



DJAARA
Statement of Cultural Significance
Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct
Marong

Warning to Aboriginal readers: this document contains the names of Aboriginal people who are now deceased. This document may contain words, descriptions or themes that reflect attitudes and government policies at different times which may be insensitive and upsetting.

What is significant:

Description of place:

The 'Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct' (BREP) occupies a highly valued cultural landscape within Djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung Country).

The Bulop Bayowayi (Bullock Creek) (DJAARA 2025b) cultural landscape flows from central Djandak in Ravenswood South, to northern Djandak, north-west of Mitiamo.

BREP is located within this landscape in Marong, enclosed by the Wimmera Highway to the north and west (less Wilson's Hill NCR and BR), the Calder alternative highway to the east, and Cemetery Rd to the south.

Key elements of the landscape:

The area holds significant tangible and intangible cultural heritage through Dja Dja Wurrung people's enduring connection to this Country.

Caroline Malcolm, a Dja Dja Wurrung Ngurar Balak (Ancestor) (DJAARA 2025a:5) is recorded as living by Bullock Creek in Marong (Registrar General's Department 1865:7) prior to being 'offered an asylum' by colonial authorities to Coranderrk (Registrar General's Department 1865:3). The Malcolm family's connection to Country has been consequently recognised by State Government, contributing to Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA) being provided rights through its Recognition and Settlement Agreement (Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and the State Government of Victoria 2013:113).

The BREP parcel further holds significant tangible cultural heritage due to its proximity and connections to Bulop Bayowayi (Bullock Creek), the Marong Family Hotel and the Marong-Bullock Creek Cemetery. Further, the site of Donald Campbell's former station 'Rathmore' included paddocks within BREP's parcel, attached to the homestead to its west (Grimes 1855, cited in Crotty

balaki wuka | giving to community

Larnangurrak (our place)

43 Hattam Street, Golden Square, VIC 3555

T: (03) 5444 2888

E: info@djadjawurrung.com.au

P.O Box 1026 Bendigo VIC 3552

djadjawurrung.com.au



D, Dolling W, 2023:47). The BREP parcel once contained the historic route from the Marong Town Reserve (Grimes 1855), which included the Marong Hotel, to the entrance of Marong-Bullock Creek Cemetery (Surveyor General's Office 1855). A further route crossed the parcel from Campbell's station to Catto's Run (Urquhart 1852 cited in Crotty D, Dolling W, 2023:46).

The parcel also includes Dry Creek, and an area on a small rise east of O'Sullivan's Road, which holds cultural value through its elevated position and the presence of mature native trees. The BREP site also interfaces Wilsons Hill Bushland Reserve, adjacent to Wilsons Hill Nature Conservation Reserve, these sites likewise holding cultural value due to their native flora and fauna, elevation, and positioning between two rivers.

It is yet to be determined whether places of colonial heritage such the 'Cemetery Road Gold Mining Landscape' (VHI 2023), or other elements of the landscape hold cultural heritage value for Dja Dja Wurrung People. Similarly, family histories of Traditional Owners who lived in this landscape are still being rediscovered. Accordingly, ICOMOS' Practise Note advising on 'The Burra Charter and Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management', suggests 'Assessments of significance need to be responsive to the dynamic nature of Indigenous cultures' (2013:4) and may require revision over time.

How is it significant?

The BREP parcel is of historic, aesthetic and associative value to Dja Dja Wurrung people.

Intangible heritage:

The BREP parcel holds historic and associative value for Traditional Owners, DJAARA members and specifically the Malcolm family.

In 1861, an inquest was held at the Marong Hotel into the death of Traditional Owner Jacky Jacky who was residing at Bullock Creek, Marong. He was approximately 55 years old when he died 7 August 1861. His inquest was held at the Marong Hotel and was found to have died of inflammation of the bowel. The inquest states that he was accompanied by a second 'native' (Registrar General's Department 1861:2) who built a 'mi-mi' (bark hut) (1861:2) to shelter and nurse Jacky-Jacky while ill (1861:2). The inquest serves as a record of Traditional Owners presence and living-ways at Bullock Creek, Marong in 1861.

In 1865, another inquest was held at the Marong Hotel into the passing of Traditional Owner Fanny Sampson. Prior to her passing, Sampson had been living with her husband in a 'Miami' (bark hut) on Bullock Creek (Registrar General's Department 1865:9). The inquest included testimony of Dja Dja Wurrung woman Caroline Malcolm, approximately 19-20 years of age, living on Bullock Creek with her parents, who she then described as 'the last of the Bullock Creek tribe' (Registrar General's Department 1865:7). Malcolm's testimony included reference to older relations dying locally, 'since I was a child I remember a few of fathers tribe, they are all dead, three of them died about here.' (Registrar General's Department 1865:7). The inquest serves as a record of Dja Dja Wurrung People's long-term presence and living-ways at Bullock Creek, Marong, including former generations of the Malcolm family.

Caroline Malcolm, is now recognised as one of eighteen Apical Ancestors of DJAARA (Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation) (DJAARA 2025a:5). Recognition by the Victorian



Government of her status as a Traditional Owner has contributed to DJAARA being afforded rights under the Recognition and Settlement Agreement (2013). Her story continues to hold a special place amongst DJAARA members and the wider community today.

