1909: 2. Web. 24 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90169192>>.

⁷³ "ROCKBANK." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 30 Sep 1911: 3. Web. 24 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90577249>>.

⁷⁴ "ROCKBANK." *The Bacchus Marsh Express* 10 Jan 1914: 3. Web. 22 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article74266403>>.

⁷⁵ Baragwanath, P, Hodgson, J, An Inventory of Mechanics' Institutes in Victoria, Vol.1 (DNRE, Historic Places Section, September 1998), pp.iii-vi.

⁷⁶ Baragwanath, Hodgson (1998), Vol.3, pp.841-842

⁷⁷ Parish Plan, Kororoit; also Shire Map Series, Parish of Kororoit, 1892. See also Starr, J, Melton: Plains of Promise (Shire of Melton, nd), pp.110 - 121

⁷⁸ Moloney 2006 citing Mr Charlie Finch, pers. conv. 24/1/2002

⁷⁹ Baragwanath, Hodgson (1998), Vol.3, p.841. Candy, Philip, 'Ex unitate vires: Mechanics' Institutes and the Federal Ideal', in Baragwanath, P, If These Walls Could Speak: A Social History of the Mechanics' Institutes of Victoria (Mechanics Institute Inc, Windsor, 2000), pp.3-5.

3.5 Transport & industry

3.5.1 Roads

The Western Highway had its genesis as one of several possible routes to the western district. However, as it was through open clay country, it could become impassable in winter. As a result other routes either via Geelong or along the lower slopes of the ranges, through Sydenham and Toolern Vale, or Beattys Road where the Rockbank Inn was places, were more common.

The three chain wide Griegs Road, which aligned with Rockbank Middle Road, to provide access to a series of water reserves along Kororoit Creek, was a substantial stock route. The width of both the Ballarat Road and Griegs Road was determined by the need to feed livestock while droving between western district farms and Melbourne markets.

Improvements to the roads were generally undertaken by the Central Roads Board in the earliest period 1853-58, then by the District Roads Boards, which evolved into shire councils, and then from 1913, the Country Roads Board (the precursor to VicRoads) took over responsibility for main roads. Many roads in the district were constructed in a modified Telford method, using the field stones to create a base of cobbles, raised above the natural ground level by digging ditches either side and spreading the soil in a crowned embankment between. The cobbles were laid in this fill and then given a wearing surface of gravel, crushed rock, sand, loam or whatever was to hand apart from the sticky basalt clays.⁸⁰

The first evidence of metalling the Ballarat Road (as it was then called) was in 1854, several years after the goldfields tracks had been turned to ruts and bogs.⁸¹ More extensive works amounting to over £50,000, was undertaken in 1857, including substantial sections of corduroy and plank roads, constructed where boggy conditions were causing problems.⁸²

In 1871 WJ Clarke was elected to Melton Shire Council, and later became President, and his influence may have led to improvements in Rockbank roads, while a new stone and timber bridge over Kororoit Creek in Deer Park, built in 1878 saw Rockbank on the main route to Ballarat.⁸³

Braybrook Roads Board was formed in 1860, then a Shire in 1871 and had responsibility for roads between West Footscray and Melton. It constructed the bridges along Ballarat Road including Kororoit Creek, Johns (or Jones Creek) and Keating's Swamp.⁸⁴ Keating's Swamp was named for local resident, John Dalrymple Keating, purported to be the first European child born in Tasmania, who died at Rockbank in 1888.⁸⁵ It was also where a 'strange animal' with 'with a round stubby, black head ...' was seen travelling about when the swamp was overflowing in 1863. 'Some said it must have been a Bunyip', according to Anders Hjorth.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Max Lay, Melbourne Miles, The Story of Melbourne's Roads

⁸¹ Victorian Government Gazette, No 94, Oct 16, 1854, p. 2295

⁸² For example Victorian Government Gazette no 104, , November 14th 1854 p.2543

⁸³ Bilszta, J 'The First Shire Council', unpublished typescript (MDHS, nd)

⁸⁴ "Advertising." The Bacchus Marsh Express 20 Apr 1878: 2. Web. 26 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article89702300>>.

⁸⁵ *The Mercury* (Hobart, Tas. : 1860 - 1954) Monday 1 September 1884.

⁸⁶ Moloney 2006 citing Hjorth, Anders, 'Recollections of Melton 1861-67', in M&DHS Newsletter, February 2001.

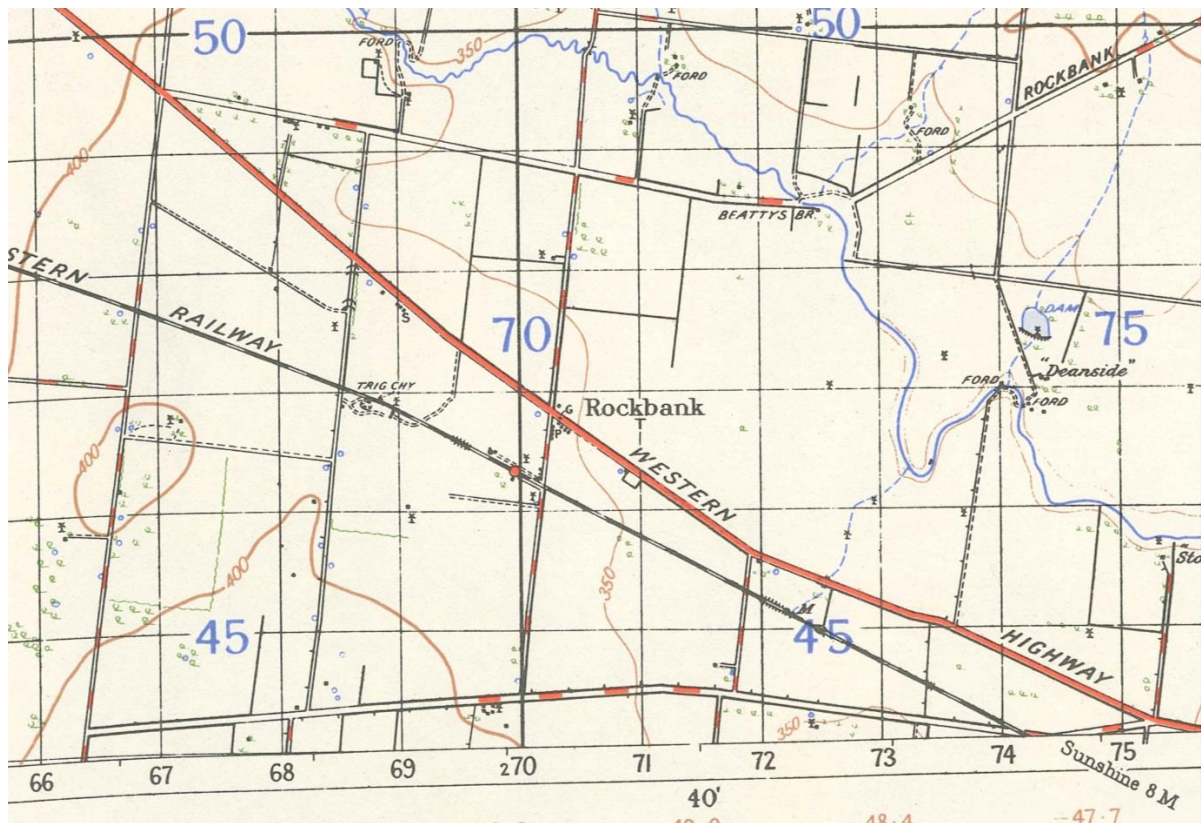


Figure 14: 1 inch to 1 mile Ordnance survey, Sunbury Sheet, 1938, showing extent of roads and some dry stone walls (thick black lines)

Under the CRB Ballarat Road was greatly improved and in the 1960s was designated a Bypass Road with limitations on who could access it. Grazing of livestock along the verges was prohibited. In the 1960s and 70s it was progressively duplicated, often eliminating early homes and other buildings built at the road junctions where widening of the otherwise generous road reserve was necessary.

One of the improvements was the planting of shelter belts of vegetation along the road side, in the early twentieth century, in particular the extensive sugar gum plantations. On the Western Highway at Rockbank an interesting plantation of different species of pine trees was created in parts of the median strip and southern verge. Some of these are believed to have been planted by state school children as part of a beautification exercise.⁸⁷

Planting along the southern and western sides of roads was more common, as this protected against the prevailing winds in what was a very open landscape, sometimes known as "Pleurisy Plains".

3.5.2 Railway and station

A major change to Rockbank occurred in the 1880s when the North Western Railway was constructed linking Sunshine to Ballarat through Melton and Bacchus Marsh. This meant the creation of a railway reserve, through the existing Crown Allotments and eventually forcing the realignment of the eastern end of Greigs Road to avoid an extra level crossing.

⁸⁷ Robert Macdonald, 'A History of Melton', typescript held by MDHS, c.1969, p.17

The Rockbank station (D7822-030) was provided with a waiting sheds, residences for station staff, a signal box and later more substantial station building.⁸⁸ Three roads (the main rail track and two loop sidings) were provided, with the chaff siding running north off No 3 Road (H7822-0717).



Figure 15: Former Rockbank Station and signal box buildings,⁸⁹

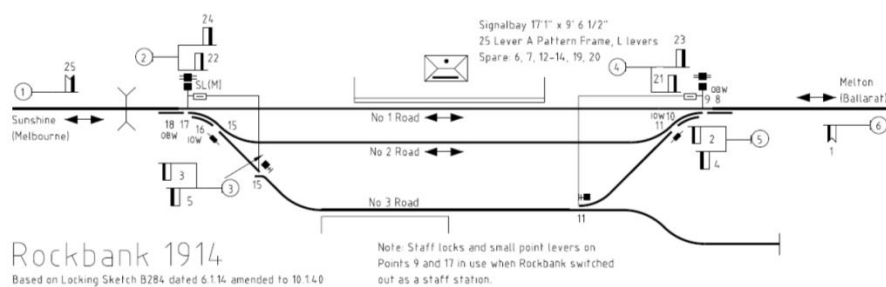


Figure 16: Plan of Rockbank station and sidings 1914.⁹⁰

The opening of the Ballarat railway in the 1880s which required considerable earthworks through Keatings Swamp, may have been instrumental in the establishment of the coursing ground at Rockbank.⁹¹

A recreation reserve was created just south of the railway, apparently using residual land acquired for the railway and station easement. This later was planted with sugar gums and other trees, and a rough playing field, tennis courts, toilets and other facilities were created.

⁸⁸ Andrew Ward, A. Donnelly, Victoria's Railway Stations: An Architectural Survey, 1982; A Study of Historic Railway Buildings and Structures for V Line, Vol. 4, Andrew Ward and Associates, 1988 p 588

⁸⁹ Where there were stations blog <http://www.stationspast.net/victoria/rockbank-to-ballarat/rockbank/>

⁹⁰ Andrew Waugh, Victorian Siding Histories <http://www.vrhhistory.com/Locations/A019-Rockbank.pdf>

⁹¹ Victorian Municipal Directories, 1919

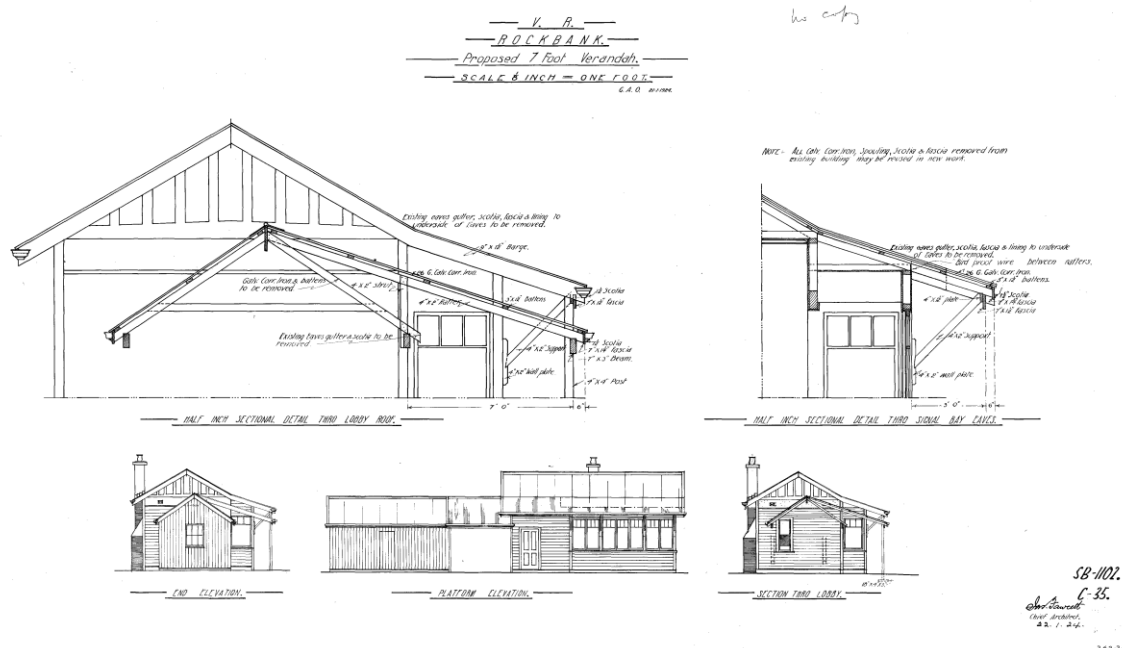


Figure 17: Plan of proposed verandah additions to Rockbank Station VR drawing 1924.