Tangible heritage:

Marong-Bullock Creek Cemetery:

According to Hanson and O'Donohue (1993:92) Jacky Jacky, described as a 60 year old Aboriginal, was buried at Marong- Bullock Creek Cemetery 4 August 1861. It is likely that Fanny Sampson and other Aboriginal people were also buried at Marong Cemetery in this early period.

The Cemetery's landscape aesthetic is distinguished by its flat, open, expansive environment, featuring mature native trees; drawing down to an intimate, pedestrian-scale experience, accompanied by natural sound and light. The Cemetery represents a highly sensitive interface, and holds particular significance due to its historic, aesthetic and associative value to Dja Dja Wurrung People.

Travel routes:

Historic plans of the Parish of Marong (Grimes 1855, Surveyor General's Office 1855) record a worn travel route north from the Marong Town Reserve, south through the BREP site, to what later became Cemetery Road and the Marong Cemetery entrance. This 4km route connects places where events significant to Dja Dja Wurrung People have occurred, namely inquests at Marong Hotel and burial at the Cemetery.

Urquhart's 1852 plan and Grime's 1855 plan (cited in Crotty D, Dolling W, 2023:46,47) further notes the route from Campbell's Station to Catto's Run, with Caroline Malcolm and her family travelling between these stations for work, and Fanny Sampson likewise travelling with the 'Loddon tribe' from Catto's run to Marong (Registrar General's Department 1865:7).

Gatjin (water):

The site's proximity and alignment with Bulop Bayowayi (Bullock Creek) along its eastern side is of cultural importance, with an area of cultural heritage sensitivity close to the south-eastern edge of the site (FPSR 2025). Bulop Bayowayi flooded within the BREP boundary in 2022 (Spiire 2023:10) demonstrating a tangible interconnectedness between these two landscape elements. Similarly, Dry Creek which crosses the south-western corner of the site likewise carries an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, indicating that cultural heritage is likely to be present in this area. An unnamed natural drainage line (Spiire 2023:9) also appears to traverse the BREP site. The importance of waterways to Djaara is evidenced through 'Dhelkunyangu Gatjin. Working together to heal water' (2023).

Galk-galk (trees):

The BREP site, including bordering road reserves, sites to the west and on a slight rise to the east of O'Sullivan's Rd contain large, mature native trees of both aesthetic and environmental value, their preservation supporting the enduring Djaara value of 'Caring for Country' (DJAARA 2025:23)

Why is it significant?

The BREP parcel of land is located within Marong, within the significant Bulop Bayowayi (Bullock Creek) cultural landscape of Djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung Country). The Bulop Bayowayi landscape is



a traditional camping area, providing water, flora and fauna, and stone; supporting living-ways, as well as acting as a travel route and site for cultural practises.

Dja Dja Wurrung occupation of the Marong area is evidenced by the density and diversity of known Aboriginal places, especially within the Bulop Bayowayi landscape, where intangible cultural heritage as well as scarred trees, artefact scatters and low-density artefact distributions have been recorded (ACHRIS 2025a).

This parcel is significant due to its established links to Dja Dja Wurrung people. Colonial documentation of their lives and passing, through coronial inquests, and land and archaeological surveys, has served to evidence connection to Country and consequent legal recognition through DJAARA's Recognition and Settlement Agreement (2013).

Today, DJAARA has hundreds of recognised members descending from 18 Apical Ancestors. Descendants of Caroline Malcolm continue to work and live on Djandak.

Dja Dja Wurrung's rich cultural heritage, in the form of stories, cultural practises, and tangible heritage, provides deep, enduring understandings and unique insight into the BREP landscape. This place-based knowledge expresses an enduring connection to Country, especially of the Malcolm family, while providing connection to the landscape for future generations.

Recommendations:

- a) That the DPO Schedule's objectives explicitly recognise the direct connection of Caroline Malcolm, Djaara people and the wider Aboriginal diaspora to this parcel of land within the Bulop Bayowayi landscape on Djandak, through inclusion of the following clause:

To recognise, celebrate, protect and appropriately interpret the Aboriginal cultural values of the Marong area and Bullock Creek, including their tangible and intangible significance to Dja Dja Wurrung People.

- b) That in accordance with the objective (a) that plans are prepared in collaboration with DJAARA, and respond to the recommendations in Cultural Values Assessments (CVAs) or Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs) prepared in relation to this site, which may require revision over time.
- c) That any development plan prepared for BREP includes an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA), prepared by a qualified heritage advisor to the satisfaction of DJAARA.
- d) That mature trees throughout the site including within road reserves, and in a cluster to the immediate east of O'Sullivan's Rd and in clusters in the west, are protected through appropriate buffer zones (Spiire 2023:33- 8.6, bullet point 6).
- e) That a landscape buffer and development setback is applied from the Marong Cemetery (Spiire 2023:33- 8.6, bullet point 1), Wilsons Hill Bushland Reserve and Dry Creek (Spiire 2023:33- 8.6, bullet point 6) of a minimum of 50 meters; within which loading bays, service yards, heavy vehicle docks and external mechanical plant zones must not be located. At the Marong Cemetery interface, the height of building envelopes must not exceed 10m (Spiire 2023:33- 8.6, bullet point 1), unless further set back (Spiire 2023:33- 8.6, bullet point 5) at least 100m, and include a tree planting capable of reaching a mature height of at least 12m (Spiire 2023:33 – 8.6, bullet point 1) for visual screening.



Dumarr (Thank you),

Harley Douglas

Acting General Manager
DJAARA

6 November 2025



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