3.5.3 Local industry

A number of local industries were established, partly due to the convenience of the railway line. These included chaff mills, and a quarry.

J. Cockbill operated a quarry located east of Paynes Road and south of the railway from at least 1925. It was served by a siding which would have facilitated stone carting on a track on the south side of the railway line. The siding was opened on 27 Feb 1925, and disconnected in 1940, after a few modifications in the mean time. A hopper for receiving stone for loading on wagons was located across the middle of the siding.⁹² This siding also served Cockbill's chaff mill. The quarry hole was subsequently filled.

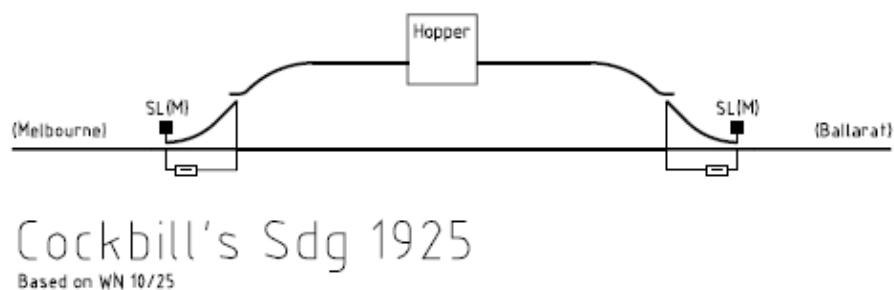


Figure 18: Plan of Cockbill's quarry and chaff mill siding⁹³

According to Moloney, there was a shell of a concrete building located about 500 metres east of Paynes Road, immediately adjacent to Cockbill's quarry. There was also an identical pair of semi-

⁹² Andrew Waugh, Victorian Siding Histories <http://www.vrhistory.com/Locations/A019-Rockbank.pdf>

⁹³ Andrew Waugh, Victorian Siding Histories <http://www.vrhistory.com/Locations/A019-Rockbank.pdf>

ruinous concrete houses on the east side of Paynes Road, about 150 metres south of the railway.⁹⁴

Growing hay and chaff milling was an important local industry which was particularly suited to the dry western plains, especially between Werribee and Melton, where fertile soil, adequate rain falls, and long, warm, dry summers allowed the hay to ripen and dry. Stooks of straw, traditional haystacks, and large chaff mills were a feature of the district until recently. Shipment of hay and chaff were the main reasons for a station at Rockbank, and a substantial station ground and sidings were installed as a result. At least two chaff mills were erected beside the line.

The first Rockbank chaff mill (H7822-0717) was built in 1908 by the Barrie Brothers opposite the railway station and its machinery brought from Melton by horse and dray.⁹⁵ Moving large machinery and buildings appears to have been something of an accomplished art for the Barries as they were also responsible for moving their Djerriwarrh home to Ferris Lane Melton by truck in 1941,⁹⁶ and Jack Findlater's house from Rockbank to Footscray West.⁹⁷

The Barries sold to Glover, Onians & Co. in 1910,⁹⁸ but the Barries seem to have either bought back into the mill, or built another one, as they are recorded as having sold the business to Dixon Brothers in 1916.⁹⁹ Hill and Reid, chaff-millers who operated from King Street Melbourne in 1915, had an interest in the mill at some stage although when and how they were involved is not known.¹⁰⁰



Figure 19: Victorian Railways, Reaping & Binding Hay at Rockbank Dec. 1953 with hay stook, SLV H91.330/3422

⁹⁴ David Moloney, pers. com, 22/5/13

⁹⁵ Recorded interview with Leo Tarleton, 6.2.87 LMW; Starr J. *Melton Plains of Promise* Melton Shire Council, n.d. ; Much of the information on Chaff Mills is from Gary Vines,, *Chaff-Mills In Melbourne's West An Industrial Sites Study* 1987, Living Museum of the West. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gary_Vines/publications/

⁹⁶ Starr J. *Melton Plains of Promise* Melton Shire Council, n.d p.217.

⁹⁷ Recorded interview with Jack Findlater, 5.2.87 Living Museum of the West

⁹⁸ "MELTON." *The Bacchus Marsh Express*) 19 Feb 1910: 2. Web. 23 May 2013 <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90171788>>.

⁹⁹ MELTON. (1916, February 5). *The Bacchus Marsh Express* p. 2. Retrieved May 23, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article74269649>

¹⁰⁰ Lists of dismantled private sidings, Indexes, held by Sidings Administration Section, V Line Melbourne.

H.S.K. Ward trading as Glover Onians and Co. also bought this mill around the same time as the Melton mill and constructed a siding in 1914, which was extended in 1915. The manager was Archie McEacherchen.¹⁰¹

By 1 July 1955 the mill appears to have been out of action as Victorian Railways were using the siding and waived the annual maintenance charge. In 1959 the siding was purchased by the railways.¹⁰² The Rockbank mill also burned down.

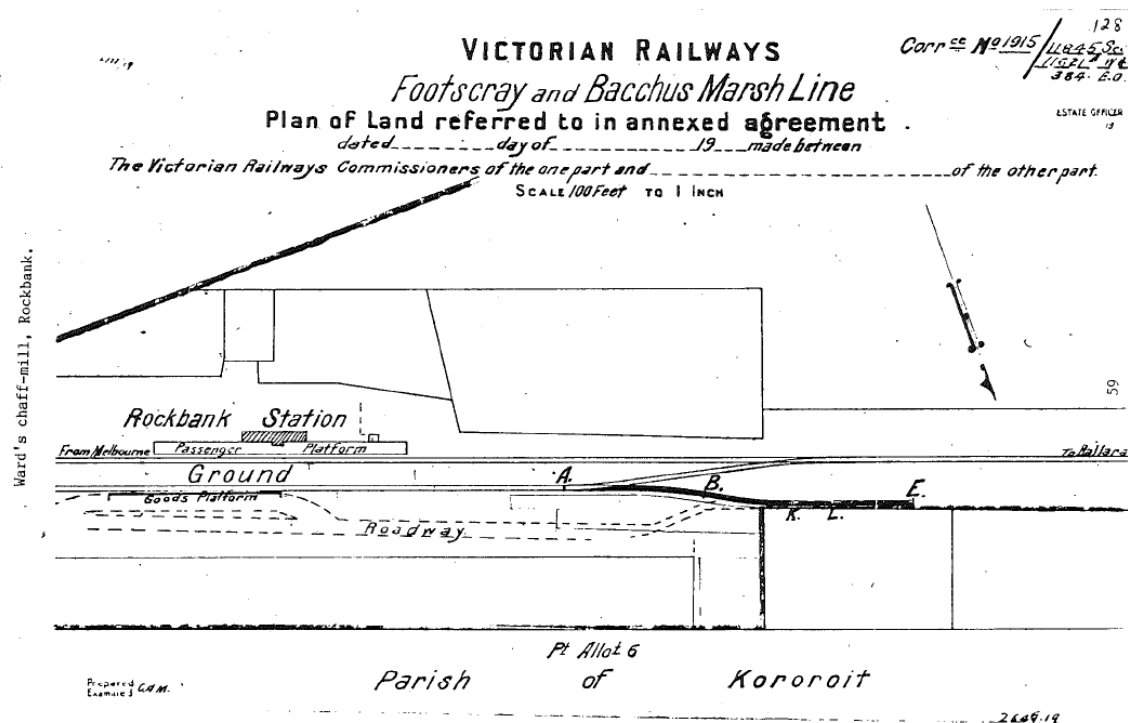


Figure 20: Plan of Rockbank Station and Ward's Chaff Mill siding (VicTrack Sidings section)

Another chaff-mill operated in Rockbank for a short time. This was established in 1925 by G. Cockbill who leased land from the railways for a chaff-cutting business and a siding. It continued until 1931 when the points and crossing were removed and the site appears to have been vacant for some years. In 1936 the siding was reconnected by J. Hocking and Sons (Hay, Corn, Chaff, Wood and Coal Merchants of Dandenong Road, Malvern and Nepean Road, North Brighton.) who later sold out to Hay Products Pty. Ltd. They in turn ceased business about 1940 and the siding was again disconnected. On 16.6.72 an inspection by railway staff revealed no evidence of the siding or a business on railway land.¹⁰³ The Company ceased on 21. 12. 1919.¹⁰⁴

In 1909 Glover Onians and Company operated in partnership with H S K Ward, operated as grain and produce salesmen 54-60 King St Melbourne. This was the last record of the firm until it was struck off the Register of Businesses in July 1929.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Starr J. *Melton Plains of Promise* Melton Shire Council, n.d. and Leo Tarleton, 'Summary of chaff-mills in the Melton area, copy held by LMW.

¹⁰² Lists of dismantled private sidings, No. 128, Ward, held by Sidings Administration Section, V Line Melbourne.

¹⁰³ Lists of dismantled private sidings, No. 129, Cockbill, held by Sidings Administration Section, V Line Melbourne.

¹⁰⁴ Defunct Business File, 933/44/14204, Victorian Public Records Office

¹⁰⁵ Defunct Business File 933/1/2, Victorian Public Records Office.

Ward appears to have continued in the chaff-milling business on his own from this time until 1946 when he formed a proprietary limited company.

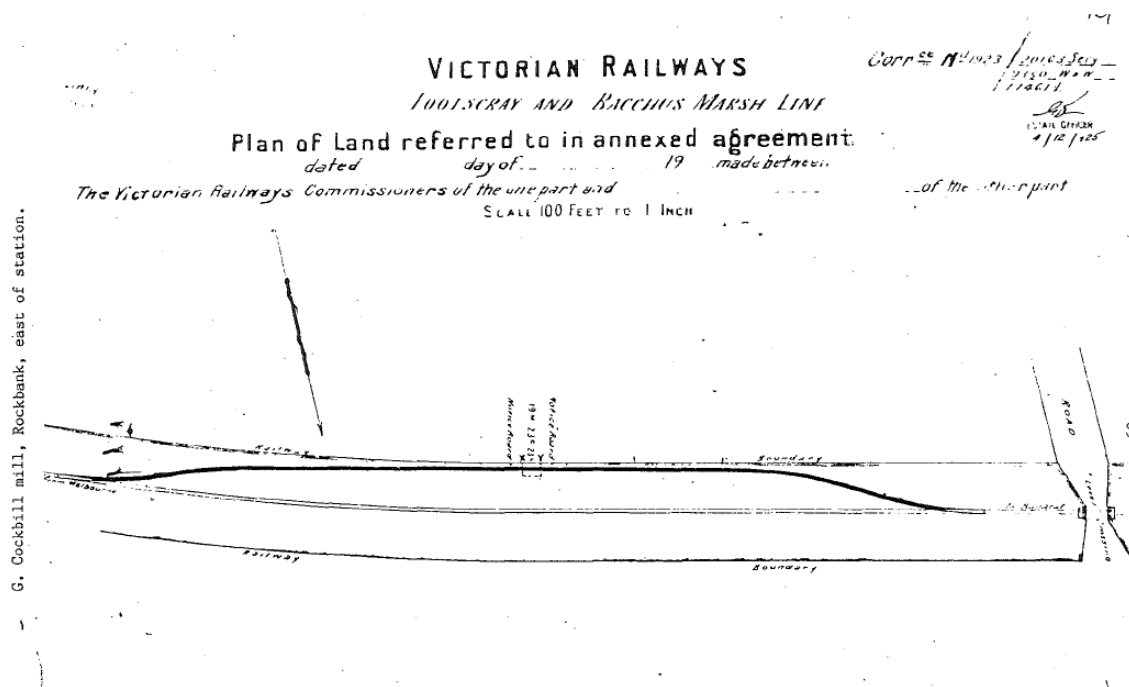


Figure 21: Siding plan at Cockbill's Rockbank Chaff Mill (VicTrack Sidings section)

3.5.4 Wireless communications

The Australian Government, as part of its role in controlling radio and telegraph communications for the commonwealth determined that a direct radio service would be required with the UK – as an adjunct to the telegraph system which operated via submarine cables.¹⁰⁶

While the prime task of the newly formed AWA had been to develop wireless for shipping in the Australian region, from 1923 it became the designer, builder and supplier of Australia's first radio broadcasting stations' transmission equipment, and a pioneer of long-distance radio. The Commonwealth government invested in the firm and in 1926, it established two large beam wireless stations on 180 hectare sites; a receiver site in Victoria at Rockbank (HO 108 located outside the Rockbank precinct) and a transmitter site at Fiskville near Ballan. The shortwave radiotelegraph service between Australia and Britain was inaugurated on 8 April 1927 and terminated on 31 May 1969.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Ian McLean, 'Rockbank, Fiskville and the Beam Wireless, Part 2', in HRSA Radio Waves, July 2004, pp.12-13; also Caslon, Australasian Telecommunications Profile: History (Caslon) www.caslon.com.au/austelecomsprofile1.htm

¹⁰⁷ Inglis, KS, 'The Beginnings of Radio in Australia', Stirling Memorial Lecture 1980; 750 Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, Technology in Australia 1788-1988, (Melbourne 1988, On-line 2000), p.536



Figure 22: Australian Wireless Beam Station.¹⁰⁸

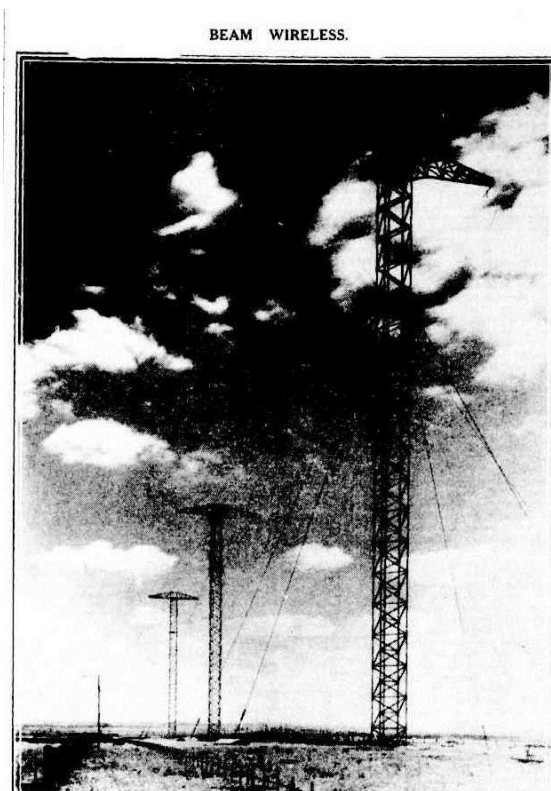


Figure 23: Rockbank Beam Wireless aerials

The Second World War saw the establishment of the Defence Department radio receiving station which took up much of Gidney's land north of Ballarat Road. As part of this development a number of radio masts and service buildings were erected, and a group of defence personnel houses built at the north east corner of Leakes Road and Ballarat Road, with a new street

¹⁰⁸ Wireless Telegraphy in Australia web viewed 23/5/13 <http://www.angelfire.com/de/vk3kcm/Fiskville2.html>

constructed. It was probably at this time that Gidney's original house was demolished, it evidently having been located where the new houses were built.¹⁰⁹

The increase in personnel from the radio and defence facilities increased the need for reticulated water, and local recreational facilities. A number of defence houses were also constructed near the corner of Leakes Road and Ballarat Road.

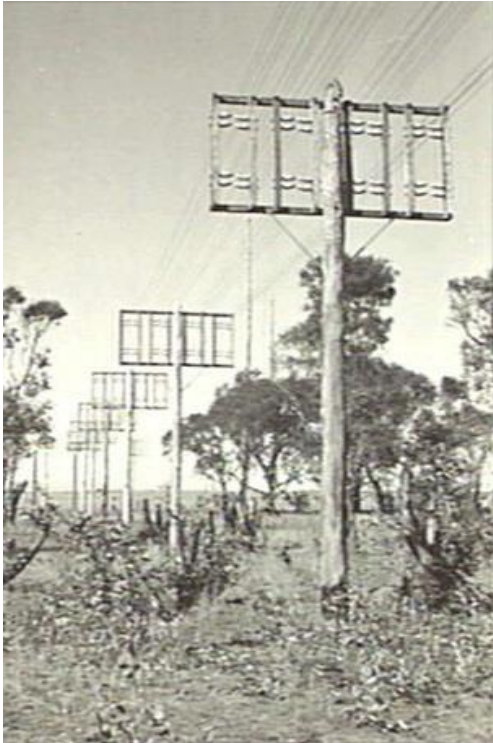


Figure 24: Transmission lines connecting aerials to receivers at Rockbank.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ THE HISTORY OF SHORTWAVE RADIO IN AUSTRALIA 1942 - Army Wireless Chain - west of Melbourne, <http://bpadula.tripod.com/australiashortwave/id68.html>

¹¹⁰AWM 051993 Irving, Robert Bruce, ROCKBANK, VIC. 1943-05-24. "Transmission Lines Connecting Double-Dipole Aerials To Their Respective Receivers At The Station of Land Headquarters Heavy Wireless Group At Rockbank. These Lines Connect The Aerial Array To The Various Receivers.

4 Previous assessments

4.1 Regional Surveys

The study area is located in the Keilor - Melton Basalt Plains grassland, a region which has seen a combination of sparsely settled pastoral stations and small areas of closer settlement from the mid nineteenth to mid twentieth centuries. It is only in the last 40 years or so that more intensive development has occurred.

Archaeological and heritage investigations have also only occurred since the 1980s, with most investigations having been undertaken in the last decade or so. The primary heritage assessment has been the Melton Heritage Study, undertaken by David Maloney and completed in 2006. In addition to the published information, data on potential heritage places was compiled in early stages of the project and kept on file by Melton Council. This study identified a number of buildings around Rockbank resulting in Heritage Overlay protection for five places in the current Rockbank PSP area.

Until early 1989, very little systematic archaeological survey had been carried out in Melbourne's Western Region. Gary Presland's 1983 Melbourne Metropolitan survey¹¹¹ stopped short to the east of the study area. Since then there have been archaeological surveys of the Maribyrnong River, Sydenham and Werribee Growth Corridors, Werribee River, several specific development sites and the region in general.¹¹² Most of these however, concentrated on or were exclusively for Aboriginal archaeology.

On the eastern border of the study area Vines conducted an archaeological study for the Melton East Structure Plan.¹¹³

A Survey of Department of Defence land at Rockbank immediately north of the present study area.¹¹⁴ During the survey two new historical archaeological sites were located near the junction of Beatty's Road and Kororoit Creek. The sites were recorded as Rockbank Inn H7822/257 and Beatty's Bridge H7822/258. The location of both sites are considered to be of high historic archaeological sensitivity, particularly at Rockbank Inn where archaeological material is expected to pre-date the 1850s. Murphy assessed areas that may potentially contain dry stone walls to be of moderate archaeological sensitivity.

Murphy and du Cros conducted a desktop study of the Kororoit Creek from Princes Highway, Laverton North to Deanside Drive, Rockbank.¹¹⁵ Ten post-contact sites had previously been recorded within the study area. The sites belong to either the early pastoral or industrial period; 1840 – 1880s. The pastoral sites are typically farm ruins, stone walls and fords. The industrial

¹¹¹ Presland, Gary, An archaeological survey of the Melbourne Metropolitan area Victoria. Ministry for Planning and Environment, Victoria Archaeological Survey 1983.

¹¹² Presland 1983; Keys & Keys 1977; du Cros 1988, 1989a 1989b; du Cros and Golding 1989; Clark 1995; Murphy & du Cros 1994; Murphy 1998; Egloff 1988; Vines 1988, 1990b, 1992a, 1992b, 1993a 1993b; Rhodes 1999; Muir et al 1996

¹¹³ Vines G(1990 Melton East Structure Plan.

¹¹⁴ Murphy 1998 Department of Defence land at Rockbank, archaeological assessment, report to department of defence

¹¹⁵ du Cros 1994 'Desktop archaeological assessment of Kororoit Creek from Princes Highway, Laverton North to Deanside Drive, Rockbank.'

sites within the study area are those associated with the manufacture of explosives such as chemical storage and treatment tanks.

Newby and Muir surveyed the intersection of the Western Freeway and Hopkins Road. No new historic archaeological sites were recorded during the survey, nor were any areas of archaeological potential recorded.¹¹⁶

During a survey Hopkins Road interchange four new historic archaeological sites were recorded.¹¹⁷ Site H7822/0245 is a remnant old cobbled roadway that survives along a discontinued route of Greigs Road. Only 120 metres of the road survives, but Vines suggests it may survive under the bitumen surface of a continuation of the road. Site H7822/0246 is a farming property originally established by the Cropley (or Croppley and sometimes mistakenly Crossley) brothers in the 1850s and known as Stoneleigh. H7822/0247 is a drystone wall running around the original boundaries of the Cropley property. H7822/0248 is another dry stone wall.

Historical archaeological sites are generally associated with early farm complexes and foci of settlement such as the hotels and creek crossings. The Rockbank Inn, Beatty's Bridge and a number of early homestead sites have been previously identified in several studies.¹¹⁸ Dry stone walls are among the most extensive historical features in the landscape, but are succumbing to various factors that are diminishing them, removal by farmers, re-fencing, stone robbing and new development. The Caroline Springs development to the east included an archaeological investigation of a section of cobbled road flanked by dry stone walls.¹¹⁹

An archaeological survey of the junction of the Western Highway and Leakes Road recorded a number of historic buildings and historic features including a c1910 weatherboard cottage and shop, a c1910 weatherboard house (since demolished) and a weatherboard hall from the interwar period, all of which are located on Leakes Road south, the Rose & Crown Hotel, a bluestone hotel from c1870 located on Ballarat Road, as well as two dams, Gidney Dam and Missen dam, dry stone walls and Gidney Farm, which is a complex of ruins and archaeological features.¹²⁰ The Rockbank Railway Station consists of the remains of platforms and asphalt tennis courts, the buildings have been demolished, but archaeological evidence of several structures and other remains can be identified. A number of radio mast bases were also identified in the Defence Department Land.

At the southern end of the study area Muir (2002) conducted a cultural heritage survey of a proposed primary school site at Rockbank. No non-Aboriginal archaeological sites were identified during the survey. Due to high level of ground disturbance Muir did not identify any of the site as having potential for non-Aboriginal archaeological material.

On the eastern border of the current study area Vines (1990) completed a historical and archaeological survey for the Melton East Structure Plan Study area. A number of non-Aboriginal historical archaeological sites were recorded during this study. Four of these sites are located to the east of the present study area adjacent to one of the major tributaries of Kororoit Creek. The sites included, a 1920 homestead site, farm and house ruins, basalt cobblestones and dry stone walls, farmhouse and drystone walls, and cypress trees. The report suggests that further such

¹¹⁶ Newby, J. and Muir, S. 1998. Western Freeway and Hopkins Road, Archaeological and Heritage Investigation of Proposed Restoration Roads.

¹¹⁷ Vines, G., 1993a, Hopkins Road Archaeological Survey, Report to Gutteridge, Haskins & Davey and VicRoads.

¹¹⁸ Vines 1990a, 1992a, 1992b, 1993a & 1993b; Murphy 1998

¹¹⁹ Lane and Rhodes 1999

¹²⁰ Vines, G., 2000, Leakes Road Archaeological Survey, Report to Sinclair Knight Merz on behalf of VicRoads

farm associated sites will be recorded throughout the region, particularly close to the creeks, tributaries and drainage lines.

4.2 Dry Stone Walls Studies

A study of dry stone walls in Melbourne's Western Region, identified a number of stone walls in the present study area.¹²¹ However, this was not a comprehensive survey so not all dry stone walls in the present study area will have been recorded. Walls were identified at two levels: selected walls were documented with a pro forma indicating function, construction form, construction technique, dimensions, stone type and size, condition, integrity and other features, while other walls were recorded according to a simplified code indicating height, condition and technique.

Walls identified in or adjacent to the present study area include the following:

Table 1: Dry stone walls sites within or near the study (Vines 1990b).

Wall Ref. No./ code	Wall type and condition	Location	Current status
018	Prominent large wall	Leakes Road North of study area on opposite side of Ballarat Road	Demolished for interchange
1.3.2	Low well preserved wall	North side Greigs Rd. east of Leakes Rd.	Poor
1.3.2	Low well preserved wall	east side Leakes Rd. north of Greigs Rd	Poor
1.2.3	Low well preserved wall	property boundary north and east of above	Fair
2.2.2	Partly collapsed low wall	South side Greigs Rd Road east of Leakes Rd.	Fair – some intact to full height
1.3.2	Low well preserved wall around Payne property	North side Greigs Rd. west side Leakes Rd.	Poor
1.3.2	Low well preserved wall around Payne property	North side Greigs Rd. west side Leakes Rd.	Poor
1.2.3 and 2.2.2	Several sections of wall in varying states of preservation around Payne property	Both sides Greigs Road outside (West) of study area	Poor

¹²¹ Vines 1990b

Table 2: Dry stone walls in Melton study (Moloney et al).

WALL_NO	HOUSE_NO	ROAD_NAME	SIDE_OF_RD	WALL_OWNER	HIST_MAP	ORIGINAL_PURPOSE	WALL_TYPE	LENGTH	BASE_WIDTH	HEIGHT	PRESERVATION	CONSTRUCTION_	QUALITY_REPAIR	COPING_STONE	FACING_CON_BATTER	FACING_SMOOTH	THROUGH_STONE	PLUGGING	TRENCHING	LICHEN_MOSS	STONE_SIZE	PLANTATION
C61		Greigs Road	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	450	1000	301-750	Good	Coarse	Coarse	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Varied	No
C65		Greigs Road	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	450	1000	301-750	Good	Coarse	Coarse	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Varied	No
C67		Greigs Road	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	450	1000	301-750	Good	Coarse	Coarse	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Varied	No
C69		Greigs Road	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double															
C70		Greigs Road	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	670	100	301-750	Good	Traditional	Unskilled									
D78	1945	Western Highway	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Single	100	550	301-750	Good	Traditional	Unskilled	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Varied	Yes
D79	1945	Troups Road	East	Single		Internal paddock	All Stone Double	25	1500	>1300	Excellent	Coarse	Coarse	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Varied	No
D80	230	Troups Road	East	Single		Road boundary	Post Wire Double	250	700	301-750	Poor	Coarse	Coarse		No	No					Medium	No
D81	196	Greigs Road	North	Single		Road boundary	All Stone Double	450	1000	1001-1300	Good	Coarse	Coarse	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Varied	No
D82		Greigs Road	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Single	450	1000	1001-1300	Good	Coarse	Coarse	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Varied	No
D83		Greigs Road	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Single	670	100	751-1000	Good	Traditional	Unskilled	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Varied	Eucalypts
J131	134	Western Highway	South	Portion Shared		Double wall	Post and Wire Double	160	1200	751-1000	Poor	Coarse	Coarse	No	No	No	No	Yes	No		Varied (notably)	No
J132	1213	Leakes Road	East	Portion Shared		Road boundary	All Stone Double	160	1000	301-750	Poor	Coarse	Unskilled	No	No	No	No	No	No		Varied Notably	No

WALL_NO	HOUSE_NO	ROAD_NAME	SIDE_OF_RD	WALL_OWNER	HIST_MAP	ORIGINAL_PURPOSE	WALL_TYPE	LENGTH	BASE_WIDTH	HEIGHT	PRESERVATION	CONSTRUCTION_	QUALITY_REPAIR	COPING_STONE	FACING_CON_BATTER	FACING_SMOOTH	THROUGH_STONE	PLUGGING	TRENCHING	LICHEN_MOSS	STONE_SIZE	PLANTATION
J133	1313	Leakes Road	South	Portion Shared		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	2300	1000	751-1000	Fair	Traditional	Unskilled	No	No	No	No	Yes		No	Medium	Cypress, Eucalypts
J134	450	Leakes Road	East	Portion Shared		Property boundary	Post and Wire Double	670	100	751-1000	Good	Traditional	Unskilled	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Varied	Eucalypts
J135	450	Leakes Road	East	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	270	1000	751-1000	Fair	Traditional	Unskilled	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Medium	Eucalypts
J136	450	Griegs Road	North	Portion Shared		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	510	1100	301-750	Poor	Traditional	Unskilled	No	No	No	No	Yes		No	Medium	No
J137	304	Griegs Road	North	Whole Wall Shared		Property boundary	Post and Wire Double	140	1200	751-1000	Good	Traditional	Unskilled	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Medium	No
J138	262	Troups Road	West	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	190	800	301-750	Fair	Traditional	Unskilled	No	No	No		No		No	Varied	Eucalypts
J139	2341	Western Highway	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	230	700	301-750	Poor	Traditional	Unskilled	No	No			No		Yes	Medium	No
J140	2341	Western Highway	East	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	300	800	301-750	Poor	Coarse	Coarse	No	No			No		Yes	Medium	No
J141	312	Paynes Road	West	Portion Shared		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	370	800	751-1000	Good	Traditional	Coarse	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Varied	No
J143	463	Paynes Road	East	Portion Shared		Property boundary	Post and Wire Double	370	1300	751-1000	Fair	Coarse	Coarse	No	Yes	No		Yes		Yes	Medium	Yes
J144	638	Paynes Road	East	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	200	400	<300	Poor	Coarse	Coarse	No	No	No		No		Yes	Medium	No
J145	638	Griegs Road	North	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	370	800	301-750	Poor	Coarse		No	No	No		Yes		No	Varied	
J146	638	Griegs Road	North	Whole Wall Shared		Property boundary	Post and Wire Double	260	1100	1001-1300	Good	Traditional	Coarse	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Varied	Cypress

WALL_NO	HOUSE_NO	ROAD_NAME	SIDE_OF_RD	WALL_OWNER	HIST_MAP	ORIGINAL_PURPOSE	WALL_TYPE	LENGTH	BASE_WIDTH	HEIGHT	PRESERVATION	CONSTRUCTION_	QUALITY_REPAIR	COPING_STONE	FACING_CON_BATTER	FACING_SMOOTH	THROUGH_STONE	PLUGGING	TRENCHING	LICHEN_MOSS	STONE_SIZE	PLANTATION
J147	588	Griegs Road	North	Portion Shared		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	500	800	1001-1300	Good	Refined	Skilled	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Medium	Cypress
J148	520	Griegs Road	North	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	220	1100	751-1000	Poor	Coarse	Coarse	No	No	No		Yes		No	Varied	
J149	1350	Griegs Road	North	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	200	1000	751-1000	Excellent	Traditional	Skilled	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Medium	Cypress
J150	1292	Leakes Road	West	Whole Wall Shared		Property boundary	Post and Wire Double	270	500	<300	Poor	Coarse	Unskilled	No	No			No			Medium	
J151	1254	Leakes Road	West	Portion Shared		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	550	500	301-750	Good	Traditional	Skilled	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Small	Yes
J152	716	Paynes Road	West	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	110	1000	<300	Poor	Coarse	Unskilled	No	No		No	No		No	Varied	
J153	1350	Griegs Road	South	Single		Road boundary	Post and Wire Double	200	1000													
J18	304	Griegs Road	North	Whole Wall Shared		Property boundary	Post and Rail	90	800	751-1000	Good											

4.3 Previously Recorded heritage places

There are a total of nine historic sites listed on state and local heritage registers and inventories in the study area and within one kilometre of the study area boundary as indicated in the following tables.

Table 3: Existing recorded heritage places in the study area

Heritage List	Designation	Site Name and Type	Location (km from study area)
Heritage Overlay	HO113	Payne's Cottage	638-688 Greigs Rd East
Heritage Overlay	HO115	Rockbank Community Hall	1171-1173 Leakes Road
Heritage Overlay	HO116	House	1967-1987 Melton Hwy
Heritage Overlay	HO120	House	1957-1963 Western Highway
Heritage Overlay	HO121	Former Rose & Crown Hotel	2057-2083 Western Highway
Heritage Overlay	HO122	House	2341-2421 Western Highway
Heritage Inventory	H7822-0717	Cistern / Dome Well	Near former Rockbank station site Ballarat Rail line
HV "D" list	D7822-0301	ROCKBANK RAILWAY STATION	Off Leakes Road
Heritage Inventory	H7822-0298	Missen Dam	South of Ballarat Rd. W. of Leakes Rd.

A number of places are recorded immediately outside the Rockbank PSP study area. Some like dry stone walls are on opposite sides of the road defining the PSP boundary, while other sites are immediately adjacent and may be affected by continuation of any proposed road alignments which extend beyond the PSP. They are included here to allow consideration of further design and planning issues.

Table 4: Places outside the study area

Listing	Number	Lat Long	Name	Location
Heritage Inventory	H7822-0300	-37.727475 144.659997	Gidney Farm	North of western Highway 250m east of Leakes Road, near Kororoit Creek
HV "D" list	D7822-0971	-37.74226 144.68597	Stone wall	South Ballarat Rd east of service centre
Heritage Register	H2278	-37.74627 144.64767	Australian Beam Wireless Receiving Stn	South of Greigs Road
Heritage Overlay	HO108			

HV "D" list	D7822/0302	- 37.72375,144. 650556	Drystone Wall	Near corner of Leakes Road and Ballarat Road
HV "D" list	D7822-0876	37.73398 144.6717	Rockbank Service Centre Stone Wall	North side Ballarat Road opposite Troupes Road
Heritage Inventory	H7822/0297	-37.727475 144.659997	Gidney Dam	North side Ballarat Road

4.4 Site Prediction Model

A review of historical background information and previous historical archaeological studies undertaken in the area has shown there is a high potential for the presence of historical archaeological sites within the study area. The pattern of site distribution that emerges from non-Aboriginal archaeological studies is that farm ruins from the early squatting period (1836 -1850) are rare, as they were often poorly constructed and easily replaced. Most historic sites located in the district reflect the pastoral period of increased building encouraged by the land sales of the 1850s. Secure tenure prompted the marking of boundaries, and due to the abundance of basalt stones on the plains, dry stone walling was the most commonly used method of construction. Many remnant sections of dry stone walls survive, making them the most common site type in this area.¹²²

In general, non-Aboriginal historical sites in the region are likely to be associated with the two phases of pastoral settlement and with travel through the region to central Victoria. The large estates established after the crown auctions may be evidenced by remnant dry stone walls and animal enclosures, or bluestone and weatherboard farm buildings. The small farms established under the Closer Settlement Scheme are most likely to have physical remains such as small weatherboard homesteads, lines of pine and cypress trees planted as windbreaks, abandoned farm buildings, stock dams, garden beds, and paths. Such sites are typical of the rural edge of Melbourne.

Cultural markers related to the history of travel throughout the region on the Ballarat Road, include bridges, cobbled roadways, and the remains of inns and blacksmith shops.

¹²² Vines 2000

5 Field Survey

The field survey was carried out on 8 and 9 May 2013 by Gary Vines (Biosis Pty Ltd). The survey involved a driving assessment of all roads, with foot survey both along road verges and other publically assessable areas such as the Rockbank Station grounds, Recreation Reserves, and public approaches to commercial premises.

5.1 Methodology

The following methodology was employed during the field survey as follows:

- An examination of activity area was undertaken taking into account ground surface visibility, disturbance and visible features
- Field notes were taken recording ground conditions, specific locations and condition of areas of surface visibility, vegetation type, slope and details of any cultural heritage identified.
- Locations of identified historic features were recorded using a Topcon GRS-1 DGPS and post-processed to sub 1 metre accuracy as per AAV target standard for recording Aboriginal heritage places for the Cultural Heritage Management Plan survey (AAV, 2008).
- Landforms and views of the activity area was recorded using digital photography.
- All landforms within the Activity area were surveyed during the field assessment.

5.2 Limitations/constraints

The field investigations was conducted primarily as a reconnaissance survey from vehicle, stopping to view specific locations from the road reserve at the property boundaries. Private property was not accessed during the survey. This has implications for survey coverage, with the possibility that historical places or archaeological sites may be located within private property and not be visible from the road or public areas. However, previous assessments in the vicinity, and the results of the Melton Heritage Study and Melton Dry Stone Walls study have covered the same ground making it likely that any significant places have already been identified.

Use of historic sources, maps and aerial photos also provided a safety check against possible omission of historic places. In this way, all structures and features marked on the 1916 and 1933 Ordnance Survey maps could be identified from public areas and either confirmed to still exist, or to have been removed. Features shown on 1945 Aerial Photographs could also be checked from public areas.

It is therefore believed that limitations on survey did not impact on the results of the study.

5.3 Survey Results

A number of historical sites or features were noted during the survey, generally comprising the places previously recorded in past archaeological surveys, the Melton Heritage Study and Dry Stone Walls study, and a small number of previously unrecorded sites. Many of the previously recorded sites were reinspected to confirm previous assessments from the Melton Heritage Study, while some previously noted but not recorded sites were also inspected.

The following section provides a summary of the historic places in the study area.

5.3.1 Payne's Cottage

638-688 Greigs Road, Rockbank

-37.74344, 144.633754

HO113



Figure 26: Payne's cottage from the east (photo David Moloney)

The former Payne House is set back the corner of Paynes Road and Greigs Road. It has a small yard bound by a timber picket fence. Nearby is a shallow earth dam with a deteriorated fieldstone wall. Surrounding the almost ruinous building are scatters of hand made bricks.

The single storey, mud mortared random coursed rubble bluestone, Victorian vernacular cottage has a simple gable roof form clad in galvanised corrugated steel. Half of the roof to the northern end is missing, and the rear projecting wall of this section is ruinous. Some windows and doors are missing, and the building is believed to have been burnt in the 1965 fire.¹²³

Early features include the hand made brick lintels above the early window and door openings, and the lack of eaves. A large stump adjacent remains from a casuarina tree,¹²⁴

The current owner has repaired and reroofed part of the building. One room has been partly restored and is in use.

Dry stone walls run around part of the lot on which the cottage stands, with an incomplete section along Paynes Road, comprising a low section of 1-2 courses of mostly dislodged stones, A similar but slightly more intact section along the northern and eastern boundary of the allotment, and a single course of stone along part of the Greigs Road boundary. These are listed In the Melton Dry Stone Walls Study as J143, J144, J145 and J146.

¹²³ Moloney 2006

¹²⁴ Pers. Con., Frances Overmars, 13/12/2001

Significance

Paynes Cottage has been assessed as being of local historical significance and local architectural interest in the Melton Heritage study.¹²⁵ It also has high potential for historic archaeological evidence such as underfloor deposits, former structural remains, cesspit and refuse pits. The dry stone walls are contributory to the site's significance as contemporary historic fabric which assists in understanding the original land uses. The remaining open grazing paddocks also provide context to the historical significance of the cottage.

¹²⁵ Moloney et al 2006, Vol 5 p.245

5.3.2 Rose & Crown Hotel

2057-2083 Western Hwy Rockbank VIC 3335

-37.72926,144.660174

HO121



Figure 27: Rose & Crown Hotel

The Rose & Crown hotel is a single story bluestone structure with modified gabled, corrugated iron clad roof (presumably with timber framing). It is built to the property boundary on the south side of Ballarat Road, with a probably later verandah. Stylistically it appears that the gable end, verandah and probably other features were reworked in the early 20th century. Surviving front 12-pane double hung sash windows are probably original. A painted masonry chimney remains.

The building has been used as a residence and office to the adjacent Sundowner caravan park for many years.

Significance

The Rose & Crown Hotel has been assessed as being of local historical significance and local architectural interest in the Melton Heritage study.¹²⁶ It also has high potential for historic archaeological evidence such as underfloor deposits, former structural remains, cesspit and refuse pits.

¹²⁶ Moloney et al 2006, Vol 5 p.306

5.3.3 Mechanics Institute/Community Hall

1171-1173 Leakes Road Rockbank

-37.726881, 144.653737

HO115



Figure 28: Rockbank Mechanics Institute/Community Hall

Built in 1920 with structural timber frame, pitched corrugated iron roof and weatherboard clad, the community hall is highly intact and in good condition. Original details include bracketed eaves, timber-shingled, stepped and bracketed gable, and double hung timber sash windows, The modern additions including the backward sloping skillion porch verandah over the entrance and rendered brick amenities block are somewhat intrusive.

Significance

The Rockbank community hall has been assessed as being of local historical, architectural and social significance in the Melton Heritage study.¹²⁷

¹²⁷ Moloney et al 2006, Vol 5 p.260

5.3.4 Pitson House

2341-2421 Western Highway, Rockbank

-37.716581, 144.639498

HO122



Figure 29: Pitson House

The house was constructed in about 1898 for Robert Pitson (although it may be slightly earlier). It is a simple late Victorian symmetrical weatherboard clad timber framed dwelling with corrugated iron hipped roof and verandas, turned verandah posts and brick chimneys. It is one of a handful of houses and other buildings which demonstrate the 19th century origins of the Rockbank Village. The Melton Dry Stone Walls Study records walls J139 and J140 in association with the Pitson House.

Significance

The Pitson House has been assessed as being of local historical and architectural significance in the Melton Heritage study.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Moloney et al 2006, Vol 5 p.310

5.3.5 Missen House

1957-1963 Western Hwy Rockbank VIC 3335

-37.735392,144.671638

HO120



Figure 30: Missen House

This house was occupied for much of the early 20th century by Missen family members, and formed part of a larger landholding used for mixed farming and grazing. The building is a simple asymmetrical Edwardian style weatherboard cottage, with corrugated iron roof and verandah. It is set in a mature but deteriorating garden. The Melton Dry Stone Wall Study also notes wall J78 as associated with the house. This is a short section of wall on Ballarat Road just east of the property,

Moloney concludes that the house was probably built in 1895 although it is stylistically later (possibly from reconstruction) and is marked on the 1916 map of the area.¹²⁹

Significance

The Missen house has been assessed as being of local historical and architectural in the Melton Heritage study.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Army Ordnance Map, Sunbury 1916.

¹³⁰ Moloney et al 2006, Vol 5 p. 299

5.3.6 Rockbank General Store & Post Office

1157 Leakes Rd, Rockbank VIC 3335,

-37.726326, 144.653868



Figure 31: Rockbank General Store & Post Office

The Rockbank store is a mostly modern building of about 10 years old. However it is on the site of the 1909 store, and may retain elements of the earlier structures at the rear. It is also notable for over 100 years of continuous use for its original purpose.

There is some potential for archaeological remains related to the original structure, the adjacent timber and iron storage building, and possible buried cistern or cess pit deposits.

Significance

While the current modern building is not of heritage significance, the location and continued operation of the store in its current use is of local social value.

5.3.7 Rockbank Railway Station precinct

The station precinct once had a number of structures including a chaff mill on the north side of the line at the western end of the rail sidings, with a residence nearby.

Station

1178 - 1186 Leakes Road, Rockbank

D7822-0301

-37.72898, 144.65043



Figure 32: Rockbank Railway Station

The station comprises an elevated pair of platforms with concrete panels and steel supports. A corrugated iron clad waiting shelter remains on the down platform, which may date to the mid 20th century, while a more modern steel frame shelter is on the recent new up platform.

Evidence of the goods platform and stock loading rams, in the form of raised and disturbed ground, remains of track ballast and some posts and postholes from fencing can be seen across the sidings. A part filled water reservoir for supplying steam locomotives north east of platforms about 50 x 80 m, 2-3 m deep, is also evident.

On the south side of the track were at least two residences for railway employees. Other features were the rail sidings for the chaff mill and quarry, and structures related to the through line itself, such as signals and bridges.

Rail Bridge

East of Greigs Rd over drain from Keating's Swamp.

-37.739338,144.674111

East of Rockbank is a three span bridge with brick piers and abutments and (replaced) steel girder spans, the main structure dates from the lines construction although the deck has evidently been replaced.

Chaff mill and house site - Dome well

H7822-0717

H7822-0301 (former designation)

-37.72813, 144.64893



Figure 33: Boxthorn marking chaff mill and house site (cistern immediately in front)

The chaff mill site is marked by extensive remains of building materials including steel, timber, brick and concrete rubble at the western end of the station yard north of the line. A dome well in the south east corner of the allotment marks the position of the former managers house. Bricks, timbers, concrete and domestic refuse are evident across the site.

Stationmasters residence(s)site

-37.729444, 144.650052

The stations master's residence may have been demolished by the 1970s, and is only identifiable by some remaining concrete slabs and stumps on the south side of the station. Sugar gums pepper corns and other exotic trees from the station yard surround the site. Other features include paths and foundations, garden ramparts and domestic refuse, water pipes, a possible pump, and wind mill,

Recreation Reserve

-37.729291, 144.649558



Figure 34: looking across playing field to tennis court site (Serbian church on adjacent land)

Sugar gums surround the former recreation reserve, now apparently used as an informal dirt race track and rubbish dump. Concrete slabs and asphalt paving mark the sites of the toilet block and tennis courts.

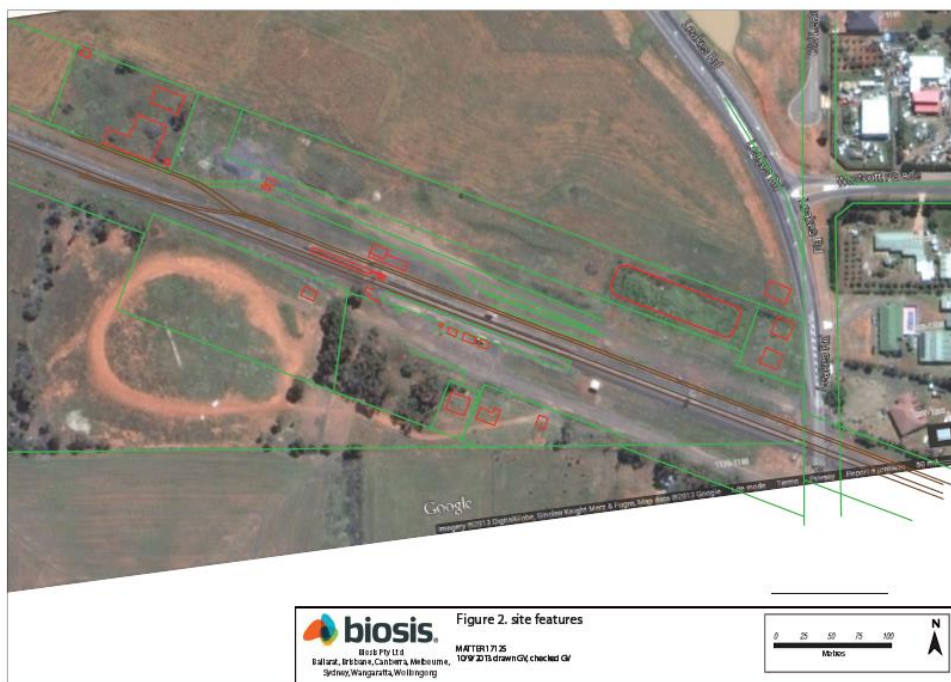


Figure 35: Aerial photo of Rockbank Station Ground with historical features superimposed

5.3.8 School site

2313-2329 Western Hwy Rockbank

-37.717436,144.641125



Figure 36: Rockbank school site – view showing remnant planting



Figure 37: Remains of painted game squares on concrete paths

The school building (probably of c 1910) was demolished in about 2010 due to asbestos issues. It was listed in the 'reserves/'seconds' list in the Melton Heritage Study

The site of the school retains plantings, concrete paths with painted hopscotch, ball courts and other features, and remnants of play areas. There is a high potential for archaeological remains of the original 1868 School, which is believed to have been of bluestone construction. If this can be identified, it would have high archaeological significance. A new school was built at 97-105 Westcott Parade (-37.73227, 144.662014), which opened in 2006.

5.3.9 Beam Radio Receiving Station

653-701 Greigs Road East MOUNT COTTRELL,
-37.7455, 144.6477



Figure 38: Radio Receiving Station

The Australian Beam Wireless Receiving Station at Mount Cottrell is immediately outside the Rockbank PSP area on the opposite side of Greigs Road.

The site was part of Australia's first direct international communications system in 1927. The site includes residential and operations complexes located about one kilometre apart, linked by a roadway, adjacent to which are three remnant concrete antenna mast bases and guy wire anchors.

The centrepiece of the complex is the main staff recreation and administration building featuring a drive-through archway with lantern tower. There are four interwar Bungalows of similar construction. Access is through the early metal gates with flanking rendered brick piers and wing walls.

Significance

The beam Radio Receiving Station has been assessed as being of historical and architectural significance at state and national levels in the Melton Heritage study.¹³¹

¹³¹ Moloney et al 2006, Vol 5 p. 180-83

5.3.10 Dry Stone Walls

Leakes, Greigs, Paynes and Troups Roads, with some on Western Highway.

In most cases dry stone walls in the Rockbank PSP 1099 precinct are half walls with post and 2-3 wire fences, with evidence of stones having been dislodged and inexpertly repaired. Some walls, such as those along Paynes Road are little more than 1-2 rows of loose rocks at the base of the fence.

Some few examples show the character of the conventional double wall construction form in short sections where they survive to their full height with intact coping stones. These sections are less than 10% of any given section of wall. The best examples of walls, (which stand to a reasonable height, show original construction techniques such as double wall, hearting and plugging, through stones and retain some sections of coping stones), are those along the south of Greigs Road (outside of the Rockbank PSP1099 precinct).

Dry stone walls in the precinct are mapped in Figure 48, according to the construction forms listed below. Almost all walls in the precinct have relatively low integrity, with less than 50% of stones remaining in their as-built positions, and of relatively low significance, having been originally either 1-2 courses of stone at the base of post and wire fences or low 'half walls' with coping stones and post and 2-3 wire fencing. Two areas had more substantial walls with greater integrity, along the east side of Leakes Road, and south of Greigs Road, although these are discontinuous.



Figure 39: Dry stone wall at Paynes Road west side.



Figure 40: Dry stone wall at Paynes Road east side



Figure 41: Dry stone wall at south side Greigs Road



Figure 42: Dry stone wall at south side Greigs Road



Figure 43: Dry stone wall at moderately intact wall on east side Leakes Road

Significance

The Melton Dry Stone Wall study has assessed the dry stone walls of the Greigs Road precinct as being of local significance, in particular for the visual character and historical significance of the wide goldfields route along Greigs Road.¹³² Dry stone walls in the Rockbank PSP area are in general of local significance and warrant conservation. They reflect the early settlement, clearance of the landscape and land use practices of squatters and selectors in the period 1850-1880, and subsequent legacy of the early settlers and farmers. The walls provide a distinctive feature of the landscape which demonstrates both the underlying volcanic origins of the natural landscape, and the evolved form of the cultural landscape.

¹³² Jim Holdsworth, Raelene Marshall, David Moloney (2007) Sera Jane Peters (2011), Melton Dry Stone Wall Study, Volume 2 – Citation No 5 – note this is titled "Mount Atkinson Dry Stone Wall Precinct" on the citation but referred to as Greigs road Dry Stone Walls Precinct elsewhere in the report.

Revaluation the walls in the Rockbank PSP, and applying the criteria established in the Melton Dry Stone Walls Study suggests some general characteristics of walls in the precinct as follows:

- A – Single course of stones with post and wire fence – sometimes only one row
- B – 2 -3 courses of stone with post and wire – top course often single copestones
- C – 4 courses of stone with post and wire, often with cope stones
- D – 4-5 courses post and wire most with coping stones
- E – 4-5 courses all stone with coping stones and some through stones

The last is only represented outside the PSP on the Clarke Wall north of the highway.

These categories slightly elaborate on the Moloney categorisation, with the intention of identifying the most substantial sections of wall (D) which lend themselves to reconstruction, restoration and retention in interpreted landscape contexts.

The locations of walls, a summarised mapping of the Melton Dry Stone Walls study findings and the current reviewed wall mapping is shown in Figure 48: Map of heritage places. It should be noted that some walls recorded by Moloney are no longer evident, having been removed or replaced with new wire fencing. Others may have deteriorated since they were first recorded, or been altered such as through removal of some stone, or reconstruction of fences.



Figure 44: Detail of dry stone wall on east side of Leakes Road



Figure 45: Detail of dry stone wall south side Greigs Road



Figure 46: Conserved dry stone wall near Hopkins Road (east of study area)

5.3.11 Serbian Church

1180-1188 Leakes Rd

-37.730428,144.65157



Figure 47: Serbian Orthodox Church

The Serbian Orthodox Church is a very modern structure associated with a c1980s domestic building and other outbuildings. It is however, of such distinctive design and form, that it creates a unique landscape element in the precinct. It is also demonstrative of a cultural theme in the western suburbs, whereby places of worship and other cultural facilities are created by and for migrant communities in a fashion which represents and reflects their cultural origins, in this case traditional cruciform and domed church.

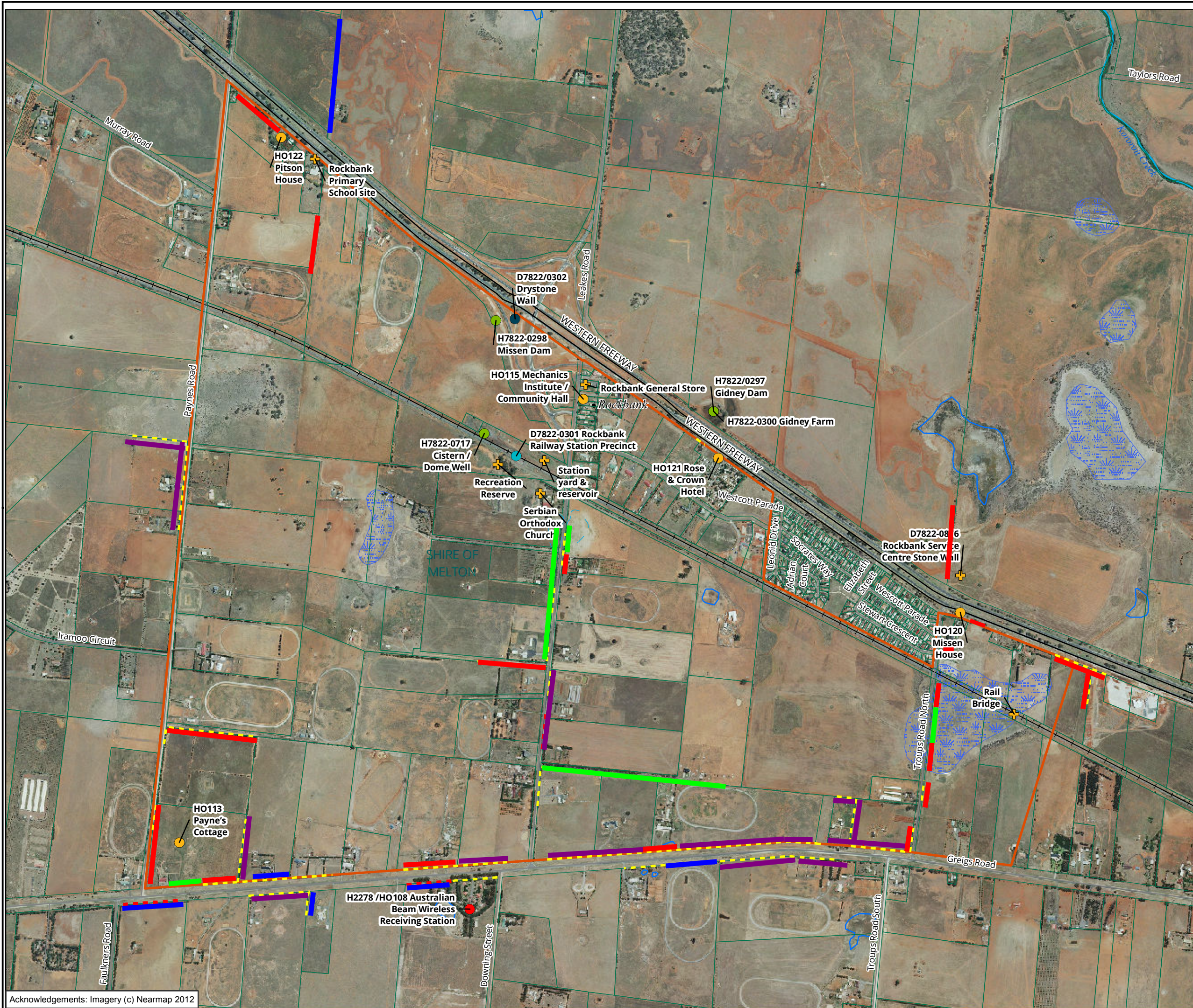
Significance

While too modern to be ascribed historical significance, and of unconfirmed architectural merit, the Serbian church is of local interest as a unique cultural site and landmark structure. It is also of social significance in reflecting the post war migration to the region, and in particular migration from the former Yugoslavia both during the communist regime and as a result of the breakup of the country in the 1990s.

Table 5: All recorded and additional heritage places in the study area

Site Name	Location	Lat	long	Heritage List	Designation
Payne's Cottage	638-688 Greigs Rd East	-37.74344	144.633754	Heritage Overlay	HO113
Mechanics Institute / Community Hall	1171-1173 Leakes Road	-37.726881	144.653737	Heritage Overlay	HO115
Missen House	1957-1963 Western Highway	-37.735392	144.671638	Heritage Overlay	HO120
Rose & Crown Hotel	2057-2083 Western Highway	-37.72926	144.660174	Heritage Overlay	HO121
Pitson House	2341-2421 Western Highway	-37.716581	144.639498	Heritage Overlay	HO122
Cistern / Dome Well	Near former Rockbank station site Ballarat Rail line	-37.7281,	144.64893	Heritage Inventory	H7822-0717
Rockbank Railway Station Precinct	Off Leakes Road	-37.72899	144.65044	Delisted	D7822-0301
Missen Dam	S. of Ballarat Rd. W. of Leakes Road	-37.72379	144.64963	Heritage Inventory	H7822-0298
Beyond study area					
Gidney Farm	2194-2232 Western Fwy 250m east of Leakes Road	-37.727475	144.659997	Heritage Inventory	H7822-0300
Stone wall	South Ballarat Road east of service centre	-37.74226	144.68597	Delisted	D7822-0971
Australian Beam Wireless Receiving Station	South of Greigs Road	-37.74627	144.64767	Heritage Register Heritage Overlay	H2278 HO108
Drystone Wall	Near corner of Leakes Road and Ballarat Road	-37.72375	144.650556	Delisted – demolished for freeway	D7822/0302
Rockbank Service Centre Stone Wall	North side Ballarat Road opposite Troupes Road	-37.73398	144.6717	Delisted	D7822-0876

Gidney Dam	North side Ballarat Road	-37.727475	144.659997	Heritage Inventory	H7822/0297
Additional Places					
Rockbank Primary School site	2313-2329 Western Hwy Rockbank	-37.717436	144.64112		
Station yard & reservoir	1178-1186 Leakes Road Rockbank	-37.729185	144.65179		
Recreation Reserve	1178-1186 Leakes Road Rockbank	-37.729291	144.649558		
Rockbank General Store	1157 Leakes Road, Rockbank	-37.726326	144.653868		
Rail Bridge	East of Greigs Road over drain from Keatings Swamp	37.739338,-	144.674111		
Serbian Orthodox Church	1188-1210 Leakes Road Rockbank	-37.730428	144.65157		



Legend

- Activity Area
- Dry stone walls**
 - Moloney - all stone
 - Moloney composite
- Historic Heritage places**
 - Heritage Inventory
 - Heritage Overlay
 - Heritage Register / Heritage Overlay
 - D listed
 - D listed - demolished for freeway
 - + Additional Items

- A 1-2 courses
- B 2-3 course, post and wire, some cope stones
- C 3-4 courses, post and wire, & cope stones
- D - 4-5 courses post, wire - some all stone most with coping stones

Figure 48: Map of heritage places, Rockbank PSP, Victoria

0 150 300 450 600 750
Metres
Scale: 1:15,000 @ A3
Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55

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Matter: 16342
Date: 28 May 2013,
Checked by: GV, Drawn by: JMS, Last edited by: jshepherd
Location: P:\16300s\16342\Mapping\16342_F23_HH_sites

6 Management Recommendations

6.1 Recommendation 1 Site recording

A number of historical places were identified in the study. An update of the Heritage Inventory listing for the Rockbank Station Precinct should be made to include evidence of former building sites, and the chaff mill. Paynes Cottage, the Rose and Crown Hotel and the former Rockbank school site should also be assessed for inclusion on the Heritage Inventory.

6.2 Recommendation 2 Heritage conservation

Places included on the Heritage Overlay and Victorian Heritage Register, should as far as possible, be conserved and managed for their heritage values.

It is recommended that identified heritage places should be retained and conserved including Payne's Cottage, the Mechanics Institute, Missen House, Pitson House and the Rose and Crown hotel.

Dry stone walls in the precinct have been re-evaluated, and while the conclusions of the Melton Dry Stone Walls study can be supported, the management of the walls in a changed land use context becomes problematic. It may not be possible to retain the proposed Greigs Road dry stone walls precinct as open pastoral landscape as recommended by Moloney et al, however, it may be possible to retain representative sections of walls, with an appropriate curtilage and compatible land uses such as conservation reserves or un-structured public open space.

As a reference point it is recommended that all dry stone walls are retained and conserved and that the design of the future development of the Rockbank precinct should take into account the walls, and wherever possible provide compatible land uses such as unstructured open space, conservation reserves, wide adjoining road verges, or allow retention of walls on frontage property boundaries by providing alternative rear access.

Where walls cannot be retained, or planning and design requirements require the removal of walls, decision guidelines should be made on the basis of the assessment of significance of walls using the Melton Dry Stone walls study and the assessment in the present study as shown in Figure 48, as a guiding principle.

6.3 Recommendation 3 Permits and Consents

Statutory approval should be sought for any places on the HO or VHI which are likely to be impacted by future works.

A Consent to Disturb will be required for any works impacting on places listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

A Planning permit will be required for any works on places included in the Shire of Melton Heritage Overlay.

If or when the Melton Planning Scheme is amended to include the schedule of land covered by Clause 52.37, a permit will be required for the removal of any dry stone wall. Where a permit is issued, it is recommended that archival recording and documentation is carried out and authentic reconstruction of walls elsewhere is carried out, reusing the dismantled stone.

Preference should be given to retaining walls according the scaled assessment in the Melton Dry Stone Walls Study and as shown in this report in Figure 48.

6.4 Recommendation 4 Further investigations

While it is unlikely that any further significant historical places of historic archaeological remains are likely to be present in the study area, if evidence of such comes to light the place or object should be assessed by a suitably qualified professional and if required, statutory protection be provided. Further investigation of any of the listed heritage places should be carried out as part of any statutory approval or redevelopment process.

Further historical research and specific site assessment should be undertaken prior to detailed planning, design and development for the Rockbank post office/ general store, and the Rockbank Primary School site. These should include investigation of the presence and potential significance of any surviving fabric historical plantings such as peppercorn trees, sugar gums and other planted specimens, and archaeological remains.

Consideration should be given to potential off-site impacts to the Beam Radio Receiving Station and dry stone walls immediately adjacent to the precinct, in order ensure the interface is sensitively dealt with in the design and development for the Rockbank precinct.

Individual conservation management plans should be developed for the places listed on the HO and VHI, and where disturbance of the site is proposed, detailed archaeological investigations should be undertaken to identify the nature, extant and significance of any archaeological remains, and provide management or mitigation for them.

Archaeological investigations should be undertaken of recorded historical and archaeological sites where further information can be obtained. This is especially so with the School Site, Paynes Cottage, the Rockbank Station Grounds and the Rose & Crown Hotel.

6.5 Report Lodgement

This report has been distributed to:

- Growth Areas Authority
- Melton City Council
- Heritage Victoria

6.6 Independent Review of Reports

Archaeological reports and the management recommendations contained therein will be independently reviewed by Heritage Victoria.

Although the findings of a consultant's report will be taken into consideration, recommendations in relation to managing a heritage place should not be taken to imply automatic approval of those actions by Heritage Victoria.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Assessment of Heritage Significance

Introduction

Assessing the significance of a cultural heritage place is undertaken to make decisions about the best way to protect and manage that particular heritage place. The category and significance of a heritage place will also determine if it is to be given statutory protection. The statutory issues that affect heritage places are discussed in detail in Appendix 2.

Places that are assessed as having National heritage significance can be added to the Commonwealth Register of the National Estate, those of State significance to the Victorian Heritage Register. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria maintains a register of known Aboriginal sites, and Heritage Victoria lists all known historical archaeological sites on the Victorian Heritage Inventory. A heritage place can also be protected under a planning scheme administered by local government. The National Trust maintains a list of significant heritage places, and local historical societies and Aboriginal communities will often have substantial knowledge about local heritage places.

Assessment of the significance of a heritage place can be complex and include a range of heritage values. The cultural heritage values of a site or place are broadly defined in the Burra Charter – the set of guidelines on cultural heritage management and practice prepared by Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) – as the ‘aesthetic, historic, scientific or social values for past, present or future generations’ (Marquis-Kyle and Walker 1992: 21). Various government agencies, including the Australian Heritage Commission and Heritage Victoria, have developed formal criteria for assessing heritage significance. These have been included at the end of this appendix and used in this report as applicable. Many Aboriginal sites also have significance to a specific Aboriginal community – this is discussed in a separate section below.

The primary criterion used to assess archaeological sites is **scientific** significance. This is based on the capacity of archaeological relics and sites to provide us with historical, cultural or social information. The following evaluation will assess the scientific significance of the archaeological sites recorded during this project. The **scientific significance assessment** methodology outlined below is based on scores for research potential (divided into site contents and site condition) and for representativeness. This system is refined and derived from Bowdler (1981) and Sullivan and Bowdler (1984).

Criteria for significance assessment – archaeological sites

i) Scientific significance assessment: historical archaeological sites and Aboriginal artefact scatters and isolated artefacts

Scientific significance is assessed by examining the *research potential* and *representativeness* of archaeological sites.

Research potential is assessed by examining *site contents* and *site condition*. Site contents refers to all cultural materials and organic remains associated with human activity at a site. Site contents also refers to the site structure – the size of the site, the patterning of cultural materials within the site, the presence of any stratified deposits and the rarity of particular artefact types. As the site contents criterion is not applicable to scarred trees, the assessment of scarred trees is

outlined separately below. Site condition refers to the degree of disturbance to the contents of a site at the time it was recorded.

The *site contents* ratings used for archaeological sites are:

- 0 No cultural material remaining.
- 1 Site contains a small number (e.g. 0–10 artefacts) or limited range of cultural materials with no evident stratification.
- 2 Site contains:
 - (a) a larger number, but limited range of cultural materials; and/or
 - (b) some intact stratified deposit remains; and/or
 - (c) rare or unusual example(s) of a particular artefact type.
- 3 Site contains:
 - (a) a large number and diverse range of cultural materials; and/or
 - (b) largely intact stratified deposit; and/or
 - (c) surface spatial patterning of cultural materials that still reflect the way in which the cultural materials were deposited.

The *site condition* ratings used for archaeological sites are:

- 0 Site destroyed.
- 1 Site in a deteriorated condition with a high degree of disturbance; some cultural materials remaining.
- 2 Site in a fair to good condition, but with some disturbance.
- 3 Site in an excellent condition with little or no disturbance. For surface artefact scatters this may mean that the spatial patterning of cultural materials still reflects the way in which the cultural materials were laid down.

Representativeness refers to the regional distribution of a particular site type.

Representativeness is assessed by whether the site is *common*, *occasional*, or *rare* in a given region. Assessments of representativeness are subjectively biased by current knowledge of the distribution and number of archaeological sites in a region. This varies from place to place depending on the extent of archaeological research. Consequently, a site that is assigned low significance values for contents and condition, but a high significance value for representativeness, can only be regarded as significant in terms of knowledge of the regional archaeology. Any such site should be subject to re-assessment as more archaeological research is undertaken.

Assessment of representativeness also takes into account the contents and condition of a site. For example, in any region there may only be a limited number of sites of any type that have suffered minimal disturbance. Such sites would therefore be given a high significance rating for representativeness, although they may occur commonly within the region.

The *representativeness* ratings used for archaeological sites are:

- 1 common occurrence

- 2 occasional occurrence
- 3 rare occurrence

Overall scientific significance ratings for sites, based on a cumulative score for site contents, site integrity and representativeness are:

- 1-3 low scientific significance
- 4-6 moderate scientific significance
- 7-8 high scientific significance

ii) Scientific significance assessment: scarred trees

The scientific significance assessment for scarred trees varies from the significance assessment outlined above because a scarred tree has no site contents rating (a tree either is, or is not, a scarred tree). Although scarred trees are a site type usually associated with traditional Aboriginal cultural activity, there are examples of scarred trees associated with non-Aboriginal activity (survey blazes for example).

The site condition ratings used for scarred trees are:

- 1 poorly preserved tree scar
- 2 partly preserved tree scar
- 3 well preserved example of a scarred tree

Representativeness refers to the regional distribution of scarred trees. Representativeness is assessed on whether the site is common, occasional or rare in a given region.

Representativeness should take into account the type and condition of the scar(s)/tree (the tree will be in: good health, poor health, dying, dead-standing, dead-on ground or destroyed) and the tree species involved.

The *representativeness* ratings used for scarred trees are:

- 0 common occurrence
- 1 occasional occurrence
- 2 rare occurrence

Overall scientific significance ratings for scarred tree sites based on a cumulative score for site condition and representativeness are:

- 1-3 low scientific significance
- 4-6 moderate scientific significance
- 7-9 high scientific significance

Aboriginal Cultural Significance

Aboriginal sites and areas of land for which a local Aboriginal community has custodianship usually have a special significance for Australian Aboriginal people.

Australian Aborigines have a very ancient and distinct traditional culture, which is very much alive. At the same time, in Australian society today they constitute a visibly oppressed and disadvantaged minority. These two elements give their heritage and history a special significance, ...Aboriginal places may be important to Aboriginal people in a number of ways.

In southern Australia the vast majority of sites are prehistoric [rather than 'sacred' or historic]. They relate to evidence of Aboriginal occupation of the continent over 60,000 years, but they have no specific traditional significance to any particular group. They are usually as unknown to Aborigines as to others until located and identified by archaeological survey of other research.

(Pearson and Sullivan 1995: 159, 162)

All pre-contact (pre-European settlement) sites that are located in the study area are considered to be of cultural significance to the Wurundjeri. The sites are evidence of past Aboriginal occupation and use of the area, and are the main source of information about the Aboriginal past. The consultants cannot comment directly on such cultural significance – comment can only be made by the Aboriginal community. In addition, any recorded (and unrecorded) pre-contact sites are of cultural significance because they are rare or, at least, uncommon site-types. In particular, many sites in the greater Melbourne region have been destroyed as a result of land clearance and land-use practices in the historic period.

Historical Sites – Cultural Heritage Significance

CRITERION A. The historical importance, association with or relationship to Victoria's history of the place or object.

CRITERION B. The importance of a place or object in demonstrating rarity or uniqueness.

CRITERION C. The place or object's potential to educate, illustrate or provide further scientific investigation in relation to Victoria's cultural heritage.

CRITERION D. The importance of a place or object in exhibiting the principal characteristics or the representative nature of a place or object as part of a class or type of places or objects.

CRITERION E. The importance of the place or object in exhibiting good design or aesthetic characteristics and/or in exhibiting a richness, diversity or unusual integration of features.

CRITERION F. The importance of the place or object in demonstrating or being associated with scientific or technical innovations or achievements.

CRITERION G. The importance of the place or object in demonstrating social or cultural associations.

Appendix 2 – Statutory Regulations

Historical Sites

i) Victorian cultural heritage legislation

The Heritage Act 1995 details statutory responsibilities for historic buildings and gardens, historic places and objects, historical archaeological sites, and historic shipwrecks. These responsibilities are set out in Part 1 of the Act, which states that one of the main purposes of the Act is to: 'provide for the protection and conservation of places and objects of cultural heritage significance and the registration of such places and objects'. The Act is administered by Heritage Victoria, part of the Department of Sustainability and Environment. The Act establishes the Heritage Council, a ten-member, independent statutory authority. The Heritage Council determines which heritage places are included on the Victorian Heritage Register and acts as an appeal body.

The Victorian Heritage Register

The Victorian Heritage Register was established pursuant to Section 18 of the *Heritage Act 1995*. Heritage places included on the Heritage Register are places assessed as having cultural heritage significance at a State level. For a place to be added to the Victorian Heritage Register a nomination must be made to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will review nominations and make recommendations to the Heritage Council for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register. All recommendations are advertised in a relevant newspaper and the owners or any party with a substantial interest in the heritage place or object can make a submission to the Heritage Council.

A permit may be required for particular works or activities in relation to a registered place or object. Permit applications must be submitted to the Executive Director who will consider the application and determine the matter. Should the applicant or owner object to the decision of the Executive Director, an appeal can be made to the Heritage Council.

The Heritage Inventory

The Heritage Inventory was established pursuant to Section 120 of the *Heritage Act 1995*. The Heritage Inventory includes historical archaeological sites, places and relics in Victoria, providing they are older than 50 years, and regardless of their level of cultural heritage significance.

A Consent will be required for particular works or activities, including excavation, in relation to an archaeological site. Under the Heritage Act it is an offence to damage or disturb relics and archaeological sites, whether or not they have been included on the Heritage Inventory, without obtaining the appropriate permission from the Executive Director.

Consents and Permits

Depending on whether a place/site is listed on the Heritage Register or the Heritage Inventory, any proposed works will require the submission of an application for either a *Permit* (Heritage Register) or a *Consent* (Heritage Inventory). If an archaeological site has been added to the Heritage Register, this will take precedence: a Permit will be required, but not a Consent. In summary:

- A Permit is required if the site is on the Heritage Register. The assessment of the Permit application will be guided by its heritage status as a site of State significance.
- A Consent is required if the site is on the Heritage Inventory (and not on the Heritage Register). The assessment of the Consent application will be guided by the significance and integrity of the site.

Applications for Consents or Permits should be accompanied by a cheque for the prescribed fee. The cheque should be payable to the **Heritage Council**. The fees payable for particular classes of work are advised in Schedule 3 (Permits) or Schedule 5 (Consents) of *Heritage (General) Regulations 1996 (Statutory Rule No. 85/1996)*. The application should be made on the appropriate form and sent to:

Mr Ray Tonkin
Executive Director
Heritage Victoria
Level 7
8 Nicholson Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

General queries relating to either Consent or Permit applications can be directed to:

Permits Co-ordinator
Heritage Victoria
Level 7
8 Nicholson Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002
Ph:(03) 9637 9475
Fax:(03) 9637 9503

Consultation relating to the Heritage Inventory and to historical archaeological sites should be conducted with Heritage Victoria archaeology officers, contact details as above.

Consultation and discussion with Heritage Victoria should be initiated well before lodging an application for a Consent or Permit to disturb or destroy a historical archaeological site.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

The Victorian Planning and Environment Act provides local governments with the power to implement heritage controls over significant buildings or places. Heritage and conservation areas and heritage places – both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – can be identified and listed on a particular local planning scheme (usually through inclusion in the Heritage Overlay), and protected as places of heritage significance. A planning permit may be required from the local council if a place is subject to a heritage overlay control or is individually listed in the planning scheme. It is advisable to check with the relevant local council to determine if any additional permits are required.

Environment Effects Act 1978 and Amendment Act 1994

The Victorian Environment Effects Act may have relevance with certain projects as it requires some development proposals to be assessed for their possible impact on the environment. The definition of environment includes the cultural heritage of the project area.

ii) Commonwealth legislation

Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)

The Commonwealth Australian Heritage Commission Act was recently repealed and in its place amendments to the EPBC Act and the provision of an Australian Heritage Council have also been made in new legislation.

Under the EPBC Act Amendments (No 88, 2003) two mechanisms have been created for protection of heritage places of Commonwealth or National significance. Initially places in Commonwealth ownership may be placed on the Commonwealth list with similar protection measures as under the previous AHC act. In addition the National list provides protection to places of cultural significance to Australia. By law, no one can take any action that has, will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on any places of national heritage value, without approval. Such actions must be referred to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Heritage.

Aboriginal Sites

i) Victorian Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

In 2006 the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 was enacted on the 28th May 2007. This new Act replaced Part IIA of the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 and the State Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972. From this date Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria is protected through the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2009 (Amended 28 May 2009).

Appendix 3 - Farming in the Melton District

FARMING- IN THE MELTON DISTRICT.¹³³

[From the Australasian Travelling Reporter.] LEAVING Parkinson's place, and following the main road towards Braybrook, we pass through level plains for several miles, none of the land being under cultivation, but entirely devoted to grazing. Occasionally a small holding is passed, but there is nothing calling for any special remarks until we arrive at the farm of Mr. George Missen, Sen., which is in the parish of Kororoit, about five miles from Melton. This farm contains 350 acres, and was taken up about nine years ago. Until last year it was usual to have about 50 acres under crop every season principally with wheat during the first few years, but latterly hay was found to give a better return. Dairying is now the principal occupation, about 50 head of cattle being kept, with a large proportion of milking cows among them. Last season 25 acres were sown with English grasses, and it is the intention of the proprietor to sow more every season until he improves the whole of the pasture. Lucerne is also being tried, 25 acres sown last season giving promise of doing very well, though the late dry weather has been much against it. There is a neat homestead on this farm attached to which is a well-kept orchard and garden containing about an acre, stocked with a good variety of fruit trees and vegetables, and surrounded by a substantial stone wall. Adjoining is a farm of 500 acres belonging to Mr. George Missen, jun., a son of the owner of the last-mentioned farm. This farm has a considerable frontage to the main road, and upon it there is a substantial stone residence, occupied by the proprietor, who combines the business of a publican with that of a farmer. About 60 acres have been generally under cultivation every year, but this season, owing to the dry weather that has prevailed, only a little hay is being grown. There is a mixed herd of about 70 head of cattle at present upon the farm, and about 300 sheep. Among the sheep are 80 of the Lincoln breed, bred from ewes, purchased from Mr. Benson, of the Cabbage-tree, Gisborne; the rams being obtained from the flock of Mr. I. Evans. Some of the animals are of a superior class, and it is the intention of Mr. Missen to improve his flock by severe culling. On the opposite side of the road is a property of 2,000 acres known as Spring Farm, belonging to Mr. Isaac Gidney and used by him as a depot for horses, a large number of these animals being purchased by him, and shipped to India every year. Mr Gidney purchased a portion of the property eight years ago, adding from time to time by buying adjoining sections as opportunity offered. About 60 acres are now under cultivation, mostly for hay, a few acres of barley and peas being also grown. Lucerne is grown upon an extensive scale, about 150 acres being now under crop with that valuable forage plant, some of the land having been sown six years ago, and the area was gradually increased every season. Mr. Gidney has a very high opinion of lucerne, which he considers to be invaluable for all kinds of stock, and does not know what he should have done without it during the present season. Though the weather has been so dry it has always furnished a good supply of feed, when at the same time, stock could scarcely obtain a bite of grass. So strong is his faith in lucerne that Mr. Gidney intends to sow the whole of his land with it as fast as circumstances will permit. The property is subdivided into a number of conveniently-sized paddocks by substantial stone walls, which are also used for the boundaries of the property. In order to provide a little shelter for the stock the situation being naturally bleak and exposed clumps and rows of trees have been planted about the place, principally bluegums and lightwoods, which seem to be thriving remarkably well. Among the horses kept for breeding purposes are three good draught mares

¹³³ FARMING IN THE MELTON DISTRICT. (1876, November 4). *The Bacchus Marsh Express* p. 3. Retrieved May 3, 2013, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article88348358>

by Emperor, Sir Robert, and Wenthorn, all of whom are now in foal to the King of the Valley, the property of Mr. J. Gibb, of Berwick. Mr. Gidney is turning his attention to the breeding of horses suitable for carrying heavy weights, a class of animals which he finds by experience: to be more difficult to obtain every year, and he has imported a powerful Norfolk roadster stallion for the purpose. This horse, called Flying Perfection, is a fine brown with black points, standing 152 hands high, remarkably good about the shoulders, loins, and neck, with a handsome head, and very good' tempered. He is now four years old, and will probably prove a valuable animal, both to his owner and the colony. A very fair young draught stallion by Ben Lomond is also kept upon this farm. Besides the horse stock there is a small mixed herd of cattle and a few sheep, some of the latter being very good. The stockyards are very substantial, and have been erected specially for the draughting of horses, some hundreds of those animals being often running on the place. Recently a large and conveniently arranged shed has been erected for feeding the horses under cover during the winter season or in bad weather, in which they will be effectually sheltered. Leaving Gidney's place, the next farm we call at is one belonging to Mr. Wm. Pratt, about a mile further along the road on the opposite side. This farm containing 230 acres, 47 being under cultivation this season, chiefly for hay, a few peas being also grown. The remainder of the land is used for dairy purposes, butter making being the speciality. Last year 10 acres were laid down with lucerne, which succeeded' very well, and an equal area has been sown this year. Like most of the farmers who have given lucerne a fair trial, Mr. Pratt is well satisfied with it, and he intends to sow more as opportunity offers. The Rockbank estate, the property of Mr. W. J. Clarke, is the largest in the Melton district, over 40,000 acres being comprised within its boundaries. From east to west it extends from the Sandhurst line of railway to the town of Melton, the northern boundary stretching to Sunbury, and the southern one to within about three miles from Wyndham. The property first came into the possession of the late Mr. Clarke, the father of the present owner, about 25 years ago, and has been used as a sheep station ever since. This season there are about 33,000 sheep, a less number than last year by 3,000, owing to the dry weather that has prevailed during the past few months. Last year the clip amounted to 550 bales of wool, and this season the yield is estimated at about 500. The greater portion of the sheep are cross-bred between merinos and Leicesters, well-bred rams of the last mentioned class being used from imported stock of the last-mentioned class being used from imported stock introduced by the late Mr. Clarke some years ago. Many of the sheep are three-quarter bred Leicesters; but according to the experience of Mr. Watson, the manager of the station, the most profitable class of animals is the first cross. In addition to the sheep there are about 800 head of cattle upon the station, a mixed herd, kept principally for eating down the rough grass left by the sheep. The land is all open plains, with scarcely any shelter for the stock, yet, though the sheep are, as a consequence, fully exposed to bleak winds and heavy rains, there are but few losses, and the percentage of lambs is generally very good. The station homestead is distant about five miles from Melton, and 17 from Melbourne, standing back about a mile from the main road. Most of the buildings are of the ordinary description, the most noticeable one being a fine roomy woolshed, built of stone, with galvanised iron roof, fitted up with all necessary conveniences. The whole of the property is under the management of Mr. Watson, who has occupied his present position for 15 years, and been connected with the station for a period of 21 years. About a mile from the Rockbank homestead, in a north-westerly direction, is a farm of 250 acres belonging to Mr. Charles Beatty, who has resided upon it for 14 years. Some eight acres are under crop this season with potatoes, mangels, and barley, the remainder of the land being used for grazing. Dairying is now the chief pursuit, about 70 head of cattle being kept, a large proportion being milkers. After leaving Beatty's place the next farm we come to is one containing 350 acres, situated within half a mile from the road leading from Keilor to Melton, and distant about four miles from the last-mentioned place. It has been occupied for 16 years by Mr. Digby Tarleton, who uses the land entirely for grazing purposes. About 200 head of cattle are kept, and dairying

is followed, butter-making being carried on upon a large scale. For a number of years Mr. Tarleton has also paid a great deal of attention to the breeding of poultry, and he rears an immense quantity every year. This year there are over 500 geese, nearly as many turkeys, and several hundred ducks and fowls in various stages of growth. Poultry raising has been found to be a profitable speculation by Mr. Tarleton, who is always able to command a ready market for what he has to dispose of. The cost of keeping them is comparatively small, as they obtain the greater part of their food from the paddocks, and very seldom get anything else. A great deal of lucerne is growing in the pastures, and this valuable plant is found to be not only of great service for the cattle, but is greatly relished by all kinds of poultry, who thrive upon it amazingly. Some of this lucerne has been sown over 16 years, and though so long a period has elapsed, it is still making vigorous growth. There is "a neat and comfortable homestead upon this farm, and everything has an orderly appearance. Leaving Tarleton's place, and crossing the Keilor-road at a point about half way between the railway station and Melton, we pass along the foot of a lofty hill called Mount Kororoit, and after travelling for about a mile and a half, arrive at the fine grazing farm belonging to Mr. John Moylan, who is a resident of 21 years' standing.' This property contains about 2,000 acres, and is divided into 17 paddocks, the total length of the fences being 23 miles. Though this farm is now entirely used for grazing a few years back it was usual to have 60 or 70 acres under crop every season, and good returns were generally obtained. Within the last few years, however, it has been found more profitable to feed sheep and cattle, a less outlay being required for labour, and the return is more certain. The number of sheep kept is 2,500, principally cross bred between merino ewes and Leicester rams. Mr. Moylan is gradually working in to the pure long woolled class, and has for several years been using imported Tasmanian rams from Mr. Field's celebrated flock, many of the sheep at the present time being nearly pure Leicesters. Some few years back a trial was made with Oxford and South Downs, but though they were found to be very hardy, and gave a good-sized carcass, the wool was much shorter and less valuable than that obtained from animals with the Leicester blood in them. According to Mr. Moylan's experience Leicesters are the most profitable kind of sheep, being hardy in their constitutions, yielding a large quantity of wool, and producing a heavy carcass for the butcher. There are about 90 head of cattle, a mixed herd, but the Hereford breed preponderates, as this class is found to be more hardy and better adapted for the locality, which is very much exposed, than shorthorns or other breeds. A good proportion of the cattle are milking cows, and dairying is carried on to some extent, butter-making being the specialty. About 70 acres of the pasture have been improved by sowing rye grass and white clover, and it is the intention of the proprietor to lay down more land with them every season. The proprietor's residence is a neat and commodious building, very pleasantly situated, the various necessary outbuildings being substantial and conveniently arranged. In front of the residence is a garden and orchard of about two acres, planted with a good variety of fruit trees, a belt of blue gums and native oaks (casuarinas) being carried round the boundaries for shelter, which are doing very well, and answer the purpose admirably. Provision is made for a good supply of water by means of a large underground tank, measuring 16 feet in diameter by 18 feet in depth, bricked and cemented, which is never dry. Mr. Michael Moylan, a son of the proprietor, is a very clever self-taught mechanic, and devotes a good deal of his spare time to the making of useful articles required about the farm, and also shoes all the horses. The work that has been accomplished by him would, in many cases, not discredit a professional engineer, and in several instances he has displayed a good deal of ingenuity and perseverance. The adjoining farm belongs to Mr. Michael Moylan, a brother to the owner of the last mentioned one, and has been occupied by him for about 21 years. About 40 acres are under cultivation this season, but formerly it was usual to have about twice as much cropped every year. The land is subdivided into several paddocks by substantial fences, and with the exception of the area under crop is all used for grazing. About 70 head of cattle are kept at the present time—a mixed herd with a good proportion of cows amongst

them, whose produce is made into butter. There are several very good farm horses among them a promising colt by Mr. Lyle's Young Lord Clyde, and another by Mr. Fell's Scottish Chief. An acre has been sown with lucerne, which is doing very well, and furnishes a good supply of food for the pigs, who thrive well upon it, receiving scarcely anything else except the refuse from the dairy. There is a very comfortable residence on this farm, attached to which is a small garden; the various outbuildings are of a substantial description. After leaving Michael Moylan's place the next farm we call at is one containing 360 acres, belonging to Mr. Henry Minns, and occupied by him for the last five years. Formerly, a large portion of the land was under cultivation, but of late years the area has seldom exceeded 30 acres. The crops now in the ground are peas, English barley, and oats for hay; and four acres have also been sown this year with lucerne. Peas are generally found to do very well, the last crop yielding at the rate of 60 bushels per acre-most of the produce being consumed at home in feeding pigs and horses. About 50 head of dairy cattle are kept, from 20 to 30 cows being generally in milk throughout the year, whose produce is all made into butter. Provision is made for feeding the cattle when grass is scarce by growing green crops, and saving all the straw, none of which is ever sold. A large number of pigs are kept, which are fed upon the refuse from the dairy, with peas, and are found to be very profitable. About 45 acres have been laid down with English grasses, and it is intended to sow more as opportunities occur. The milking-sheds of this farm are very roomy and substantial, and the yards commodious and well arranged. The various outbuildings are also of a superior description to those which are to be found on many farms. Attached to the homestead is a large garden and orchard, well stocked with fruit trees and vines, which appear to be in a vigorous state of growth. Leaving Minns's place and travelling towards Melton, we call next at a farm belonging to Messrs. George & William Buchanan, which is about two miles distant from the township. It contains 450 acres, and has been in the hands of the present occupants for about four years, but they have been farming in the district for over 26 years. Formerly it was usual to cultivate over 50 acres every season, but of late years the area has been gradually diminished, and at present only 30 acres are under crop. The crops now in the ground include 22 acres of oats intended for grain if circumstances turn out favourably, five acres of Cape barley, and three acres of peas, which are found to do very well, as a rule, and furnish a large supply of food for pigs, of which there is a considerable stock. Dairying is now the chief pursuit, about 100 head of cattle being generally kept, there being a good number of milkers among them, whose produce is turned into butter. Several good useful farm horses are kept, the more noticeable among them being a fine mare by Clydesdale Charlie, a son of the celebrated stallion Prince Charlie.: About two acres have been planted as an orchard with miscellaneous fruit trees, apples preponderating, and generally very fair crops are obtained from them.

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